

VERULAMVOX

*Your school, your voice,
your magazine.*



GLOBAL WARMING

The Big Problem - Page 42

CREATIVE WRITING

Read stories created by
our amazing students!



VERULAM
SCHOOL

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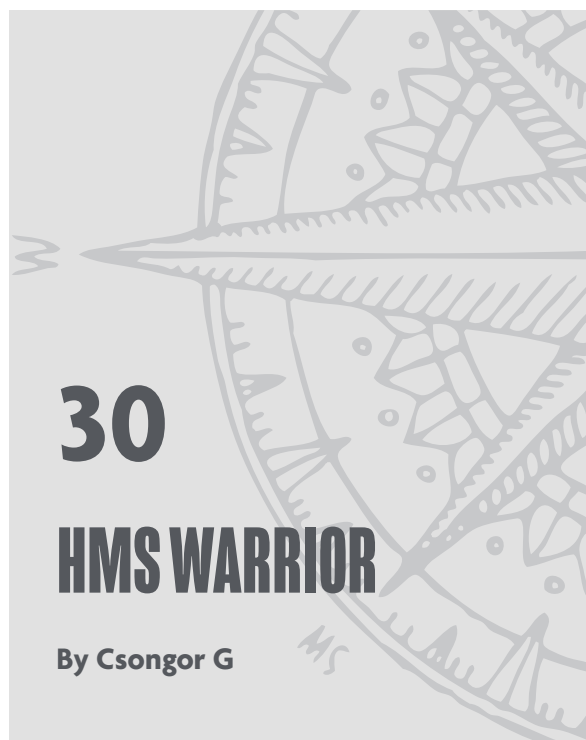
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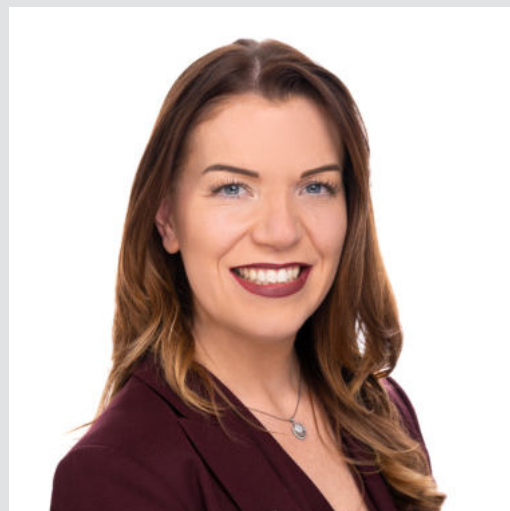
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The Unknown - by Seb B



06 REVISION - SOME ADVICE

By Mohammed H



WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Students,

Welcome to our Summer term edition of Verulam Vox. This term we have a Senior Prefect team in Sixth Form and a team of House Captains and House representatives who have all recently taken up their posts. This is the first time most of them have written for Verulam Vox. They do not disappoint. There is an array of interests and talents to read about as well as a range of accounts of trips and school events for you to read about. There are also thought-provoking articles and some interesting non-fiction and fiction to keep you interested. It is a pleasure to bring all this to you in one wonderful showcase of Verulam talent.

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

Best wishes,
Miss J Richardson

SENIOR TEAM UPDATE

BUILDING ON FOUNDATIONS AND REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

It is my distinct honour to be able to take over writing as School Captain for the Verulam Vox. But before I delve deeper into that, introductions are in order: My name is Billy Jobson, currently in Year 12 studying Biology, Chemistry and Psychology in addition to an Extended Project Qualification (or EPQ for short) on trawling and the effects it has on the environment. I took over recently from Myles, for whom along with the rest of the previous team, I have the utmost respect, as the positive effect on the school can be seen easily. Carrying on from this, and with the help of the Senior Prefect team, I intend to build upon what has already been set in place, whilst also progressing forward with new ideas.

The current Senior Prefect team has been a delight to work with as they demonstrate a huge amount of enthusiasm, which has been incredibly pleasant. A number of the team have already assigned themselves to either maintain already set-in-place projects or planning and undertaking new projects.

A number of ambitious ideas have been suggested (with a large number coming from myself due to my overactive imagination). These have been discussed so that we may evaluate the feasibility of the ideas and assign people to specific roles best suited to them, and I can say with confidence that a number of exciting projects are coming up, so look forward to them!

Looking forward to a quickly approaching event on the 20th of May: Let's Talk About Boys Conference is on the immediate horizon with invited guests attending workshops and talks. This will be a great opportunity for the Senior Prefect team to really help the school. I personally am looking forward to helping at the event, not only to make the event as smooth as possible but also to represent the school in the most positive way I can.

BY BILLY J, SCHOOL CAPTAIN

SCHOOL

LIFE



WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS POST-16?

There are many options after doing GCSEs and the choice is on you. You can stay in school and study A-levels, or you can go to a college or sixth-form to study for a vocational qualification. An apprenticeship is also a great option, which allows you to work and learn at the same time.

Not many people know that you can do an apprenticeship after GCSEs. Recently it has increased in popularity post-16 and post-18. There are also traineeships, which are short courses that give you work experience and help you develop your skills.

Quite similar to apprenticeships, another option is employment which means going straight into work whether that's full-time or

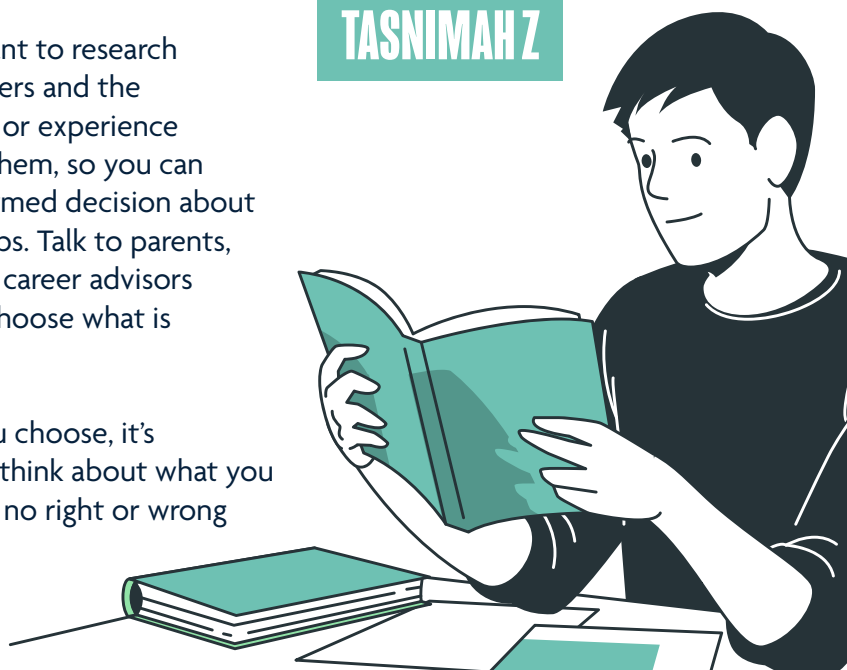
part-time, making your own money. One thing to keep in mind is to not rush it, take your time and look at each option thoroughly. It's also important to think about your long-term goals and what you want to achieve in your career.

You might want to research different careers and the qualifications or experience required for them, so you can make an informed decision about your next steps. Talk to parents, teachers, and career advisors to help you choose what is best for you.

Whatever you choose, it's important to think about what you enjoy. There's no right or wrong

path after GCSEs, and you can always change direction if you decide that your initial choice isn't right for you. Do not rush to make a choice!!

TASNIMAH Z



SCHOOL LIFE

REVISION - SOME ADVICE

Academic achievement depends heavily on revision since it enables students to strengthen their topic knowledge and understanding. Revision strategies that work can boost productivity and efficiency. Following are some tips for improving your revision: First, participation is essential. Avoid reading notes and textbooks passively; instead, take an active approach. Make flashcards, summarise the main ideas, or impart the knowledge to someone else. These exercises improve knowledge retention and enhance learning.

The second important factor is organisation and planning. Make a timetable to allot specific amounts of time to each subject and break up your revision into manageable portions. This avoids last-minute cramming and guarantees a balanced strategy.

Practise with previous exams and practise questions are also really beneficial. You can improve your answering strategies and spot opportunities for development by being familiar with the exam's style and question categories. Utilising diagrams, mind maps, or flowcharts as visual aids also improves comprehension and aids memory recall.

Last but not least, taking frequent breaks while studying is crucial. Short breaks may help with focus and minimise mental weariness, increasing productivity overall, according to studies.

Effective revision strategies include active participation, planning, repetition, visualisation, and adequate rest. You may maximise your learning, improve performance, and approach tests with confidence by putting these techniques into practice.

BY MOHAMMED H



SCHOOL LIFE

REVISION

BY ERNEST J

I am in Year 7, and the week of 15th May to 19th May are my end of year exams. A lot of people might be worried, but it is easy to revise and doing this properly can help you get much more confident in any subject. There are many effective strategies, and here are a few of them:

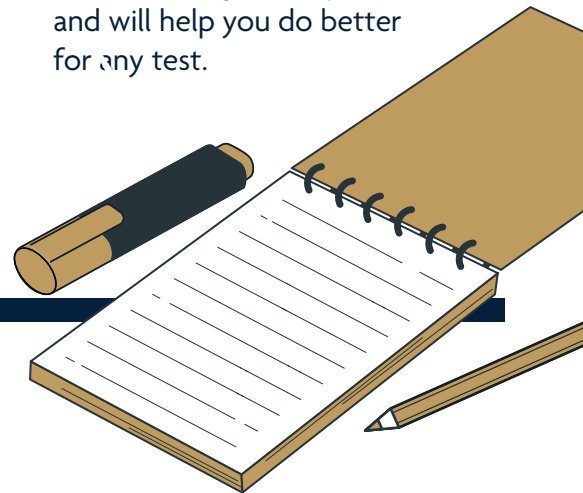
Flashcards: To make a flashcard, get a small piece of paper and write a question or key term on

one side and the answer to the question or definition of the key term on the other side. Then, learn the answer or definition, and test yourself by saying the answer or definition. You can also get a friend or family member to test you.

