



Parent Bulletin

19th September 2025

We were delighted to welcome families, guests and friends of the school to our annual awards evening yesterday. These are always special events as they provide us with the opportunity to celebrate the many successes of our students in a formal manner. Our guest of honour and speaker this year was Dame Judith Weir. Having written about Dame Judith on several occasions, many parents will know that as well as being a renowned musician and composer, she was also the Master of the King's Music between 2014 and 2024, a role that involves writing music for national and royal occasions, which has included the late Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday celebrations and the UK's official commemoration of the 1918 armistice.

Our relationship with Dame Judith came about due to her commitment to supporting music teachers and young composers. I know that her previous visits to the school have provided many of our A level musicians with great inspirations given the calibre of Dame Judith's work and depth of her knowledge. Dame Judith gave a thoughtful and insightful speech, which I am sure was greatly appreciated by all in attendance. Dame Judith made reference to some of the work that has undertaken to campaign a broader curriculum in schools including greater space for the arts. She emphasised the point that the provision for the arts at Vyners remains exceptional and not something that is present in most secondary schools. This is obviously something that we are very proud of.



Left to right: Dr Martina Lecky, Mrs Claire Clarke, Cllr Philip Corthorne, Gary Mullings

I do need to mention the wonderful rendition of *For Good* from the musical *Wicked* by the extremely talented duo, Izzy Hartree and Farah Dallal; but ultimately the evening was about the prize winners and their families. It was with a great sense of pride that I stood on the stage as the students received their awards from Dame Judith and it was particularly pleasing to see so many of our outgoing Year 13 students in attendance. We very much understand that some could not attend due to start dates at various universities but it would be great to see those students at a later point in the year.

I would like to thank all who attended on the evening. My particular thanks go to the Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Philip Corthorne for their attendance; Mr and Mrs Cahill, who travelled from Ireland for the Neill Cahill Award; and our Trust CEO Dr Lecky. Thank you also to Mrs Claire Clarke for her continued support as Chair of the local Governing Body; Mrs Hampshire and her team from the Friends of Vyners for their support with refreshments; and Ms Derby, Office Manager and Ms Ogunlabi, Assistant Headteacher for their substantial work in coordinating the Awards event. I think everyone agreed that it was a wonderful evening.

Whilst it was a long week for me, I also very much enjoyed meeting parents and carers of students in Year 7 at the cheese and wine event on Wednesday evening. Thank you to all parents and carers who were in attendance. We very much hope that parents and carers found the evening to be informative and that they had the opportunity to meet other parents at the school; particularly those parents who are new to the school. Thank you to Ms Ashe, Year 7 Leader and Ms Pape, Assistant Headteacher for their coordination of the evening and again to the Friends of Vyners for providing the lovely cheese and wine.

Finally, I would like to remind all families that we have our annual open evening next Wednesday evening. Parents and carers should have previously received a letter about this event which explains the requirements for an early finish on Wednesday afternoon and a late start on Thursday morning. A copy of the letter can be found here [\[click here\]](#). I would also like to remind all families who intend on visiting on the evening to avoid travelling to the area by car and, where this is not possible, to avoid parking on roads in the immediate vicinity of the school whilst being thoughtful and courteous when parking. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Wishing all families and friends a lovely weekend!

Gary Mullings, Headteacher

Home-School Communication Protocol

The protocol for contact between parents, carers and the school, was updated at the end of the summer term. A copy of the protocol can be found here ([click here](#)).

It is always lovely for us to talk to our parental community, and school staff are standing by to be helpful. However, we would like to remind all parents that we are now a very large school of over 1500 students. A large community will, by its nature, generate a lot of routine queries.

In the case of a non-urgent query, parents should expect for it to take **up to 48 hours** (2 school days) to receive a response. Please remember that members of the teaching staff are not available during the day to take phone messages or answer emails, as they will be classrooms teaching. Furthermore, as outlined in the protocol, we would appreciate parents avoiding attempting to contact staff directly via email or telephone and that the correct contact routes are used as outlined.

It would be very helpful if queries could be directed to the right recipient. For example, if your email concerns your child's attendance at school - medical appointment, orthodontic appointments, reports of sickness, etc - these should be sent straight to attendance@vynersschool.org.uk

Thank you in advance for your assistance

Miss Williams, Business Manager

CREST Awards

We are thrilled to celebrate the outstanding efforts of our students who have successfully completed the CREST award program this year. The CREST award is a prestigious program that honours innovative and creative project work led by students in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

These dedicated individuals engaged in over 20 hours of project work focused on sustainability and the impacts of global warming. Their hard work exemplified dedication, teamwork and creativity, and they should take great pride in their accomplishments.



Congratulations to all our achievers!

