



The Academist



Secretary of State
Discusses Online

Students Launch
Natural History GCSE

Work Experience

UCAS Report
Oxford University

Green for Grenfell

Race for Life

National Rowing

Volleyball

Duke of Edinburgh

Spanish Adventure

A message from Mr Kynaston, Headteacher



As you read this edition of The Academist, I hope one message stands out above all else: at Hammersmith Academy, learning extends far beyond the classroom.

Over the past term, our students have embraced an extraordinary range of opportunities. They have debated ideas at the **University of Oxford**, explored careers with **Banijay** and **Gort Scott Architects**, contributed to the launch of the proposed Natural History GCSE with the **Department for Education** and **Natural History Museum**, enjoyed exclusive experiences through our partnership with **Historic Royal Palaces**, and completed work experience with employers across London. They have also excelled in national STEM competitions, developed entrepreneurial skills through Young Enterprise, and celebrated important milestones together as a community.

These experiences don't happen by chance. They are made possible through the strength of our partnerships and the dedication of staff who work tirelessly to create

opportunities that challenge, inspire, and broaden horizons. We are proud to work alongside organisations that share our belief in giving young people the confidence, ambition, and experiences they need to thrive in an ever-changing world.

As you explore the stories in this edition, I hope you will also see the qualities that define our students: curiosity, resilience, creativity, kindness, and a willingness to embrace every opportunity. Those qualities, combined with academic excellence, are what prepare them not only for examinations, but for fulfilling lives and successful futures.

My sincere thanks go to our staff, families, governors, alumni, and partners for the continued support they give our students. Together, we are creating an education that is rich in opportunity, ambitious in outlook, and firmly focused on preparing every student for Real World Success.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and feel as proud as I do of everything our students have achieved. ○

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mr Kynaston'.

Mr Kynaston, Headteacher



Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson talks to Year 7 students about their love of natural history during a workshop at the Natural History Museum.

Students attend national launch of proposed Natural History GCSE

What might the future of environmental education look like? Hammersmith Academy students explored that question at an exclusive national event at the Natural History Museum.

On Thursday 11th June 2026, Hammersmith Academy students attended the national launch of the Government's proposed Natural History GCSE at the Natural History Museum. Bringing together leading voices from education, science, and conservation, the event offered students an exclusive opportunity to explore a qualification that could shape the way future generations learn about the natural world.

The day began with an interactive discussion led by renowned naturalist, explorer, presenter, and author Steve Backshall. Sharing stories from his own adventures, he encouraged students to stay curious, ask questions, and see nature as something to be explored rather

than simply studied. His enthusiasm set the tone for a day centred on discovery, scientific thinking, and the importance of protecting our environment.

Students then immersed themselves in a programme of hands-on citizen science activities before meeting Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson and joining expert discussions. They were invited to contribute their own views on the proposed qualification, exploring how greater emphasis on biodiversity, practical fieldwork, and environmental science could inspire more young people to engage with nature and consider careers tackling some of the world's biggest environmental crises. ➡

”

Hearing from experts, contributing to discussions, and exploring the proposed Natural History GCSE encouraged them to think critically about the world around them and the role they can play in protecting it.”



The proposed Natural History GCSE will include practical fieldwork, such as sampling and identifying species.

Reflecting on the experience, Mr Savvidis, Head of Science, said: "Science is driven by curiosity, and this event gave our Year 7 students the chance to experience that first-hand. Hearing from experts, contributing to discussions, and exploring the proposed Natural History GCSE encouraged them to think critically about the world around them and the role they can play in protecting it. It was fantastic to see them engaging so confidently with topics that will become increasingly important for future generations."

For our students, the day offered far more than an introduction to a proposed new qualification. It demonstrated how science can open doors to exploration, influence national conversations, and inspire future careers. Most importantly, it showed that young people have an important role to play in understanding and protecting the world around them. ○



Natural History Museum staff show students how to use digital microscopes to look at invertebrates in detail.

Meet the Alumni

Fathima Nawshad

Paralegal
HA 2017-2019



HA: What job/study are you doing currently?

FN: I currently work as a Paralegal for one of the UK's largest property freehold companies. Alongside this, I am self-studying for the SQE1, the Solicitors Qualifying Examination.

HA: What does a typical day at work entail?

FN: A typical day involves responding to enquiries from colleagues and third-party solicitors, drafting legal documents such as deeds of variation and lease extensions, and managing the administration of more than 100 active files. That includes filing, updating spreadsheets, taking calls, and dealing with incoming post.

HA: What do you enjoy (or not enjoy) about your job?

FN: I specialise in property law, mainly freehold, leasehold, and landlord and tenant matters. One of the biggest obstacles is reading old leases with faded writing and outdated language. At the same time, that's what makes them so interesting. Every document is different, and I enjoy unpicking unusual clauses and discovering what they mean—it often feels like

detective work.

HA: What has been your biggest break or setback?

FN: Failing my SQE1 exams was definitely my biggest setback. I missed a pass by just a few marks, which was frustrating after so much preparation. However, I've stayed focused on my goal of qualifying as a solicitor—a goal I've been working towards since I was 16.

HA: What skills did you develop at HA that you still use today?

FN: Hammersmith Academy helped me build confidence in communicating clearly and working independently. It also laid the foundations for my analytical skills, which I've continued to develop throughout my career.

HA: What do you look back on most fondly?

FN: The friendships I made during my time at Hammersmith Academy.

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

FN: Don't let setbacks stop you from pursuing your goals. It's easy to lose motivation, but staying focused,

resilient, and believing in yourself will take you much further than you think.

HA: What's the best advice you've ever been given?

FN: Not to compare my journey with anyone else's and to be kinder to myself.

HA: How do you manage your work-life balance?

FN: I'm fortunate to have a healthy work-life balance and try to keep work within my 9-to-5. Outside work, I enjoy baking, cooking, and discovering new cafés. Having hobbies helps me switch off and maintain a good balance.

HA: Who do you most admire, and why?

