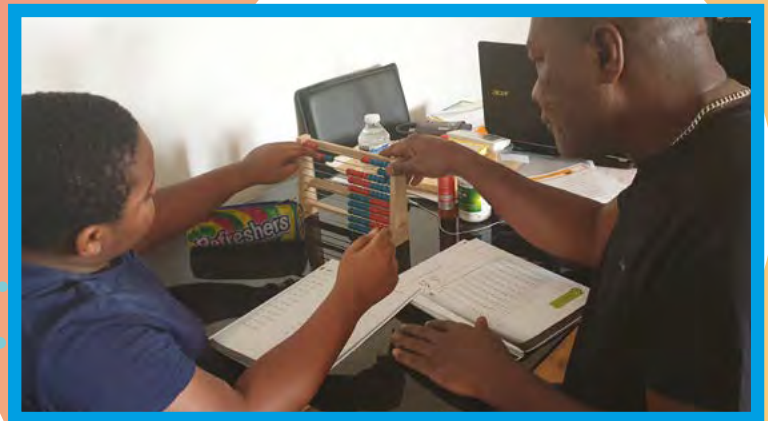


TCES Group

"Life in Lockdown" Bulletin



August 2020



East London
Independent School



North West London
Independent School



Essex Fresh Start
Independent School



Create Service
Personalised Therapeutic Education

CEO Welcome

Welcome to this special edition of our 'Life in Lockdown' bulletin. What a year this has been so far!

Staff swung into action early in the year and managed to get ahead of the self-isolation curve, by putting cross-curricular project packs together, so that Distance Learning could immediately be in full effect. This enabled us to test our online resources and, after a few technical glitches, the Distance Learning portal grew rapidly, with new child-friendly resources being added almost daily. Through teamwork, we were able to transform the way we worked, eventually developing online teaching, using both live and videoed lessons. We were even able to run an exciting Creative Arts competition – The Art of the Possible – that was judged by five celebrities! (see page 18.)

More recently, we've been making a number of changes to our schools to accommodate social distancing and ensure the safety of all as an increasing number of staff and pupils have returned to school.

Without the hard work, dedication and flexibility of our staff in making these changes possible, on top of already busy daily workloads, this just wouldn't have been possible. I'm always so grateful to see how our staff pull together as a team to maintain the very highest level of care and support for our pupils. I really cannot thank them enough for this.

Having now invested in distance learning, we will be developing this further for those who are tutored through our TCES Home Learning service (see page 5.)

It is with huge regret that we've had to say farewell to our Essex Fresh Start school at the end of this academic year, after nearly 16 years of operating. The school has played such a central and important part in our 20 year

history, and we've enjoyed the opportunity to support so many children over this period.

Once our London schools and services open again in September, we'll have a new look and new website to celebrate the start of our third decade. It has been designed to more accurately represent the unique operations of TCES today, reflecting that we are truly an inclusive and innovative 21st century organisation, which transforms lives through the delivery of sector-leading therapeutic education and a pupil leadership curriculum. You can see a taster of the new branding on page 4 and on the TCES Home Learning page (page 5). More details on this exciting project, will be issued soon – do watch out for them!

We have some innovative plans for the academic year ahead, which we'll be telling you more about in due course. These include: an even greater focus on our unique LIFE programme; new training programmes for both staff and pupils; a higher level of family support, through training, group work and advocacy; and we'll be taking on our first Alumni Mentors as permanent members of staff.



Thomas Keaney, CEO and Schools' Proprietor
NASEN 2019 SEND Leader of the Year
@TCESgroupCEO

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Parent satisfaction shows the positive impact of TCES Distance Learning

Like many others, TCES Group has had to adapt to the 'new normal' thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. One permanent, lasting change to the organisation is the creation of TCES Home Learning. Read more on page 5 to find out more about this new service.

To ensure we are delivering the highest standard of education from a remote distance, we surveyed our parents back in April to see how our pupils and their parents/carers were getting on, and if we could make any changes to better suit their needs.

A few months later, we did the same again - and the results showed that satisfaction had increased, and that TCES Group has adapted superbly to the challenge brought on by the pandemic.

Curriculum satisfaction increased from an already impressive 88% to 95%, and pupil engagement also improved. Confidence in teachers rose from 82% to 88%, and fewer parents and carers felt the need for support in assisting the home learning environment.

All parents and carers have received regular contact in helping to deliver distance learning.

Helen, a parent at East London Independent School, sent her thank you to "all the staff who are working very hard to pull home schooling resources and lessons together."

Similarly, Carly, whose son attends Essex Fresh Start, said "they have always made my son's learning very personalised, and continued to be mindful of his specific needs throughout."

