

# Newsletter

Spring Term | Issue 5



VERULAM  
SCHOOL



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# Welcome from the Headteacher

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**Dear Parents/Carers,**

**Welcome to our Spring newsletter. So much has taken place this term! Our students have worked collaboratively to raise over £1700 for the Sponsored Read and have been rewarded for their excellent behaviour and attendance with the first Gold, Silver and Bronze trips!**

In addition, I am delighted to share the details of our first HPQ cohort in this edition - where Year 10 pupils researched, analysed and presented on a range of topics, in presentation in front of parents and their peers, alongside a 2000 word essay. The efforts of these student shows Verulam at its best and I am incredibly proud of their efforts.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and wish you all a wonderful Easter break.

Best wishes,

*Miss Richardson*

**Miss Richardson  
Headteacher**

## Work Shadowing Day

Throughout their time at Verulam, students are involved in a variety of career-related opportunities. These help them to make decisions and manage transitions as they progress through the Key Stages and onto post-GCSE options. Currently the majority select A-Level courses at Verulam followed by a University course.

Apprenticeships are also becoming an increasingly popular option. To bring post-school education and the world of work into focus, all Year 8 students took part in a Work Shadowing Day on Friday 20th January 2023. The Year 8 Work Shadowing Day involved students spending a day at a known workplace. This is usually with a parent/carer, a close family member or a close family friend. The aims of the day included: to help students to understand the role of different employees in an organisation, shadow the routines involved, reflect on their strengths in relation to work, communicate confidently with their peers and adults and relate future job

opportunities to their personal qualifications and skills. During the day students took time to observe, shadow and speak with both employers and employees.

A few students, for a variety of reasons, were unable to access a suitable venue for their shadowing so the school provided a full day of online and live activities. This included interactive interviews with a Civil Engineer, an academy Deputy Leader and a Site Manager.

At the close of the day all students completed an online feedback form in which students rated their day out of 10 for how enjoyable it was and whether it was a good use of a school day. The average scores from the whole year were 8.3 and 9.1 respectively. We are obviously delighted with this confirmation and look forward to running our 3rd annual Year 8 Work Shadowing day next January.

**By: Mr Hall**

## Alumnus of the Month

John Sparrow is our Verulam School Alumnus of the Month for January 2023. John Sparrow left Verulam School (what was then St Albans Grammar School for Boys) in July 1966 and is now a self-employed automotive consultant.

To find out more - [click here](#).





## Engaging Minds

The Spring Term saw the second half of our weekly lectures by leaders in their fields ranging from Law, Medicine, Politics, Journalism, Social Media, Social Sciences and Education. This term it was a pleasure to welcome back two successful alumni to share their post Verulam journey.

Highlights this term were @christopherhope Associate Editor @Telegraph for getting into journalism, breaking the 2009 MPs expenses scandal & his Top Predictions for UK Politics 2023; We followed up from time activities marking Holocaust Memorial Day when we were honoured to have Vera from @Gen2GenUK join Year 12 re-telling her family story from Slovakia to England;

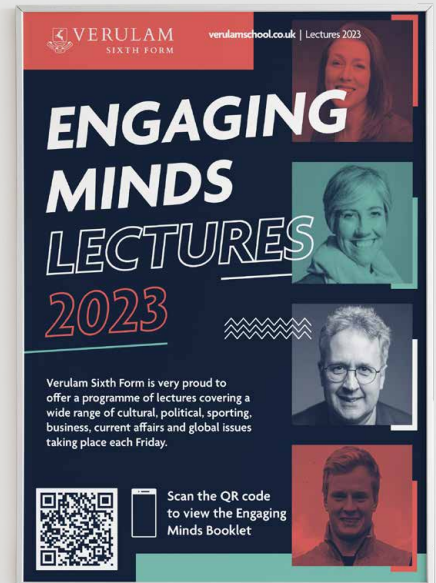
Just before the holidays we welcomed back a Verulam School alumni, Cameron Craig to join our Year 12 reflecting on his time in Sixth Form, onto

@UniOfYork, an apprenticeship @edfenergy placement with @DefenceHQ; In February @libdemdaisy returned with a lecture focussing on the NHS, along with a Q&A with the students;

Deputy Navigating Officer & ex School Captain, Oliver Denton spoke in March on his career in the @RoyalNavy explaining his day to day work on over land and sea; @PeterTatchell returned to Verulam after his last visit in 2014, delivering a thought provoking lecture on his career championing & Human Rights followed by a robust Q&A. We are always on the lookout for more speakers and are currently booking for September 2023.

If you have a contact or could offer a talk yourselves, please contact the school.

By: Mr Base



## Word of the Week

Our Word of the Week initiative has had continued success, helping to improve pupils' vocabulary and literacy. We have issued over 900 house points linked to using the WotW since September! This term, some of the words have included:

- Superfluous
- Loquacious
- Sagacious
- Nostalgic

By: Mr Pettitt

www.verulamschool.co.uk

**WORD OF THE WEEK**

**Superfluous**

(soo-puh-floor-uhs)

**Definition**

Adjective: unnecessary, especially through being more than what is sufficient or required, and/or is no longer needed

**Synonyms**

Surplus      Excessive  
Redundant      Unnecessary

**Sentence**

It is superfluous owning 20 pairs of shoes when I only wear the same 5 pairs.

In Geography: The superfluous water from the canals is drained off by rivers into the coastal lakes.

**Translation**

Written in Bengali:

অনাবশ্যক

**Etymology**

From Latin superfluous, from super- meaning 'over' + fluere meaning 'to flow'

**House Points**

Use the WotW verbally or written as many times as possible this week to receive House Points!

## Curriculum Enrichment Day II

**The second of three Curriculum Enrichment Days this academic year took place on Thursday 19th January, 2023. Its theme was Religious Education. Students across all year groups and key stages took part in a range of activities, workshops and tasks with links to different faiths, representing a range of beliefs from today's contemporary British society.**

Year 7 spent the day working with STEP (The St Albans and Harpenden Christian Education Project). It is a statutory requirement of the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE that through Key Stage 3, schools should undertake an in-depth study of Christianity. Verulam School is proud and lucky to have a strong working relationship with STEP to deliver a strong Christian education to our students. There have even been some follow up visits in classroom sessions to discuss and debate the existence of God.

Many Year 8 students visited The British Museum to partake in a religious artefacts treasure hunt, seeking treasures from all six major world religions – just like Indiana Jones! Students had the opportunity to explore and experience cultures across the

globe from the dawn of human history to the present day. There were also many cross-curricular links to enrich other subject areas, including Art, Geography, History, D&T and Citizenship.

