



THE ACADEMIST

HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM 2024 EDITION

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A WORD FROM OUR HEADTEACHER



What a term it has been! As always, the energy and enthusiasm from our students, staff, and wider community never fail to make Hammersmith Academy stand out as a hub of opportunity, growth, and success.

This term, our students had the honour of meeting Mayor Sadiq Khan during a special fundraising day in the City of London. Moments like these remind us of the power of connection and the importance of encouraging our young people to step into the wider world with confidence.

We are thrilled that the Academy has been recognised by Young Enterprise for our financial education programme. This award really highlights our commitment to equipping students with essential life skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

Sustainability remains at the heart of our efforts, and we are delighted to have received a Gold Award for our School Travel Plan. The Junior Leadership Team have led the way on championing safer and greener ways to travel and worked with TfL last academic year.

Looking ahead to January, we will be introducing Yondr, a mobile phone pouch system that promotes a more focused and connected learning environment by limiting usage during the school day. We are confident this will create an even stronger sense of community within the Academy and help students make the most of their time here.

There is so much to look forward to in the new year, not least our highly anticipated production of Matilda the Musical. I know the cast and crew have been working tirelessly to bring this much-loved story to life, and I can't wait to see it on stage.

A huge thank you to everyone in the Academy community who has supported our nominated charities this term, Children in Need, Show Racism the Red Card and Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. Your generosity has led to fantastic totals being raised, making a real difference to those in need. This collective effort exemplifies the compassion and unity that define our Academy.

Finally, it has been a pleasure to hear from another one of our talented alumni this term. His story, like so many others, is a testament to the enduring connection we have with our past students and the inspiration they continue to provide to our current cohort.

Enjoy reading about these achievements and more in this edition of the newsletter. ■

Mr Kynaston, Headteacher

BGC DAY WITH MAYOR OF LONDON



Students were on the trading floor experiencing trading firsthand and asking traders about the role mathematics in their day to day work and seeing trading in action.

The Mayors' Fund for London run Numbers@Work- an employability and skills programme for students to see how maths is used in workplaces. This September, we were invited to meet the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan during a BGC fundraiser event. BGC is a global financial services company who hold an annual fundraiser with traders donating the day's commission to charities including the Mayor's Fund for London.

We joined Sadiq Khan as he toured the trading floor and watched on as he completed trades with the brokers. The trading floor was quite chaotic but the people there were saying that it was similar to a normal day for them. We heard how trading involves a lot of quick thinking and taking in a lot of information from many different places, it wasn't the professional environment many think of, however, we thought this was quite cool!

The Mayor took time to speak to each of us individually, including our future career paths and current

GCSE subjects. He asked us about how visiting work places helped us better understand how maths is used by people every day at work. This was followed by a detailed tour of the office floor specialising in trading overseas. We met people of different ages and job roles who took time to explain how trading worked. We learned about the difficulty of making transactions overseas and the importance of deadlines and being on time, especially when wanting to secure something profitable.

We were inspired by the ages of people who worked on the trading floor as some had been working there for decades and others in the office were straight out of sixth form. This encouraged us to apply for work experience there.

Overall, this trip that was offered to us by BGC and Mayor's Fund for London was a fantastic and memorable experience and appreciated the Mayor inviting us for the day. ■

**YEAR 11 STUDENTS
WERE INVITED TO
MEET SADIQ KHAN
AND TAKE PART IN A
CHARITY FUNDRAISER
DAY. FINLEY, MAKEL,
GRIVIELMA, ZAKI,
NAMEEHA AND TAHA
TELL US ALL ABOUT
THEIR MORNING.**

“ We joined Sadiq Khan as he toured the trading floor and watched on as he completed trades with the brokers. ”

FINANCIAL EDUCATION AWARD



Mr Da Cunha (left) pictured with students and the Young Enterprise Award alongside Headteacher, Mr Kynaston.

Hammersmith Academy has been recognised as a Young Enterprise Centre of Excellence for Financial Education, a national accolade celebrating teaching essential financial skills and knowledge.

The Centre of Excellence status is awarded to schools excelling in delivering financial education. Achieving this recognition required the Academy to meet rigorous criteria in five key areas:

- **Leadership and Management**

A strong vision and commitment to financial education at all levels.

- **Teaching and Learning**

Delivering creative, engaging lessons inspiring students to manage money.

- **Student Assessment and Involvement**

Actively involving students in learning and assessing progress.

- **Staff Development**

Ensuring teachers are skilled to deliver high-quality financial education.

- **Sharing Financial Education**

Collaborating and sharing best practices with other schools.

Our financial curriculum starts with foundational skills like bank accounts and saving and advances to insurance and personal credit scoring, and for older students, managing university and personal finances. This comprehensive approach ensures students are prepared for immediate challenges and equipped to handle adult financial complexities confidently.

The aim is for students leave the Academy with the knowledge and confidence to make informed financial decisions.

Thank you and congratulations to Mr Da Cunha in the Maths Department who has developed and led on the financial curriculum, ensuring our students are well-prepared for life's challenges and opportunities ahead.



**THE ACADEMY HAS
BEEN RECOGNISED
FOR LEADING THE
WAY IN FINANCIAL
EDUCATION FOR ALL
STUDENTS.**

A MOBILE FREE DAY

HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY ADOPTS THE YONDR POUCH SYSTEM FOR A MOBILE FREE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. DEPUTY HEADTEACHER, MR WILSON EXPLAINS.



Yondr pouches will keep mobile phones out of use during the school day.