Become the teacher: simply learn the topic and then teach it to someone who knows little to nothing about the topic. This will help you remember the topic.

Mind maps: make a mind map (or spider diagram) and write down all the points you know. Then, find more information and note that down too.

These are all good ways to revise, and will help you do better for any test.



HOW TO TACKLE SIXTH FORM

The level of independence and responsibility is one of the most significant changes between Year 11 and Sixth Form. You will be required to manage your own schoolwork, attend lessons on a regular basis, and meet deadlines in Sixth Form. It's critical to get organised from the start if you want to keep on top of your academics. To keep track of your assignments, homework and upcoming tests you can use a planner or digital calendar on your phone. Another thing that would also help is asking for help either from your peers or your teachers - that is what they are there for.

Sixth Form is a chance to pursue your hobbies and passions while also selecting topics that will prepare you for future work or academic aspirations. However, it is critical to select subjects judiciously depending on your strengths and interests. You should conduct research on the things you are interested in, speak with your tutors, friends, and communicate with your parents or guardians about what you think would be best for you.

Sixth Form is a time to push yourself both academically and personally, as well as to make goals for the future. However, it is critical to remain

focused and motivated, even when the coursework and exams get difficult. Setting realistic goals, breaking down your responsibilities into obtainable portions, and rewarding yourself can help you stay motivated.

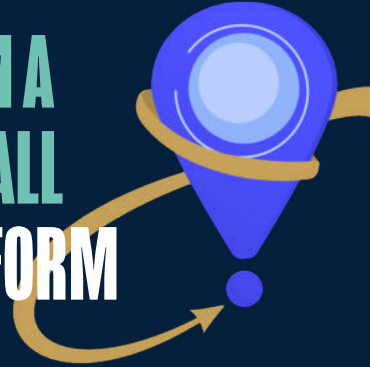
Hopefully this gives you an insight into how to get the most out of Sixth Form.

SARAH E

SCHOOL LIFE

SCHO

THE TRANSITION FROM A MIXED SCHOOL TO AN ALL BOYS' SCHOOL SIXTH FORM



Transitioning from a coed school to a single-sex boys' school can be a challenging experience for any student like myself. Suddenly, you may find yourself surrounded by unfamiliar faces and a different social dynamic. However, with the right mindset and approach, this transition can also be a valuable opportunity for growth and learning.

Making the adjustment to an all boys' school and the social dynamics has been one of my major obstacles. I've been used to interacting with both boys and girls in a coed school, so being transitioned into a single sex environment for Sixth Form can be strange. But it's crucial to keep in mind that these schools have unique social dynamics for a reason. If there are less distractions you could find that you can concentrate better on your studies and

extracurricular activities and build stronger relationships with your peers.

Feeling like you don't belong is another difficulty you may face. However it is important to keep in mind that when being exposed to a new environment it's natural to feel this way. Try to not let it control you. You were admitted to the school for a purpose and lastly don't be hesitant to introduce yourself to others and form new relationships.

At the end of the day it's a brand new opportunity to start a new chapter in your life so make the most of it.

BY AYESHA R

VERULAM SCHOOL

I think that Verulam School is an amazing school for many different reasons. In my personal opinion, Verulam school is one of the best.

In our school, there are a variety of different things you can do and lots of different career paths open to you.

Verulam dates back to 1938 with only 50 boys now in 2023 there are over 1000 people.

There are lots of different clubs here: science, fencing, football, basketball, chess; whatever you like. We have it here.

Whenever you're feeling down or upset the staff will be there to help you and support you.

There are some amazing fun trips coming up where we do a lot of fun and exciting activities.

I really like this school and I am very proud to be a part of the Verulam community.

BY JAYAN J.

SCHOOL LIFE



MY EXPERIENCE AT VERULAM YEAR 7

When I first joined Verulam I was very scared about not making friends at school. Also, I was nervous about moving around the school with older year groups because I am quite small.

At the same time though I was also very excited about moving to secondary school. I was looking forward to having different teachers for different subjects and moving from one classroom to the other.

When I joined the school I felt like a young person rather than a junior boy. I always looked up to my brother who is now in year 12 at Verulam.

Once I joined I didn't understand why I had thought it would be scary, I have made lots of new friends across different forms. I made it into the school football team, which I am very happy about. My favourite subjects in school are Maths and French, but overall my favourite lesson is PE.

Outside of school, I play a lot of football. I play for two football teams, St Albans City and EDGE FA in the Junior Premier League (JPL). My positions in football are ST, RW.

Since joining the after-school table tennis club every Tuesday, I have become very interested in this sport. I realised I am quite good at it. It has been great.

A few of my friends have also joined and we have lots of fun. For March Mental Health Month our Form 7H organised a table tennis competition to raise money and I took part and came second.

I am looking forward to our up and coming Lake District Trip at the end of May. I am going to challenge myself and take part in activities that I have never done before. I am most excited to take part in the Ghyll Scrambling.

Time has passed so quickly that I can't believe I have nearly completed my first year at Verulam!



BY PAOLO I

SCHOOL LIFE

SCHO

PUBLIC SPEAKING

There is nothing you have prepared for other than this very moment. Taking a deep breath, you read over the script you just wrote. It's your time. Your heart beats rapidly. As you walk on stage, you feel a sense of pressure throughout your body as you make your way forward. You go silent. Then the audience goes silent, and you feel fear. You open your mouth, and the words flow right through you. That's what public speaking feels like.

You've probably heard that public speaking is feared more than death itself, which sounds crazy, but if you look at the data, you can see that 75% of people are more scared of public speaking than death, and according to the NIMH (National Institutes of Mental Health), it's ranked as the #1 fear. But public speaking is vital for personal development. Public speaking improves critical thinking, communication skills and boosts confidence. Public speaking also helps you share your thoughts, opinions and ideas as well as connect with new people, and that's what I love about it. Public speaking is also an essential skill for leaders and helps with professional growth. But it's not easy speaking in

BY RISHANK L

front of a whole crowd about something you believe in, which is why it's feared more than death. But to change the world, you need to do just exactly that.

Recently, I had the opportunity to give my opinions on BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) at the Year 6 Transition Evening. I had to talk to a room full of people I didn't know. It was nerve-wracking, but it was also really fun. I had a great time sharing my opinions with people I'd never met. I think everyone should work on their public speaking because it's a crucial skill for all future leaders and world-changers.



AWARDS AT VERULAM: THE BLUE STAG

At Verulam, we strive to go by our core values daily, which is what makes us excel in our learning and day to day life. All students should aim to follow these values, to become successful people later on in life, our values are: Excellence , Character and Respect, these values set aside Verulam boys from the rest, and with our introduction of the Blue Stag award, we aim to make those boys who excel at learning, stand out from the rest.

Getting the blue stag award is no easy feat though, you have to show excellence in 7 different aspects of school life, all aspects corresponding to a different letter in the school's name. First is voice and vision, then enterprise and aspiration, resilience, (getting back up when things get tough), understanding and respect, respecting those around you, including pupils

SCHOOL LIFE



BY OLLIE B

and teachers alike. Then we have love of learning, being engaged in the lessons and showing aspiration to learn more, accountability and responsibility, being honest and taking the consequences if you have done something wrong and finally we have make a difference and leaving a legacy, leaving an impact on the school that will last even after you leave, all these aspects help keep Verulam and its boys engaged, smart and excellent at what they do.

CLUBS AT VERULAM SCHOOL

BY MUSTAFA A

There are lots of clubs like table tennis, football, basketball, etc

One of the clubs is football which is a very popular sport around the world and it builds very good teamwork between your teammates building good relationships. You play against your friends and people you know.

Another club at Verulam is basketball which is another popular sport and it is hosted at the sports hall which is used for sports such as badminton, table tennis, volleyball.

Outside of sports there are board games such as chess at lunch times and many more.

Also, if you want a change from sports, well we have a maths club which Ms Moreland runs in B3 on Wednesday lunch time for the lower lunch each week. What if you don't like maths? Well, there is more to it than time tables and sums! Come along and see, you might find something exciting that will change your mind forever!



BLUE STAG AWARD

Earn a Blue Stag by achieving a Letter of Recognition (LOR) for each of the following areas:

V	VOICE & VISION
E	ENTERPRISE & ASPIRATION
R	RESILIENCE
U	UNDERSTANDING & RESPECT
L	LOVE OF LEARNING
A	ACCOUNTABILITY & RESPONSIBILITY
M	MAKES A DIFFERENCE & LEAVES A LEGACY

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SCHOOL LIFE

MY VIRTUAL REALITY ART GALLERY EXPERIENCE!

