

HAMMERSMITH

Academy



# THE ACADEMIST

HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM 2025 EDITION

## IN THIS EDITION:

TOP BBC JOURNALISTS BROADCAST AT HA • MUSIC & COSTUMES • MEET THE ALUMNI  
STEM - ROBOTICS & ARCHITECTURE • SPACE EXPLORATION • NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SCIENTIST  
CHARITY • HACKATHON • MEDIA & MOVIES • DEPARTMENTAL NEWS • AND MORE!

# A WORD FROM OUR HEADTEACHER



This edition of The Academist focuses on what we describe as our “*real-world success*” formula, that outstanding education extends far beyond examination results. At Hammersmith Academy, we place great value on expanding students’ cultural capital, confidence, and personal growth by providing meaningful experiences that connect learning to life beyond the classroom.

This term has been a powerful example of that approach in action. Through our growing network of partnerships, students have benefited from an exceptional range of opportunities. We welcomed BBC journalists broadcasting directly from the Academy, giving students first-hand insight into professional journalism and global reporting. Our speaker programme has brought a diverse range of voices into school — from a National Geographic scientist working in the Amazon, to physicists from the National Space Academy, and professional costumiers from The Old Vic Theatre — each demonstrating how academic learning translates into real careers.

Students have also taken part in hands-on challenges such as our Hackathon, where creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving were put to the test in a fast-paced, real-world context. Alongside this, our Sixth Form students have benefited

from one-to-one corporate interviews and mentoring, helping them prepare confidently for university applications and future employment.

We have also been inspired this term by the real-world success of our alumni, both recent and from earlier cohorts. In this edition, you will meet Nedal Harris (HA 2013–2020), who is making waves in the world of architecture, and Lily Traykov (HA 2019–2025), who has begun a highly competitive degree apprenticeship with the L’Oréal Group. Their journeys are powerful examples of what our students can go on to achieve.

Alongside all of this, the Academy has continued to deliver the full richness of school life, a busy programme of lessons, assessments, sport, music, drama, trips, competitions, leadership opportunities, and community events. It has truly been a busy and productive term.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of The Academist and learning more about the opportunities shaping our students’ journeys. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Kynaston'.

Mr Kynaston, Headteacher

# TOP BBC JOURNALISTS AT HA



The journalist panel consisted of Ricky Boleto (Newsround), James Waterhouse (BBC Ukraine Correspondent), Vitaly Shevchenko (BBC Monitoring Russia Editor) and Victoria Derbyshire (journalist, newsreader and presenter)

Hammersmith Academy welcomed some of the BBC's leading journalists on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November for a special joint recording of BBC Newsround and the Ukrainecast podcast — an extraordinary opportunity for students in Years 7–10 to experience professional journalism up close. The event was particularly meaningful for our Ukrainian students, now living in Hammersmith & Fulham, who were able to engage directly with reporters covering the conflict in their home country.

The panel — featuring Victoria Derbyshire, James Waterhouse (BBC Ukraine Correspondent), Ricky Boleto (Newsround presenter), and Vitaly Shevchenko (BBC Monitoring Russia Editor) — led a powerful Question Time–style discussion on how three years of war have affected the lives, education, and wellbeing of young people in Ukraine and around the world.

Our students rose to the occasion, asking thoughtful, sensitive, and well-informed questions. Their maturity

and curiosity impressed the panel and demonstrated the strength of global awareness within our school community.

The visit also offered students a rare behind-the-scenes look at how news is made. They observed the full production process — from camera crews and sound teams to interview preparation and live discussion — gaining valuable insight into the world of broadcasting and investigative journalism. For many, this was their first experience witnessing a professional recording in action.

Headteacher, Mr Kynaston reflected on the significance of the event, “Having top BBC journalists in our school gave our students a front-row seat to professional journalism at its best. They saw how global stories are shaped, how evidence is gathered, and how reporters give a voice to young people affected by world events.” ■

## STUDENTS EXPERIENCE JOURNALISM AND BROADCASTING FIRSTHAND AT HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY.

“ Having top BBC top journalists in our school gave our students a front-row seat to professional journalism at its best. ”

[Watch the BBC show](#)





# EXPLORING RAINFORESTS

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER INSPIRES STUDENTS WITH STORIES OF FIELDWORK IN THE AMAZON, CUTTING-EDGE SCIENCE, AND THE HIDDEN LIFEFORMS THAT SUSTAIN OUR PLANET.



Dr Vásquez Espinoza during her talk in a Year 9 Science class, talking about her fascinating research and fieldwork in the Amazon rainforest.

As part of our special partnership with National Geographic, Hammersmith Academy was delighted to welcome Dr Rosa Vásquez Espinoza, a chemical biologist, conservationist, National Geographic Explorer, and award-winning artist, for a series of inspiring talks with our students.

Of Peruvian-Andean and Amazonian descent, Dr Vásquez Espinoza shared how her passion for science began in her grandmother's backyard "natural pharmacy," where she first learned about traditional medicine. That early curiosity has led her to explore some of the planet's most extreme environments, including the Amazon rainforest and Yellowstone National Park's boiling, acidic waters.

Dr Vásquez Espinoza spoke to Sixth Form students through the Insight Programme and also visited Year 9 Science lessons, adapting her talks to suit each audience. She shared

fascinating insights into her work in the Boiling River and her research into South American stingless bees, whose honey has important medicinal properties.

Students were particularly intrigued by how microscopic organisms can have a global impact, including bacteria found in Yellowstone that now play a role in COVID testing. Her ability to connect the smallest lifeforms to wider ecosystems helped students understand how science underpins both human health and biodiversity.

Seeing a female scientist working in the field was especially powerful for students, offering a real-world example of the many pathways into science. Dr Vásquez Espinoza's visit was both engaging and inspiring, and a memorable highlight of our partnership with National Geographic.

# BLASTING OFF!



Scientists from the National Space Academy delivered the exciting sessions which included demonstrations of experiments that led to space exploration.

## YEAR 7 AND 10 STUDENTS EXPLORED SPACE SCIENCE THROUGH HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS FEATURING ROCKETS, HOVERCRAFT, AND A REAL COSMONAUT SPACE SUIT.

Year 7 and Year 10 students were launched into a world of discovery this term as they took part in inspiring space science masterclasses, delivered in collaboration with the National Space Academy. The organisation was founded to bring space science into the secondary curriculum in a meaningful and accessible way, and these workshops did exactly that.

The sessions were carefully designed to link directly to what students already know, helping them apply their understanding of forces and Newton's Laws to real-world contexts. Engagement was high

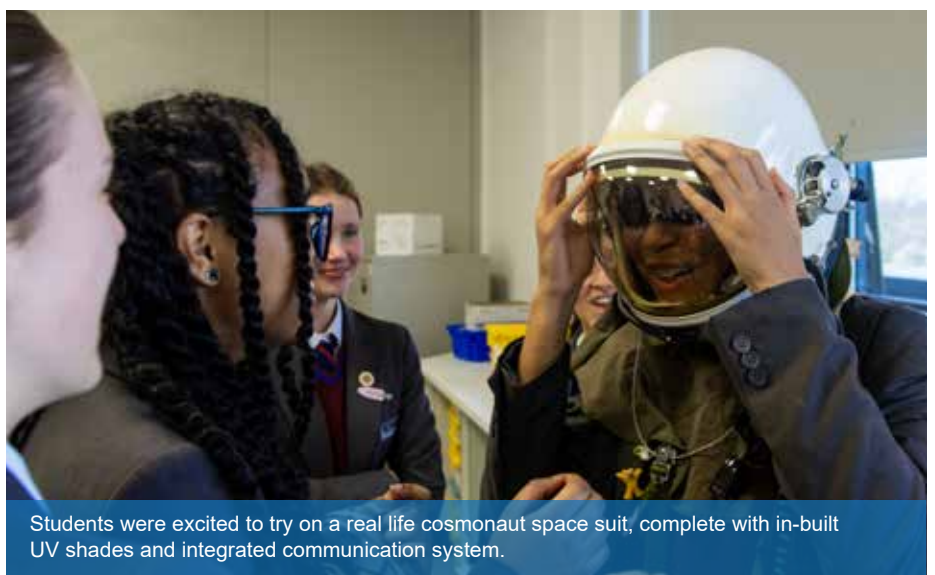
throughout, particularly during the hands-on challenges, where students were able to put theory into practice.

