

# VERULAMVOX

*Your school, your voice,  
your magazine.*

## STEM CLUB

Stephen Hawking:  
Hawking Radiation Theory

## CREATIVE WRITING

Read stories created by  
our amazing students!

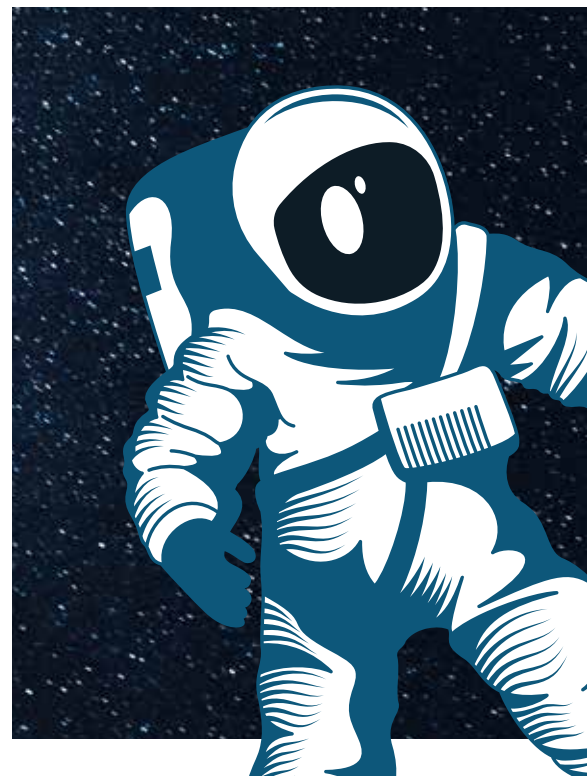


VERULAM  
SCHOOL

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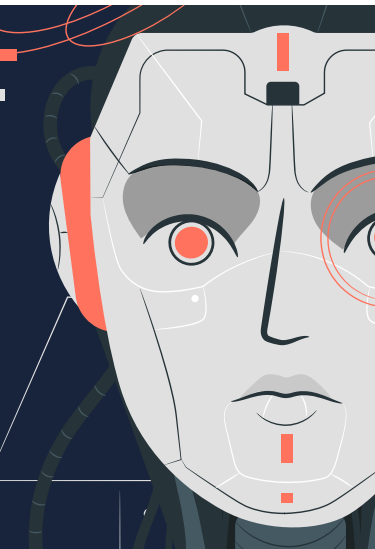
## CREATIVE WRITING

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## STEM CLUB

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## WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Students,

Welcome to our Spring term edition of Verulam Vox. This half term sees our students contemplating their next steps whether this is choosing options in Year 9, making decisions about Sixth Form in Year 11 or moving on from school to university, apprenticeship or employment. However, there is always time for hobbies and sport. It is a delight to read about the many interests our students have and the wide range of pursuits they explore. This edition is a wonderful showcase of talent, skills and positivity; it's a pleasure to share these through Verulam Vox.

I hope you enjoy this edition and enjoy the half term break.

Best wishes,  
Miss J Richardson

# SENIOR TEAM

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# UPDATE

## INTRODUCTION

After what I hope has been an enjoyable Christmas and New Year, I would like to welcome you all back to the last edition of the 'Senior Team Update' section in the Verulam Vox, written by Myles O'Connor (current School Captain).

This edition will reflect on examples of excellence, character and respect demonstrated by the team; the rigorous process of selecting our successors and a final goodbye from the Senior Prefect Team of 22/23.

BY MYLES O

## OVA DINNER

**Four members of our team were invited and had the pleasure of attending the annual OVA Dinner, held at Ashwell House in St Albans. This is another fantastic tradition of the school. Current staff, previous Headteachers, previous staff and alumni students are all invited to form the Old Verulamium's Association. The dinner celebrates school success and is a true reflection of the truth behind how we stand by our motto of #VerulamForLife.**

I had the pleasure of delivering a speech, detailing the achievements that the team have made thus far, whilst telling a few interesting stories along the way!

The dinner provided a great opportunity for us to meet a selection of Verulam alumni students who shared lots of great memories of their

time at the school. One noticeable memory for a few ex-students was the South Africa Rugby Tour in 2002.

It was a great evening of celebration and thanksgiving for all who attended.

A definite highlight for me.





## ABBEY SERVICE SUCCESS

**I am proud to announce that after thorough preparation, our annual service of thanksgiving at the Abbey was a great success. As usual, our team (and aspiring prefects) represented Verulam impeccably and were a credit to themselves and the school. Mr Hall commented on how flawless the procession was, which gave a sense of pride to the occasion. We also had the pleasure of hosting Nicole from St Albans and**

**Hertsmere's Women's Refuge, who were our chosen charity this year. She delivered a fantastic talk on the importance of increasing our awareness of domestic violence. It gave us a great insight into the amazing work they do to help those most vulnerable. Additionally, well done to those who read and delivered prayers to the 1000+ people in attendance.**

Last but by no means least, a special thank you to Mr Hall for organising this fantastic annual occasion.

PS: Take a close look at the picture - you may be able to spot a few members of the new team due to be announced in the next few weeks! Can you guess who they might be?



## INTO THE SIXTH TALKS

Late November and into December, the Senior Prefect Team delivered a series of informative talks to the Year 11 forms. These talks were designed to inform the students of what Verulam has to offer post-16 and answer queries they may have before joining the Sixth Form.

We addressed the following areas:

1. What subjects we are studying.
2. Our experience of studying A-Level / B-Tec Qualifications at Verulam.
3. The consortium option (if applicable).
4. Question and Answer session.

The talks were aimed to help smooth the transition process from Year 11 into the Sixth Form. We hope to have had a positive impact in this process.

Good luck to the Year 11s in their GCSE exams this summer.

## SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE NEW TEAM



After an eye-opening round of interviews, the new Senior Prefect Team have now been selected and are due to be announced.

Those that wished to apply for the higher roles were shortlisted from the interview process and had to deliver a speech to Year 10, 11, 12 and 13, outlining their manifestos.

A vote was then cast to select the top four candidates to go forward to the final stage. This includes a formal conversation with Miss Richardson, allowing the candidates to voice their opinions of the school and put forward the proposals that they intend to implement if they are to be selected.

Good luck to everyone involved.

## CONCLUSION / SAYING GOODBYE

That wraps up the last edition of the 'Senior Team Update' from the 22/23 team. I hope that it has been an enjoyable read and that you have gained an insight into some of the great work that this team has carried out during our term.

I would like to end by thanking every member of the Senior Prefect Team of 22/23 for all your effort and dedication to the role. I'd like to also wish the best of luck to our successors.



# NEXT STEPS...



## FINDING A PERFECT SIXTH FORM

**As of late a significant amount of my time has been spent on finding a Sixth Form that fits my personality and will prepare me for later life. Whether that be within the beausandver consortium or elsewhere, the hunt for my perfect Sixth Form has been brutal. Many hours of my time have been spent at open evenings around local schools such as: Verulam, Beaumont, Sandringham, St John Lawes, St Goerges and more.**

Whilst all schools are amazing only one school can ever be a perfect fit for a student. Some students look for a Sixth Form with outstanding academic achievement, others look for a school with amazing sporting promise, whilst some look for a place where they can fit in and be themselves.

As well as the struggle to find a Sixth Form to study at, one must also select the three subjects to study for the next two years. This selection is key

as it will determine the next two years of your education so they must be subjects you enjoy and have genuine interest in. As the deadline for applications nears it is important to get the decision right or education for the next few years just won't feel right.

**BY JOHN B**

# NEXT STEPS...



## VISITING CHILTERN ACADEMY

**While expectations are high, we acknowledge that any individual with the right mindset can thrive in the Sixth Form environment. As Luton residents, we wanted to ensure that Verulam is accessible to other Lutonians who are ambitious and willing to put the effort into their studies.**

On the 9th of November, we had the opportunity to represent Verulam Sixth Form at Chiltern Academy's post-16 information evening. We learnt that the current Year 11s of Chiltern Academy were actually going to be their first ever school leavers. Given that they don't have a Sixth Form attached to the secondary school, we were privileged to invite the first generation of students to join our school.

Some factors that hinder accessibility may include logistical factors such as being uninformed or unsure about the availability of transport. Others may be social factors such as feeling out of place given your particular background, and we felt like this topic was particularly important given recent Lutonian figures gaining negative traction. Presenting at Chiltern Academy's information evening allowed us to share our own experiences as students from Luton to

dispel any misconceptions and show our Sixth Form's diversity, as well as eliminate doubts about reaching the Sixth Form for those prepared to work hard to achieve the right grades.

A month later, on the 9th of December, we were happy to welcome a group of Year 11s from Chiltern Academy to our Sixth Form for a visit. We gave them a tour around the school and then joined our own Sixth formers in the assembly hall for an Engaging Minds Lecture. We were glad that our efforts had an impact and hope that they are eager to join our school community.

We all leave traces behind us, and that is what people will remember us for, but are they positive or negative? We are sure that more Lutonians will leave behind a positive legacy.

Verulam then hosted their "Into the Sixth" Sixth form Open Evening event on Thursday 12th of January. This event was hugely successful and culminated in many commendations for both teachers and students.

Open Evenings are incredible opportunities for members of the school to show off their passion for their subject and help to encourage future students.

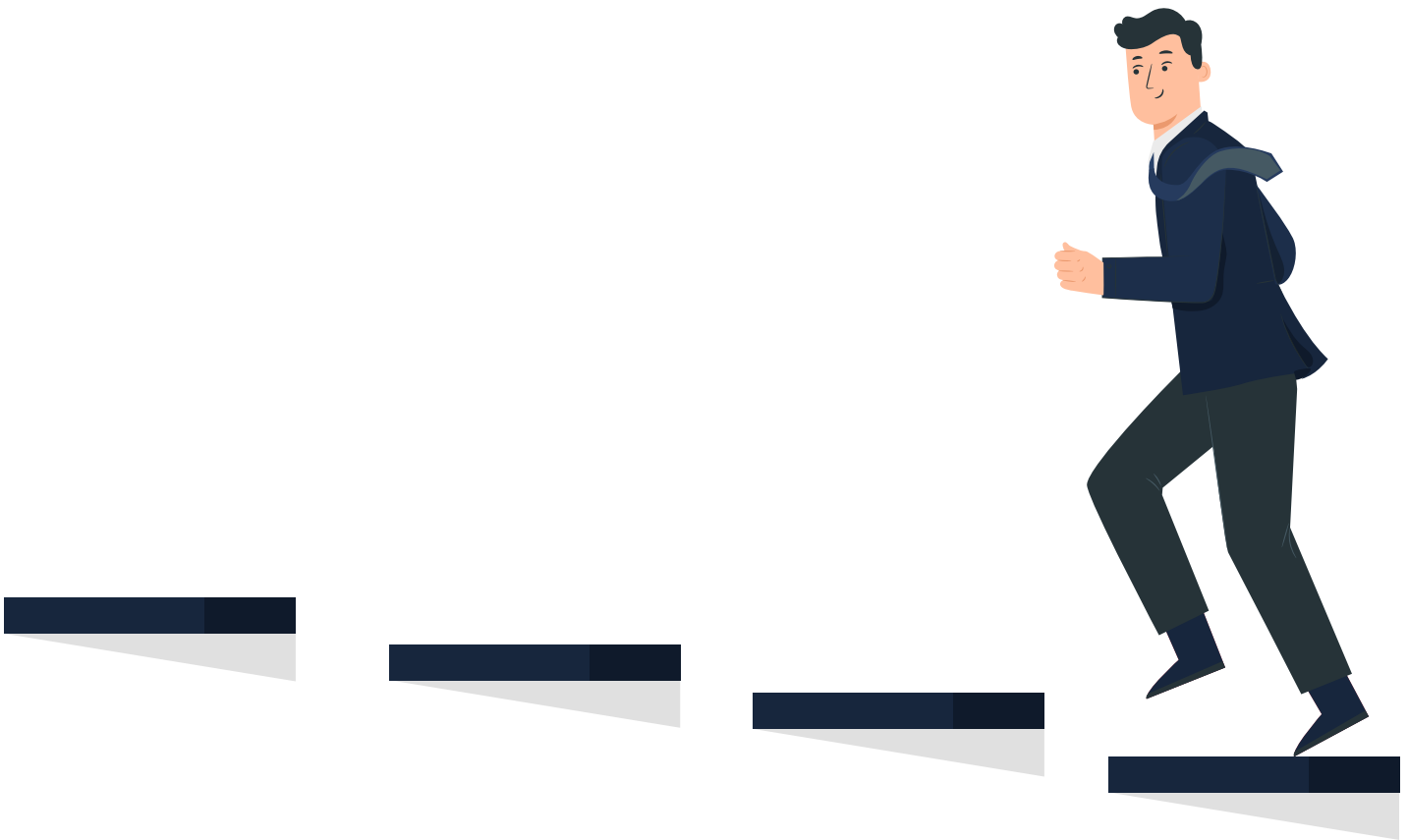
The evening started with speeches and then transitioned into five, twenty-minute carousels. These carousels presented an opportunity for prospective Sixth Form students to meet current students and staff. They would arrive in the room allocated to the subject and listen to a short 15-minute presentation about what the subject entailed and why students should choose it. Teachers got the opportunity to demonstrate their love for what they teach and gauge interest levels for next year. Students got to (hopefully) inspire the next generation of Sixth Formers and have a positive impact on their school.