Other Year 8 students remained on site and completed some beautiful pieces of spirited arts, considering the relationship between religion and art. Students used different artistic styles, including Chinese paper lanterns, Buddhist mandalas, Islamic pattern stencils and stained-glass designs.

Verulam is a UCL Beacon School centre for Holocaust Education. Year 9 students received important Holocaust Education on this day in the lead up to Holocaust Memorial Day on Friday 27th January 2023. A challenging but necessary day of staff-led workshops covered the topics Being Human, what was the Holocaust?, Authentic Encounters and Resistance. They also watched a documentary with Holocaust survivor Freddie Knollers. This was further supported by an assembly the following week.

Year 10 were visited by a number of guests speakers for a multifaith panel. Guests from Humanists UK, Mitzvah Day (Judaism), Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism. It was a great opportunity for students to engage with different members from local faith communities. There will be some further works with Mitzvah

Day in the Summer Term. Two external companies presented to Year 11 students in support of their GCSE Religious Studies content and revision. Mitzvah Day spoke about Judaism and the Jewish beliefs concerning social action and justice. Stand Up! Education against Discrimination is an interfaith programme led by facilitators from Jewish and Muslim backgrounds, demonstrating how groups often perceived as oppositional can work together successfully.

Through debunking myths and challenging stereotypes about the communities, young people's critical thinking skills are developed, enabling them to identify and counter discrimination safely and responsibly. Students also had the opportunity to develop their revision skills with a focus on their current GCSE philosophical unit of work about the existence of God and revelation.

A spiritually enriching day was had by all. Year 13 even managed to demonstrate mindfulness by practising yoga.

Namaste.

**By: Miss Nicholls**





## Year 11 Edexcel Awards in Mathematics

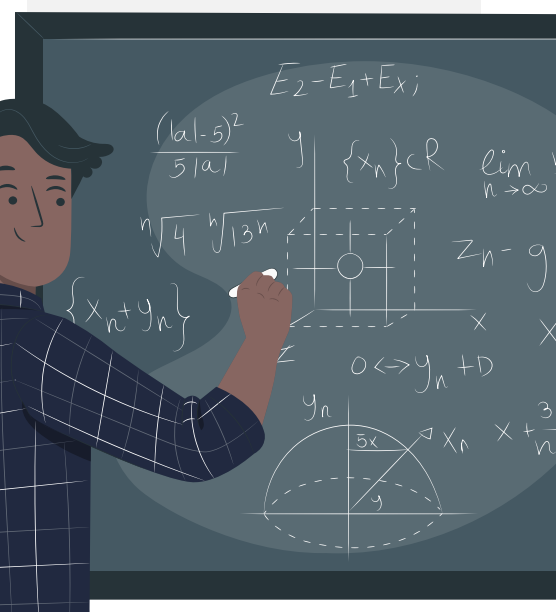
In January all of our year 11 students sat an Edexcel Award in Mathematics.

There were three different awards taken; a level 2 Award in Algebra, a level 3 Award in Algebra or a level 2 Award in Number and Measure.

Our students worked so hard for these Mathematics Qualifications and we were delighted with the overall results. In particular, of the 130 students who sat the Algebra Awards, more than 90% passed!

A huge well done from the Mathematics Department to all Year 11 students!

**By: Mrs Cornmell**



## Gothic Tales

**On Monday 16th January, Year 9 had the opportunity to take part in an in-school event, 'Gothic Tales'.**

The workshop (run by Red Heart Theatre) incorporated the telling of 3 gothic tales from the golden age of gothic horror: The Red Room by H G Wells, The Signalman by Charles Dickens and The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allen Poe. The three pieces were all performed in full, period costume on a Victorian

set, with ingenious, atmospheric lighting and sound effects. The workshop provided a great introduction to the genre for our students who began studying 'Jane Eyre' following the Christmas break.

The Gothic tradition utilises elements such as supernatural encounters, remote locations, complicated family histories, ancient manor houses, dark secrets, and mysteries to create an atmosphere of suspense and terror.

The plot of Jane Eyre includes most of these elements.

Students all thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and teaching staff have all utilised the sessions (thereafter) to effectively recall elements of the gothic, bringing these alive for our classes.

**By: Mrs Mitchell**

## Sixth Form Open Evening

**We were pleased to be back with our first 'live' Into the Sixth Form Evening in 3 years with over 300 people in a packed hall and on the balcony, with standing room only.**

Families were informed by Miss Richardson of the major investments and developments, continuing to improve our Post 16 offer. Whilst Director of Sixth Form, Mr Base outlined our ethos, developing role models in a Sixth

Form that is big enough for academic excellence but small enough to notice and nurture every young person. This message was endorsed by two current Sixth Form parents who advocate the Verulam offer based on their first-hand experience. The evening concluded with a passionate speech by outgoing School Captain, Myles O'Connor.

Following the evening we are pleased to see a jump in the number of applicants, particularly from external students. We are excited to meet them all again for our two-day Induction programme on Wednesday and Thursday 28th/29th June, then in September for the start of their Post 16 Journey.

**By: Mr Base**





## Year 7 News

**Despite this term being much shorter than the Autumn term, Year 7 have packed the term full of events with plenty of news to share with you.**

In January we held our second Curriculum Enrichment Day which was based around the theme of religion to mark several events such as Holocaust Memorial Day. Year 7 attended the annual workshops delivered by STEP who the school has a long-lasting partnership with. The boys attended a series of workshops throughout the day including learning about parables, morals and teaching about Jesus and who he was. It was an important day of learning based around Christianity to enable the boys to explore the beliefs of people that they may or may not share. Year 7 got a lot out of the day and this ended with a Kahoot! Quiz where each form

competed against each other to show who had learned the most from the day.

At the start of the new half term was Feeling Good Week which is a Hertfordshire wide week which raises awareness of mental health within young people. We had a number of events during the week and students were invited to award their favourite staff with shout out cards and a form winner each receiving a Verulam branded Shout Out mug.

This year saw the first of Verulam's very own spelling bee amongst our year 7 and 8 students. At the start of this term all year 7 and 8 students were invited to take part, with the first two rounds taking place in class; students were pre-issued with a bank of cross-circular spellings and learning both the correct spelling and definition

of these terms was incorporated into students' weekly homework. We were overwhelmed with students' interest in this event, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all students who took part, both for their confidence to perform under the pressure of their peers and the time and effort put into revision behind the scenes. In the end we had to award joint winners from both year 7 and 8, as the competition was just too close to call. Congratulations to our winners. We are already excited for next year's competition!