Mrs Ehsan, Teacher of Science

'For our project, my group focused on making s'mores; exploring how to harness the heat from boiling water. I experimented with different setups to melt the chocolate and marshmallows effectively, and I've learned a lot about heat transfer. And when the chocolate wouldn't melt, I had to develop my problem-solving skills. This project taught me how to test and refine an idea. Within my group we divided tasks and devised a clear goal: it was rewarding to see our final attempt actually work. Overall, this project gave me more confidence in finding solutions and as an added bonus we had a delicious end product!'

Catherine, Year 10 Student

'For my project, we focused on designing a windmill to explore renewable energy. The goal was to investigate whether the speed of the turbine affects how brightly a light would shine. Although the project didn't work as planned, I used problem solving skills to try and fix the issues. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get it working in the end but I've learned from the mistakes I made and will know how to improve next time. The design part was the most fun, as I got to build the model from scratch and connect all the wiring myself. Overall, it was a fun experience, and I felt proud seeing the finished product, even if it didn't function exactly as intended'.

Zaina, Year 10 Student

'I was delighted to be able to hand out certificates to the largest group of students ever to complete the awards. It was great to see such a broad range of students showing genuine interest in STEM subjects'

Mr Mullings, Headteacher

Teaching and Learning Update

The Power of Positive Anticipation

At the start of the academic year the school is filled with excitement and anticipation about the new learning and the new experiences that lay ahead for the next couple of months. Anticipation was the theme of our first whole school assembly last week and we reminded students about the power of positive anticipation and how it can override any negative anticipation such as anxiety, stress or impatience to get things done. Positive anticipation boosts well being and psychological health because we all benefit from hope, enjoyment and optimism about the prospect of something happening. This, in turn, helps learners to increase their goal-directed behaviours and be better prepared to cope with the opportunities and the challenges that we encounter in life. We encouraged students to not only have aspirations for this academic year and beyond (in terms of their learning goals) but also to enjoy the process of learning, to find happy moments in the journey and the build up towards achieving what they have set their minds to this year. We're delighted to see that students have settled down well for a positive start to another year of learning.

Home Learning

If you are a new parent or carer to the school you may find it helpful to refer to our [Home Learning Policy](#) that was updated during the last academic year. We aim to build up students' skills in independent learning progressively over time. The frequency of Home Learning (also referred to as homework) depends on how often a student studies a particular subject and which key stage they are in. The quantity of Home Learning will increase as students progress through the school. In Key Stage 3 each piece of Home Learning should be capped at 30 minutes, for example, and in Key Stage 4 students can expect to do longer Home Learning tasks in their option subjects once a week and more often in English, maths and science. Home Learning will also become increasingly challenging as students get older. For more information on how departments in Key Stage 3 (Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9) set Home Learning experiences, please [click here](#). Students will typically complete a range of written and digital tasks as part of their Home Learning.

Just as a reminder, parents and carers can see updates about Home Learning via [Edulink](#) and students can access their Home Learning via Google Classroom [click here](#). We really value your support in ensuring that your child has a quiet, purposeful and comfortable learning space at home in which to complete their Home Learning. The school also runs a Home Learning Club in the LRC Monday to Thursday 3pm- 4:30pm to further support students. If you feel that your child would benefit from additional support beyond the Home Learning Club, please contact your child's tutor to discuss the support options that are available.

Miss Pape, Assistant Headteacher

VLТ Inclusion Project

We are delighted to introduce the VLT Student Voice Inclusion Project. Please [\[click here\]](#) for further information. This is a fantastic opportunity for students across the Trust to showcase their creativity while reflecting on what inclusion means to them. Whether through words or images, students are encouraged to explore and express the CARE values at Vyners - community, aspiration, respect, and equity - through their own authentic work.

Selected entries will contribute to a Trust-wide mural on inclusion, celebrating the voices and talents of our students. We cannot wait to see the inspiring range of poems, artwork, photographs, and reflections that will be submitted.

Entries can be sent directly to inclusionproject@vlt.org.uk or submitted to Mr Millard-Healy at office@vynersschool.org.uk

We look forward to seeing many brilliant contributions and celebrating our students' creativity and commitment to inclusion.

Mr Millard-Healy, Deputy Headteacher

Summer University Residentials

During the Summer holidays a number of our Year pupils took the opportunity to take part in residential courses at various institutions across the country. Below is a selection of the courses pupils took part in. The pupils are a credit to themselves and Vyners School.