FN: My mum. She's incredibly resilient and brave, and her journey continues to inspire and motivate me every day. ○

To join our Alumni Network or for more information please contact our Alumni Coordinator
alumni@hammersmithacademy.org



Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology joined students and Mr Kynaston for a roundtable discussion on social media use and future restrictions.

Secretary of State discusses young people's online lives

Hammersmith Academy welcomed the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology as students, parents, and staff helped shape the national conversation on life online.

Hammersmith Academy was pleased to welcome **Liz Kendall, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology**, on Thursday 21st May 2026 as part of the Government's Growing Up in the Online World consultation.

The visit placed our students at the centre of an important national discussion about online safety, social media, and digital wellbeing. Throughout the morning, they shared their experiences of navigating life online, discussing both the opportunities technology creates and the challenges young people face every day. Parents and members of the Academy's pastoral team also joined the conversation, offering their own perspectives on supporting children in an increasingly digital world.

As part of the visit, the Secretary of State toured the Academy, visiting science lessons and learning more about our calm learning environment, including the use of Yondr mobile phone pouches. The system forms part of the Academy's wider approach to reducing distractions, encouraging face-to-face interaction, and helping students develop healthy relationships with technology.

The visit also attracted national attention, with Channel 4 News filming at the Academy as part of its coverage of the consultation.

Reflecting on the visit, Headteacher Gary Kynaston said, "We were delighted to welcome Liz Kendall and representatives from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. Online safety and

digital wellbeing are hugely important issues for schools, parents and young people alike. It was invaluable for our students and families to have the opportunity to share their experiences directly and contribute to a national conversation that will help shape future policy."

One of the strengths of Hammersmith Academy is creating opportunities for students to engage with issues that extend beyond the classroom. Whether contributing to national discussions, meeting decision-makers, or exploring topics that will shape the future, these experiences help students develop the confidence, judgement, and critical thinking needed to navigate an ever-changing world. It is all part of our commitment to preparing every student for real world success.



A voice for young people

For **Alisha-Rose (Year 12)**, standing for election was about more than winning a vote — it was about ensuring young people's voices are heard.

The Academy is delighted to congratulate Alisha-Rose (Year 12) on her election to the **UK Youth Parliament**, where she will represent the voices of young people across Hammersmith & Fulham.

Growing up in the borough, Alisha-Rose says she has developed a strong understanding of the issues affecting young people, both within the local community and beyond. As she became more aware of challenges including mental health, school pressures, financial literacy, and employment opportunities, she felt compelled to make a difference.

"These issues are what sparked my passion for challenging the inadequacy of governmental laws and advocating for young people to be heard," she said. "Clearly, we have not been heard enough."

Standing for election, she explained, was an opportunity to turn that passion into action.

"I wanted to be more than a role model. I wanted to take action and become a political voice that young people can trust."

Although she believed in the campaign she had built, waiting for the results was still an emotional experience.

"Standing on stage with the other candidates was nerve-racking," Alisha-Rose recalled. "But I knew how much hard work, dedication, and passion I'd put into my campaign."

Looking ahead, Alisha-Rose is excited about representing young

people on issues that matter most to them, including mental health, inclusion, and improving access to employment opportunities. She is particularly looking forward to taking part in the annual UK Youth Parliament debate in the House of Commons, where young representatives from across the country debate issues of national importance.

"My biggest priority is amplifying the voices of young people," she said. "I want us to be heard on a national scale."

Alisha-Rose also hopes her election will inspire other students to become more engaged with democracy and the issues shaping their futures.

"Democracy is one of the most important ways young people can influence decisions that affect them directly," she said. "We are the future, and all students should feel empowered to make change within our society. A new form of leadership could start with you today."

Alisha-Rose's election is a fantastic achievement and reflects the confidence, leadership, and sense of responsibility we encourage our students to develop. We look forward to seeing the positive contribution she will make, both within the borough and on the national stage.



I wanted to be more than a role model. I wanted to take action and become a political voice that young people can trust."





A game of hoop rolling on the Palace lawns captured the spirit of a day filled with history, exploration and family fun.

Kensington Palace: a royal partnership

From exclusive family experiences to academic conferences and curriculum enrichment, Hammersmith Academy's five-year partnership with Historic Royal Palaces is transforming the way students and families engage with history, culture and learning beyond the classroom.

One of the defining features of a Hammersmith Academy education is the strength of our partnerships. Through our unique **five-year collaboration with Historic Royal Palaces**, students and families have enjoyed exceptional opportunities that connect classroom learning with world-renowned heritage sites, inspiring curiosity, broadening horizons, and creating memorable experiences.

This year alone, students have explored history through exclusive workshops, attended specialist lectures, taken part in curriculum enrichment activities, and welcomed experts into the Academy. Two events, in particular, capture the breadth and ambition of this remarkable partnership.

Family Day: a palace for the whole community

On Saturday 4th July 2026, families from across the Hammersmith Academy community enjoyed an exclusive day at Kensington Palace.

The event welcomed current families, staff, governors, and those who will be joining the Academy as Year 7 students this September, giving them the opportunity to explore one of London's most historic royal residences together. Importantly, the entire day was provided free of charge, ensuring that all families could enjoy this unique experience and the exceptional opportunities made possible through the Academy's partnerships.

Throughout the day, families explored the Palace's magnificent

State Apartments, handled historic objects, met Queen Caroline through a fascinating living history performance, and enjoyed artist-led zine-making workshops inspired by the Palace and its stories. Families also spent time together on the Orangery Lawn, enjoying games, picnics, and refreshments provided by the Historic Royal Palaces team.

A particular highlight was the opportunity to experience the new The Last Princesses of Punjab exhibition, offering a thought-provoking insight into identity, heritage, and the remarkable lives of Princess Sophia Duleep Singh and her sisters.

The day reflected the strength of Hammersmith Academy's partnership with Historic Royal

Palaces, which extends far beyond a single visit. Through the Kensington Enrichment Project, students and families have access to experiences that enrich learning, broaden cultural understanding, and create lasting memories together. Welcoming our incoming Year 7 families also provided an opportunity for them to experience first-hand the unique opportunities that await them as part of the Hammersmith Academy community.