The Year 7 finalists were Ernest, Patrick and Claude from 7H however the overall joint winners were Rishank and Advait both from 7C. Congratulations to them all!

**By: Mr Knowles**



# Holocaust Remembrance Day

At Verulam we are proud to hold the status of a Holocaust Beacon School. Our core values of compassion and inclusion were demonstrated by our Yr 9 pupils on the recent Curriculum Enrichment Day that focused on the Holocaust. A number of Verulam Staff are trained as specialist teachers of the Holocaust and with the support of the Social Sciences Department delivered a day of activities that developed our pupils knowledge of this genocide. The day enabled pupils to understand how small acts of intolerance, ignorance, injustice and prejudice can lead to the atrocities associated with this challenging period in human history.

Our pupils in Yr 9 examined themes such as 'Being Human' studying the stories of the victims, the bystanders, the collaborators and the perpetrators. Through

looking at pictures of a child's toy the boys learned the story of Barney Greenman, how he survived Auschwitz while his wife and child perished. Pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding how religious intolerance can grow within a historical and current context. We also reflect upon how, for many of those who lived, 'surviving survival' was a lifelong challenge.

In the afternoon we came together as a year group to watch the story of Freddie Knoller a remarkable survivor who demonstrated our core value of strength. His strength of character, his resilience and the strength of the relationships that played a part in his survival was inspiration to our pupils.

It is a challenging day for students, Mr Hobbs and the team of teachers who worked with Yr 9 on CE Day felt a deep sense of pride

in the compassion, maturity, depth of knowledge and thirst for understanding that was demonstrated again and again through the course of the day.

By: Ms Hart



**HOLOCAUST  
MEMORIAL  
DAY 27/1**



## Feeling Good Week

**Feeling Good Week is a Hertfordshire-wide event that encourages schools and the wider community to promote children and young people's emotional wellbeing by raising awareness of mental health and showing where support can be accessed within the community.**

In the History Department to raise awareness of this, our dedicated Key Stage 3 students put their creative thinking to the test to create a diorama of their favourite historical event or period. This was a chance to think outside the box a little and express their imagination

outside of their hard work of the history classroom. We had some excellent submissions all round but our winners were the following:

### Year 7

Dev B and Sunny K in 7P

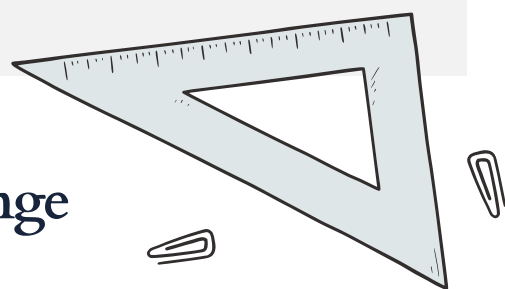
### Year 8

Asher T and Fancis H in 8C

### Year 9

Thomas B in 9Y and Alex P in 9C

**By: Mr Jenkins**



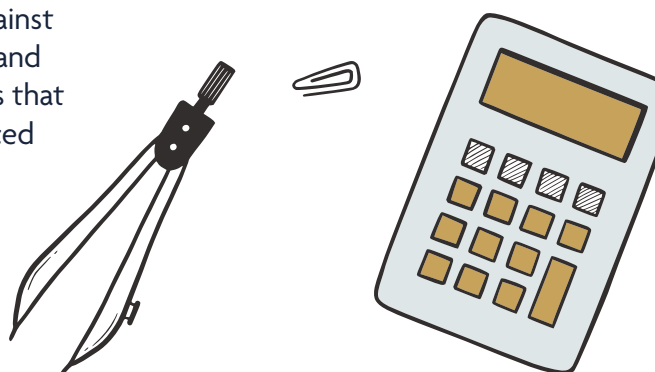
## Year 7 Maths Challenge

**More competition came in February from the Maths faculty in the shape of the Year 7 Herts for Learning Group Challenge.**

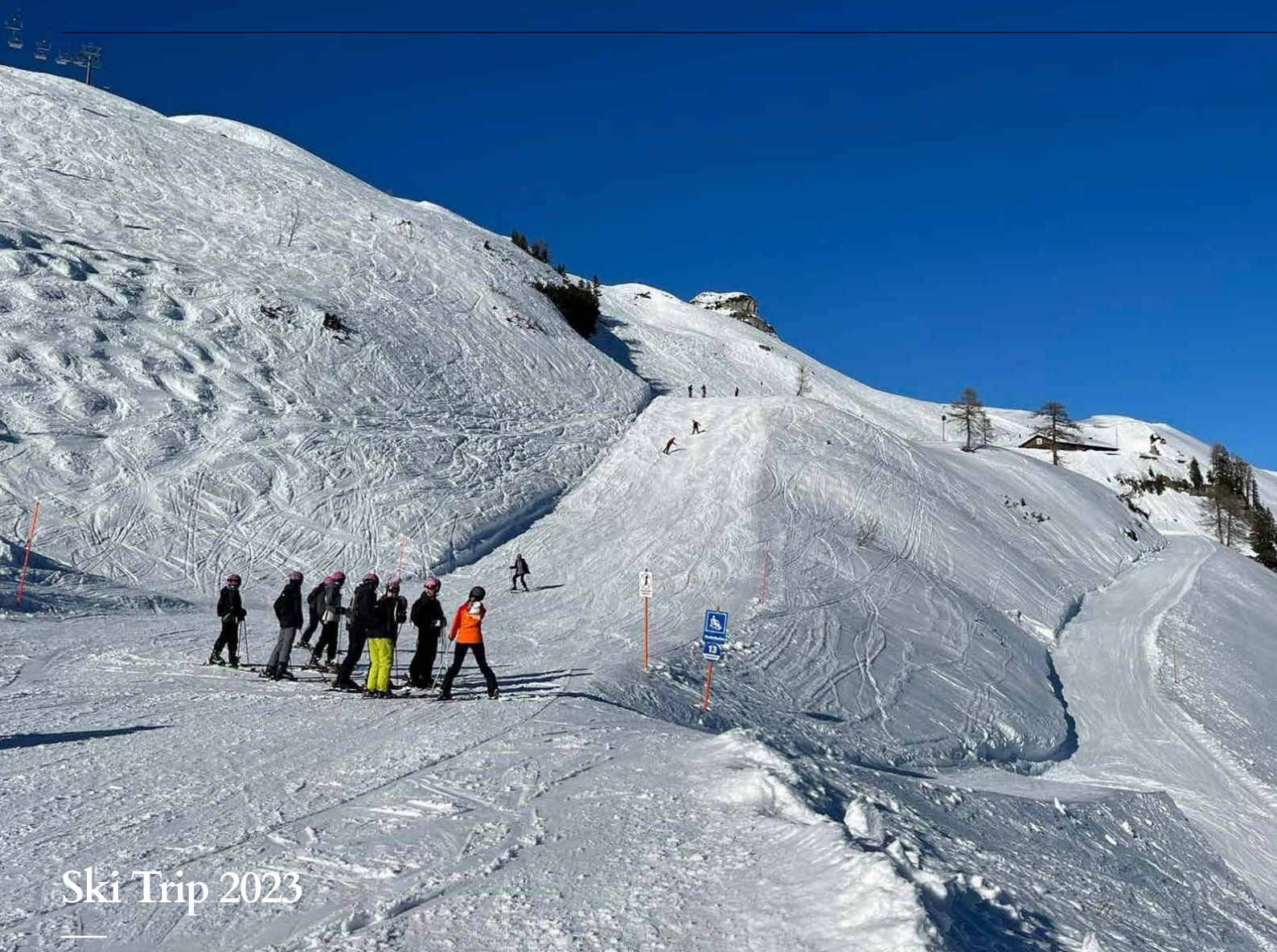
Two teams of boys competed in four rounds of challenges against other schools in the county and out of the twenty-five teams that took part our boys were placed 6th and 9th place which was an amazing result.