The school has recently launched a range of new A-Levels as well, which all featured in the evening, having very pleasing levels of interest. This is an encouraging step to expanding the Verulam Sixth Form and opening it up to different academic styles.

Thank you to everyone who came to the evening, and to the teachers and students representing the school.

**BY HARRIS AND ENID R. B.**





## THE UCAS EXPERIENCE



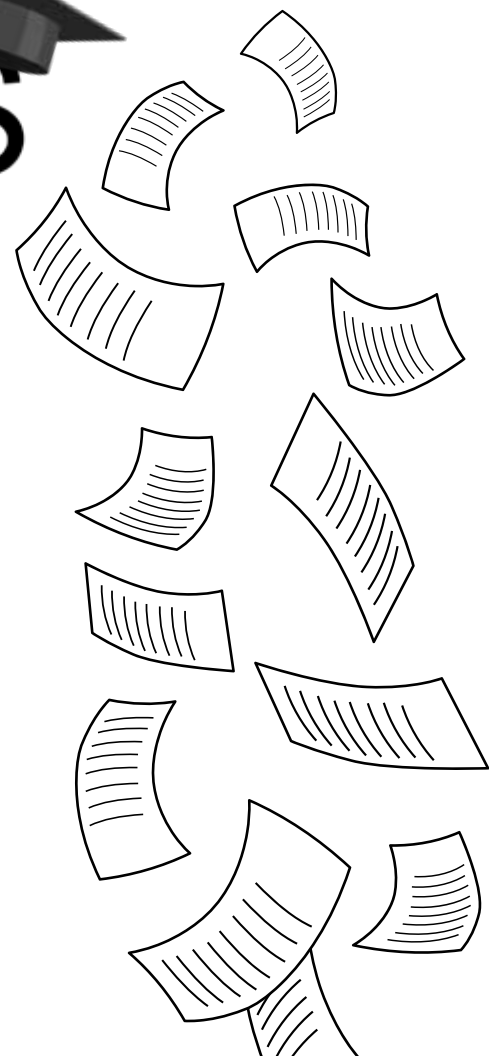
**Applying to university can be quite the daunting, emotional rollercoaster. Trying to write a personal statement is one of the hardest things to do, and picking the universities can be a shot in the dark, you can never know what's around the corner.**

I made countless shortlists and weighed up what I liked about each university, and what I didn't. There is no doubt I've faced several difficulties during my application process but receiving your first offer instantly makes it worth it. As a guide to any year 11/12s starting to look at universities or courses, the main piece of advice I have to offer is to find what you enjoy, find what you're good at, and try to find a healthy balance.

For me, this was Politics, I loved the A-level and received good results so this was a fairly easy decision. I had originally, however, thought of doing Law, after beginning the A Level I soon found that I enjoyed Politics more, and wanted to pursue this.

Being open-minded about your choices is the best approach, weigh up your options, and remember that your mind can, and probably will change!

**BY JAMES A.**



# ARE WE IN OVER OUR HEADS WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

**Many people believe that the human race is taking AI too far, and poses an imminent threat to life as we know it. The debate about AI and its capabilities has sparked up again due the release of a new chatbot named ChatGPT.**

ChatGPT is a powerful language model developed by OpenAI that has the ability to generate human-like text. While its capabilities are impressive, some experts have raised concerns about the potential dangers it poses to society. One concern is that ChatGPT could be used to create deep fake text or manipulated

content, spreading misinformation and causing confusion. Additionally, there is a fear that the model could be used to impersonate individuals and organisations, potentially leading to fraud or other malicious activities. It is important to continue monitoring the development and use of ChatGPT to ensure that it is used ethically and safely.

A number of these very worries are exemplified by the paragraph above, which was written in its entirety by, you guessed it, ChatGPT!

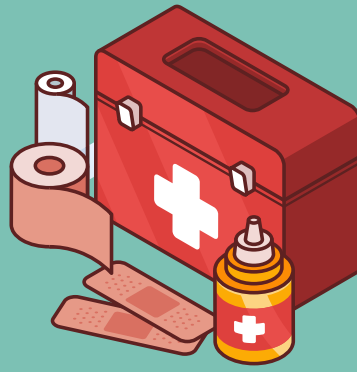
Now while ChatGPT and AI as a whole can be extremely helpful for certain things, it is not to be underestimated, and therefore, as a species, we simply cannot be naive about the potential danger AI possesses or we will bear the consequences.

**BY RYAN K**





# FIRST AID



I recently completed a first aid course. Initially, I found it most interesting from a biological perspective, seeing how what we learn in biology works in practice - but this is the obvious one. But what I did find was that, first aid gave me a set of skills that I can use to help those around me, I feel that I am now able to save someone's life, by implementing CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), but beyond this I'm

able to use other techniques to help those affected feel comfortable and safe whilst waiting for medical assistance from professionals.

Considering the ease and spontaneous nature to which incidents may occur, it has provided me with a new perspective that compels me to also think about the safety and health of all those around me. It has also made me more confident as I found I was

out of my comfort zone whilst doing the course.

It is certainly a life skill that I would recommend to everyone, not just those interested in sport.

**BY LEANDROS T.**

# LANDMARKS OF ST ALBANS

St Albans has many landmarks with some known and others not so much. This article is to help spread information about places you may walk past every day.



## THE CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral or Abbey is the biggest landmark of St Albans and one of the oldest sites of continuous Christian worship in Britain. It was built in 1077.



## THE WHITE HART HOTEL

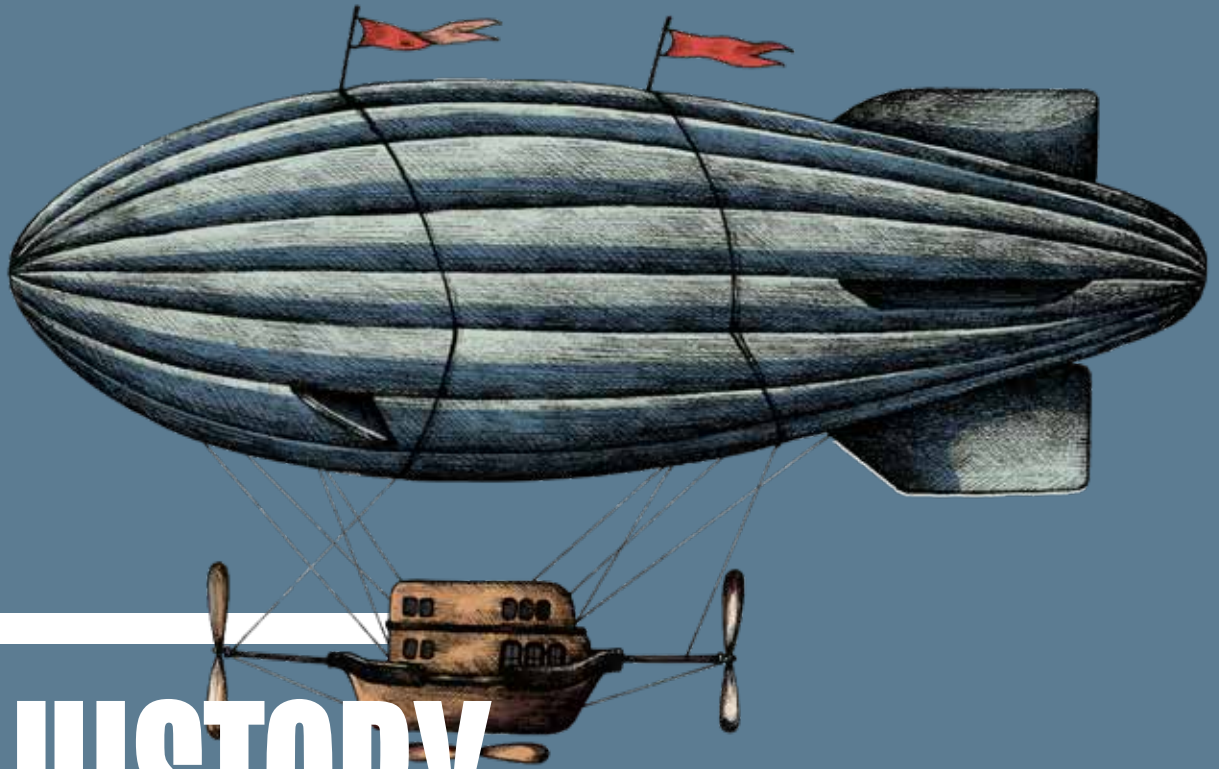
This place dates back to 1470 and is located on Holywell hill and has seen multiple historic events. It is positioned opposite the Cathedral and is known for being haunted with one of the most famous stories being about a woman who sat in the top seats of a coach who was said to have broken her neck on the entrance. Another ghost story being about a girl who died in a fire haunting the back stairs of the hotel.



## CLOCK TOWER

The building of the Clock Tower was finished by 1405 and stood as a symbol of resistance against the power of the abbot of St Albans and stood to allow the town to sound its own hours and curfew. In addition, the Tower's bell rang out for the first battle of St Albans during the Wars of the Roses in 1455.

**BY KIERAN S**



# THE HISTORY OF AIRSHIPS

**The first airship was invented in 1852 by French engineer Henri Giffard, and his aircraft made use of steam powered propellers to move it.**

Airships go by many other names: dirigibles, zeppelins and blimps. In fact, there is a difference between them: a zeppelin has a rigid, or semi-rigid, structure, whereas a blimp has a non-rigid structure, like a balloon. Inside a dirigible there would be numerous gas cells filled with a lifting gas (either hydrogen or helium), and ballonets with outside air. Varying the pressure inside the dirigible is what allowed it to fly and this was done by pumping out the outside air from the ballonets to make the aircraft lighter.

Airships served mainly as luxury transport for those who could afford it, but there were also attempts to incorporate them in the military as

aircraft carriers. Unfortunately given the fickle nature of their structure and the materials they were made of, airships were incredibly susceptible to breakage. The fragility of dirigibles led to many accidents, namely the Hindenburg disaster. The Hindenburg was the largest passenger airship ever built. In 1937 it tragically burst into flames when mooring at Lakehurst, New Jersey, after making a transatlantic trip from Germany. This event led to dirigibles being discontinued for commercial use.

