



ASHMOLE ACADEMY TRUST

# @shmmole

Spring 2021

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Scan the code with your smartphone to take you straight to the school website.



## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD TEACHER



Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Friends

Well, what an extraordinary first term as Head Teacher of Ashmole Academy.

Within a day we had switched to a new online provision for the whole school, set up a testing centre in the school gym, ensured the safety of all staff who were remaining on site and established a provision for vulnerable and key worker children. With the support of everybody we have made it.

If there were to be any "positives" taken from the second lockdown, it would be the overwhelming sense of collectiveness and togetherness amongst the whole Ashmole community. It is my

sincerest wish that we can build upon this greater spirit of openness and collaboration. Parental reaction to our online provision, the incredible work of the equality committee and the extremely generous contribution of those parents that volunteered to help with the Covid testing, all indicate to me that this greater spirit of collaboration is a goal we all wish to strive towards.

I cannot wait to see what next term brings.

Wishing you all a very enjoyable Easter break.

Mr T Sullivan | *Head Teacher*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRIMARY HEAD

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you to you all for your support throughout these unprecedented times. Sadly, we have lost members of our school community to the pandemic and my thoughts and prayers are with those that have lost loved ones. The online learning was brilliant for all the children, with excellent use of Zoom/Google Meets and Google Classroom. The staff worked incredibly hard during this time. Thank you for all the extra time and effort that everyone put into this new online platform. Remote learning can be very difficult for parents whilst trying to work from home themselves, however, your continued effort in supporting your children at home was greatly appreciated.

All pupils have received support to transition back to school. We continue to focus on pupil well-being and assessments have been used to identify areas where pupils require additional support. We will continue to deliver extra catch up programmes

after school for children in Reception to Year 4.

It has not been an easy time for schools or families, but we have all managed to work together to achieve our ultimate goal; which is to make sure all the children continue to learn and flourish. The balance to sustain the energy and well-being of our staff and pupils is always at the forefront of what we do. The Summer season is filled with hope, and the successful rollout of the vaccine offers us all a reason to look forward optimistically to post-pandemic life. It has been great to see all the children, parents and staff back at school again.

Thank you for your patience and support during these strange times and we all look forward to a prosperous Summer term.

Mr Chris Tofallis | *Head Teacher, Ashmole Primary*



6<sup>TH</sup> FORM NEWS

We have been delighted to welcome our Sixth Form students back to school and they have been ambassadors to the lower school in their response and approach to the school's mass testing programme. We continue to be impressed with students' resilience and efforts, during the months of remote learning. Students shared many of the incredible things they completed under the most challenging of circumstances. We have been impressed with the number of students who have attended additional workshops, lectures, seminars and extra-curricular clubs virtually and have shown their determination to succeed.

The launch of 'The Sixth' has occurred this term, with students creating the first student run sixth form publication, this has been filled with tips and hints on how to best manage remote learning, sharing ideas on how to remain motivated during the challenges of lockdown and also included film and book reviews, cookery ideas and keeping fit initiatives. We look forward to reading the upcoming second edition.

As the end of Year 13 students' time at school approaches, the next chapter begins with many of our students having already received and accepted university places.

Mr El Sayed | *Head of Sixth Form*

## YEAR 12 STUDY MORNING AT THE BRITISH LIBRARY

On Wednesday 27th January, our Year 12 English Literature students attended a 'Virtual Study Morning' with the British Library as part of their exhibition 'Unfinished Business: The Fight for Women's Rights' looking at the evolution of women's literature over the last 200 years.

Ms Smith | *2 i/c English*

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS: THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

As part of the study morning, Dr Rashmi Varma (University of Warwick) discussed the significance of including all cultures, ethnicities, ages and sexualities of women in literature, explaining how crucial it is to see ourselves represented. Post colonisation, the majority of women of colour were silenced: and in a patriarchal world, women writers were rarely published. The few that were lucky enough to see their novels printed were Caucasian. Dr Varma stressed the inclusion of female writers of all backgrounds, as well as characters of all backgrounds, to be seen and noticed in the modern world. Overall, her lecture was very insightful towards diversity in literature, highlighting the need for different female voices to be heard and recognised by readers across the globe.

Chya | *12MOL*

One conversation that really stood out was Dr Rashmi Varma's on the idea of 'un-learning.' For centuries, beliefs and perceptions of women have been fixed in a certain way, so 'un-learning'



is about reclaiming the representation of women and really pushing the idea of changing preconceptions about women in literature and in general. Dr Varma reflected on the shocking story of Sarah Baartman "the Hottentot Venus" - a South African woman brought to Europe under false pretences by a British doctor and then exploited by a 'freak show' because of her body type. Sarah's story alone really amplifies racial injustice and the objectification of women throughout history. Dr Varma's lecture really inspired us to challenge these stereotypes and seek out texts that are more representative of real women from all cultures.

Hanah | *12VAU*

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY VIRTUAL PHYSICS LECTURE SERIES

A number of Sixth Form Physics students attended a virtual lecture hosted by Cambridge University on Tuesday 9th February. The lecture included problem solving and a talk on gravitational waves and how to detect them by Prof. Sir Jim Hough from the University of Glasgow's Institute for Gravitational Research. His work contributed to their detection for the first time in 2015.

Mr Costello | *Head of Physics*

*"It was great, I had heard of the detection of gravitational waves but finding out how they actually detected them was really interesting!"*

James | *12SIO*

*"This sort of stuff is the main reason for my passion for Physics, I love learning about space and found it very informative."*

Emre | *13KEM*

## BRITISH PHYSICS OLYMPIAD



Two Year 13 students sat the British Physics Olympiad before Christmas. This is the hardest Physics exam A-level students can sit, with an average score of just 27%, despite being sat by the top students in schools around the country. Therefore, achieving a certificate of any colour in this exam is considered a significant achievement, as many do not. Max in 13/GRA and Archie in 13/SMK were selected as the top two students at Ashmole to sit the test, and both should be congratulated for achieving certificates for their efforts, ranking them amongst the best physicists of their age group across the country:

Max – **Bronze II**

Archie – **Silver**

Silver certificates and above were only awarded to the top 30% of the already highly selective group of students who sat the test.