Our thanks to the Historic Royal Palaces team for agreeing to turn our idea into reality, building all our families into the partnership programme.

Psychology through a different lens

The partnership has also enriched learning in the Sixth Form. Earlier this year, our second annual Psychology Conference was hosted at Kensington Palace's Clore Learning Centre, bringing together students, academics and practising psychologists to explore how our understanding of mental health has evolved over time.

Following preparatory visits to Kew Palace, students examined the story of King George III before hearing from Historic Royal Palaces curator Polly Putnam, whose keynote explored historical attitudes towards mental illness. A panel of psychologists, therapists and alumni then shared

insights into careers across the profession before students took part in a speed networking session with industry experts.

The conference pushed students to think beyond the curriculum while developing professional networks, critical thinking and a deeper appreciation of psychology as both an academic discipline and a career.

These experiences are only possible because of the strength of our relationship with Historic Royal Palaces. We are incredibly grateful to everyone involved for their enthusiasm, expertise and continued support. Together, we are creating opportunities that encourage curiosity, deepen learning and give our students experiences they will remember long after they leave the Academy. ○

”

This year alone, students have explored history through exclusive workshops, attended specialist lectures, taken part in curriculum enrichment activities, and welcomed experts into the Academy.”



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES



Students joined psychology professionals at Kensington Palace's Clore Learning Centre.

Shaping up for an AI future

Artificial intelligence is already transforming the way we live, learn and work. Through Hammersmith Academy's partnership with Tech We Can, Accenture and Microsoft, Year 10 students were challenged to think beyond today's technology and imagine how AI could solve tomorrow's educational challenges.



The whole of Year 10 were introduced to ideas and concepts in an extended assembly as the first part of the **Regenerative AI Programme**. Part two comprised two full-day workshop sessions for 60 students to work alongside industry experts exploring how artificial intelligence can be used responsibly to improve education. Following a keynote discussion, an opportunity to hear from employer volunteers about their career journeys and a Q&A session, students worked in teams to identify real challenges facing schools, before designing their own AI-powered solutions. From generating original ideas to refining and pitching their concepts, the day mirrored the innovation process used by technology companies.

The event culminated in a showcase where each team presented its proposal to an employer panel and local MP Andy Slaughter (pictured).

Students demonstrated creativity, critical thinking and confidence as they explained how their ideas could make learning more engaging, accessible and effective for future generations.

More than simply learning about artificial intelligence, students experienced what it means to innovate collaboratively, solve complex problems and communicate ideas with impact. Through partnerships such as this, Hammersmith Academy continues to give students first-hand access to the technologies and employers shaping the future of work. Mr Francis, Head of Year 10, was impressed: "Programmes like these allow our young people to see the big picture, explore possibilities and build confidence in critical thinking. I was particularly pleased to see our students challenging themselves and building confidence with new ideas,

but also asking senior executives tough questions about the impact on the environment and employment."

The programme also included a whole-staff workshop which offered a further insight into current thinking on AI in education, adding value to our programme of continuing professional development focused on the effective use of AI tools in education, and contentious issues such as plagiarism and the potential for the erosion of critical thinking skills. [🔗](#)

Spanish study visit

Year 10 student, Charlie reflects on an unforgettable visit to southern Spain, where language, culture, and history came to life beyond the classroom.



Our trip to Spain gave us a fantastic opportunity to experience the language and culture that cannot be recreated in the classroom while building confidence in our Spanish.

After arriving in **Málaga**, we made the most of the beautiful weather with an afternoon at the beach before enjoying a traditional tapas dinner at a local restaurant. A stroll through the city centre, complete with ice cream, provided the perfect introduction to Spanish life.

The following day, we explored some of Málaga's most famous landmarks, including the Teatro Romano de Málaga and the city's historic castles. After time to browse the local shops and enjoy lunch, we visited the Museo Picasso Málaga before taking part in a speaking challenge that encouraged us to put our Spanish into practice in real-life situations. We rounded off the evening with

dinner overlooking Málaga Cathedral. A visit to Córdoba offered a fascinating insight into Spain's rich cultural heritage. Exploring the spectacular Mezquita-Catedral and Casa de Sefarad helped us better understand the country's diverse history and the influence of different cultures through the centuries.

Before returning home, we enjoyed one final morning exploring the Museo de Málaga, the city's park, and the waterfront, making the most of our last few hours together.

Although the visit was only a few days long, it provided an unforgettable opportunity to improve our language skills, deepen our understanding of Spanish culture and history, and create lasting memories with friends. It was an experience that brought our classroom learning to life and inspired us to continue developing our confidence in Spanish. ○



Exploring the spectacular Mezquita-Catedral and Casa de Sefarad helped us better understand the country's diverse history and the influence of different cultures through the centuries."



Work experience week

For one week, offices, hospitals, theatres, construction sites, schools, and studios became the classroom as every Year 10 student stepped into the world of work.



Year 10 students spent a week in work placements across a diverse range of sectors including a group at AtkinsRéalis, a global professional consulting and project management company.

From Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July, every Year 10 student swapped classrooms for workplaces across London as part of **Hammersmith Academy's annual Work Experience Week**, an established tradition that lies at the heart of our commitment to preparing students for real world success.

Whether working alongside engineers, healthcare professionals, architects, theatre practitioners, teachers, marketers, hospitality teams or business leaders, students experienced first-hand what it means to be part of a professional workplace. Throughout the week they developed confidence, communication skills, independence, and a greater understanding of the expectations and opportunities that await beyond school.

This year's placements reflected the breadth of students' ambitions. They gained experience with organisations including HS2, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, AtkinsRéalis, the Lyric Theatre, OMD EMEA, St George, RPM, the National Archives, Hammersmith & Fulham Council, West London Audi, and a wide range of primary schools, charities, local businesses, and creative organisations.

