



Dear Parents and Carers,

Spring has been an interesting term, with all the usual preparation for the exam season as well the curriculum trips we also had our long awaited OFSTED inspection. For Ashley College it was a positive experience and we eagerly await our official report. I would like to thank all the parents who responded to the OFSTED survey and spoke to them at the school gate, as well our pupils who gave feedback to the inspectors and the rest got on with the normal school day activities.

The staff have been working hard to ensure Year 11s are supported for their GCSE exam prep, and offering the weekly Tuesday after school interventions and sessions during the Easter Break. I hope the pupils will take full advantage of these so that they achieve the best that they can.

Please do take the opportunity to read the newsletter, which highlights activities and work that has taken place in the Spring term. Enclosed you will also find the Brent SEND newsletter, other useful information including activities for young people in Brent during the Easter Holidays.

Meanwhile I would like to wish you all a restful holiday and hope you are able to spend time with family and friends, celebrating Ramadan, Eid, Easter, Rama Navami, Vaisakhi/Baisakhi or Songkran. Whatever your faith, Spring brings with it the symbolism of renewal, fresh start, rebirth and hope. With warmer weather and longer days I hope Spring lifts the spirits and gives us all time to reflect and plan for the future.

We look forward to seeing our centre pupils back on Monday 15th April and when home tuition will commence.

**Ranjna Shiyan- Headteacher**

## Indoor Climbing



As we do each spring, our pupils went to the climbing wall at Harrow Wall indoor centre. At first pupils were very wary and did not seem to enjoy scaling the high walls using small finger holds and tiny foot ledges. That is apart from 2 pupils, who seemed to have some qualities of Spiderman in their genes and were able to virtually fly up the walls.

That was until some of our KS4 girls found the indoor climbs and slides. The urge to get onto the slides overcame all fears of climbing up there in order to slide down different pathways, some parts of which were vertical!

Though it took some time (and some loud screaming) even our youngest pupil managed to get to the top. This was a well attended activity and we hope pupils will continue to take part in this outside of the school time as it seemed that most enjoyed it.



**Frank Ofori-Sampong**

## British Museum Trip



### Writing to argue:

#### Year 11s engage with the debate surrounding the Parthenon Sculptures

One of the highlights of our visit to the British Museum was seeing the Parthenon Sculptures up close, as this was the focus of research conducted by our Year 11 students in preparation for writing an article on the topic as part of our English lessons. Using newspaper articles and TV reports, the students explored the controversy around the request that the marbles are returned to Greece.

The students produced informative and enjoyable articles demonstrating their skills in writing to argue, using a range

of linguistic devices, vocabulary and stylistic features. It was evident that their writing was enhanced by their trip to the museum. Well done to all the students involved in this project.

**Caroline O'Gara**

### A Research For My Art project.

*The school visited The British Museum on the 7th of March 2024. We first began by going to the room with Gems. It was interesting but very small and not as exciting as the other rooms. After that room we went to the Living and Dying room which was very interesting.*

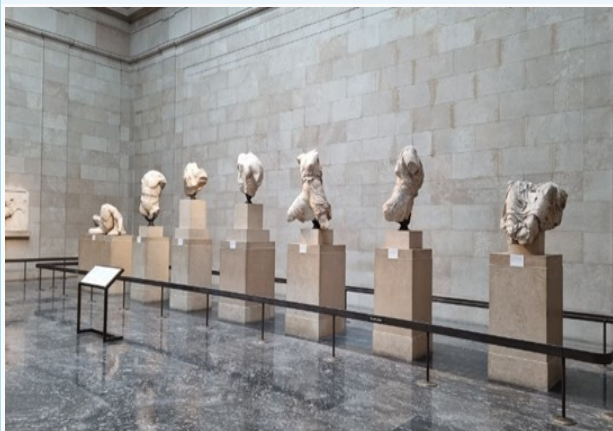
*Then we went to part of the room where the Greek Parthenon Sculptures and artefacts were on display. I found it interesting, I had already read about the sculptures but I learnt new information such as how many pottery items there are.*

*After lunch, we went to the Enlightenment Room to learn about the new scientific discoveries of the 18th century, European colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade.*

*We also saw the Elgin Marbles. In the end we went back to the Enlightenment room, where I drew the sculpture of Zeus as it linked to my art project. In the end my favourite part of the trip was seeing the Greek items as I love reading about it.*