Mr Costello | *Head of Physics*

# ENGLISH AND HISTORY ENRICHMENT

## New College of the Humanities



New College  
of the Humanities

In early February, twelve students from Year 12 submitted their entries for the annual 'New College of the Humanities' essay writing competition. Their dedication and professionalism to the project ensured that the essays submitted were brave, insightful and truly thought provoking.

Whilst we await the results of the national competition, Mr Ford and I asked Mr Sullivan to select our own Ashmole winners. After much deliberation, Mr Sullivan awarded first place to Lily (12VAU), second place to John (12VAU) and third place to Shaila (12COR). Mr Sullivan also made special mention of the essays submitted by Mabel (12MCY) and Nafeesa (12DES).

Congratulations to everyone who took part: the standard this year was exceptionally high. If you would like to read the essays in full, they can be found here: <https://ashmole.fireflycloud.net/enrichment/nch-2021>

Ms Nelson | Sixth Form Enrichment  
Co-ordinator

## Is democracy experiencing a setback worldwide?

Democracy. A concept so widely debated it is hard to understand what defines 'true democracy'. Originating in ancient Athens, democracy is one of the oldest political systems in the world. Without wading through complicated definitions filled with political jargon, at its core democracy is when the people's voices can be listened to. Due to recent events, some have considered democracy to be under attack, and 'experiencing a setback worldwide'. However, can we claim our Western democracy to be true democracy? Some have argued it is impossible to truly have everyone's voice heard amongst a crowd of millions - novelist Mark Twain suggested that "If voting made any difference they wouldn't let us do it".

John | 12VAU

## It's 2120 there is no such thing as poetry or poets. What happened?

Extract from 'The Sky's Bride'

It's now twenty one twenty one,  
We struggled and triumphed,  
And we, no longer living in fear,  
What a year.  
How we grew,  
But really who knew?  
That it would come true,  
That we would rise up and rebel,  
Now not trapped in a cell,  
For now we tell and yell,  
The story and dwell  
On how we fought,  
Which will be taught  
And will inspire  
To start a fire  
If liberty's oppressed.  
Although higher powers will detest,  
We shouldn't lay freedom to rest.

Lily | 12VAU

## When, if ever, should one be criminally liable for infecting another person with a disease?

In fact, infection liability acts protect people who are put in colossally vulnerable positions as they should. The judiciary take these cases very seriously and are conducted in a highly sensitive way as they understand the extent of such pressing issues and the toll it has on the complainant. Infection liability acts also make the defendant think twice about the consequences of their negligence in the hopes that they do not end up endangering any member of the public. This therefore shows that the government are very severe about criminal liability in terms of infection and causation of harm to others as well as how in the eyes of the law people should be drastically liable for the infecting and causing of bodily harm to others.

Shaila | 12COR

## New College of the Humanities Essay Competition



The NCH essay competition is a great enrichment opportunity which enables you to push yourself academically and dive into a subject of your choice. With an array of 10 different topics (from Art, History and Creative Writing, to Economics and Data Science) there is a broad variety of topics and question titles to choose from. Personally, I chose the history question relating to the lasting impact of COVID - which couldn't be more relevant to us today. Although I obviously couldn't reach an absolute conclusion, as we are still amidst the chaos of the virus, I was able to deeply explore the topic and create links to historical events (like the Spanish Flu) to predict COVID's lasting impact. I was assigned a mentor to guide me and give me prompts of improvement along the way, which steered me in the right direction, helping me understand how to style an essay in the real world. Overall, the NCH competition improved my writing style and confidence significantly and ultimately, my depth of knowledge in my chosen subject.

Daisy | 12COR

## Years 12 and 13 University of Birmingham Webinar

Years 12 and 13 students had the chance to attend a webinar delivered by Jon from the University of Birmingham, who gave an overview of the types of courses available, Birmingham as a city and the non-academic clubs and societies on offer.

Some topics discussed were students' contact hours as well as study spaces (including the newly-built 'Teaching and Learning Building'). Jon also mentioned in particular their high level of sports participation, that 48% of students decide to continue living in Birmingham post-graduation, and that it is a much greener city than many people expect!

Overall, it was very informative and, as I was lucky enough to receive an offer from Birmingham, has further helped me in the decision-making process.

Alex | 13SAN



## YEAR 12 OXBRIDGE PROGRAM

The Oxbridge program is set up each year for Year 12 students, run by Miss Lawrence and Mrs Gray. The aim of this program is to prepare students, who may apply to Oxford or Cambridge, for the application process (including deciding a course of interest and writing your personal statement) and helps develop skills for interviews and admissions testing.

This year the majority of our sessions have been online; however, this has not restricted us in any way. The sessions are usually split into two categories: debating and discussion and advice and informative lectures.

The debating sessions require all student to do a little bit of research before a session on a pre-chosen topic, and then amongst ourselves we argue for and against a point using the information we have found prior. I think this has been one of my favourite parts of the Oxbridge program as it is not only interactive but allows you to gain more confidence when speaking, as well as developing your critical thinking skills and ability to think on the spot - similarly to how an interview would be. All the topics that are chosen are relevant to us in the present day, however, are not always commonly discussed problems, such as the environmental impacts of having multiple children.

Adding to this, the other half of the sessions provides detail and information about how to apply to Russell Group universities and the preparation required beforehand. Our most recent session was a lecture by Ana Hastoy of Oxford University explaining admissions tests and what these would entail. This was very beneficial, as many students did not realise they would have to sit admissions tests and how to prepare for these.

These sessions have been valuable and have given me and many other students a sense of confidence leading up to the university applications process. I would highly recommend any students, that will be interested in applying to top ranking universities to join this program or speak to Mrs Lawrence about what they can do in preparation.

Asha | 12HAS



I have really enjoyed the Oxbridge sessions, not only because they are full of useful information and tips, but the sessions challenge our ability to think critically and apply our knowledge to real-life scenarios. One highlight for me is the debate sessions, where we are given a statement to do some reading and research on before debating the topic and seeing what form of consensus we reach.

