



INTRODUCTION



It has been heart-warming to have so many pupils back on the School site in recent weeks and to start to feel the buzz of School life again, if only momentarily. I would like to recognise the Herculean efforts of everyone involved in making this possible: mums and dads' taxi services; Governors and the Bursars' Team who oversaw the risk management and site readiness, alongside the sweat and toil of the Trojan-like Site Team; indefatigable and resilient teachers who have cheerfully kept learning going on the home-front and latterly in the classrooms; and the PTA who boosted morale and fun through surprise visits from the ice cream van and a profusion of "99er" Flakes and cones. I wish I could mention everyone individually by name so if I have forgotten you, apologies.

One of my colleagues reminded me of a popular children's story recently, which I think is applicable when I reflect on the second part of this academic year in which families and organisations across the nation have been placed under extraordinary pressure. "We can't go under it, we can't go over it, we can't go around

it. We'll have to go through it!" Our resilience has been pushed to the very limit, but we have moved on forwards through disappointments, frustrations, and in some tragic cases, bereavements.

We can grasp the opportunity to create something more beautiful, stronger, and kinder as we come through these life-defining times, if we can find the inner strength to grow through them. Do we want to go back to our previous attitudes and lifestyle choices, or can we find a new love for the environment, community cohesion, justice and equality of opportunity for all? The Black Lives Matter movement has shown us all the power of activism and human agency to unite around an urgency for change: much is already going on behind the scenes to address this particular issue in our own Ewell Castle context, and I am excited to share our plans with you in due course. I have always believed that schools should not just be raising awareness about social and racial injustice but rather be consciously equipping our young people to be influencers and agents for change themselves. We will continue to use the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals as an anchor for our ongoing commitment to teaching and leading on social responsibility: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

After the impact of the last few months, I hope we will all have the opportunity to relax and regroup over the summer break. I am encouraging staff to ensure that they have several weeks away from their School work

in order to recharge their batteries ready for the Autumn Term. This will also be extremely important for all our pupils. I know some parents may be slightly concerned about possible gaps in learning and the need to be ready for the new academic year. I am confident, however, that the Ewell Castle teaching has been thorough and effective across the whole academic year and that we will quickly be able to identify areas for focus early in the academic year. Reading though the end-of-year reports, I must commend all our young people in how they have stayed on top of their work, maintaining the momentum of their progress. A relaxing and fun-filled summer-break away from academic study will be the best preparation for the mental challenges of 2020/21. Get outside and get some fresh air!

As already mentioned, during the summer break, a number of colleagues are taking the opportunity for some much-needed holiday time and will not necessarily be available to contact directly. I am therefore pleased to recommend a helpline for those who might be struggling with their wellbeing before we start the new academic year in September. YoungMinds have a free parent helpline (0808 802 5544) with advice on behaviour, emotional wellbeing or mental health and many resources for parents on their website: <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help-for-parents/parents-helpline/> Please do get in touch with them if you are at all worried about your child during this time. Of course, if you still have concerns at the start of the new School year, please do let your child's Form Tutor or Year Group

leader know so that we can provide the appropriate pastoral support to ensure they can thrive within the Ewell Castle community going forwards.

Inevitably, we do have some staff changes to announce for the coming academic year. In the meantime, we have been pleased to welcome back Miss Lucinda Jones to the Learning Support Department after her Maternity Leave.

We are sad to be bidding farewell to several members of staff and we look forward to a gathering later on in the year to mark the occasion in a fitting fashion. In due course, we will be sharing further details of the valuable contributions these staff have made to the life of Ewell Castle, some of whom are retiring after a considerable number of years' service. For the purposes of this letter, however, I will merely provide a summary, and extend our warm appreciation for their commitment to the development of the Ewell Castle community as we know it today:

- Mr Peto is retiring as Head of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education programme at the Senior School, having joined in 1985
- Mrs Hillman retires as Teacher of Religious Studies, having joined in 1987
- Mrs Conibear has been at Ewell Castle in one guise or another since 1987 (according to local folklore)
- Mrs Buckley is retiring from the Senior School Learning Support Department, having been with the School since 2010
- Mrs Jarman retires as Prep School Teacher, having joined in 2014
- Mrs Clark retires as Teacher of Psychology, having been with us since 2015
- Mr Scott is retiring as Head of Computer Science and ICT, having joined in 2017

- Miss Adewale has resigned as Saturday Sports Coach

Mrs Ikwuemesi has resigned from her role as Head of Religious Studies but we are delighted that she will be continuing as School Chaplain for a further academic year. Miss Hughes is leaving her post as Part Time Teacher for Year 3 but will continue as a supply teacher at the Prep School.