Mr Kelly, Oxbridge Coordinator

'During the Maths from the underground residential at Kings' College, Cambridge, I took part in an academically intensive programme that explored fascinating topics beyond the curriculum mainly in 1st year undergraduate mathematics, with a touch of physics. Such topics included, Binomial coefficients and Counting, Number Theory, Calculus, Circular Motion, Invariants (in terms of physics conservation laws) and Newton's Shell Theorem which I enjoyed the most. Although challenging, it was an extremely rewarding experience in terms of stretching and developing my mathematical thinking and problem solving as well as meeting like-minded people. If you have an interest in mathematics, I would highly recommend applying if given the opportunity as I found it highly beneficial'.

Tim (Year 13) - Kings College Cambridge

'Over the summer I spent a few days at Cambridge on the Biosciences Residential, exploring everything from bacterial genetics and CRISPR to plant reproduction using scanning electron microscopes at the Sainsbury Lab. I got to try techniques like gel electrophoresis and spectrophotometry for the first time, which showed me how different university-level bioscience is compared to A-Level. A highlight was a zoology session where we tackled fascinating questions such as why animals don't have wheels or why bees form hexagons in honeycomb, showing how biology is about problem-solving and critical thinking as much as it is about facts. Alongside the labs, punting on the River Cam and formal dinners in halls gave me a real insight into Cambridge life. I would really recommend applying for this opportunity during Year 12 summer!'

Yara (Year 13) - Trinity College Cambridge

Over the holidays, I got the opportunity to go to Imperial for their “ACSTEM” programme, led by their African and Caribbean Society. After an introductory ice breaker and student finance session, I was able to learn more about their EFDS (Economics, Finance, and Data Science) Course, with both a finance session on investment and an economics session on the cost of living crisis led by faculty and first-year students, respectively. We also had a talk from George Imafidon MBE, co-founder of Motivez, a company focused on securing STEM jobs for young people, who led a session on personal branding and the power of networking. We concluded the day with a fun scavenger hunt (of which my team won!), which gave us the chance to tour the Kensington campus. Overall, the experience was extremely fun and informative.

I also got the chance to go to Cambridge with Target Oxbridge in the summer. We began the day with a talk on admissions into Oxbridge, then had a tour around a college of our choice (I chose Lucy Cavendish College). We got to ask questions to current Cambridge students, gaining a greater insight into what exactly student life is like at their college. Afterwards, we had a mock supervision with an academic in our subject choice. Our group’s subject was Land Economy, and we spoke about the Nash Equilibrium and game theory. Overall, my experience at Cambridge was undoubtedly insightful in fueling my passion for economics and informing my university decision.

Chiddi (Year 13) - Imperial and Lucy Cavendish College Cambridge

On the first day of the Cambridge Biosciences Residential, we were warmly welcomed to the prestigious Trinity College, one of the most iconic and academically rigorous colleges at the University. After settling in and being assigned our rooms for the three-day stay, we began with a guided tour of the college grounds, exploring its historic architecture and learning about its rich academic legacy. I was accompanied by Issam Sadaoui, whose presence elevated the overall experience.

The academic programme began with a captivating lecture by Dr Richard Hayward on pathology, focusing on viral infections in bacteria—an engaging blend of virology and microbiology. We explored a range of molecular tools used in genetic manipulation, such as restriction enzymes, plasmids, ligases, and polymerases, before moving on to CRISPR and CAS9 technology and its revolutionary role in genome editing. We also examined zoonotic infections and their ability to cross species barriers, studied tilt-series electron microscopy for detailed 3D visualisation of biological specimens, and learned about the “inclusion,” a specialised intracellular compartment with various biological functions.

Later, we went punting along the River Cam, passing under the Bridge of Sighs and alongside famous Cambridge colleges, enjoying stunning views from the water. It was a peaceful way to unwind after a busy academic day, made even better by the company of friends. The day concluded with a traditional Cambridge Formal Dinner, a truly memorable experience that captured the historic and cultural essence of the university in an elegant setting.

Day 2 began with a series of interactive practical sessions and lectures that explored various areas of biosciences. We investigated advanced microscopy techniques, gaining hands-on insight into how high-resolution imaging contributes to medical research. Another session delved into genetics, focusing on the latest methods for analysing gene expression and mutation impacts, and the role these play in diagnosing and treating disease.

In the afternoon, we attended a seminar on evolutionary biology, looking at how environmental pressures shape species over time. Discussions touched on biodiversity, genetic drift, and the importance of conserving fragile ecosystems. These academic sessions not only deepened my subject knowledge but also provided a clear view of the interdisciplinary nature of modern

bioscience. In the evening, we enjoyed more informal social time with other participants, discussing our academic interests and ambitions while exploring parts of the city. The exchange of ideas with like-minded students from across the country was both inspiring and motivating.

Day 3 opened with a lecture on biotechnology's future applications, including synthetic biology, personalised medicine, and sustainable bioengineering solutions. The talk highlighted how biosciences can address global challenges in health, agriculture, and the environment. We also had a Q&A with current Cambridge students, who shared honest insights into their application process, daily routines, and balancing academic and social life.

