



# Building Community Partnerships

by the Imberhorne Community Partnership Team

In the past, schools' engagement with community organisations and businesses may have been limited to the occasional need for prizes, sponsorship of events and fund-raising. Today, we recognise the importance of more defined, long term partnerships with external organisations and individuals. A partnership is a continuous, mutually beneficial relationship - when we remember that, exciting things can happen to enrich our students' experiences.

At Imberhorne we acknowledge the wealth of resources that exist in our school and the wider East Grinstead community; among residents, parents, businesses and local groups. In 2020 the Imberhorne Community Partnerships Team were established to create further opportunities where our students, staff and the local community can strengthen our bonds.

Opportunities that are embedded in our school calendar involve; TED-style talks from visiting local professionals, local employers who give up their time to take part in mock interviews for our Year 10s, local companies who offer work experience opportunities and volunteering fairs where the community groups share their charity work with our students to enhance awareness and engagement. More recently Year 9 volunteering has been added to the calendar - an opportunity for our eldest Key Stage 3 students to be selfless for a day and help others for no personal gain other than the feel good factor and sense of pride that comes with simply 'helping others'.

Parents and carers who have been at the school for a while will know that over the last few years we have established strong links with West Sussex Children's Services (Gift a Book, Easter Egg Sharing) to support children living in care settings across our local area. We have also strengthened our ties with Young Epilepsy in Lingfield, supporting their Winter Wonderland and Christmas

parties to name a few projects. Other achievements include, students preparing hampers and gifts as well as baking for others in the community who appreciate some extra care and attention. These partnership projects deepen our students' understanding of the world around them and encourage the growth of vital skills such as empathy, communication and creativity, and when they also benefit the local organisation - everyone wins!



Y10 baking for local care homes Xmas '21



As summer arrives, we turn our attention to one of the biggest community events in our calendar, **I-Fest**. This event grew in popularity from 2017-2019 and we have missed it dearly over the last two years. But it is back for 2022, with the added attraction of a Colour Run to celebrate its return. This event brings together future students from local primaries, current students and alumni who just love to return to see staff and

continue to support our school. It is a staff and student led event, including a packed line up on the music stage and always provides a lovely community feel on the night. We fund raise at the event with a few stalls and games for added fun, (we're so very grateful for the amazing donations we receive), but the event is so much more than that. It allows Imberhorne to host an evening that the whole community can enjoy together because we ARE a strong community.