The Academy is introducing Yondr – a pouch system for locking away mobile phones during the school day, providing a mobile free school environment where students are freed from the distractions of notifications, the pressures of social media and the fear of missing out from online interactions.

Research tells us that the average teenager checks their phone more than 100 times a day, and spends 7 hours a day on their device.

Starting in January 2025, students in Years 7-10 will lock their mobile phones away during the school day.

How does it work?

Students will securely lock their mobile phones in a specialised Yondr pouch at the start of each school day. The pouch remains in their possession and is stored in their school bags throughout the day. At the end of the school day, the pouches will be unlocked, and students will regain access to their phones as they leave the Academy.

Why are we making this Change?

Schools that have introduced the

Yondr system report remarkable benefits, including:

- Improved engagement in lessons as students are free from the distraction of mobile phones.
- Strengthened social connections among peers through face-to-face interactions during breaks.

Our current mobile phone policy already requires students to turn off and refrain from using their phones during school hours. For those who follow this policy, little will change. The Yondr system simply ensures consistency and reduces the temptation for students to use their devices.

What are the benefits?

Schools that have adopted this system report improved social and interpersonal skills, focus and engagement and overall wellbeing. Furthermore, students themselves say they feel unburdened by the need or temptation to check their phones.

Why Yondr and not a total ban?

We recognise that mobile phones

are a vital tool for families to stay connected before and after school.

The Yondr pouch system strikes a balance by safeguarding this connection while ensuring that phones do not disrupt learning or social activities during the school day. ■

Watch the video:

Mr Wilson introduces the Yondr system and how it will work at the Academy.

CHILDREN IN NEED

CHILDREN IN NEED WAS OUR BIGGEST CHARITY DAY OF THE AUTUMN TERM.



This year's Children in Need fundraiser was a tremendous success with students, staff, and our wider community uniting to support the cause. The week long fundraiser was our largest charity event of the term, featuring a Pudsey Bear merchandise shop, a Pudsey raffle, a huge bake sale, and for the second year running, a thrilling HA Bake Off competition.

The atmosphere throughout the week was full of excitement, thanks to the enthusiastic efforts of our newly appointed Junior Leadership Team. They encouraged everyone to get involved. Additionally, students participated in a special HA Citizen session, where they learned about how the funds raised for Children in Need are used to support individuals within our local community.

The HA Bake Off showcased the students' creative flair with bakes inspired by their house representatives: Ada Lovelace, Catherine Johnson, David Attenborough, Fazlur Rahman Khan, and Steve McQueen.

The judging panel, which included Ms Jackson, Ms Adolphus, and Mr Yimini, had the delightful yet difficult task of judging these mouth-watering creations. After much thought, the winners were announced: Amelia (7M) took third place, Sarah (7L) secured second, and Rielle (8L) wowed the judges with her exceptional Lovelace-themed bake, which perfectly showcased her baking skills and house pride.

In the competitive house bake sale, McQueen House emerged as the overall winner, edging out Lovelace by a mere 31p! Thanks to everyone's hard work and generosity, we raised an impressive £725.75 for the charity.

Overall, the event was a wonderful reminder of the compassion and generosity within our school community. Beyond the fun and festivities, it served as an inspiring example of how we can come together to make a meaningful difference to the lives of others.

We look forward to our other charity events later in the year and continuing the positive impact. ■

“ McQueen House emerged as the overall winner, edging out Lovelace by a mere 31p! ”

**Total Raised
£725.75!**

GENEROSITY & COMMUNITY SPIRIT

MS SAMUELS & MS JACKSON UPDATE US ON THIS TERM'S CHARITY WORK AND FUNDRAISING.



Show Racism the Red Card was one of our nominated charities this term, alongside Macmillan Coffee Morning, Children in Need, Royal British Legions and Save the Children.

It has been a fantastic term of charity awareness and fundraising with no less than five events!

Macmillan Coffee Morning

We kicked off our charitable efforts this term on Thursday 26th September with a staff-only bake-off in support of Macmillan Cancer Support. The scent of freshly baked goodies filled the air as our talented staff members competed for the title of top baker, raising an impressive £124.30 in the process. This event highlighted not only the culinary creativity within our team but also our collective dedication to supporting those affected by cancer.

Wear Red for Show Racism the Red Card

On Friday 18th October, our school united in red for Show Racism the Red Card. Students and staff came

together to wear red and purchase merchandise, raising an incredible £535.61. This event served as a powerful reminder of the importance of standing against racism and celebrated the inclusivity and diversity that define our school.

Remembrance Day

On Monday 11th November, we observed Remembrance Day, paying tribute to the sacrifices of our armed forces. A reflective minute of silence during tutor time brought us together in remembrance and gratitude. Students and staff sold paper poppies and handmade wooden poppies, lovingly crafted by our talented Year 12 Art students for The Royal British Legion.

Children in Need

Friday 15th November brought a lively celebration in support of Children

in Need. It was our biggest charity event of the term!

Christmas Jumper Day

We ended the term on a festive note with Christmas Jumper Day on Thursday 19th December, raising £255 for Save the Children. The day included a delicious Christmas dinner and an insightful PSHE session exploring the vital work carried out by Save the Children. It was a fitting way to wrap up a term dedicated to making a difference.

As we look back on a term filled with kindness and compassion, we celebrate the impressive total of £1678.16 raised across all our charity events! This incredible achievement reflects the power of teamwork and generosity within our school. Thank you to everyone who helped us reach this total. ■

AN ARTISTIC TERM

THE ART DEPARTMENT TAKES US THROUGH ALL THE CREATIVE EXPERIENCES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE THIS TERM ACROSS THE ACADEMY.