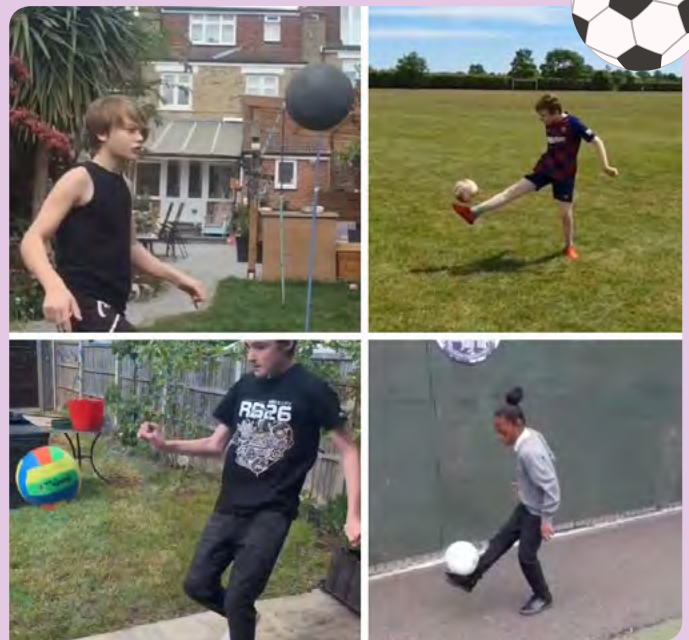
TCES Keepy Uppy Challenge

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, our annual TCES Group Football Competition - which last year was held at the West Ham United Foundation grounds - was cancelled. However, this didn't get in the way of staff and pupils from across TCES Group having fun and working in teams for a competition, as Wellbeing Coach Ben Green and the PE Leads decided to host a virtual 'Keepy Uppy Challenge'.

Staff and pupils were invited to film themselves doing as many kick-ups as they could and send the footage to their site's PE Lead - who would then count the total and send the footage to Ben. Those who didn't have a football had to get creative - some used socks, and others used balloons.

The winners, with a brilliant 107 kick-ups managed collectively, was the team from ELIS. Following in second was NWLIS with 60, third EFS with 52, and last - but not least - was Create, with 49.

Congratulations to everyone who entered. Watch the Aidan Boxall [video](#) in which he congratulates all participants.



Peer mentoring programme

We're delighted that 19 pupils from across the group have passed a Level 2 peer mentoring course with the Mentoring School while in lockdown.

After their initial lessons, the pupils were all praised highly by tutor Richard Curtis, who said to Thomas Keaney: "I just wanted to feed back how mature and engaged I found your pupils from all three schools today. They all were incredibly patient whilst we naturally resolved technical issues and found handbooks. Their answers to my questions were mature and insightful. So a very positive first session for all three schools!"

Distance Learning

It's been a very busy time for our schools and services, and for our pupils who were self-isolating at home. Watch our video recap [here](#) or on YouTube: [here](#)



Adapting our therapy

The TCES therapy team has worked extra hard since lockdown to provide distance therapy on both an individual and group basis, shape shifting into various roles in order to support fellow members of staff, parents and our pupils. They have undertaken additional training to be able to provide bereavement support and are now offering this to the entire TCES community.

When lockdown was announced, the team created therapy support packs for distance learning, which included social stories to help explain what was happening, and games for language and social skills. They looked at supporting parents to enable their children to build routines and complete household tasks, as well as providing sensory and fine motor activities that could be completed in the home. Our expressive arts team provided strategies for emotional regulation as well as grounding techniques.

As we started to welcome learners back to school, SaLT provided more social stories to support explaining this change to our pupils. OT supported this with work around goal setting and mapping as well as transitioning.

Distance Therapy has continued to grow, with therapists offering one to one sessions and some running virtual groups too, providing a platform for development of social skills and exploring leisure pursuits. At Create, our therapists have been offering group sessions with World Travel Club and Comic Book Club, providing a platform for building social skills and exploring leisure pursuits.

Virtual Summer Camp

Our Virtual Summer Camp portal provided pupils with a range of resources and fun activities to do over the summer break.

Watch the preview [video](#) or [visit the portal](#) on our website.



Distance Learning Portal

Distance Learning Portal

A whole new area of the TCES Group website, which many staff will be very familiar with, is our Distance Learning Portal. Made to assist teachers and pupils with their distance learning packages, the portal is available on the front page of our website for all to see, and includes all the key information necessary for pupils to work from home.

The portal will remain a permanent feature, with a huge upgrade when it migrates over to our upcoming new website, to help pupils who join TCES Group on a Home Learning basis moving forward.



TCES THE COMPLETE EDUCATION SOLUTION
CREATING UNIQUE JOURNEYS FOR LIFE AND LEARNING

Our New Brand

In September 2020, TCES Group will be undergoing a huge visual change, as the Marketing & Communications team has been working on a rebrand for the entire organisation.

Moving from “Transitional Care Education Services”, the organisation will be named “The Complete Education Solution” – a better reflection that our schools and services will find the right educational pathway for any child that comes our way.