For many students, the week introduced professions they had never previously considered or gave fresh insights, helping them make more informed decisions about A Levels, apprenticeships, university courses, and future careers.

Reflecting on the programme, Ms Harrowes, Head of Careers &

Cultural Connections, said: "Work experience is one of the most valuable parts of a student's journey at Hammersmith Academy. It allows young people to experience professional environments, build confidence, and begin connecting their education with the careers they aspire to. Every placement offers something different, but each one helps students develop the skills, independence, and perspective that will benefit them long into the future."

Work Experience Week is made possible by the generosity of our employer partners, whose continued support helps inspire and prepare our students for the world of work. ○

Work Experience Placements

The business of success

After a year of turning ideas into reality, Elev8 closed the books on a successful Young Enterprise journey with a fitting celebration of everything they achieved.



Managing Director, Dawid (pictured third from right) with the Elev8 team and Mr Ahmed (pictured far left)

Running a business is about far more than developing a product. It means making decisions, solving problems, managing finances, and working as a team. Over the past year, our **Young Enterprise** company, Elev8, experienced exactly that.

Their journey concluded on Wednesday 8th July with the company's Final Annual General Meeting (AGM), where students presented their company report and financial performance to investors, staff, and invited guests. The event concluded with the distribution of dividends to shareholders, recognising both the company's successful trading and the support it received throughout the year.

Reflecting on the experience, Managing Director, Dawid (Year 12), said: "Being Managing Director of Elev8 has been an unforgettable experience. We've grown so much as a team, learning how to overcome challenges, make important business decisions, and work together towards a common goal. I'm incredibly

proud of what we've achieved, and I'm thankful we got to celebrate our journey with everyone who has supported us at our final AGM."

Throughout the programme, students developed leadership, communication, financial planning, marketing, and problem-solving skills while gaining first-hand experience of what it takes to launch and run a successful business.

Mr Ahmed, Head of Business & Economics, said: "Young Enterprise gives students something that can't be replicated in a classroom alone. They experience the realities of business, learn from both successes and setbacks, and discover the value of collaboration, accountability, and innovation."

Although Elev8 has now reached the end of its trading journey, the confidence, resilience, and entrepreneurial mindset developed along the way will stay with the team long after the final accounts have been closed. 



We've grown so much as a team, learning how to overcome challenges, make important business decisions, and work together towards a common goal."

Opening Oxford's doors



Walking through historic colleges, debating complex ideas in university tutorials, and learning directly from Oxford academics gave a group of Hammersmith Academy Sixth Form students a genuine insight into life at one of the world's leading universities.

Their visit to **Exeter College, University of Oxford**, was designed to go far beyond a campus tour. Through admissions workshops, personal statement sessions, and mock tutorials, students experienced the academic challenge and intellectual curiosity that define an Oxford education while gaining practical guidance on the application process.

For Ruby (Year 12), one of the most valuable aspects of the visit was

understanding how Oxford differs from other universities.

"The tutorials gave me a real feel for student life at Oxford. We explored historical sources in much greater depth than we would at school, and it helped me decide whether studying History, and Oxford specifically, is something I want to pursue."

Students were encouraged to think critically, defend their ideas, and engage in university-level discussion. For Alexandra (Year 12), the tutorial experience was particularly memorable.

"Whatever ideas we presented were challenged and examined, forcing us to think beyond our first response and explore the deeper meaning. It gave me confidence that, with ambition and hard work, anyone can

become an Oxford student."

Alongside exploring the colleges, chapel, and library, students also gained valuable insight into what admissions tutors look for in competitive applications, helping them prepare for the next stage of their educational journey.

Experiences such as these form an important part of Hammersmith Academy's university preparation programme, ensuring students are not only informed about their options but also inspired to pursue them with confidence. By connecting students with world-leading institutions and providing authentic insight into university life, the Academy continues to help young people raise their aspirations and realise that ambitious destinations are within their reach. ○



For our Year 13 students, submitting a UCAS application represents months of research, reflection, and careful decision-making as they prepare for the next stage of their education.

This year, 108 of our 128 Year 13 students applied to university. From researching courses and attending open days to refining personal statements and completing applications, students were supported throughout the process by Ms Harrowes, Head of Careers & Cultural Connections, helping them make informed choices about their futures.

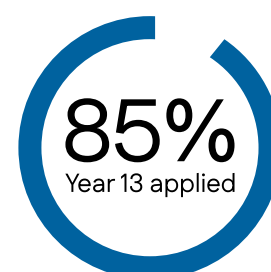
That preparation has resulted in an impressive range of offers from some of the UK's leading universities. Students have received offers across an exceptional breadth of disciplines, reflecting both the ambition of this year's cohort and the diversity of opportunities available.

Destinations include the **University of Cambridge** for Chemical Engineering, **Imperial College**

London for Economics, Finance and Data Science, **University College London** for Environmental Geoscience, Data Science, Biological Sciences and Biomedical Sciences, **King's College London** for Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, the **University of Warwick** for Mathematics, Accounting and Computer Science, the **University of Edinburgh** for Social Anthropology and Politics, and Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science, **Queen Mary University of London**, the **University of Southampton**, and the University of East Anglia for Medicine, alongside **University of the Arts London** for Design Management, Animation, and Media and Screen Studies.

These destinations reflect the Academy's commitment to supporting every student in pursuing ambitious pathways that match their interests and aspirations. As students prepare to make their final choices, we look forward to celebrating their achievements and following their journeys beyond Hammersmith Academy. 

From Medicine and Engineering to Artificial Intelligence and Design, this year's Year 13 cohort has secured an outstanding range of university offers following months of personalised guidance and preparation.



University Offers

Duke of Edinburgh expedition: Rising to the challenge

Maps unfolded, rucksacks packed, boots laced. With the route planned and the weather forecast offering little encouragement, this year's Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition was underway in the wilds of Surrey.

Across a weekend in June, students navigated unfamiliar routes, carried everything they needed on their backs, pitched tents, cooked for themselves, and adapted to changing conditions. While the miles tested their stamina, it was the everyday moments of working together, solving problems, and encouraging one another that defined the experience.