One of the highlights was the opportunity to design, build and test hydrogen-powered rockets. Students also constructed balloon-propelled CD hovercraft, exploring ideas around thrust, air resistance, and motion in a way that was both practical and entertaining. There was plenty of excitement in the room as designs were tested, refined, and tested again.

Students were also given the rare chance to get up close with a real cosmonaut space suit. They were even allowed to try on the helmet, giving them a genuine sense of what it might feel like for astronauts preparing to go into space. This was a memorable moment for many and brought an added sense of realism to the science behind human spaceflight.

Seeing students work so confidently with complex physics concepts was a real pleasure. The practical nature of the workshops made challenging ideas clearer and more memorable, and the enthusiasm shown across both year groups highlighted just how effective these sessions were.

These workshops were a brilliant example of science brought to life beyond the classroom, and we hope to welcome the National Space Academy back again soon. ■



Students were excited to try on a real life cosmonaut space suit, complete with in-built UV shades and integrated communication system.



# STEM ROUND-UP



Ms Ferrell with Year 11 student, Ramtin and his 3D-printed prosthetic arm which he has been designed and built during his time on the Imperial College Maker Challenge.

**MS FERRELL, STEM COORDINATOR, REFLECTS ON A TERM OF INNOVATION, CREATIVITY, AND REAL-WORLD LEARNING.**

Our students have kicked off the academic year with an exciting range of STEM experiences, exploring everything from architecture and design to advanced engineering and emerging technologies. Through visits to professional studios, creative workshops, and hands-on projects at Imperial College London, students have been able to apply their skills beyond the classroom, spark curiosity, and gain valuable insight into future career pathways.

## **Grimshaw Architects Careers Showcase**

Sixth Form students began the term with a visit to the Grimshaw Architects Careers Showcase, hosted at the firm's London studio and supported by the Grimshaw Foundation. The event offered students a carousel of workshops introducing the wide range of careers within architecture and the creative industries.

Students observed professional 3D printing in action and explored AI and VR tools used in industry-level design and engineering. Many of our aspiring engineers and designers

engaged enthusiastically, asking thoughtful questions and gaining a clearer understanding of real-world applications.

Ivan (Year 12) explained, "I learnt a lot about what genuinely goes into designing everything from scale models to huge buildings like airports. My favourite part was seeing their high-spec 3D printers."

Frida (Year 13) added, "It was great going back to Grimshaw as I did work experience there. Everyone was welcoming, and it's really helped me think more clearly about my future career choices."

## **Accelerate Studios - Open City**

A group of Year 9 students took part in Accelerate Studios, an inspiring programme delivered by Open City alongside architecture and design professionals. The workshops introduced students to creative careers while developing practical design skills.

Working in teams, students designed ambitious concepts for community centres, bringing ideas to life through 3D model making. Designs included



a year-round ice rink dome, a world foods market celebrating cultural diversity, and environmentally conscious buildings featuring green roofs and solar panels.

The programme concluded with student presentations to Open City architects, providing valuable professional feedback.

Mr Young, Head of Year 9, said of the programme, "It was fantastic to see students collaborating, debating ideas, and solving real-world problems. We clearly have some future architects and engineers in this year group."

The final phase will see students visit a London-based architecture firm to observe how projects develop in practice.

### Imperial College Maker Challenge

Students in Years 10 and 11 participated in the Imperial College Maker Challenge, an after-school programme encouraging young people to develop ideas using advanced technologies. Working in the Imperial Makerspace, students had access to 3D printers, laser cutters, electronics, and craft equipment, supported by expert



Budding Year 9 architects present their building models during the Open Studios Accelerate Session.

mentors.

Ania (Year 10) created a gesture-controlled car and she said, "We learnt so much, soldering, 3D printing, laser cutting. It felt like DT, but with the space and time to do more, and the independence to really explore."

Ramtin (Year 11) designed a 3D-printed prosthetic arm with motor-controlled fingers, inspired by a family member, an impressive example of creativity combined with technical skill!

We are proud of our long-standing relationship with Imperial

Makerspace, with many HA alumni continuing to develop their ideas through the Dangoor Reach Out Makerspace.

Students aged 14+, whether or not they study Design & Technology, are encouraged to contact Ms Ferrell to find out more about future STEM opportunities.

This term has shown just how powerful STEM learning can be when students are given time, space, and real-world context to explore their ideas. We look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead.



# YEAH! HEALTHCARE



A highlight from the event were the virtual reality headsets simulating medical procedures and giving a look at what an operating theatre looks like.

On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November, our Year 8 students were invited to Imperial College London to take part in the Year Eights Accessing Healthcare (YEAH!) initiative, an outreach programme designed to give young people greater insight into careers in medicine and healthcare.

The day began with students using virtual reality headsets to practise simulated surgical procedures, giving them a glimpse into the precision, teamwork, and decision-making required in an operating theatre. This immersive experience proved to be a real highlight, capturing students' attention from the outset.

Students then met a range of healthcare professionals, including a GP, a pharmacist, and a nurse, who

introduced them to essential medical equipment such as stethoscopes, oxygen meters, and blood pressure monitors. Students were able to use the equipment themselves, learning how professionals assess patients and monitor vital signs.

To round off the day, students applied their chemistry skills by analysing water samples and using scientific clues to identify where in London each sample may have originated. This hands-on challenge encouraged careful observation and critical thinking.

The visit was both engaging and informative, bringing science to life and helping students see how their learning links to real-world careers in healthcare. ■

# CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

MS SUGANTHAKUMARAN, HEAD OF MATHEMATICS, REFLECTS ON A TERM OF PROBLEM-SOLVING, COMPETITIONS, AND ENRICHMENT ACROSS THE MATHS DEPARTMENT.



Sixth Form Senior Maths Challenge cohort with their certificates, including Henry (far left of image) who scored the highest score in the Academy.

## UKMT Senior Maths Challenge

Students once again took on the UKMT Senior Maths Challenge, tackling demanding, non-routine problems that tested logic, creativity, and resilience. We are proud to report excellent results, with over half of all HA entrants earning certificates.

A special congratulations goes to Henry (Year 13), who achieved a Gold Certificate and the highest score in the school. Henry progressed to the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo and secured a Silver Certificate — an outstanding accomplishment.

## Count on Us Maths Club By Jacob and Hafsa, Year 10

The Count on Us Club has had a great start this year, bringing together students who enjoy solving problems, spotting patterns, and challenging themselves. Each week, we work through a mix of fun puzzles, group activities, and maths challenges that help build confidence and push our thinking further.

Last year, I had the opportunity to represent Hammersmith Academy

in the Count on Us Competition — an experience that really helped me grow as a mathematician. This year, I'm excited to support the new team, share what I learned, and help prepare them for their own journey through the competition.

If you enjoy being logical, analytical, or simply love a good puzzle, Maths Club is the perfect place for you. We meet every Thursday at 3:30pm in S07. Feel free to come along or speak to Mr Christie for more information!

## Year 11 & 13 Maths Talk at St Paul's Girls' School

A select group of Year 11 and Year 13 students attended a fascinating lecture at St Paul's Girls' School, delivered by Dr Igor Wigman of King's College London. The talk explored Game Theory and its real-world applications in areas such as chess, finance, and politics.