Nowadays some companies are trying to revive airships in an attempt to make travel, and freight, greener and more sustainable. For example, HAV's Airlander 10 boasts a 10-tonne maximum payload and flexible payload space, which allows it to be adapted to the user's needs. HAV, a UK based company, hopes to change aviation as we know it; their dirigibles

currently produce 75% fewer emissions 100% electric by 2030!

## Did you know?

The mast at the top of the empire state building was meant to be a docking/mooring mast for airships. However, it was never used for its intended purpose after it was found that the incredibly strong winds at the top of the skyscraper would make it quite hard for people to safely board and exit an airship.

**BY ENID R. B**

# OUR ENVIRONMENT

## MARINE LIFE: THE TYLOSAURUS



**The Tylosaurus is an extinct species of marine wildlife belonging to the animalia kingdom. They were one of the largest mosasaurs and are estimated to be between 39-52 ft long. As time went by, the creature increased in size.**

Lined with two sets of pointy cone shaped teeth, the Tylosaurus used its snout to locate prey. Like most mosasaurs, it was long and muscular,

with a flattened tail that would power it through the water so it could ambush prey with rapid bursts of acceleration. Its diet consisted primarily of fish, seabirds, sharks, plesiosaurs and other mosasaurs.

The Tylosaurus lived in the Western Interior Seaway, during the Cretaceous period 85 million years ago, which would now be North America. As of

recently, Tylosaurus Proriger remains have been found primarily in Kansas.

In 1918, Charles H Sternberg discovered a Tylosaurus with plesiosaurus remains in its stomach, which is now mounted in the US National museum.

**BY RAYAN J**

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT:

**Protecting the environment is an essential part of securing the future of humanity and our planet. Forests are vital for the environment. They keep temperatures down and provide food and shelter for animals. In pre-industrial times, humans used up most of their natural forests. Governments can help the environment in several ways- primarily by encouraging people to use less energy and resources. They can also pass laws discouraging wasteful practices such as eating cows that eat grass or wearing**

**leather shoes. Each year, over 1 million humans die due to deficiency issues related to eating too much meat. Over 3 billion people do not have access to clean water to drink, cook with or stock their livestock tanks with. By making changes, the world can sustain its population while protecting the environment.**

Environmental issues are serious problems that need immediate attention. People use natural resources without considering how they affect

the environment. Using less energy reduces environmental degradation along with health problems caused by air pollution and in rural areas.

Therefore, before wasting energy unnecessarily, consider alternate options and try your best to reduce carbon footprint.

**BY TRISTAN G**





# HEALTHY EATING HEALTHY EATING HEALTHY EATING HEALTHY EATING

## FOOD AND NUTRITION LESSONS

BY LOGAN O



**Cooking is a very important skill that lots of people should be able to do. According to Statista, only 42.6% of people cook every day in the UK, which is very low.**

Students at Verulam are lucky enough to have cooking classes where they can learn how to do the basics, like cooking rice, pasta and chicken. Learning how to cook is also offered to Verulam students for GCSE, which enables them to broaden their knowledge of how to cook certain dishes, while also learning safety in the kitchen.

As well as being an important skill, a chef could be an option for a job, earning on average £11.71 per hour. Lots of chefs make money in other ways, by having a cookbook, their own brand of food related goods or having a YouTube channel for example.

Next time, rather than going out to eat, why don't you go cook some food at home? It is a lot cheaper and healthier.



## HEALTHY EATING AT UNIVERSITY

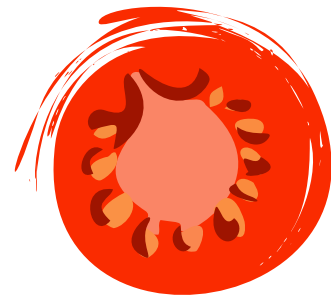
**The latest theme of our last Curriculum Enrichment Day as Year 13s was preparing for university life and future skills. One of the areas of the CED that had a particular impact for me was the theme of healthy eating. Those students cooked up Chilli con Carne and Chicken Tikka Masala dishes to underline the ease with which healthy meals can be assembled at low costs.**

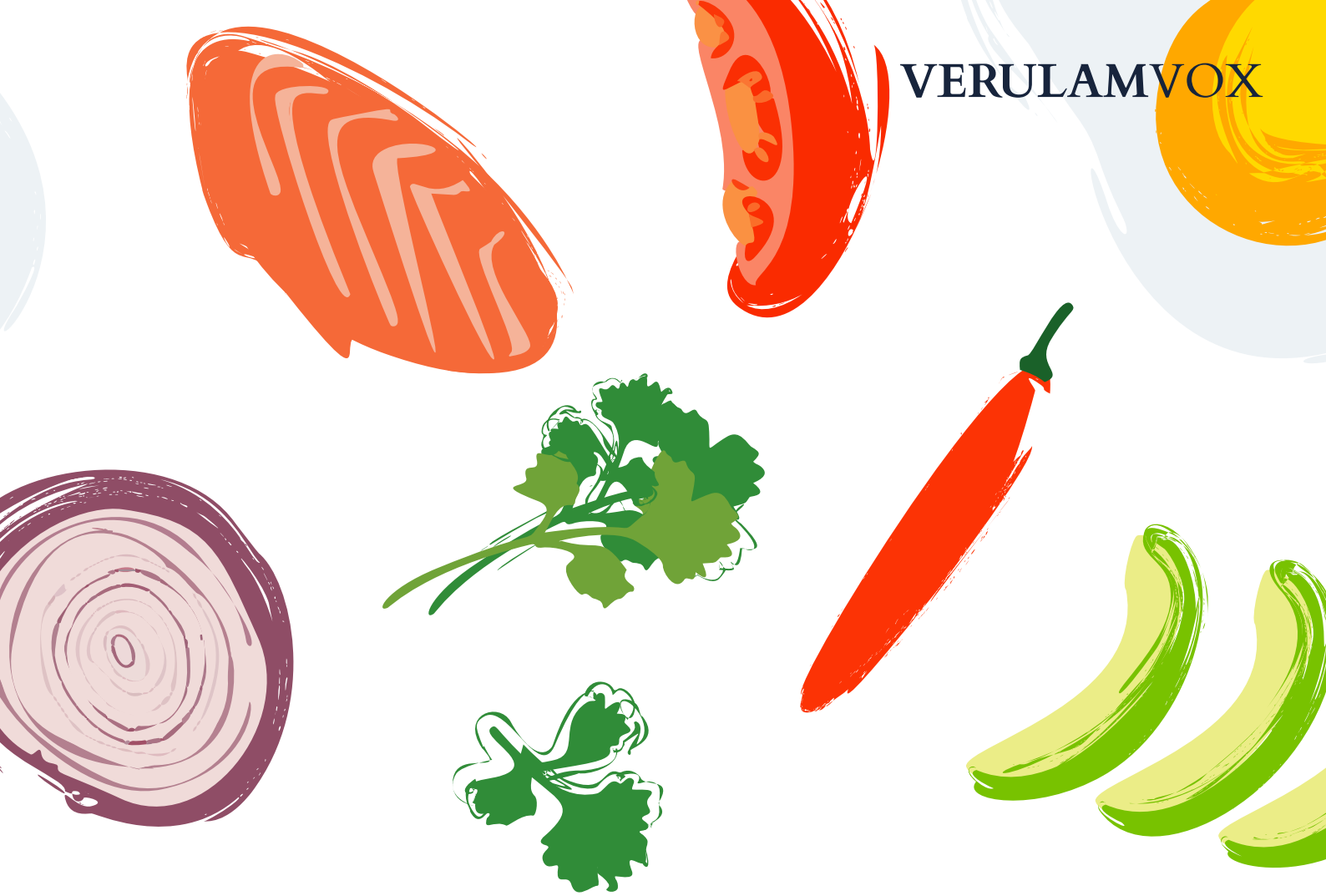
A study of first-year university students' dietary and physical habits found that in America nearly 1/4 of college students gain a significant amount of weight during their first semester at college compared to their peers who had little to no significant weight increase:

### 1. Participated in less physical activity

2. Ate fewer fruits and vegetables
3. Drank more fizzy drinks
4. Consumed more junk food
5. Ate several fast-food meals weekly
6. Slept fewer hours
7. Consumed more calories

While universities cannot control their students' sleep patterns or physical activity habits, leadership can pivot students away from cheap, unhealthy foods by providing quality, convenient and affordable options which our teachers wished to advocate. Unhealthy food choices can significantly impact university students:





1. **Depression:** There's a correlation between dietary habits and mood disorders like anxiety and depression. People who maintain healthy diets with higher proportions of produce, fish, chicken and whole grains have at least 25% less risk of depressive symptoms than those who regularly consume processed food, fast food meals, sugary desserts and soda.
2. **Heart disease:** High-fat snacks, nutrient-poor meals, skipped meals, added sugars and high sodium diets increase waistlines and heart disease risk among college students.
3. **Lower grades:** While poor eating habits adversely affect academic achievement, studies show higher grades are achievable by maintaining a healthy diet.
4. **Poor memory and concentration:** Students whose diets are high in

saturated fats perform worse on tests requiring memorisation and critical thinking. Students can improve studying retention during quizzes and tests by cutting out their overuse of foods like red meat and butter.

5. **Lack of energy and focus:** Junk food, caffeine-fuelled beverages and high-sugar snacks offer short bursts of energy followed by crashes that adversely affect sleep schedules and grades. Skipping meals reduces energy too, disrupting metabolic and nutrient-intake patterns.
6. **Disrupted sleep schedule:** Most university students are all too familiar with "exam cram" mode — pushing themselves to complete assignments on time and spending late nights studying for tests. Students reach for caffeinated beverages like soda, coffee and energy drinks to stay awake in their attempts to juggle

it all. Even though 92% of college students consume caffeine in some form to improve concentration and increase energy, their efforts can backfire because caffeine lowers academic performance and interrupts sleep patterns, disrupting studying efficiency for days at a time.

It is of utmost importance that, with the majority of Year 13s transitioning to university life, we must not neglect our eating habits in light of the numerous negatives highlighted above regarding the impact of unhealthy eating and how it can adversely affect our lives. Overall, this CED was extremely helpful for developing life skills as future undergraduates.

# MENTAL HEALTH

## MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

BY JAGO A

**Children's mental health week in 2023 is taking place from the 6th of February to the 12th of February. It is a yearly event dedicated to raising awareness about the mental health of young people. This year's theme is "Let's connect" encouraging young people to connect truthfully and healthily with each other expressing the thoughts and feelings that may be holding them back.**

1. Children's mental health week facts:
2. 5 out of 30 children in a classroom are likely to have a mental health issue
3. 50% of mental health problems start at 14
4. 75% of young people suffering from mental health issues are not getting support
5. around 200 young people take their own lives every year

Most children are suffering in silence. However, this does not need to be the case. If you are struggling it is best to get it off your chest. Talk to someone you trust - a parent, a teacher, a friend or even a football coach. If you don't feel comfortable talking in person you can also call confidential helplines.

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AS A STUDENT

**Maintaining good mental health is crucial for our well-being, but it is especially important for students as it can impact our ability to learn, make friends and enjoy activities. Here are a few ways that you can keep yourself healthy at Verulam.**

One way to stay healthy is by making sure we are getting enough exercise. Regular physical activity can help improve mood, reduce stress, and boost energy levels. I think it's great to see so many students cycling to school, and some of the older students discussing recent workouts or happenings at the gym. I encourage everyone to find a form of physical activity that they enjoy and consistently do it by incorporating it into your daily routine.

Another way to stay healthy is by eating a balanced diet. Did you know that eating a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which can be found in foods such as fatty fish and walnuts, can help

to improve brain function and reduce the risk of depression? Eating a variety of nutrient-dense foods can help us maintain a healthy weight and improve our immune system. Try challenging yourself to pick fruits for breakfast for a whole week, or the options on the menu with vegetables from the canteen or cafeteria at lunch!