I am sad to announce that Mrs Doreen Parker, one of our longstanding Governors, is stepping down after 6 years of dedicated volunteer service to the School, where she has brought great experience and judgement to her safeguarding oversight of the School. We wish her every happiness for the future.

I am delighted to let you know that after 'virtual' interviews and rigorous selection processes, the following colleagues will be coming on board for September and I am sure that you will join me in welcoming them all into the Ewell Castle family:

- Mr Bunce, Teacher of Geography
- Ms A Brown, Teacher of Philosophy and Religious Studies
- Mrs Cowie, Teacher of Psychology (part time)
- Miss Francis, Teacher of Maths
- Ms Materna, Teacher of English
- Mr Skinner, Teacher of ICT
- Mr Short, Key Stage 2 Teacher
- Mr Stone, Head of Philosophy and Religious Studies

We have a few colleagues who are changing their roles:

- Mrs Devane will be moving from the Prep School to the Senior School as a Learning Support Assistant
- Mrs Way will be splitting her time between the Prep and Senior School Learning Support Departments as a Teaching Assistant

- Mrs Sanderson will be our new Forest School Coordinator
- Mrs Edwards will be taking on the role of Head of Year 8 and has resigned as Director of Music
- Mr Essenhigh will be overseeing the leadership of the Music Department, in addition to his current role as Director of Performing Arts
- Ms Hoddell has resigned as Head of Year 11 to focus on her role as Director of Social Responsibility
- Mr Manley will be Head of Year 10
- Mr Edwards will be Head of Year 11
- Miss Wilkinson will be teaching one day per week for the next academic year as she prepares for the Japan 2021 Olympics.

We are currently planning for a full return to School in September, including risk mitigation in: practical social distancing; safe catering arrangements; hand-washing and sanitiser protocols; and an increase in the frequency of cleaning regimens. Looking at calendar events and fixtures, etc, safety must be a priority but we are also keen to ensure the widest possible opportunities are still available for all our pupils.

I will write with more detail about this before the Autumn Term commences, when we hope that a rather clearer picture will have emerged. As I write, the Government has published more "guidance" about September reopening, but experience has taught us all that there is a fine line between wishful thinking and practicality.

We will continue to exercise our judgement to find the best path for our local context and to do all we can in achieving our ambition of a whole-School reopening in September.

Wishing you all a safe, healthy and enjoyable summer.

Silas Edmonds
Principal of Ewell Castle School

MERTON MUTUAL AID

Hi, I'm Zak and I'm in my final year of Sixth Form here at Ewell Castle. I studied English Literature, History, and Politics for A-level and I hope to study Law later this year. At Ewell Castle, I was the President of *Model United Nations* wherein I hosted termly MUN sessions discussing differing world opinions on matters such as climate change.

On Sunday 15th March I started *Merton Mutual Aid*, a group set up to provide support to those vulnerable and shielding during the COVID-19 pandemic. I had noticed that there was no such group set up for my borough of Merton, which encompasses Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden.

It has now been more than three months since setting up the Group and, looking back on the experiences I have had, it's been amazing to see how the Group has thrived and worked closely with other organisations to maximise benefit to people in need, whether: delivering prescriptions and medication; food shopping and supplies; sourcing and redistributing crucial household items; or even just providing some company for someone on their own.

For me personally, the Group has provided me with an opportunity not to go crazy during lockdown, stuck at home watching TV and playing games since my exams were cancelled, but rather do something immensely



productive. As the founder and main administrator, I monitored the main email requests, oversaw 60 *WhatsApp* groups, managed the NHS and care-home teams, along with a large number of other elements that I devoted my time to.

I wholeheartedly recommend those reading this to join their local groups to see what they can do in their local community. I am aware that slowly things are returning to the 'new normal' and it may seem like there isn't much to do, but there are still many people in need as a result of the virus and we all have the ability to make a real difference.