Congratulations to Theo and Evan in 7Y, Oli B in 7J, Levi in 7P, Csongor in 7B, Ernest and Claude in 7H and Advait in 7C. A big well done boys!

**By: Mr Knowles**







## Ski Trip 2023

**After a 2-year break from Ski Trips, it was with great pleasure that 60 students from years 8 and 10, accompanied by 7 staff were able to visit Loser in the Austrian Alps during February half term of this year. Although the main visit was in the half term, prior to this, students had been undertaking lessons at the Hemel Snow Centre in order to begin their ski experience. This meant on our arrival we had no complete beginners and could experience the slopes to the max.**

With the dreaded 24-hour coach to begin with, expectations of little sleep and lots of tired boys, we set off early on Friday the 10th of February. This was followed by

6 full days of skiing that saw boys and staff make good progress from near beginners to people feeling at home on the slopes and putting in some great runs. To say we hit a purple patch of weather was an understatement – it was fantastic! For 5 days we had clear blue skies and wall to wall sun shine. So much so I was able to get in my first ever run in shorts and T shirt! The last day was a bit of a reality check with some sleet and snow – however, this is also good for the boys to experience the full range of mountain weather.

The fun didn't stop on the slopes, we also went swimming, had a sleigh ride and went out for a pizza (after a 3-course meal)

and pancakes (also after a 3-course meal!). After all this even the return coach journey didn't phase us – the extra 6 hours in Calais on the bus was a different story though!

Suffice to say we all had a great time, learnt a lot about ourselves and improved our skiing. A massive thank you to the boys and staff both on the trip and those at school who helped provide this opportunity for all.

For current Year 7 and 9 please keep an eye out for an invitation to the next trip which is planned for Zell Am See in Feb 2024.

**By: Mr Toley**



# History Trip to Berlin



**A group of GCSE History Year 11 students embarked on a three day residential trip to Berlin on 1st February 2023, focusing on the Cold War, part of their Superpower Relations and Cold War GCSE course. After an early flight, we arrived in Berlin and spent the afternoon at the Bundestag, the German Parliament building. We then had a walking tour of the centre of the city, including the Fuhrer Bunker, Brandenburg Gate and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.**

On day two, we spent the morning at Sachsenhausen Nazi Concentration Camp, which was interestingly turned into a Soviet camp from 1945-50, re-opening just months after the Red Army liberated the area from Nazi control. After, we ventured to Cecilienhof Palace, the site of the famous Potsdam Conference in 1945 where Churchill (later replaced by Attlee), Roosevelt and Stalin met to discuss plans for

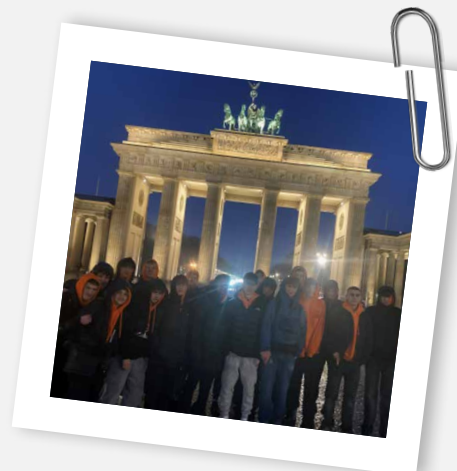
Germany after the war. It was at this conference the exact borders of Germany and Berlin were determined which would shape the rest of the Cold War. That evening after dinner, students enjoyed a few games of bowling before heading back to our hotel.

On the last day, we started with an early morning walking tour of the Berlin Wall on Bernauer Strasse, talking about topics such as the early Cold War crises, the influx of refugees into West Berlin and the impact of the construction of the Wall on US-Soviet relations, not forgetting some of the bizarre methods of escape East Berliners attempted, and sometimes succeeded. Later, we visited Checkpoint Charlie and the museum, the site of the famous standoff between American and Soviet tanks in 1961.

With the disruption of COVID, many Year 11 students have not had the same experience with educational trips; the Year 11 students were ambassadors for

the school and certainly enjoyed their time in Germany, even if they had to wear their personalised orange hoodies 24/7!

**By: Mr Pettitt**



## Intermediate UKMT Challenge

On the 2nd of February, 65 of our fantastic Year 9, 10 and 11 mathematicians took part in the Intermediate UKMT Challenge. 62% of these students achieved certificates including 6 Gold awards, 18 Silver and 16 Bronze.

Congratulations to all those who took part, we are so impressed with your determination and resilience! Special shout out to Marcus L in Year 10 for getting Best in School.

Max D-N and Ching K took part in the Kangaroo Challenge, and Marcus L and Jay B in their respective Olympiads.

**Well done boys!**

**By: Ms Moreland**

Five of our students then qualified for the two next rounds. Rayan J,

## Year 7 Herts for Learning Group Challenge

Two teams of Year 7 students competed in the Herts for Learning Group Challenge on the 28th of February, they completed four rounds of challenges – including drawing a poster for memory!

Out of 25 teams, our students were placed 6th and 9th. The

boys were brilliant, incredibly keen and worked so hard. You can see them enjoying the challenge on our maths twitter page @verulammaths!