With the rebrand comes our new logo, which is crisp, fresh and modern – and each school and service will have their own version to use. The ‘E’ represents an adult and child/pupil and reflects the care and attention we put into every individual’s education, as well as the strong relationships built between staff, pupils, parents/carers and our local communities.

Along with this change will come a brand new website, suitable for all devices, with a layout which will make it much easier for everyone to access the information they need. More details on the new website will come soon.



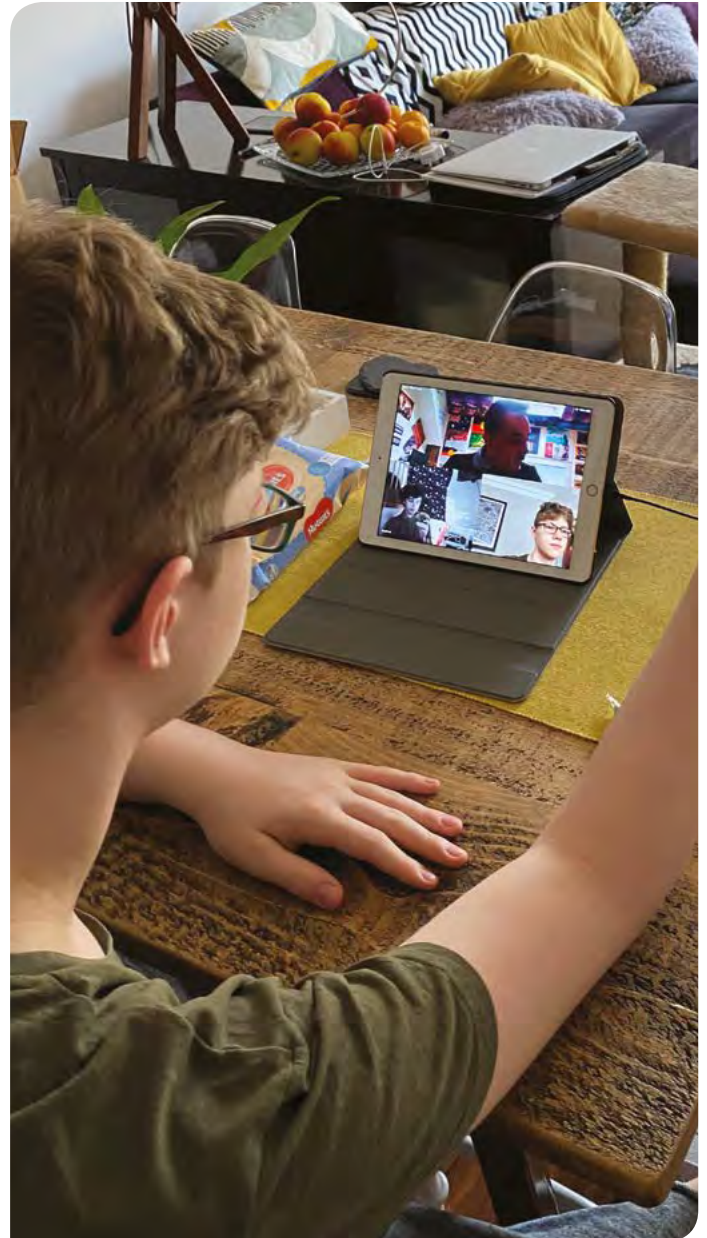
TCES Home Learning has evolved from what was formerly known as Teaching Talent, refining itself to become what is now a specialist home tuition service for vulnerable children and young people in London and the home counties. What we have realised throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, is that there is a cohort of young people for whom distance learning may be the best option, long after the world returns to its “new normal”.

To date, our referrals have mostly come internally for pupils who are undergoing assessment for placement in one of our TCES schools. Referrals have also come directly from Local Authorities who have pupils on their caseloads for whom school placement is not yet an appropriate option.

Our pupils are aged between 7-19 years and tend to fit one or more of the following profiles:

- Diagnosis of an ASC and/or PDA
- Diagnosis of ADHD or Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)
- Mild – moderate learning difficulties
- Severe anxiety/school phobia because of multiple exclusions and/or placement breakdowns
- Complex needs and associated challenging behaviour which are deemed unsafe when interacting with other young people (violence, sexually harmful behaviour)
- History of school refusal, periods of time out of school
- Community recovery programme following admission to a CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) inpatient unit or have ongoing mental health issues (anxiety)
- May have immuno-deficiency issues which make school attendance difficult
- Pupils between educational placements and/or awaiting tribunal outcomes

Although face-to-face learning is more suitable for some, we understand that this is not always possible, and have developed our service so that we can effectively deliver education remotely. We subscribe to several learning platforms which offer innovative lesson materials designed for ease of use to align our face-to-face lessons to those within a virtual learning environment (VLE). Through distance learning we can set and assign work, and most importantly assist pupils during lessons, as we do through face-to-face lessons. Distance learning also allows us to teach pupils where this would otherwise not be possible.