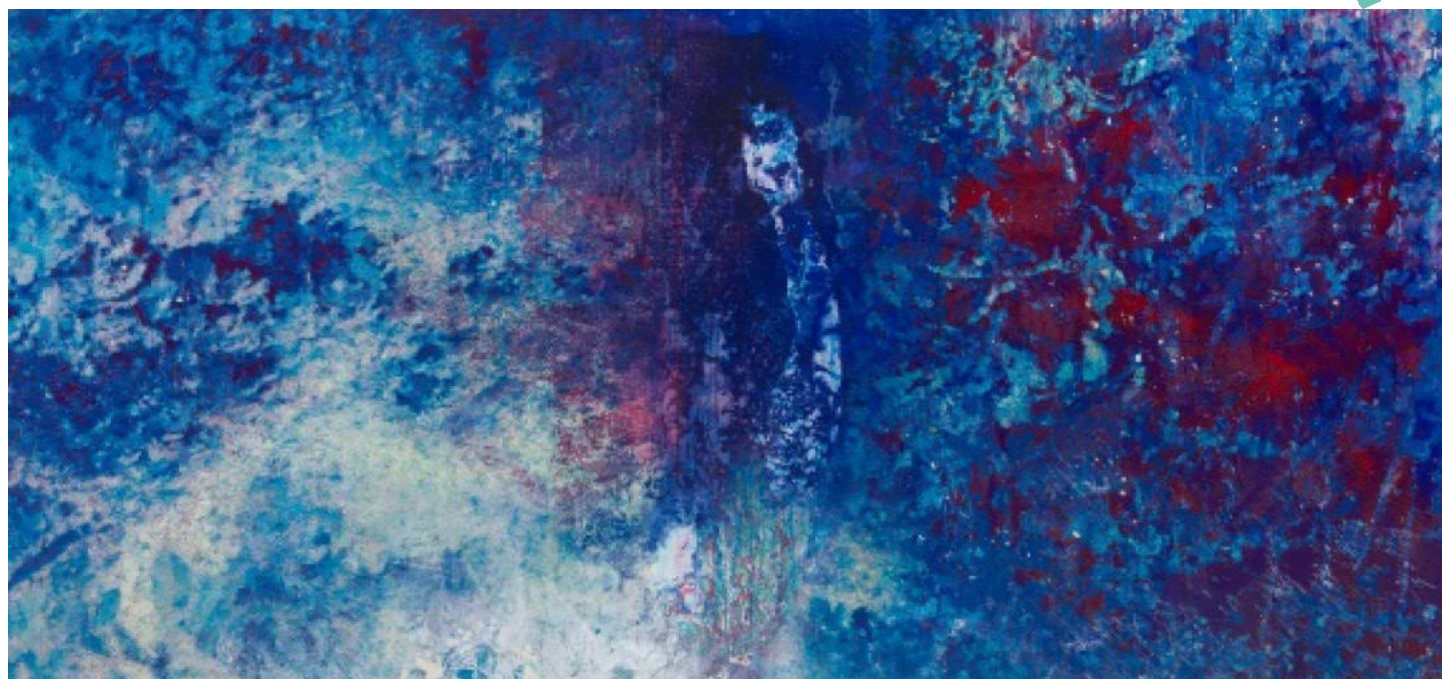
BY THOMAS H

When I attended Art club I was lucky enough to experience using the Vortic VR headset to visit two galleries of my choice, in London and in Zurich, Switzerland! The first Art show was at the Nixon Gallery in London. I was able to virtually walk around the gallery, visiting three different rooms. I loved an artwork called 'Les Abymes' by Alexandre Lenoir.

The VR handset allowed me to click on the artwork and find out really helpful information about it such as it was painted using acrylic and oil on canvas; it was quite large scale, 142 x 248 cm; the artist is a

Parisian called Alexandre Lenoir and he only painted it last year – 2021! There was also write ups about their work explaining what the work meant, the multi layers represent flashbacks or dreamscapes. The VR controllers allowed me to see close up detail and view the painting from many angles just like walking from side to side in real life. There are so many more live Art shows available on the VR set and they're constantly being changed.

It was a great experience and I hope to be able to explore the other galleries around the world.



CELEBRATING VERULAM A LEVEL PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS' WORK IN 2022



I captured this image last month at the Islington Assembly Hall in London. I asked the venue if I could get a media pass to gain access to go in front of the barriers and shoot. In total that evening, I captured over 1000 photos. In order to create this effect, I manipulated the colours and framing heavily on a photo editing software. The artist that inspired me to shoot and edit this way was Nabil Elderkin.

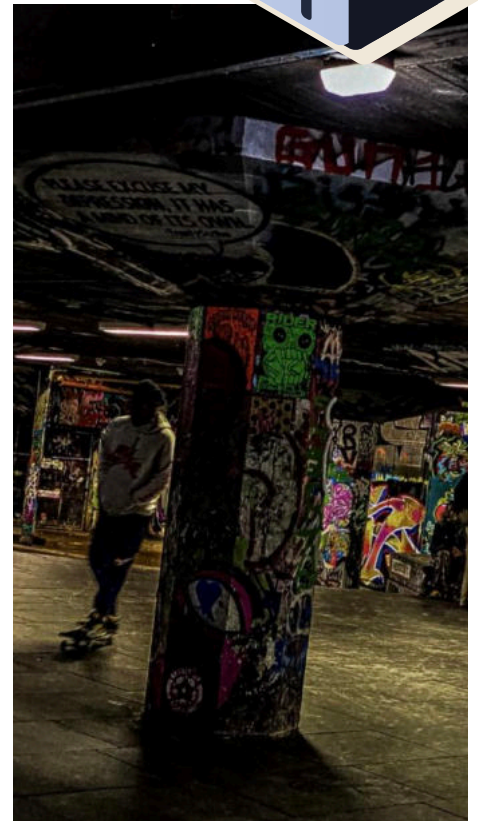
BY SAMI P



I was inspired by Madhur Dhingra when taking this photo. It was taken in Barcelona, Spain. I used the smudging tool on Photoshop.

I used a diagonal brush stroke to create this effect which contrasts with the figures which remain unedited.

BY CHARLIE W



I took this photo by the Southbank in London.

I have a passion for Street art and wanted to capture the atmosphere felt when walking around this area. I was inspired by street art photojournalist, Ian Cox.

BY SAMEER M

SCHOOL LIFE

MY PE EXPERIENCE AT VERULAM

My name is Alexander and I am in Year 9 at Verulam School. I have always really enjoyed Physical Education; trying different sports and getting better at them.



At Verulam, we have a wide selection of sporting activities and clubs that you can attend and join no matter how good you are. The clubs that you can join/participate in are the following: football, basketball, table tennis, tennis, badminton and rugby.

During my three years at Verulam, I have greatly appreciated the effort that our PE team has put in to make our lessons fun for all.

In addition, PE is not just about the physical activities, it is also about our mental condition. I firmly believe that doing/taking part in sports is really good for releasing stress and pressure.

Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed my three years at Verulam School.

BY ALEXANDER J

THE FIELD'S OPEN AGAIN

On the 2nd of May, Verulam school finally let students back on its large, beautiful field after an extremely icy and snow packed winter. After lots of snow in February, and lots of heavy rain in April, the sun has finally come out to dry the grass and mud, allowing the students to frolic on the field after 7 months.

A bench has also been moved onto the field to help students have a rest after intense football games. This can also be used as an area to place bags for the students that are playing on the field to have quicker access to their belongings. This also means that the Year 7 students won't be restricted to the tennis playing area, and that year 8 students won't be restricted to the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area).

The students are extremely thankful for the reopening of their beloved field and I can guarantee that they will have a grand time playing different sports and games in this incredible open space.

BY PHILIP L



PARIS 2023

In mid to late April, Ms Herrington organised a 4 day long trip for 40 or so boys in Years 9 and 10 to go on a trip to Paris.

It was an amazing experience for those who had and hadn't been before, as we went to many of the outstanding and beautiful landmarks that Paris has to offer. Day 1 was mostly made up of travel from St Albans to Paris, starting at 5.00 am. It was a nice coach ride there, until we got delayed at the Euro tunnel for a few hours. At around 6pm, we finally arrived at the place we were staying. There were rooms of 3 and 4, as well as a big playground and football pitch. Day 2 was made up of us going to the Stade de France in the morning - consisting of a tour around the stands, the pitch, changing rooms, and more. It was great to see as it is the stadium for the French national

football and rugby team. In the afternoon, we drove across Paris to the Eiffel Tower. It was amazing - we climbed up two storeys, and then whoever wanted to was able to get a lift to the absolute top. The view was astonishing, you could see everything for miles, including the Seine river, Notre Dame and more!

We also went on a boat ride to see some landmarks in more detail - at land level.

On day 3, we first visited the Sacre Coeur (translated to English as -The Sacred Heart). The cathedral had such astounding detail, but we had to climb a lot of steps to see it. We went to Parc Asterix (a theme park) for the rest of the day. The rides were really good, with some having multiple loop de loop and sharp turns.

Day 4 was the last day of the trip. We went to see the Louvre, which had amazing pieces of artwork, although it was very busy. The

Mona Lisa had a long line, and was a bit underwhelming, but the rest of the museum provided a great selection of beautiful art pieces. We also went to the Champs-Élysées, and the Arc de Triomphe. Although the shops were a bit expensive, it was a great walk down the street.

Overall, the trip was a great success. C'était génial!

BY ALEX E



PARIS 2023



FRENCH TRIP

I am going to be writing about the Year 9 and 10 French trip just after and the Easter holidays.

On the school trip we visited many places such as the Eiffel Tower, Parc de France, the Louvre and the Parc Asterix. On this trip I had the most fun I ever had and I know the other students had the time of their lives as well, but this could not have happened without the teachers. They were very helpful and very easy to talk to and let us go and wander in certain places such as Parc Asterix. The experiences from this trip were once in a lifetime and the places we went should be seen at one point in everyone's life.

It was truly great and I can't thank the teachers and the school enough for making that happen. By the end of the trip nobody wanted to leave and everyone's spirits were high.

BY WILL G

PARIS TRIP 2023 (YEAR 9 & 10)

On the 25th of April, 40 students from year 9 and 10, including myself, went to Paris for 4 days with the school. Within these 4 days, we managed to see all of the main landmarks and tourist attractions around Paris, even including a theme park.

