



Solefield School

Pastoral Care and SMSC at Solefield School

2023-2024



An Overview

At Solefield, we feel very strongly about promoting values spiritually, morally, socially and culturally and our three school values “Value yourself, value others, value our world” run through everything that we do. We use every opportunity to promote these values – theatre visits, assemblies (led by both pupils and staff), TPR and PPE lessons, links with charities, links with the local places of worship, form periods, RSHE, drama and music productions, Eco Team, School Council and other pupil-led committees for Reading, EDI, Food and Wellbeing, our Grandparents’ Day, trips and visitors to name but a few. We are also aware of how these values permeate every aspect of school life and every lesson; teachers at Solefield are all happy to incorporate them into every lesson, club and activity. Our values are sent to all staff, parents and governors, are in our Homework Diaries and are displayed widely around the school and we explore each one in detail each term.

As a school, we are extremely proud of our ability to develop a child from one with low esteem or lack of self-confidence to one that is comfortable in themselves and ready to take the next challenge put before them. Many parents report that their children are truly happy during their time at Solefield and that they leave as a confident, resilient, well-rounded, kind and caring individual.

Opportunity

The vast array of opportunities children get within school goes some way to describe how we feel about their SMSC development. There are many cross-curricular activities and a wide range of trips, visitors and experiences that we hope interest as many pupils as possible. Whether it is baking bread, a visit to the local Food Bank or a trip to the Gravesend Gurdwara, all children are encouraged to try new things and to develop their understanding of the world around them. In Years 7 and 8, pupils undertake some voluntary work in the local community, litter picking or helping at a local primary school.



Year 8s leading the STEM fair on flight

No child ever slips through the net

Solefield is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- Staying safe
- Being healthy, physically and mentally
- Being kind
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution

Solefield School aims to:

- Develop the individual abilities of each child in a secure, caring, friendly environment where they are happy and motivated to learn and to appreciate the benefits of healthy living and physical fitness.
- Encourage participation, enjoyment and success in all areas of the school's curriculum to create a well-rounded, confident child who shows respect, tolerance and compassion towards people and the environment and are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Have a strong understanding of Fundamental British values and protected characteristics.

- Help children develop self-worth, resilience, independence and maturity so they are equipped to deal with life's challenges and are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Create a strong partnership between parents, children and staff to foster social awareness and to allow all members of the school community to feel valued and appreciated.
- Help children to develop resilience.

Every member of our community is aware of our aims and these are regularly reviewed by the Leadership Team.

“Mutual trust and respect” are words often used to describe the basis of our school ethos. We are a small school and staff tend to know all pupils within a short space of time, as pupils know staff. A simple greeting as paths cross creates a pleasant and caring atmosphere and is something that every member of staff and pupil is encouraged to do, as is opening doors for one another or saying “please” and “thank you”.



We have high expectations of pupil behaviour both in class, clubs and activities and when representing the school. Children enjoy positions of responsibility and respond well to these. Our Head Pupil, Deputy Head Pupils and other Year 8 prefects speak in assembly every week and each member of Year 8 presents an assembly on a theme of their choice. Year 8 prefects have particular responsibilities for Charities, School Council, ICT, Sport, the Playground, Wellbeing, Drama, the Pre-Prep and Music. All Year 8 pupils act as monitors for younger forms and help them every day during form time and registration. Pupils in all years spend one assembly per year talking about their learning to their parents and then showing them their books as well as guiding them during tours on our Open Days.

One of the most wonderful things to see is the older pupils helping and playing with the younger ones at playtime or praising them in assembly. All of these opportunities for children of different ages to interact has created a very positive bond between pupils. The Wellbeing Committee has its own brightly coloured “Find a Friend Bench” in the playground so if a child doesn’t have anyone to play with or has a problem, a member of School Council or an older pupil will help them.

Moving our beautiful library into the heart of the school and creating a Reading Committee, Reading Cinemas and author visits have helped all to develop a true love of learning and a strategy for downtime, relaxation and wellbeing for the future.