**Dhruv ( Yr11)**



### At the British Museum,

*I really enjoyed seeing the Elgin Marbles as we studied about them in our English lessons. I especially liked the ones that were displayed individually on a pedestal. I enjoyed exploring them as they were in a three-dimensional form varying in range depending on where they were originally placed on the structure in Greece.*

*My favourite part was sketching the sculptures in the large Enlightenment Room which was full of 18th century art and history.*

*We all sat and did some observational drawings and took photos which we added to our art portfolios. What I learnt from my trip was there was a lot more to be seen and explored at the museum which I didn't know was there and would be happy to visit again.*

**Lucas( Yr11)**



## Drop Everything and Problem Solve

The Drop Everything and Problem Solve has been reintroduced this year. The tasks are aimed to encourage and develop students' numeracy, problem solving and thinking skills, these take place outside the maths lesson, challenging the attitude of 'I can't do maths'.

The tasks are designed and/or intended to be thought about independently first, then discussed as a small group. Students are expected to explain their responses to the problem, thus improving their numeracy. This is an example of one of the tasks

Learners are becoming more confident in tackling questions involving problem solving and are not put off by lengthy problems.

Staff comment - "These sessions have been brilliant encouraging the students critical thinking skills. As a non-maths teacher, I have received excellent hands-on support with delivering these. Learners have loved the problem-solving tasks and the discussions which they generate"

Students' feedback is that they 'really enjoy it' and they compare to try to get to the answer first, particularly before the teachers!



## BALANCING ACT

Eight of the nine metal balls shown have the same weight and the other one is heavier. How can you use a balance to identify the heavier ball in just two weighings?



Kader Benamara

On Wednesday 20th March pupils, parents and staff enjoyed the delightful treats baked by our very talented Year 10 bakers.

As a result of the generosity and kindness of our students, families and staff, we raised £50. For a tiny school, we are very proud of this achievement!



Lauran Brannigan



This half-term we have visited the Vale Farm Gym in Wembley on a weekly basis. Once we completed the induction and the staff there were happy that we could use the equipment safely, we were let loose to exercise! Most students used the cycles and the running machines to warm up before going onto more specific pieces of equipment and took part in exercises on the various machines and free weights. There is a host of different kinds of apparatus as well as very helpful Personal Trainers on hand.

The students are now enrolled and can attend individually as members of Vale Farm Gym. As The induction has already been covered students only have to pay per session or they can pay a monthly fee and go as many times as they like. **Please do encourage them to utilise these.**

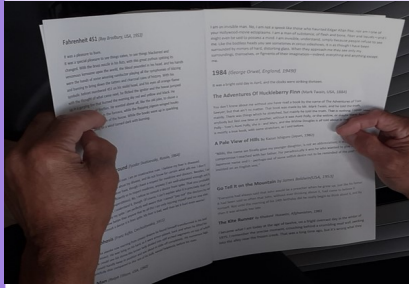
All in all, this has been a very rewarding period. Not only have our students learned how to use the equipment safely, have the confidence to exercise by themselves but they have also started to benefit physically and mentally from their activity.

Frank Ofori –Sampong

## THE VALE FARM GYM



## World Book Day : A shared reading experience



This year, World Book Day was an opportunity for students and staff to come together to read aloud and listen to the openings of great novels from around the world. Novels



included, *The Outsider* by Albert Camus, *The Colour Purple* by Alice Walker, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin, *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, *Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka, *1984* by George Orwell and many more. This was a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

**Caroline O’Gara**

In February, we launched our very own Ashley College creative writing competition, inviting students to create a piece of writing that would tap into their individual interests and strengths. This was a chance to express themselves through description, narrative, poetry or song lyrics. We are thrilled to announce the winners:

1st prize goes to Alex (Y11) for carefully crafting a description evoking a mysterious atmosphere, which is also incredibly rich in its use of vocabulary and literary devices.

2nd prize has been awarded to Dhruv (Y11) for his song lyrics about love, which beautifully capture the intense passion and longing of the lyricist.

Finally, the 3rd prize goes to Milosz (Y11) who takes the reader back to the 12th Century where the narrator - a soldier under the command of Genghis Khan - describes in brilliant detail his experiences in battle.

Well done to these brilliant young authors for their powerful and inventive writing!