Each group quickly developed its own identity. Group 1 (Ania, Blen, Eunice, Kateryna, and Kebron) kept morale high, their singing echoing across the countryside even as the rain set in. Group 2 (Tyreece, Pau, Marko, Jacob, and Charley) tackled every route with boundless enthusiasm, always convinced they could find an even quicker way to the next checkpoint.

At camp, Group 3 (Milan, Annalise, Sofia, Bess, Julia, Hannah, and

Alyssa) impressed with their organisation, preparing meals efficiently and looking after one another after long days on the trail. Meanwhile, Group 4 (Abduraheem, Hadib, James, Hussein C, Hussein E, and Alex) became known for their oversized walking sticks or "staffs", as they proudly called them and somehow produced campsite dinners of steak and eggs that left everyone else wondering how they had managed it.

Although every group approached the challenge differently, they all demonstrated the same qualities: resilience, independence, and a genuine willingness to support one another. Confidence grew with every mile, and by the end of the expedition it was clear how much had been achieved beyond simply completing the route.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is about far more than reaching the finish. It is about discovering what you are capable of, learning to rely on others, and returning home with greater confidence than when you set out. This year's expedition captured that spirit perfectly. ○

Rain, campfires, questionable weather, and plenty of laughter. Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator, Mr Barlow looks back on an expedition that tests students in more ways than they expected.



Cooking together at camp was just one of the many challenges students embraced during their Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition.

Author brings Runaway Road to life

An inspiring visit from award-winning author Sue Divin gave Year 9 students the opportunity to explore how literature can deepen our understanding of history, identity, and hope.



As part of our **National Year of Reading celebrations**, Year 9 students welcomed Northern Irish author Sue Divin to the Academy to explore the stories and history behind her latest novel, *Runaway Road*.

Drawing on her background in community relations and peace and conflict studies, Sue introduced students to the novel's themes of family, identity, and belonging. Set against the backdrop of Northern Ireland, *Runaway Road* follows two siblings determined to stay together while escaping a difficult home life, offering a powerful exploration of resilience, hope, and home.

A memorable moment came as Sue shared photographs and video footage of landmarks, murals, and communities across Northern Ireland while reading an extract from

the novel. Seeing the real places behind the story helped students understand how history continues to shape modern society and how authors draw on lived experience to create authentic fiction.

The session concluded with a lively discussion, with students asking thoughtful questions about Sue's writing process, her inspiration, and the difficulties of exploring complex themes through young adult fiction.

Reflecting on the visit, Academy Librarian, Ms Harney, said: "Visits like this remind students that reading is about far more than finishing a book. Meeting an author, hearing the stories behind the story, and exploring the real places that inspired it encourages curiosity, empathy, and a lifelong love of reading. It was wonderful to see Year 9 so engaged throughout the session." 



"The best books don't just tell stories—they help us understand the world through someone else's eyes."

From page to performance



Over the past ten weeks, Ms Williams, Head of Drama, has been working alongside a group of Year 8 students as they embark on a creative journey through the **ReAct Festival**, a partnership between the **White City Theatre Project** and **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre**.

Working with professional theatre practitioners, students have devised an entirely original performance inspired by this year's theme, Power. Rather than performing an existing play, they have created every aspect of the production themselves, experimenting with physical theatre, improvisation, character development, and ensemble performance to transform their ideas into live theatre.

"Watching students grow in confidence, both on stage and as members of an ensemble, has been one of the highlights of the project," said Ms Williams. "The devising process has encouraged them to listen to one another, experiment creatively, solve problems together, and take ownership of every aspect of their production."

The project forms part of the ReAct Festival, which brings together students from schools across West London to create and perform original work before showcasing it at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. Along the way, students gain an insight into professional theatre-making while developing creativity, resilience, and teamwork.

Their journey will culminate in a performance at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre this July, where they will perform alongside other schools taking part in this year's festival. Students will also have the opportunity to continue their theatrical journey through the White City Theatre Project's youth theatre, whose alumni include ten former Hammersmith Academy students.

"Projects like this show students that theatre is about far more than performing on stage," added Ms Williams. "It's about creativity, communication, collaboration, and finding the confidence to share your ideas. Watching them grow throughout the process has been incredibly rewarding." ■

What does it take to create an original piece of theatre? Year 8 students are discovering the answer through an inspiring partnership with the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre.

“

The devising process has encouraged students to listen to one another, experiment creatively, solve problems together, and take ownership of every aspect of their production.”

Economics in action



For Year 12 A-Level Economics students, an afternoon in the City of London provided a fascinating insight into how the concepts studied in the classroom shape the UK's economy and global financial markets.

A visit to the **Bank of England Museum** traced more than 300 years of banking history, from the Bank's foundation in 1694 to its role today in setting interest rates and controlling inflation. Students also put their strength to the test by attempting to lift a genuine 13kg gold bar, while discovering why gold remains one of the world's most valuable assets.

The visit concluded at **Schroders Investment Management**, where finance professionals shared their career journeys and explained how economic theory underpins decision-making across asset management, investment banking, and financial markets. It was a valuable opportunity to see how Economics extends far beyond the classroom and into the heart of one of the world's leading financial centres. ○

Thinking like an entrepreneur



Taking part in the **Start It Summer Entrepreneurship Course at St Paul's School** gave Eric (Year 11) and his fellow group of Year 11 students a valuable insight into the journey from business idea to investment pitch.

Working in a team, Eric helped develop an AI-powered app designed to reduce food waste and encourage more sustainable eating. Alongside refining the concept, students explored areas of business beyond the classroom, including financial forecasting, marketing, and business planning. Eric presented the group's marketing strategy as part of the final pitch, helping the team secure the Best Sustainability Award.