We are given the chance to attend university and subject-specific events regularly, and there is lots of support for drafting personal statements. Recently we had a webinar from an admissions tutor at Oxford who gave us helpful advice on how admissions tests work and how to best prepare for them. This also gave us the

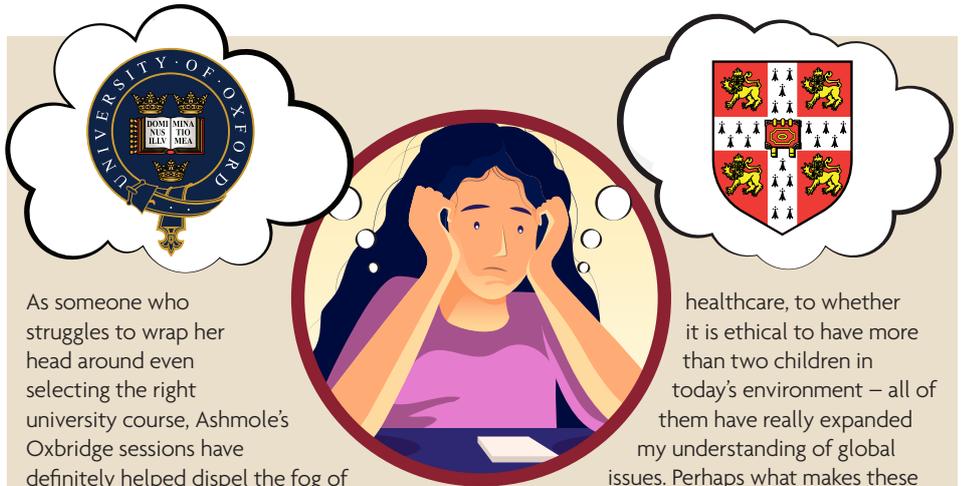
opportunity to ask other university related questions – which was very helpful.

Josh | 12MCY

### Oxbridge Offers

Congratulations to the five Year 13 students who have received undergraduate offers from Oxford and Cambridge. They are:

Layo   13SMK	English	Cambridge
Archie   13SMK	Mathematics	Cambridge
Max   13GRA	Natural Sciences	Cambridge
Isabel   13SPI	Geography	Cambridge
Alyssa   13NEL	Law with French	Oxford
	Law	



As someone who struggles to wrap her head around even selecting the right university course, Ashmole's Oxbridge sessions have definitely helped dispel the fog of applications tests, personal statements and even choosing which college is right for me, out of the many that form the campuses of Oxford and Cambridge. Without their guidance, and helpful sessions from guest speakers I definitely would still be stuck gazing blankly at the Oxbridge websites – eyes glazed over from the various 'dos' and 'don'ts' of navigating the application process.

Out of all the various sessions offered, which often involve interactive elements – a clever way of maintaining focus - the one I've come to anticipate with the most excitement are the debate sessions. While I would not call myself a natural debater, those sessions have proven to be a really exciting opportunity to explore difficult topics and tackle them as a group. From considering how deeply the government should be involved in national

healthcare, to whether it is ethical to have more than two children in today's environment – all of them have really expanded my understanding of global issues. Perhaps what makes these sessions as great as they are is the enthusiasm that my fellow students employ in building on or contesting each other's points. As someone who has taken subjects which require healthy debate, such as Philosophy and English, it really helped me apply the skills I had already been working on in my lessons, whilst also being enjoyable to participate in.

Beyond the debate sessions, the team that co-ordinate all the various events and online sessions which seek to inform and prepare us for applying to Oxbridge – whilst also considering life at university - have been beyond helpful. They must be thanked for all the hard-work they put into organising this, particularly when considering how tough organising things are at the moment.

Mabel | 12MCY

# BUSINESS KS4 CLUB



On Wednesday 3rd March, the Business Department launched a Business KS4 Club to enable students to go on virtual tours of different businesses. This gave students the ability to apply their knowledge taught in class to real-life businesses and discuss their ideas with business students of other years.

The first tour started off with a virtual tour of the Apple Museum in Prague. Students were able to hear the speech of Steve Jobs as they

looked through different rooms within the museum, which showed all the products of Apple to date. Students used forums on Firefly to discuss their ideas.

We look forward to continuing these virtual tours and discussing more business topics with the students as we welcome them back to school!

**Miss Sharif** | *Teacher of Business Studies and Economics*

# FRENCH

In French A-level, students have been competing in a Bake Off! Students have made an array of French dishes, improving their French using French recipes.

The pictures show some amazing Fondants made by Years 10-13 students!

**Ms Corbel** | *Teacher of French*

Our class began by baking Galette des Rois every week, and over the term we have baked other French pastries including Pain au Chocolat and Croquembouche. In addition, for Christmas I baked a Bûche de Noël, which is a yule log that was surprisingly easy and looked very pretty. To celebrate February, we were also set the challenge to make chocolate fondant. It's a great way to continue to learn the language and gain a new skill, especially whilst we were in lockdown. On top of baking, our teachers have also recommended French films and shows on Netflix, such as Lupin which was a great watch, and means we can again improve our French and have had something fun to talk about each week.

**Kara** | *13SPI*



**Matthew** | 10  
Fondant au chocolat



**Rammiya** | 11  
Fondant au chocolat



**Kara** | 13  
Fondant au chocolat

# CAREERS



GT Scholars is an amazing social enterprise founded by Temi Kamson. As stated on their website, GT Scholars strongly believe that each and every young person is unique, has potential and matters. On 17th February, their first ever Online Career Summit - which was open to all ambitious young people aged between 13 and 18 - took place. This event occurs in-person every year, however due to the current pandemic it had to be hosted online. A great number of young people signed up - over 10,000 registrations were recorded.

There were nine panel sessions in total. As a result of joining the live sessions, I gained: interview skills and knowledge; both virtual and in-person work experience competence and an insight to careers in finance and consulting. Moreover, I was taught how to map out a career pathway and choose a career, as well as entrepreneurship - particularly the importance of building business skills. The panel was extremely understanding, passionate and did their best to answer all of the questions asked by the young people participating, doing so with enthusiasm. Also, it was incredibly interesting to hear about the backgrounds and extraordinary stories which members of the team recounted, proving to us that we are all capable of great success (regardless of our backgrounds, who we are or what goes wrong).