The first day after travelling was dedicated mostly to these attractions, starting the morning off with a visit to the Stade de France, where the World Cup and next year's olympics are played. We had an excellent tour guide, who showed us around the stadium, even in the locker rooms and the walk out onto the pitch. Afterward we headed further into the French capital to climb La Tour Eiffel. It gave us an amazing view and was definitely a highlight of the trip, seeing as we all had access to the very high third floor.

Following this was a boat ride (bateaux mouche) upon the River Seine. Every night we'd all relax back at the hotel and play football with another English school who was staying there - we won every match! The second day revolved around Le Parc Asterix, with a quick stop at the Sacre Coeur (the

large church pictured). The park was, as many of us believe, on par with Disneyland, being very close to Paris and very large with thrilling rides. All of us went on at least one large rollercoaster, including ones that went backwards, very high or even in loops! After a long and enjoyable day at the park, we finished off with some pizza and returned home to pack to leave the following morning. Though the trip was over, the coach ride was still a lot of fun, with Mario kart tournaments, football chants, and the ferry across the English Channel with wonderful food and an arcade (we all tried the punching machine, with the highest score close to 800). All 39 of us finally got home at around 11 o'clock, exhausted yet refreshed from such a nice trip. We'd like to thank all the members of staff who organised and came with us on this trip. It was a great first trip for a majority of the year 9s with chances to have conversations in French and a lot of independence and fun.

BY EVANT



PGL TRIP

BY GEORGE R

Hello, my name is George and I am one of the 8C form representatives.

My favourite moments of being at Verulam School so far have been the school trips. I've only been on two trips, one of the trips was to Osmington Bay PGL and the other was to the British

Museum in London. PGL was great, we spent four nights there doing fantastic activities such as the big swing, zip lining and a lovely walk on the sunny stoney beaches in Dorset. One evening we swam in the freezing cold sea, all of the teachers went in as well which was really funny. The British Museum was really cool, we

looked at many historic artifacts such as the Rosetta Stone which is over 2000 years old! We also saw Egyptian mummies which were over 4000 years old. They were gross, one of them still had hair! I'm looking forward to more trips away with my year group.

YEAR 8 PGL TRIP

On the 19th of September 2022 most of my year went to Dorset. Dorset is near Dorchester with a rocky beach. I believe that it was the best school trip so far.

We had so many activities. My personal favourite was the giant zipline because of how fast we went. As we were in groups we discussed and said that the giant swing was the best because of the view that we had when we were on the swing.

After we did some activities we went to the cafeteria to eat our dinner. Also after we had dinner we went to the stoney beach for

a swim. Straight after our whole year was involved in a hide and seek in the dark. After that we were all so disappointed that we had to go home. I wish I could experience something like that again.

BY ABUBAKR A-R



THE GOLD REWARD TRIP

BY OLLIE B

Towards the end of last year, the school announced a new reward system. This would replace the house point rewards, like the sweets and amazon gift vouchers, and involve something more general. These would be the reward trips. In order to get on these trips, a student had to have good house points, attendance and lack of Es. The amount would change depending on the trip.

Last term, the first of the trips passed when the gold trip occurred. The plan of the day was to leave shortly after form to go to Locked Escape Rooms, in St Albans. This would then be followed by Nando's and a walk back to school.

On the day, we left school only to be met by rain. We managed to arrive considerably early, but it was only time for us to dry off. We were then split into groups to attempt escaping one of the rooms. One of these rooms was trying to

escape and rob a train, and the room fitted the context perfectly. We then left for Nando's, leaving enough time to walk back to school via the Alban Way.



SCHOOL TRIP LAKE DISTRICT

I am very excited to take part in the Lake District trip later on in May, as there will be lots of activities and I can enjoy them with my friends. Hopefully the trip will be very sunny, as I don't enjoy rain that much.

It's almost exactly 2 weeks from our assessment that we have our Lake District trip. In my opinion, it's a good thing we are doing the trip after our assessments, so we can have more fun.

I have also been on another trip, like the "Stonehenge trip," where we could go to Stonehenge for a whole day (I had done that trip twice since I changed schools). But the Lake District trip will last 5 days, there will be activities, and we will miss school! Well, one day...

In Year 7, we have these trips called "Gold Trip," "Silver Trip," and "Bronze Trip". Each trip correlates to its level; for example, for a gold trip, you have to be getting lots of house points and attendance; the same is true for a silver trip, but silver is a lower level; and so on until a bronze trip.

BY KONRAD V



FRANCE AND BELGIUM RESIDENTIAL TRIP

The Year 9 France and Belgium trip has everyone very excited and the trip will take place on the 19th-23rd of June 2023 with approximately 44 people going. This will be a very long but cheerful journey. The trip will include being in hostels and good accommodation. Travelling will be via the Eurotunnel by coach and by ferry.

On the first day we will arrive in France and travel to Agincourt. On the second day we will travel

to Ypres and this will also include hearing the last post. Day 3: we will travel to Somme and have exclusive tours with it. On the second to last day we will travel to Waterloo which is where the battle of Waterloo took place on 18th of June 1815 and also learn about Napoleon and how he led in the battle. Finally on the last day (day 5) we will travel to Dunkirk and then we will travel back home.

To make the trip even better the staff members will take the

students to do very fun activities like bowling, football etc in the evenings. But overall the trip is a very good recommendation to students if they want to do History for GCSE and to learn more which might help in assessment and exams.

BY GAMAL SM

A THOUGHT ABOUT GOD

BY VICTOR A

Questions that are asked by many people are: why is there suffering in the world? If God exists, wouldn't he do something about suffering in the world? This leads on to thoughts such as: if God really exists, he would answer all of my prayers or at least do something in the world to prove that he is there.

There are a few things which can be said to answer all the questions asked by people who don't believe in God. If God answered everyone's prayers, then there would be many problems in the world.

For example, if someone was very ill and was about to die someone may pray for them to get better and live. Now there are millions if not more people everyday who

pray for this and when God supposedly doesn't answer their prayers, they blame God and some stop believing in God.

If God however did answer all these prayers, then there would be overpopulation and this would cause a lot of problems in the world.

Another example is if two football teams pray to win the game, then how can God answer both their prayers without being biased? It wouldn't work, for one because God is just.

Furthermore, if God answered all of our prayers then there wouldn't really be free will in the world, it would basically be God playing Simcity with Earth.

Humans have free will on this Earth, and with that free will, we are the ones who decided to create evil and suffering in the world.

But this is just a thought on something I gained interest in during my religious studies.



HOW EXERCISE BENEFITS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

BY ERIN P

Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year. School students in particular can really struggle with the academic pressure they are put under, leading them to develop mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

However, there are many ways to help reduce symptoms for these things such as exercising. Exercise releases chemicals like endorphins and serotonin that improve your mood. Taking up a new sport where you can be a part of a team, can get you out of the house and

feel less isolated and alone with your thoughts. Exercising can help you stay more energetic and focused, as well as helping you sleep at night. For example, I am part of a synchronised swimming club which can help distract me from all other worries in life as I am focused on working hard elsewhere, whilst also having a good time with new friends I have made through joining the team. If you sometimes feel down or alone, joining a new sport or getting outside and just going for a walk can really lift your mood and improve mental health as a whole.



THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS AND WHAT IT MEANS

BY AARON L

In recent times, the commonly used phrase “cost of living” has been referred to numerous times but what does it actually mean?

The cost of living is the amount of money needed to cover basic expenses such as housing, food, taxes, and healthcare in a certain place and time period. The cost of living is often used to compare how expensive it is to live in one city versus another.

In your particular household, you may have encountered your parents cutting back on items in the food shop or not switching the heating on in cold temperatures.

This could be as a result of how inflation (general rise in prices) has exponentially risen in recent times. There are several reasons for this with the major one being the impact of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine who are the largest producers and exporters of agricultural products, such as wheat, and some metals. These products became more expensive on international markets, leading to increases in food and materials prices in the UK. They are also major suppliers of electricity and gas and this has caused a major increase in energy bills causing an ‘energy crisis’ which saw household bills drastically rising.

What can you do if you or your family are struggling with basic necessities or access to resources?

- Check the GOV.UK website for different support plans in place such as cost of living payments or Energy Bill support scheme
- Speak to a member of staff or SLT at Verulam
- Contact local organisations such as Youth Talk
- Speak out to your wider family or friends and see if there are any ways, they can support.



THE BIG IFs SURROUNDING THE GENESIS OF LIFE

One of the most significant conundrums of our existence is the daunting question of: where do we come from?

Over time, there have been many theories, philosophies and experiments carried out to try to understand our existence. Mind you, I am not talking about the start of the universe but rather the origin of life!

Many of you may be familiar with the Christian story of Adam and Eve, in which humans once lived in the Garden of Eden. But due to our disobedience, we were exiled from Heaven and sent down to Earth. At this point, God cursed men to a lifetime of hard labour followed by death and women to the pain of childbirth. Hence, this story suggests that we all came from the same woman, and that is Eve. This suggests that no evolutionary/progressive process made us have our current adaptations, we were just like this. Interestingly, this may be factually true in some respects. Research has shown that we have descended from a matrilineal most recent common ancestor (MRCA) named Mitochondrial Eve (mt-Eve). Another way to understand it is that all humans have an unbroken line of descent

through our maternal lineage until all lines converge on one woman!

The most likely reason why we might be distantly related is that during fertilisation, the mother's ovum (female gamete) carries the mitochondria required for the foetus' development. It carries the mitochondrial deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)/ ribonucleic acid (RNA) that the foetus will produce as it grows up and will thus form somewhat similar mitochondria to the mother's.