Looking back at myself months ago, I would have never imagined being in such a position wherein I could make a tangible difference to the lives of hundreds, if not thousands. I am immensely proud of my decision to create the Group and, furthermore, to model it into something that will hopefully last into the future through a partnership with the *Dons Local Action Group*, an amazing local group run by AFC Wimbledon, that I recommend you check out and join.

Zak Dada - Year 13



VOLUNTEERING AT EPSOM AND EWELL FOODBANK

Over the past three months during the COVID-19 lockdown, my brother Ben and I have been volunteering at the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank twice a week. We pick up pre-organised parcels of food and other essentials with our mum and deliver these to people who have requested it. Normally these people would collect it from the foodbank centre themselves but because of the pandemic, the food parcels have to be delivered to their homes.

We feel very fortunate to be able to help people in need during this difficult time and to be able to understand that there are so many families that need help, even in our area.

There was clearly a real need for us to volunteer and the statistics speak for themselves. For example, in May 2019, 361 people were fed through the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank. In comparison, 1,169 people were fed in May this year! This is a very stressful time for everyone, but especially those who are less fortunate or vulnerable, so we felt that volunteering was the best way for us to help.

Lucy Crockford - Year 11

Ben Crockford - Year 9



SCHOOL STAFF 'LOCKDOWN' CHOIR

In keeping with the 'virtual choir' lockdown trend that you will have seen dominating your social media pages over the past few months, I decided to launch Ewell Castle's own 'Virtual Staff Choir' to boost morale and to give the staff a new challenge to keep them entertained during the challenging 'home-learning' phase.

For those of you who have ever tried recording yourself singing without any kind of backing track or accompaniment, you'll know it is an incredibly daunting prospect, but I



was so impressed by the number of staff who got involved and pushed themselves well out of their comfort zone. The result was an epic 25-strong chorus of 'Happy' teachers (and accompanying staff band)

singing together at a time where we all felt so far apart and I'd like to thank each and every one of them for their involvement.

By Mrs V Edwards

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD UPDATE

I was thrilled to receive a certificate recently from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, detailing the amazing achievements of Ewell Castle School during the last year. Pupils have committed 1014 hours to voluntary service within our local communities, worth £4410.90 in social value! Furthermore, 1131 hours were spent doing physical activity and 1014 hours committed to developing a skill. I think you will agree that these results are a fantastic testament to the pupils of the School, which has seen a significant increase in awards achieved over the last year and a total 65% of awards achieved (above the Surrey average of 59%).

While we have had to put expeditions on hold for the time being, pupils have been making great progress on their activities. Pupils have been submitting evidence to me about a wide range of activities, including fitness at home, running and home cooking. Pupils have also been planning the activities they will be doing once we are all back in School.

Rest assured that as soon as we can, expeditions will be resuming in the Surrey Hills and the New Forest. I am sure that despite the present unusual circumstances, the

standards for the Duke of Edinburgh Award will be as high as ever.

Here are a selection of comments from pupils about how they are getting on.

During lockdown, my brother taught me how to set up our tent and taught me some skills and tricks to use, to make the most out of the expedition. It was helpful that my brother had completed the DofE at Ewell Castle so he knows the way everything works!

My bass guitar teacher and I used Zoom to create the ability to practise and learn three songs off by heart, normally we would have done it in a recording studio.

Harry Dunn - Year 9 (Bronze)

I have learnt to cook multiple foreign dishes before and during lockdown, I have really enjoyed it and it has expanded my palate to appreciate more foods. This appreciation has come through knowing what is going into food.

I have done football and rugby over two terms for my sport. It was cut slightly short by quarantine. It developed my skills and has improved me as a player.

Joe Keohane - Year 9 (Bronze)

Over the course of lockdown, I could not go to my piano lesson physically. So, my teacher and I communicated through Skype. This has been going reasonably well but my teacher could not see where my hands were placed. Even with that disadvantage for such a long period of time, I will not give up practising or quit. I am on Grade 4, nearly on Grade 5.

Kamran Seward - Year 10 (Silver).

Finally after 7 weeks of lockdown, I managed to get some yeast and this is the final product!