## Creative Writing Competition

## The Great Readers’ Prize

As part of our drive to promote reading for pleasure, we have the expectation that our students have a reading book with them at all times. These are some of the benefits of reading for pleasure:

- Correlation between reading engagement and reading attainment
- Vocabulary
- General knowledge
- Understanding of grammar
- Spelling skills
- A link to both improved attainment and more positive attitudes to writing
- Effect on wider academic performance
- Develop empathy for others
- Develop understanding of emotions and vocabulary to discuss these
- Promote a better understanding of the world
- Develop their self and social identities
- Improved mental well-being



Our Great Readers are those students who read when they arrive early to school before lessons begin, read during tutor time and engage with 1:1 reading with staff during which very lively discussions often take place. We have noticed significant improvements in these students’ reading ages, their use of vocabulary and understanding of texts. The following students have been awarded the Great Readers’ Prize:

Andi-Mae (Year 11)

Milisz (Year 11)

Dhruv (Year 11)

Ruby (Year 9)

Nicolas (Year 8)

Well done to all these fantastic readers!

**Caroline O’Gara**



## CREATIVE WRITING TASK



The dark, foggy forest was filled with an eerie silence as I cautiously made my way through the twisted trees and dense undergrowth. The mist hung heavily in the air, creating an almost mystical atmosphere that sent shivers down my spine. In the distance, I could just make out the silhouette of a mysterious house, barely visible through the haze. Its windows were dark and foreboding, and I couldn't help but feel a sense of unease as I approached closer. As I ventured further into the gloomy forest, the gnarled branches clawed at my clothes and the damp ground seemed to swallow my every step. The only sound was the eerie creaking of the trees in

the wind, adding to the sense of desolation and dread that hung in the air. The mysterious house loomed larger now, its shadowy presence casting a long, twisted shadow across the forest floor. I could feel my heart pounding in my chest as I hesitantly drew closer, unsure of what secrets lay within its walls. The darkness seemed to swallow me whole as I finally reached the doorstep of the mysterious house, the only sound now the whisper of the wind through the trees.

I yanked the rusted and ancient door knob and a loud screech echoed throughout the forest. Dark demons haunted my every thought. I tip-toed throughout the rubble entrance with caution. The wind that patrolled the forest could be heard through every hole and crack in the house. Floors that should be held up lay on the dark spruce ground. The house was breathing. Wind created a shiver for any being who passed by. There it was, right in front of me. A being that has only been described by survivors. A myth that has come true.

**Alex (Yr11)**

I'm falling, in all the good times  
I find myself, longing for change  
And in the bad times I fear myself, that it won't happen  
I'm not tired trying to fill that void in my heart  
Let me tell you how it is not possible that you haven't  
recognise my feelings  
Others sometimes assume I always have you in my mind,  
well I do  
I'd like you to know that I love you  
  
I can only imagine what it will be like, When I walk, by your  
side as lovers  
I can only imagine what my eyes will see, when your face is  
before me  
Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel  
Will I stand in your presence, will I sing or will I be able to  
speak at all?  
I can only imagine when that day comes  
When I find myself standing in before you in our life  
  
I don't understand why I always have you in my mind  
I've lost control of my body when you stand before me  
I'm angry about every time you're in pain  
I think about you, every time I see something that reminds  
me of you  
I want you to know, my love for you for you  
Tell me how you don't understand my feelings  
  
I can only imagine us both loving through the night  
I can only imagine us together side by side  
I can only imagine we're dancing in the moonlight  
I can only imagine how it is to be with you

**Dhruv(Yr11)**

### **Weeping woods**

The fog engulfed the eerie forest as a soupy blanket, dense and unforgiving for anybody wanting to navigate through it. The vile emerald colour would evoke an eerie feeling in anyone seeing it. Could this be the doing of something paranormal?

Among the foggy surroundings there were bare trees almost skeletal in nature; their leafless and muddy, liver coloured branches were clawing at the sky like furious daggers. The weather, which was windy and howling through the woodland, was more powerful than the trees which were being shoved around and could not fight back, only scratch at the omnipotent gust.

Standing menacingly before the woods was a stone arch which was corroded and mossy, being illuminated by the moonlight. This arch resembled a magical portal into a strange and unfamiliar new place that swallows you as you step through. In the middle of the arch was a cold and tall iron gate drawing people in as victims to become lost in the seemingly endless acres of the brown maze. It is as if the gate is acting as a minion for the iniquitous woods hoping to lure more souls into its evil grasp.