Congratulations to Theo M, Evan L, Oli B, Levi C, Csongor G, Ernest J, Claude-James O'R and Advait L. And a massive thank you for taking part!

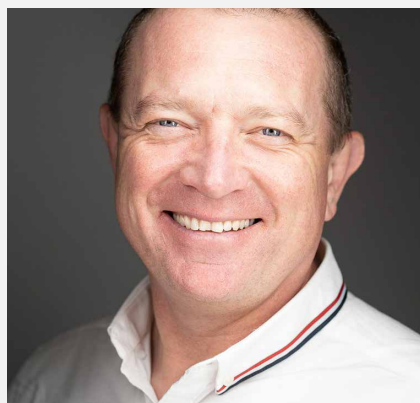
**By: Ms Moreland**



## Alumnus of the Month

Chris Monaghan is our Verulam February Alumnus of the Month. Chris left Verulam School in 1988 and is now the Marketing Lead for an Insurtech business, he is also the Head Coach of Verulamians RFC.

To find out more - [click here](#).







## NYC Trip 2023

**Early starts and late evenings! We started the day with excitement and enthusiasm for the fun packed trip to New York City. After an intense day of travelling, the view from the Empire State Building was breathtaking and heart stopping. The students were in awe of what they could see in front of them and I felt a sense of delight and peace.**

The trip had some amazing moments which were exciting and full of cultural lessons, here are a few of my highlights:

A visit to the 9/11 Memorial Museum where students had the opportunity to walk around the memorial and gain an insightful understanding of the emotions which were associated with the 9/11 terror attack. The morning

was overwhelming for both staff and students, this was a moment which moved everyone.

We needed to lift the moods of everyone after such an important part of the trip and decided to take the students ice skating in Central Park. By skating, I mean letting Mrs Chirchi push me around on the ice, whilst sitting on a plastic dog!

Another key highlight of the trip was the stunning view from Brooklyn Bridge. We walked across the bridge to see a 360 degree view of the city. The walk itself was exhausting but worth it. There were pop up souvenir stalls, where we could buy little gifts for family and friends.

Overall, the trip was an experience of a lifetime for students and teachers. Everyone had the opportunity to reflect on past historical events, whilst learning and embracing a new culture. This is imperative; it gives the students a true perspective of what it means to be a sociologist. Be prepared for Airport issues and questions!

**By Ms Khan**



## Year 9 Options Evening

We had a brilliant turn out for our Options evening on Tuesday, 7th February. Ambitious Year 9s and parents headed to the hall soon after the school day had ended and eagerly listened to Mr Freakley, Mr Hobbs and Mr Zaman who provided a break-down of important considerations to make when choosing GCSEs.

The brand new options booklet had freshly been released so students were able to begin their thinking: Should I choose subjects I perform the best at? What do I enjoy the most? What have others have historically succeeded at? Soon after, students hunted the GCSE options rooms to hear more detail about what's available on Verulam's menu.

The buzz around the school was exciting and meaningful and now, the ink has dried, the options have been chosen and an exciting new adventure begins next academic year. Well done to Year 9 and all the best.

By: Mr Zaman

## #VerulamForLife, Sports Hall of Fame

As a school, we love celebrating students, both past and present, who have gone on to achieve remarkable feats within the world of sport and physical activity. With this in mind, we wanted to create a display that inspired the young men and women who walk through the sports hall with inspirational figures that have attended Verulam.

A wide array of students both past and present were celebrated with an array of sports/achievements. From Tomas Galvez at Manchester City/Finland National team and Hayley Ladd at Manchester United Woman/Wales National team to Oli Stockwell a GB cyclist and Thomas Heath at GB fencing,

the diversity and levels of achievement are huge.

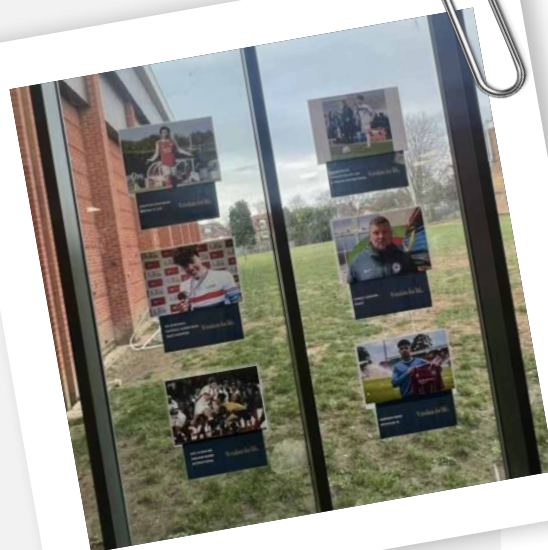
Not only about participation, our hall of fame celebrated students who have gone on to successful careers in physiotherapy, personal training, sports podcasts and even our current student Jacob H in refereeing.

We hope this inspires our students to aim for the best and realise the opportunities that sport can provide.

#InclusiveForLife

#VerulamForLife

By: Mr Anthony







## Geography A-level Fieldwork

**On Friday 17th March the Lower Sixth departed for Lesson House, a fieldwork centre just outside of Swanage on the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset, for 4 days of fieldwork. The purpose of this is twofold. Firstly, the fieldwork report is 20% of their A level grade. Secondly but more important is that Geography is the study of the real world and the many interactions between man and nature, fieldwork allows us to study this in detail and improve our understanding of the world we live in.**

To this end, we set out to investigate the village of Corfe Castle and understand the perceptions of community generated within the village. Following this we looked into the coastal management in Swanage Bay itself before moving up to Studland to study the fragile sand dune ecosystems found there.

After these introductions, the students designed their own fieldwork to be carried out. This involved not only setting their own questions and hypothesis but designing the methods to collect the data itself. Following this fieldwork, we are now analysing the results in order to understand what we have found and compare this to the theory and other areas that have also experienced the same circumstances.

Thanks to the students who made such a positive contribution to the work, Mr Hobbs for his expertise and those of you who played along to guess where the photos were taken!

**By: Mr Toley**



## Watford FC Training

On Friday 10th March, a select group of Year 10 boys spent an evening with two professional football coaches at Watford Football Club's indoor dome facility at their training ground.

The coaches ran a training exercise to get the boys to think about tactical positioning within the game. Attackers, midfielders, defenders and goalkeepers specifically worked on their role which fed into working as a team.

By: Mr Pettitt



## Drama Club

Drama Club has restarted for the new year. Students are coming on a Monday evening after school to enjoy a range of drama games and fun activities. They are practising working together on a range of different stimuli to develop their physical and vocal skills.