Try to adopt a growth mindset. This means that you always see potential for growth and improvement, as opposed to a fixed mindset where you impose limits on yourself. I think that everyone puts limits on themselves because of a "fear of change" and we choose to keep things as it is: fixed and unchanging. A growth mindset has helped me in my early years of secondary school when I went into lessons that I didn't initially like, mainly English. I would make the excuse that it was difficult, it took too long and I simply wasn't suited for essay-based subjects. As you can imagine, my mental health was impacted by putting myself down and limiting myself. I realised that the reason why I didn't like English was because I found it difficult and I preferred to avoid it instead of trying to learn how to do better. When I realised that "I can do



it if others can do it! I am not that good now, but I can do better” I was on the path to improving myself.

Finally, support from friends, family, and trusted adults can be crucial for maintaining good mental health. It's important for us to have a support system of people you can talk to and seek help from. Remember your “five fingers of faith” and feel free to scan any of the QR codes on the boards around the school to find a method of support suited to your problem.

**BY HARRIS R**

## Mental Health & Well-being

It is OK not to feel OK, many people of all ages will struggle with a mental health issue at some point in their life.

### Being emotionally healthy includes:

-  having self-esteem and self-respect
-  being able to recognise and express feelings
-  being able to manage emotions to suit the situation
-  recognising and managing the factors that affect emotions
-  feeling positive about life

### Five fingers of faith at Verulam

Remember, at Verulam you have the Five Fingers of Faith to speak to:

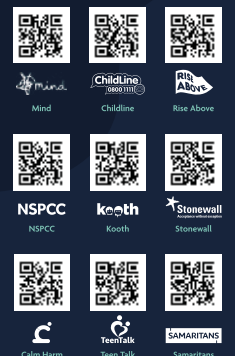
-  Form Tutor
-  Pastoral Support Team
-  Head of Year
-  Favourite Teacher/Friend
-  Designated Safeguarding Lead

If you are having a difficult time or if you are worried about someone else, you can call the Samaritans 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on 116 123 for free or ChildLine for free on 0800 1111

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111

**SAMARITANS**

Need some help or advice? Visit these sites for support:



**VERULAM**  
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# OUR CURRICULUM

## POLITICS A LEVEL

**As some may be aware, Verulam School as of school year 2023/2024 have decided to expand their A-Level subject choices to include Politics.**

As someone who has chosen to do A-Level Politics, at another school in the consortium, I feel it is important I can help others understand what it is and why you may want to pursue it.

The subject of politics not only allows you to help understand your own political views but also listen to those of others, and teaches the importance of having an open mind.

There is varying content, from UK politics and the make-up of the UK government to the political ideologies which dominate the scene. I personally believe that the best thing about this A level is that it is not an A level which only lends you knowledge to one pathway, instead it teaches you many skills that are transferable to every part of life, such as healthy debate, acceptance of other beliefs and helping you gain an interest of the world around you.

For more information on this, the teacher heading this is Mr Jenkins or if you would like a student point of view I am free to talk more about this.

## DRAMA

**I've written this article to tell you about my passion for drama, a hobby which I have enjoyed taking part in for most of my life. My love for the theatre started when I was chosen to play one of the three wise men in my primary school nativity, at the age of 6. From that point I knew that I was going to love drama and acting.**

Outside of school I go to Theatrix, a drama club where we work on improvisational drama skills and showcases. When I joined Verulam I was astounded by the quality of drama, and have been thrilled to take part in performances such as the year 7 Harry Potter pantomime, the Autumn showcase, and my personal favourite just before Christmas last year, 'A Christmas Carol', adapted for Verulam from Charles Dickens' original text by Mr Mckenzie.

The reason I have enjoyed taking part in the performances is the fact that I have met students from other year groups, had lots of fun at rehearsals and the chance to perform in front of an audience. I have enjoyed every moment of drama at Verulam and I can't wait to take part in many more performances.

## HISTORY

**We are always told to learn from our mistakes, but how are we meant to do that if there is no record of what we did?**

History keeps a record of every triumph or failure, every victory and defeat, every success or failure and most importantly every mistake. Without history how are we meant to hold ourselves accountable? How will we ever learn to do better?

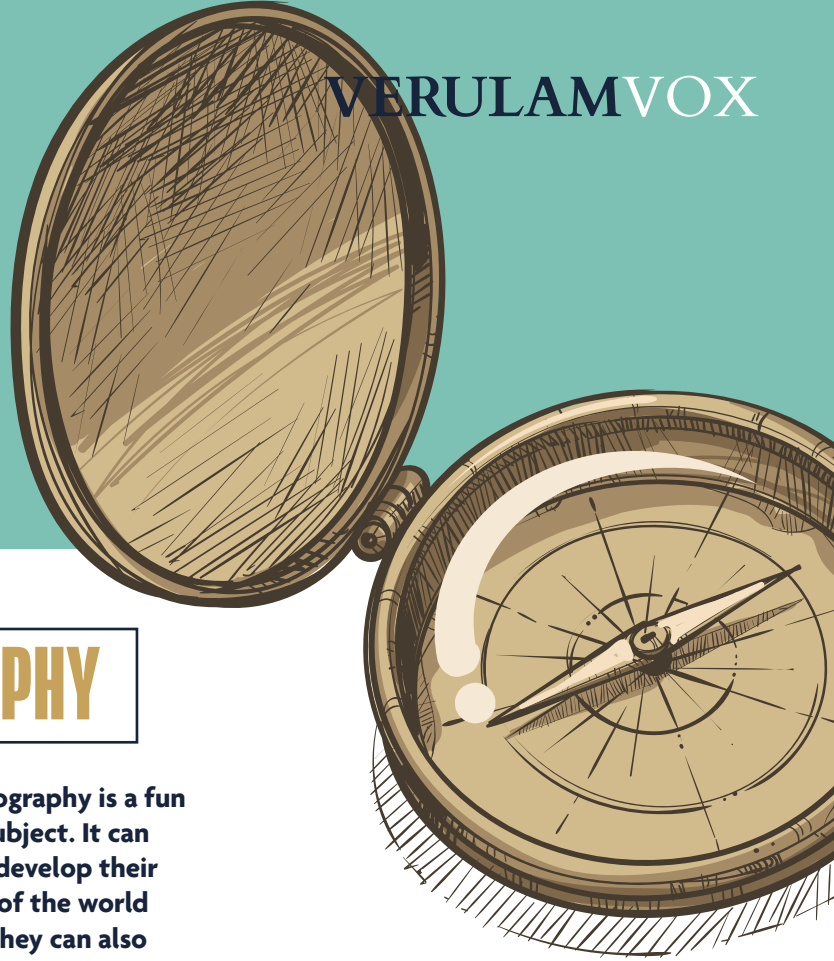
The importance of studying history cannot be stressed enough, not only to see what we did in the past but how we are better for it. I think that what people learn from history is to learn from their mistakes and looking at the past is always a great way to plan for the future.

History is our story as people and we should be able to look back at all the failures of the past and know that we have changed ourselves for the better.

BY CAIT O'C

BY SAM M.

BY MURTAZA N



## FIELDWORK TRIP

**In late November of 2022, all year 11 geography students proceeded to Epping Forest and Stratford in order to expand their knowledge on rivers and key economic hubs, conducive to paper 3 of our GCSE course.**

We visited these two locations on two separate days and on the first day we went to Epping Forest. Here, we learnt about the characteristics of rivers, particularly how they change downstream. For this we investigated the Debden Brooke river, and in groups we visited three points of the river. At each point we got in, and measured the depth, width and velocity of the river. However due to the wet and windy weather conditions, we were unable to record accurate data. Despite this we did manage to reach a good conclusion.

On day two, we went to Stratford, a key economic hub, in order to see the level of development in Stratford over time. We used various different techniques to measure economic development and went to locations such as the Olympic Park and Hackney Wick to compare, measure and analyse the levels of change and development over a period of time.

In my opinion this was an overall amazing experience!

BY ELYAN B

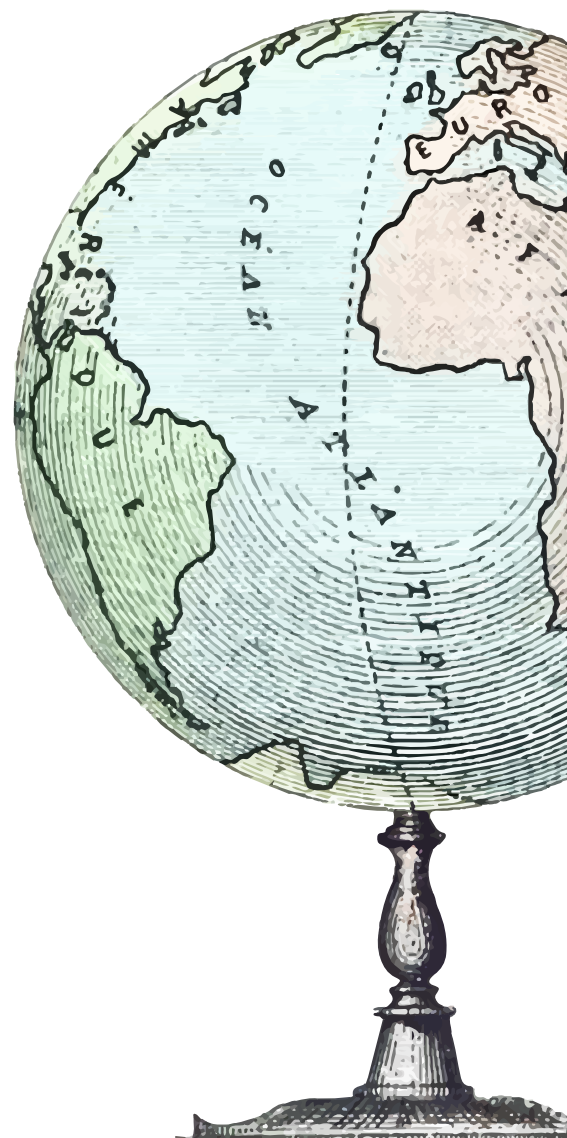
## GEOGRAPHY

**At Verulam, geography is a fun and engaging subject. It can help students develop their understanding of the world around them. They can also explore different cultures and historical sites.**

It is an important part of every learner's education and can help them develop their critical thinking and creativity. Through activities and discussions, it can also help them build their social skills. From researching ancient history to devising effective marketing strategies, geography can serve a wide range of purposes.

In addition to being a fun way to learn about new places and cultures, it may also be useful in various fields such as business, finance, and science. There are many career opportunities in this field. It can be a rewarding and interesting way to make a difference in the world. You can use your knowledge and skills to help people in their daily lives.

BY GEORGE C



# CLUBS AT VERULAM



## CHESS CLUB

BY DANIEL L & ARTHUR R-S

So, at Verulam there is a chess club you can go to at every lunch all through the week. You pick up a board and a box full of chess pieces and head for a table. You then set up to play your game of chess with your desired opponent.

Once set, a timer of your choice lies on the shelves for your use. With functioning batteries, all ready to go, you and your opponent will have a limited time to play.

So, what are you waiting for? Don't hinder yourself anymore, develop your strategic thinking, and come to chess club!



## MATHS CLUB

**Codes, ciphers, graphs and pictures, maths club is more than sums!**

For those of you who don't know, Miss Moreland has been running a maths club in B3 on Wednesday lunchtimes, for the lower school each week.

Everyone's looking for something fun to do with friends at lunchtime; in maths club there's plenty of it. So far, we have been cracking weekly ciphers, useful to any future spymasters and using Desmos (a maths website) to complete challenges and graph interesting pictures.

Desmos is so much fun, we carry on at home, challenging each other to create more interesting patterns.

What if you don't like maths? There's more to it than times tables and sums. Come along and see, you might find something you might like which could change your mind. I really like doing something different from normal maths classes.

Even if you just want to get out of the cold and wet, you'll get a warm welcome at maths club. We'll be glad to help you and share our enjoyment of maths, so come and join us next half term.