Pastoral Care

As our class sizes are so small and many staff teach across the whole school, we really get to know each and every pupil and keep a very close eye on each one. Staff meet regularly to discuss pupils and we discuss each pupil in turn, making sure that the focus is not only on a few.

We are fortunate to have two trained counsellors on the staff who spend time with particular pupils, when needed for talk time and a play therapist and a visiting independent counsellor who works with individual pupils and families and gives parents talks. We have three wellbeing hubs around school and a Lego Therapy Room enjoyed by all pupils. Wellbeing Lessons allow time for relaxation and reflection and the chance to meet with our Wellbeing Dogs, Monty and Charlie.

All staff have access to our “Behaviour Tracker” in which any anomalies in behaviour are detailed by staff concerned. This is reviewed every day by the Headmistress, the form teacher and the teacher in charge of behaviour for the year groups in question. We have a weekly pastoral staff meeting in which any matters are raised. Pupils are encouraged to complete their Homework Diaries with details of Headmistress’ Awards, Kindness Awards and house points; staff write messages on the ‘blue pages’ about any small misdemeanours; these are signed by the pupil, teacher and parents and pupils are helped to ‘put things right’ with restorative measures. Yellow pages are used far more than blue and on these we record house points, Headmistress Awards, Kindness Awards, Womble Awards and postcards home. The staff strive to ensure that each pupil receives at least one award every year.

Wellbeing

When single-sex, Solefield was the first boys' independent school to be granted a national award for work in pastoral care and wellbeing. We value the importance of mental health and provide pupils with skills to help them take on the challenges and opportunities of the modern world.

The Solefield Change Team and Wellbeing Committee, made up of staff, pupils, parents and governors (and dogs!) have really put wellbeing at the heart of all that we do and improved this in every aspect of school life.

Wellbeing lessons, hubs, assemblies, staff and pupil worry boxes and trained wellbeing dogs have been introduced and established at the school in the last 15 months. Charitable initiatives to support mental health, talk time, a school counsellor, presentations for parents, Lego therapy and play therapy as well as lots of pastoral time and work on expressing emotions and talking things through are part of school-life. Mental health and wellbeing training have given all members of staff the confidence and strategies to support pupils on a daily basis which has helped their own mental health. All our Year 7 and 8 pupils have undergone Mental Health Warrior training.

Pupils enjoy a Wellbeing lesson by the open fire and Christmas Tree in the Old Library at the end of the Autumn Term and talk about their successes and targets for the next year with their friends and teacher.

Our independent visiting school counsellor works with several individuals and families and also runs evening talks for parents on staff on various topics. We also host workshops on neurodivergence and invite local state schools to join us.

We have evaluated the RSHE curriculum to include more topics that support wellbeing such as self-care and coping strategies and our Wellbeing Champions are proving to be a very effective form of pupil leadership. Introducing counselling services helped pupils maintain better emotional wellbeing and signposting support routes means pupils, parents and staff know where to go for help.

Our school values, 'Value yourself. Value others. Value our world' tie in beautifully with the work on this award. They are at the core of everything we do at Solefield, as is wellbeing.

Wellbeing is about more than happiness; it is understanding how our bodies and minds work and then learning to look after ourselves through life. We try to equip pupils with strategies to deal with whatever life throws at them, whenever that may be.

Zones of Regulation

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As part of SEL (Social Emotional Learning) at Solefield we have introduced the Zones of Regulation. This is an internationally recognised curriculum which we have implemented across the whole school to help students identify their emotions and learn how to regulate them.

What are the Zones?

The Zones of Regulation is the original framework and curriculum (Kuypers, 2011) that develops awareness of feelings, energy and alertness levels while exploring a variety of tools and strategies for regulation, prosocial skills, self-care, and overall wellness. This curriculum provides a straightforward way to think and talk about how we feel on the inside and sort these feelings into four coloured Zones.