There is no doubt that this has been a benefit to me and to every participant. In the future, we will have the advantage of expertise developed from this event, knowing how to act in different situations. GT Scholars will boost your confidence levels and allow you to acknowledge your brilliant potential - getting involved would definitely be worthwhile.

**Chelsea** | *10/V1*

## ART WELLBEING DAY

On Wednesday 10th February, all art students took part in 'Wellbeing Day', moving away from their usual art schemes of work for one lesson only, to emulate the work of contemporary photographer, Martin Parr. Students learned about how to compose a great photograph, considering light, composition and depth and framing.

Students then spent the lesson photographing

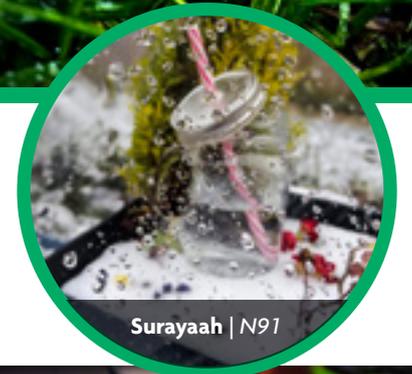
10 things that made them happy. At the end of the day, Miss Campbell, Ms. Griffin and Ms. Dinmahomed were delighted to see a huge range of photographs which showed enthusiasm, as well as a great understanding of the principles of photography. We have included some of our favourites from the day.

Well done to all involved!

Ms Griffin | 2i/c Art



Velislava | 9N1



Surayaah | N91



Adam | 7J1

## WELLBEING DAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021

Here at Ashmole we were delighted to be able to host Well Being Focus Day on Wednesday 10th February in support of Children's Mental Health Week. The day consisted of students having a range of activities introduced to them by their teachers as well as an opportunity to spend the afternoon exploring their own free choice of wellbeing activities. All subject departments contributed and came up with some really creative wellbeing activities to excite and engage our students from exploring

mindfulness in a foreign language to dance, journaling and drawing. Our students seemed to particularly enjoy the activities associated with art and music, showing how much they value self-expression as part of their own wellbeing. The activities remain on our Firefly platform for students to continue to try out a range of activities and build their own strategies for wellbeing and daily self-care.

Mrs Brown | Assistant Head Teacher

## WELLBEING DAY

For Well Being Day this year, my English class and I took part in a lesson about 'Journaling' and how it can impact your wellbeing. We looked at quotes from famous literary diarists, such as Virginia Woolf, Susan Sontag and Oscar Wilde. My favourite quote was (the American feminist writer) Susan Sontag's quote: "In the journal I do not just express myself more openly than I could to any person; I create myself. The journal is a vehicle for my sense of selfhood". This suggests some benefits to journaling, such as how it allows you to express yourself without any judgements and you can reflect on yourself as an independent individual.

We also looked at different types of journaling, so that it can fit to purpose. Here is the journal I submitted - an example of one of my days during lockdown:

### Tuesday 9th Feb

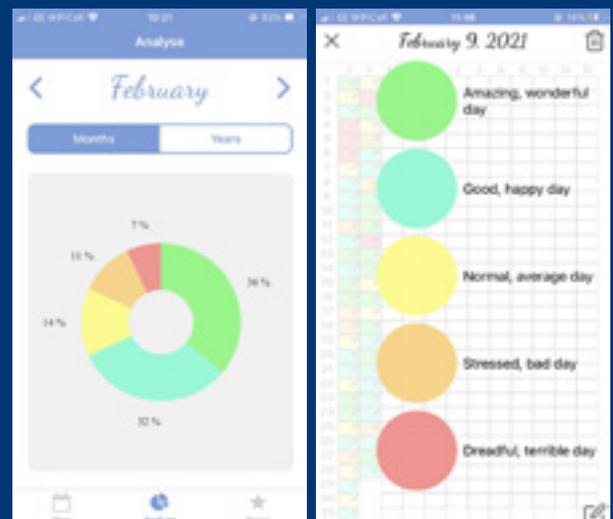
I woke up for online school on time today and got all my lessons done swiftly. For brunch, I had a perfectly gooey boiled egg with a butter waffle and a Nutella waffle which was SO delicious.

After school, my mum drove me back to the same spot where Henry and I believed he lost his phone on our walk yesterday and I FOUND IT UNDERNEATH THE SNOW! It was a MIRACLE! It's still functioning properly – we've been so happy today, we are so lucky!

For dinner, I had my Mum's amazing creamy mushroom, spinach and chicken pasta. After dinner, we continued watching 'Finding Alice'

in her bed and had some great laughs (and some cries lol). I also spoke to her about the things I've been anxious about recently before I went off to bed and she comforted me and made me feel so much better and less stressed. GREAT DAY!!!!

Jadesola | 11/S1



# WELLBEING DAY

Wednesday 10th February was Wellbeing Day for us here at Ashmole, a day in which we actively reflected on our own physical and mental wellbeing and the various ways in which we can look after ourselves. On Wellbeing Day, each of our classes were required to incorporate an element of wellbeing into the lesson. In English, we were asked to try our hand at journaling, as a way of expressing ourselves and seeing our emotions come to life on paper. As a class, we discussed other ways in which we could express ourselves and wind down from the stress of a hard day's work, and collectively we pondered over making a playlist of songs to help us relax and, when some of us mentioned apprehension of the artistic aspect of journaling, came up with the idea to set aside time each week to write five things we had enjoyed that week. We made it clear that this list should be physically written as opposed to merely typing into our notes on our phones, seeing as the list would be a way to detach from everyday life and just reflect on our lives for a couple of minutes. Since Wellbeing Day, every Friday I now get out a notepad and a pen and write down five things I've enjoyed from the week. I'll put on the relaxing music playlist I also made as a result of the Wellbeing Day, and simply put aside everything I have to do and work I need to get done, for some time to look after myself. Below is one of the many entries I've done so far, and although it isn't the most artistic or creative journal piece, it is definitely something I look forward to doing each week, to look back on the good and joy that can be found in the very simple and mundane every day.

**Nafeesa** | 12DES

For Wellbeing Day, I decided to journal some important parts of me that I haven't written down, like writing about how I felt when I lost a loved one or about a fun day out I had before COVID-19, or how COVID-19 has affected me.