Reflecting on the experience, Eric said the course strengthened his understanding of entrepreneurship while demonstrating the importance of teamwork, creativity, and turning innovative ideas into practical solutions. ○

Coastal challenge



Year 12 students Abdulrahman, Ahmed, Amanuel, Makel and Dawid recently completed a demanding five-day expedition along the **Pembrokeshire Coast Path**, walking around 10 kilometres each day while camping along the route.

Beyond the physical exertion, the expedition developed resilience, independence, and teamwork as the group learnt essential outdoor skills, adapted to changing weather conditions, and supported one another every step of the way. Along the journey, they were met with remarkable kindness from the local community, from campsite owners who generously provided free pitches to the many people who offered encouragement, advice and even an ice cream. Their generosity left a lasting impression, namely that adventure is as much about the people you meet as the places you visit.

With thanks to the **Mark Evison Foundation** for making this unforgettable experience possible. ○

Inside trauma surgery



Members of **MedSoc** welcomed orthopaedic trauma surgeon Dr Matthew Arnaouti for an honest insight into one of medicine's most demanding specialisms. For Amira (Year 13), the session was "a fascinating glimpse into the rewards and challenges of a career in trauma surgery."

Drawing on his own experiences, Dr Arnaouti spoke about treating complex injuries and the technical expertise, teamwork, and compassion required in the operating theatre. Amira found the discussion around phantom limb pain particularly memorable, describing it as "a reminder of just how complex the human body can be." Students also heard about a 24-hour operation and the realities of providing surgical care in disaster zones, including Gaza and Malawi.

It was clear that becoming a great doctor requires far more than scientific knowledge. As Amira reflected, it also demands empathy and the ability to support patients through the most challenging moments of their lives. ○

The making of television



A visit to **Banijay UK**, the production company behind programmes including MasterChef, Big Brother, Peaky Blinders and Survivor, gave Year 12 students a behind-the-scenes look at the television industry. Reflecting on the experience, Millie and Alexandra (Year 12) described it as an eye-opening introduction to the creativity and collaboration behind some of the UK's best-known productions.

Working in teams, students developed marketing campaigns for Last One Laughing before pitching their ideas and creating original reality television concepts. Alongside the creative tasks, they met professionals working across production, design, and content development, discovering the wide variety of careers that bring television programmes to life.

The visit explored preconceptions about the industry and demonstrated that successful television production depends on many different skills—from creativity and communication to teamwork and problem-solving. ○

JLT student voice



Members of the HA Community Junior Leadership Team (JLT) demonstrated outstanding leadership this term by organising two student-led competitions celebrating diversity and wellbeing.

To celebrate Language and Culture, they delivered the Academy's annual Mural Competition, inviting students to create artwork inspired by the many languages and cultures represented across the school. The winning designs will be combined into a permanent mural in the Academy's safe space.

During **Mental Health Awareness Week**, they also organised a Poetry Competition themed Take Action, encouraging students to explore positive wellbeing through creative writing.

Led entirely by students, both initiatives highlight the JLT's important role in amplifying student voice and shaping Academy life. ○

Coldstream Guards award



Year 11 student Leonard has been honoured at this year's **Hammersmith & Fulham Coldstream Guards Awards**, which celebrate young people who have made an exceptional contribution to their school communities.

Nominated by Academy staff, Leonard was recognised for his outstanding academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, and unwavering commitment to excellence. Alongside his own success, he is known for supporting classmates through collaboration and peer learning, demonstrating maturity, kindness, and a genuine willingness to help others succeed.

The award was presented during a special Year 11 assembly by Cllr Daryl Brown and Major Rudy Vandaele-Kennedy of the Coldstream Guards, recognising Leonard's achievements among the borough's most exceptional young people. Congratulations to Leonard on this thoroughly deserved recognition. 🟡

History at Kensington Palace



A visit to Kensington Palace gave Year 8 students the opportunity to experience history beyond the classroom, exploring original artefacts and discovering the stories they tell about Britain's past.

Through a hands-on workshop, students examined historical objects to deepen their understanding of the British Empire and the influence of different cultures on British history, including artistic pieces inspired by Chinese ceramics. They also explored The Last Princesses of Punjab exhibition, where the lives of the Duleep Singh sisters brought their classroom learning to life. Learning about Sophia Duleep Singh and her role in the women's suffrage movement offered students a powerful insight into the people who helped shape modern Britain.

The visit encouraged students to think critically about the past while demonstrating how museums and historic collections can transform the study of history into a truly immersive experience. 🟡

Problem shared, problem solved



Quick thinking, teamwork, and plenty of determination were on display as Year 9 students represented Hammersmith Academy at this year's **Count On Us Competition**, taking on mathematical challenges alongside schools from across London.

Organised at the Academy by Mr Christie, the competition brought together eight schools for a series of fast-paced quizzes and puzzles testing mental arithmetic, strategy, problem-solving, and collaboration. Supported by three Year 10 coaches, our team had spent months preparing and approached the day with confidence. Although they narrowly missed out on a place in the final, organisers praised their teamwork and the way they played to one another's strengths.

Reflecting on the day, Xinchen (Year 9) described the competition as "very fun yet challenging", with every round demanding fast thinking and close collaboration. 🟡

Celebrating the Class of 2026

Across two memorable evenings, our Year 11 and Year 13 students celebrated the end of an important chapter, marking their achievements, friendships, and the exciting journeys that lie ahead.



Abdirahman and Almas were crowned Year 11 Prom King and Queen.

As another academic year drew to a close, our Year 11 and Year 13 students celebrated the important milestones with memorable Proms that recognised their achievements, friendships, and the journeys that lie ahead.

Year 11

For Year 11, the celebrations began with a Thames boat cruise. More than 100 students and 45 members of staff gathered at Putney Pier before

setting sail on a warm summer evening, enjoying spectacular views of London as the boat made its way along the river.