Using the Zones

Once students understand their feelings and recognise the zones they are in they can learn to use tools/strategies to manage their behaviours and meet goals like doing schoolwork or other tasks, managing big feelings, and have healthy relationships with others.



At Solefield, students are encouraged to 'check in' with their emotions and think about which zone they are in, throughout the school day. They do this by using posters and displays which help them communicate their zone. This encourages them get into the habit of considering their emotions and behaviours on a regular basis and helps teachers support them with regulating their behaviour.

Resilience

Following on from our success in achieving our Wellness Award we are now working towards a Pupil Resilience Award. This award will be used to validate the excellent practices that we already have in place to help pupils develop resilience, but will also provide an opportunity for us to include new initiatives and further embed resilience into our daily routines.

Aiming high, we have signed up to work towards a Gold Award, which contains 8 benchmarks of good practice. These include:

Emotional resilience

Digital resilience

Financial resilience

Promotion of resilience through our school ethos and culture

Embedding the language of resilience throughout our school

Encouraging a growth mindset

Encouraging pupils to take on new challenges and experiences

Developing healthy relationships with themselves and others

Charities and Education for Social Responsibility

We do a lot of fund-raising and voluntary work for charities, both locally and globally. We have supported a school in Malawi by sending many resources and 3 members of staff there to help with projects and teacher-training. In recent years, the Year 8 pupils raised lots of money for charities of their choice by organising a mini-market after their exams.

Solefield has an outstanding history of supporting a variety of local, national and international charities. We place a strong importance on helping others and we aim to educate our pupils to become compassionate, caring individuals. By participating in a variety of fundraising activities and events each year, we hope that our pupils will learn that they can make a difference to the lives of others and that by working together we can help bring about change. Each year, a Year 8 Charities Prefect is appointed to assist with the organisation and delivery of Solefield fundraising events. They choose charities to support with the pupils and writes to parents. In recent years, we have raised over £12,000 for a variety of local, national and international charities.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the extraordinary generosity of our parents which enables our charitable work to thrive and continue.

Through School Council, food and hygiene products are regularly donated to local foodbanks.

Pupils this year wrapped over 200 presents and left them under our tree for children less fortunate than themselves through the Salvation Army.

We have offered the use of our Old Library and open fire as a Sevenoaks 'Warm Space' for the elderly and we host free Stay & Play sessions for parents with babies and toddlers.

We visit Old Peoples' Homes and share or donate our resources with local state schools; staff also offer free training for these in sports, chess, debating, creative writing etc

Faith and EDI

All the major world religions are studied at different stages within the RS and TPR curriculum. We have pupils that follow a variety of religions within the school and embrace all faiths, delivering lessons impartially to allow children to express their own opinions. Each year, we visit St. Mary's, Kippington at least twice and Year 7 go to the Gravesend Gurdwara. The whole school celebrates Diwali and Chinese New Year and we enjoy a special assembly about the Kazak New Year given by a pupil.



Diwali dancing

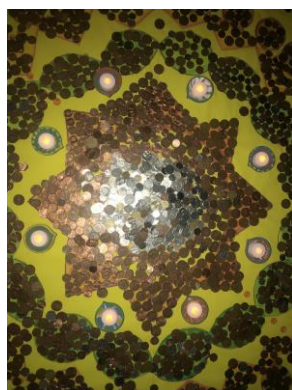
Pupils in Years 7&8 have email correspondence with a school in the South of France and we strive to ensure that all races and faiths run through lessons and are recognised in assemblies, displays, books and projects. Each term, the pupils choose a Language of the Term, most recently this was Russian.

Every year, we celebrate the diversity of our community and environment with Languages Day and Francophone Day. As well as learning French from the age of 4 and Latin in Years 7&8, pupils study Summer Term Spanish and enjoy clubs based on different languages and cultures. St Nicolas visits Little Acorns and Reception every year and leaves sweets and gifts in their shoes.

