



Headteacher's Update

22nd March 2024

I would like to start this week's update by thanking everyone who has been involved in organising and leading the excellent learning and developmental opportunities that students have been able to engage in over the past fortnight. This has included incredibly impactful knife crime workshops delivered by two serving paramedics, speakers from both Oxford and Cambridge Universities engaging students from Years 9 to 12 about university life and excellent subject based revision events that are supporting our students in Years 11 and 13 prepare for their trial examinations.

In between these externally led activities has been the excellent World Book Day celebrations that were organised by the English department and led by Ms Goode. Whilst I did fail spectacularly on the day by not wearing fancy dress related to any of my favourite books, I did enjoy the varied activities that took place throughout the day and particularly the bake off that was judged, in part, by the Rt Hon David Simmonds CBE MP. A truly fantastic day.

Parents and carers will also find details in today's update, of how they can get involved with the Friends of Vyners (FoV) organisation. Since joining the school in 2013, I have always known the school's parent / teacher association to have been made up of a few, but very dedicated, parents. We are now at the stage where we are losing members of the group due to the fact that their children are due to sit their exams and leave Vyners at the end of the summer term. FoV have achieved so much over the years and I believe that it would be a pity if we got to a point where the group was no longer viable. Therefore, I would ask parents to consider whether they would like to volunteer to be a member of FoV, even if they are unable to commit lots of time to the different activities that take place across the academic year. My sincere thanks to all those who have volunteered past and present.

This week, I would also like to pass on my very best wishes or 'Ramadan Mubarak' to all students, colleagues and families who are currently observing the holy month of Ramadan. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and the holy month of fasting. During this period, Muslims are required to fast and give to charity, show kindness and patience and to strengthen their relationship with God.

Fasting during Ramadan takes place throughout each day after an early morning meal and ends at sunset. It is meant to encourage spiritual reflection and it provides a great challenge, particularly for students in secondary school who have elected to participate. As is always the case, we make adjustments for staff and students who observe Ramadan, including limiting physical activity and providing spaces for prayer. Every student that I have spoken to about their experiences of Ramadan has been extremely positive and reflective, with one student in Year 11 telling me that fasting has helped him to focus on his learning and revision.

The end of the spring term also brings about an incredibly important time in the Christian calendar, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, which heralds a time of celebration and renewal for Christians worldwide. Interestingly, this year, Easter is rather early. Unlike Christmas, which adheres to a fixed date in the calendar, the timing of Easter is tied to the lunar cycles, resulting in variations from year to year.

Whilst it is clearly such a special time of year for many families, I would like to wish all families associated with the school a happy, safe and peaceful Easter holiday period.

Gary Mullings, Headteacher

Year 11 Food and Nutrition

Our talented Year 11 Food Preparation and Nutrition students completed the final practical element of their GCSE NEA last week. The challenging format requires our young chefs to cook three dishes at once. This year, the overriding theme for the dishes was seasonal, fresh ingredients. Salmon en croute, creme patissiere fruit tarts, ravioli with home-made pasta are just a few of the sumptuous delights served up by our delightful year 11s. Both classes were a credit to themselves and performed beautifully.

Well done all, and thank you for your hard work.



Mr Welch
Design & Technology Department

Easter School 2024

Last week some Year 11 and Year 13 parents would have received emails from the school inviting their child to the Vyners Easter School. The sessions have been tailored for individual groups of students who need extra support in the lead up to their exams. Unfortunately we do not have the capacity to be able to invite all students to these sessions, hence why they have been tailored to individual students and skills.

If your child has been invited to one of the sessions, please complete the Google Consent Form in the final paragraph of the letter as soon as possible.

Miss Brown
Assistant Headteacher

Friends of Vyners Needs You!

What is Friends of Vyners?

- Friends of Vyners in the Vyners School Parent Association. Since its creation in the 1960s, Friends of Vyners has raised money for a variety of causes around the school, including:
 - chromebooks for classroom use
 - redevelopment of the school quad
 - roll out of the main Wi-fi network across the school
 - equipment for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme
 - the purchase and maintenance of the school minibuses
- Without the work of Friends of Vyners none of these causes and projects would have been completed. Friends of Vyners are part of a number of events throughout the year, within which they raise money. Events include Quiz nights, the 100 club, refreshments at school productions and sports day.
- The parent group is a huge asset to the school and something we are incredibly proud of.
- Now it is your turn to be a part of this association!