The session offered valuable insight into how mathematical thinking influences everyday decision-making and professional fields.

From competitions to clubs and academic talks, this term has given

our students many chances to extend their mathematical horizons. We look forward to even more achievements next term.

## Axiom Maths

Axiom Maths is a charity dedicated to stretching and challenging passionate young mathematicians, using problem-solving and collaboration as the cornerstones of their aims: to widen skillsets, deepen understanding, and increase enjoyment of the subject.

This year, a select group of Year 7s have been chosen to pilot the scheme at Hammersmith Academy. Harvey in 7J shares his experience so far, saying "In Axiom Maths Club, we work together in pairs or small teams to solve challenging maths problems. It helps me build both my maths and teamwork skills as we work through the questions. I would rate this club five stars. It has really helped me in my lessons by stretching my understanding beyond my homework".

We look forward to seeing how the Axiom Maths Club continues to inspire our young mathematicians. ■



# DEEP DIVE INTO HISTORY

YEAR 13 STUDENT HANNAH REFLECTS ON AN INTERACTIVE VISIT TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, BRINGING THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION TO LIFE THROUGH REAL HISTORICAL SOURCES.



A-Level History students were allowed to get up close to historical documents, which included correspondence between spies.

Our trip to the National Archives in Kew was particularly interesting, as it offered an interactive experience that provided an in-depth insight into the different roles within the Russian Revolution. For example, we examined correspondence between spies stationed in the USSR who were working in favour of the British, which helped us practice linking our course content to historical sources.

Learning about how the Archives operate was also fascinating. We discovered how information and documents are stored and released, with millions of records housed within the building. In addition, we were able to handle artefacts and leaf through historical books and information leaflets, including a London census document that

contained details about Karl Marx and his living conditions.

We were also set the challenge of identifying the political views of unknown individuals by analysing a range of documents. This task required careful evaluation of sources and offered a valuable glimpse into the day-to-day work of archivists.

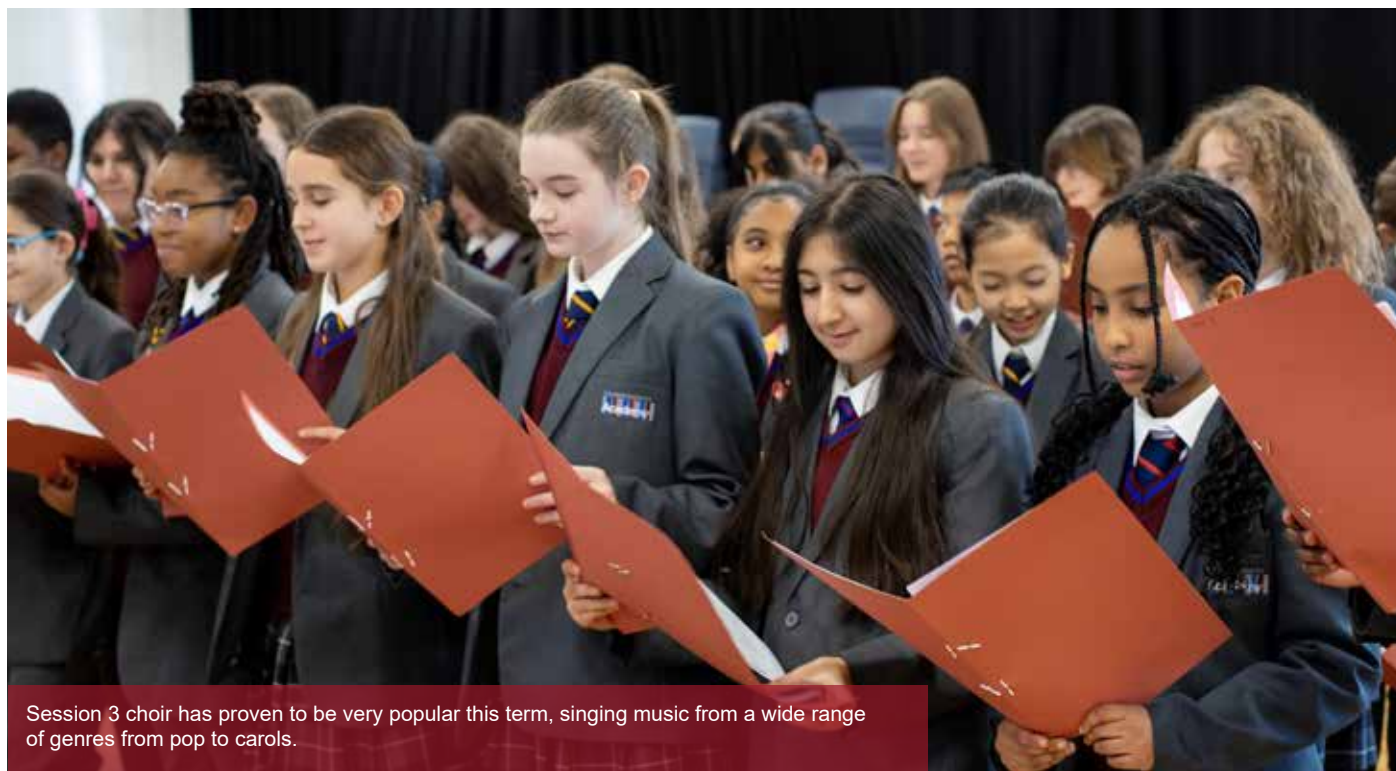
Ultimately, this experience helped bring abstract course content to life and demonstrated how history is actively investigated, interpreted, and understood. ■



Being able to handle documents brought historical events to life for students.

# ALL THE RIGHT NOTES

FROM PERFORMANCES TO INSPIRING TRIPS, IT'S BEEN A STANDOUT TERM FOR MUSIC. HEAD OF MUSIC MS CANTWELL TELLS US MORE.



Session 3 choir has proven to be very popular this term, singing music from a wide range of genres from pop to carols.

## Year 9 RCM Music Trip

Earlier this year, Year 9 students visited the Royal College of Music, exploring its museum collection of over 14,000 artefacts. Highlights included historic instruments from the 14th and 15th centuries, the earliest-dated guitar and stringed keyboard, and interactive barrel organs that students were able to play.

Students also toured the Kurt Cobain Unplugged exhibition, featuring Cobain's rare Martin D-18E guitar, his iconic cardigan, and footage from Nirvana's 1993 MTV Unplugged performance. The visit deepened students' appreciation of musical history and the cultural impact of Nirvana's work.

## Year 10 Music Trip

Kensington Aldridge Academy's Music Department graciously invited our Year 10 musicians to attend an evening concert led by The Outcry

Ensemble, a professional chamber orchestra conducted by James Henshaw. The Ensemble played all the set works from the GCSE Music course, leading interesting discussions and analyses of the pieces. A special shout out to Alex Wong for his involvement, and thank you to Kensington Aldridge's Mr Rigby for the invitation to this wonderful event.

## Music Session 3s

This term has been a positive and rewarding one for the Music Department, with students showing commitment, enthusiasm, and impressive progress across all Session 3 extracurricular activities.

Our choir has demonstrated strong growth in confidence and vocal technique, with consistently high attendance at rehearsals. Students have worked hard to improve tone, blend, and articulation, while expanding their repertoire to include

a wide range of styles — from pop and show tunes to seasonal carols. Teamwork has been a clear strength throughout the term.

Students attending Keyboard Club have shown excellent perseverance and creativity. Many have developed a deeper understanding of harmony and chord progressions, alongside improved notation reading and the ability to perform more complex pieces with confidence.

