



Parent Bulletin

22nd November 2024

I would like to remind parents and carers that the week ahead will be a relatively short one due to the two days of staff conference that all staff at the school are engaging in on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th November. The school will be closed to all students on these days. The theme of the conference this year is **belonging**. This is a term that has become increasingly prevalent in educational settings over recent years as it has been used to describe why some children attend well and engage in school based activities, whilst others may attend less well, and/or when they attend, they are less likely to engage in what the school has to offer. Belonging can be about positive relationships, feeling included, and finding enjoyment in the additional activities that the school has to offer, but it can also be succeeding in the classroom, however relative that might be, and feeling that your contribution inside and outside of the classroom is valued.

Whilst we have confidence in the standards of teaching and learning at the school, we genuinely believe that the opportunity to engage in such professional learning has the potential to move our students to the next level, ensuring that all children feel positive about attending school and that absolutely no child is left behind in the classroom. This is not without challenges, which is why days such as these, where we are able to participate in high quality professional learning, are so important. I very much appreciate the support of parents and carers in this respect.

Enrichment Activities

Continuing on this theme, I would like to thank Assistant Headteacher, Ms Ogunlabi for the work that she has undertaken to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the school's enrichment programme. I am delighted to be able to share with parents that over 60% of students at the school have attended a school club this term. A programme of all clubs available at the school during the autumn term can be found here [[click here](#)]. A draft plan for all overseas trips can also be found via this webpage. It should also be noted that an extensive range of activities are also made available to students at different points of the year. Examples include the Duke of Edinburgh Awards (DofE), Science Crest Awards, Maths challenges as well as activities through the school's house system.

In October, I was delighted that over 120 students in Year 10 participated in the Jack Petchey Speak Out challenge, having the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills by working with tutors from the Speakers Trust. Public speaking is a challenge for most, but it is always fantastic to see so many of our students challenge themselves and push beyond their comfort zones to undertake this life enhancing activity. As parents will read about later in this update, our former Head Girl, Laura White, started her public speaking journey at Vyners as a nervous teenager and is now speaking in front of large audiences on international stages as part of the British Debating Team. I am also delighted to inform parents that the regional final of the Speak Out challenge will take place at Vyners School on Wednesday 4th December. Vyners will be represented by Otto Keyte (10J) and Zeus Ginwalla (10W) who were our school winners this year and the event will be hosted by Leena Amin (11H), who was the regional winner and grand finalist last year. Congratulations to all three students on their wonderful achievements.

Finally, I would like to ask parents and carers to encourage their child to participate in at least one enrichment activity at the school this year. Over the course of a school career, we know just how impactful these experiences can be in shaping young people's lives. I would also mention that we are always open to suggestions and will be happy to put additional clubs and activities in places wherever there is demand and feasibility.

Student Standards

Whilst students' standards remain high at Vyners, it has been noticeable that there is a small, but relatively persistent group of students who have, at times, been wearing black trainers to school rather than proper school shoes. We do recognise that replacing items of school uniform during the school year can be expensive and we have, in recent years, been very understanding with regard to the general cost of living. However, we do believe in the importance of maintaining high standards at the school, which is why we will be reapplying the rule that students who attend without school shoes will be expected to wear footwear provided by the school unless they have a medical note that requires a child to wear trainers. This will be black plimsolls for students in key stage 3 and replacement shoes for students in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form. We will ensure that all shoes are well maintained and hygienically sprayed after each use. I would politely ask that parents and carers do not write notes in an attempt to excuse their child from wearing school shoes. My thanks to parents and carers for their understanding.

Gary Mullings, Headteacher

Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal / Remembrance Service

Thank you to all staff and students for their contributions to this year's Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal.

This year's contributions amounted to £202.91

I would like to thank our Deputy Head students Ved Sakaria (13W) and Alice Day (13C) who spoke so eloquently as part of the school's Remembrance Service on Monday 11th November.