However, be warned:

A very common misconception surrounding mt-Eve is that she was the only female present at that time period. Nuclear DNA studies indicate that the population size of the ancient human never dropped below tens of thousands, for her to be the only survivor. For this reason, it leads us to believe that other women were living during mt-Eve's time who may have descendants alive today but not in a direct female line.

Many scientists also wonder where the building blocks of life originated from. Here are some of the possibilities that they found:

- Meteorites also contain amino acids (subunits that make up proteins). The Murchison Meteorite landed on Earth in the late 1960s and was found to contain numerous types of naturally occurring amino acids that life requires. Other meteorites (carbonaceous chondrites) also contained non-biological and biological amino acids with the addition of lipids which when added to water, spontaneously formed a phospholipid bilayer (the same structure as our cell membranes possess).
- This thus introduces the possibility that the building blocks of life may have originated from extraterrestrial materials.
- Finally, one intriguing finding surrounds RNA, which is considered to be the primitive of DNA. RNA strands can assemble to form ribozymes (which are enzymes that speed up the rate of reactions) and they can self-assemble and self-replicate! Hence, this led to the idea of an "RNA-world" where the ribozymes would be floating in pools of water and metabolising.

Unfortunately, this still does not answer the question of where life came from. For life to actually exist, there are three key factors that astrobiologists take into account:

- An energy source
- A means of concentrating molecules.
- An environment conducive to complex molecules and their assembly

Charles Darwin's "warm little pond" was one of the most fascinating theories about the start of life. He asked himself if we "could conceive in some warm little pond with all sorts of ammonia, phosphoric salts, light, heat, electricity [...] present, that a protein compound is chemically formed, ready to undergo complex changes".

Impressively, a theory quite similar in theology to Darwin's "warm little pond" is the emergence of life from impact craters.

During the early stages of Earth's formation, the planet was extremely vulnerable to asteroid impacts (mainly due to Jupiter not being large enough to have a strong enough gravitational pull to attract the asteroids into its orbit). When an asteroid impact occurs, it heats the surrounding rocks, providing a source of energy and the heat creates hydrothermal cells (not actual living cells) which leads to the circulation of water throughout the impact crater.

The circulating water could provide an environment to

produce complex substances to assemble as the temperature became less extreme over time. For instance, the condensation of phospholipids (the components that assemble to form our cell membrane) or the small subunits (nucleotides) that form DNA.

Another theory for the genesis of life emerges from the deep sea vents (hydrothermal vents) found at the bottom of the ocean. Hydrothermal vents are where reducing fluids gush up from the crust of the Earth into the oceans. Such fluids contain iron and sulphur, one of the core elements needed for life.

This location fits the factors that I have mentioned above, with the:

- Source of energy coming from the hot fluids
- The concentration of organic compounds possibly occurs in the chimneys around these vents and the rocks formed around the edges of these plumes of materials.
- And the environment possibly being conducive to the formation of the complex compounds as they dissipate or collect around the vents at cooler temperatures.

Finally, one of the most intriguing theories comes from Louis Lerman in 1986, named the "Bubble Hypothesis".

400 million years ago, many hydrothermal vents and underwater volcanoes released prebiotic gases (gases that came before life) that rose in bubbles to the surface of the prehistoric oceans. Those volcanic gases (ammonia, methane, ethene...) reacted with other gases in the prehistoric atmosphere (oxygen, carbon dioxide...) with the help of ultraviolet radiation to form more complex organic compounds.

These newly formed complexes, redissolved in the oceans and at the sea bed and reacted further to form even more complex organic compounds due to the high heat released from the hydrothermal vents. This cycle continued until the simplest amino acids formed and reacted to produce proteins and phospholipids. These phospholipids interacted with water and formed the first cell membranes and over time unicellular organisms!

Unfortunately, Lerman's hypothesis was rejected by many sceptics and was said to require more evidence and experimentation.

It seems that over time as we advanced in our scientific thinking, our understanding of the origin of life gave us more questions than answers. However, the Genesis of Life may remain a secret for the better.

BY RISHABH H

BEHIND THE FILTER

BODY DYSMORPHIA

BY KIITAN.O

It's no secret that social media has changed the way we interact with others, but what about the way we perceive ourselves? For many teenagers, social media has become a breeding ground for self-doubt and negative body image. With every filtered photo and carefully curated post, we are flooded with images of "perfect" unattainable bodies and lifestyles that fuel our obsession with perfection.....

But at what cost?

As we explore the relationship between social media and body image, it's important to understand the ways in which it can impact our mental health, self-esteem, and overall well-being.

Body dysmorphia is a disorder that takes a toll on many teenagers. It is a condition where a person perceives their body to be flawed or defective in some way, despite what others may see. This can lead to obsessive thoughts and behaviours, often related to body image, which can have a significant impact on an individual's mental and physical health.

Body dysmorphia is often associated with eating disorders, but it can also manifest in other ways. For example, a guy with body dysmorphia may obsess over their

muscle tone, believing that they are too skinny or too fat. This can lead to excessive exercise, steroid use, or other dangerous behaviours in an attempt to achieve their ideal body.

The prevalence of body dysmorphia among males is often overlooked, as it is more commonly associated with females. However, studies have shown that up to 25% of people with body dysmorphia are male. This is likely due to societal pressures to conform to a certain body type, social media platforms often present a distorted and unrealistic image of beauty and perfection. Many social media influencers and celebrities use filters and editing tools to enhance their appearance, which can create unrealistic expectations for young people.

It fosters a culture of comparison and competition. Teenagers may feel pressure to conform to certain beauty standards in order to fit in or gain popularity on social media

The effects of body dysmorphia can be devastating. It can lead to depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. It can also cause physical harm, such as over-exercising, steroid use, or other dangerous behaviours.

In conclusion, body dysmorphia is a serious mental health disorder

that requires attention and care. It is important for parents, teachers, and other adults to be aware of the signs of body dysmorphia and to seek help for those who may be struggling. With the constant feeling of never being enough with the right treatment and support it is possible for teens with this body dysmorphia to live healthy and happy lives. I will end with a popular quote by Theodore Roosevelt: "Comparison is a thief of Joy."





BENEFITS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

There are many benefits that employment can offer to young people, many of which are overlooked as a majority just work for the obvious financial aspects.

The main benefit is work experience, getting into the world of work at a younger age, can open up a wide range of possibilities. You can use your experience of working for your personal statement for applying to university or apprenticeships or even opening the door to other jobs. This is largely because of the skills that employers require employees to possess such as resilience and dependability.

Holding a job requires teenagers to take on responsibilities, such as showing up on time, completing

tasks, and working with others. This can help them develop a sense of responsibility and accountability. Robert Drake and Micheal Wallach found in "Employment is a critical mental health intervention" that employment is great for mental health, and has been recommended as a short-term treatment for improving self-worth and is impart a reason why prisons offer job opportunities to convicts as it is proven to lower violence and repeat offending.

Some might say that employment can be a distraction from studying and could lead to worse exam results but balancing school, work, and other activities can help teenagers develop strong time management skills, which can be useful throughout their lives.

Earning a paycheck and completing tasks at work can give teenagers a sense of accomplishment and boost their self-esteem.

Overall, working can provide teenagers with invaluable life skills and experiences that can help them succeed in the future.

However, it's important to ensure that working doesn't negatively impact academic performance or other important aspects of their lives.

BY ETIENNE. C



MY FAMILY JOURNEY

Over the last few years there has been a lot of negative talk about refugees, such as people that have come from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine. This has made me think about my own family who were also refugees, but from Uganda. They were known as East African Asian refugees due to our heritage being India. Many people think refugees are a bad thing and that they are coming to the UK to take advantage of the welfare system, but this isn't always the case. Sometimes it is a life or death situation. My family's history demonstrates this.

My family's story starts in a small village in Gujarat, India in the late 1930s. My great grandparents, Laxmichand and Kastur (who we call Bapuji and Ba), had recently got married and have just had a little girl called Vijya. Bapuji's father had already emigrated to Uganda in search of a better life and set up a business. Uganda and India were both at the time British colonies and many Indians were encouraged

to move to Uganda. In 1941, Bapuji's father beckoned him over to Uganda to help run the business.

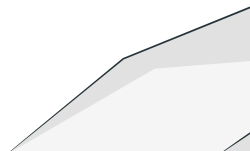
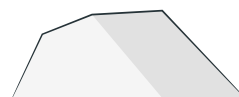
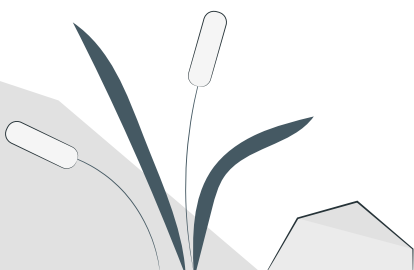
Bapuji soon left for Uganda. Soon after Ba arrived in Kampala with a 1 year old Vijya. Bapuji and Ba went on to have seven children together only one of them being a boy, Balu (my grandad!). They lived a happy life in Uganda and had many businesses which Bapuji ran with my grandad.

Then trouble came for them in 1972 when Idi Amin arose as the dictator of Uganda. Amin said anyone of Indian origin or descent has 90 days to leave the country. This is because many Indians living in Uganda became wealthy and ran all the businesses. He was discriminatory towards the Indian population and gave them an ultimatum to leave even though many generations of Indians had lived in Uganda. There was violence and lots of people were being killed.

Scared, the family looked for places to go, most of them had obtained British passports but they were still not allowed into the UK because the UK wasn't prepared to take them in (there was complicated legislation in place at the time which prevented anybody who could not prove a connection to the UK to come here, even if you had a passport!). But eventually, after lots of pressure from other countries, they were allowed to come to the UK.