Year 8 students spent the day at the Hayward Gallery on the Southbank for an exclusive hands on workshop inspired by artist Haegue Yang.

This term, the Art Department has hit the ground running with an array of inspiring trips and activities for students across all key stages. From gallery visits to our first-ever life drawing class for Sixth Formers; it's been a whirlwind of creativity and artistic growth.

Sixth Form at the Wallace Collection

In September, our Year 12 and 13 Art students spent an unforgettable day at the prestigious Wallace Collection. Immersed in the splendour of the Rococo collection, students explored the representation of the human form through the masterpieces on display.

The highlight of the day was a private workshop that introduced students to life drawing, with a particular focus on human anatomy and foreshortening. Guided by expert tutors, each student created a series of dynamic sketches, forming a mini life-drawing portfolio to enhance their university applications.

Georgia in Year 13 shared her thoughts on the experience: "The life drawing session was so eye-opening. It challenged my skills and gave me a completely new perspective on studying the human form." The students' enthusiasm carried over to Latymer Upper School, where they've continued their life drawing practice.

Year 8 at the Hayward Gallery

On 11th November, 30 Year 8 students visited the iconic Hayward Gallery, renowned for its cutting-edge exhibitions of contemporary art. This visit was carefully curated to support their current 'Identity' project, offering them a fresh perspective on both 2D and 3D modern art.

The highlight of the visit was the exhibition by Haegue Yang, a contemporary artist celebrated for her abstract and mixed-media installations. Inspired by the innovative works on display, students participated in hands-on workshops that encouraged them to respond

directly to Yang's art through their own creative explorations.

Year 8 student, Adelice said: "I was amazed by the variety of art on display. Seeing so many abstract works helped me appreciate abstract art in a whole new way!"

Students returned to school brimming with ideas for their Identity projects. We can't wait to see how they channel this inspiration into their artwork in the coming weeks.

Looking Ahead

There's no slowing down for the Art Department. Exciting trips are on the horizon for Years 7, 9, 10, and 12, with visits planned to some of London's most inspiring galleries. We're also eagerly anticipating our mid-year Photography Exhibition and the ever-popular HA Big Draw House Competition.

With so many opportunities for creativity and artistic exploration, it's shaping up to be an incredible year. Watch this space for updates on our students' artistic achievements! ■

SESSION 3 CLUBS

A HELLO FROM MS DODD AND MS HENDRA, OUR SESSION 3 COORDINATORS WHO UPDATE US ON ALL THE MANY EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

Since September we have been leading on all things Session 3, our after school clubs and activities, and what an exciting term it has been for all things extra-curricular! Below is just a snippet of this term's activities.

Session 3 Fairs

All students, either virtually or in person, took part in Session 3 fairs at the beginning of this year to sign up to the wide range of clubs available at HA.

Unsurprisingly, Mr Russea's table for chess club was surrounded by students. Chess Club runs on Mondays after school and is open to all year groups.

KS3 Debate Club

The Hammersmith Academy Debate Club, which began this summer, has been busy taking on new recruits to talk all things politics, current affairs, and morality. Most recently, students prepared for a particularly heated discussion on whether planes should be banned as a form of transportation.

Craft Club

The Library is always a hub of activity after school, and every Wednesday



Teachers set up stalls in the Sports Hall to promote their club to students.

it is taken over by top crafts men and women, led by the librarian Ms Harney. This term they have been making many, many friendship bracelets and more recently our new sixth form volunteers have been teaching younger students how to crochet.

Board Games

Board Games Club, run by Mr

Montero has become one of the most well-attended and popular clubs at the Academy with games, such as Uno, leading to students forming teamwork and problem-solving skills in the most fun of environments. Fahad (Year 8) tells us, "board games club has such a variety of games, whatever you enjoy there's a game for you. It's a great club for socialising with existing friends and making new ones."

New Clubs

New clubs will be released in January, so keep your eye out, and congratulations to all out Session 3 badge winners this term who have attended one or more clubs with 100% attendance since September! ■



Mr Russea's chess club was a popular draw during the Session 3 Fair.

CHESS TOURNAMENT



Hammersmith Academy entered two teams and competed against four other schools to make it into the Regional Stage of the competition.

**HAMMERSMITH
ACADEMY HOSTED
THE NATIONAL
SCHOOL CHESS
TOURNAMENT
QUALIFYING ROUND.
MR RUSSEA BRIEFS
US ON THE RESULTS.**

“The competition showcased incredible talent across the board.”

This year's U19 National School Chess Tournament qualifying round was a fun-filled day of chess, bringing together schools from the local area to compete in a friendly yet competitive atmosphere.

Teams had to compete in three rounds with any team winning two of its three matches qualifying for the Regional Stage.

It was exciting to see the tournament grow, with two additional schools joining for the first time, making this year's event bigger and better than ever.

Teams from Gunnersbury Catholic School, The Fulham Boys School, Latymer Upper School (A and B), and Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle (A and B) were represented and competed with great spirit, demonstrating the thriving chess culture in our local area!

The competition showcased incredible talent across the board, with each participating student earning an official English Chess Federation Rating—a rewarding milestone for these budding chess enthusiasts.

Hammersmith Academy A and B teams represented our school brilliantly. Congratulations to Hammersmith Academy A for qualifying for the Regional Stage with their outstanding performance.

As the host, I'm proud of the Academy's teams. They showed competitive spirit against very strong competition and held their own in every match.

I am very much looking forward to the next stages of the tournament in 2025 and wish all qualifying teams the best of luck as they continue their chess journey. ■

INSIGHT PROGRAMME

HEAD OF CAREERS & CULTURAL CONNECTIONS, MS HARROWES REPORTS ON A BROAD RANGE OF GUESTS AND TOPICS FROM THIS TERM'S INSIGHT PROGRAMME.