Band rehearsals have been energetic and focused, with students strengthening their ensemble awareness and technical skills. They have approached new and challenging repertoire with maturity, enthusiasm, and a clear sense of collaboration.

Overall, students have made outstanding progress in their Music Session 3s and ended the term on a real high note. ■



# MUSICAL RETURNS!

THIS YEAR'S MUSICAL IS THE MODERN CLASSIC, HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL JR! BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW.

Hammersmith Academy's Performing Arts Department is pleased to announce that this year's school musical will be Disney's High School Musical Jr, coming to the stage in February 2026.

The much-loved 2000s classic follows East High's star athlete Troy Bolton (Adrianna, 8J) and Mathlete Gabriella Montez (Milan, 10J) as they challenge expectations by auditioning for the school musical. Bursting with energy and school spirit, the show celebrates confidence, teamwork, and unexpected friendships.

Auditions took place in September, attracting strong interest from students. Since then, rehearsals have been lively, with many cast members arriving early for extra practice. Rehearsals take place every Wednesday, with a rotating focus

on drama, vocals, and choreography, and excitement continues to build as performance week approaches.

Performance dates:

- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 7:00–8:30pm
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 7:00–8:30pm
- Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 7:00–8:30pm

All performances will take place in the Hammersmith Academy Theatre.

Tickets are now available via [TicketSource](#), and we look forward



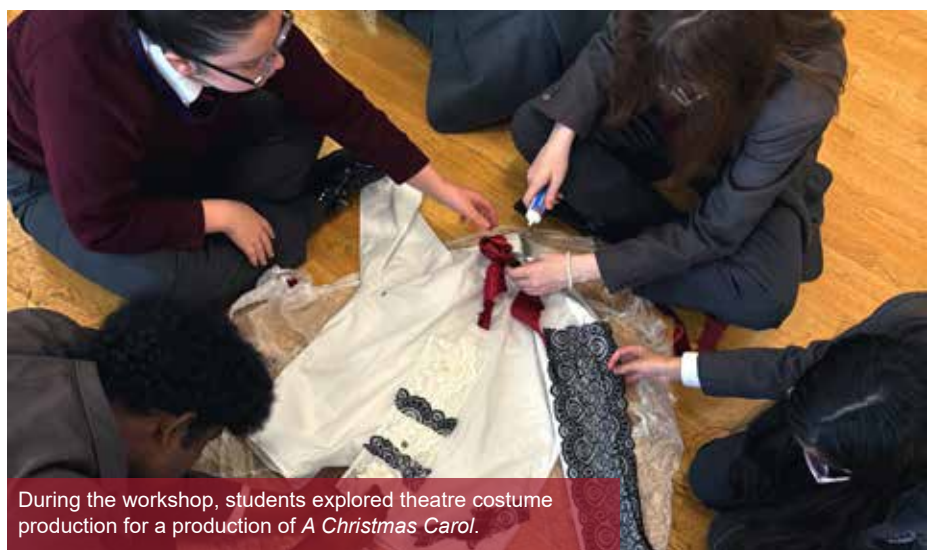
to welcoming audiences to celebrate the hard work, talent, and dedication of our students. ■

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## OLD VIC COSTUMES

Building on last year's success, our continued partnership with The Old Vic Theatre has led Year 9 students on an exciting journey into the world of professional theatre so far this term.

Over the past few months, students have enjoyed two of the four Schools Club workshops and trips, most recently attending a captivating performance of *A Christmas Carol* that brought Dickens' classic to life. Following the trip, they took part in a costume design workshop, discovering how costumes convey character, time period, personality, and status, and how vital costume choices are to story-telling on stage. Students then designed, created, and presented their own costume ideas for characters from the show, illustrating exceptional focus, vision, and collaboration. The workshop also offered valuable insight into theatre careers and how backstage



During the workshop, students explored theatre costume production for a production of *A Christmas Carol*.

departments work together to forge a finished production.

Experiences like these give students practical knowledge and inspiration that can be carried into their GCSE Drama studies, helping them develop skills in design and character analysis,

as well as a good grasp on the full life cycle of a production.

We are incredibly proud of how engaged Year 9 has been and are excited to see what the future of this partnership holds. ■



# KINDNESS COUNTS!

MS NAIR REFLECTS ON A TERM OF GENEROSITY, AS THE HA COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER TO SUPPORT TWO IMPORTANT CHARITABLE CAUSES.



Year 7 students with the Children in Need raffle prizes which helped to raise £428.03 for good causes across the UK that support young people and their families.

## Show Racism the Red Card

On 17<sup>th</sup> October, KS3 students took part in our annual Show Racism the Red Card event, supporting the UK's leading anti-racism education charity, which uses sport to challenge racism and promote equality.

Students embraced the day with enthusiasm, competing in a lively inter-tutor group football tournament. Congratulations to the winning teams: 7 Lovelace, 8 Johnson, and 9 McQueen.

Alongside the tournament, our popular SRtRC Bake Sale returned and was a great success. Families and students contributed a wide range of treats, with Spencer (Year 7) crowned Master Baker for his creative red card muffins.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we surpassed last year's total, raising an impressive £696.31.

## Children in Need

In November, the Academy once

again came together to support Children in Need, raising funds and awareness for young people across the UK. Students and staff eagerly bought raffle tickets for the chance to win themed hampers or the much-loved Giant Pudsey Bear.

It was fantastic to see so many students wearing Pudsey ears and getting into the charitable spirit. Congratulations to our raffle winners: Anjelica (7J), Zariya (8M), Pratigya (10A), and Mr Francis, who won the Giant Pudsey!

Together, we raised £428.03, reflecting the generosity of our HA community.

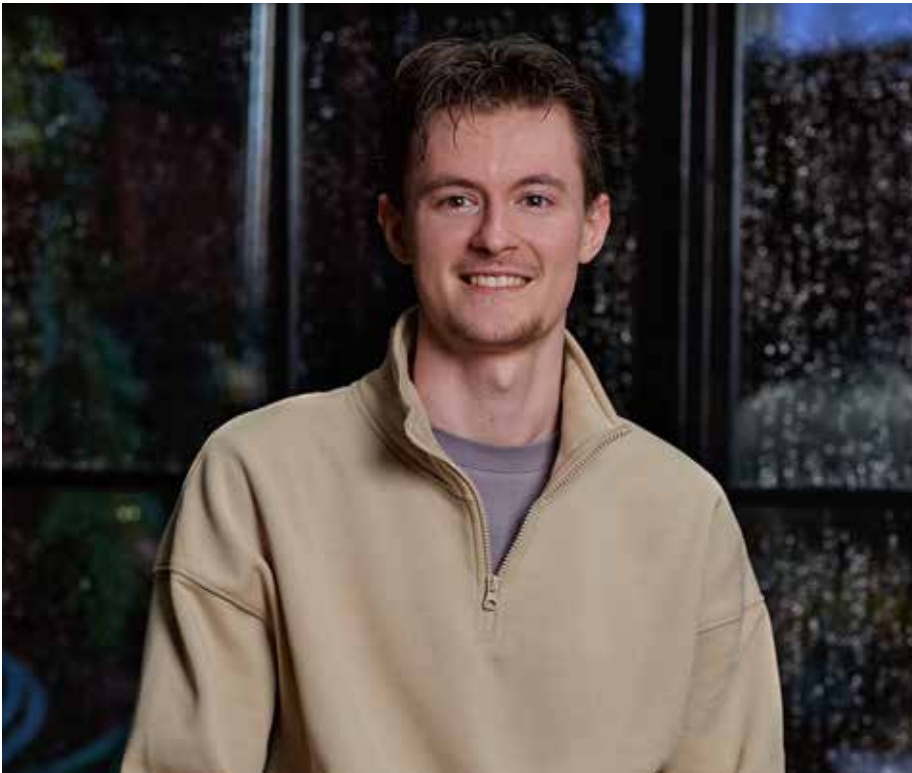
## Thank You

A huge thank you to every student, family, and member of staff who donated, baked, played, purchased tickets, or helped organise these events. Your support continues to make a meaningful difference and shows our Academy values — and 7Rs — in action. ■

“It was fantastic to see so many students wearing Pudsey ears and getting into the charitable spirit.”