Our EDI Committee is instrumental in giving members of our community a voice about these important issues, regularly soliciting opinions and feeding back to staff and pupils. From pupils' suggestions, we recently created a new house named in

honour of Dame Kelly Holmes which is for the new boys and girls in our Little Acorns, pre-Reception class.

Protected characteristics and Fundamental British Values are openly discussed in form times, assemblies, lessons and pupils have displayed posters on these around the school. Staff review their resources and curricula regularly to make sure that these reflect our diverse community. With over 20% of our pupils bilingual, trilingual or speaking another language in the family home, we are truly and proudly multicultural and celebrate a variety of cultures, languages, foods and festivals.



Our Rangoli made of coins (for charity) with our pupil-decorated Diya lamps

RSHE

The RSHE curriculum has been recently reviewed and rewritten with whole staff training taking place on it. Each class has a timetabled lesson in this every week with trained teachers. Parents and governors have been consulted about the scheme of work and its content. Each year group begins with a lesson on e-safety and cyber-bullying. An old pupil, now at Cambridge, came to talk to pupils in small groups about their online habits and to answer any questions they may have that they would be too embarrassed to ask their parents or teachers. This year, a visiting speaker gave tailored online safety workshops to pupils, parents and staff. Pupils have taken part in First Aid Training, Stranger Danger and Road Awareness courses. We celebrated the Queen's Jubilee and her life. We are well aware that British values are very important for our pupils and all staff strive to emphasize these in lessons, assemblies, trips and school-life in general.

Form and subject teachers also try to link their curricula to any of these values where possible.

We regularly have focussed sessions in form times teachers discuss wellbeing and calmness and practise relaxation techniques with their forms. We also promote fiction reading for relaxation throughout the school day to give pupils the opportunity to unwind and relax as well as develop empathy. We have Wellbeing Lessons for time to reflect and relax as well as meet with our Wellbeing Dogs, Monty and Charlie. There are also Wellbeing Hubs for staff and pupils around school a Lego Therapy Room.



Pupils from Year 6 upwards have the opportunity to study Politics, Philosophy and Ethics. They have learnt about what it means to uphold British values, visited the Houses of Parliament, helped us to become a Fairtrade School and learnt to debate, reason and listen to other opinions. It is an exciting and varied syllabus and has inspired many children to join our popular debating clubs, complemented by Debating Week once a year. PPE has also allowed us to explore the tricky theme of radicalisation and terrorism with the older pupils. All staff have completed training on this and have earned a nationally recognised certificate.

We are an eco-school and have an Eco Team who are currently working towards our bronze award. We subscribe to the various careers' packages which we use with pupils in Years 6, 7 and 8 and pupils also enjoy hearing about different professions in assemblies and Thinking Allowed talks where pupils have recently had the chance to talk to a pilot, a Cambridge undergraduate, a lawyer, a medic and journalist. The Year 8 Post Exam Programme allows them to study first aid, photography, studio recording and cooking as well as many other exciting and enriching activities.



Resilience, Stress Management, Independence and Failure

We recognise that it is important to build pupils' resilience as preparation for their future careers and that they realise that failure is part of life and learn to accept this and learn from it. From an early age, they take part in musical, sporting, house and individual school-wide competitions, with not only the winners being applauded but

all those taking part. We reward not only academic prowess but effort as well and we give awards for these separately at the end of each term. Everyone at Solefield has the chance to represent the school and everyone takes part in our recitals and performances.

In preparation for entrance to highly competitive senior schools, pupils are supported and have familiarisation sessions. Their parents are also supported in this and we have focussed one of our counsellor-led talks for parents on supporting pupils at times like this.

An external expert visitor talks to pupils in Years 7&8 through a workshop in Time Management to help them manage exams and the pressure of an ever-growing workload.