Writing things like that down, has let me understand how I feel and helped so I could move on from it and made me realise what I need to do going forward. I know I must keep going no matter what life throws at me because COVID-19 was a pretty big hit and I'm still here and thriving.

**Charlotte** | 9/S2

For the Wellbeing Day task, I interviewed my dad on his childhood and what he used to do and like. I asked him questions like 'who was his best friend in Primary School?' and 'where did you grow up?' I benefited from asking these personal questions as I got the opportunity to learn more about him and also his childhood. I got to ask questions that I would have never

have thought to ask, and I got answers that I may never have come across. I also think that my dad enjoyed sharing his memories with me because now I know what he was like and see him, not just as a dad who tells his daughter off when she does not get on with her homework! I really enjoyed this task.

**Chloe** | 7/M1

For Wellbeing Day, I attempted the journaling task, I really enjoyed it because it was very calming and relaxing. I learnt that journaling once a day can really make you reflect on the things that you did that day and what you achieved.



**Nehir** | 9/N1

Free writing is when you keep writing for a planned period of time without taking pen off paper. The idea is to write freely, without restraint and to let your ideas flow. The word given as the stimulus for this piece of free writing was 'fate'. Below is an example of free writing I completed as a part of the Wellbeing Day:

"The supposed force, principle, or power that predetermines events; the inevitable events predestined by this force. Now look at the word supposed. We don't even know if fate exists. If it does, why does it have to be predestined or predetermined? Ultimately, who is it that decides? Are we to accept that there is a semi-controllable force directing our lives? Is it God, the stars, people? The concept of fate is so hard to grasp yet so many believe in it: they trust fate to bring them to where they need to be in life, but then, really, how much freewill do humans really have? Fate is the collection of every decision you've ever made. What you've been told about choosing your destiny is essentially true. It's controlled by your choices. The smallest choice of switching your breakfast cereal or waking up 3 minutes after your alarm sounds. Everything effects everything with fate. It's a prophetic butterfly effect, influencing not only your future, but everyone else's. Nothing is safe and out of question; it all plays a role in your so called 'destiny'."

Anya – 11/M2

## KEEP KIDS ACTIVE CAMPAIGN



As part of the Telegraph's Keep Kids Active national campaign launched by Loughborough College, our Ashmole Academy PE department were asked to plan and deliver five PE lessons aimed towards students aged 10-14. The five lessons included; Athletics, Dance, a fitness workout, some multi skills and a challenge day. Each lesson was supported by students from Ashmole Academy; Myla in 8/M2, Jason in 7/V1 and Victoria in 9/J2 who demonstrated fantastic professionalism throughout. They were all 30-minute practical lessons, with an additional 30 minutes of independent physical activity. All of the lessons have been put on the Telegraph website, as well as YouTube, with over 5,000 views so far. If you haven't had a chance to watch this yet, I would encourage you to do so. Below is Victoria's experience of the campaign.

**Mr Chapman** | Head of PE

"I recently participated in KEEP KIDS ACTIVE. For me it was a great experience and I really enjoyed being in the videos. The videos are each 30-minutes-long and after the video your teacher sets you another task, for example a 30-minute walk, cycle or run. I believe that these videos are effective because they will keep you fit and keep you in shape. The videos start with a five-minute warm up and then we went onto the main activity and lastly the one-minute challenge. In my opinion the one-minute challenge was really fun because you are competing to see if you can beat your teacher's score. This was my experience and I'll do it again any day!"

**Victoria** | 9/J2

# UNI GENIUS VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE CHALLENGES

## About Uni Genius

At the beginning of Year 12, I applied for and was accepted into a program called 'Uni Genius' ran by the organisation Generating Genius. Uni Genius is a two-year program which aims to boost the acceptance rate of BAME students into prestigious universities for STEM related careers and subjects. They achieve this by offering their student members exclusive work experience opportunities and help with meeting enrolment requirements.

## Virtual Work Experience Challenges

Over the February half term, I was blessed with the chance to complete two virtual work experiences: one with the National Grid (NG), which spanned two days and a separate challenge day with the Ashton Fire Consultancy firm, which was a huge learning curve for me.

The first challenge was finding a solution to the UK's 2050 net-zero target, which is a government plan to make the UK carbon neutral. We then would pitch our proposal to a panel of five NG executives. We were flooded with information to digest in the days preceding the virtual call, where we would then be put into teams at the end of day one.

On day one itself, we had the opportunity to speak to members of the National Grid at various stages of their careers and ask questions. Through this, we gained an insight into what day-to-day work entails and the different

sectors the NG is comprised of. Following this, we got the rare opportunity to speak to former BBC presenter Juliet Alexander, who as she described, has "trained virtually every black MP" currently on the political stage in public speaking. She put us through an enjoyable crash course in public speaking where she highlighted the importance of tone and shared a checklist for a powerful presentation. At the end of day one we met our judging panel which consisted of five company directors and, after a short introduction to their backgrounds, were placed into our teams. We were given two hours to begin research and start working on our presentation before regrouping and for a progress check, which concluded day one.

On day two, we were given a further three hours to complete our proposals, which was an extremely tight deadline. My team of four was at a natural disadvantage as we couldn't see or speak to one of our team members and had to communicate via the chat function, which was extremely difficult. Some other teams even had five members and this meant we needed to work twice as hard.

Scoring was out of 20, and despite our team receiving the highest mark, we were beaten by a team which went the extra mile and did research into how AI can be used to predict energy trends. Their win was well deserved due to their out of the box thinking.

They each won a £50 amazon voucher, but there were two more £20 vouchers up for grabs. One was for the most engaged participant and

the other prize was for the most "insightful" questions, which was awarded to me.

The next day, I was involved in a similar work experience opportunity ran by Ashton Fire, which is a fire safety consultancy comprised of former firefighters and fire resistance engineers. This event was so exclusive, there were only 16 places available and we had to write a short passage on why we should be chosen.

Successful applicants were tasked with identifying problems with an architectural proposal to build a hotel for athletes in time for the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games and pitch it to five fire safety experts. Once again, we had to conduct research and create a presentation, this time with an even tighter deadline. In the end, my team ended up winning and we each received a £50 amazon voucher for our efforts.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself in these events and since then, I have gained valuable employability skills. These challenge days have brought me to the attention of the Uni Genius team, and I have been accepted into a program for the 'Top 100 [BAME] STEM Future Leaders'. This is another two-year program gaining me access to leadership academies and current leaders in the STEM field, improving my network.