All our pupils are taught the core subjects of English and Maths. As well as our core subjects offer, Complete Home Learning provides opportunities for engagement and enrichment such as health, fitness and wellbeing, creative arts projects and a range of distance therapies including psychotherapy, SALT and OT, dependent on need as outlined in the pupil's EHCP. We also offer these pupils the opportunity to engage in our L.I.F.E (Leadership, Independence skills, Financial awareness, and Enterprise/ Employability) programme, which can lead to further qualifications, roles and experiences.



Parent/carer voice


Adapting to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was a huge challenge for everyone – while some staff and pupils remained in school, other staff and pupils had to adapt to a new working environment – their own homes. Of course, this had a huge impact on parents and carers, who had to adapt their own lives and homes to accommodate a new learning environment.

Our excellent staff jumped to help the cause, assisting parents as much as they could in delivering high-quality education to all of our pupils – whether in school or at home. Here are just a few of the many letters that staff were sent as a result:




Jeuxtuce is doing better. He is completing his home learning work and he's loving the Art Project. He can't wait to get back on to it every afternoon!


Jeuxtuce's mum, Year 7



I would just like to say a very big thank you to the staff for the help and support you have given Tyn and us over his time spent at your school, he has matured and come so far. We are super proud of him and never thought we would see the day he would graduate from school when all other provisions had wrote him off. So again, a huge thank you! Tyn's parents, EFS



As a family we would like to express our sincere gratitude toward the teaching staff, and the environment that they have created at this school. All of their efforts have helped in developing a strong bond between us and the school, thus allowing to help collectively formulate Aiden's educational goals. We extend a special thank you from the depth of our hearts to Aiden's current teacher, Yemi! It's refreshing to his teaching approach towards Aiden and his education! Yemi has helped Aiden flourish over the last academic year, all while professionally keeping us in the loop with planning Aiden's educational path. He has wholeheartedly shown interest in Aiden's education and success while displaying a high level of understanding and patience with Aiden. We appreciate him dearly and are deeply thankful that he entered Aiden's and our lives! – Aiden's family, ELIS



To Jode,
Thank you for all your support over the year,
and for being an awesome teacher.
We appreciate all your efforts.

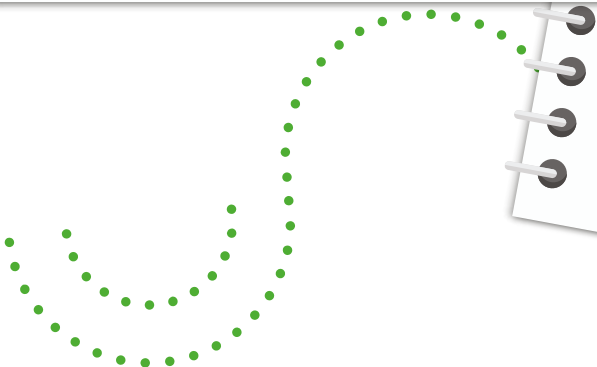
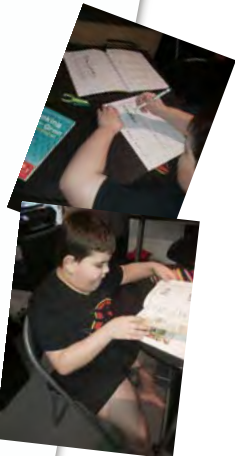
Helen, Tim and Joshua

Good morning,
Hope this email finds you all well.

Mason has done a lot of work this morning. He's done writing, maths, reading and has drawn a picture of his choice. I enclose some pictures for you and the team.

Be safe and have a wonderful blessed day.

Mel x



LGBT History month - February

East London Independent School

ELIS pupils took part in classroom display activities, decorating each room with symbols of pride such as rainbows and positive messages. In addition to this, some pupils and staff created an outdoor mural.

In order to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues, events were held at the school including an assembly, group process sessions, and classes had individual PHSE lessons on the subject.



Create Service

Create staff and students celebrated the month with a range of different activities.

Deputy Head Teacher Dawn Jones-Wigington kicked the month off with an assembly, explaining a clear understanding of equality, diversity and the impact of raising awareness of LGBT History.



Art Teacher Santiago Alcon held expressive art sessions, showing how art can be used as an opportunity to explore identity. Covered in this session was animation, puppetry, and an exploration of the work of renowned artist Matisse.

Santiago said: "Matisse found a way to overcome his challenges at the end of his career. He was unable to work with paint and pencil as his hands began to shake more and more with age, and his eyesight failed. He found a way around these problems by using large pieces of coloured paper and large sharp scissors to cut and arrange shapes, making images and patterns that expressed himself. He inspires people who are struggling to face the world as they really are, helping them to find a way to express themselves and be accepted."



Using this technique, students learnt about and recreated the various LGBT+ flags.