What do I need to do?

- You can sign up to be a member of the committee. You would be required to attend 5 meetings per year, three of which are online and two in person. The meetings are held at Vyners School. Or, you can sign up to volunteer at events. You would be required to help at one or more events throughout the year.

Why should I get involved?

- As mentioned above, without Friends of Vyners we would not have many of the facilities available to the students on a daily basis. We have plans for the future, including raising money to continue to fund the school minibuses, raising money for a new sports facility and raising money for our very first Vyners School vegetable garden. Without your help the students will not have access to these facilities.

How do I register my interest in joining?

- Please use this [Google Form](#) to register your interest and become part of our mailing list:

Your help will be greatly appreciated and valued by all in the school community.

Friends of Vyners Committee Members

Year 10 Knife Crime Workshop

On Thursday 14th March all students in Year 10 attended a knife crime workshop, organised by two members of the London Ambulance Service. Amanda Cassidy and Jed Farrell, volunteered their free time to visit Vyners and teach students vital lifesaving skills. These included what to expect when calling an ambulance, key information needed by the call handler and how to look after the patient. In addition, the reality of knife crime was brought to life when Amanda and Jed shared their real life experiences of young people who had been victims of knife crime. The feedback on the sessions from staff and students after was fantastic.

We are very much hoping Amanda and Jed will join us back in the summer term to present to our Year 9 students.



Easter Half Term Activities

#DOSOMETHINGTHISHOLIDAY

The London Borough of Hillingdon are running fun and free sessions and workshops for 8 to 24-year-olds who live, learn or earn in Hillingdon and may benefit from additional targeted support. These are run on a referral basis. If there is not a professional working with your family, a self-referral can be made using the 'Make a referral' button on the website below. Please click [[here](#)] to find out more.

Ms Ashe
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

World Book Day Celebrations

As part of Vyners' World Book Day celebrations this year, various activities took place to inspire and engage students in the joy of reading. The author Caroline Lawrence best known for her series of historical novels; The Roman Mysteries, delivered an inspiring creative writing presentation to our Year 8 students. Caroline's visit was a wonderful celebration of the written word where she shared her

expertise and tips on how to write a great story to a captivated audience!



From creative costumes to a Scavenger Hunt and a 'Bake Off' competition, students were involved in a host of exciting events.

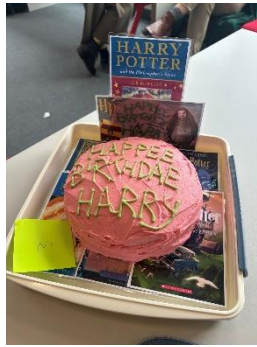


The Scavenger Hunt involved students hunting for signs that staff had caught the 'World Book Day Bug', transforming themselves into characters from some of our most beloved stories. Students had to look out for characters or items that staff were wearing and once they had spotted a clue, wrote down either the character or book they came from in order to gain a point. Once they had written down as many literary finds as possible, they submitted their sheets to their English Teacher.

A huge congratulations to the winners of the Scavenger Hunt for the most literary finds were:

1. Angie Chin - 7F
2. Rajni Bhambra - 7G
3. Arissa Siddiq - 7P
4. Nekayva Castaneda-Kwamie - 8F
5. Ranisa Derhaley - 8H

Students and parents/carers were also invited to show off their baking skills by baking World Book Day themed cakes! Judging and certificate awards were handed out by the local MP David Simmonds in the LRC. Once the winners had been chosen, the cakes then went on sale with all proceeds going to The World Book Day Charity. The Money raised for the charity was £103.50. Considering cakes were being sold at 50p and £1.00, I think we can safely say that the 'Bake Off' was a huge success and there was certainly a celebratory atmosphere in the LRC!



