

On Wednesday of this week, I had the good fortune to attend a leadership engagement day at the London Google headquarters along with the headteacher of Ruislip High School, Mr Davies. The day was primarily focused on the development of a trust wide strategy for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in education with the aim of improving the work flows and efficiencies for staff as well as provide high quality and engaging learning experiences for students. Whilst it is clear that AI has great potential to support education the day also demonstrated that schools and trusts will need to develop robust policies and practices to ensure that the technology is used positively and safely and that both staff and students understand the ethical and moral standards that need to be adhered to when using such powerful tools. This is something that we will be developing over time as the Gemini AI tools are already enabled in the staff versions of the Google apps suite. Mr Milard-Healy, Deputy Headteacher will be leading the strategy at the school and he will be inviting parents and carers to workshops to gain a greater understanding of AI at various times over the coming terms ahead.

### **Vanguard Learning Trust Staff Conference**

I would again like to thank parents and carers for their understanding with regard to the closure of the school for the staff conference and occasional day. The opportunity for all of the staff within the Trust to get together for a day of professional development was invaluable, particularly given the theme of *inclusion through the lens of belonging*. On Friday 28th November all staff returned to their schools to work individually and in teams to implement the learning from day 1. An exception to this was the Learning Support Assistants and Teaching Assistants from all Trust schools who all came together at Vyners for a carefully planned development session that was led by the trust inclusion lead, Alison Foster and friend of the school and educational psychologist, Dr Martijn van der Spoel.

There were many personal highlights from the two days. However, the one learning point that I wish to share with parents and carers came from one of our keynote speakers, Martin Conroy. Martin is a former teacher and senior leader who now travels to a broad range of schools across the country, including some of the most prestigious independent schools, to talk to school staff and leaders about the challenges that many boys face navigating school life as well as developing the positive aspects of masculinity. Martin asked the audience to give examples of the social norms that we observe in a lift. There were several light-hearted responses including not making eye contact, the first person in the lift managing the button pressing and of course, not breaking wind! He then asked us to think about the social norms for some groups of boys, which may be counter to the expectations that we have of them in places such as a school.

Linked to this, Martin talked about what our intentions might be for our students and how those messages might be received. The reason that I mention this is that there are, on occasions, strategies that we employ in school(s) that are intended to support the positive development of our students and, as Martin put it, *help them flourish*. One such strategy that will shortly be launched by Mr Hall, Subject Leader for PE and Mr Newbey, Assistant Headteacher is the Elevate boys programme, which will be focusing on helping young men develop the positive aspects of masculinity and help them develop the kind of motivation that is required to succeed in education. I

know that they will be communicating with some families over the weeks ahead and I am hopeful that their intentions for our boys are well received.

### **Senior Citizens' Christmas Party**

On Thursday 4th December, Vyners hosted its annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Party. It was another wonderful event where we had the opportunity to invite senior members of the Hillingdon-wide community into the school. After settling down to tea, cakes and sandwiches, our guests were treated to an afternoon of entertainment including musical performances, a Christmas quiz, a session of bingo and a wonderful Christmas sing-a-long. This continues to be a wonderful Vyners tradition that was established many years ago but it still inspires so many of our students to engage with senior members of the community. Our staff and students were wonderful ambassadors throughout the afternoon; with students representing all year groups in attendance. My sincere thanks for making it such a special occasion for everyone present and I would again like to wish all of our senior citizens in the community a very merry Christmas.

### **Vyners Behaviour Policy**

At the most recent local governing body meeting that took place on Monday 24th November, the governing body approved the most recent iteration of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is part B local policy, which sits alongside the part A Trust-wide policy. A copy of the combined policy can be found via the school website ([click here](#)).

Whilst there are very few significant changes, I would like to bring to the attention of parents and carers the slight change in the protocols for mobile phone restrictions. As many parents will be aware, the government is determined that all schools should prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, encompassing not only lessons but also break and lunchtimes, to foster an environment that is calm, safe, and free from distraction. This action is seen as necessary to enable students to be fully present and engaged, mitigating risks such as unnecessary distraction, lesson disruption, and vulnerability to online dangers like cyber-bullying.

To achieve this goal, schools are expected to develop and implement a tailored mobile phone policy - which may include banning phones entirely from the premises or requiring them to be handed in - that is consistent, straightforward, and clearly aligned with the school's overall behavior policy. School leaders must ensure that expectations are transparent by communicating the policy and its consequences to all staff, pupils, and parents. To enforce the prohibition, the Department for Education (DfE) backs headteachers in using a range of sanctions, including the power to confiscate mobile phones and similar devices for a proportionate length of time, and to search for such items if they are identified in school rules. Crucially, while enforcing the ban, schools must still comply with legal duties by considering reasonable adjustments for specific pupils, such as those with disabilities or medical conditions (like diabetes monitoring), who may require access to their phones.