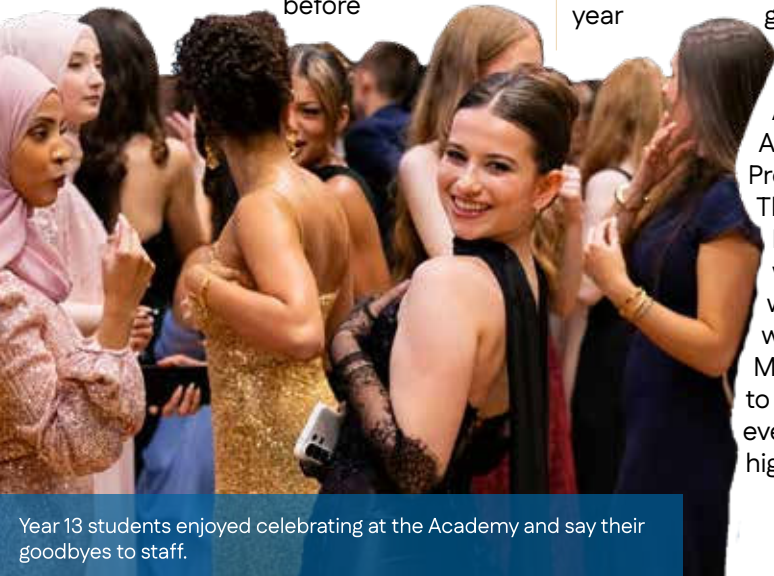
The atmosphere came alive as students took to the dance floor, posed for photographs, and celebrated the end of their GCSEs together. A delicious meal from local restaurant Bonego kept everyone fuelled before the evening's traditional awards recognised some memorable personalities within the year group. Juliana and Zion were named Best Dressed, while Abdirahman and Almas were crowned Prom King and Queen. The ever-popular Best Dancer award went to Omar, whose dance-off with Headteacher Mr Kynaston proved to be one of the evening's biggest highlights.

Year 13

Meanwhile, Year 13 celebrated the conclusion of their Hammersmith Academy journey with an elegant Prom held in the Academy Theatre. Students also enjoyed a meal from Bonego before spending the evening celebrating with friends and staff, reflecting on the memories they have made throughout their time at the Academy.

For many Year 13 students, the occasion marked the end of a seven-year journey that began in Year 7. It was a fitting farewell to a year group that has made a lasting contribution to Academy life and now looks ahead to university, apprenticeships, employment, and a wide range of exciting opportunities.

We wish all of our Year 11 and Year 13 students every success as they begin the next stage of their journeys and look forward to following their future achievements. 🌟



Year 13 students enjoyed celebrating at the Academy and say their goodbyes to staff.

Primary partnerships

A new partnership programme is bringing local schools together to inspire younger learners while giving Hammersmith Academy students valuable opportunities to lead, mentor and grow.



Year 4 and Year 5 students learning Flamenco during the La Feria event which introduced primary students to Spanish culture.

This year marked an exciting new chapter in our work with local schools. Through a growing programme of shared learning, enrichment and cultural experiences, we are creating opportunities beyond the classroom that benefit both younger learners and our own students.

Working with partner schools, the programme has already welcomed hundreds of primary students to the Academy for a wide range of academic, cultural and enrichment activities.

One of the highlights was two exclusive matinee performances of **High School Musical**, where almost 480 primary students enjoyed a live theatre experience before the public performances. Performing for a younger audience gave our cast invaluable experience, helping them build confidence, refine their performances and inspire the next generation of performers.

The programme has also extended into the classroom. During **La Feria**, Year 10 students worked with

the Modern Foreign Languages Department to introduce Year 4 and 5 students to Spanish language and culture. Acting as mentors, they developed leadership, communication and teamwork skills while helping younger learners discover a new language in a fun and engaging way.

Other highlights included a hands-on **ZooLab Animal Encounter**, an inspiring **author talk** with J.P. Rose, and Hammersmith Academy students leading practical activities at John Betts Primary School's **STEAM Event**, encouraging curiosity and creativity through science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.

Beyond enriching the learning of local primary students, the programme has strengthened our students' confidence, responsibility and leadership skills. As it continues to grow, it is building stronger relationships across our community and creating opportunities for young people of all ages to learn from one another. ○



By inspiring younger learners, our students discovered the confidence to lead."

7 primary school partners

Addison Primary School
Brackenbury Primary School
Flora Gardens Primary School
John Betts Primary School
Miles Coverdale Primary School
St Paul's CofE Primary School
Wendell Park Primary School

STEM: Invent. Explore. Discover.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics are changing the world at an extraordinary pace. At Hammersmith Academy, students aren't simply learning STEM, they're applying it through industry partnerships, national competitions and projects that tackle real-world challenges.



Our Year 7 delegation was hands-on during the Race to the Line event, designing and constructing model cars.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics are changing the way we live, work, and solve some of society's greatest challenges. At Hammersmith Academy, STEM is about more than mastering individual subjects—it's about asking questions, testing ideas, and applying knowledge in meaningful ways.

This term alone, students have engineered award-winning racing cars, explored careers in architecture, and designed innovative solutions to improve air quality. Together, these experiences demonstrate how STEM education at Hammersmith Academy develops not only technical understanding, but also the creativity, confidence and problem-solving skills that prepare students for the future.

Race to the Line

Year 7 students put their engineering skills to the test at the **Race to the Line 2.0 Bio Area Finals**, designing,

building, and racing biodegradable CO₂-powered model cars. Using specialist software, they refined their designs before securing an outstanding first, second and third place with the three fastest cars of the day.

Beyond the podium, students developed resilience, teamwork, and creative problem-solving while experiencing the engineering design process first hand. Next year, this year's competitors will return as mentors, helping inspire the next generation of Hammersmith Academy engineers.

Architecture

Through the national Accelerate Studios programme, Year 9 students visited **Gort Scott Architects**, meeting architects, engineers, CAD technicians and model makers to discover how buildings evolve from concept to construction.

Exploring architectural models and

discussing live projects gave students valuable insight into the creative and technical careers shaping the built environment. The visit encouraged students to think differently about architecture while highlighting the wide range of opportunities available across the industry.

Air Quality Science

Year 8 students explored air quality and environmental science through the **AWAIR for Schools programme**, designing solar-powered displays that communicate real-time pollution information and practical health advice.