To complete the week, staff held a quiz for pupils to highlight the work of the Terrence Higgins Trust, which focuses on the celebration and recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+) people and culture, past and present.

Essex Fresh Start

Staff at Essex Fresh Start held an assembly for pupils, focusing on key figures, moments and political acts that have happened in our past – first focusing on English history, then moving on to international history.



Pupils learnt about acts that criminalised homosexuality, such as The Buggery Act of 1533 (which made it punishable by death), and then learnt about the movements that fought against them – like the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, which removed the death penalty punishment.

They also learnt about events in history which were the basis of why LGBT+ History is so important – including the Stonewall Riots in 1969, which eventually led to the first Pride parade in 1972 that now takes place annually all over the globe.



Cultural Week



Held in March every year since 2017, each TCES Group school and service celebrates a 'Cultural Week', aiming at creating a better awareness and understanding of different cultures throughout the world. Activities span from themed lunches and trips to museums, to whole-school classroom competitions, where each class will pick a culture and decorate their classroom with traditional artwork, cook traditional food, and share their chosen culture's music and literature.

For some of our schools and services, Cultural Week went ahead as planned early in the month - but those who had their awareness week planned for later in the month didn't let the coronavirus pandemic stop them. Instead they hosted and took part in their own competitions, events and classes from home, via distance learning.



Create Service

This year, pupils at Create Service worked with their teachers remotely, focusing on projects surrounding North American, Hawaiian and Mexican culture.

One pupil, Rusty, managed to squeeze in a trip to the British Museum before lockdown alongside his tutor, studying Native American ceremonies, tribes, buildings and clothing.

Other works included Alessia's work on Hawaiian cuisine and artwork, studying their rich patterns and designs, as well as music. Jubayer focused on the iconic architecture found in Mexico. Once the service is fully re-opened, works will be put on display.



East London Independent School

ELIS pupils quickly adapted to Distance Learning and used the opportunity to run the Cultural Week classroom competition they had planned virtually, with some very positive feedback from staff.

Pastoral Care Coordinator Anna-French Walker said: "The pupils adapted well and rather than decorating their classes, showcasing foods and cultural dress, they turned to their ICT skills and each prepared a slide for their presentations."

Obama Class focused on Indian culture. Their teacher, Miss Chance, explained how they made it work: "Each pupil focused on a specific area, and we collated it for them into a presentation and shared it with them, getting their approval before finalising the work. They had a vision and I think that they delivered it perfectly with great teamwork and determination."

Certificates were presented to the top three group presentations:

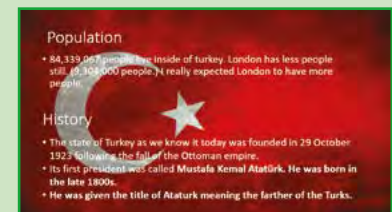
1st Place: Branson Class - Malta



2nd Place: Wellington Class - Italy



3rd Place: Turing Class - Turkey





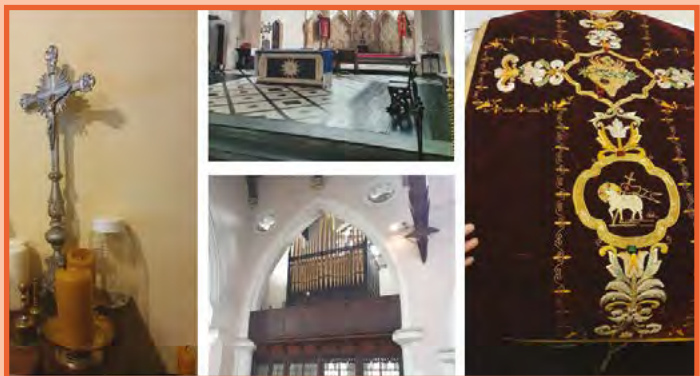
Essex Fresh Start Independent School

Pupils in the upper school at EFS focused on more local culture this year, and were luckily able to take a few trips into London before lockdown took place.

Head Teacher Elaine Lloyd said: "Our staff and pupils wanted to explore the cultural diversity there is to offer in London, so we investigated different places of worship and the wealth of art and architecture they have to offer. They all loved the experience."

Pupils took an interest in the various pieces of Street Art they came across, and also took a trip to the London Dungeons, to see how challenging the life and culture of London once was.

Closer to home, lower school pupils investigated and experienced a range of food and traditions from all over the world, and took part in a few activities including making their own Japanese 'coil pots'.



North West London Independent School

Staff and pupils at NWLIS were also able to celebrate the full week as planned. Pupils decorated their classrooms with the help of their teachers, cooked cultural meals, and explored traditional outfits, linking different aspects of classroom and extra-curricular learning to the week.

Presentations were made to visiting parents, staff and members of the local community, who judged the competition. Out of all eight classes, Monet class won with their exploration of Moroccan culture.

As well as the competition, staff arranged cultural-themed meals throughout the week during lunch breaks, and a visit from the Iroko Drumming Company, who hosted an afternoon of in-house drumming and drama workshops.