The Insight Programme features a very broad range of guest speakers. We were joined by international model, Jean Campbell (pictured) and Dr Sada Mire, Somalia's only active archaeologist.

What subject would you be studying if you had an A Level that showed you how to check your pay slip, followed by a presentation on cultural heritage in the Horn of Africa, and finishing off with an interview with one of the UK's biggest TV companies? Sounds interesting right?

The Hammersmith Academy Insight Programme is timetabled into the Sixth Form week every Wednesday afternoon. Running since we opened in 2011, this regular programme of talks is designed to introduce Sixth Form students to important ideas and interesting careers, and provide the kind of opportunities and intellectual challenges that private schools have traditionally offered. It is designed to give our ambitious and highly motivated A Level students the skills and ideas to access top universities

and careers and increase their capacity to grab the right breaks in a world where all the power is often in the wrong hands.

The 2024/25 programme has got off to a strong start with a mix of ideas and opportunities to apply. In the ideas camp, I was delighted to interview Jean Campbell, a successful couture model who has battled with chronic pain for much of her life. She talked about her mental resilience and shared her advice. Demonstrating the Insight Programme's capacity to offer a real breadth of thinking, our long-standing partnership with National Geographic allowed us to welcome a really unique talent, Dr Sada Mire, UCL academic, writer and Somalia's only active archaeologist. Dr Mire was a huge hit, not only with the Sixth Form students, but also giving short

“ Our long-standing partnership with National Geographic allowed us to welcome a really unique talent. ”



Dr Sada Mire, Somalia's only active archaeologist was one of our star speakers.

classroom talks to Year 8 and Year 9 History students and a group of Year 12 Sociology students. Students were also fascinated by the rather closer to home topic discussed by Chris Hawkins of Tenent Financial Education who talked Year 12 through the important minutiae of how to understand your pay slip.

On the opportunities front, we've had amazing presentations from the Mayor's Fund for London, encouraging students to sign up for Access Aspiration for Sixth Form work experience opportunities. They came back later in the term to give every single Year 13 the opportunity for a mock formal corporate interview.

Year 12 also had the opportunity to hear from our long-standing partners the British Exploring Society. They invited a number of Year 13s who had been wilderness camping to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and Iceland last year to share their

experiences and to allay any fears that Year 12s might have about applying to go on expedition.

Next term students are going to hear from speakers on topics as diverse as QAnon and conspiracy theories, coping with the climate emergency, student finance and a panel of our ex-students sharing their experience of working in film and tv.

The Insight Programme ambition to offer skills and ideas to help all Sixth form students to achieve access top universities and careers is surprisingly easy to achieve. Not because I can guarantee that everyone will be looking for a career in the sector featured, but because I know that the calibre of our speakers is such that all our students will be gaining a well-rounded cultural education and broadening their horizons each Wednesday at 12pm.



TEAM UPSIDE



Team UPside was set up by young professionals to help other young people reach their academic and professional potential.

Team UPside, a charity specialising in helping young people to attain their full academic and professional goals, visited the Academy to run a careers and learning Breakfast Club to support Sixth Form students.

For a week in September, Sixth Form students met with individual members of Team UPside to discuss the best way to approach applying for universities, how to enter specific

professions and receive guidance on effective studying and other tangible advice.

Members of Team UPside are young professionals with experience from a broad range of sectors, from finance and medicine to marketing.

Students were invited to grab breakfast and sit with one of the professionals to chat about their interests and where they could see

themselves in the future.

The breakfast club was a great success with many students returning each day to see a different volunteer to explore a variety of university and career options.

Hammersmith Academy has a special connection with Team UPside as one of their volunteers is also a Hammersmith Academy alum, Amari Drysdale (HA 2013-2018) who left HA to study at University of Oxford before helping to set up the charity with founder and chairman, Sulaiman Iqbal. Amari now works at Goldman Sachs and is a regular visitor to the Academy to support students.

Students who took advantage of the breakfast club said, "The support and guidance was beyond amazing. We went into real depth and found the exact things which could work for me. The talk was assertive and we got to a point where I felt very motivated just by hearing the short steps I need to take for success."

Team UPside will return in 2025 to follow up on the progress of the students. ■

MEET THE ALUMNI



Mohamad is now working in the finance sector in Dubai having finished university.



HA: What job are you in currently?

MK: I am an analyst at Alvarez & Marsal in Dubai, working in the sovereign advisory team. We provide financial and operational advisory services to central banks, ministries of finance, sovereign wealth funds, multilateral development banks and more.

HA: What does a typical day at work/study entail?

MK: A typical day includes some form of analysis or study (e.g. macroeconomic, benchmarking...) that would then be developed to a set of actionable items for our clients to carry out.

HA: Best/worst thing about your job?

MK: Advising our clients in ways that deliver a positive impact which is rewarding.

Worst thing; working with sovereign clients, there are often scenarios where bureaucracy can limit our effectiveness.

HA: Greatest achievement so far?

MK: Taking a big step by moving to Dubai after university on my own to pursue my career.

HA: What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

MK: The greatest skill I learnt at HA was a growth mindset - keeping an open mind to anything that comes around as there is always an opportunity to learn something, even when making mistakes.

HA: What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

MK: The memories with my friends and the relationships I built, many of which still exist to this day.

HA: What advice would you give to current HA students?