Soon the family packed their bags for the UK. They were only allowed to bring one piece of luggage and leave all their money, property, jewellery and other possessions behind. They had a lot of their things stolen. If they had stayed they would have been killed.

The problem was that there was one person without a British passport, this was Balu, my granddad. The family had to leave without Balu and they were





very frightened to come to the UK without him. They eventually moved to a house in Burnley but couldn't live without Balu and were worried he would get killed.

Soon after Balu took a risk and got a plane to London. He was interrogated at the border and was kept in Pentonville prison for coming to the UK illegally. Thankfully, a very kind old lady called Mrs Blackburn, who was the family's neighbour in Burnley, would help them out and get Balu out of prison. The family were reunited again. But they found life hard in the UK at first. They had lost everything and had to start again. The UK was very unfamiliar and they faced quite a lot of racism.

Sometime after the family moved to a house in Edgware and Balu married Hansa (My grandma) and in 1978 they welcomed a little boy named Bhavesh (My dad) then later in 1982 Priya. The family was over the moon.

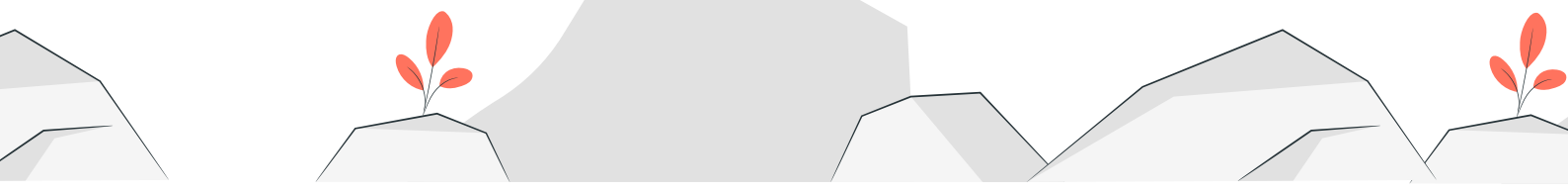
My grandad and grandma worked hard and started their own businesses. Life got easier but the trauma of what happened to them is something they will never forget.

This is the story of my family and I think it is important we all embrace our heritage and our origins even if it wasn't such an easy journey to get to our lives now. They were refugees and have been able to live a successful life in the UK.

Sadly, in 1999 Bapuji passed away from dementia. Ba went on to live till 100 and sadly passed away in 2021.



BY SUNNY K



FROM COLONIALISM TO INDEPENDENCE: THE EVOLUTION OF NIGERIAN EDUCATION

Nigeria has a rich and complex history when it comes to education, from the early days of colonialism to its present state as a modern, post-colonial nation. The country's education system has undergone significant changes over the years, with both successes and challenges along the way.

During the colonial period, Nigeria's education system was primarily geared towards producing a compliant workforce for British industries. This meant that education was highly standardised and focused on rote memorization, with little emphasis on critical thinking or creativity. However, the country's push for independence in the 1950s and 60s brought about significant changes to the education system. Nigerian leaders recognized the need to develop an education system that would foster a sense of national identity and prepare students for leadership roles in a post-colonial society.

In the decades that followed, Nigeria invested heavily in education, building new schools and expanding access to education at all levels. However, the country's education system has faced significant challenges, including underfunding, a lack of qualified teachers, and widespread corruption. In recent years,

there have been efforts to reform the education system and address these challenges, but progress has been slow.

Despite these challenges, there are many examples of successful educational initiatives in Nigeria. For example, Bridge International Academies has created a network of low-cost, high-quality schools across the country, providing access to education for students who might otherwise not have had the opportunity to attend school. Similarly, Teach for Nigeria is working to improve education outcomes by placing highly qualified teachers in underserved schools.

In conclusion, Nigerian education has come a long way since the days of colonialism, but there is still much work to be done. By continuing to invest in education and address the challenges facing the system, Nigeria can ensure that all of its citizens have access to high-quality education and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

One of the noteworthy aspects of Nigerian education is the role of private schools, which have emerged as an important force in the country's education landscape. Nigeria has a thriving private education sector, which includes

a wide range of schools from low-cost, community-based schools to elite, international schools.

Many Nigerian private schools are renowned for their high academic standards and innovative teaching methods, which often prioritise critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. These schools also tend to have smaller class sizes and better teacher-student ratios than public schools, allowing for more support.

One example of a highly regarded Nigerian private school is Redeemer's international secondary school in Lagos, which offers a British-style education and has consistently been ranked as one of the top schools in Nigeria. Another example is Greensprings School, which has multiple campuses across Nigeria and offers a holistic education focused on academic excellence, character development, and community service.

About a year ago when I moved to the UK, my intelligence fascinated my class, they felt as a boy from Africa, I was expected to have a crude accent, be less than average intelligence, I have also been asked quite frequently if I went to school in Nigeria and my explanation is

THE HMS WARRIOR



usually when upper middle-class or rich Nigerian children move to the UK to study, they often find that they are well-prepared for the academic rigours of their new environment. Nigerian schools have a reputation for producing students who excel in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and many Nigerian students who study abroad go on to pursue successful careers in these areas.

In conclusion, Nigerian schools are known for producing intelligent and hardworking students who are well-prepared for academic success, both in Nigeria and abroad. The strong emphasis on academics, discipline, and hard work in Nigerian schools provides a solid foundation for students to achieve their academic goals and pursue successful careers in the future and so explains why I have blended so well to my new life in the UK.

BY ENIABITOBI I

On England's south coast, in the port city of Portsmouth, a magnificent piece of machinery anchors in the bay of the Historic Dockyard, the HMS Warrior. A 40-gun steam-powered armoured frigate, built for the Royal Navy in 1859-1861 was Great Britain's first iron-hulled battleship.

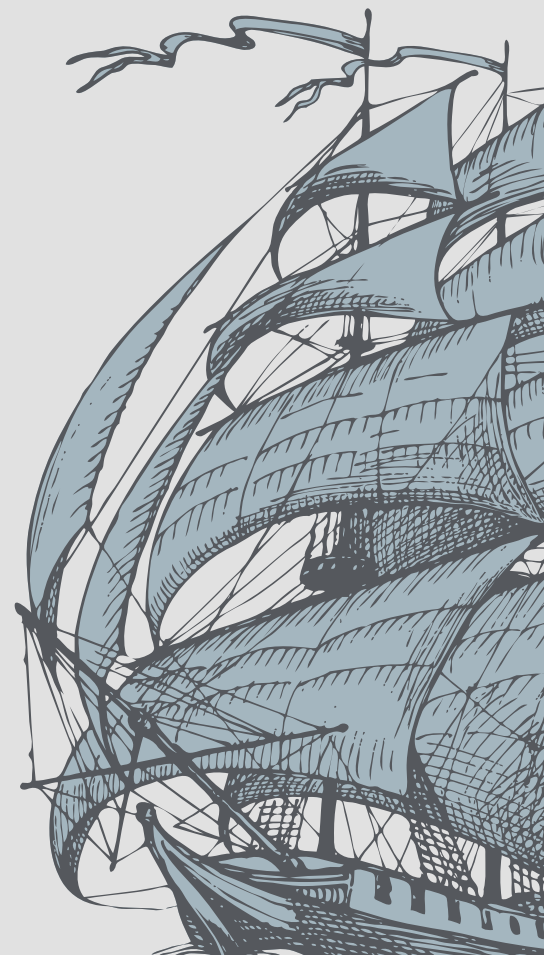
In response to France launching its first ocean-going ironclad warship (the wooden-hulled Gloire), the chief constructor of the Navy - Isaac Watts - was made responsible for designing a ship that would compete in combat.

In her time the HMS Warrior was the fastest, largest and most powerful warship with a speed of 17.2 knots (sail and steam combined) a length of 418 feet and a crew comprised of 50 officers and 656 ratings, 122 of which were royal marines, all of them keeping the ship in the highest working order. Knowing these statistics it is no wonder that fear conquered her enemies' minds. For the next 3 years she led the Channel Squadron, patrolling home waters until eventually she was retired from duty in 1883 and is kept on display since 1987.

Did you know?

At the launch of the HMS Warrior Charles Dickens wrote: "A black vicious ugly customer as ever I saw, whale-like in size, and with as terrible a row of incisor teeth as ever closed on a French frigate."

BY CSONGOR G



THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE



At the time of writing it has been 441 days since the start of the '3 day special military operation' proposed by Vladimir Putin to dethrone the 'Nazi government' in Ukraine. The tragedy of the conflict has been unimaginable, incomparable in its horror. Cities such as Mariupol and Bakhmut lie in ruin. Thousands have died, millions have lost homes. And still the war thunders on. The conflict recently has taken a backseat on the news, something I find upsetting given the scale of the devastation.

The last months have been characterised by trench warfare not unlike WWI, with over 20,000 Russians suspected to have died to capture a mere 4km of blasted city in Bakhmut. Add that to the tens of thousands of Russian fatalities this year, their lives being spent to capture a mere 0.12% of Ukrainian territory. The cost is obscene.

The war is expected to take a different turn soon, however. The arrival of Western tanks such

as the Leopard and Challenger, nine NATO trained brigades and a general willingness to reclaim lost territory have culminated in Ukraine gearing up for a major counteroffensive, one that will likely happen in the next few weeks. While unlikely to totally defeat the Russians, it could certainly inflict a heavy blow and instil confidence in Ukraine's eventual victory.

Make no mistake I believe: strategically, Russia has lost this war. Their military, made up mostly of inheritance from the Soviet Union, has been severely depleted. Their global influence has been curbed. Their reputation has been mocked by poor military performances and reviled by their atrocities. Their occupied territory is depopulated and ruined, while foreign investment has dried up following sanctions.