**Total Raised  
£1,124.34!!**

# MEET THE ALUMNI



Nedal has been on an accelerated career trajectory since leaving Hammersmith Academy, including being shortlisted for "Drawing of the Year Awards 2025".



**HA:** Looking back, how did HA change your view of what was possible for you?

**NH:** Being surrounded by supportive teachers and motivated peers expanded my understanding of what I could achieve. HA helped me see university, a professional career and creative industries as real possibilities, not just in how to apply, but how to succeed once there.

**HA:** What does real world success mean to you now — and how did Hammersmith Academy help you understand or achieve it?

**NH:** Real world success, to me, means doing work that feels meaningful, staying curious, and continuing to grow professionally and personally. Hammersmith Academy played a huge part in shaping that mindset. The school encouraged me to explore my strengths and set ambitious goals to help achieve them.

**HA:** Did you make any professional connections through HA that shaped your path?

**NH:** Yes. The work experience placement I completed in Sixth Form is the same architectural practice

I still work in today — and I'm now fortunate enough to be its director.

**HA:** Which experiences at HA had the biggest impact on your confidence or direction?

**NH:** Enrichment activities, design projects and trips had a huge impact. They sparked curiosity and creativity, and helped me build confidence in presenting ideas.

**HA:** How did HA's teachers help you turn ambition into achievement?

**NH:** HA teachers genuinely believed in my potential. They pushed me to refine my work and aim high, helping me turn vague ambitions into concrete goals — like applying for architecture school and pursuing the Part 1 and Part 2 pathway.

**HA:** How did HA prepare you for the transition to university, an apprenticeship, or your first job?

**NH:** The academic rigour at HA prepared me well for the independence required at university. I left sixth form confident in managing deadlines, researching and presenting — skills that made the transition to architecture school much smoother. ■

THE ACADEMIST  
INTERVIEWS  
NEDAL HARRIS (HA  
2013-2020), HEAD  
OF COMMERCIAL  
ARCHITECTURE AT  
CATO CREATIVE.

# HA TO L'ORÉAL

STUDENT FINISHES YEAR 13 AND JUMPS INTO MUCH DESIRED DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP WITH L'ORÉAL GROUP.



Lily was a guest speaker at the Houses of Parliament event to celebrate Hammersmith and Fulham's Upstream London strategy.

We are delighted to share the success of former Hammersmith Academy student, Lily Traykov, who has earned a place on the highly competitive degree apprenticeship programme at L'Oréal Group at their UK and Ireland headquarters in White City. Lily applied during Year 13 and stood out in a rigorous selection process for one of the most sought-after apprenticeships in the country.

## Careers Support

Her achievement was strengthened by the guidance of our dedicated Careers Team, who invited L'Oréal into school, took Lily to apprenticeship events and supported Lily throughout each stage of her application. From interview preparation to refining written submissions, the team ensured she felt confident and fully equipped to showcase her abilities.

## Inspiring Others

Lily's story has already begun

to inspire others. On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, she was invited to Parliament to speak at the launch of the Pathway Bond, a new initiative led by Hammersmith & Fulham Council and senior government ministers, including Darren Jones MP, Minister for Intergovernmental Relations of the United Kingdom. The programme aims to connect young people with opportunities in science, technology, engineering, maths, medicine and media (STEM<sup>3</sup>), building clear routes from education into fast-growing industries.

At the event, Lily introduced a short film charting her journey from Sixth Form student to L'Oréal apprentice. Her experience is helping to shape the Pathway Bond's mission of increasing access to high-quality career pathways for young people across the borough.

Part of Upstream London, Hammersmith & Fulham's pioneering industrial strategy, the Pathway Bond reflects the borough's commitment

to nurturing talent and strengthening links between schools and leading employers based in the borough. Lily's achievement is a powerful example of what young people can accomplish with ambition, resilience, and the right support around them.

We are incredibly proud of Lily and look forward to seeing all that she goes on to achieve and to the many HA students her story will continue to inspire. ■

**L'ORÉAL**  
G R O U P E

 **Watch the video:**

Watch Lily's journey from Hammersmith Academy to L'Oreal UK and Ireland.



# SHAPING FUTURE CAREERS

FROM EMPLOYER TALKS TO WORKPLACE VISITS, MS HARROWES SHARES HIGHLIGHTS FROM A PACKED TERM OF CAREERS EDUCATION AT HA.



The Careers Team hosted a corporate interview day at the Academy for Year 13 students to help prepare them for university applications and the world of work.

## Strong Support for Year 11's Next Big Step

This September, our Year 11s began their post-16 transition journey with a series of activities designed to prepare them for life beyond secondary school. Every student had a guidance interview with a trained careers adviser to help them understand the wide range of post-16 pathways available.

October brought our annual Next Steps College & Apprenticeship Fair, where students and families came together to talk to a range of local providers, before hearing from Head of Careers and an expert panel about the options. Every student also attended our Sixth Form Taster Day, trying out subjects and gaining valuable insight into future study. Workshops on applications, college life and wellbeing ensure students feel informed, supported and ready to make good decisions for the future.

Going forward, the Careers team will work closely with Inclusion and the Year 11 pastoral team, and the door is always open to help our Year 11 students to find the right destination in September. Parents can always get in touch if they need support with the process or any advice.

## Year 13 Destinations: Showcasing Bright Futures

Last year's Year 13 cohort moved on to an impressive range of destinations, reflecting their ambition and hard work. Notable apprenticeships were secured with organisations such as Savills, National Highways, the National Theatre and L'Oréal. (See Lily's story)

88% of students applied to university this year, with 86% progressing on to further study, including one student who secured a highly competitive spot at Oxford to study Fine Art. Other students went to York, St Andrew's, Bath, Southampton, Exeter

and Edinburgh, as well as plenty closer to home at a range of London universities.

We are also glad to see growing interest in the creative industries; three students opted for art foundation, six started visual arts degrees and two are pursuing architecture. The creative sector has been identified as having the highest level of potential employment growth in the UK and the greatest need for graduates in the government's assessment of priority skills to 2030.

We're now in the midst of sending off applications for our current Year 13s, supporting Oxbridge students, Medics and apprentices with interviews, and looking forward to what September 2026 will bring.

## Collaboration Takes the Lead in HA Careers

It is no secret that Careers is an important part of student life at

Hammersmith Academy. Central to our promise of real-world success, the Careers team is made up of Ms Harrowes, Head of Careers and Ms Ali, Careers Coordinator - and more than 100 other staff.

Yes, you read that right, the Careers team is the biggest department in the school because careers really is a whole school priority built into our vision, planning and staff development.

At HA, we all take responsibility for supporting students' growth and developing their career skills. Teachers and tutors encourage students to explore opportunities, consider future pathways, and understand the wider labour market and current employment trends. Careers education is embedded across the curriculum, with regular subject-based careers learning alongside PSHCE sessions that develop key life skills. Students also benefit from careers-focused trips and talks that provide real-world insight. In addition, close collaboration between staff and the Careers team ensures targeted support. Our Student Counsellor, Mr Njie, works alongside Careers to help students set inspiring goals, while SEND students and their families receive tailored one-to-one guidance when setting targets or preparing applications.