An Apprentice-style mini-market run by Year 8 at the end of the year gives pupils the opportunity to experience the challenges and develop the resilience needed to manage their own company. This also enables us to give them careers' advice for the future. Thinking Allowed talks also enable pupils in Years 7 and 8 to have the chance to listen to adults talk about their different areas of experience and to ask questions about these. Pupils in Year 7 and 8 learn more about careers and complete a questionnaire and suitability matching exercise through various quizzes (previously Morrisby Tests) and all pupils are learning about careers and finance as part of our Resilience Award.

We recognise at Solefield that pupils need to be taught to manage stress, which often leads to anxiety if left unchecked. We strive to teach them to regard stress as a challenge, a problem to solve, rather than as a threat.

As a school, we try to approach problems as calmly and confidently as possible and encourage parents to do the same. Our sense of calm will allow pupils to feel secure. Furthermore, we are aware that what we do is keenly observed and sometimes copied by pupils.

In addition to the physical and emotional demands of school, academically, pupils have to master the basic building blocks for all further learning. Socially, each child must learn to get along with other children, to be considerate of their needs, to listen carefully, and to take turns; these are things that we help them to do in all areas of school-life be it in the classroom, playground or on the games' field.

We instil a sense of calm for a period of time each day, whether it is reading at the start of registration or during one of our form times when we practise relaxation techniques. We have created more "down time" in the curriculum with additional form periods and a Scholarship Path Programme for pupils in Years 7 and 8 to practise the area that they really love – Academic, Sport, STEM, Music, Art or Drama. We encourage pupils and teachers to read where possible to lower stress levels and to facilitate relaxation. Our Reading Cinemas, Reading Committee, beautiful, easily-accessible library and ERIC (Everyone Reading in Class) emphasize a love of sharing stories and build bonds between older and younger pupils.



This bond is further strengthened by our Friendship Bench. Pupils can seek guidance and help from older, trained pupils about situations that may make them unhappy or stressed at playtimes or indeed at any other time.

As teachers, we demonstrate good social skills ourselves: we take the time to look at pupils and listen attentively when they speak to us and we also try to avoid interrupting them. We ask questions that show we've listened and that we're interested in what they have to say. We also ask them to help us whenever appropriate, and thank them when they've done so.

Pupils are encouraged to be as independent as possible, whether thinking for themselves and puzzling something out in class or learning to manage their property, time-keeping and homework effectively. We provide several opportunities for them to work independently and for the love of learning too, with whole school competitions, our termly themed project, the Solefield 60 (extra activities to do at home with parents) or Mind Gyms.



Debating has become a huge part of school life with regular lessons, clubs, competitions and even pupil v. staff challenges.



Exam marks are never published publicly. The Head sees each pupil for mock interview practice before any formal interview for a senior school takes place and they have the opportunity to work individually with teachers or to have extra practice in

SPP afternoons before these, both to practise exam technique and to work out strategies to combat nerves.

Pupils know the benefits of exercise and have regular PE and games sessions. All are encouraged to join some of the 40+ clubs on offer. We have also changed exam times and homework recently to make sure that weekends and holidays are breaks from work for pupils, as far as possible.

Healthy eating is also discussed and promoted as part of school life with pupils taking part in special workshops and lessons. Parents were also invited to a special evening nutrition workshop. Our lunches are healthy (with lots of vegetable smuggling!) and as organic locally sourced as possible. Lunch cooked at school is part of education at Solefield and we sit together in a family-style.

We make a point of praising efforts rather than the results achieved. This minimises anxiety, because pupils can decide how much effort to put into their work. We praise effort and determination which in turn builds self-confidence.

We recognise that pupils have a lot to say about their life at school; School Council listens to their concerns and acts upon them; Year 1 and above undertake online surveys designed by School Council about school-life, giving them the opportunity to give honest feedback, which has in due course been acted upon.

We work with parents to try to help manage stress for both them and their children; we have organised talks and presentations in the past to help with this. Our independent counsellor, play therapist and two talk-time specialists as well as our wellbeing lessons and Zones of Regulation across the school support this further. There are free presentations, workshops and talks for parents organised by the school, led by experts.