Well done to the much-deserved winners who were chosen from the following categories:

Most Delicious - Phoenix Payne-Barnes 8C

Most Creative - Marli Pistorius 10J

Most Wacky - Eduard Pistorius 7M

Overall Winner - Cooking / baking book - Phoenix Payne-Barnes 8C

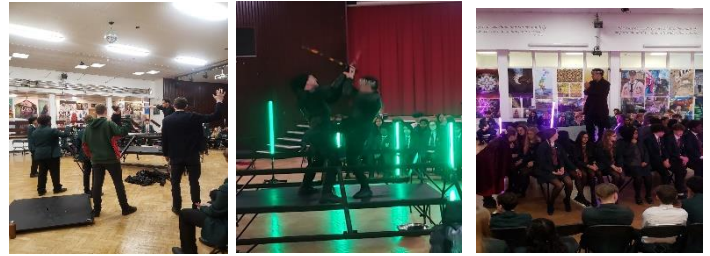
Of course, the joy of reading doesn't end with World Book Day. Alongside our weekly Drop Everything and Read, we believe at Vyners that every day is an opportunity to celebrate the power and magic of literature, to explore new ideas, and to challenge ourselves to think in new ways. Whether we are sharing a story with a friend, exploring a new genre, or simply getting lost in a great book, reading is a lifelong journey that can often take us to places we never imagined.

I hope that this year's World Book Day celebrations have inspired our students to continue that journey, and to make every day a celebration of the written word.

Ms Goode
Assistant Subject Leader, English

Shakespeare's famous tragedy 'Macbeth' comes to Vyners!

The London-based award winning, writer-led Box Clever Theatre Company, dedicated to the creation of contemporary theatre for young people, visited the school on Tuesday 19th March, bringing Macbeth to life for our Year 10 students with an engaging, dynamic performance and interactive workshop.



The Year 10s thoroughly enjoyed this modernised interactive production, with lots of audience participation, giving them renewed energy and enthusiasm for Shakespeare's famous tragedy! This was a fantastic opportunity for students to see the play they are currently studying for their GCSEs!



Three actors performed the play in just over an hour, followed by a workshop to help the students learn more about some of the key themes. As well as being extremely informative, the actors were all approachable and enthusiastic. Physical theatre, lightsabers, audience participation, rap ... a very clever interpretation of the play.

Ms Goode
Assistant Subject Leader, English

Year 13 Workshop - Maximise your Potential

This morning we were delighted to welcome Jeremy Dry from Maximise your Potential to give a workshop to our Year 13 students as they head into exam season. Maximise your Potential specialise in high impact study skills and motivational talks. We find that this workshop gets the students to stop, rethink and reassess their revision prior to sitting their final exams. Jeremy also shared some excellent advice on the more personal skills that are needed as the students head into the world of work, apprenticeships and university.

We really hope each student who attended was able to take away something that will motivate and support them in the next few weeks.

Mrs Lane
Year 13 Leader



Rugby Success

Congratulations to three of our year 10 students who played for Ruislip Rugby Club U15s over the weekend. Kena, Kian and George played in the team that beat Old Albanians to win the Herts and Middlesex League, which means that they have now been promoted to division 1 as Champions. The team has been unbeaten for two years; an incredible achievement. It was a tough game and they played hard and dug deep. It was an amazing result and we are all rightly proud of the boys and their achievements.

Mr Neville
Year 10 Leader

Economics Revision Day

On 2nd March, eighteen Year 13 students took part in an Economics revision conference at Bishop Ramsey school with the well-known and popular YouTube guru 'Econplusdal'.

This entailed a day of handy advice on both subject content and exam technique interspersed with several intra-student competitions. The advice provided was sound, sensible and stimulating on topics such as how to convert a reasonable paragraph into an A* one, meaning the students were focused throughout, despite being at the back of a crowded room.

The competitions were highly competitive at every turn, often involving finalists having to stand on chairs, thus adding to the drama. We are proud to note that Vyners students were invariably involved in the latter rounds, demonstrating sound Economics knowledge, with Zaid Hussain and Santhula Ekanayaka even winning a couple of the contests.

