



## Headteacher's Update

17<sup>th</sup> May 2024

I would like to thank Mr Welch for his excellent work in organising and hosting the very first Vanguard Learning Trust (VLT) cookery competition that took place at the school last Wednesday afternoon and involved a mixture of primary and secondary phase children from across the trust schools. I am sure that parents and carers will appreciate the health and safety implications that need to be assessed and managed alongside the basic logistics of getting students and staff together on one school site to cook over a two hour period. It was a wonderful afternoon enjoyed by all and I was delighted to be able to hand out the prizes to the three overall winners.



One of the highlights of every academic year is the Year 13 leavers assembly. The latest version of this traditional event took place last Friday and, as always, involved some rather creative fancy dress costumes. Whilst there wasn't a prize for the best costume, I think that the sight of an eight foot battery inflated gorilla on the school quad surrounded by dozens of excitable school children almost definitely stole the show. It was a heartwarming afternoon whereby staff were able to wish the cohort the very best and thank them for their service to the school community, whilst the students through their tutor groups were able to thank the staff that had had the biggest impact on them during their time at the school.

Thank you to Mrs Harvey, Mrs Lane, Mrs Coyle and the wider sixth form team for organising the afternoon and for supporting the students throughout their time in the sixth form. I would like to wish the students the very best of luck as they enter into the examination season.

Parents may recall that, from time to time, I have written about the challenges involved in the recruitment of teachers (and support staff) in the current climate; I am sure that many parents are also involved, one way or another, in the recruitment of staff to an organisation and may experience similar challenges. In short, there simply are not enough people training to become teachers in England and the problem is particularly acute in specific subject areas. This issue is often exacerbated in areas such as London and the south east due the additional cost of housing with some school staff relocating away from these areas when seeking to purchase their first home or simply reducing rental or mortgage costs.

One of the quirks of teaching is the notice period required to leave a teaching post prior to starting a new role. An example of this is the impending 31<sup>st</sup> May deadline, which is the deadline for a resignation to enable a start at a new school on 1st September. After this time, schools can only recruit staff who are not currently in post including newly qualified teachers (now known as early career teachers). As I am sure that parents and carers can imagine, this can be a nervous time for schools as they try to ensure that they are fully staffed for September, hoping that they do not lose any key staff leading up to the half term break in the knowledge that they will be exceptionally difficult to replace.

Whilst I know that it can be frustrating when a member of staff leaves or when lessons need to be covered by a temporary member of staff for a period of time, particularly one that is less experienced, I do hope that parents and carers can appreciate that the strong reputation of the school and the multi academy trust does mean that we remain fortunate to retain excellent staff and recruit some of the very

best staff available each year. I am delighted with the staff that we have been able to recruit this year and am keeping my fingers crossed that the May half term passes without incident. I will update parents and carers about our staffing position once we have clarity in June / July.

Finally this week, I would like to mention how much we enjoy welcoming visitors to the school and particularly, developing partnerships. Yesterday morning I welcomed Deborah Beeken to the school from the Stronger Families hub. The hub provides a range of services to help families with the support that they need and it operates 24 hours a day, 7 days of the week. A link to the hub webpage can be found here [\[click here\]](#). My meeting with Deborah had two main purposes. The first is as the Headteacher at the school to create a stronger partnership with the hub to ensure that we have another effective way to support families at the school as we appreciate that some families have faced greater challenges since the periods of lockdown.

The second purpose to my meeting was as the representative of the Hillingdon Secondary Headteacher's group to ensure that all schools are provided with the relevant information to access the borough wide services that are available to support children and their families. Much of the work of the hubs is linked to mental health support, school attendance including emotion based school avoidance and providing advice and guidance about parenting. It's really important to stress that the practitioners are not social workers but are there to support families about a wide range of child and teenager related issues. If parents or carers would like to learn more about the stronger families hubs then please do go to their page on the Hillingdon website. Alternatively, please contact your child's Year Leader if you wish to access the service via the school.

### **VLT Cooking Competition**

The inaugural Vanguard Learning Trust Cooking Competition took place at Vyners on the afternoon of 9th May. With representatives from all six schools in the trust, the food rooms were full of energy with our best young chefs preparing, cooking and presenting their dishes. The challenge was to cook a dish which represented the teachings of the Eat well guide. It was fantastic to see such enthusiasm, skill and enjoyment from a wonderful array of year 5, 6 and year 7 pupils. After 90 minutes of prep and cooking,

the talented youngsters presented their dishes for judging. What a delight it was to sample such impressive results. Congratulations to Arianna Manni who served up a real showstopper of a risotto with parmesan crisps. Enhanced with a hint of saffron, the flavours and textures combined beautifully to earn Arianna the runners-up trophy and prizes. Congratulations also to Eva Ali who served a delightful chicken in black bean sauce with perfectly fluffy egg fried rice. Eva finished in a very commendable fourth place overall. It was a pleasure to see so many young people enjoying their cooking in a competition that was held in a supportive and friendly atmosphere.

Thank you to all competitors and we look forward to hosting again soon!