I believe that recent offensives have only served to divide their army further and waste what equipment remains. This does

not mean Ukraine will win - wars can result in both sides losing, after all.

Ukraine certainly has an uphill battle, with a smaller population, a dependency on Western aid and the fighting taking place on their home turf. It's probable a victorious Ukraine would be battered and weakened, with trillions of dollars needed to restore the damage inflicted by Putin's conflict.

While it's easy to talk about the war with numbers and grandiose terms, the fact of the matter is that each statistic is a human life. Regardless of who they fight for or why, their deaths will be felt by friends and family close and far. It's important that we never forget that in war, there are always victims and innocents in the crossfire, and every death is someone's tragedy; something we have to be careful not to celebrate.

BY CHARLIES

WHAT IS BLACK GIRL MAGIC?

BY HEAVEN B

Black girls Magic. The phrase that brought us all together. The phrase that harnesses our powers in 3 single words. The phrase that when you hear it brings a shiver to your spine as to how powerful it is. The phrase that is so original it can't be recreated or duplicated. The phrase so pure that it will be carried through generations and generations to come.

Black Girl magic it's an enduring devotion rooted deeply in our stories; the winding, bendy, journeys through small setbacks and enormous obstacles that make each of us who we are. The full lives that make each of us bad. Not bad meaning bad, but bad in the Run DMC sense. Bad means good. Better than good. Excellent. Goals. Magic. Our Magic.

I love us. We are beautiful, powerful, queens. Master of slays. Leader of movements. Makers of culture and change. We are Michelle Obama's leadership. Grace Jones' radicalness. Maxine Waters' candour. And Tarana Burke's compassion. Yara Shahidi's optimism. Dina Asher-Smith's speed. Serena Williams' stamina. And Sade's elegance. Ava DuVernay's vision. Patrisse Cullors' activism. Missy Elliott's innovation. And Megan Thee Stallion's knees. We are all these things and more. I don't think we even understand the magic and power we have within ourselves.

I have grown tired of conversations that only look at our exceptionalism in relation to misconceptions about us. And I have also grown equally tired of conversations where we

must explain our chosen states of being, whether that be self-improving, excelling and flexing or slowing down, muddling through and figuring it all out. White people aren't expected to slay all day. And when they do, they aren't asked to defend said excellence.

Why should we?

As women, we're often the recipients of instruction that was not asked for and policing that is not required. This is even more so for Black women, who have been subjected to a long history of systemic policing – of our bodies, behaviours and our beings. Profitable careers have been built doing exactly this.

For many of us, we have felt like we have to be on top, at all times, as this was instilled into our upbringing, with parents in all corners of the world going so far as to instil in their children the idea of having to be twice as good as their white peers in order to earn just as much. A self-fulfilling maxim born out of the Jim Crow era and the civil rights movement that followed, it permeated not just the parenting style of generations, but our entertainment, social groups and literature.

Why do we have to be twice as good or work twice as hard? Why isn't being us just being ourselves good enough?

I don't want to work as twice as hard to be noticed for a job or just to be seen in a space that I know I deserve

to be in. It's not my fault my confidence intimidates you or the way my curls bounce off my shoulders or the way my fro stands out in a crowd and makes you feel a sense of awkwardness. That has nothing to do with me, but it has something to do with you. It's not my fault my outspokenness and boldness make you feel a way but please don't mistake it for aggressiveness because that's what it's not, it's just me being myself with confidence and power in my stride with my passion shining through.

So what is Black girl magic you ask? Black girl magic isn't just a phrase it's a lifestyle it's the way we pave our way through the world making our mark on everything we do and ignoring the looks and the whispers from others who couldn't compare, at first, we were ghetto but now they want to embody us and claim our originality as their own. Black girl magic is slaying with your natural hair and then the next day slaying in your 32-inch buss down HD lace front. It's either loving your curls or embracing your 4c kinks in your fro.

But it's also realising that if you're too loud in some environments you are deemed as aggressive or wearing hoops is a ghetto look for you but in others, it's trendy and chic but not letting things like that get to you.

Being a black girl is magical and the magic we harness is more powerful than we even know and it should be harnessed day in and day out.



WORLD WAR II HISTORY TO BE REMEMBERED

BY NIKOLAI C

Victory Day against Nazi Germany (9th May) is near, and World War II is known as one of the largest and most bloody wars in history. It is very important to remember the vital strategic decisions made by the commanders, the devastation it brought upon civilians and the infinite bravery of soldiers, who went out to fight the fight of the world against the Nazi Germany and the axis powers (Italy and the Empire of Japan).

The official start date for WWII is considered to be the 1st of September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Yet German military tactics and equipment proved superior to the defence of most European countries – by June 1941, just under 2 years since the start of the war, Germany had control over Poland, Yugoslavia, land previously under Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Denmark, Norway, and a large part of France. The numbers show that the German war machine was a mighty force at the time, and a lot of strength would be required

from the allies in order to prevent it from taking the world:

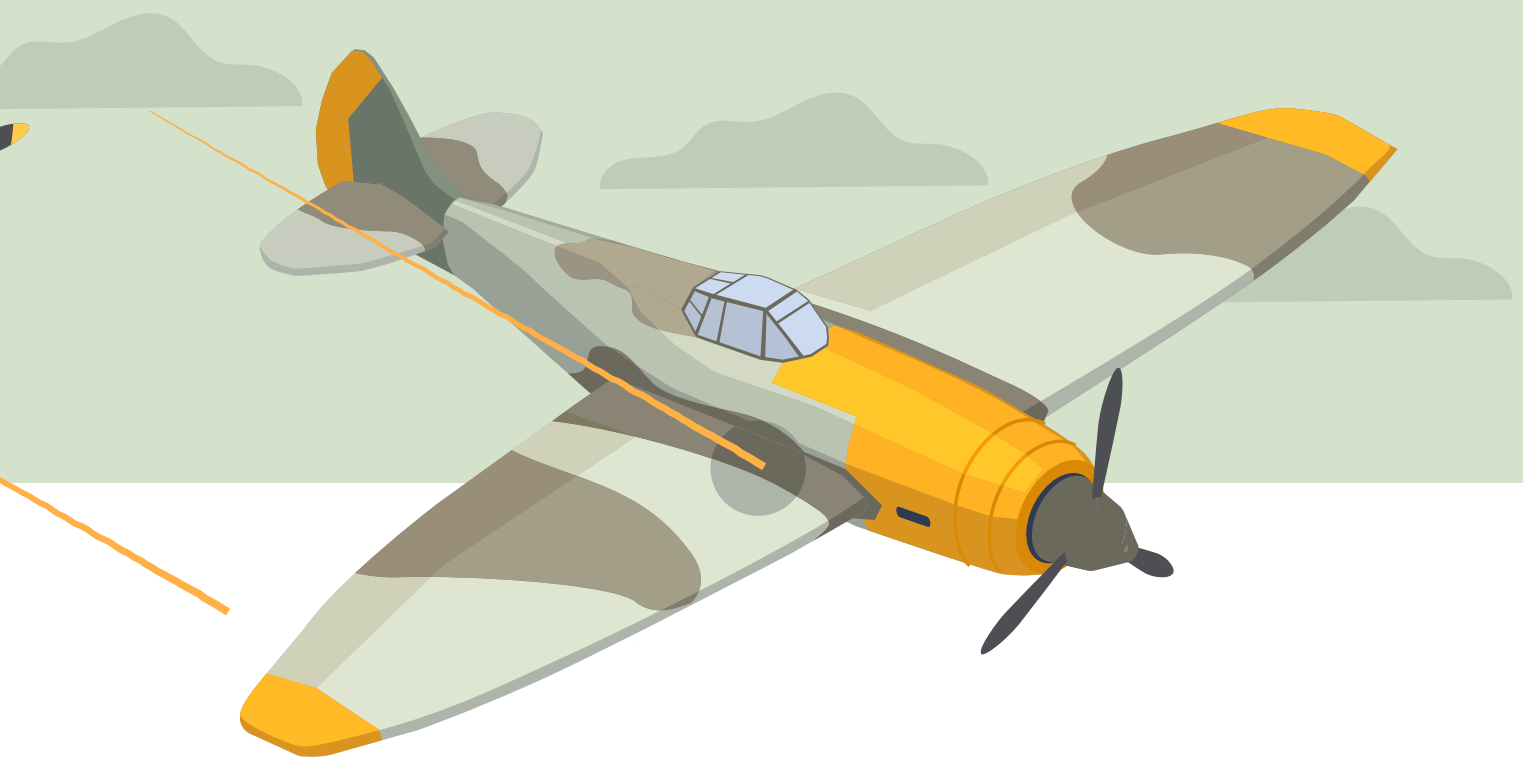
Norway: 62 days
France: 6 weeks
Poland: 35 days
Belgium: 18 days
Netherlands: 5 days
Denmark: 6 hours

These times are incredibly small compared to the entire duration of the war, showing how a turning point was needed in order for the Allied forces to win.

After the success of Germany in France, a peace treaty was offered to Great Britain, which refused to accept it and wished to continue fighting. The head of the German navy received orders to develop a plan on how to attack and defeat Britain, the so called “Operation Sealion” consisted of achieving air and naval supremacy over Britain. This led to the Battle of Britain – it may be said that in this battle the German Luftwaffe suffered its first defeat, as it lost many vehicles, yet the RAF showed no signs of will to surrender or lack of strength. Major bombing campaigns were planned

out (later known as the “Blitz”), targeting mainly London. On the 7th September 1940, approximately 350 bombers, protected by over 600 fighters filled the skies of London, dropping bombs aimed to destroy the docks, infrastructure, industry, aircraft, and demoralise the civilians. Yet, due to the fact that mainly light and medium bombers were used, their attack did not have enough strength to completely destroy London. It was clear that the RAF was not surrendering as on the 15th September, 300 British fighters managed to defend against two enemy attacks, destroying 80 German planes. After this, the main targets for German bombing attacks were on other industrial cities – from the 1st to the 31st of October Coventry, Southampton, Birmingham, Liverpool and other major cities were subject to major bombing raids. By then, the British anti-air defence strengthened, and Germany resorted to only periodically attacking the British Isles.