BY FRANCIS H



## SPORTS AT VERULAM

BY LUKAS M

**At Verulam there are great sports facilities such as the sports hall and the Games fields at Sandpit Lane. These locations provide a large variety of clubs which can be hosted there. These include extracurricular activities such as badminton, football, basketball, rugby and many more. The sports hall is a relatively new addition to the school, only being built in 2007. It has its own gym which students are allowed to use during their lunchtime and the school puts out posters around the buildings to make sure to let students know when the hall and other facilities are available.**

At Sandpit Lane during games lessons, we can play a variety of sports and the

PE department has a large range of equipment for us to use during our lessons.

There are lots of different extracurricular activities for us to partake in at school, during lunch time or after school. These include: sport, homework help, language and many different types. Whatever you like, there is something for you to work on and enjoy. People are encouraged to take part in lots of different activities and it is recommended that you partake in at least two to three extra curricular activities which usually take place during lunch or after school on certain days. I enjoy participating in many myself such as History Society, Latin, STEM and many, many others.

Lots of teachers are very invested in their students and the sports even when outside of the school hours. For example the other week, the inter cross country team qualified for the national cross country championships which was hosted in Leeds and one of the teachers came to help us prepare for the race. I also know that multiple teachers help out with the football and go to the matches to organise the teams nearly every other week during some of the much busier periods of the sporting year. Almost all of the extracurricular clubs are run by the teachers themselves and they spend their spare time creating fun activities, clubs and societies for all students.

## SPORTS CLUBS

**At Verulam there are lots of opportunities for after school clubs and activities during the lunch time. Not only that if you want to go even further on in the sports you can join the school teams such as the basketball, Cricket (only in the summer term), football and athletics and there will also be many more.**

The lunch time activities are a good way to spend your lunch break if it's a wet day or if you want to play against a friend at table tennis or badminton. The gym is another opportunity to have fun at lunch times.

The school teams such as the football team mean you have to go to training and hopefully you will get chances to play in matches after school and sometimes during school. Although to get the opportunity to play for the team you have to have a trial and get selected unlike the other lunchtime activities which are free for all boys no matter what your ability is.

BY WILLIAM G



# CLUBS AT VERULAM

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## STEM CLUB

### STEPHEN HAWKING: HAWKING RADIATION THEORY

#### Who was he?

Stephen Hawking was an English theoretical physicist, cosmologist, and author who, at the time of his death, was director of research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology at the Cambridge University.

In his early life he studied mathematics and physics and earned a PhD in physics. But the reason why I'm talking about him here is because of his love of black holes and how he could break the laws of physics.

#### Stephen Hawking theory

As black holes absorb information, which is how we distinguish one thing from another, in theory the mass of a black hole increases. This allows more space for the information to be stored. This would be fine, and obey all laws of physics so far however, Stephen Hawking states that black holes don't get bigger but in fact get smaller due to a process called Hawking radiation. This phenomenon was discovered by Stephen Hawking in 1974 and shows

that over incredibly long periods of time, black holes are evaporating and shedding particles from their event horizon and losing mass. The strange thing about this though, is that it seems that the information that the black hole engulfs has nothing to do with the particles that are evaporating suggesting that a black hole and all the quantum information it contains could be being erased. If this is the case, we are left with the question if this quantum information does in fact disappear, where does it go?

If this was to be true, it would force us to rewrite many of our fundamental scientific paradigms.

#### How much evidence is there to support the Hawking radiation theory?

Truly speaking, there is a good chance, but currently there is limited information to prove it. Hawking radiation has never been observed but if it exists the information lost when objects enter a black hole might be carried out of the black hole via this light. This



## ACTIVE CLUBS

BY THOMÁS B-D

means the information isn't truly lost. If Hawking radiation is accurate, that also means that black holes follow the laws of thermodynamics. Stephen Hawking was an incredible physicist who inspired so many to study science and showed that anything is possible.

BY THOMAS H

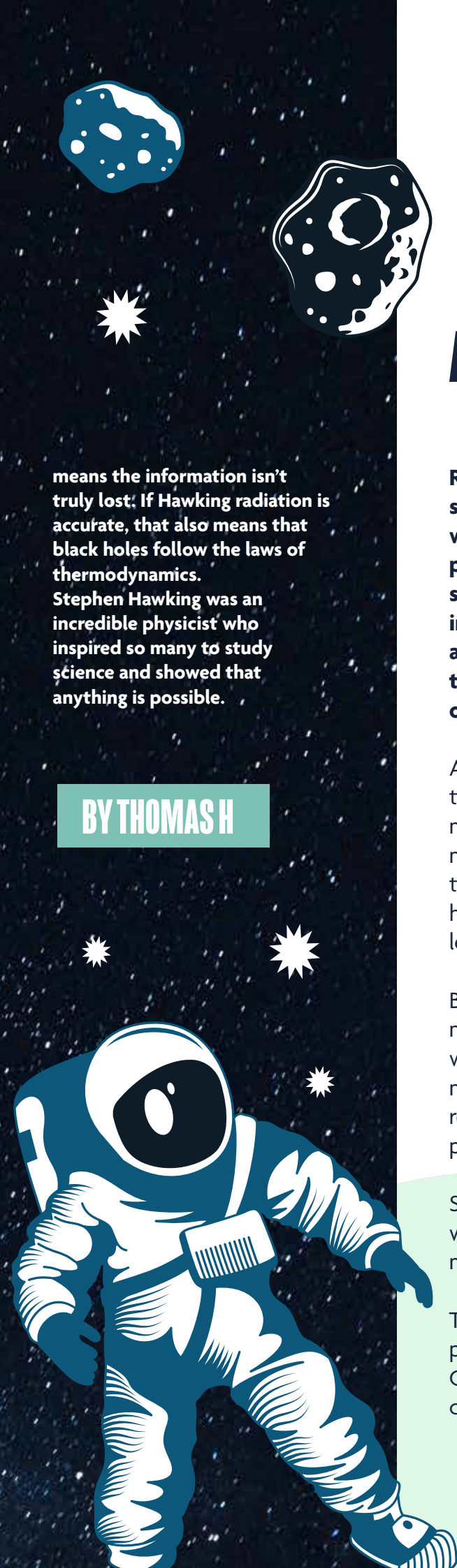
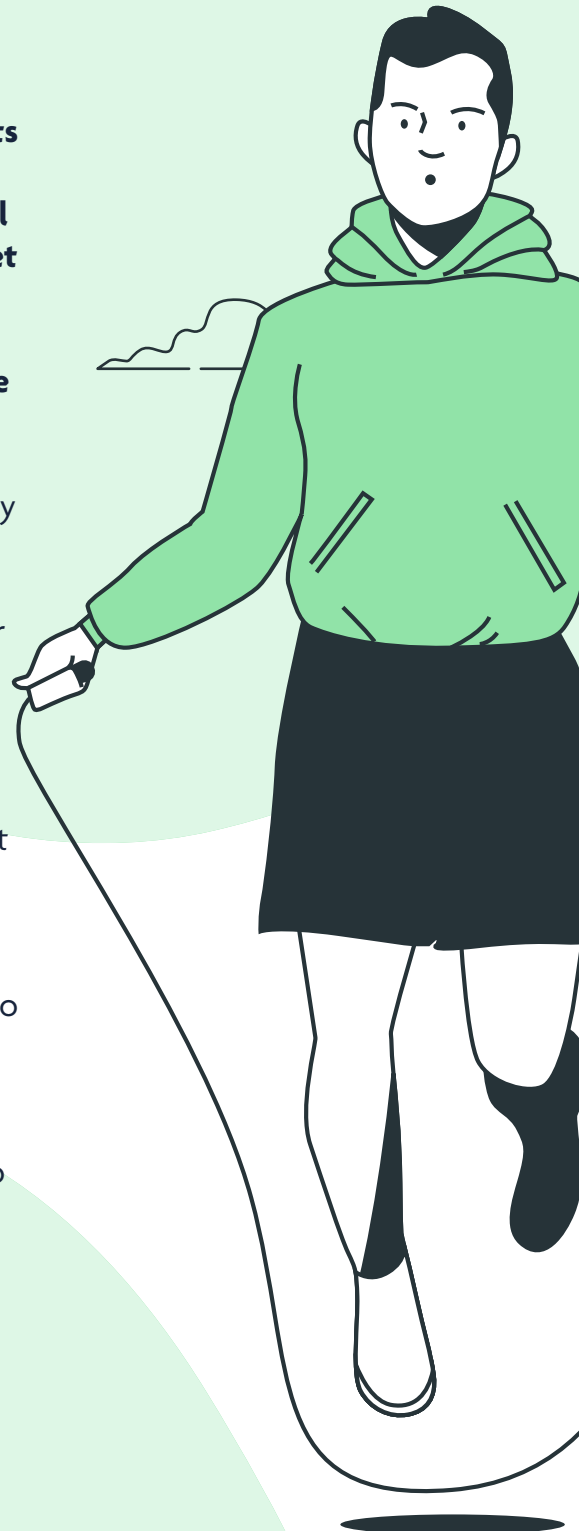
**Research shows that secondary school students who exercise regularly or play school or recreational sports are less likely to get involved in unhealthy activities than sedentary teens who do not exercise or play sports.**

Active teens are more likely to have efficient time management skills. They must learn to balance their time between school, homework and their leisure activities.

Being active can also boost mental and psychological well-being. Active teens must be able to adapt and remain calm and focused to perform well.

So to answer the question why does Verulam offer so many active clubs?

To help our mental and physical well-being. Consider joining an active club at Verulam!





# OUR HOBBIES



## WOODTURNING

Woodturning is a form of woodwork that involves shaping and cutting wood using a lathe which is a machine that spins a piece of wood while tools are used to shape it. The lathe holds the piece of wood securely in place by having a live end which spins and a tailstock end which helps to support it, allowing the turner to cut the wood using a variety of hand-held tools such as chisels and gouges. The basic ones are roughing gouge, a skew chisel, and a parting tool.

Woodturning can create a wide range of items, from small items such as pens and bowls and keyrings, to larger pieces such as lamps and vases.

Some facts about woodturning include: Woodturning has been around for centuries, with evidence of lathes dating back to ancient Egypt and Rome, Woodturning is a versatile craft that can be done by people of all ages and skill levels, from beginners to professionals.

Why not give it a go?

BY ELIAS B



## ST ALBANS GANG SHOW

**There is a special event happening early in February. I am sure some have already heard about it: it is the St Albans Gang Show. Some of our students at Verulam are in this show including Joe B and Sam M.**

I am encouraging you to get some tickets for the show because we they have been working hard all winter and it will be a good laugh so get tickets now, they are selling out quickly.

The shows will be all week from Tuesday 7th to Saturday 11th February. We at Gang Show wish for you to come along this year so we can share all the wonderful things we have been working on. And if you are a scout and are going to be 11 next year maybe you can sign up next time and have a good laugh in the show.

