



Vanguard Learning Trust Newsletter

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Equalities week

From Monday 19th to Friday 23rd February 2024, schools took part in the fourth Trust-wide equalities week, focusing on celebrating the diverse cultures, backgrounds and identities of the school communities.

At Ruislip High School students took part in a variety of activities and presentations including a workshop on Indonesian Gamelan music (the traditional ensemble music of Indonesia), an experience with Kathak dancing (an Indian classical dance) and a session showcasing cultural cooking. On Wednesday 21st February 2024 all students were encouraged to wear traditional clothing that represented their culture as part of a featured cultural day.



Students at Ruislip High wearing traditional clothing

Vyners' community engaged with a number of activities in PSHE, tutorials and assemblies that celebrated their uniqueness. The school also joined Ruislip High's community for the keynote speaker presentation delivered by Jude Guaitamacchi, a leader in trans-rights campaigning who has made history by chairing the first all-trans panel briefing in UK Parliament with the organisation Trans+ Solidarity Alliance.

'We did an Irish dancing workshop during equalities week. It was really fun and exciting to learn some moves. It involves intricate, rapid footwork, which is quite hard and you have to keep your upper body still.'

Charlotte, Year 7, Vyners School

Three student equality ambassadors from Vyners, Khaled, Joud and Duncan in Year 11, visited Hermitage Primary School to deliver a presentation on equality.

'I liked that they gave us a chance to talk to the people next to us and how it was interactive, but also they taught us about equality and how everyone is unique. It was an extremely enjoyable experience. It was also nice that they answered our questions about high school.'

Niyati, Year 6, Hermitage Primary School

Ryefield Primary School's focus was on disability awareness. Students participated in debates and a 'would you rather' activity where students chose between two difficult scenarios and explained their reasoning.

Hermitage Primary School focused on diversity by students sharing their own life stories and celebrating each person's uniqueness, whilst Oak Farm's students explored the importance of living as a rights-respecting citizen. Through discussion, drama and the sharing of experiences students learned how to take actions that respect the rights of others whilst taking into consideration the importance of compassion. The students at Field End Junior School enjoyed exploring their names, backgrounds and family contexts.

Overall, equalities week provided students with an opportunity to work together as a community as well as to celebrate what makes people individuals. It is through developing this understanding that helps to unite our school communities.



Vyners' equality ambassadors leading a session at Hermitage



Field End students wearing traditional clothing

Student activities

Student awards

Each school in the Trust selected students, one from each key stage, except for Field End's who were all in KS2, to receive an award for demonstrating the Trust's value of *'Community - collective responsibility, collaborating within and beyond the Trust'*.

The recipients received a certificate and a Trust pin badge, and a postcard was sent home to their parents/carers.

The recipients were as follows:

Field End: Zain, Sara and Filip, KS2

Hermitage: Maya, EYFS, Amelie, KS1, Zane, KS2

Oak Farm: Albert, EYFS, Lexi, KS1, Jesse, KS2

Ruislip High: Shaunav, KS3, Jeffrey, KS4, Alexia, KS5

Ryefield: Kyan, EYFS, Mia, KS1, Henry, KS2

Vyners: Chloe, KS3, Mya, KS4, Neha, KS5



Field End Junior School's winning team

The second round was the speed challenge. Words in this round centred on the theme of exploration. Students had a choice of difficulty: easy, medium, or hard words to spell. There were some clear tactics employed by the teams with a number of them choosing the 1-point easy ones to answer as quickly as possible.

At this stage, it was still any team's competition to win. The last round, though technically the individual challenge, was a final opportunity to earn a few additional points to change the standings. However, with even more challenging words, the fight for the last speller standing was nail-biting. With just two students left, Mr Gould, the host of the event, commented: *'It's just like a penalty shoot-out!'*

Japji from Vyners ended up taking the crown of the Trust's best speller, but her fantastic effort in the final round wasn't quite enough to wrestle the overall lead from Field End, with the latter deservedly claiming the team award.

Overall, it was a great opportunity to showcase the best of all six schools. Well done to all the top spellers across the Trust, and congratulations to Field End's stellar Year 6 team on their phenomenal teamwork; it was a well-deserved win.

Spelling bee

On Wednesday 24th January 2024, Ruislip High School staff were excited to host Vanguard Learning Trust's spelling bee for the second year in a row. The event organisers were also really pleased to welcome staff and students from Oak Farm Primary School, for their first experience of the spelling bee.

The room was filled with anticipatory buzz even before the competition began. Students from all six schools, alongside Ruislip High's Year 7 cohort, filled the seats of the auditorium, all in support of their peers.

Once the competition began, representatives from each school took turns spelling increasingly challenging words one by one, earning points for each correctly spelt word. As the difficulty of each word increased, so did the pressure; the students, however, rose to the challenge. Ruislip High and Field End were neck and neck, but Field End's team held its nerve to take the first round.