MK: Building your network and surrounding yourself with people you wish to be like is extremely important. I also highly recommend taking advantage of the opportunities Ms Harrowes brings, especially for those in Sixth Form as simply getting a degree isn't enough to stand out nowadays. ■

WE CAUGHT UP WITH MOHAMAD KIANPISHEH (HA 2012-2019) FIVE YEARS ON FROM LEAVING THE ACADEMY.

“The greatest skill I learnt at HA was a growth mindset - keeping an open mind...”

”
ALUMNI

MATILDA MUSICAL



The Matilda cast have been working very hard over the past few weeks, including dedicating weekends to rehearsals.

The Drama and Music Departments are thrilled to announce that this year's Academy musical will be Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical JR., set to enchant audiences in February 2025.

This beloved story of a clever, courageous girl who dreams of a better life — and the “revolting children” she inspires — promises to captivate audiences of all ages. Packed with high-energy dance numbers, catchy songs, and a heartwarming message, Matilda Jr. is a joyous celebration of imagination, resilience, and girl power.

Matilda is a young girl with astonishing wit, intelligence... and even a few special powers. Despite being unloved by her cruel parents, she impresses her kind-hearted teacher, Miss Honey. However, life at school is anything but easy thanks to the terrifying headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, who delights in dishing out punishments to rule-breakers. But with Matilda's bravery and cleverness, her classmates might just teach the grown-ups a lesson they won't forget!

Auditions began back in September and we saw a record number of

students put themselves forward for roles, so competition was high and casting was a difficult decision.

Rehearsals are in full swing, with students meeting every Monday for singing, Wednesdays for dancing, and even spending time after school and on weekends under the guidance of Ms Cantwell and Ms Williams.

Adelice, Year 8 student and member of the cast, gave us a glimpse behind the scenes, “Our rehearsals for Matilda have been full of enthusiasm and fun from the students and teachers, as everyone is having fun and shining in the roles they play. However, we have also been focused on improving our acting skills and how we can improve at singing and dancing as well. Stay tuned for the musical and don't forget to buy the tickets when available — the cast can't wait to perform and show what we have been working so hard for!”

Tickets for Matilda Jr. go on sale in January, so mark your calendars and get ready for a magical performance filled with laughter, music, and extraordinary talent. The cast and crew can't wait to share their hard work with you — this is one show you won't want to miss! ■

MATILDA IS THIS YEAR'S SCHOOL MUSICAL AND WE CAUGHT UP WITH CAST MEMBER ADELICE (YEAR 8) BEHIND THE SCENES.



OLD VIC - INSPIRING THE NEXT GEN

HEAD OF DRAMA, MS WILLIAMS INTRODUCES AN EXCITING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME WITH THE OLD VIC THEATRE.



Theatre professionals from The Old Vic Theatre ran workshops to accompany each of the trips to watch a live performance at the celebrated venue.

This term, a group of 30 enthusiastic Year 9 Drama students had the privilege of joining The Old Vic's innovative Schools Club programme. Designed to inspire the next generation of theatre-makers and offering free tickets to productions, bespoke workshops, and insights into the many non-performing roles within the theatre industry.

The journey began with a trip to see Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* at The Old Vic Theatre in Waterloo. Following this performance, the students delved into the art of directing in a hands-on workshop, exploring how directors bring a script to life and create compelling stage moments that captivate the audience. The experience opened their eyes to the meticulous planning, creativity, and vision required to lead a production successfully.

Their second outing was to the Old Vic's much-loved production of *A*

Christmas Carol. After watching the festive classic, students attended a follow-up workshop on costume design. Guided by industry professionals, they explored the role of a costume and wardrobe manager, gaining insights into how costume design supports storytelling and brings characters to life. As part of this workshop, the students rolled up their sleeves to create Victorian-style dress-down shirts, channeling the spirit and aesthetic of the era depicted in *A Christmas Carol*.

These workshops have sparked interest in different theatre careers, from lighting and sound to set design and playwriting. One student said, "I never knew how much work goes into a play. Now I'm thinking about being a costume designer or trying directing!" The Old Vic partnership has inspired students, leaving them eager for the next show and full of fresh ideas for the future. ■



Students outside The Old Vic Theatre before the *A Christmas Carol* performance.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

MS HUNTLEY, JLT
COORDINATOR
INTRODUCES US
TO THIS YEAR'S
NEW LOOK JUNIOR
LEADERSHIP TEAM.

The Junior Leadership Team offers students a platform to voice their opinions on key aspects of school life and make meaningful contributions to the wider community. Additionally, it enhances the development of HA character, preparing students with the qualities and values essential for life beyond school.

This year the team has been restructured into two focus groups: Global Citizens and HA Community, involving students from Years 7 to 11. Students will be working towards a Student Leadership Accreditation (SLA), building up a portfolio documenting projects and events they have worked on to gain accreditation.

Here are just a few of these events that students will be involved with planning and delivering throughout the year:

Global Citizens

The Global Citizens group has kicked off the year with great energy and enthusiasm! Our first major event was supporting Children in Need, where we successfully raised an impressive £725.75. This achievement was made possible through a variety of activities, including organizing a raffle and selling tickets, selling Pudsey merchandise, and running a bake sale during breaks and lunches. These activities brought the school community together to contribute to such an important cause, and the team encouraged everyone to give what they could to make a difference.

Building on this momentum, students are now focusing on supporting our local food bank to help those in need in our community. To encourage



Top - HA Community Team - Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11
Bottom - Global Citizens Team
Middle - HA Community Team - Year 7 and Year 8

student involvement, we've created a food bank bingo card for each tutor group. Students can fill their cards by donating canned and tinned goods, and the group that donates the most will win a prize. This fun and friendly competition is a great way to boost participation and raise awareness about the importance of giving back. Together, we're making a difference both locally and beyond.