### Why Parents Make the Best Career Guides

Working together to deliver a strong careers curriculum gives HA students the best possible chances of a successful working life. Interestingly research shows that it's parents and carers who have the biggest influence on young people's careers decision making, so it's important that the careers collaboration continues with our families too. Special annual career information events for Year 11 and Year 12 parents, the STEAM Careers Fair every second year, and the opportunity to talk to Ms Harrowes and Ms Ali at parents' evenings for Year 10 – Year 13 are a great chance to meet and ask questions. Our parents also have free access to our excellent Unifrog online careers resource so that you can log in and find the answers to all your questions or just navigate different careers or university choices with your child – just use the parent sign up code HMRSFamily to sign in here

[www.unifrog.org/teacher/home](http://www.unifrog.org/teacher/home).

Remember if we can help you in any other way, just email our Head of Careers [sharrowes@hammersmithacademy.org](mailto:sharrowes@hammersmithacademy.org) or call the school to leave a message.

### The Power of HA Year 13 Careers Prep

If you're in Year 13, it can feel like there's a lot of planning for the future, trying to decide what you do next and where your A Levels might take you after HA. It can be stressful, especially if you feel unsure and unprepared, which is why the Careers Team put our students through a programme that prepares them for key decisions and applications.

Early in the first half of the autumn term, Oxbridge and medical students get expert support with applications and interviews, including mentoring from St Paul's Girls' School, interview practice with St Paul's boys' school and coaching for application tests. Students making UCAS applications throughout the autumn term are supported with the HA How To Guide on writing a personal statement, tutor workshops, Unifrog UCAS feedback and regular support appointments with Ms Ali or Ms Harrowes. A highlight is our annual St Paul's Girls' School Personal Statement Clinic and this term were delighted to welcome 10 teachers from our private school partner. They delivered 50 30-minute guidance interviews, working carefully through each student's ambitions and helping them to craft a compelling statement of why they want to study their subject and what they've done to prepare. It's a valuable session that

helps HA students stand out from the crowd, preparing them for success.

Apprenticeships are also a key focus at this time of year. Once again the Careers Team are on hand to coach students through applications and interviews, but we also offer a prep menu to help deliver real world success. A specialist Microsoft Teams group offers regular live job adverts and online events and the Construction Youth Trust run Pathways for Professional Careers – regular coaching sessions for an ambitious group focused on apprenticeships. All Year 13s also attend a 30-minute Mock Corporate Interview in our annual event organised in collaboration with the Mayor's Fund for London. It was great to see the Drama Studio buzzing once again with focused students all practising their STAR answers and getting on the spot professional feedback. We were privileged to welcome 20 volunteers from Banijay UK, Scor, Novartis, Oxford Properties, Alix Partners, Talking Tables, GLA and Omers who between them interviewed more than 120 students over the course of a morning! Students are often experiencing the stress of an interview situation for the very first time and it's a very useful way to build skills and reduce anxiety for future real-life experiences. Everyone came away smiling!

Preparing our students well gives them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to significantly increase their chances of career success, and we're looking forward to seeing where they end up in September 2026. ■



20 corporate volunteers from Banijay UK, Scor, Novartis, Oxford Properties, Alix Partners, Talking Tables, GLA and Omers took part in our corporate interview day.

# TOP 25% NATIONALLY



We are proud to announce that Hammersmith Academy has been awarded the ALPS Top 25% Award for GCSEs, also known as the ALPS Gold Award, placing the Academy among the top 25% of schools nationally for student progress.

This prestigious award recognises schools in England and Wales that achieve exceptional value-added progress, meaning students make significantly more progress than expected from their starting points. Crucially, this progress is seen across all ability bands, demonstrating that students of all starting points make outstanding progress, not just those already achieving at the highest levels.

Importantly, the award focuses on *value added*, rather than raw attainment, recognising how much a school helps students grow academically over time. This endorses the quality of teaching, student effort, and the inclusive, supportive culture at Hammersmith Academy. It confirms that regardless of prior attainment, every student is challenged and supported to achieve their very best.

We are extremely proud of this achievement and look forward to building on this success as we continue to raise aspirations and outcomes for all our students. ■

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## JUNIOR LEADERSHIP

The Junior Leadership Team (JLT) is a student-led initiative that gives students a structured platform to share their voice and engage with school life. Through discussion and leadership roles, students develop communication skills, responsibility, and an understanding of democracy, one of the key British values.

This term, the Community JLT cohort has been active, organising a range of activities to promote kindness during Anti-Bullying Week. Older students led Tutor Time sessions, creating realistic bullying scenarios and guiding discussions on how students can respond and seek support. A highlight was the Kindness Box, where students wrote positive messages for their peers, a thoughtful way to end the week.

Our younger JLT members also launched the KS3 Anti-Bullying Competition, giving tutor groups the chance to win prizes. Congratulations to Samira (7M) and Angelica (9M), who each received a board game, and to Class 7 Khan, who submitted



The Community JLT group have been very active this term promoting Anti-Bullying Week and visiting Elgin Close Resource Centre

the most entries and won chocolates to share.

The JLT has also supported several community volunteering initiatives this term. Year 7 and 8 students visited Elgin Close Resource Centre with TimeGivers, spending time chatting with residents and creating festive crafts.

Meanwhile, Years 9 and 10 worked with TimeGivers, LBHF, and the

Children's Book Project on LMP Action's 2025 Christmas Hamper Appeal, helping prepare festive hampers for local families and young people.

Finally, the JLT organised a whole-school mural competition, with two winning designs now in their final stages and set to be displayed in the Safe Space area in the new year. ■



# KARATE KID & BFI



Year 12 A-Level Media students spent a study day at the BFI exploring the media industry, including a talk from Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff, Senior Staff Editor of *The New York Times*.

## Karate Kid Screening

Swapping study sessions for the silver screen, our GCSE Media Studies class visited Acton's ODEON Luxe Cinema for a special screening of *Karate Kid: Legends*. Year 10 students, Sophia and Tasmin, shared their experience of the event.

"Going to the ODEON to watch *Karate Kid: Legends* was an amazing experience. The teachers were really fun to be around, the atmosphere was very enjoyable overall, and the

movie itself made the day even better. It was action-packed, exciting, and entertaining; it felt as though barely any time had passed before it ended. Additionally, it showed us as Media students what film production looks like, making it both an interesting and educational watch. We hope to go on more trips as inspiring as this one!"

## BFI Trip

A-Level Media students visited the British Film Institute to partake in an engaging Media Study Day focused on newspaper journalism and the

evolving media landscape.

They spent the morning applying theory and studying key publications cited in the exam board specifications, including *The Daily Mirror*, *The Daily Mail*, and *The Times*. Analytical skills were honed through debates and the investigations of media industries, with particular emphasis on representation, influence, and sociocultural relationships with genre and authorship.

In the afternoon, students were invited to listen to Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff, former Editor-in-Chief of independent British magazine *gal-dem*, and current Senior Staff Editor of *The New York Times*, and freelance writer for *The Guardian*. Brinkhurst-Cuff offered insight into how to break into the journalism and publishing world, and led a Q&A about whether print is making a comeback in this digital age, and what steps media companies have to take to regain the trust of the younger generation.

The day was filled with astute and relevant deliberation, and will be hugely beneficial to our A-Level Media students as they carry their newfound knowledge into their course. ■

# RGS STUDY DAY

This term's learning was brought vividly to life when our A-Level Geography students attended the Royal Geographical Society's A-Level Study Day. The event offered the opportunity to take part in a series of specialist sessions led by recognised experts in the field. Throughout the day, students were introduced to topical research and contemporary geographical issues that closely link to - and extend beyond - the key themes of the KS5 curriculum.

The event consisted of three short lectures, each focusing on a different key component of the course:

tectonic hazards, global governance, and the carbon and water cycles. Each session provided students with valuable insight into current academic thinking and helped to strengthen their conceptual understanding in preparation for their final studies.