Japji, the winner of the Trust's best speller, with Mr Davies, Headteacher, Ruislip High School

Student activities

Japji, winner of the Trust's best speller from Vyners, commented: *'I was excited to be chosen and I had a great time.'*

Rosie, a member of Field End's winning team, commented: *'I felt really nervous but started to feel more confident once it started. I would like to do it again as I felt extremely proud because we succeeded.'*

Netball tournament

On Tuesday 27th February 2024, the Trust-wide netball tournament took place at Oak Farm Primary School. Both girls' and mixed teams comprising students from Years 5 to 7, with varying levels of experience, played in closely competed matches throughout the afternoon.

In the girls' tournament, Ruislip High won the trophy and gold medals, and Hermitage and Oak Farm finished in second and third place respectively, with all students being awarded medals for their efforts. In the mixed tournament, Oak Farm won the trophy and gold medals and Hermitage and Ruislip High finished in second and third place respectively, again with students being awarded medals.



Ruislip High School's winning girls' netball team

The students enjoyed the competition and it is hoped that this will become an annual Trust-wide event.

'It was great fun to take part in the tournament because we were able to play against the other schools and work together with our team mates.'

Jess, Year 6, Oak Farm Primary School

'I really enjoyed taking part in the mixed netball tournament, I normally play basketball but I had fun playing a new sport. I scored a couple of goals and we came third in the mixed competition and got a medal.'

Hamza, Year 7, Ruislip High School



Oak Farm's winning mixed netball team

Poetry project

This term, a Trust-wide poetry project was launched, with all schools in the Trust taking part. Students from Years 5 to 8 took part in two special workshops hosted at Field End Junior School on Wednesday 21st February 2024 and Tuesday 12th March 2024. Students studied poems by Coelho, Agard, Horne and Gorman; the aim of the sessions was to inspire the students to develop their own interpretation of poetry.

The students engaged with enthusiasm, sharing their points of view and penning personal responses. Writing activities included a note to their future self, writing poems where the words create a specific shape that reflects the content of the poem and creating poems by redacting words from other texts. Their work continued beyond the workshops via a blog providing opportunities for collaboration and a real audience. Students are now busy drafting their competition entries. The announcement of the individual school poets of the year and the first ever Vanguard Learning Trust poet laureate will take place after Easter.

'I like the way we went into the meaning and the message behind the poem.'

Annushri, Year 5, Ryefield Primary School



Students from all Trust schools at the poetry workshop

School improvement and Trust community update

School improvement work

Let's Think

Work with Let's Think has continued this term. Lynda Maple, Let's Think maths tutor, led an online session with staff on Wednesday 6th March 2024. Martina Lecky, Let's Think science tutor, taught a lesson at Ruislip High School on Thursday 7th March 2024 and was observed by Ruislip High staff as well as other science leads across the Trust.

'I enjoyed observing the Let's Think science lesson on the reasoning pattern of classification; it served to highlight students' misconceptions and how teachers cannot make assumptions about students' level of reasoning in relation to different constructs. The use of different examples provided the students with a range of contexts to develop their reasoning such as living things and chemicals and the lesson observation aided my understanding of the Let's Think methodology.'

Mr Murray, Acting Head of School, Ryefield Primary School



Let's Think science demonstration lesson at Ruislip High

After Easter, English, maths and science tutors will continue with lesson demonstrations providing staff with the opportunity to observe and reflect on the Let's Think methodology.

Peer reviews

Curriculum peer reviews have now taken place at Field End Junior School, Vyners School, and Ryefield Primary School.

Field End held the first of the peer reviews on Wednesday 24th January 2024. External reviewers attended from each of the Trust's primary schools. Their comments were reflective and thought-provoking throughout the review day.

Vyners School held its peer review on Wednesday 28th February 2024. The review teams worked collaboratively in pairs, each consisting of a host reviewer and an external reviewer. The focus was on Key Stage 3 for the selected subjects. Mrs Harvey, Deputy Headteacher at Vyners, commented: 'The

review process facilitates a shift from the intent documentation to the practical implementation of the curriculum and the impact of this on student engagement and progress. Connecting the evidence in this way allows the review team to see the curriculum implementation from a student perspective and showcases the excellent practice that happens every day in our Trust classrooms.'

Ryefield's peer review took place on Wednesday 6th March 2024. The review centred on Ryefield's history and geography curricula. Throughout the day, teachers engaged in discussions with their counterparts; interacted with students; observed lessons; and scrutinised teaching materials and plans. It proved to be an enriching experience, fostering professional dialogue and providing a platform for showcasing the school's strengths.



Peer review at Vyners School

Trust community update

Gambia project

On Tuesday 13th February 2024, eighteen young Metropolitan volunteer police cadets travelled to Gambia to help renovate a school. Three volunteer cadets from Hillingdon were successful in applying for this once in a lifetime opportunity, two of whom are from schools in the Trust. Harry, Year 11 at Vyners School, and Charlie, Year 11 at Ruislip High School, were among those chosen to take part. The Trust supported the cadets by helping to raise funds to purchase school uniforms for the students.



The cadets with the school uniforms bought with money raised by the Trust