HA Community

The HA Community group have started the year by organising activities surrounding anti-bullying week. The students have planned a lesson for our anti-bullying week which ran during tutor time. Students planned discussion and debate activities. This was a lesson designed by students for students which was fantastic.

The HA community group will

be volunteering as a part of our partnership with Timegivers organisation. As a part of their first volunteering activity year 7 and 8 students travelled to Elgin Close Resource centre where students volunteered with the elderly. Students were able to spend time making Christmas decorations and chatting with the residents. The residents were excited to get stuck into some crafts and enjoyed making decorations and chatting with our students. Now the residents have some lovely handmade decorations to hang up around the centre.

It was fantastic to see the students spreading Christmas cheer and engaging with the local community. Throughout the new year HA community will be participating in other volunteering activities that centre around engaging with our local community. ■

FUN & FRIENDSHIP



Team crate building was one of the many activities on offer to boost teamwork and communication skills with some friendly competition thrown in.

On Friday 18th October 2024, our new Year 7 students set off for an exciting day of adventure at Longridge Activity Centre. The trip was designed to help students settle into their new year group, make new friends, and strengthen their teamwork skills through a variety of fun and challenging activities.

Throughout the day, students tackled a range of activities, each uniquely designed to enhance teamwork and collaboration. On the climbing wall, students cheered one another on, offering encouragement and support as they pushed themselves to reach the top. During crate stacking, they had to work closely in teams to build the tallest tower while balancing on top—no small feat without trust and communication!

In the game of laser tag, teamwork was essential as students strategised together to outmanoeuvre and "take out" the other teams. Jacob's ladder provided a unique challenge, requiring students to help each other climb higher with each rung becoming progressively more difficult to conquer alone. Finally, the trebuchet building activity reinforced that success truly

comes from teamwork, as students quickly realised that constructing the medieval-style catapult simply couldn't be done without everyone playing their part.

Normally, students also take part in a water-based activity on the River Thames as part of their Longridge experience. Unfortunately, excessive rainfall this year meant that the conditions were unsafe, and they were unable to go out on the water. While this was a disappointment, the additional land activities more than made up for it, providing plenty of challenges and opportunities for fun and teamwork.

Each activity offered a valuable lesson in trust, communication, and collaboration, while creating plenty of smiles and laughter along the way. By the end of the day, students had not only conquered their fears but also forged stronger bonds with peers.

A big thank you to the Longridge staff for hosting such a memorable day, and to all the Year 7 students for bringing their energy and enthusiasm. We look forward to seeing these new friendships and skills flourish as the year progresses.

**YEAR 7 STUDENTS
STARTED THEIR
SECONDARY SCHOOL
EXPERIENCE WITH
A TEAMBUILDING
DAY AT LONGRIDGE
ACTIVITY CENTRE.**

“Each activity offered a valuable lesson in trust, communication, and collaboration.”

GOLD STANDARD!

THE ACADEMY RECEIVES GOLD ACCREDITATION FOR ITS SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN AS A RESULT OF THE MANY ACTIVITIES PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL.



This term the Academy has been awarded gold status for its School Travel Plan by Transport for London.

This achievement is the result of over three years of hard work and teamwork by students, staff, and partners in delivering impactful activities, workshops and promoting healthy forms of travel to help reduce car use. Here are some of the highlights from the last year:

TfL Pioneers Programme

The Academy's Junior Leadership Team have led the way, taking part in the TfL Pioneers Programme which saw students creating a travel board with helpful tips and information and designing a special obstacle course to highlight the dangers of mobile phone distraction to students in Year 7.

Students had to navigate a course, first as a vigilant pedestrian whilst being timed and then repeated but as a distracted pedestrian using their mobile phone. Participants were deducted points for inaccurate texting and bumping into obstacles with the highest scoring person crowned the most attentive pedestrian! The

difference in times highlighted just how distracting mobile phones are to students when out and about.

Exchanging Places

Last year all students in Year 7 took part in the Exchanging Places experience. Run by the Met Police, the experience highlights the dangers of blind spots for large vehicles and cyclists and pedestrians. Students were invited to sit in a lorry cab and talk to the driver and officers to find out about the issues of visibility and correct positioning, blind spots, mirrors. The experience will return again this academic year.

Bikeability in Our PE Curriculum

Another key factor in achieving gold was incorporating Bikeability into our PE curriculum. This ensures that every student gains essential skills in cycle safety and maintenance, while also building confidence to travel sustainably. By making cycle training a core part of our students' education, we're helping them develop lifelong habits that contribute to a healthier planet. ■

WE HAVE
ACHIEVED



HACKATHON WIN



The Academy's winners with their individual prizes. Judges loved their app design which provided a one stop shop for job hunting, portfolio building and training.

On Thursday, 14th November, the annual Hackathon, sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT), returned for its third instalment. This year's event, held in the historic Ada Lovelace Room at City, University of London, tasked students with using technology to make Further and Tertiary education more effective and accessible.

The Hackathon challenges students to develop innovative concepts for digital solutions to tackle a proposed problem. Participants work under tight deadlines to design their solutions and pitch their ideas to a panel of expert judges. The decision-making process is based on creativity, feasibility, and quality of the presentations.

This year's winning concept, Pathfinder, came from Hammersmith Academy. The app combines job searching, learning, portfolio building, and job placement support into a unified platform. Merchant Taylors' School, Northwood earned second place, while Lilian Baylis Technology School were runners-up.