Caitlin Coward-Younger - Year 9 (Bronze)

Mr C Blencowe

SIXTH FORM ENRICHMENT PLUS

We are very proud of our Enrichment Programme in the Sixth Form, it takes a year of planning and a tremendous amount of thought to make each week interesting, engaging and informative. When forced into lockdown, we were faced with rebuilding our Programme in a way which would engage the Sixth Form and actually be feasible. Myself, Mrs Lawrence and Mr Getty therefore came up with Enrichment Plus where the Year 13s would be set a challenge each week, working in small groups to produce something innovative and fun. To add a little more, a small cash prize was awarded for the winning team each week. The whole Programme took place on Microsoft Teams with students joining us from all over Surrey, North London, Hong Kong and South Korea!

The first week saw the Great Student Bake Off where each team had to create a student meal for under £12. They were placed into teams of three and each student had to produce a dish, film and edit it and then send it to us. We were blown away by the sheer inventiveness of the groups. They were all extremely well filmed and edited and very entertaining. Well done to Georgie, Zak and Elliot for winning that week. You can see the winning film here (tinyurl.com/y8ra4t99)

The second week involved each group creating a product or service during the lockdown. They were



required to put a business plan in place and pitch to the rest of Year 13 about how it would work and how much it would cost to launch. The one person who was absent for this particular week was Zak Dada who had actually launched a very successful food bank and delivery service to the NHS and those self-isolating. The winning group was the group who suggested setting up a service to transport and deliver essential medication to the vulnerable. It was no surprise that the group included our aspiring medics, Lauren and Vish along with Jemin Park, communicating from South Korea.

We were very fortunate to be joined by Old Ewellian, Matt Robertson in the third week. Matt, who left Ewell Castle three years ago, chose to work in Recruitment and was able to talk to Year 13 about job applications from the employer's perspective. Run like a webinar, the students were able to ask Matt questions about C.V.s and interviews. It was a very useful afternoon for the students and they benefited from Matt's experience and advice.

The following week, the students were asked to put a film together which involved continuity from one student to another. We had a tie for first place with a group of Year 12 students producing a news report on COVID-19 around the world in four different languages: Korean, Spanish, Turkish and Norwegian. The remarkable part was that the Korean report was from George Greensmith and the Norwegian report was done by Theo Bromley. Both boys were self

taught and their level of competency was very impressive! The winning film was by a Year 13 group who put together a very entertaining video involving a tennis ball, click here to see this funny video here (<https://youtu.be/WbqVeLS-YLA>)

The final week was probably the biggest challenge of all. The students were told to find a local business and build a website. This was a huge challenge which involved interviewing the customer and producing something eye-catching and creative. They were also able to learn the skills involved in building a website, so useful for the future. We had several entries which were all very impressive. The three top entries were Eloise Warren who built a website for the newly registered Ewell Castle Academy Tennis Club which will be used in the School's bid for new courts, Tom Hall who produced a beautiful website for someone trying to start a bakery delivery business and, the winner, Jago Banham who has been building a website for some time for his own photography business which you can view here (tinyurl.com/y8fl29qf)

The whole Enrichment Plus Programme has revealed how incredibly creative students can be under severe restrictions. Technology has meant that groups can work together to produce some amazing films and has highlighted the fact that you do not all have to be in the same room to work as a team.

Mrs E McManus

DRAGON'S DEN

With lockdown's perpetual cycle of boredom slowly driving Ewell Castle's Sixth Form to insanity, Miss McManus and Mr Getty kindly put in the time to organise online Enrichment meetings. Every Thursday at 2:00pm, I get a rush of nostalgia and warm feeling in my heart as they allow us to compete in weekly challenges to win a wholesome £10.00 per team member.

My team won the Dragon's Den challenge, with our exciting business venture, Vector Deliveries. A delivery service with the purpose of packing students' belongings at their university accommodation and transporting them to students' home during quarantine.

My team found this particular challenge quite stimulating since it required us to not only work in a team to derive a feasible idea but also it allowed us to utilise different skills. We used our mathematical skills to produce the accounts for the business and find statistical evidence from our market research, as well as our creative skills to develop a superior advertising strategy.