**Milosz(Yr11)**

# Safeguarding updates

**shout**  
85258

Shout offers confidential 24/7 crisis text support for times when immediate assistance is required  
Text "SHOUT" to 85258 or [visit Shout Crisis Text Line](#)

**SAMARITANS**

Samaritans 24/7 365 days a year - they are here to listen and provide support  
Call: 116 123 or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Crisis Tools**

Crisis Tools helps professionals support young people in crisis - short accessible video guides and text resources  
Sign up for free resources [here](#)

**PAPYRUS**

Papyrus provide confidential support and advice to young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person  
Call: 0800 068 41 41 or Text: 07860 039967 (opening hours 9am to midnight – 365 days a year)

Urgent and other support available

**childline**  
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

Childline confidential telephone counselling service for any child with a problem  
Call: 0800 1111 anytime or [online chat with a counsellor](#)

**Good Thinking**

Good Thinking is London's digital wellbeing service and provides a range of resources for young people to help improve mental wellbeing including free NHS-approved apps

**THE MIX**  
Emotional Support for young people

The Mix provides free, confidential support for young people under 25  
Call: 0808 808 4994 (11am – 11pm every day) or [Email](#)

**Beat**

Beat provide support to help young people who may be struggling with an eating problem or an eating disorder  
Call the Youthline (under 18's) 0808 801 0711 or Studentline 0808 801 0811 (9am – 8pm during the week and 4pm – 8pm on weekends and bank holidays)

**keoth**

Kooth is a free, safe and anonymous online mental wellbeing community including live chat with the team, discussion boards, magazine with helpful articles and a daily journal a magazine

The Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) provides healthy food and enriching activities to children and young people, with free places available for those who receive free school meals. It's available during the Summer, Easter and Christmas school holidays.

School holidays can be a particularly difficult time for some families. This free holiday club programme helps children to enjoy active and healthy school holidays, where they can experience new activities, meet friends and eat healthy meals. For information,

[HAF](#)  
[Where kids can eat free or for £1 during the Easter holidays 2024](#)



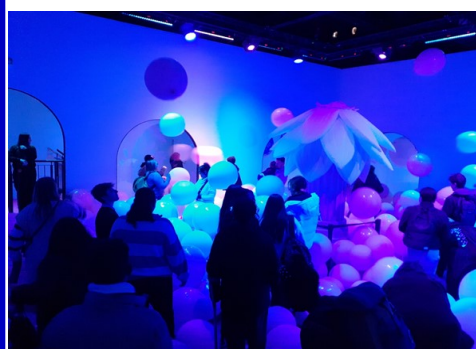
The Brent foodbank works with a range of local agencies who meet people at risk of going hungry. Citizens Advice, children's centres and health visitors are just some of those who can make refer people to our foodbank by issuing them with a foodbank voucher. If you think that your family would benefit from food bank support please email [info@brent.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@brent.foodbank.org.uk)

**NSPCC**  
**HELPLINE**  
0808 800 5000  
[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111

## Bubble Planet

Ashley College students visited Bubble Planet on the 25th March 2024. This was a rewards trip. Firstly, the students enjoyed takeaway pizza for lunch. At the entrance, we were greeted by an interactive bubble floor, followed by a room with lots of blown up huge balloons, it was great fun having balloons thrown up into the air! We then headed straight to the ball pit, where Nicolas dived in, we lost Dhruv at the bottom of the ball pit and Milosz started a whole school ball fight, which was enjoyed by all students and staff. Next, we entered a different dimension, which left some of us feeling dizzy. We looked at the bubble chairs and Milosz, Andi and Lucas got their picture taken with the rubber ducks. We then walked through a



room that had string lights and mirrors that you walked through, it was very atmospheric. There was also a robot machine that was blowing bubbles, which Alexa kept popping!

*'I had a fun time at bubble planet, this was my first time going and I thought it would have been a boring, but it wasn't. We took many photos and few videos of everything. The most exciting room that I liked was the ball pit'*

**Louise Togher**

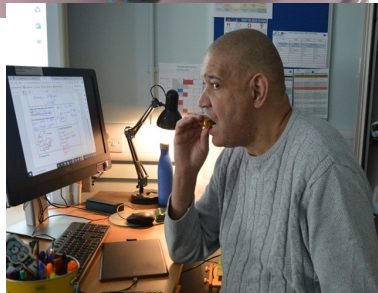
## Food Glorious Food!

During our Spring term, Key Stage 3 pupils have been learning about how to use food to feel good. This begun with a virtual trip to India! They have learnt about using food as preventative medicine, the daily recommended values of nutrients for their age and gender whilst experimenting with various dishes from around the world such as stir fry and curry.