BY JOSEPH B



## UNDER WATER HOCKEY

BY SEBASTIAN S

**Underwater hockey, also known as 'octopush', is a sport played by two teams of six players who compete to move a puck across the bottom of a swimming pool using small sticks.**

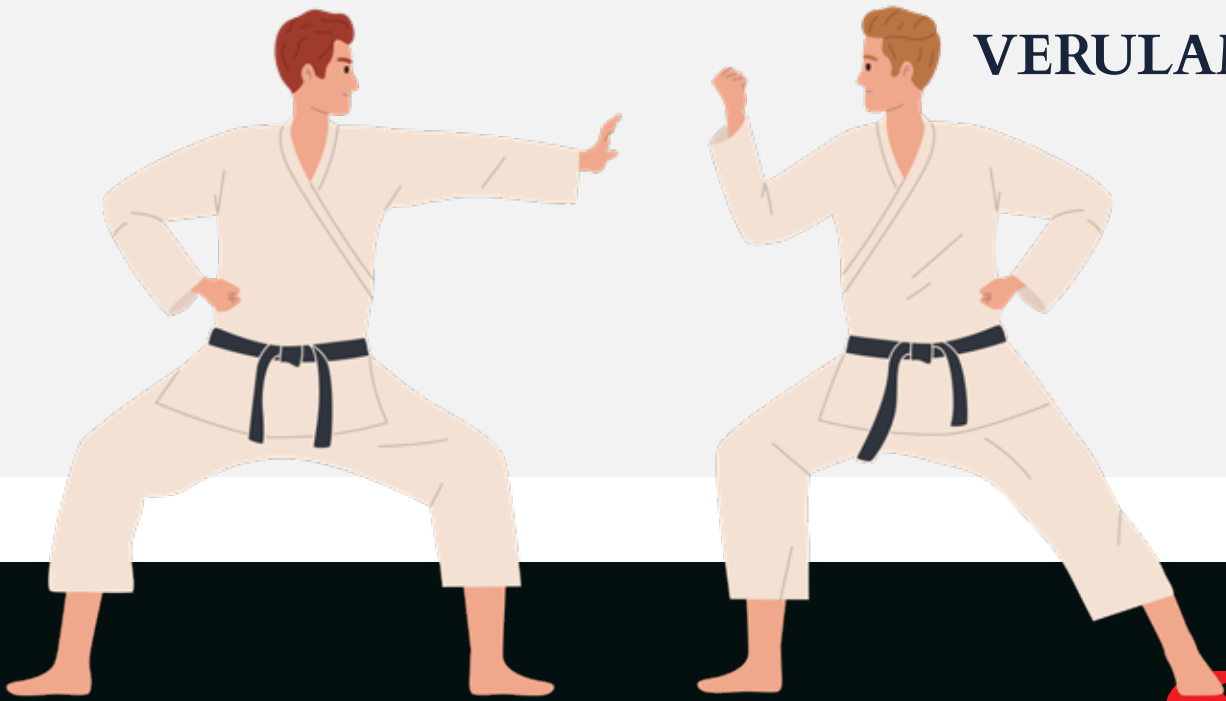
The game is played in a pool that is typically between 25 and 33 metres in length, and the depth of the pool ranges from 1.5 to 3 metres. The objective of the game is to score goals by propelling the puck into the opponent's goal using the sticks. Players must hold their breath and use a combination of swimming and diving to move around the pool and manoeuvre the puck. The game is played in two halves, each lasting 15 minutes, with a break in between.

A few years ago, I started playing for the SASAC (Saint Albans Sub-Aqua Club) and now play for an hour every week. We recently played against the Bedfordshire County team and managed to secure a 13-1 victory, which we were very proud of.

One of the unique aspects of the sport is the use of snorkelling gear, including fins, a mask and a snorkel. This gear allows players to stay underwater for longer periods, making for a dynamic and fast-paced game. Due to its rapid nature, it also provides a great cardiovascular workout and improves strength, endurance, and flexibility.







# MY KARATE JOURNEY

BY SAM S

空手道

**From as far back as I can remember, my dad has always been obsessed with martial arts. So it was no surprise that he wanted to find something along those lines for me to do. I remember we went from place to place trying to find what best suited me. I went to a few different sports centres checking out different martial arts, until eventually, we found ourselves at karate. I signed up and loved it immediately.**

My dad, who got extremely bored watching me for an hour every week eventually signed up too. Around six years later I earned my black belt. And my father had become more interested in the sport, even taking me to Ireland to take a seminar with one of the top karatekas in the world, Rick Hotton. I remember him being extremely short but still equally

as scary. I absolutely loved the trip and learned a lot.

In addition to me and my father, my mum also earned her black belt with me in April 2022. So, my family isn't exactly like any other. I always find myself getting lectured on how to be more flexible, or how I'm not punching properly, or where the nunchucks are.

But overall I thoroughly enjoy the sport and I'm competing in March this year. I hope that I can win with minimal injuries! My karate journey has been fun and the people in the community are great. I would highly recommend joining a local dojo.



# CREATIVE WRITING



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# BY ITS COVER

BY DANIEL I

**I closed my eyes, my breath in snippets as I did so, sweating profusely, arms bleeding... It was maybe a few seconds or minutes or hours perhaps, but soon, I opened them to find myself in a strange room containing large shelves stocked with books. I was dressed in warm white robes, and my arms which had been previously soaked in blood were now whole. I looked up, perplexed and slightly frightened. Had I been kidnapped and transported to a new chamber? But then why were my arms healed?**

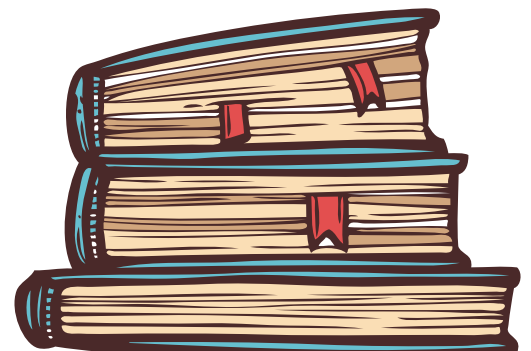
My head spinning, I turned to see a flight of stairs, descending to more shelves below, and ascending to a strange wooden door with an emblem: a circle above an infinity symbol, both dark and bold and although I was sure I'd never seen the symbol before, I recognised it somehow. What was happening to me?

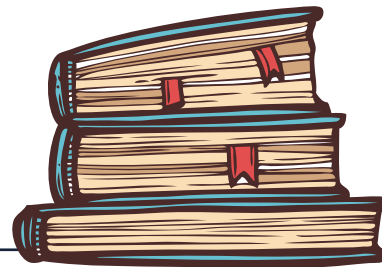
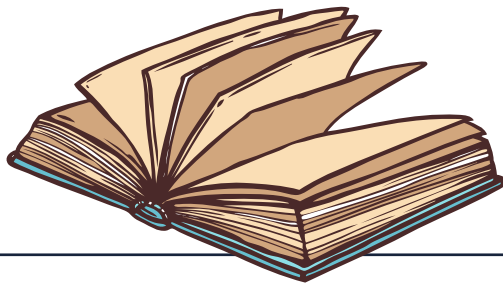
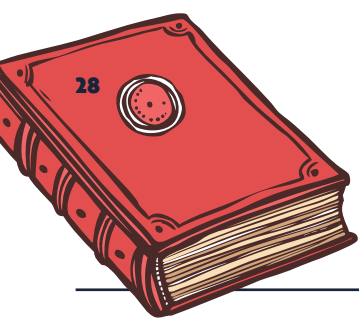
With that question came an abrupt rush of anger and curiosity. So, what if I'd been taken? No one had the right to imprison me with no answers. Coming to a decision, I strolled across the red carpet, soft and luxurious under my feet, and I realised my shoes had also been stolen from me. Ignoring this, I continued strolling until I reached the start of the stairs. I looked up. The stairs spiralled, climbing up to the wooden door, and I paused. I began to think whether this was some kind of ploy to give me false hope. Perhaps behind the door, poised and armed were dozens of soldiers, grinning maliciously, awaiting my escape. The moment I opened it, would I be ambushed? I answered my own question by taking the stairs. If they'd wanted to mock me, they would have come up - or down, jeering and sneering at me; I had been captured and they would've loved to celebrate. Other than that, I had an urge to open that door. Behind it was

some sort of answer, a truth to my questions. Yet I had my doubts; what if they were awaiting my arrival? What if they had become smarter? Those questions still swam in my mind; however, they were going to have to wait. I had reached the door.

Upon closer inspection, the door looked old and rotten, yet sturdy and strong. The bronze doorknob was chipped away from finger marks all over it, but although it looked ancient, it was still securely bolted in place. My eyes lingered on the symbol on the door alone. Why did it reach out to me? Where had I seen it before? My fingers brushed over the door, rough like rocks and slightly dirty, before they reached the doorknob. I clasped it, steeling myself for whatever creature was about to rush out at me. My legs, brown and hard, planted themselves into the ground. My hands were balled into fists and almond eyes narrowed. But before I could open the door, it pulled backwards and I was forced to let go as a man in similar robes stepped out from within the room beyond.

I stumbled backwards, and if not for the man's strong grasp I would've fallen. The man pulled me back, his grip tight but gentle simultaneously. 'Thank you.' I gasped, studying the man. He nodded, and I noticed stacks of leather bound books in his other hand. I offered to assist him but he said, 'Come with me.'





Usually, whoever had ordered me like that was inviting a fist in the stomach, then he added, 'Time is of the essence Kamel.' Arching an eyebrow, I followed along, and he led me down to my landing spot.

'Who-' I began.

'Not yet.' He interrupted.  
'But-'

'The more you talk, the more time we waste!' He snapped briskly, then kindly: 'you can trust me.'

It was strange, but I did. The man was tall, slightly thin with a clean-shaved beard. His hair, as dark as his eyes, neatly fell over them, almost like a curtain. It was a contrast to his snowy white skin. I didn't know his name, so I simply called him 'The Librarian.'

At last, we reached the end of the stairs and he strolled across the corridor, swerving between bookshelves and several antique objects which I'd previously missed upon waking in here.

Finally, The Librarian stopped at the edge of a long wooden table, and he rested the books onto it. As the books slammed onto the table, I realised that they made no noise. I was shocked. A place that had no sound. The Librarian seemed unperturbed as he rapidly began selecting books and strolling over to bookshelves. He used a ladder to reach the top and fixed the books into the missing spaces. Silence billowed; I watched, mesmerised as the man continued to place books into the vacant spaces, skilled at his work. Not once did he say anything, not until he had finished with the books did he turn to me. Close to, I saw the kindness and benign, warming look in his eyes.

'Welcome, Kamel. How may I be of assistance?' He asked softly.

I blinked, letting out the air from my lungs and stuttered, 'Um... Well, I, I'm confused- I-'

'Naturally.' He agreed, nodding, and smiling. His voice was a contrast to the rest of him; it sounded croaky like a frog, like one who was tired of life...

'Let's start with this- Where am I, and who are you?' I asked warily.

'Which would you like me to start with?' He enquired, the corners of his mouth tugging actively.

I didn't smile; how was one capable of joking at this time? 'Okay.' I retorted. Looking around at the impressive array of books (My mind had now concluded that I had indeed found myself in a Library of some sort),

'Where am I?'

The Librarian spread his arms wide, gesturing to the chamber. 'This,' He said loudly, 'is the Mongols Library, containing every book that has ever been written, and every book that will be written- in every sense.'

'What do you mean by that- "in every sense"?' I enquired intently. 'The Library has several biographies; books detailing everything a particular person has ever done and will ever do. From what they had for breakfast ten years ago, to how and when they are going to die.' He finished grimly.

Shivers were sent down my spine and I felt nervous. My stomach somersaulted but my food held. 'So then...who are you?' I asked tentatively.

'My name is Isaiah, and I am the latest in a long line of Librarians taking care of the Library.' He explained calmly.

'Latest?'

He nodded. 'I am not the first, nor will I be the last Librarian.'

At this his eyes turned to me, almost boring into me, and unsteadily I murmured,

'Am I...am I the new Librarian?'

Even though I was horrified, it made sense...why we were dressed similarly and why I was here.

Isaiah chuckled. 'No...You're a Reader, not a Librarian. Readers visit the Library constantly either intentionally or unintentionally.' He added to my questioning look.

'So, I'm not the newest Librarian.' I sighed with relief. He shook his head. 'Then...why am I here?'

Isaiah looked questionable, deep in thought, then he shrugged. 'That should be simple, Kamel. You were brought here to read a book.'

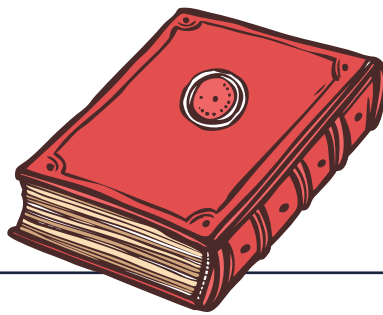
I rolled my eyes. 'Obviously...but do you know how I got here?'