The event concluded with a session devoted to examination technique, guiding students on approaching extended questions, structure responses effectively, and succeed in A-Level assessments. It was a valuable experience that broadened students' knowledge whilst also supporting their progress towards the demands of Year 13 and beyond. ■



# SESSION 3 CLUBS

MR CARR,  
WIDER STUDENT  
ENGAGEMENT LEAD,  
OUTLINES HOW  
SESSION 3 IS HELPING  
STUDENTS EXPLORE  
NEW INTERESTS  
AND BUILD SKILLS  
BEYOND THE  
CLASSROOM.



Year 7 students were invited to a Session 3 Fair to discover all the clubs on offer and decide which clubs to sign up to for the autumn term.

The Academy launched its new extra-curricular Session 3 offering at the start of the academic year providing students the chance to explore their interests and shape new skills.

Classic favourites such as Chess and Board Games have returned, giving students space to relax and test their intellect. Simultaneously, new leadership has brought fresh energy to clubs like Gardening and Boys' Football, inspiring students to get active and embrace the great outdoors - all smashing successes.

This year has also invited exciting new options, including the Spanish

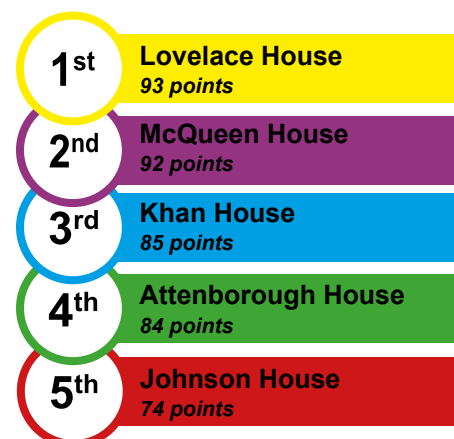
Zine Club, where creativity meets language, and Model UN, helping students develop global awareness and debating skills. In addition, Model-Making is giving budding future engineers a new explorative outlet, and the launch of Year 7 Netball has engaged our new-starters in a great sport.

With such a diverse mix of activities, Session 3 has become a highlight of the school week for many students, cultivating camaraderie, confidence, and community. The enthusiasm from students and staff alike shows these clubs are here to stay, and we are keen to see how they evolve going forward. ■

## HOUSE NEWS

Our House System has had a strong start to this year and continues to be a vital aspect of Academy life. Each house has embraced its new values through focused House assemblies, helping to strengthen identity and House pride. Students have taken part in a variety of competitions, including House Football, the Poetry Contest, the Spanish Challenge, and the sensational House Rowathon, all showcasing talent, teamwork,

and determination across the board. Regular updates keep everyone informed, while House Captains have played an important role in motivating and organising their peers. As the first term comes to an end, the competition is fierce, with only 19 points separating first from last on the leaderboard - every point counts! ■





# BUILDING BONDS IN YEAR 7

YEAR 7 PASTORAL SUPPORT OFFICER MS OKOLI REFLECTS ON A TEAMBUILDING TRIP THAT HELPED NEW STUDENTS BUILD CONFIDENCE, FRIENDSHIPS, AND A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING.



The crate tower challenge brought out the competitive nature between the teams with each team trying to build the highest crate tower.

The Year 7 Teambuilding Trip to Longridge Activity Centre, which took place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September, was a fantastic way to start the academic year. The visit gave students the opportunity to step outside the classroom and their tutor groups and build connections across the whole year group, forming new friendships while developing teamwork, communication, and confidence.

The programme was carefully designed to encourage collaboration and resilience. One of the highlights was Jacob's Ladder, where students quickly learned that success depended on working together—reaching the top rungs was impossible alone. During wall climbing, students had to trust and listen to their teammates for guidance and encouragement in order to overcome both the physical challenge

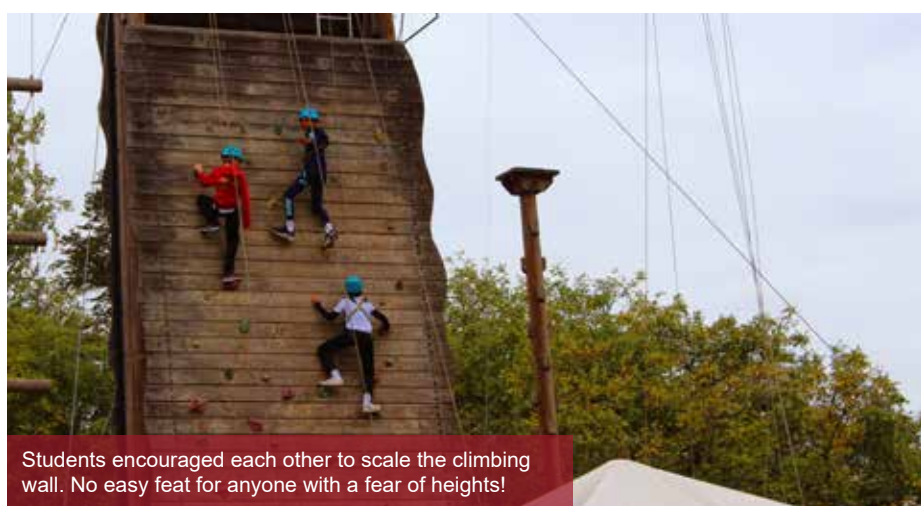
and their fear of heights!

Students also took part in dragon boat racing, which required coordination, rhythm, and clear communication to move the boat efficiently across the water. Crate building tested problem-solving skills

as teams competed to construct the tallest possible tower, balancing strategy, cooperation, and steady nerves. The day finished with a lively game of laser tag, allowing students to work tactically as teams while enjoying some friendly competition.

Throughout the day, students consistently supported one another—cheering, encouraging, and offering help during more challenging moments. The positive atmosphere continued on the coach journey home, with students chatting, sharing stories, and reflecting on what they had achieved together.

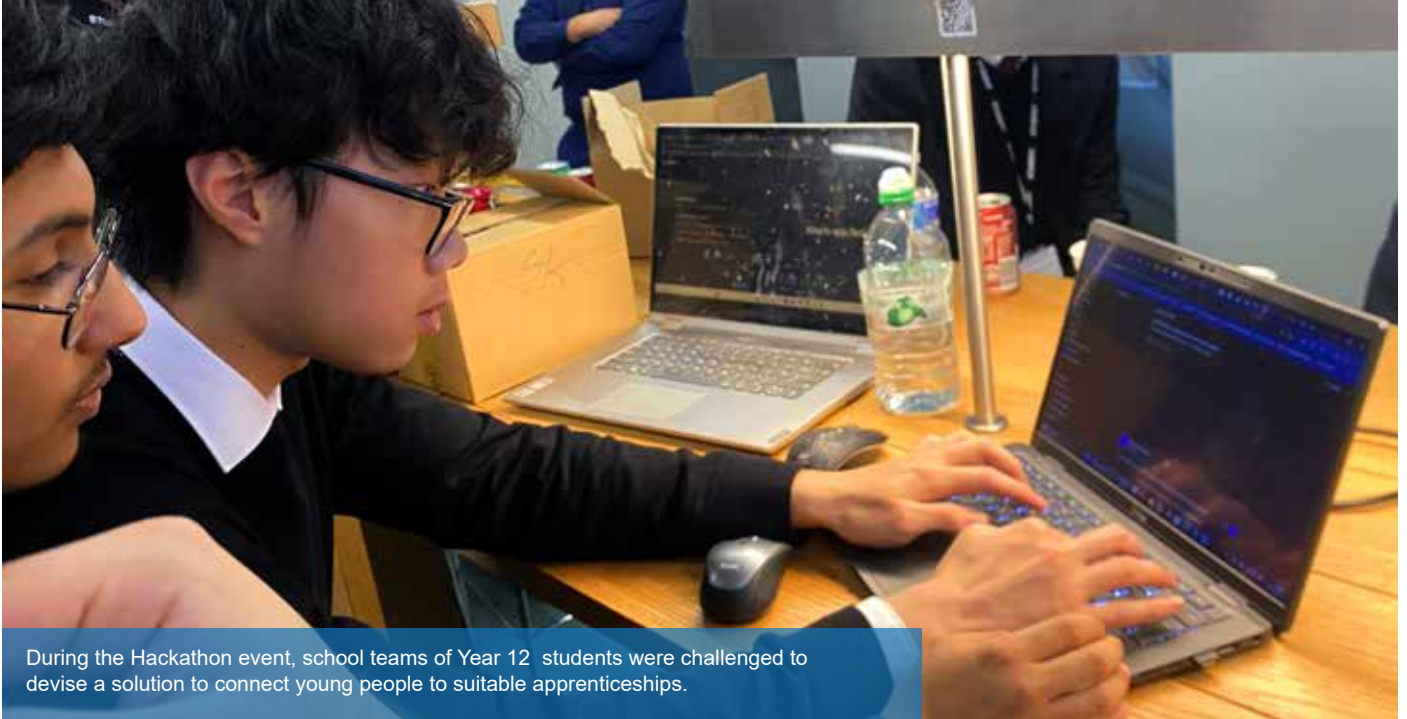
Back at the Academy, the impact of the trip has been clear. Students have returned with greater confidence, stronger friendships, and a willingness to put their new teamwork and communication skills into practice in lessons and tutor time. The experience laid strong foundations for a year built on confidence, cooperation, and community spirit, helping Year 7 settle quickly and feel part of the wider Academy community. ■