Before the programme concluded, we reflected on the skills and knowledge gained, as well as the ways in which the experience could shape our academic journeys. The residential offered not only a wealth of scientific knowledge but also an authentic taste of Cambridge's unique learning environment.

Overall, the three days were academically challenging, socially engaging, and deeply inspiring. They have strengthened my commitment to pursuing a bioscience-related pathway and given me a clearer understanding of the dedication and curiosity required to succeed at this level.

Khushal (Year 13) - Trinity College Cambridge

Attending a Cambridge residential was surreal but very rewarding. After so many virtual sessions, it felt strange to actually be able to have academic discussions with people in person and learn more about studying Law at one of the world's best universities. I enjoyed every workshop (no matter how tricky the material was) and it made me realise how lucky I was to be a part of it. The university architecture was an added bonus too, not to mention punting on the River Cam.

Holly (Year 13) - Corpus Christi College Cambridge

Sports Update

FA Schools U14 Girls Round 1

On Wednesday 17th October Vyners hosted the first round of the cup. After a short dry spell in the first half we managed to secure a 9-0 win against St Gregory's. This puts us through to the next round and a tougher competition against Bohunt, Wokingham. Goal scorers were Libby Scarisbrick (3), Lauren Dampha (2), Lily Havard (2), Orlaith O'Donoghue (1), and Elsie Fitzgerald (1).

Ms John, Teacher of PE

Musical Instrument Audit

Within the music department we would like to know who currently plays an instrument(s) and what grade they have achieved in this. Therefore, if your child does play an instrument please could you fill in this Google Form [\[click here\]](#). **Please do not fill in this form if your child previously learnt an instrument but does not play it anymore.** Thank you

Mr Cullum, Director of Music

Information Received

Ickenham Youth Football Club

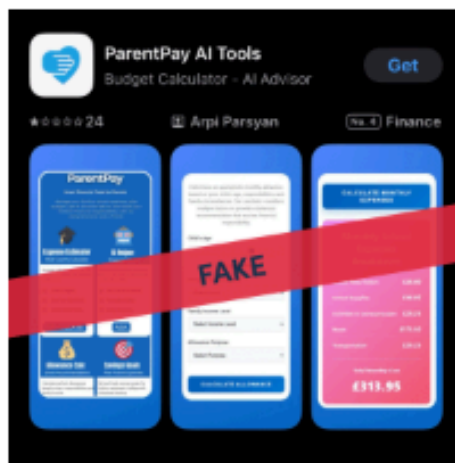
Ickenham Youth Football Club are looking for players across all age groups from Year 7 to Year 13 to join their successful GIRLS teams. With 150 current players and teams at all levels, interested players are invited for a free trial session. Please email girls@ickenhamyouthfc.com to register for a session.

There are also a few spaces available for our boys teams across the age groups, enquiries can be emailed to youthdevelopment@ickenhamyouthfc.com

Fraudulent App



We have been alerted to a fraudulent app in the Apple App Store that mimics ParentPay branding.



Security and safeguarding are top priorities at ParentPay Group, and we took swift action to report the app and are working closely with Apple to have it removed.

To date, we have recorded only 2 cases of affected parents.

Please be aware:

- ParentPay **does not have an app available for download from any app stores**
- To use ParentPay, parents should visit <https://www.parentpay.com/> from a mobile phone or computer
- After logging in, parents can save a shortcut onto their phone's home screen

This message is for awareness only, so you can confidently and quickly respond to any parent queries.

Friends of Vyners

For further information on Friends of Vyners, please [\[click here\]](#)

For a list of winners for the '100 Club', please [\[click here\]](#)

The next Quiz Night will be on 3rd October, for further information please [\[click here\]](#)

VLT Support Staff Vacancies

Please [\[click here\]](#) for the list of support staff vacancies across the VLT sites.

Autumn Term Key Dates

Wednesday 24 th September	Junior School Open Evening
Tuesday 30 th September	Year 9 Parent Information Evening
Wednesday 1 st October	Year 12 Parent Information Evening
Friday 3 rd October	FOV Quiz Night
Tuesday 7 th October	Year 10 Parent Information Evening
Tuesday 14 th October	Year 8 Parent Information Evening
Wednesday 15 th October	Year 11 Parent Information Evening
Tuesday 21 st October	Sixth Form Open Evening (applications open)
Friday 24 th October	Year 8 and Year 13 reports issued
Monday 27th to Friday 31st October	Half Term

Please click [\[here\]](#) for the link to the Calendar page on our school website, which includes key dates for this academic year - this document will be updated regularly