If you have enjoyed this description of my activities or are interested in STEM, you can find a more detailed blog post, which Uni Genius asked me to write on their website.

Sybil | 12MCY

## FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

Our students have been very busy this term. Year 11 have been completing their practical trials whilst in lockdown at home, in preparation for their final practical assessment.

The Design and Technology department is so proud with how our Food and Nutrition students have endeavoured to create such fantastic practical outcomes whilst working from home.

Lydia in 10/J1 has found a wonderful way to show your gratitude to your mother by baking fresh cakes, which she has so beautifully decorated. These are a truly unique and thoughtful present.

Ms Saunders | Head of Food Preparation & Nutrition



Lydia | 10/J1

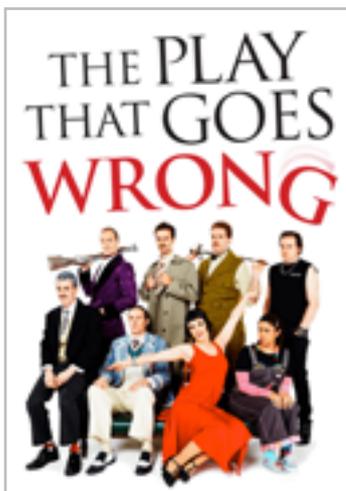
## PRODUCT DESIGN

We would like to congratulate our Year 12 A-level Product Design student Sybil in 12MCY for gaining a place on the Uni Genius STEM program. Benefits include gaining access to top STEM companies and universities, as well as the opportunity to meet other students with the same drive to succeed.

Ms Gordon | Head of Technology

## THE SECRET THEATRE CLUB

The Secret Theatre Club runs every Wednesday (Years 7, 8 and 9) and Friday (Years 10 and 11). The club gives students an opportunity to watch extracts from famous theatre productions from various styles and genres (thanks to the National Theatre Collection and Digital Theatre Plus). Following the viewings, students then discuss and analyse the extract. This allows students to articulate their own responses and opinions about theatre.



**Mr Tozzi** | *Director of Performances*

The 'Secret Theatre Club' is very interesting. Every week during the session, we watch a short clip of a play and afterwards we discuss what happened, what went well, what the actors do etc. You also learn a lot from this class. But the best thing for me is that I can just sit down, I eat my lunch, and enjoy my time with people who have the same interest as me!

**Charlotte** | 8/M2

I have now attended a few of the 'Secret Theatre Club' online sessions, and I can honestly say that I love it.

I enjoy it because it gives me the chance

to watch and give my opinion on different productions, some even from Broadway itself! It also helps you broaden your horizon, especially now that we cannot see live shows.

There is also the option to just sit back and enjoy the show in the company of fellow drama enthusiasts. It is a great place to go if you want to just calm down and watch something extraordinary.

I recommend it to all of you who have never, ever seen a musical/play and are into drama.

**Theo** | 7/M1

I love Secret Theatre Club because theatre is really expensive and it's nice that we can go to the club and watch it with friends instead of having to pay for each ticket.

**Erin** | 8/S2

## TAKE THE LEAD WORKSHOPS

26 lucky students have gained the opportunity to be part of the Old Vic Theatre's 'Take The Lead' Scheme. This involves three workshops over the coming months.

Take the Lead is a free employability programme from The Old Vic for students aged 15–18 that uses theatre techniques and creative workshops to build on five core skills: communication, self-management, self-belief, teamwork and problem solving.

This programme is created in collaboration



with schools and businesses and draws on The Old Vic's expertise as a theatrical institution to support young people to take ownership over their next steps after school and prepare them for the working world of the future.

**Mr Tozzi** | *Director of Performances*

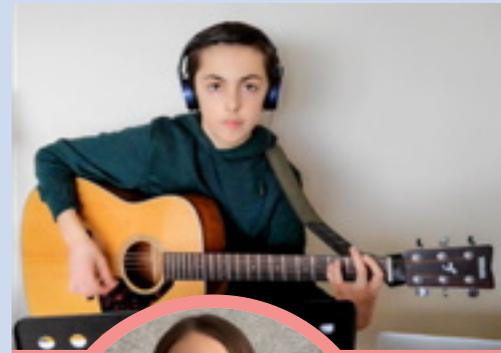
## VIRTUAL BAND

In the music department, we so missed our music-making that we decided to start a virtual band. We were overwhelmed with the uptake, with close to 75 members of the school community (pupils and staff) taking part.

We chose an uplifting song, 'Make Your Own Kind of Music' by Paloma Faith, and sent out parts to be learned on all instruments as well as a variety of singing parts. We asked students to video themselves as they played or sang along to a backing track (through headphones). The videos were sent in, compiled into one project and the audio mixed in a separate program - and then the magic happened. This fantastic video can be viewed via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlgtPbZ3b4A>

**Mr Egan** | *Head of Music*



## YEAR 7 HALF TERM CHALLENGES

Over the February half-term, we set a number of challenges for the Year 7 cohort to complete. The challenges were 'Back to the 80s' and 'screen time'. Through these challenges, we were trying to encourage students to limit their screen time and engage with other activities.

Ms Lyall | Year 7 Senior Learning Mentor



For my No Screens/Back to the 80s challenge, I made an Airfix model and continued crocheting a blanket that I started at the beginning of lockdown. I ordered the Airfix model from Amazon, and although it is very fiddly, it was still very fun to do! My mum taught me how to crochet and I have always done it in my spare time. When the first lockdown began, I started making a blanket, so it was something to do during these challenges! I found these challenges fun to do, and it gave me more time to enjoy all of my hobbies.

Rebecca | 7/M2



The Back to the 80s task was great fun. Luckily, we already had lots of 80s games which we play all the time but I'd not been able to play on the old Nintendo handheld computer game before. My favourite was a Super Mario game where Mario and Luigi had to fill boxes with bottles without dropping them. It looked like a very easy game as the graphics were very simple compared to

games graphics today but it wasn't at all. I'm still playing it as it's so addictive and I want to beat my high score! The board games were lots of fun and I managed to win a lot. We listened to 80s music at the same time but some of it wasn't very good. It was good to be away from the screen and have some fun with my family instead. I loved the challenge.