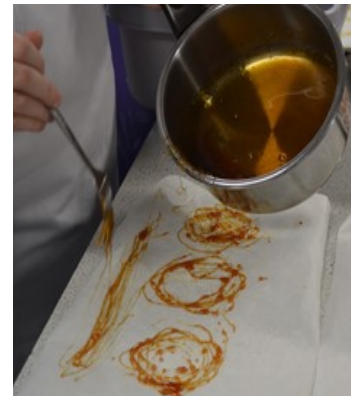
Based on this knowledge and previous learning about nutrition, they designed a balanced meal for a teenager which resulted in a tasty chicken pasta bake and a beautiful carrot ribbon salad.



Our Year 10 pupils have been introduced to GCSE Food Preparation through learning a variety of cooking methods, food hygiene and are developing their understanding of nutrition. They produced a beautifully colourful display of their findings on water-soluble vitamins. They also have collaborated on making carrot cakes which were iced beautifully and shared amongst some very appreciative staff .



Year 11 pupils have been working intensely on creating the perfect birthday meal which also incorporates the use of eggs in a variety of ways. This year we have introduced GCSE Food Preparation as well as BTEC Home Cooking Skills which means some of our students have also been experimenting with how to caramelize sugar and how the results can vary depending on the technique and the type of sugar used.



Lots of exciting dishes are being made in the run up to their final practical exam. DJ has created a very sophisticated Indian two course meal which will show off his range of skills and interests, including delicious onion bhajis with tamarind sauce. LOL has produced some beautiful birthday cupcakes and homemade tortellini.

MK and BH have been experimenting with some classic party food recipes in order to make them healthier with some delicious results, that have inspired both Caroline and I to make the same dishes at home! I'm very excited to see the final results where students will incorporate other skills they have learnt throughout the course such as garnish and drizzle techniques.



**Lauran Brannigan**



## Innovation Spotlight

As a parent, we know that talking to our children about their learning is important but we often don't know the right questions to ask. " Tell me about your day" often meets a resounding silence, perhaps even a grunt or two. These are teenagers, after all!

You can use the prompts below to begin a focused conversation around your child's learning. All these questions relate to our Innovation across the curriculum drive. Let them teach you - put them in the driving seat.

What is Socratic questioning? Share some examples of when you have used this in English lessons.

What is vertical farming? What are the advantages and disadvantages of vertical farming versus organic farming?

Ask your child about currency conversion. Test their knowledge using a currency converter table and a calculator. Ask your child about which careers would need you to apply timetables, division, ratio and proportion .

Get your child to describe the virtual science experiments they have seen. How do these compare to their own practical investigations in class?

Ask your child about links between subjects. Give them this sentence starter " I learnt this in maths and then in history "

In other news, we have used VR to deliver wellbeing activities and support in Science curriculum, we are currently looking to expand the use of VR to support in the wider curriculum and are exploring the best options for Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality. We are looking at different providers to ensure we employ the best one for our pupils and needs. We will be rolling out the newer technology from September 2024 for supporting our teaching and learning. I would be very interested from any parents who have any opinions or knowledge of the field.

[Amika@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk](mailto:Amika@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk)

**Anne-Marie Mika**

### Elefriends (part of MIND UK)

A supportive online community where you can be yourself. We all know what it's like to struggle sometimes, but now there's a safe place to listen, share and be heard.

Whether you're feeling good right now, or really low, it's a safe place to share experiences and listen to others. Elefriends is moderated daily by the Ele handler team from 10am-midnight.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/support->

Whenever you need to talk



### Hub of Hope

The Hub of Hope is the UK's leading mental health support database. It is provided by national mental health charity, Chasing the Stigma, and brings local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support and services together in one place for the first time.

<https://hubofhope.co.uk>

### ASHLEY COLLEGE

ASHLEY GARDENS  
WEMBLEY HA9 8NP

Tel: 020 8937 3330

Email: [admin@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk)

For Activities over the holidays and outside of school hours for pupils with ASD please visit the BOAT website:

[www.brent.gov.uk/boat](http://www.brent.gov.uk/boat)

Or contact them : [boat@brent.gov.uk](mailto:boat@brent.gov.uk)



### SUMMER TERM:

Term Starts : **Monday 15th April** - pupils return

Parent Evening: **Wednesday 24th April**

KS3 /Yr10 Parent/Carer Progress Review and Target Setting @ 4.20-6.30pm

Yr11 Exams and NRA Information @ 5.00-6.00pm

**HALF TERM :** **Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May 2024**

Staff INSET : **Wednesday 19th June**

**Wednesday 24th July**

Term Ends: **Tuesday 23rd July** - for Pupils



Wellbeing Award  
for Schools