At Solefield, we aim to create resilient, determined pupils who are able to overcome challenges with strength, good humour and open-mindedness.

Leadership Opportunities



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Our Head Pupil is assisted by deputies and various prefects with designated roles. All Year 8s deliver an assembly of their choice every year. Year 8 pupils act as monitors for younger form groups and help with registration time and wet breaks.

As part of the post exam programme, Year 8 pupils run an “Apprentice” style mini-market in which they compete to raise money for their own chosen charity. Each team is given an investment amount by the school and last year, from an investment of £50, they raised over £450. Pupils reported that this helped them enormously in developing skills such as money and people management and that they were exhausted but very proud at the end of it! It helped them not only to develop physical and emotional resilience but also to embrace failure as there was friendly competition regarding the overall winning team. Teams ran competitions, made magazines, played games, cakes, cookies, milkshakes and created a video games’ room!

As part of the same programme, Year 8 have the chance to be Teaching Assistants with the form that they monitor throughout the year. They are able to deliver lessons if they so wish (with a lot of teacher support!) and to be thoroughly involved in the teaching of the class. They really enjoy this and find it extremely rewarding, as well as developing many skills for life.

Leadership opportunities at Solefield offer the chance for all pupils to develop in confidence and to gain emotional intelligence.

All our pupils spend time in mentoring sessions with younger pupils at the end of the year to discuss the next phase of their schooling and answer any questions. Year 7 pupils recently spoke to Year 6 ones about future schools, 11+, ISEB etc and the younger pupils, and their parents, reported that this was extremely helpful.

We listen to pupil opinions about prospective teachers after lesson observations and invite them to feed back to us about our lessons. We have also surveyed pupils about their opinion of lessons and life at school and acted upon their feedback.

Years 7 and 8 complete a “diploma” during their time with us, making a portfolio of their favourite work and other achievements that they choose such as teaching others, carrying out voluntary work or gaining recognition for a skill or talent outside of school.

Year 8 pupils lead assemblies every week as well as leading our Remembrance Day celebration every year which is very moving, with them reading poems and the whole school observing ‘The Last Post’ together in the playground.

School Council, Eco Team, EDI, Food, Wellbeing and Reading Committees



Representatives from each form meet regularly to discuss new ideas. Feedback from the meetings is shared with each form via the form rep, letters, the Acorn newsletter and assemblies.

We feel it is very important that the pupils feel they have a voice and that their opinions are heard. School Council has recently asked all pupils from Year 1 upwards to complete a survey about life at school.

A separate Food Committee meets regularly with catering staff to discuss these issues.

Our Chairs of School Council and Eco Team, speak to the Head very regularly and write to parents and governors regularly with updates. They also report back to staff meetings.

In the past, School Council has organised a whole school magazine made entirely from pupils' work; proceeds went to Cancer Research, the charity voted for by its members.

Our pupil bodies really do give a voice to the pupils at Solefield; they take the initiative and work hard to listen to fellow pupils and make positive changes. They are vital to the school and ensure that pupils know life at school is fair and that their ideas are heard and acted upon.

Rewards and Sanctions

Expectations of good behaviour and kindness to others are high at Solefield and very few misdemeanours, academic or social, occur. Staff work closely together to ensure that the pupils have the very best support and guidance possible and to ensure that all members of staff know if a pupil needs extra help at a particular time. There is a weekly meeting dedicated to pupils' welfare and progress and longer meetings devoted to particular year groups. There is also a meeting on a Wednesday devoted solely to pupils and their behaviour. Incidents of serious misbehaviour are logged by all staff on the Behaviour Tracker Document which is reviewed on a daily basis by the form teacher, Headmistress and Pastoral Lead for that year group.

We are fortunate to have 2 trained counsellors on the staff and an independent visiting counsellor and play therapist who see pupils when appropriate.

