



## Headteacher's Update

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

Now that we are at the end of the first half term of the academic year it is possibly a good time to reflect on the progress that has been made as we have attempted to return to the more rounded form of education that our students have tended to engage in at Vyners. I must congratulate the Year 7 cohort for the way that they have adapted to the new routines and practices given the disruption that they have faced over the past two years. It has been wonderful to see just how engaged they have been in their learning as well as a number of extra curricular activities and house events; I hope that parents and carers enjoy reading about some of the activities that have taken place in recent weeks.

Students across the key stages have been incredibly positive over the past seven weeks. There have been significantly fewer sanctions and many more rewards than the same point last year. I am confident that they will approach the remainder of the academic year with the same levels of enthusiasm. I would also like to thank the staff at the school for their continued dedication and support for the students and the ethos of the school. I do hope that they are all able to get some valuable down time during the half term break so that they feel energised on their return in November.

Whilst there is much to be positive about, I am sure that all families are concerned about the rising numbers of coronavirus cases that have been reported in the media. Currently, we do have a small number of students who are absent from school due to positive test outcomes and fortunately, no current cases amongst our staff. However, I am aware from discussions that I have had with colleagues in other schools within Hillingdon that cases are continuing to rise amongst secondary school aged children and that this has had a significant impact within some institutions.

Given that we know that cases will probably continue to rise throughout the winter I believe that it is only correct that we plan to take additional measures to mitigate against the potential spread of the virus within the school community. For example, it may well be the case that we will need to reintroduce the use of face coverings in busy areas such as corridors and canteen queues as these are areas where students can mix with children that they do not know. I would also ask that students who travel on public transport wear face coverings on journeys to and from school with immediate effect.

Updates that I have received from the London Borough of Hillingdon have made it clear that we were extremely fortunate to have completed the vaccination programme for 12 to 18 year olds at the start of the month as the roll out of the programme has been problematic. Due to the issues faced with the delivery of the programme in some school settings there will be pop up vaccination centres for 12-15 year old children in Hillingdon during half term. These will take place at the following venues:

**Oak Wood Secondary School - 25th October 9am - 5pm**  
**Barra Hall Children's Centre - 27th October 9am - 2pm**

The consent form for this programme can be found [here](#). Please note that this facility is also available for children who have recently turned 12 years of age who were not eligible when the team visited the school.

Finally, I would also ask all parents to ensure that their child completes a lateral flow test on the Sunday evening prior to their return to school on Monday morning. The link to report your child's COVID test results can be found [here](#).

### Black History Month

We have been celebrating Black History Month throughout the month of October. This year the theme for the celebrations has been 'Proud to be' which is inspired by the 2020 black lives matters events. Students across the key stages participated in a number of PSHE, curricula and cross curricular events to learn about different aspects of black history as well as learn about inspirational black icons. I decided to lead the main school assemblies for BHM as it provided the opportunity for the students to learn a little about my family history and how each generation, from the transatlantic slave trade through to my parents who arrived in the UK as part of the Windrush generation in the 1960's have each experienced their own struggles which, ultimately have provided me with the opportunities that I have experienced. Today, I am one of less than one percent of black headteachers in England including primary and secondary sectors and I remain extremely proud to be the headteacher at a wonderful school such as Vyners. I would like to thank all students and staff who have taken the time to give such warm feedback about the assemblies.

### Student Personal Safety Workshops

Following on from last week's message I would like to thank PC Claire Boyle and her colleagues for their series of excellent personal safety workshops that our students participated in, which included the 'your life, you choose' sessions that were enjoyed by all students in Year 7 and the knife crime workshops for students in Years 8 and 9. The sessions that I attended were interesting and well presented and I must also commend the students for their levels of engagement. Thank you also to Mrs Bashford-Hynes for organising these important activities.





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### VLT Maths Challenge Success

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October, a group of some of the most able Year 7 mathematicians took part in the VLT Virtual Maths Challenge. These were Nathan Griffiths (7F), Thomas Donnelly (7G), Dylan Lewis (7H) and Paul Rohnean (7J).

They were up against Ruislip High School, ACS International School, Field End Primary School, Ryefield Primary School and Hermitage Primary School. The primary schools each entered teams from Year 6. There were five rounds - the 24 Game, two rounds of Problem Solving, Financial Maths and UKMT (UK Mathematics Trust). There were also bonus questions between the rounds where the Vyners pupils competed against each other for prizes.