Once more he reverted to that thoughtful state. 'Well,' He said slowly, 'you could be in a situation beyond your control, involving a physical assault on your body-'

The image of my arms, weak and mutilated, blood streaming visibly down their skin flashed before my eyes and I flinched.







'-Or', he continued, oblivious to my thriving discomfort, 'Or, you may have been sent here because you were asleep. Either way, I see no difference. You're here- That's what's important.' I took note of that. 'How did you know my name?' At this The Librarian - Isaiah - stopped. He looked curiously at me, 'Because you told me once, Kamel. Have you forgotten already?'

Arching my eyebrows, moving closer, I asked quietly, 'What do you mean? This is the only time I've met you.' But Isaiah shook his head. 'Wrong. You've met me once before, Little Prince.' I gaped. That name...I'd heard it before. Where? Then it hit me. Mother kissed me goodnight...a boy of twelve had smirked at me playfully before departing to his own room...my father, his crown as bright as ever had swept over me in an embrace...my eyes closing only for them to reopen to a giant Hall...a man, tall and handsome, with skin the colour of my snow globe...he and I had read many tales...so trusting was the man. The Librarian had told me his name...Iceayah...the farewell...goodbye, Little Prince.

My flashback came to a stop. I looked up at Isaiah who watched me intently. 'It was you.' I said in a small voice. 'You- you're the man from my dreams.' Isaiah smiled as I rubbed my fingers through my hair. 'All those years...I never remembered...but you did.' He nodded. I gulped.

'Is-is this a dream?'

The man from my childhood chuckled. 'Yes and no.'

'How? How could it be both?' I breathed.

He did not elaborate. I forced myself to be calm. 'Why did you remember my name?'

'I can recall all who've visited the Library in my time.' He replied nonchalantly.

I gazed at him admiringly. What I wouldn't give to be in such a calm state. I focused. If I'd been sent here, then this place must have had answers for me.

'You said that every book is here and is available for people to read?' Isaiah nodded slowly.

'Is there a book about my life?' I asked.

'There is a book about everyone's life, fictional and non-fictional, born and unborn.' He said placidly.

'Can I see mine?'

Isaiah studied me, his eyes darting wildly, finally coming to an option, he nodded. 'If you're to read your life story, we must be swift. Your time here is short.' He turned and ushered me to follow him. As he turned a corner and I tagged along, my stomach churning, I chewed on his words. Your time here is short. I didn't like the sound of that.

The Librarian led me to a particular section of the Library, with a long wooden ladder with wheels resting on a vast shelf. He climbed it and began skimming the middle section of the shelf. I was certain that there was a gathering of dust and dirt from lack of use, however I couldn't be sure. Isaiah hovered over a particular part,

muttered to himself, then retrieved something, retreating from the ladder onto the ground below. He passed me a book - leather bound and new. I took it.

The book was quite large, and I opened it to see tables of content. 'Hmm...' I murmured sceptically, as I rubbed my finger over the final chapter of my life labelled 'BURNING STAR'. It began at page 502. 'Is this...?' I began.

'This book contains all that you have done and ever will do while alive.' 'Even my form of death?' I asked anxiously. Isaiah nodded. 'Would you like to read it?' He asked, studying me intently. The truth was, I didn't know. Did I want to read it?

'If I don't,' I started slowly, 'Will I ever get to read it again?'

A nod. 'It's your story, Kamel.'

My eyebrows knitted in a puzzling look. 'You said my time here is short.' Isaiah seemed unperturbed by this. He remained still and relaxed.

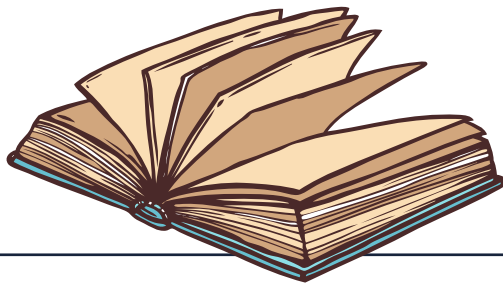
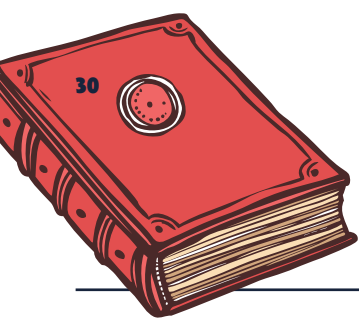
Should I read my book? My life story. What if I didn't like what I read? My head began to swim, and I looked everywhere but the book, unsure whether I could stand it. Isaiah took note of my indecision.

'Perhaps I should give you time to decide what you want to do.' He encouragingly suggested.

I nodded in agreement. 'But what will you be doing in the meantime?' I began wondering whether he had books to sort out.

'The Library is not only a hive for information, but a tunnel as well. Many different versions of the Library exist in many different places and time





periods. As we speak, miscellaneous people have arrived and they must be attended to.' He turned, walking away as he did so. 'I shall return soon to escort and assist you, but then you must be on your way.' He finished smoothly and briskly.

The strange thing was that although I was confused as to why I had woken up here, I didn't want to leave - not soon anyway.

'Any more questions?' Isaiah invited. I feigned thinking at that moment, then asked, 'Who was the first or original Librarian?'

Isaiah looked lost in his thoughts, then answered, 'Countless Librarians have come and gone before my time, and although I have no record, I am fairly sure there was an Isaiah in my place before me. I was not the first and will certainly not be the last.' That didn't answer my question, but I moved on. 'Who created this place?' 'I am sorry, Kamel, but that is undisclosed information. However, I can tell you that the Library has been here for centuries - perhaps a millennia - and will be here for a millennia more until it is time to go. Final question?'

Had he known that I had a final question? Steeling myself for disappointment, I asked, 'Is there a way out of the Library? Is there a world beyond?'

For the first time since seeing him, the caretaker of the magnificent place looked sorrowful and said, his voice slightly chilling now, 'Yes. There is a world beyond the Library, but all Readers who awaken here are forbidden to see it. I think that is enough for now.' He swiftly glided along the carpet, disappearing past a bookshelf. Suddenly, there was a great burst of brilliant glow, orange and

blue, sounds of rapid fire I'd heard the Gunners use before, then it dimmed down and died.

Left alone to the comfort of my life I looked down at the book. In my hands, it was as cold as snow, but smelled strangely of wine and... cheese? I wanted to sit down, and when I looked round, where there had only been piles of books previously, a table and chair was now placed in front of them. I strolled over to them, my book's scent wavering and strengthening in the air. I sat down on the soft, leather chair, gingerly placing the book on the brown, wooden, clearly polished table. I sighed and focused on the book which detailed all my actions and thoughts in life; my successes and my failures; my life. Did I dare read it? If I did, would I like all the things I read?

A burning arose in my chest. Had I somehow walked into a trap? Had Isaiah deliberately agreed to my knowing of my future simply to throw me off balance? Was he another one of their agents? But something prevented me from pursuing that thought. Albeit I'd only just met the man, there was a soft and gentle nature about him that just couldn't make him my enemy. That didn't mean he was much help, either- he'd abandoned me for other "Readers", and he'd answered my questions ambiguously.

The book stared at me passively, motionless, yet powerful and I arrived at a decision: I opened the book and began to read.

Isaiah returned maybe two or three hours later. I didn't know; time was a strange concept in this world. What could've been a day for me could've been an hour for him. But I didn't care. I was stood up, pacing around the

room unsteadily, my green eyes drooping with bags; my brown hair over them, and for the first time the robes felt like an abomination as they glued to my skin. My composure had taken flight.

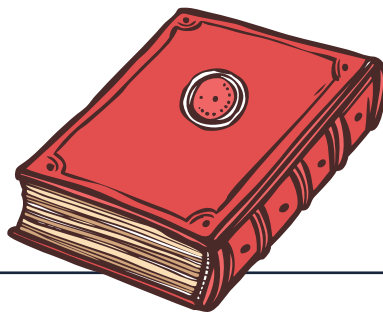
Isaiah had two books in his right hand, but unlike the first time I met him, The Librarian's left hand was occupied. He was carrying a scale, like those weights I'd seen before in court, although unlike those ones, "Lady Justice" didn't carry them. Instead, an unidentifiable figure, with a face that seemed moulded from clay, held the weights which looked like a burden for it; it was crouched as if the weights were burdensome.

Upon seeing me, Isaiah paused, as serene and kind as ever. He looked down at the table. There, closed and neat was my book, my life story. He dropped his objects delicately, almost effortlessly onto the table. 'You read the book?' He asked calmly, his eyes still upon it. 'Yes.' I answered brusquely. 'How did you find it?'

I didn't answer; I continued to pace up and down in my trance. Only then did he look up. He understood I was troubled but before asking about my wellbeing, he attended to the book like I knew he would.

I knew everything - at least about my actions. I stopped and looked up as he returned my book. 'Did you ever read it?' I asked, slightly angry, forcing myself not to yell and bawl. Isaiah retreated from the ladder. He shook his head. 'I am bound to only books of tales. I am not allowed to read the realities of others - neither are you unless absolutely necessary.'

I nodded. I knew that was going to be his response; I'd read it. And I didn't bother asking about what he meant by



“absolutely necessary.” I knew what that was as well. I was going to - meant to - find out about it when I visited the Library again - for the final time. But unlike next time... I shifted my focus to the room. Isaiah seemed to be studying the books he'd brought in. 'I know all the things I'm going to do, Isaiah, all the things written...'

At this, The Librarian tore his gaze away from the books. 'The way you say it makes it sound like they're shameful things.' 'They are shameful!' I bellowed, betraying fury. My chest rose and fell. 'Sure, I do some good things...but the things after... Those are horrible, terrible things! How could my destiny have wound up so wayward?' Isaiah pursed his lips. 'So, they really are terrible?'

I ignored his attempt at humour. Everything before I read the book had been so simple - so easy. But now... I looked up at him with pleading eyes. Don't say it. I thought desperately. Don't say it.

'I'm sorry, Kamel.' He paused. 'But if you don't like the way the book is planned out...'

'...I could always take a different path. I know. It was written in the book.' I said despairingly. 'But here's the part where I reject it and act like a hero...I have to keep going on this path until the very end.' Oh the torture, the humiliation.

'What do you want to do?' He asked. I rounded on him. 'It doesn't matter what I want to do, it has to happen! I know that I'll come back to this Library...this place...once by accident, another time unintentionally, and again by my own free will. Then there will be the last time...' I stood up. It was almost time to go, but I had another few questions.

'Isaiah?'

'Yes, Kamel?'

'When I got here, I saw a door with a strange symbol on it- a circle above an infinity symbol emblamed on it. What is beyond the door?' I asked. I truly had no idea what he was going to say, for that answer had not been detailed anywhere in the book. I waited for Isaiah's answer.

Isaiah did not answer. He did not move for several seconds, and resembled the statue he had brought in. Then his lips parted and if I'd not been searching the lined face, I would have thought the voice came from out of nowhere.

'It's time for you to go.' He murmured, suddenly looking up.

My heart fell. It couldn't be time. Not yet... But as I joined him to look up at the ceiling, realisation and wonderment passed through me. It was time to go.

Something peculiar was happening to the ceiling. It resembled space, with glittering stars in the purple-and-blue strewn sky that soared and twisted in a graceful flick. Then the ceiling became motion: almost as if it was a river, and a stone had skipped into it; a single star produced a wavering effect rippling the transfixing sight. Space coming to life; echoing that stone-sunk movement, I tore my gaze away, costing an effort as I turned to Isaiah.

'Please.' I gulped, hands clasped together, now on my knees. A sensation seemed to be taking over me, almost as if I was becoming a disembodied thought; I couldn't feel a thing, and as I looked down, my skin seemed to be disappearing. 'Isaiah-' I gasped, clutching his robes.