On reflection of the whole week, CEO and Schools' Proprietor Thomas Keane said: "The efforts of our pupils and staff, especially during such a difficult time for all, truly represents a deep understanding of our community values and how we strive to show respect and understanding for all. Well done to all involved."



Essex Fresh Start

Sadly these will be our last EFS pages as we've had to close the school after nearly 16 years in Essex. EFS has played a central and important part in our 20 year history,

and we've enjoyed the opportunity to support so many children over this period.



As the academic year drew to a close, Liam, a departing Y11 pupil, penned an emotional letter to his colleagues, current and former staff members.

Liam said: "In the past three and a half years I have become someone who I am now proud of. I have achieved nationally recognised qualifications and through other people believing in me and my abilities I have also learned to be more confident in myself. I feel I am more ready to move forward to college."

"I think we will miss each other a great deal. A positive atmosphere and community spirit constantly sang throughout the school. Our success was because of these things and I feel sorry for all of the children who should've been coming here in the future. They will never know what they have missed."

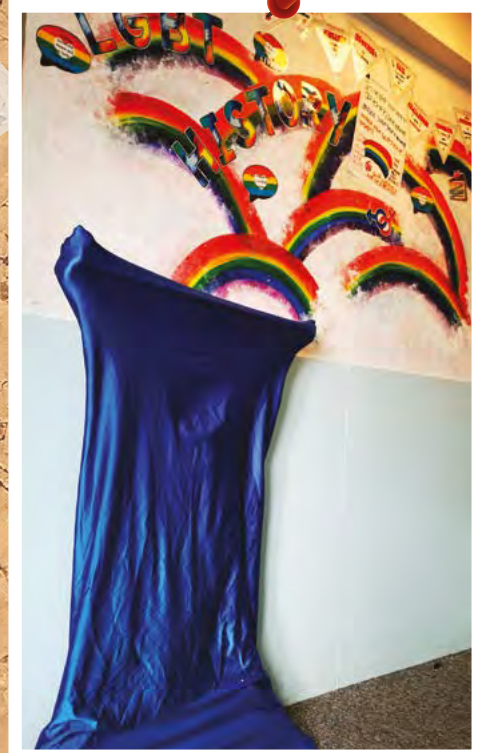
You can read the full letter at tces.org.uk/essex-fresh-start-pupil-liam-says-goodbye.



Staff and pupils who were on-site during lockdown made a lovely display to welcome back their friends and colleagues.



Pupil Dillon got into his cooking during lockdown. Ben Green, Wellbeing Coach, said "Dillon has attended a 90% of his calls with me, when we set goals together he always exceeds my expectations!"



Staff at EFS are always keen to keep the Team happy and well fed with homemade delights!



Even superheroes need to learn!





Staff and pupils who remained on-site during the lockdown were keen on showing their support for local NHS and Key workers.



EFS pupil Brad shared a poster with his fellow pupils and staff, telling them to stay safe and that he missed them.



Dillon produced this amazing model of the earth and also worked on this fantastic volcano project!



Many thanks to the staff who prepared the meals for the pupils and staff on school over the half term week! It made life simple for us all!



Teachers garnered responsibility for some training on MSTeams in preparation for our live learning sessions!

East London Independent School

Api:Cultural

Pupils who remained in school during the lockdown were kept busy outdoors by Mark from environmental company Api:Cultural, who engaged them in a huge number of projects.

Pupils built on their existing vegetable garden and grew all types of vegetables, including pumpkins, sweetcorn, potatoes and more. They also erected a greenhouse nearby, meaning they could grow straight from the seed, rather than using pre-bought plants.

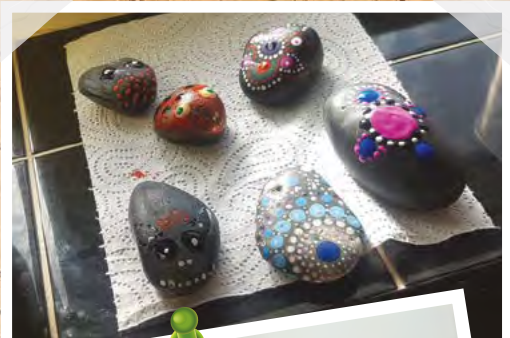
They also created a wildlife garden in a shady part of the school beneath some large trees, including a bee hotel, home-made bird boxes and other micro-habitats for insects. They hatched butterflies and released them into the garden, and made their own honey from a beekeeping project – from which they also made soaps, hand cream and candles using leftover beeswax.