This term the club has focussed on promoting communication skills, learning to work as part

of a team, socializing outside of their usual friendship group and of course, building self-confidence.

Looking towards the summer term, the club are going to work together to produce a skit and/or scenes for the summer show. The drama club is welcoming new members – so feel free to come and see what it's all about in the Drama studio.

By: Mrs Tomlin





**This year 33 Year 10 students volunteered to take on an additional qualification the: Higher Project Qualification. This is an accredited qualification examined by AQA exam board and is the 'younger sibling' to the EPQ (Extended project qualification) that runs in Sixth Form.**

As with EPQ, the HPQ is a project-based qualification where students come up with their own research project and learn how to research successfully and then compile a thorough 2,000 word report on their chosen topic. This qualification is separate from any specific curriculum subject and the chosen topics therefore cannot be something the student studies in school – it has to be something they are interested in that is additional to their studies.

Over the course of the year inevitably some students have dropped out of the course – it is quite a commitment requiring students to attend after school for an additional lesson every week and to then work independently on their project. In total, this qualification takes 60 hours of work. As I write this, our final 14 students have completed and

submitted their projects on a wide range of subjects as indicated below:

**What makes the ultimate hedgehog house? (Alongside this project, the student constructed the hedgehog box as part of the project)**

**How do I convey cultural ideas about life in Nigeria alongside global issues around bullying in a short play? (This student also wrote his play as part of the project)**

**How will you power a car in the future? The impact of automation in the retail industry.**

**What are the current capabilities of space travel, and where could we go in the near future?**

**Are serial killers formed by nature or nurture?**

**Why do academics disagree on the cause and meanings of dreams and what is their impact?**

**How can we justify the death penalty?**

**Could the legalisation of cannabis improve mental health?**

**How did World War Two impact scientific and technological advances?**

**Can anything be art?**

**A study of the impacts of social media on teenagers.**

The next stage is for these students to present their projects to an audience of staff and parents. This is a formal presentation and takes courage. I wish them all the best with their presentations and look forward to celebrating the amazing work these students have completed this year.

In the Summer term I will be arranging an evening presentation to current Year 9 parents and students to explain more about the HPQ and encourage students to take up the opportunity to complete this qualification when they begin Year 10 in September. This qualification is worth half a GCSE and is finished by Easter of Year 10. In terms of Sixth Form applications, it will give these students a really interesting topic to discuss and clear evidence of their ability to work independently.

**By: Mrs Avery**

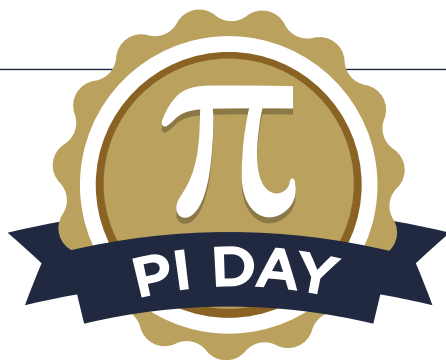
## Pi day 2023

On 14 March 2023 mathematicians across the world celebrated Pi Day. Pi is the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and is approximated to be 3.14, hence the celebrations on this day! Our Mathematics department always look forward to this day and plan lots of fun activities for the students.

Some examples of this year's activities are:

Mrs Cornmell, Ms Moreland and some KS3 mathematicians delivered an assembly all about the history of Pi and the concept of Pi being irrational (the numbers after the decimal places will never end!)

Year 7 made Pi bead chains and Pi Sky lines.



Year 8 enjoyed learning about the history of Pi as a guided reading activity.

Year 9 tried to find patterns in the digits of Pi that have been calculated to date

Year 10 used their mathematical skills to calculate the numbers from 1 to 30 using only 3, 1 and 4. Our teachers also had a fun day, including making and eating pies!

Thank you to George N, Elias B, Evan L, Seb S, Francis H, Thomas B-D and Adarsh S for speaking so eloquently in our Pi assembly.

**By: Mrs Cornmell**

## UCL A Level Sociology Conference

Tuesday March 28th saw the first return since COVID of our Y12 Sociology students to UCL (University College London), for an A Level conference attended by over 700 students from the largest Social Science schools in the country.

The day allowed our students to hear directly from the UK's leading Sociologists that they study in their textbook. It proved to be an enlightening day of lectures featuring Prof Louise Archer, 'Using Bourdieu to understand young people's identities,' Prof Alice Bradbury on 'Educational Inequality after Covid.' The day was concluded with a keynote interview with Professor Becky Francis CBE of the Education Endowment Foundation.

This is the first part of our aspirational engagement programme with other leading London universities, LSE, and Kings College London, planned for in the future.

On a personal note, it was lovely for Ma'am & Sir to take the next generation of Social Scientists to our Alma Mater.

**By: Mr Base**

## Year 10 Maths Feast

To round off Pi Day, eight of our Year 10 students travelled to Barnwell School in Stevenage to take part in the AMSP Maths Feast Challenge.

Four rounds of mathematical challenges tested our students on mathematical problem solving and even their team work skills. They

were fantastic as we knew they would be and one of our teams even placed 3rd out of the 20 teams.

Thank you and congratulations to: Daniel I, George G, Tom R, George B, Rachad B, Alex E, Marcus L and Victor A.

**By: Ms Moreland**



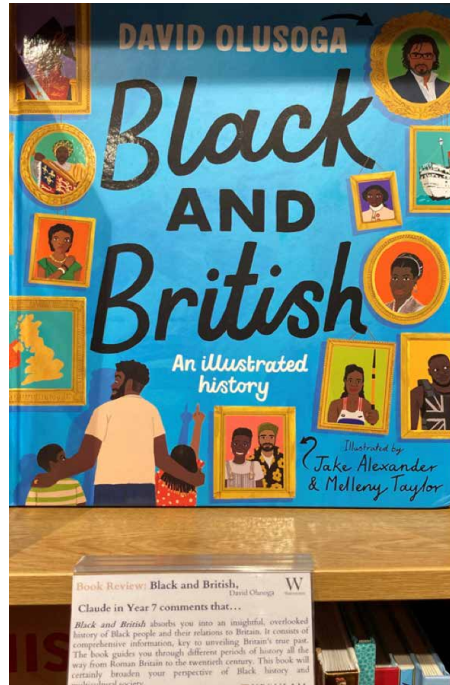
## Partnership with Waterstones

Over the last few weeks, certain Verulam pupils from Years 7-9 had the opportunity to write a book review for our local Waterstones bookstore in St Albans.