The judging panel, which included WCIT Master Gary Moore (who set the challenge), Associate Dean at City, University of London Anton Cox, and Leila Thomas FRSA, CEO of Urban Synergy, commended

the students' innovative ideas and polished presentations. Adding to the prestige of the day, the Lady Mayoress Florence King presented a commemorative silver spoon to the winning team.

For many students, the Hackathon was an opportunity to develop critical skills and push their creative boundaries. Year 12 student, Tamila, shared her reflections, "The Hackathon was more than a competition; it was a journey of growth. We faced challenges like assigning roles based on individual strengths, coming up with a creative idea that matched the brief, and ensuring everything came together coherently. The experience taught me how to work effectively in a team under pressure—something that will benefit me in university and future group projects."

Fellow participant Henry echoed these sentiments, "I collaborated with classmates and used a variety of skills to complete our project. We overcame challenges by working together and openly discussing different ideas to find the best solutions. It was inspiring to team up with others and create a product we were all proud of. I'd love to do it again."

We look forward to seeing what next year's Hackathon will bring! . ■

YEAR 12 STUDENTS, TAMILA AND HENRY RECALL THEIR WIN AT THIS YEAR'S WCIT HACKATHON EVENT.

“ Participants work under tight deadlines to design their solutions and present to pitch their ideas to a panel of expert judges. ”

GOLD FORMULA



Students Anisha, Zakariya and Henry were awarded gold certificates, putting them within the top 8% of UK students.

On Tuesday 1st October, 26 of our talented Year 12 and Year 13 students took part in the prestigious UKMT Senior Maths Challenge.

This international competition tests mathematical reasoning, precision,

and problem-solving skills, and is highly regarded by universities worldwide. Our students rose to the challenge brilliantly, with an impressive 12 bronze, 7 silver, and 3 gold certificates awarded!

A special congratulations goes to Henry (Year 12), Anisha (Year 13), and Zakariya (Year 13), who achieved gold certificates. Their outstanding performance places them among the top 8% of participants nationally and qualified them for the next round of competition. Henry went on to achieve a Merit in this subsequent stage—a remarkable accomplishment!

We are incredibly proud of all our participants for their hard work and dedication in this challenging competition. The UKMT Senior Maths Challenge is a fantastic opportunity for students to stretch their mathematical abilities, and our results highlight the depth of talent and commitment within our school community.

A huge well done to everyone involved—we look forward to even more success in the future! ■

SCIENCE OF CEIAG



Diverse Futures help connect exceptionally talented young people with companies and businesses and develop their soft skills and expertise.

CEIAG – or Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance – is often about asking the right questions and listening carefully to the answers. We've been encouraging our students to make the most of opportunities on offer.

We fund a free Unifrog account for all students to help them consider every opportunity out there. Even our younger students are encouraged

to make the most of the website by completing Myers Briggs style tests which help identify their personality type and the kind of activities they might prefer in a future workplace.

Parents can access the tools too (and are welcome to use everything from CV guidance to university info) if you log into www.unifrog.org and use the sign up code HMRSFAMILY.

We've also crunched the numbers with whole year groups accessing top tier professional advice this term. Year 11 students had a 30 minute personal advice session from external Level 6 trained advisers. Year 13 all had a mock corporate interview organised by the Mayor's Fund for London and more than 50% of the year group also had a 1:1 university application appointment with a teacher from St Paul's Girls' School or a volunteer from IntoUniversity.

Meanwhile the Construction Youth Trust and Diverse Futures have both offered the Sixth Form the chance to plan for future STEM careers by signing up for pre-apprenticeship training programmes. Schemes like these give our students a foot in the door with competitive apprenticeships, building desirable soft skills that employers are looking for and the expertise to approach applications and interviews with confidence. ■

WINTER CONCERT



The choir sang a number of crowd pleasers including Ocean Eyes, I'm a Believer and Somewhere Only We Know.

THE WINTER CONCERT WAS A SHOWCASE OF CHORAL AND INSTRUMENTAL TALENT. HEAD OF MUSIC, MS CANTWELL REPORTS FROM THE CONCERT.

On Wednesday 18th December, our much-anticipated Winter Concert showcased the incredible talents of our students.

The night was filled with standout performances, including Alessia's guitar rendition of *See You Again* by Charlie Puth, Fiona and Adelice's unforgettable duet of *A Million Dreams* from *The Greatest Showman* and the Choir, led by Ms Cantwell, performed beautifully with songs like *Ocean Eyes*.

The evening also featured a sneak peek of our upcoming production of *Matilda The Musical*, with the choir performing *School Song* and *When I Grow Up*. Judging by this

performance it is going to be quite the show!

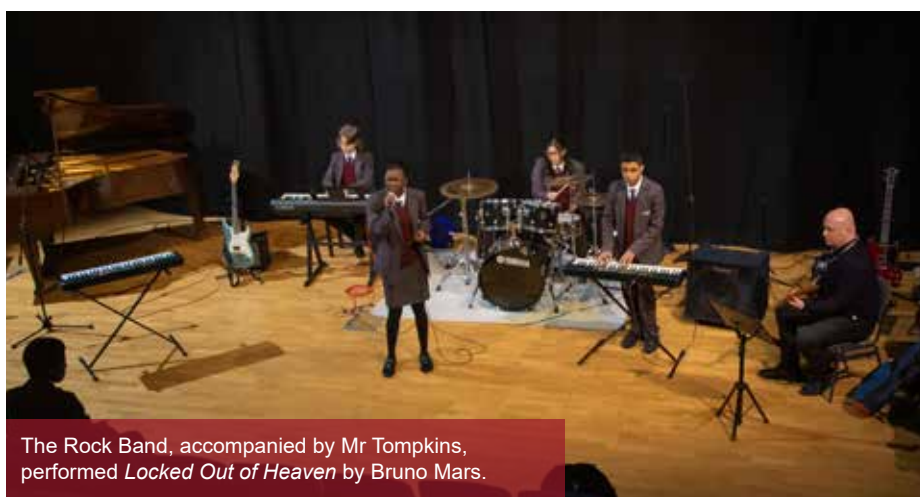
There were of course festive favourites, including Jessica's stirring solo rendition of *All I Want for Christmas is You* and Angelica's violin interpretation of a *Winter Wonderland*.