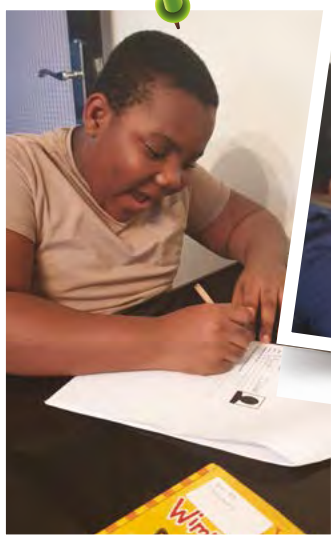


Younes enjoyed his science and art lessons while working from home. He made a short video teaching his mum about light refraction, and designed some beautiful 'Mandala Pebbles' with stones he had collected on his cycling and walking trips with his family.



Austin took a heavy focus on his GCSE Engineering work while working from home, including building a plane out of household materials. His mum has been very pleased with the progress he's made, saying to his teacher Mr Gannon: "The support and communication you have given has been amazing... I am incredibly proud of him for finishing year 11. It has also been fantastic to be able to speak with a teacher that is also 'human' and can understand that life and family can get in the way. Keep being the teacher you are."





Kal-EI is lucky enough to have a maths teacher in the family - dad was able to help lots with his distance learning.



Josh settled into distance learning very well, with the help of his mum and teachers. When able to go back into school, he was able to finish all of his GCSE coursework in time!

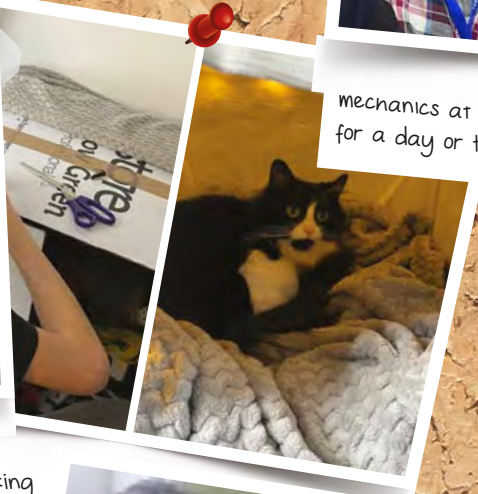
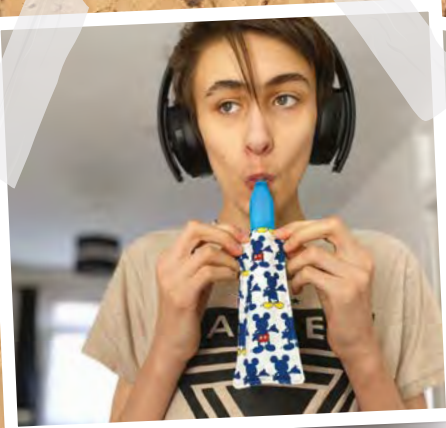
Helen, his mum, said: "Mr Gannon and his team have been in touch every day to help Josh and myself navigate home schooling. We've received lots of materials and guidance, along with encouragement. Mr Gannon has been on hand to support Josh and me whenever we have needed this. We've been carrying out lessons in all subjects and wellbeing, as well as life skills around housework."



Odene remained in school during lockdown and used his time to learn and practise the piano and drums. His teacher said "Odene's natural talent with music has really blown my mind!"



Josh went to study mechanics at Barking and Vagennam college and returning for a day or two in Post-16.



Kal-EI has been up to lots of fun activities during lockdown - including making scrubs for the NHS with his mum, a cat bed, and a handy holder for his ice lollies.



Obama class pupil Milan enjoyed cooking in the kitchen.



Amine has officially graduated Year 11!

Create



Outstanding participation during the peer mentoring course by Kyler!



Closed bowling alleys don't get in the way of Christine getting her strikes!



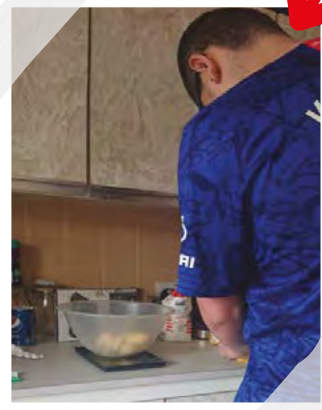
Our Create pupils held a comic book club over Microsoft Teams during lockdown.



Great comic book character design by Ellie!



Pupil Kaden also got into his cooking.



Check out this tasty cake Lauren baked!



15

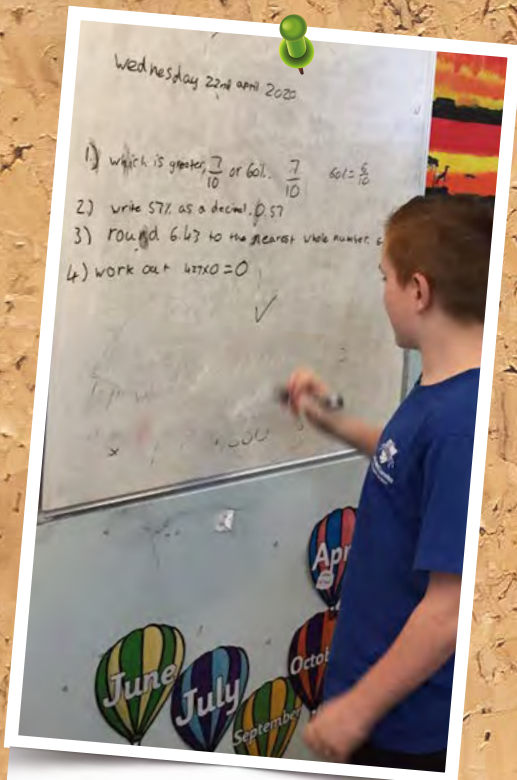


Pupil S did some brilliant screen-printing T-Shirt designs in lockdown.