A system of sanctions is in place that all pupils understand. We also occasionally use “reports” for a short period of time to help pupils to keep on track. At Solefield, however, we prefer to reward positive behaviour and house points are fiercely sought. Each pupil and member of staff is allocated a house and there are various competitions throughout the year. Pupils complete the yellow pages in their Prep Diary with housepoints and other awards; teachers write minor misdemeanours on the “blue pages” which are then signed by pupils and parents. Pupils are helped to put these right with restorative measures. We try to make sure that the yellow pages are far more populated with Headmistress Awards, house points, postcards home, Womble Awards and Kindness Awards.

Kindness Awards

Pupils and staff are able to nominate other pupils for our Kindness Awards. The list of these is read in assembly (name and reason) and then each pupil receive a special certificate and lots of housepoints!

Co-curricular links

As well as all children at the school taking part in at least one performance or recital and Learning Assembly a year, we have a variety of cultural visits. Whether it is a whole school trip to the pantomime, a trip to Stratford for a workshop with the RSC, playing in our “Solefield’s Got Talent” competition, visiting Sevenoaks’ School’s Science Fair or taking part in the 02 “Young Voices” performance, we ensure that every single pupil here at Solefield is given the opportunity to see the wider world and to enjoy cultural experiences. We have also joined with other schools, most notably all girls’ and co-ed schools, for music, chess and debating.

We take an inclusive view across all areas of the curriculum to make sure that we incorporate all children. The pastoral needs of the children have high priority within the school. We cannot make a child enjoy a particular activity (although we try our best!) but we guide them to alternative activities in order to make sure they find other ways of flourishing. Success is important but it can be gauged in many ways: we see a child representing the school for the first time at Under 7 football just as much an achievement as an academic scholar to Sevenoaks School. We celebrate success both on an individual basis and collectively. At Solefield, effort is recognised as much as success.

Enrichment Opportunities

Every year, we have an Enrichment Week. These include special workshops and all lessons for the week incorporate the theme in some way. Pupils have made a giant rangoli pattern in coins for charity and dressed in the colours of the Indian flag for a day. We have enjoyed an Enrichment Week on the theme of Africa, to complement

our charity work with the school we support in Malawi. We have also enjoyed all things South American, a 1940's Enrichment Week and all pupils have touched Moon Rock and we had our own planetarium to celebrate 50 years since the Moon landings. We also participate in World Book Week and have our own Art Exhibition, with every pupil in the school exhibiting a piece of Art. We also have a European Day of Languages every year and last year, the Year 8 pupils ran our "Journee de la Francophonie" with each pupil organising a display and quiz about their chosen country and running a French café at lunchtime. There are presentations by the pupils for their parents, staff and visiting senior school teachers about our Enquiring Minds Programme and Scholarship Path Programme.



Our "Thinking Allowed" talks after school for scholars and all others interested (pupils, staff and parents) see visiting speakers and current and ex-pupils present a topic of interest and take any questions afterwards. We have learnt about the world's fastest "winged" man (an ex-Solefield pupil), the Battle of Solefields, Bridges and Art in an Orphanage in the Ukraine.

Year 8 Post Exam Programme

The Year 8 Post Exam Programme allows them to study first aid, photography, studio recording and cooking as well as many other exciting and enriching activities in the weeks following their Common Entrance exams.



Solefield Cross-Curricular Activities, Trips and Visitors.

We have over 40 clubs on offer on a termly basis here at school, the majority of which are run by staff at lunchtime and after school. All pupils in Pre-Prep do weekly Outdoor Learning at the Riverhill Himalayan Gardens and swim at the Granville. Pupils in Years 3 & 4 all have Judo and Chess as part of their timetabled curriculum. Pupils in Year 5 upwards go on an annual residential trip and there is a huge range of day trips running throughout the year.



Year 5 at Port Lympne as part of their Safari topic

Many visitors have visited us in recent years, including Tom Palmer, a pottery workshop, a visiting French theatre company and professor Bubbles! We are also welcoming back Old Pupils at Prize Giving to tell us about their adventures since leaving Solefield, including a nuclear submarine commander and screen writer Tom Edge who have shared their experiences with us all.