The DfE guidance document ([click here](#)) outlines four methods for implementing such approaches. Currently, the school adopts approach d) *never used, seen or heard*, which allows students to bring items to school with the expectation that they are never seen or used on the school site unless a student has express permission to do so from a member of staff. The approach could be seen as the most lenient of the four approaches and I would add that other schools within the borough have or are experimenting with more stringent approaches. Whilst the overwhelming majority of students adhere to our current approach, there are still too many occasions where students have had to have their phone confiscated with the worst cases being students using their phones within lessons. It is for this reason that we have taken the decision to lengthen the time that a phone is confiscated. Going forward, any phone that is confiscated will be returned after 24 hours rather

than at the end of the day. I would also like to stress that it still remains the case that in the rare occasions that a child has their phone confiscated on more than one occasion during a term that the phone will not be returned to the child and will have to be collected by a parent or carer.

Finally, as mentioned, we will continue to monitor the success or otherwise of strategies being used by other schools and will consult with students and parents in the new year as to how we strengthen our approach further in the next academic year. In the meantime, I would like to thank parents for their continued support around this matter.

**Gary Mullings**  
**Headteacher**

## Senior Citizens' Christmas Party 2025

Christmas at Vyners School always kicks off with our annual Senior Citizens Christmas' Party and it was a pleasure to welcome guests into school on Thursday 4th December. It is always a jolly affair, with students providing a range of entertainment, and Mr Hall running the ever popular bingo session.

We were fortunate this year to be supported by both the Fassnidge Memorial Trust (a locally based charity supporting older people) and Mrs Malik who was kind enough to donate 100 french pastries for our guests. We very much appreciate the generosity.



These pictures show the pastries being served and our Sixth Form Leadership Team hard at work at the tea station using the teapots bought by the Fassnidge Memorial Trust. The enormous water boiler that they were also kind enough to purchase is just out of shot!

As is always the case, the students who volunteered to support the event were a credit to themselves, the school and their families. The event truly is a lovely way to start the Christmas festivities!



**Miss Williams, Business Manager**

## Christmas Lunch - Tuesday 16th December

Our Christmas lunch this year will be on Tuesday 16th December 2025. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a full, sit down, Christmas dinner. The cost of tickets is £2.97 and these may be purchased either via ParentPay or via the canteen tills. **Tickets MUST be purchased no later than 9th December.** Students eligible for free school meals may obtain a free ticket by simply visiting Mrs McLaren (KS3) or Mrs Tighe (KS4). Full details of the menu can be found [[here](#)]. We hope your son / daughter will be joining us!

**Miss Williams, Business Manager**

## Year 8 Theatre Visit: *A Christmas Carol*

Last week, our Year 8 students had the wonderful opportunity to watch *A Christmas Carol* performed by the touring theatre company Box Clever. The production brought Dickens' classic story to life with energetic performances, clever staging and moments of both humour and tension.

Our students were fully engaged throughout and came away buzzing with enthusiasm. Many commented on how the show helped them understand the characters and themes more clearly, especially as they are studying the text in English this term. It was a fantastic experience that sparked lively discussion back in the classroom.

We're proud of how maturely Year 8 represented the school, and we're delighted they enjoyed such a memorable and enriching start to the festive season.



**Mr Dennis, Assistant Subject Leader, English**

## University Outreach Activities

Our pupils are very fortunate to have the opportunity to take part in various outreach activities that are available from different Universities including Oxford and Cambridge. Some of the events that pupils take part in are just for a day, or an afternoon, but some are sustained courses which last up to 18 months for pupils in the Sixth form.

As a school we currently have activities that pupils from Year 10 to Year 13 are involved in and from January this will extend to some students in Year 9 who will be taking part in the Critical Thinking programme from St.John's College, Oxford. Some of the events/courses are very difficult to achieve places on and require a great deal of commitment from our pupils which should be highly commended.

Below is a selection of some of the comments from participants of courses that our pupils are currently working on.

**Mr Kelly, Oxbridge Coordinator**

I'm currently participating in COMPOS, a course that aims to deepen students' understanding of Maths and Physics by assigning challenging problems far beyond the A-Level curriculum. I've found this course really useful and interesting; it has not only supported but significantly extended my A-Level studies. I highly recommend anyone passionate about STEM to find and engage with similar enriching opportunities.