You can imagine that, as this took place on a Saturday, it would have required the 'hard sell' to students but by the end of this enriching, fun day the students' view was unambiguously positive and that it had been a highly worthwhile investment of their time. Now to put all the good exam advice into action!



Mrs Robinson-White and Mr McDonough
Economics and Business Studies

Oxford and Cambridge University Talks

Over the last few weeks we have had speakers in school from Cambridge and Oxford Universities talking to pupils in Year 11 (Cambridge), Year 9, Year 10 and Year 12 (Oxford) about different aspects of University life. The feedback from the students has been exceptional; it genuinely seems that the sessions have inspired them to achieve their goals.

Mr Kelly
Lead Practitioner, Mathematics

The outreach officer gave incites into what Oxford and Cambridge look for specifically in successful applicants throughout each process. The officer also gave lots of resources for super curricular activities, which is extremely useful as 20% of your personal statement for an Oxford and Cambridge applicant should be built around what super curricular activities you have done and what you have learnt from them. Overall, the talk clearly outlined what the next steps are, and the best way to maximise one's chances to become a successful applicant for Oxford and Cambridge University.

Kyal, Year 12 Student

I personally found the talk extremely useful and educational. It helped me consider my options for the future and motivated me to take my revision more seriously and spur onwards into my academic journey. I would definitely recommend this talk to younger students who are considering university as an option.

Valentina, Year 11 Student

It was really cool to see all the unique things Oxford has to offer, such as their world-class facilities and their tutorial system, where you regularly have 1-on-1 meetings with lecturers and professionals that can help you study and develop your skills. The main thing I took away was that even if we don't end up at Oxford, there are still so many amazing universities, colleges, and apprenticeships available!

Elizabeth, Year 10 Student

I was excited to be chosen for this opportunity as I have wanted to go to Oxford University since I was in Year 5. I knew that it is one of the UK's oldest universities, and my dad has always told me it is the best place to study in the UK. The speaker spoke about the different colleges at the university and how some parts of the campus are older than others. As it is one of the top universities in the world, he made it clear to us that the entry requirements are high and that we need to be getting the best grades in GCSE and A-level if we want to study there in the future. I want to study Medicine, and feel that the session was useful in getting a better understanding of what I need to achieve and work towards so that I can do this at Oxford.

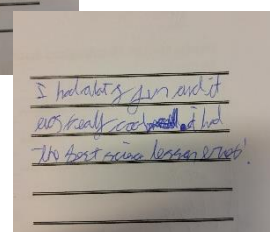
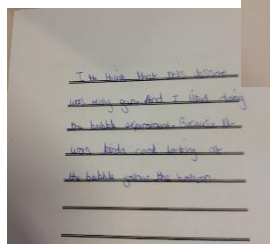
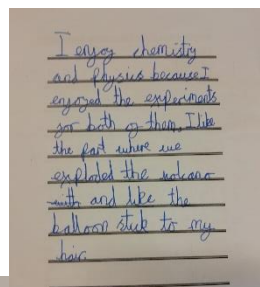
Sultan, Year 9 Student

British Science Week 2024: Breakspear Primary School

British Science Week is a ten-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths taking place between 8th and 17th March 2024.

Vyners Science department led two days of exhilarating science sessions during British science week at Breakspear Primary School for year 5 and 6 to ignite curiosity, raise awareness and enthusiasm. Through engaging activities and experiments, the science department showcased the wonders of scientific exploration, captivating the students with interactive experiments on topics ranging from respiration to static electricity. The positive reviews from pupils resonated with admiration and

eagerness, as they expressed newfound excitement for science.



**Mr Peran
Assistant Subject Leader, Science**

Safeguarding Snapshot

This week's snapshot is regarding self-harm. This is when someone intentionally causes harm to themselves as a way of dealing with difficult feelings, traumatic experiences or memories, neglect, or situations that they find overwhelming. People sometimes self-harm when life feels hard to cope with. Please click [[here](#)] for more information.

Employment Opportunities at Vyners School: Exam Invigilators

We still have vacancies for exam invigilators. If you are interested please refer to the website, complete the application form and email this to recruitment@vynersschool.org.uk.