Well done to all the performers. They worked hard over several weeks in preparation including weekly after-school and lunchtime practice sessions.

It was brilliant to see so many family and friends on the evening in support of the performers. A great way to end the autumn term. ■

“ Judging by this performance it is going to be quite the show!

”



The Rock Band, accompanied by Mr Tompkins, performed *Locked Out of Heaven* by Bruno Mars.

SPORTS ROUND-UP

THIS TERM HAS BEEN A TYPICALLY BUSY ONE FOR THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT. HERE IS A ROUND-UP OF ALL THE SPORTING NEWS.



Year 13 student Jana met Olympic rowers and bronze medallists from this year's Paris Olympics at Fulham Reach Boat Club.

Meeting Rowing Olympians

Jana (Year 13) has been volunteering at Fulham Reach Boat Club since getting the rowing bug during a games session 3 years ago. She told us, "Volunteering at the boat club has been great for improving my leadership skills. This summer, I had an amazing opportunity to meet bronze medalists from the summer

2024 Olympics who competed in the womens' eight category. This was such an inspiring moment for me as I got to speak to 3 rowers and their cox and hear about their journey to competing at the Olympics and the hardships they faced. They gave us such great advice on the mindset needed for training and competition as well as how to balance sports with study. They also spoke about their

experience on the race course and how they came to win their bronze medals."

Boys Football

The Year 8 team (under new management), played their first game against St Thomas More. Led by captain Malachi, the team went into halftime 0-0. In the second half, Malachi earned a penalty, which he confidently converted. The match ended 1-0. Special thanks to Dior and Arijon from Year 7, who stepped up and played important roles in the game. Man of the Match went to Mikaelee for his crucial saves, and keeping a clean sheet.

The Sixth Form team secured a 3-0 win against Burlington Danes Academy (BDA) in some pretty challenging conditions. Following a long throw, Abdulahi hit a first time shot the BDA keeper could only parry, and Bilal was on hand to tap it in to make it 1-0 at half time. In the opening exchanges of the second half, Erion whipped in a corner to the 6 yard box and Musa slammed home the volley to make it 2-0. As BDA began to push higher, this left a lot of space in



The Sixth Form Boys Football team have racked up some impressive victories this term.

behind. Anas exploited this, playing a delightful pass over the top to Erion, who hit a half volley into the bottom corner from 20 yards out. An excellent start to the QPR league for the Sixth Form Boys!

Following the convincing 3-0 win against BDA to kickstart their QPR League campaign, the Sixth Form Boys were up against West London Free (WLFS). HA took the lead through Musa, who hit a half volley from 20 yards into the bottom corner to make it two goals in two games for the captain. However, WLFS grew into the game, and deservedly got their equaliser after some poor defending from HA. Following a fantastic save from Lincoln, HA did not react and gifted the WLFS striker an open goal to make it 2-1 at half time to WLFS. HA started brightly in the second half and a delightful cross from Edward picked out Omar, who on his debut, rifled the ball into the top corner to make it 2-2. In the final 10 minutes, both teams went all out to try and get the winner, and a defensive lapse saw Omar race through and slot the ball into the bottom corner to make it 3-2 to HA.

Girls Football

This term the U13 Girls Football team travelled to Rayners Lane FC to compete in the EFL Utilita Girls Cup. The tournament got off to a frosty morning start and the girls had to adapt quickly to the conditions.

Despite a concerted effort and playing to a high level, they lost out 4-3 against BDA in their first match. They unfortunately went on to lose all three of their games which meant they were bumped into the B Bracket of the tournament.

Over the lunch break, the girls regrouped and reassessed their tactics. This did the trick and the girls raised their game and went on to win all three games they played. This saw them crowned as B Bracket champions and the girls were awarded a medal to celebrate their win. ■

Follow Sports on Instagram

📷 @hasport1



Sportswoman of the Term

In GCSE PE, Asia has consistently displayed academic excellence. Yet, what truly sets her apart is her dedication to Trampolining and Football, a commitment that extends far beyond her academic studies.

Balancing the rigorous demands of school with the commitments of both Trampolining and Football, Asia exemplifies resilience, discipline, and a tireless pursuit of personal growth.

Impressively, during a recent Sport Psychology workshop for GCSE PE students, Asia was commended for her engagement in the session, utilising her own experiences of sport to contribute on the importance of mental rehearsal to her own performances in Trampolining.

Congratulations on a superb term of sporting achievement. ■



Sportsman of the Term

Ismail has had a fantastic start to PE!

He has represented the school in a host of events, including both Year 7 Football and Year 8 Football, putting in a number of outstanding performances.

In the most recent Year 8 QPR League fixture vs Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA), Ismail put in a Man of the Match (MOM) performance and was very unfortunate to not score, hitting the post on two occasions!

Ismail demonstrated a commitment beyond what is expected of his year group and is a role model to his peers in regards to his attitude and engagement within PE, often going above and beyond in all that he does.

Well done on standing out from the rest of the pack. ■



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