**Kaavye, Year 12 Student**

I am lucky to have the opportunity to be taking part in the Lucy Cavendish academic attainment programme organised by the University of Cambridge. It is a very demanding yet rewarding experience, we attend different lectures, including a series of subject based enrichment sessions, university readiness webinars, peer discussions groups, etc. Not only does it support our studies in school, it extends beyond school curriculum, expanding our knowledge further in our field of studies, all assisting us in building a solid foundation towards our competitive University applications.

**Andreas, Year 12 Student**

I took part in the mechanics taster day at Cambridge University's Cavendish laboratory. It was an amazing experience as they gave us sample lectures and information about applying to Cambridge. It was very useful and I would recommend others to apply for it in the future.

**Aahil, Year 12 Student**

I had the opportunity to take part in the Isaac Science Cambridge mechanics taster day. It gave me an introduction to higher level physics questions with tutorials on how to do them afterwards. It also gave me an idea of how applying to University works and what it would be like to attend university doing a STEM related course by answering questions from the audience, and giving a mock lecture on angular momentum which was very interesting. I enjoyed the taster day a lot and recommend it for other people.

**Artur, Year 12 Student**

A few weeks ago I attended a mechanics taster day at the world famous Cavendish laboratory at Cambridge University. Upon arrival, we went into a huge lecture hall where we were given some difficult maths questions to work on in small groups. Then a few of the Professors from the University showed us how to solve them. I particularly enjoyed this as I made friends with two girls who also love Maths and Physics as much as I do! The professors also spoke to us about how the application process to Cambridge University works and gave us advice on how to write our personal Statement and how the interviews work. Throughout the day we also had a taster lecture on the "physics of spin", which gave me a good insight on what physics related courses at university will be like. The day was very informative and has given me encouragement and confidence to apply to Cambridge in the near future!

**Marli, Year 12 Student**

I recently got accepted into the COMPOS program and I have really enjoyed the sessions. They have been interesting and worthwhile, the work has been challenging but it is so beneficial. I strongly recommend it to anybody who is interested in maths or physics as it deepens your understanding whilst making the GCSE content easier to understand. It's been a great experience overall and I'm looking forward to continuing on with it.

**Nyla, Year 11 Student**

## Rowvember Challenge

Mr Hall and Mr Flynn embarked on their Rowvember challenge raising money for the Movember charity on Wednesday 26th November. The original goal set to row was 61,900m but this was well surpassed at break time so a new challenge to row 100,000m was set. After 8 hours of rowing this was accomplished with the PE team also contributing! A separate staff rower was also in action throughout the day surpassing 85,000m which also was a fantastic effort. The event raised real awareness around men's health and gained lots of support from staff and students.

Mr Hall and Mr Flynn would like to thank all that donated to the cause with the total money raised reaching over £800. Watch this space for the next challenge!

**Mr Hall and Mr Flynn**

## Friends of Vyners

Congratulations to the winners of the 100 Club for September and October 2025.

September 2025 monthly draw £25 - Mrs Andrea Richards

September 2025 quarterly draw £50 - Mr Matthew Yates

October 2025 monthly draw £25 - Mrs Kerrie Hope

Please [click here](#) for further information on how to register for the 100 Club.

## Attendance Figures

Please find below attendance figures for w/c 24th November 2025

Year Group	Present Marks (%)
Year 7	89.74%
Year 8	96.14%
Year 9	93.17%
Year 10	94.88%
Year 11	91.6%
Year 12	95.48%
Year 13	93.95%

Please find below the top tutorials for attendance for w/c 24th November 2025

Tutorial	Present Marks (%)
8C / 12G / 13C	100%
12M	98.84%
10G	98.39%

### Autumn Term Key Dates

Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 9 reports issued
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Lunch (tickets to be purchased by 9 <sup>th</sup> December)
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	Vyners Christmas Concert
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 7 reports issued
<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>End of Autumn Term (12.20pm finish)</b>

### Spring Term Key Dates

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Inset Day (school closed to students)
<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Start of Spring Term</b>
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 8 into 9 Options information evening
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Year 9 into 10 Options information evening
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January	Year 8 & 9 options forms open
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> January	Years 11 and 13 reports issued
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> January	FOV Quiz Night
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Year 11 parent consultation evening (online)
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 13 parent consultation evening (online)
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 8 reports issued
<b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> to Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February - Half Term</b>	

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.