**Mr Welch,  
Assistant Subject Leader Design & Technology**

### **Team Maths Challenge**

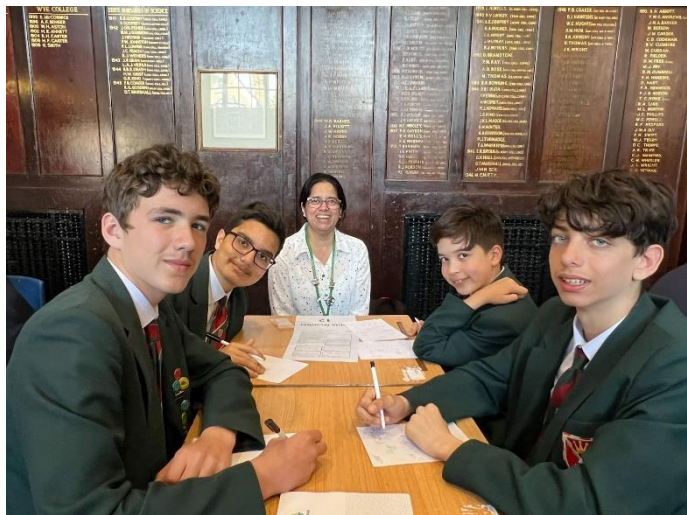
About 130 Year 7 and Year 8 students took part in the Junior Maths Challenge on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024. 81 students earned either Gold, Silver or Bronze certificates.

7 Students from our school have qualified for the next round which is an 'Invitation Only' round. They are Ethan Liu, Aren Gunduz, Oscar Corcoran (all Year 7s) and Zach Easton, Emma McCormick, Millie Sowby, Jegor Spak (all Year 8s).

Special mention goes to Zach Easton (8F), who has qualified for the Olympiad Round which invites only

1200 students to take part from England and Wales every year.

The school team also took part in the 'Team Maths Challenge' this year hosted at Tiffin School in Kingston. They showed great teamwork and resilience and finished 11<sup>th</sup> in the Regional Competition. The students that made this possible are Nathan Griffiths (9F), Dylan Lewis (9H), Zach Easton (8F) and Waleed Aldhahir (8G).



**Mrs Malegaonkar, Maths Department**

### **Butterfly Project**

During this half term, a number of students within Learning Support helped with a project - nurturing caterpillars and watching them transition into chrysalis state and then finally into butterflies which they then later released. During this process the students monitored and observed the changes that occurred and then later released the 'Painted Lady Butterflies' into the wild. The students enjoyed observing the transformation take place and were fascinated by the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly.



**Learning Support Team**

### **Duke of Edinburgh**

As part of their Bronze DofE Award, students must complete 6 months of volunteering for an hour a week. Recently 4 of our Year 9 students have been helping to improve our local community by litter picking. The St Andrews Park Residents Association (SAPRA) has recently contacted the school to praise the hard work and dedication of our students to pick litter in 'rain or shine'. SAPRA has also said that they would love to have other DofE Award candidates to volunteer in the future.

**Mr Sankey, Duke of Edinburgh Co-ordinator**

### **Sports Update**

#### **Borough Senior Athletics**

Vyners were very successful at Borough Senior Athletics (Year 9/10). It was a fantastic day with many medals won and beautiful sunshine. All students in a track event qualified to make the final which is also a massive achievement.

Well done to all involved!

#### **Year 9**

##### 1st Place:

Dylan Lewis - 1500m  
Nathan Griffiths – Javelin

##### 2nd Place

Lara Colgan - Shot Putt

##### 3rd Place

Matilda Sorrell - 1500m  
Chayden Clarke - 400m  
Oli Young - Long Jump

#### **Year 10**

##### 1st Place

Ava Rowlands - Hurdles  
AnnaMarie Baker-Lopes - 200m  
Luke Atkinson - 800m  
Year 10 Girls Relay Team (Chloe Sims, Isla Barrow, Ava Rowlands, Annamarie Baker-Lopes)  
Kena Domike - Shot Putt  
Taylor Kerswill - Javelin

## 2nd Place

Reuben Nornoo - 100m

Callum Martin - 200m

Year 10 Boys Relay Team (George Langley,  
Alfie Clark, William Gibson, Reuben Nornoo)

Caleb Wright - Discus

Alfie Clark - Triple Jump

Neve O'Connor - Shot Putt

Isla Barrow - Triple Jump

## 3rd Place

George Langley - 400m

Thomas Aherne - 1500m

Chloe Sims - 1500m

Callum Martin - Long Jump

William Gibson - High Jump

**Miss Hawes and Mr Cawley, PE Department**

## **Middlesex County Championships**

Dylan Lewis (9H) won gold in the 1500m (4m 17s) at the Middlesex County Championships on Saturday at Lee Valley Stadium.



## **Absence Line**

Parents/Carers are kindly reminded to report any student absences before 9am via EduLink or email to [attendance@vynersschool.org.uk](mailto:attendance@vynersschool.org.uk). This is crucial for safeguarding purposes.

## **Reminder re dropping off items at school**

Please click [\[here\]](#) to the letter sent on 2nd February and re-sent on 15th May

## **Lost Property**

The school has a large pile of unclaimed PE kits in Student Services. If your son or daughter is missing the kit, please ask them to take a look, as we may have it. All uncollected lost property will be disposed of over May half term.

Please can we remind parents to label all uniform with their child's name. This makes it considerably easier to return lost items. Thank you.

**Miss Williams, Business Manager**

## **Friends of Vyners**

### **Treasurer Position**

Could you be the Friends of Vyners next PTA treasurer?

With a clear head for numbers, you will control the PTA funds in line with the committee's decisions, as well as charity law. You will also make sure upcoming events are affordable and profitable, and report financial information to the rest of the team.

For more information or to register interest, please fill out this Google form:

<https://forms.gle/XCpfDqN99Bhfv9uf8>

### **FOV 100 Club**

Please click [\[here\]](#) to see the winners of the FOV 100 Club for January, February and March 2024 and click [\[here\]](#) for the Application Form for the next newsletter please.

**Friends of Vyners Committee Members**

### **Safeguarding Snapshot**

Please click [\[here\]](#) to read this week's Safeguarding Snapshot which contains advice on talking to your child if they witness a violent incident.