Working alongside researchers from **Imperial College London**, students combined scientific understanding with creative thinking to tackle a real-world issue. Following presentations to staff, students and industry professionals, the winning design was selected for permanent installation at the Academy. ○

Making a charitable difference

From supporting local communities to raising awareness of important causes, our community has once again demonstrated the generosity, compassion and community spirit that define Hammersmith Academy.

The term began with our **Green for Grenfell** fundraising day, held in memory of the 72 lives lost in the Grenfell Tower tragedy and in solidarity with those still affected. Students and staff dressed in green and raised £316.62 for the Grenfell Foundation.

Students also organised fundraising for **The Outside Project**, London's LGBTIQ+ community shelter and support service. Through student-led initiatives and donations, the Academy raised £338.39, helping to provide safe, inclusive services for people experiencing homelessness.

The term concluded with our annual Race for Life Summer Fair, raising funds for **Cancer Research UK** and **Sport Skills 4 Life**. The Academy was transformed into a vibrant summer fair, with food and drink stalls, candy floss, homemade bakes,

face painting, temporary tattoos, raffles, tombolas, fairground games, a plant sale and the ever-popular 'Dunk a Teacher' game. Together, students, staff and families raised an outstanding £1,545.75, with proceeds shared between the two charities. It was the perfect way to round off another successful academic year.

Across the term, the Hammersmith Academy community raised an incredible £2,200.76 for charitable causes. Our sincere thanks go to every student, member of staff, parent, carer and visitor who donated, volunteered, baked, bought a raffle ticket, ran a stall or simply came along to support. Every contribution, however big or small, helped make a genuine difference and demonstrated the generosity and community spirit that make Hammersmith Academy so special.

£2,200.76 for charitable causes this term!



Mr Russea during the 'Dunk a Teacher' game at the Race for Life Summer Fair.

Beyond the scoreboard

Behind every medal, every finish line and every fixture is a story of commitment, teamwork and personal growth. These are the moments that define sport at Hammersmith Academy.



The Academy's Year 10 rowing team had an incredible day at the Youth Boat Race, including being interviewed for Channel 4.

National Rowing Success

Months of early morning training and strength and conditioning sessions culminated in a remarkable performance as our Year 10 Rowing Team finished runners-up in the **2026 Youth Boat Race**, competing against 20 schools from across the country.

Racing on the River Thames and broadcast live on **Channel 4**, the crew overcame an early clash of blades to recover brilliantly and secure second place in a fiercely contested final. Their composure, technical skill, and teamwork were evident throughout the race.

Adding to an unforgettable day, Eric and Ania were interviewed by renowned broadcaster **Clare Balding**, sharing their experiences and reflecting on the continued growth of rowing at Hammersmith Academy.

It was a superb achievement and another milestone for the Academy's rowing programme.

Stepping into the Ring

A group of Year 10 students are developing new skills and confidence through an exciting after-school boxing programme led by Coach Moe.

Across eight weekly sessions, students are learning the fundamentals of boxing, from footwork and defensive techniques to pad work and fitness training. Beyond the physical challenge, the programme encourages discipline, resilience, focus and self-control, helping students build confidence both inside and outside the ring.

The initiative forms part of Hammersmith Academy's commitment to providing students with a broad range of sporting opportunities that promote personal growth alongside physical wellbeing. We look forward to seeing the group continue their progress over the coming weeks.

Racing on the River Thames and broadcast live on Channel 4, the crew overcame an early clash of blades to recover brilliantly and secure second place in a fiercely contested final."

Volleyball on the Rise

What began as a small Session 3 volleyball club has quickly developed into an exciting new sporting opportunity at Hammersmith Academy. Thanks to the enthusiasm of our students, Ms Nair established a partnership with **ONYX Volleyball Club**, bringing experienced coaches into the Academy to help develop the foundations of next year's volleyball team.

Throughout the programme, students embraced every hurdle with determination and a willingness to learn, growing in confidence, teamwork, and technical ability with every session. The partnership has provided a fantastic opportunity to develop both sporting skills and personal resilience, while laying the foundations for a bright future for volleyball at the Academy.

Our thanks go to ONYX Volleyball Club for their invaluable support—we look forward to seeing the team continue to grow next year. 🟡



Athlete Spotlight

Ty (Year 9)

Ty has earned recognition through his outstanding attitude, commitment, and determination in every aspect of PE. Whether developing new skills, competing in team activities, or pushing himself to improve, he approaches every lesson with energy, resilience, and a desire to learn.

Ty is a dedicated member of the Academy's volleyball club, where his enthusiasm and commitment have been evident throughout the year. His willingness to embrace feedback, support teammates, and continually improve has helped him grow into both a stronger player and an emerging leader within the squad.

Teacher's comment:
"Ty leads by example through his attitude and commitment. He gives his all in every session and demonstrates the teamwork, perseverance, and positivity that we value in Hammersmith Academy sport." 🟡



Anjelica (Year 7)

Anjelica's commitment to sport has made her a standout performer both in and beyond the classroom. In PE, she consistently demonstrates excellent skill, determination, and a willingness to challenge herself, approaching every lesson with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.

Outside school, Anjelica's dedication to tennis has played a significant role in her development as an athlete. The discipline, resilience, and technical ability she has developed through regular training are reflected in her performances in PE, where she leads by example and encourages those around her to achieve their best.

Teacher's comment:
"Anjelica's commitment to improving, both in school and through her tennis, has been exceptional. She is a fantastic role model combining talent with humility and an outstanding work ethic." 🟡



Contact Us

Hammersmith Academy

25 Cathnor Road, London W12 9JD

T: 020 8222 6000

E: info@hammersmithacademy.org

W: hammersmithacademy.org



Private School Partners



St Paul's School
FOUNDED 1509



ST PAUL'S
GIRLS' SCHOOL

Hammersmith Academy

@hamacad

@HammersmithAcad

facebook.com/hammersmithacademy