With lots of team work and resilience, the Vyners team won. Very well done to the four students involved and my thanks to Miss Ward for her support and colleagues at Ruislip High School for their organisation of this trust wide activity.



### MFL Bake Off Competition

The MFL department held a KS3 European Day of Languages bake off competition recently. There were some amazing entries this year and we would like to congratulate the following students:

1st place - Ishani G Sharma 8G

2nd place - Rosie Sumpter 7M

3rd place - Katie Gardner 7G

Images of a number of entries including our prize winners can be found [\[here\]](#).

**Miss Vigo, MFL Department**

### Book Buzz

There has been an air of excitement around the English Department this week as Year 7 and 8 pupils have chosen which of the 17 book titles they would like from the Book Buzz selection. Please remember to pay £3 on sQuid if you would like your child to receive their chosen book in the Spring Term. The payment deadline has now been extended to Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**Mrs Nicholls, English Subject Leader**

### Art Visit

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October the Year 12 Art and Photography students went to East London to find out more about street art and photograph Shoreditch in all its beauty.



We had a walking graffiti street tour and learned about Dreph (born 1973) who is a London-based visual artist known for large-scale portraits in the public realm. He did a series of 10 murals across London depicting women of African and Caribbean descent who had worked hard to better their community.

This one is of his mother, he felt it was important to celebrate their achievements.

We saw all the big global street art names and obviously had to end with a Banksy (protected under Perspex).

The sun managed to shine and London didn't disappoint

Well done everyone who came, their enthusiasm and behaviour was exemplary.

**Mrs Vine, Art and Photography Subject Leader**



### Charity Challenge

From Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October, I will be taking on the David Goggins 4/4/48 challenge whereby I will be running 4 miles (6.5km), every 4 hours for 48 hours! This will be just short of 2 marathons in two days.

You are probably thinking this is crazy and that I will get no sleep and you would be correct. However, I am sure a lot of you know that I love pushing myself to the max and challenging myself. This will be a challenge physically and mentally.

The main reason I am doing this challenge is to raise some money for Great Ormond Street Hospital who is a charity close to my heart. GOSH saved my brother's life and he wouldn't be here today without them. My parents were told when my brother was 11 weeks that he wouldn't live past his third birthday due to his chronic epilepsy. My brother is now 29 years old.



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22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

My brother has defied every expectation, all thanks to Great Ormond Street Hospital and is disabled but can walk and talk and live his life normally. Therefore, I would like to raise a bit more money for GOSH and pay back the favour as much as I can.

Wish me luck and I hope you can support me. For more details please look at my just giving page and if you are able to contribute to charity I would be entirely grateful. I will be completing two of the runs on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October around Ickenham at 12pm and 4pm if you see me, give me a cheer!

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/kirstyhawes2>

**Miss Hawes, PE Teacher/Deputy Y11 Leader**

## Maths Workshop for Parents

We have been notified of a seminar that is planned for parents called 'Helping Your Maths-Anxious Child' on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 7:30pm. Using both the latest research and her vast experience in this area, Rachel Kidson (Maths Author and Educational Psychology Lead at Eedi) will give practical advice on ways parents can help their children with their maths, whether they are struggling with maths anxiety or stuck on their homework. Parents will also learn tips for keeping their own maths anxieties at bay too! Please click [\[here\]](#) for booking details.

## BBC Newscast

The History & Politics department welcomed the production team of BBC Newscast to the school on Friday. Year 12 and 13 Politics students were filmed for an upcoming episode of the show that will air on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 11:35pm on BBC One. They were asking questions on the upcoming COP26 Climate Conference which the UK is hosting. The quality of the questions that the students came up with was excellent and will be a challenge for the presenters to answer. The production team was full of praise for the depth of knowledge and presentation skills of our students.



Have a wonderful half term break!

**Gary Mullings  
Headteacher**

## Headteacher Commendations

### Work Related Learning

Arun Tamber	8C
Leon Thapa Magar	8C
Haydn Timmins	8C
William Vipond-Hill	8C
Oliver Whicker	8C
Lewis Wilmot	8C

### Special Achievement

Oliver Whicker	8C
Robert Head	Ex student