We have a number of trips throughout the school to try to help groups to bond and for pupils, and staff, to be seen in a different light. We appreciate as a staff that pupils flourish in so many areas and this is a chance for us to see pupils in different surroundings.

These trips offer children so many opportunities to explore different aspects of life as well as learning many new skills.

They also give them the chance to develop socially, away from home.

Year 7 start the new school year with a Bonding Trip at Bore Place.

During residential trips in the Summer Term, Year 5 enjoy bushcraft and living in teepees, Year 6 visit Shakespeare country to complement their work on Macbeth, Year 7 go on a geography and science field trip to North Wales and Year 8 have the opportunity to experience many outdoor teambuilding activities such as kayaking and paddle boarding on the Isle of Wight.



Solefield Holiday Camps and After School Care/ Breakfast Club

At Solefield, we seek to enrich all aspects of school-life as well as to work with working parents. After School Care/ Breakfast Club are available every day of the week at low cost, staffed by our own teachers.

Our holiday camps offer Solefield pupils, their sisters and friends the opportunity to enjoy a range of activities throughout the school holidays.



Our two flagship camps are our multi-activity 'FunZone' Camp for Children in Years 1-8 and our 'Little Acorns' camp for children aged 3-5. We also offer a variety of other camps at different times of the year including: Art, Budding Writers, Chess, Computing, Cricket, Debating, Football, Gymnastics, Investigators, Rugby, Table Tennis and Young Enterprise camps.

Clubs run in most weeks of the holidays (48/52 weeks last year). Our camps provide parents with a fun, caring and safe environment for their children to enjoy all year round, staffed by Solefield staff, who know the children well and can cater to the individual.

Skills for Life

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At Solefield, we are very keen to promote independence, critical thinking and general skills for life. All pupils are encouraged to take ownership of their development by working closely with their teachers to write and review personal and academic targets. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 work towards our “Solefield Diploma”, receiving a special award on showing the successful acquisition of such skills. LAMDA, recitals and pupil input in class ensures that each pupil develops the ability to speak in public before they leave us.

Solefield School Year 7 & 8 Diploma

Pupils should evidence *all* of the following to achieve their Senior School Diploma.

Skill	Evidence	Achieved?
Independent learning		
Leadership (meeting, assembly, teaching a lesson)		
Creativity through Music, Art, Drama, ICT, writing an article for the Acorn or similar		
Social responsibility (ie charity work, commitments outside of school)		
Collaboration		
Self-awareness (reflection, target-setting)		
Life skills (ie cookery, First Aid)		
Awareness of careers and the world of work		
International understanding		
Academic excellence (progress or achievement) -evidenced in at least 5 pieces		

Parents and wider families

Families are a very important part of school-life here at Solefield. Whether it be helping to fundraise with SPA (the Solefield Parents’ Association), singing in our choir, helping with trips and visits or in the library, delivering assemblies and

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specialised lessons or supporting the work that we do with the children at home, their input is priceless.

They help us recently by organising and participating in Music & Curry Night, Christmas Fair, Quiz Night, Summer Ball and help with the second-hand uniform sales as well as running film nights for the pupil and the Y7 & 8 disco. We have shared our training with parents on motivating pupils and offer other parent talks too. Our termly anonymous surveys provide invaluable feedback for the school from parents although parents are encouraged to contact staff with any query at all, no matter how small it may seem.



Final word

Through regular meetings, learning walks, surveys, lesson observations, discussions with pupils, parents, staff and governors, a strong and active pupil leadership team representing pupils of all ages, the Senior Leadership Team monitor the quality and range of lessons, activities, trips, visitors and clubs to ensure that Solefield provides a stimulating and balanced environment. We are always keen to hear ideas on how to improve life in our community still further from pupils, parents and governors.

Helen McClure, Headmistress