Presenting Vector Deliveries to my cohort and teachers, I felt truly blessed to be able to have teachers that dedicate their time to us, the students of Ewell Castle.

Vishaanth Raguraj - Year 13



SOCIALLY DISTANCED VIDEOS



During lockdown, the Sixth Form has been running an Enrichment Plus programme to ensure that we are still preparing for life afterwards, we also do fun projects throughout this too.

One of our most recent projects was a 'socially distanced' video of us interacting with an item, we were given the socially distanced 'fight' videos as an example. Our

team went about this and aimed to include small inside jokes within the video such as the tennis scholars missing shots. This was a fun experience and gave us all a good laugh and lifted our spirits at this time. You can see our finished video on YouTube using this link: <https://youtu.be/WbqVeLS-YLA>

Tom Hall - Year 13

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY - YEAR 7



Harrison Germain



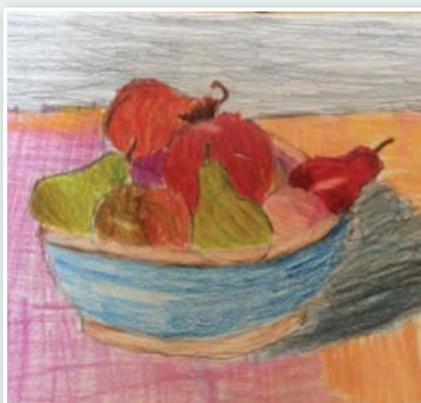
Emily Chater-Robinson



Joel Franey



Alexander Skinner



Julian Tank



Phoebe Yuill



Amy Fan



Michael Salman

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY - YEAR 8



Kasra Pochin



Kate Macallister



Tilly Wong



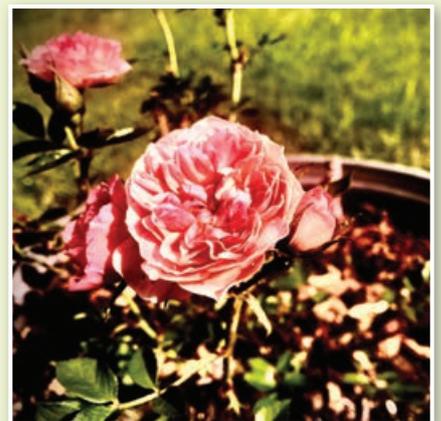
Nicholas Bosman



Ashton Nag



Joshua Goldstein



Rotimi Oderinde

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY - YEAR 9



Sophie Pershin



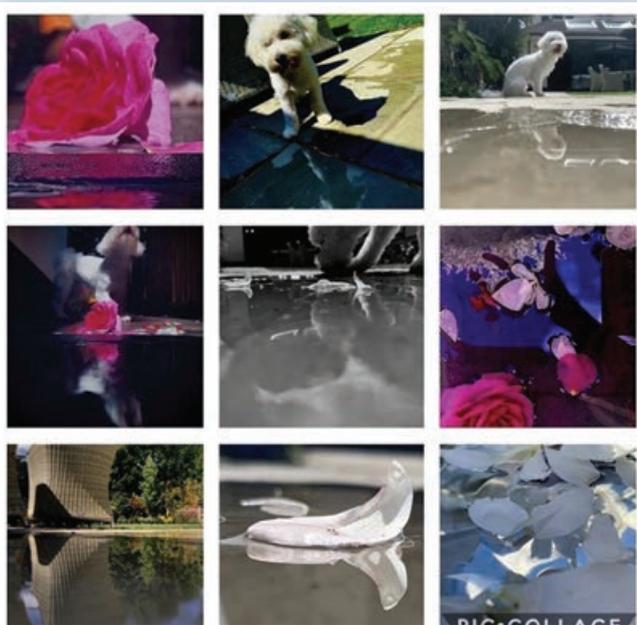
Millie Gunson



Rebecca Hogan



Andrea Sterritt Hernandez



Ella-Louise Collett



Cameron McAnally

A FINAL MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD GIRL AND HEAD BOY

Our year hasn't had the best of luck with exams, with being the 'guinea-pig' year to go all '9 to 1' with our GCSEs and then having our A-levels cancelled, but that hasn't stopped anyone from securing places on a range of amazing courses. Ewell Castle has opened countless doors for us and has gone above and beyond in every aspect of our schooling. It is safe to say that we will all be in debt to every member of staff, especially Mrs McManus, Mr Getty and Mrs Lawrence, for spoon-feeding us to get us where we are today. I'm not sure how we will all cope entering the real world going to university, I am sure that there will be many emails back to School asking for advice, although the skills we acquired from Enrichment should allow us to keep our heads above water. This is however one of my favourite things about Ewell Castle, the endless support everyone has given us even when we didn't realise we needed it.