'It's okay, Kamel.' He said soothingly, gently prising my fading hands off his robes. 'It's going to be okay.' 'But the door.' I rasped, my eyes heavy with sleep. How I could even have been influenced by exhaustion... 'The door remains a mystery until the moment. Everything will work out. Trust me.' He said serenely. And the strange thing was that I did, and even as I closed my eyes with the full knowledge I was never going to see the man again, that I was going to regret my existence and that I was going to be worse than dead later, I managed a smile. Isaiah was right. Everything was going to be alright. My life had said so.

There was darkness; I was nothing. Isaiah and the Library had gone. I only knew that I was nothing because I could think. Soon with thought came the realisation of touch and feeling and the pain in my arms. Then there was that light, shining bright and awaiting me.

And the light felt warm.

Oh, so warm...



# SCHOOL TRIPS



## BRITISH MUSEUM



BY TOM W

**On 19th January Year 8 went on a trip to the British museum for curriculum enrichment day. The museum was very large and it was amazing to look around and see all the ancient artefacts and treasures.**

There were so many exhibits spanning across the museum. My favourite bit

was the Chinese jewellery section with lots of jade objects. One of the most famous objects in the museum is the Rosetta Stone. It was used to translate hieroglyphics and understand what they meant from ancient Egypt. But it wasn't in the museum as it was loaned somewhere else.

After we looked around for a bit we sat down in the cafe and ate our packed lunches whilst discussing what we saw and what we wanted to see. Some good exhibits were the Roman history exhibit which included old shields and coins and the African exhibit which displayed a range of interesting objects.

## THE MATHS INSPIRATION SHOW

BY ROBERT E

**The maths inspiration show was an incredible experience, going into central London and walking down Fleet street, we saw many incredible sites before even arriving at the theatre for the event.**

The show itself was amazing and showed us so many ways that maths is involved with the real world, from crowd behaviour to juggling, we also had three interesting speakers.

The first speaker discussed crowd behaviour: how fast areas can be evacuated and how relevant this is too the real world, which proved very

interesting as you explore ideas such as maximum flow and the use of large scale simulations in mathematics. The second discussed maths in an engineering context talking about arches in football stadiums and other major structures.

The third took an interesting turn, choosing to talk about juggling and showing us the near infinite complexities of maths and we invented a juggling trick that had never been done before. All in all, it was a very interesting day.

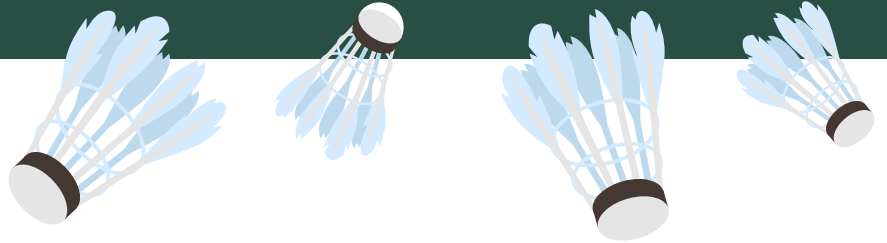






# SPORTS ROUNDUP

## BADMINTON BY FINN T



**This past November, Verulam hosted a badminton tournament for schools within the local area of St Albans.**

Eight schools participated in the event, with teams such as Sandringham and Samuel Ryder providing some stiff competition. The winner of each bracket of four would earn a place in the county championship on the 9th of December, as well as a place in the final of this tournament. Verulam went

on to win their bracket and then the tournament with a team of two Year 10s and three Year 11s.

The Verulam team then proceeded onto the county championship, with the top eight schools in Hertfordshire, competing in a similar tournament. The tournament took the same format as previously, and despite Verulam winning their first 2 matches by wide margins, the third match was far closer and came down to the last

point. However they did eventually progress onto the final, where they had a tough match up against Watford Grammar School for Boys.

After taking a 1-0 lead in the match, thanks to the dominance of their captain, the Verulam team unfortunately lost the next three games and the match, but came second in the county which was an incredible achievement.

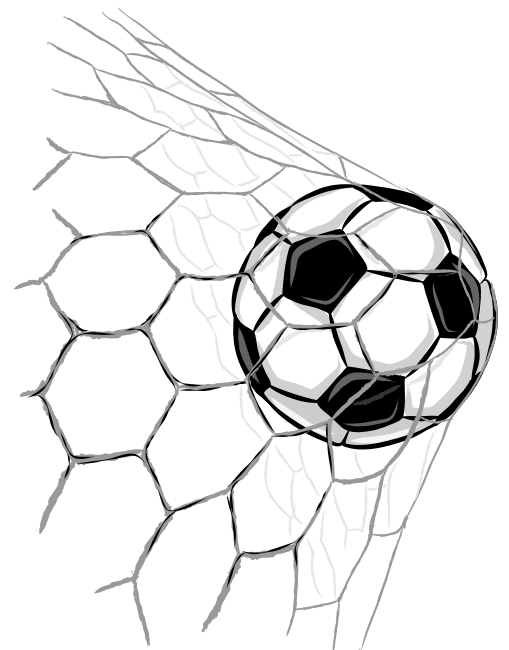
## FOOTBALL BY BENJIM

**Whether it's playing in the field or playing against another school, school football is the greatest enjoyment in school. This is because football has the experience of playing with your friends, doing something competitive and also good exercise.**

The memories made from playing football can last for a lifetime. About 50% of students play football in the playground regularly and it can often

dominate the area which is why it is important to keep the games smaller and controlled. This is also the reason why the MUGA has been a great instillation as it provides borders for the game, is not muddy as to ruin uniform and is accessible by everyone.

If you are interested in football and want to get started as a regular exercise or as a way to spend time then school football is perfect for you as it is relaxed, a range of levels and very very enjoyable.



# SPORTS ROUNDUP

## CROSS COUNTRY

BY JOSHUA S

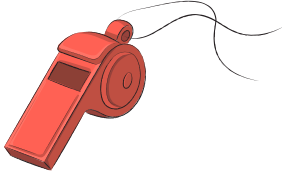
**It was a long and hard cross-country season where many races took place each month for school and club. I ran league matches for school every week against other schools in the district and participated in the District XC finals coming 2nd in my year group.**

At the end of the cross-country season, there is the county schools' race where the top eight qualify to represent Herts in the national school's cross-country race. The race was 4km and I came 4th in the end and qualified to represent Hertfordshire.

The national school's race was down in Kent and there were over 200 participants from across the country in each race which made the start very hectic. Unfortunately, Hertfordshire was given the middle pen at the start line which meant as I was running towards the first bend and the other Herts runners got squashed from either side of us and we all got pushed to near the back of the pack. After trying to get as high up as possible throughout the race I managed to finish the top half. Although this was still good, I felt I could have finished higher if it was not for the start.



# YEAR 9 FOOTBALL



**This year the year 9 football team has seen great success so far, currently in round seven of the National Cup.**

As a member of the team, the spirit within us is so far unmatched and by all means we see ourselves going all the way. Although we suffered our first loss this season in our last game in the county cup, we faced a strong Aldenham side currently in the semi-finals of the elite national cup; which should reignite our desire to reach the later stages of the National Cup.

Throughout our run in both cups, we have had a threatening attack, a more than stable defence and a fine combination of that in the middle. Success in school has fuelled our success and has helped our game on the pitch.

With the next round approaching, I'm thoroughly looking forward to the experience and hope to advance onto even bigger stages in the competition.

**BY ROMANT**

# SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

**At Verulam school I have been chosen to play for the school football team. My time being in this team has been very fun as we are doing very well this year only losing one game and we are in round seven of the National Cup and hoping to win it this year.**

It is not just fun because we are doing well, it is fun because Mr Errington is putting in lots of effort trying to organise games and even when games are cancelled he quickly reschedules them.

Overall, my time at the Verulam school football team has been very enjoyable due to having an amazing teacher helping and a good environment with teammates and parents cheering you on, even if you are having a bad game, which is very motivating and kind.

Finally, I think that joining the school team was a great experience and good decision and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time.

**BY JACK D**



# CLUBS & SOCIETIES



CLUB NAME	SUITABLE FOR	LOCATION	DAY	TIME
<b>DRAMA</b>	Years 7-9	Drama Studio	Monday	3:15 - 4:15pm
<b>DRAMA MASTERCLASS</b>	All	Drama Studio	Friday	3:15pm - 4:30pm
<b>ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB</b>	Years 10-11	A2	Monday	3:15pm - 4:30pm
<b>BADMINTON CLUB</b>	Years 7-9	Sports hall	Monday	After school
<b>BASKETBALL CLUB</b>	Years 7-9	Sports hall	Wednesday	After school
<b>CHINESE AND MANDARIN CLUB</b>	Years 7 & 8	A3	Tuesday	Lower Lunch
<b>MANDARIN PRACTISE</b>	Years 9-13	A3	Friday	Upper lunch
<b>CODING CLUB</b>	Years 9-13	LRC	Friday	Upper lunch
<b>DEBATE CLUB</b>	Open to all	Room 2	Wednesday	3:15pm - 4:15pm
<b>HPQ QUALIFICATION</b>	Year 10 only	Room 4	Wednesday	3:10pm - 4:10pm
<b>SOCIAL SCIENCE CLUB</b>	Years 7 & 8	21	Friday	Lower Lunch
<b>TABLE TENNIS CLUB</b>	All	Sports hall	Tuesday	After school
<b>VERULAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY</b>	Years 9-13	Room 30	Wednesday	Upper lunch
<b>VERULAM POLITICS SOCIETY</b>	Years 9-13	Room 32	Wednesday	Upper lunch
<b>WARHAMMER CLUB</b>	All	Room 31	Thursday	3:10pm - 4pm



# DAILY ISLAMIC PRAYER

**MONDAY - THURSDAY**

**Room 37 - 13:45-14:00**

**Please note: Friday Prayers  
are held in the Drama Studio**



#InclusiveForLife

# Happy As I Am

A group for LGBT+ students and their friends to socialise and meet other LGBT+ students in a safe and supportive environment.



VERULAM  
PRIDE

[pride@verulam.herts.sch.uk](mailto:pride@verulam.herts.sch.uk)

For details on where and when “Happy As I Am” is held, or if you want to discuss any LGBT+ issues such as:

- homophobia,
- support for your friends,
- support for a family member or
- support for yourself

Contact the email address below or speak to Mr Knowles.

# Working together to keep children safe



VERULAM  
SCHOOL

The safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibility and schools have a duty to ensure that they promote the safety and welfare of children.

## If you have a concern

If you have concerns about the safety or well-being of any child or have concerns about a child, group of children or family that might be vulnerable to radicalisation or violent extremism, please speak immediately to the Headteacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or any of our Safeguarding Team. Your concerns will be treated in the strictest confidence.

## Contact

**Visitors please email**  
dsl@verulam.herts.sch.uk

**Verulam Staff**  
Record on CPOMS

**Students**  
Contact your Form Tutor or Head of Year or email:  
concern@verulam.herts.sch.uk

**Local Authority Designated Officer LADO**  
Tel: 01992 555420  
0300 1234 043

## Our Safeguarding Team



**Mr Flack**  
Designated Senior Lead  
Location: Deputy Head office by Room 8



**Miss Richardson**  
Location: Headteacher office behind reception



**Mr MacKenzie**  
Assistant Headteacher  
Location: office next to VLR in room 27



**Miss Perry**  
Assistant Headteacher  
Location: AHT Office MFL corridor



**Mr Base**  
Director of Sixth Form  
Location: Sixth Form Office



**Ms Moss**  
Student Wellbeing Manager  
Location: Office in the first floor of the Inclusion Hub



**Mr Halsall**  
KS3 Head of Year  
Location: KS3 Head of Year office on the English corridor



**Ms Morrison**  
Safeguarding Assistant  
Location: First floor of the Inclusion Hub

# VERULAMVOX

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