Thank you also to Corporal Richards of the RAF for playing the Last Post prior to the entire school community observing 2 minutes silence. It was very much appreciated by all present.



Sustainability Week - 11th November to 15th November

Throughout the week students engaged in a number of different sustainability events and projects. Three of our fantastic Year 11 prefects spoken beautifully in our whole school assemblies about sustainability and the importance of protecting our planet. Year 7 students upcycled materials into bird feeders; Year 8 students created 'reduce, reuse, recycle' posters; Year 9 students learnt about Stewardship in Ethics lessons. The community came together to try sustainable food options in the canteen and made an effort on picking up litter to keep our environment tidy. Our Year 11 Sustainability prefects went out into the local community armed with litter pickers and rubbish bags, cleaning up our woodland areas and Warren Road.

It was great to see the Vyners Community once again come together and place a focus on protecting our environment.

Well Done Everyone!

Miss Sally Brown, Assistant Headteacher

Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge - Year 10 School Finalists

On Wednesday 13th November we held the Year 10 School Assembly Final as part of Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge. Seven workshop finalists delivered passionate speeches on a range of topics from forgiveness to the importance of facing your fears. Every student should be incredibly proud of their efforts, and it is wonderful to see such talent and determination in our Year 10 cohort. After a long and difficult deliberation from our judges, Otto (10J) and Zeus (10W) have been selected as our School Finalists, with Nathan (10F) and Mahdi (10F) as our reserves.

The next stage is the Hillingdon Regional Final, which will take place on Wednesday 4th December in our school hall from 6:30-8:30pm. Twenty students from across the borough will compete in front of a panel of professional judges and be co-hosted by our Grand Finalist from last year, Leena (11H). Doors will open at 6pm; all are welcome.

Congratulations to our students, and my thanks to Ms Hockley and Mrs Robinson-White for taking part in the judging.

Miss Duran, Assistant Subject Leader, English

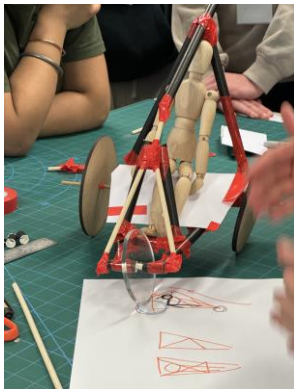
Year 12 & 13 Product Design Trip to London South Bank University

The Y12 and Y13 Product Design students were invited to London South Bank University to learn more about their newly structured Product Design and Technology course launching in September 2025. The students went head to head in the Battle Mountain World Human Powered Speed Challenge where three groups were tasked with designing a prototype for the next best Human Powered Vehicle.

Associate Professor Barnaby and Professor Deborah-Andrews, course leaders on the new course, delivered a talk to students introducing them to students work and the innovative products that have been designed in previous years at the university; this highlighted a wealth of industry professionals who are both alumni of and now part of delivering the course at London South Bank University. The students were also given a tour of the technology departments various workshops and were able to speak with current Product Students. The tour ended with a visit to the Formal Student workshop,

an extra curricular club where students from courses across the university such as engineering, product design, film, business and many more come together to design a Formula One race car for the chance to be tested on the Silverstone race track.

The students enjoyed themselves and relished the opportunity to learn from and receive advice directly from university professors to help inform their upcoming UCAS applications or future potential university interviews.



Mr Babra, Subject Leader, Design & Technology

Sports Update

KS3 Girls Football Tournament

Well done to the girls below who won the KS3 Borough Football Tournament held at Hewens on Monday. 5 games played and they won all.

- 1-0 win over Oakwood (Bow Mower)
 - 1-0 win over Park Academy (Bow Mower)
 - 3-0 win over Hewens (Bow Mower x 2, Libby Scarisbrick)
 - 1-0 win over Rosedale (Elsie Fitzgerald)
 - 2-0 win over Haydon (Bow Mower and Libby Scarisbrick).
- No goals conceded and 8 goals scored.