Students encouraged each other to scale the climbing wall. No easy feat for anyone with a fear of heights!



# WCIT COMMUNITY HACKATHON



During the Hackathon event, school teams of Year 12 students were challenged to devise a solution to connect young people to suitable apprenticeships.

Year 12 Computer Science students recently represented the school at the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists' Hackathon at City, University of London.

This annual event is hosted by one of our sponsors, WCIT, a City of London-based livery company. It invites students to use technology to come up with solutions to real-world

problems, encouraging innovation, altruism, and an understanding of technology's practical applications. Their presentations are then judged by a panel of esteemed tech professionals, with the chance to win exciting prizes.

This year, students were tasked with engineering a technological solution addressing a "CommuniTy" problem. Our students ran with the brief, building an AI-powered centralised webpage to help young people find suitable apprenticeships based on industry, requirements, and location. The judges praised their clear vision and professionalism in presentation, earning our team the runners-up title. They also challenged our students to think about further development, expanding their focus to neurodiverse or disadvantaged young people.

The day concluded with our student's confidence high and their minds brimming with ideas to improve the site. It was an inspiring experience that has undoubtedly encouraged their ambition and desire to keep innovating beyond the competition. ■

**INNOVATION, TEAMWORK, AND QUICK THINKING TOOK CENTRE STAGE DURING THIS TERM'S HACKATHON. MR TOLAK TELL US HOW STUDENTS ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE.**



Students presented their ideas to students from other schools and a panel of industry professionals.

# SPORTS ROUND-UP

THIS TERM HAS BEEN A TYPICALLY BUSY ONE FOR THE SPORTS DEPARTMENT. HERE IS A ROUND-UP OF ALL THE SPORTING NEWS.



BMX at the Wormwood Scrubs track is a popular Year 10 Games session.

## Sixth Form Football

The Sixth Form football season kicked off under gloomy November skies with a thrilling away fixture against Ark Burlington Danes. After a delayed kick-off and a challenging start that saw Burlington Danes take an early 2–0 lead, the HA team showed real determination to fight back and level the score at 2–2.

With five minutes remaining, HA found themselves trailing 4–3, but refused to give up. A late equaliser sealed a dramatic 4–4 draw in a fast-paced, end-to-end contest.

The team demonstrated excellent teamwork and resilience in their opening match. A special congratulations to Amanuel (12M), named Man of the Match, for stepping in as goalkeeper at the last minute despite being an outfield player. A fantastic team effort—keep it going!

## Year 9 and Year 10 Girls Football

Our Year 9 and 10 girls' team played their first fixture of the season against

Harris Lowe Academy at Kings House Sports Ground. Despite a tough match and wet conditions, the team showed outstanding determination, teamwork, and positivity throughout.

Their resilience and commitment to supporting one another made for a spirited debut performance and laid a strong foundation for the season ahead. A promising and inspiring start.

## BMX

This autumn, Year 10 students took part in BMX lessons as part of their weekly Games sessions, continuing our strong partnership with Wormwood Scrubs BMX Track. So far, 35 boys have completed a six-week block of sessions, developing confidence and mastering new skills around the track, including jumps and technical manoeuvres.

A huge well done to all involved for their progress and enthusiasm throughout the programme.

## Year 7 Boys Football

Our teams have been busy with

a run of competitive and spirited fixtures against West London Free School, Hurlingham Academy, KAA, and Phoenix. Across all matches, the players showed determination, teamwork, and a real hunger to improve every time they stepped onto the pitch.

One of the most exciting moments came in a thrilling fixture against KAA, which went right down to the final stages and kept players and spectators engaged until the very end. A standout highlight across the fixtures was Admir's outstanding free-kick, a moment of real quality that lifted the whole team.

The final match against Phoenix was a hard-fought contest. While the boys narrowly missed out, it was clear just how far they have already come as a group, showing resilience, belief, and togetherness throughout.

The boys continue to battle hard and represent the school with pride, staying in good spirits regardless of the challenge. A huge thank you to Mr Ibraheemi and Mr Ahmed for their support and guidance in managing the teams. Their commitment is





The newly formed Year 7 boys football team have been racking up experience as a team this term with matches against Hurlingham and KAA.

helping our players develop both on and off the field.

We look forward to building on this positive momentum as the season continues.

### Year 8 & 9 Boys' Football

In November, our Year 8 & 9 boys took part in an 11-a-side fixture at Barn Elms against Hurlingham Academy. Despite a spirited and competitive performance, the match ended in a narrow 4–3 defeat.

There were several standout moments throughout the game, including a spectacular long-range top-corner strike from Taha (Year 9), which was a highlight for both players and spectators.

Mohamed A (Year 9) was deservedly named Star Player for his outstanding performance, driving the team forward and showing determination and quality throughout a hard-fought match. ■

**Follow Sports on Instagram**

📷 @hasport1

### Sportswoman of the Term

Noor is a committed member of both the football team and netball club, and has shown outstanding dedication across multiple sports this term. Always eager to get involved, she approaches every training session with positivity, determination, and a willingness to challenge herself.

Her strong leadership skills are clear in the way she consistently supports and motivates others, leading by example both on and off the pitch. What truly sets Noor apart is her infectious enthusiasm and relentless work rate - she gives 110% in everything she does.

Whether it's a training session, a competitive fixture, or a weekly PE lesson, Noor brings energy, focus, and resilience. She is a fantastic role model for her peers and a credit to the Academy. A thoroughly deserved award - congratulations, Noor! ■



### Sportsman of the Term

As a key member of the football team, JD consistently demonstrates the encouraging communication, teamwork, and leadership that are essential to a successful squad. He always puts the team first, showing maturity, respect, and strong sportsmanship in every situation.

JD brings a calm, focused presence to both training sessions and matches, helping to motivate and steady those around him. His positive attitude ensures that teammates feel supported, particularly during challenging moments in games. Despite his achievements, he remains humble in both victory and defeat, focused on improving himself and encouraging others.

His combination of tenacity, ambition, and composure allows him to rise to challenges and guide others to do the same. Well done, JD! ■





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