On display to the public, these reviews are testament to the love of reading our boys have. Well done to those who wrote a review - published in the country's leading bookstore!

By: Mr Pettitt

## Waterstones



## Gold Reward Trip

A group of intrepid puzzlers went to Locked Escape Rooms in St Albans town centre for their Gold Reward Trip last week. The students were rewarded for their outstanding behaviour and attendance by spending the day finding clues and solving puzzles in order to escape a locked room in only one hour! The four teams each tried their hand at a themed escape room – with two of the four making it out just in time.

The Year 7 group had to defuse a set of bombs that had been armed in St Albans in order to defeat the dangerous Shadowmaster. Their excellent communication and delegation of tasks meant that they breezed through the challenge with a whole 7 minutes

to spare! Meanwhile, a Year 10 group took on the Great Train Robbery, managing to escape the train and steal an incredible £900,000 out of a possible £1.5 million. The day concluded with a well-earned meal at Nando's – a worthy reward for a intense day of escapology!

By: Mr Hobbs



## Sponsored Read

To celebrate and encourage a lifelong love of reading at home and at school, Verulam School participated in a two-week sponsored read event between Monday 6th March and Friday 17th March. The event was organised and supported by our local Usborne Book Publisher and all the money raised has gone towards brand new books for our school library.

In addition to the sponsorship money that pupils raised, Usborne Books donated 60% of the total raised in extra free books to the school. Our target was £600, and to date we have raised over £1,700. An amazing total!

Awards were given to the most amount of minutes read in each form, year group and overall. Some of the awards included House Points, Letters of Recognition and the chance to be invited to be part of Mr Pettitt's Book Selection Committee to help choose the books we purchase from this event.

We look forward to having more books to read in the library!

By: Mr Pettitt



## Safeguarding information for parents and carers

Young people continue to be targeted by criminal organisations and this has proved to be more prevalent in towns which surround major cities and those towns which may be considered to be affluent.

We are using our half-termly newsletters to inform parents and carers of safeguarding information we feel will support them in keep their children safe.

***‘Child exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child.’***

**Save the Children, 2021**

When viewed as exploitation we are clear that the child is the victim and the others involved are the perpetrators, regardless of whether the child or young person thinks that they have actively agreed to do whatever they are being asked to do.

### Forms of child exploitation:

#### Criminal exploitation

Children/young people coerced and/or manipulated to commit crime;

#### Sexual exploitation

Children/young people coerced/ manipulated into sexual activity. Does not have to be in person, can be over the internet;

#### County lines

Children/young people being used to distribute drugs for gangs;

#### Trafficking

Movement of children/young people for purposes of exploitation;

#### Modern slavery

Children/young people being forced into servitude, slavery or situations where they have to undertake forced or compulsory labour;

#### Money mules

Children/young people being forced to launder money through their bank accounts.

### Sign and indicators

Extra money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation;

Sudden changes in friendship groups;

Increased secretiveness; Exclusion, unexplained absences or returning late without explanation;

Involvement with drugs/alcohol; Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;

Internet/social media concerns or excessive receipt of texts/ phone calls;

Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

## Mental Health Update

**This term has been a busy one for the mental health and well-being of our students and staff.**

After half term, we started off with Feeling Good Week, a Hertfordshire wide mental health event. Feeling Good Week is designed to promote local mental health charities and boost the mental well-being of those in our local communities. Focused on the theme of 'Be Kind and Connect' several events ran for students including a dodgeball tournament and an opportunity for all students to show their appreciation of staff and each other through postcards and award mugs.

It has also been great to see more students taking a positive interest in each other's well-being, echoing the messages of the Ask Twice campaign earlier this year.

This half term has also been characterised by preparations for Mental Health March.

Form representatives met with fundraising teams from six local mental health charities; Mind in Herts, The Counselling Foundation, Youth Talk, The Living Room, Viewpoint and the Ollie Foundation.

After these meetings the representatives organised events within their form groups to raise money for their chosen charity. Activities have ranged from bake sales and football competitions to board game clubs and sponsored activities. I'm excited to see how much money we can raise for these great causes over the course of the month and am looking forward to reporting on this in the next mental health update!

**By: Mr Giles**

### Power imbalance

**The common theme within all exploitative situations is the imbalance of power - the exploiter holds the power, and the victim has very little control if any.**

Control is maintained through threats, access to items the victim wants, and/or continuing a relationship.

Research shows that all children and young people are vulnerable to exploitation, especially those needing support, affection and/or are, or perceive themselves to be, disadvantaged in some way.

Exploiters are adept at changing their methods quickly to avoid detection.

### What to do

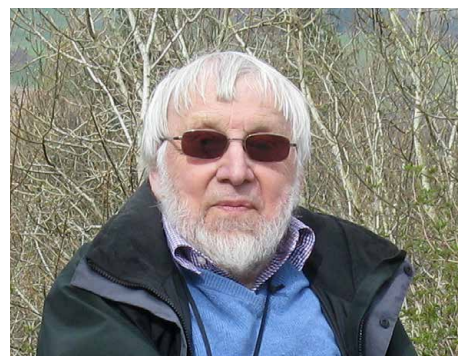
Please discuss this with your child. If you like further information and advice, please contact me at school and details can be found on the [safeguarding page](#) of our website.

**By: Mr A Flack**

## Alumnus of the Month

**Mike Richardson is our March Verulam Alumnus of the Month. Mike left Verulam School or, as it was then, St Albans County Grammar School for Boys, in 1956.**

To find out more - [click here](#).





# Sporting Round Up

## Football



### Year 7

The Year 7 team beat local rivals Sandringham in a friendly fixture before going on to beat Roundwood Park 3-2 in the first round of the District Cup. It was a close game with Logan B scoring the winner with only seconds to spare. The team unfortunately lost 2-1 to St Columba's in a very even game which could have gone either way.

The Year 7B team found themselves facing Sandringham once again. Unlike our previous two meetings, we drew 2-2, scoring two wonderful goals in the last 10 minutes of the friendly fixture. Year 7B and C teams also had friendly games against St Columba's, winning 5-1 and 6-0 respectively!

### Year 8

A year of developing as a team saw the Year 8 team on the end of some rollercoaster results. Lots of positives to take from the season after they bow out to a strong Sandringham side in the District Cup.

### Year 9

This term has seen the Year 9 team reach the latter stages of both the County Cup and National Cup. They unfortunately lost against very strong opposition from Aldenham School and Ashcombe School, Surrey in the last 8 of the National Cup. Other victories have also included wins against Dame Alice Owens, Sandringham and Katherine Warrington.