Well done all.

Ms Hawes, Teacher of PE



Laura White - Ex-Head Girl

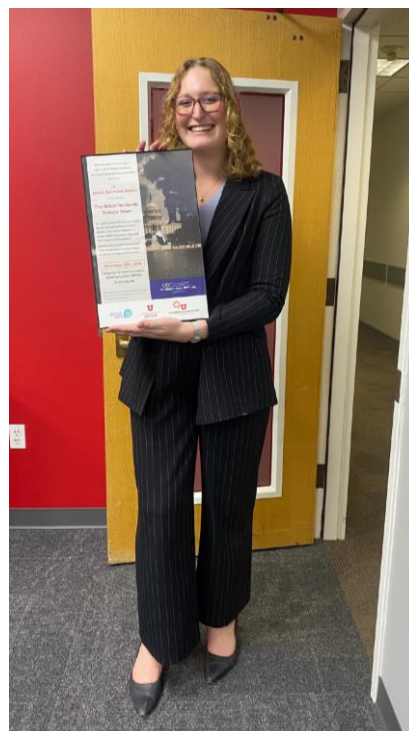
One of our previous Head Girls, Laura White, got in touch this week to share with us details of being part of Britain's national debating team. Laura left Vyners in 2020 but has continued to develop her love of debating after being encouraged by one of her English teachers to join the English Speaking Union in Year 9.

She contacted us from Salt Lake City, on a visit to the University of Utah. This was a stop on a tour she's on as part of the British National Debate Team. By the end of her five week trip, Laura and her debate partner will have visited ten different universities in the US to compete in public debates; as well as speaking to American students about why oracy is important; and running debate workshops for high school and university students.

Visiting Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Colorado, Texas, Tennessee, Utah, Laura has been an ambassador for the value of public speaking and effective debating. Her trip culminates this week by taking part in the US National Communication Association Convention, in Louisiana. Much of Laura's travel was prior to and during the election and she thoroughly enjoyed speaking with college students from all walks of life about their political beliefs and thoughts on the current landscape, encountering a huge diversity of perspectives.

Our Year 9 students are working on debating skills in English this month as part of their work on The Power of Protest scheme of learning. Laura attributes much of her relish of constructing a strong argument and her critical thinking skills to her experience of English at Vyners, especially at A Level. It would be great if some of our current students could aspire to also represent their country in debating!

Ms Connolly, Acting Subject Leader, English



A favour from the Music Department

If anyone knows of a piano in good condition that can be donated to the music department we would be very grateful. Some of our pianos are now 60 years old and it is time to retire them. Please email Mr Cullum via the school office at office@vynersschool.org.uk if you can help.

Uniform4Kids Black Friday Offer

The offer is valid for one day only, online, and exclusively on **Friday 29th November 2024**. The 20% discount applies to all products including schoolwear, sportswear, footwear and accessories. This offer is available **online only** via www.uniform4kids.com. Discount code **BLACKFRIDAY20** must be entered at checkout. A discount cannot be added retrospectively to an order already placed. We will not be offering Click & Collect or Delivery to School during this event. Orders will be dispatched via courier. Orders may take up to **one week** to process.

Please click [here](#) for more information.

VLT Staff Vacancies

Please click [\[here\]](#) for a list of vacancies within the Trust schools.

Autumn Term Key Dates

Thursday 28th November	Conference - school closed to students
Friday 29th November	Conference - school closed to students
Monday 2nd December	Year 11 and Year 13 Trial Exams (until the end of term)
Thursday 12th December	Awards Evening
Monday 16th December	Vyners Christmas Concert
Friday 20th December	Term ends (12.20pm finish)

Spring Term Key Dates

Monday 6th January	Staff Development Day - school closed to students
Tuesday 7th January	Term starts
17th - 21st February	Half Term
Friday 4th April	Term ends (3pm finish)