A fantastic piece of art by pupil Hannah.

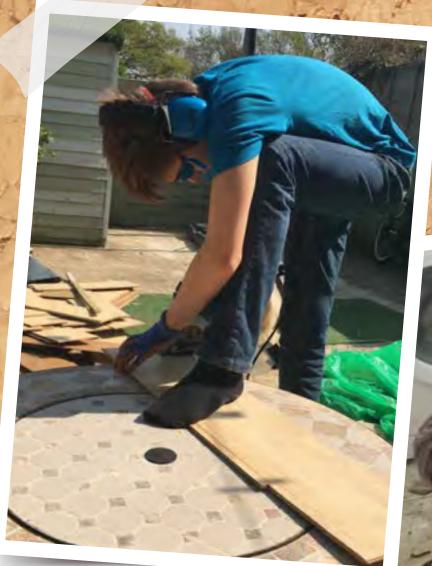
North West London Independent School



Many TCES Group pupils put pieces of art together in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement – here's some work from Kenza (above right) and Mason (above left).

Lee, who remained ... lockdown, learnt how to set out his work and manage tasks easily. Pastoral Care Coordinator Lateefah Elcock said: "Lee worked hard and concentrated on his tasks, remembering how crucial management skills are if he wants to get his work done correctly."

Johnny settled into Distance Learning nicely – with a particular interest in art and outdoor activities.



Martyna's Mum was delighted ... th his work around the house during lockdown: "He's been helping with DIY jobs around the house – he helped us take up the flooring, and even tried to build his own chair!"



Tre has done lots of amazing work at home: including gardening.



Mason has been concentrating well and working very hard at home.



Mason gets his siblings involved in his science homework! Here he's learning about density using oil and food colouring. He has enjoyed baking with them too.



Kristian's Mum sent in lots of photos of him at work.

Creative Arts competition

Lockdown art wows legends of stage and screen

It's not every day you get to have your dancing judged by ballroom icon Len Goodman or have Bond actor Colin Salmon comment on your skill at creating powerful characters, but that's exactly what's happened for TCES pupils.

The 'Art of the Possible' competition was created by TCES Head of Art, Graphics and Design Paul Morris, currently in the running for a National Pearson Teaching Award for his work with SEND children, as a way for children to manage their anxiety and feel a sense of creative calm during lockdown and COVID-19 uncertainty.

The Art of the Possible attracted entries from TCES pupils in a broad range of categories from dance to photography, animation to illustration. Each entry has been included in a professional [virtual art gallery](#) for all to enjoy.

Judge's Special Prize for craft, judged by Elaine Paige: Skye



Judge's Special Prize for photography, judged by Dame Esther Rantzen: Aadam



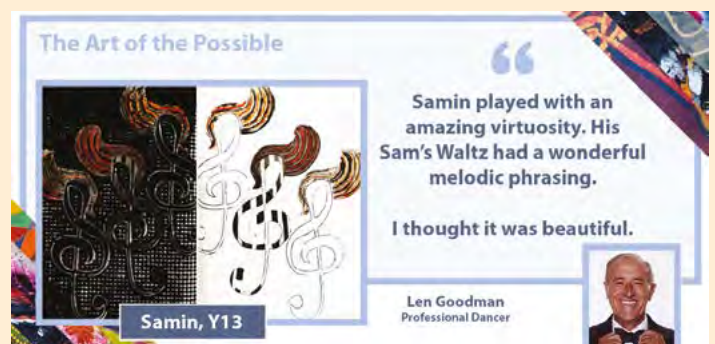
Judges' Special Prize for art, judged by Colin Salmon and Fiona Hawthorne: Lee



Judges' Special Prize for digital art, judged by Colin Salmon and Fiona Hawthorne: Diaz



Judge's Special Prize for performing arts, judged by Len Goodman: Samin



To read the full article and the judges comments please click [here](#).

Arts Week

During Arts Week in July pupils had the chance to participate in another creative venture, called 'Best Foot Forward'. They were encouraged to use feet templates to help them understand that life is a series of journeys and by putting their 'best foot forward' they can go on to achieve. At the end of the week, all the templates were used to create a huge collage to remind everyone to take the steps to achieve and to keep trying.