Jasmine | 7/V1



In the Back to the 80s Challenge, I felt worried because I thought I wouldn't find anything to submit. We don't really have anything old in our home. I remembered when my mum let me use a game a long time ago for a show and tell in my primary school. It was an old small handheld computer game and just what I needed for this challenge. I really enjoyed playing with it! I found the screen time challenge very easy because there were many things I could do to entertain myself such as cooking and creating dress designs which I love to do. I often create designs using pieces of material and old clothes that we have at home. I normally use my iPad to take pictures of my designs so I can remember them. It's really good fun and rarely my little sister helps too. We like to do challenges to see who can make the best dress.

Emily | 7/M1



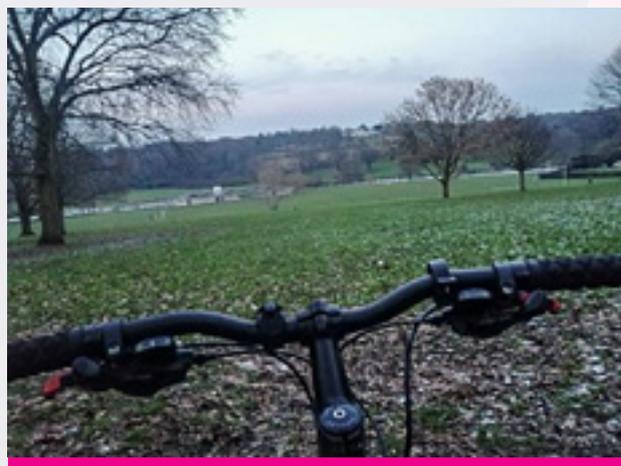
I really enjoyed taking part in these weekly challenges. For the Back to the 80s challenge I spent time playing on my father's old Arcade Defender video game that he played with as a kid. Compared to modern video games it is simpler and more limited, however, that's what made it fun! It was great to play a game that my father enjoyed when he was my age. I think what's better about modern games is that you can interact with friend's no matter where they are, with this game you can only play with your friend's if they're physically with you. Even though games like Minecraft and FIFA can be addictive they have been really helpful during lockdown to socialize with my friends from afar.

For the screen time challenge I spent most of the day playing electric guitar preparing for my upcoming music exam. I managed the whole day away from screens except in the evening where I watched a bit of television with my family. I think this task was fairly easy as I don't go on screens that much. By practising my guitar for many hours, I think I will do well in my exam. Playing music is more important to me than for example, watching YouTube or playing online games, and makes me feel proud of my achievements.

Theo | 7/S2

I found the screen time challenge fun; it encouraged me to step away from the screen and do something else I enjoy. The first book I read was 'The Borrowers'. I liked the old style of writing and the story of how the Borrowers lived. I also read 'A Long Winter'. I found this book really interesting as it focused on the story of a girl and how her and her family survived during the war. Something else I enjoy doing is creative writing and I used 'Better English' to help improve my grammar, spelling and punctuation. I am really interested in the work that the World Wide Fund (WWF) do to protect endangered animals and their habitats. I read the factual 'Animal Encyclopedia' to increase my awareness of this and learn more about endangered animals. I really enjoy reading and have continued to explore new books I'd like to add to my growing collection!

Riya | 7/V1



The Screen Time challenge which I completed during half term was a fun and rewarding activity. I spent my time cycling through my local park. Looking at the winter views of the park was a nice change from being in front of a screen. Taking the screen time challenge gave me a goal to focus on and was good for my wellbeing.

Christos | 7/S2



# ASHMOLE PRIMARY

## SCIENCE WEEK



Science week took place week beginning Monday 15th March 2021. This gave us the opportunity to focus on making science creative and to raise its profile, by exploring ideas and investigating scientific concepts. We invited all pupils and staff to embrace the theme of 'Innovating for the Future'. The children had lots of fun researching some of the best inventions from the past and understanding the creative process of innovation. KS1 focused on the topic of 'not so fantastic plastic'. They designed and explored alternative solutions for the use of plastic. For example; making a cup from jelly and making a spoon out of corn flour. KS2 focused on the topic of 'space tourists'. The children had to design a way to get into space, move around in space and get home again. All of the children got to design, build prototypes and review their inventions. We concluded the week by dressing up as scientists and having a fun filled day full of exciting experiments.

## BOOK WEEK

From 1st March until 5th March, we had our annual Book Week, which was carried out virtually. Our theme for the week was 'Dragons' with our focus on inspiring a love of literature in all our students, celebrating books, authors and illustrators. Throughout the week, each year group was given a different dragon text to explore and work around, from 'The Dragon Machine' to 'How to train your dragon'.

We started the week with a whole school virtual assembly with guest author M.P. Robertson. Then different year groups took part in a dragon drawing workshop. Later in the week we had a virtual author visit from Gareth P Jones where all year groups had the opportunity to take part in story time workshops. We also had quizzes, Drop Everything and Read, story time with Mr Tofallis and mystery readers (which included staff and parents/carers) to finish each day. We celebrated World Book Day by dressing up as our favourite book character (teachers included) and finished off the week with Film Friday where we watched a dragon movie of our choice before writing our own film reviews.



## EYFS SPRING NEWS

The Spring Term has certainly been very different this year. Despite the children's school routine being swapped for a 'home school' routine, they have continued to amaze us all. The children adapted exceptionally well to virtual learning and we could not be any prouder of them. They joined in with virtual lessons demonstrating the same enthusiasm and dedication that they show in class. This term in Reception, the children loved learning about Chinese New Year and getting creative by making their very own lanterns. Our topic of 'People who help us' is very fitting this term as we have been learning all about doctors, nurses, paramedics, firefighters, police and many others. This has linked in well with what has been happening in the real world and highlighted how thankful we all are to those who have continued to work and look after us all. The children were so excited to return to school and be introduced to their very own Buddy Bear (thank



you PTA). We cannot wait to see what the Summer Term holds for our amazingly resilient Reception children.