Unfortunately we lost 1-0 away to Marlborough in the District Cup which brought an end to the season. Top scorer ended with Will S leading the way with 10 goals, followed by Freddie J with 9 and Jack D with 6. The B team had a narrow loss to Sandringham and still have Katherine Warrington to play before the end of term. Well done to all the boys involved.

### Year 10

Our Year 10 team made it through to the District Cup Semi Final after a convincing win against Sam Ryder in the quarter finals. In the National Cup they made it to the third round.

### Year 11

Finishing their 5 years at Verulam with a hard-fought win against St Albans Boys School in the District Cup. They were defeated by a strong Sir John Lawes team in the quarter-final. Congratulations to all the boys who have represented Verulam and best of luck with their footballer endeavours in the future.

### Senior Team

The seniors await a quarter final cup clash with local rivals Beaumont as they look to reach the District Cup final, two years on the bounce. If successful, they would play their final game at Clarence Park, home of St. Albans City FC.

By: Mr Errington

## Rugby

The U16s and U18s teams took part in the Herts County Rugby 7s with the most bizarre weather for a 7's competition. Sideways rain, sleet and sub zero temperatures.

The U18s beat Samuel Ryder and JFK to win the U18 Plate scoring over 14 tries between both games. Self appointed Man of the Match, Sam D scoring 4 and getting an assist.

The U16 team bolstered the Year 10s. Playing 3 games, winning 2 games and only losing to a very strong St Georges team to finish 2nd in the U16 Plate.

By: Mr Errington



## Basketball

This term saw the first two basketball matches for our enthusiastic Year 7 basketball team. The attendance at Wednesday's training sessions has been incredibly positive, especially seeing the same boys attending consistently each week, as well as new starters who have joined us as recently! Unfortunately the team saw two losses in their opening league matches, firstly against Roundwood and the second from local rivals Sandringham. Both matches saw us facing formidable opponents, and Verulam's fighting spirit was clear; our boys played and were fully committed right to the final buzzer, indicating a promising future for Year 7 basketball at Verulam.

By: Mr Errington





## PTA Quiz

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTA for all their hard work so far this year. A highlight of the Spring Term was the PTA quiz. It was wonderful to see so many parents and friends of the school attend – the hall was alive with the buzz of thoughtful discussion as we worked our way through Mr Bint's fiendish quiz questions.

The brilliant Mr Bint (an excellent maths teacher if you have not yet come across him) creates our quizzes around a school-based theme.

This term's theme was our new two-week timetable. We were treated to rounds based on curriculum subjects – and the timetable also included homework for us to do. It is safe to say that the teacher's table struggled somewhat with their homework... anagrams are clearly not our forte.

The PTA don't just put on an excellent quiz night, they also support a range of school events and by doing this they get a greater understanding of the whole school rather than just their son/daughter in Sixth Form's school life. They also get to know other parents and enjoy the time they spend together. We welcome new active members to the PTA so please do get in touch and get involved in your PTA.

**By: Mrs Avery**



## PTA News

**Our Next Event: The Secret Garden Ball - April 22nd 2023. DON'T MISS OUT! BUY YOUR TICKETS HERE!**

Bernadette Hall-Roberts (Y9 mum and our amazing PTA Chair!) and the Ball Committee are hard at work creating something really special for you. The gates to the Secret Garden open on Saturday April 22nd at 7pm. You'll be treated to an amazing wild garden setting, a delicious 3 course meal, a free welcome drink, and entertainment from live band Bought & Sold. A lot of time, effort and money has already been invested in this event, and we would love to see it going ahead in all its glory – but for this to happen we need to sell a lot more tickets! Please ask your friends (non-Verulam also) to join you, buy your tickets, and have a fabulous night out!

### Your PTA needs YOU!

The PTA works hard to raise much needed funds to support the education of all our children at Verulam. There is a small committee, and a group of friendly "helpers" who don't mind being asked for their time to support various events during the year. We are sorely in need of more parents who are willing to lend their support, so would be delighted to hear from you if you would also be willing to join our group of "Friendly Helpers". Please email us on **verulamschoolpta@gmail.com**



**YOUR  
PTA  
NEEDS  
YOU**



## Other ways to support the PTA

### Did you know Verulam PTA has a long-running Lottery?

We have 6 draws a year, and the latest winners (February draw) were:

Maria Taylor - £80  
 Claire Exact - £50  
 Nicola Griffiths - £30

The more participants there are, the bigger the prize pot, so why not join in, help raise vital funds for the school, and be in with the chance of nice cash win! To join the Lottery, please click here and complete the on-line form: [Lottery Application Form](#)

### Do you shop on-line?

If you do, did you know that thousands of websites will donate money to Verulam PTA just because you shopped with them? Sign up to Easyfundraising here:

[Sign up to Easyfundraising](#)

### Could you set up a monthly Gift-Aided donation to the PTA?

If this is something you are able to do, please email us at [verulamschoolpta@gmail.com](mailto:verulamschoolpta@gmail.com) and we will help to organise this with you.

## Urgent!! Treasurer needed to ensure the PTA can continue to function

Our current Treasurer, Y13 Mum Leonie Brady, will be stepping down from the role in May, when her son completes his Verulam journey. Without a Treasurer, the PTA cannot continue to function, so we urgently need to hear from you if you could offer to take over this role please.

Skills needed: able to use a fairly simple Excel spreadsheet, good with money, attention to detail.

## PTA Quiz

Thank you to all the parents and friends of Verulam who supported our fabulous Quiz night on Friday 3rd Feb.

Mr Bint's excellent quiz was delivered with his usual panache, and Y9 Mum Jennifer Caminsky's hard work organising the event made for an excellent evening for all! You raised over £2000 towards this year's target of £15,000.

Thanks Jennifer and Mr Bint!

## Panto Trip

It seems a long time ago now (oh no it doesn't!) - a fabulous evening was had by all who attended, and you helped to raise over £600 for the PTA.

Year 9 mum Maria Georgiou has already got us booked in for 5pm on Tuesday 12th December 2023. Details on how to get hold of your ticket will be sent early in the Autumn Term.

Thanks Maria!

## Second Hand Uniform Sales

Year 11 mum Lesley Mitchell co-ordinates our popular Second Hand Uniform Sales which take place once a half-term.

Our next sale is Saturday 29th April, 10.30-11.30am in the school canteen. Donations of uniform are also welcomed and can be brought in to School Reception any time.

So far this year uniform sales have raised over £2,000. Thanks Lesley and the Second Hand Uniform team!

**Verulam School**  
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