My Ewell Castle journey began in 2013 when I joined Year 7, however the 'Hall' name had already gained quite a reputation around the School - thanks to my brother who had made strides in sporting areas and was regularly a member of (and often captain) of various sports teams. I imagine the prospect of another Hall joining the School would have got the Sports Department quite excited however anyone that knows me will tell you, this excitement would have been short lived! The prospect of me doing any more exercise than necessary is about as likely as Mr Blencowe calling me Tom instead of my brother's name seven years on (despite looking nothing alike)! Instead, I found great joy in the Performing Arts and pursued this and got to enjoy all sectors of it from the tech side of things and stage management, to being on stage in various performances big and small throughout the years. I speak of my brother in this as were it not for him, I would not have known about the School, and possibly not joined. I think the fact that both he and I

were able to flourish within the walls of Ewell Castle, despite having vastly differing interests, is truly a testament to the Castle's ability to accommodate all types of students and provide them with an amazing, enjoyable experience.

I joined Ewell Castle in Year 9 as one of the first three girls, so my time here has been a unique experience to say the least. Bringing girls into an all-boys school was like opening a new exhibit in a zoo, and although we have never had enough girls for a Hockey team, I wouldn't have changed a single thing. The boys always complained that the girls got special treatment, and they were right - we were princesses! I cannot thank everyone enough for pushing me and believing in me, especially when I struggled to myself. Ewell Castle doesn't just produce academics, it produces well-rounded adults who should all be proud of the morals and standards they hold themselves to.

Many of the friends I have made have been here since I joined in Year 7 and the friendships are still going strong seven years later. The addition of new pupils to the School at different times has not left anyone out, instead the Ewell Castle community has provided the space in which we have been able to make new friendships and nurture existing ones, which will last far beyond any leaving ceremony, be it in person or virtually. This is true not only for the end of Sixth Form which is where my peers and I are now, but for the pupils who decided to carve new paths elsewhere. We remain in contact with and still see them at events put on by the School and they are still very much a part of the Ewell Castle family. When I think of our final day I am saddened, not only by the thought of not seeing my peers or the staff on a regular basis, but also by the fact that our life-shaping experience didn't truly run its course and instead was cut short on a random Friday in March. This brought much disappointment to the Sixth Form; however we are aware sacrifices had to be made as there were bigger problems at play in the world although this was not without



its silver linings. The cancellation of exams was a shock, however also a relief to many people, even if they won't admit that to the teachers. I too would be a liar if I were to deny the fact I was somewhat relieved by the prospect of not having to take exams, but comfortable in knowing my work throughout the years would contribute towards my final grades.

As well as all the support and persistent hard work of all the staff, we would like to give a huge thank you to our Senior Prefect Team, and everyone who held a role of responsibility; and given our small year size, this means absolutely everybody! Our year has truly proven that it is about quality not quantity. We will all walk away with an abundance of precious memories; it is just a shame our time had to be cut short. The way everyone has handled these pressing times reflects the strength and resilience of a Ewell Castle student. We think it is safe to say that every single student can walk away from Ewell Castle with their head held high with confidence and pride, knowing that they were a unique asset to their School and demonstrate all the positive attributes that the School prides itself on. I am proud to say that I was part of the Ewell Castle Sixth Form and that I went to School with these people, because they are all truly amazing and have bright futures ahead of them and we will all go far, and still be welcome at the Castle. We cannot wait to see all the amazing places that life takes you all, down a road paved by Ewell Castle School. We love you all!

Lauren Body - Year 13

LOCKDOWN MEMORIES





*We wish all of our pupils and staff a happy,
healthy and safe summer holiday!*



**EWELL CASTLE
SCHOOL**

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