Miss Cleary | Reception Teacher

## KEY STAGE 1 NEWS



Though we have had a very different Spring Term this year, the children in Year 1 have continued to make fantastic progress across the curriculum. Our theme for this term was 'There's no place like home'. In History we have been comparing Victorian and modern houses, looking closely at the different features (both inside and outside) of these houses, as well as comparing the lives of Victorian children and children today. In our Science lessons we have been investigating different materials and their properties through carrying out a variety of experiments. The children enjoyed writing predictions, carrying out experiments and discussing our findings. We also spent the start of the year learning about Islam in RE, which Year 1 showed great interest in.

We had a wonderful book week the week before so the children came in laden with their Dragon Machine drawings and we had prizes

galore to give out for book week costumes and creations.

A busy first three weeks back included plenty of looking after our wellbeing, mindfulness, longer playtimes and time to catch up with friends.

We pretended to be palaeontologists and had a fossil dig and have become apprentice gardeners in Science, investigating and planting seeds to observe in class and the wildlife garden. We took part in an amazing Science week exploring why 'Plastic is not so Fantastic' and we completed challenges to help us see how innovators are changing the world.

Well done for being so resilient during these challenging times Key Stage 1.

Miss Costas | KS1 Leader/Deputy Head

## KEY STAGE 2 NEWS

The beginning of the Spring Term was very different this year and much of our term was spent learning on Zoom. We are extremely proud of the mature attitude demonstrated by all Year 3 and Year 4 children during our online learning, everyone worked so hard. The teachers are so proud of how the children have returned to school and settled back into school life and routines.

In Year 3, the children found out all about life in Prehistoric Britain in their History lessons. They travelled through time from the Stone Age to the Iron Age finding out about what life was like and the different developments that took place from age to age. They particularly enjoyed finding out about how the tools and weapons evolved from stone to metal and how Prehistoric Humans discovered how they could use the smelting process to make bronze. During the topic, the children went on a virtual visit of the British Museum to see the artefacts from Prehistoric Britain and find out more from the

different items.

Year 4 loved finding out about different periods during medieval times and the differences between modern day life and life in the past. It was interesting to find out how clothes were different in medieval times. The children also worked hard using different resources to find out more information about Henry VIII. The children delved deeper into Henry VIII's character and tried to draw conclusion about what kind of a person Henry VIII was.

Year 3 and Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed our virtual Dragon themed Book Week. We particularly enjoyed the drawing workshop where we all learnt so much about how to draw a realistic dragon. The children worked hard on their book character costumes and it was amazing to see so many different characters on our Zoom Lessons!

Mrs Charalambous | Year 3/4 Leader



## ASHMOLE PRIMARY PTA (APPTA)

A newly appointed team now form the core committee for the PTA. With the uncertainty and difficulties of lockdown, the team have been focusing on different and innovative fundraising ideas. The aim has been to continue building our sense of community whilst raising funds for the children. Our initiatives so far include a Quiz Night, Christmas photos and a Virtual Winter Junior Bake-Off, with some of our teachers including Mr. Tofallis judging the entries.

We appreciate that home schooling has not been easy and to help welcome and support the children's return to school, the PTA has purchased special Buddy Bears for each child.

We are looking forward to lockdown easing where we can continue to work with parents and the school to raise further funds and would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and the school for their support.

Celeste Menich | Chair of the APPTA

## PRIMARY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### SUMMER TERM 2021

19 <sup>th</sup> Feb - 30 <sup>th</sup> April	The Big Pedal
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	May Day Bank Holiday
31 <sup>st</sup> May - 4 <sup>th</sup> June	Half Term
7 <sup>th</sup> June	Second Half Term
w/c Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Arts Week
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Inset Day
w/c Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Sports Week tbc
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Lost day of academic year

## WORLD BOOK DAY 2021



At Ashmole, World Book day went virtual for 2021. Students across the school took part in online quizzes, form time 'shelfie', shared their book recommendations and took part in online workshops. Some of our most enthusiastic students even got dressed for the occasion! Winners of our 'Best Dressed' competition will be announced soon.

Many thanks to all those who took part. A special thank you to Lily in Year 12 and Isabel and Layo in Year 13 who ran workshops for our

younger year groups. I hope you enjoyed the festivities.

Ms Nelson | *i/c Gifted and Talented English*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### SUMMER TERM 2021

12 <sup>th</sup> Apr – 28 <sup>th</sup> May	First Half Term
3 <sup>rd</sup> May	May Day Bank Holiday
31 <sup>st</sup> May – 4 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Half Term
26 <sup>th</sup> May	Last Day for Year 13 Students
27 <sup>th</sup> May	Last Day for Year 11 Students
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Spring Bank Holiday
7 <sup>th</sup> Jun – 19 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Second Half Term
16 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Last Day for Students
19 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Staff Training Day



Follow us via the Academy's twitter account, **@ashmoleacademy**, for updates on the latest news and events:

# JACK PETCHEY AWARD WINNERS



## Spring Winners

### Jessica | 13/SAN

Jessica worked as a key worker for children with disabilities during lockdown.



### Jake | 11/S1

Jake worked for two hours every Sunday with Friends of Broomfield Park Association to clean the park, carry out maintenance, pick up litter, gardening and the creation of a wetland area there.



### Danielius | 10/N2

Daniel raised £200 for the Red Cross.



### Pannie | 10/S1

Pannie has raised money through bake sales, mud runs and participated in many charity events for several charities, namely Cancer Research, AVM and the Autistic Society.



## SCHOOL DIRECT

Ashmole Academy runs a very successful School Direct Teacher Training Scheme.

For 2021/22, we will be offering places in the following subject areas: Mathematics and Science.

If you are a parent or carer who is interested in becoming a teacher or have family/friends who are interested in teacher training, please contact Ms Foye at [kfo@ashmoleacademy.org](mailto:kfo@ashmoleacademy.org) or telephone 020 8361 2703 extension 2206 for an informal discussion.

## ASHMOLE ACADEMY TRUST

Cecil Road, Southgate, London N14 5RJ • Tel: 020 8361 2703 • Fax: 020 8368 0315 • E-mail: [office@ashmoleacademy.org](mailto:office@ashmoleacademy.org) • Website: [www.ashmoleacademy.org](http://www.ashmoleacademy.org)