It is estimated that the Luftwaffe lost 1700-1900 planes, whereas the



RAF lost 950-1200. It was clear that the German command had lost that battle, and failed to achieve the targets of its “Operation Sealion”, one of the first military losses of Nazi Germany. However, the impact it caused was still quite large: 43,000 people died under these bombs, over 1,000,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed.

Major battles occurred in North Africa, yet none of the sides managed to achieve major victories.

Considering its prior successes, Germany decided to put an end to any other power ruling mainland Europe – the “Barbarossa” plan, which involved major air raids and several rapid strikes led by tank spearheads into the Soviet Union. The plan was split into primary strikes (advance and capture of Lithuanian, Latvian, Belorussian, Ukrainian and Estonian Soviet Socialist Republics and secondary strikes (capture of Leningrad, Moscow, advance to Stalingrad). This plan was supposed to result in the encirclement and surrender of

the main forces of the Worker-Peasant Red Army (as the Soviet army was called at that time), and the advance of German troops to the region of the Ural Mountains, where it was planned that the remnants of the Red Army and Soviet industry would be bombed into non-existence. Parallel to this, the “Ost” plan was developed – a German attempt to wipe off the face of the Earth Slavs, Jews, and any other “non-German” nationalities via torture in death camps, starvation, and mass murder, one of the bloodiest genocides to ever take place. Operation “Barbarossa” started on 4:00 in the morning on the 22nd of June 1941, a date to this day remembered as “The day of Remembrance and Mourning”, throwing approximately 4,000,000 soldiers, 4,300 tanks, 4,000 planes and 43,000 artillery systems just from Germany, the axis powers adding 850,000 soldiers, 400 tanks, 1,000 planes and 6,500 artillery systems. At first, the attack was going by plan – Minsk, Smolensk, Vyasma, Rzhev, Bryansk – just a few of many places, where Soviet

troops were surrounded by hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Leningrad was besieged (but not taken) on the 8th of September 1941, starting the long 872 days of the Siege of Leningrad, which killed approximately 1,093,000 people in Leningrad due to hunger, fighting and bombs, which is an example of one of the most cruel acts of Nazi Germany. At some point in the siege, civilians only received 125 grams of bread per day, similar to a small-sized bun one may have with tea.

It may also be argued that the turning point in the war was the counterattack under Moscow – Nazi regiments were thrown back from 17 km from the edges of Moscow (29 km from the Kremlin – it could be seen from German positions by using binoculars) to 100-250 km from Moscow, which resulted in the handing over of the initiative on the battlefield to the Red Army regiments. Similarly, Germany also suffered defeat in the Caucasus mountains, forcing them to retreat and the “Barbarossa” to fail.



Partisans also played a key role in holding up German progress in their attack – rapid advance forward often left the rear of the German army unprotected and unprepared for sudden raids, meaning that diversions usually worked well and had a major impact on reserves, food and ammunition supplied to the frontlines, as well as inter-regiment and command-regiment communication.

Meanwhile, the USA also directly joined the war effort after the attack on Pearl Harbour, which destroyed 4 battleships and heavily damaged 4 others, apart from destroying 7 other ships, 349 planes and killing 2,400 people. The USA also helped the war effort both before and after that event significantly not only by sending its own troops to fight, but also by running the lend-lease programme, which enabled other countries to get access to extra ammunition, resources and weapons to aid them in fighting the common enemy.

The next main events occurred on the eastern front – the battle of Stalingrad - 5 months of tight combat across the city, both sides

suffering major losses, houses with Soviets on one floor, Germans on the next, then Soviets again, the famous “House of Pavlov” being held by several soldiers for 60 days, under the siege of the German forces, and the result of the fighting – a defeat Nazi Germany had not suffered before, and one, from which it could not recover – the encirclement of the 300,000 soldiers of the German 6th Army. Another key event was the largest tank battle to take place – the Battle of Kursk, which included 6000 tanks from both sides, also resulted in a Soviet victory and aided the liberation of Soviet territory.

1944 may be considered the year after the tide has turned, however, it can be argued that D-Day (6th June 1944) was also a significant turning point, as it was the first time the Allies formally counterattacked and stepped onto the shores of Europe since 1940, the opened second front significantly eased the advance of Soviet troops, meaning that by August 1944, the Soviet Army managed to reach the borders of the Soviet Union, and later start the Vistula-Oder offensive, which

liberated Poland and advanced into German territory. The final of the war in Europe was the Berlin operation – whilst Allied troops were liberating France and western Germany, Soviet soldiers attacked Berlin, leading to the storm of the Reichstag, and the signing of the total and unconditional surrender of Germany in WWII on the 8th of May 1945.

There were of course further battles fought against the Empire of Japan, those also lead to its surrender on the 2nd September 1945.

It can be clearly seen that World War II was a difficult, blood-filled fight of the world with the common enemy – the inhumanity of Nazism. By some estimates, it took the lives of 520,000 French, 400,000 Italians, 325,000 Americans, 364,000 Czechs and Slovaks, 1,600,000 Yugoslavians, 6,028,000 Poles, 9,700,000 Germans, 20,000,000 Soviets – it is important to remember this history, in order to make sure, that it does not repeat itself. Nobody is forgotten. Lessons must be learnt.

FOR SCIENCE

FARADAY CHALLENGE

The Faraday Challenge is an exhilarating school challenge that empowers young minds to delve into the realm of engineering and design. Specifically tailored for KS3 students, this unique competition provides an opportunity for budding inventors to showcase their creativity and problem-solving skills. The competition encourages students to think outside the box and envision ground-breaking technological advancements that could shape the future.

This year, it was in the context of future aviation devices. We went to Sandringham school and were given a design brief by the event leader. We were told to make a form of accessory or other technological advancement that would help us change the way we use the skies.

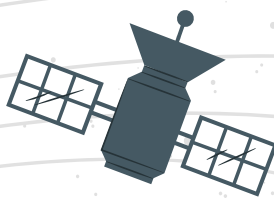
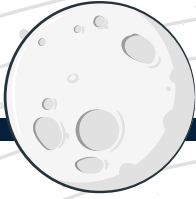
My team created a system for drones to deliver packages securely into people's chimneys, or windows in the case of a flat.

Unfortunately, our (ground-breaking) inventions didn't win the competition, but we gave it our best shot, and learned a lot along the way.

BY SEBASTIAN S

VERULAMVOX

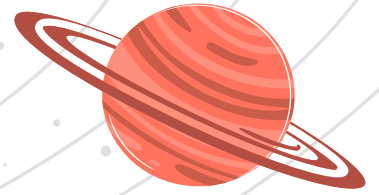




SPACE



EXPLORING THE VAST COSMOS



One of the things I am most interested in is space! I find space very intriguing as when you look to the sky, you may only see the moon, stars or occasionally planets but you take them for granted, they are so incomprehensibly big that it puts into perspective our insignificance to cosmic objects.

Space also holds some of life's greatest and most interesting mysteries. For example, the expansion of our universe, this means that 'dark energy' (the energy in completely empty spaces) is pushing our universe outwards into nothingness and expanding. This means that in a few million years we may never observe quite as many galaxies as we do today. I believe space looks stunning and beautiful but also terrifying and fierce, this is why I like space - for its mind-boggling size, immense danger, terrifying beauty and its wonder and mystery; for it is the greatest in every factor of creation and truly is a spectacle.

BY JORDIA

We can look into the astounding depths of the universe thanks to astrophysics, the fascinating field that unites astronomy and physics. It explores the underlying ideas that underpin celestial bodies, cosmic occurrences, and the mysterious forces that form the cosmos.

The Big Bang theory, which contends that the universe formed from a singularity then expanded and changed over billions of years, is one of the most fascinating ideas in astronomy. Our understanding of the origin and development of the universe is based on this hypothesis.

Powerful telescopes and cutting-edge technology are used by astronomers to examine celestial objects like stars, galaxies, and black holes. They look into the enigmas of stellar birth, evolution, and demise, illuminating the complex processes that control these cosmic occurrences.

Astrophysics also investigates perplexing ideas like dark matter and dark energy. Despite being invisible, they are present because of the gravitational influence they have on visible matter. The features and nature of these enigmatic beings remain a mystery, stretching the limits of scientific investigation.

Astrophysics also examines the potential for extraterrestrial life, seeking habitable exoplanets and investigating the conditions necessary for life to flourish beyond Earth. By studying exoplanetary atmospheres and the building blocks of life, scientists strive to answer humanity's age-old question:

Are we alone in the universe?

In conclusion, astrophysics is an enthralling scientific discipline that unlocks the secrets of the cosmos. By delving into the birth, evolution, and mysteries of the universe, astrophysicists inspire us to ponder our place in the vast expanse of space and time. Through their tireless pursuit of knowledge, they continue to unveil the wonders of the universe, captivating our imaginations and propelling humanity toward a deeper understanding of our existence.

BY OLIVER H

WHAT DID NASA FIND IN 1978 WHEN THEY STOPPED EXPLORING THE OCEAN?

The US government agency that explores space is known as NASA. However, did it ever explore the oceans, and if so, why did it stop? On social media, an array of conspiracy theorists claim that NASA discovered something and is hiding it from the public or that they simply became disengaged in ocean exploration. But consider the catch. Less than 10% of the ocean has reportedly been explored, but why stop there? There are potentially billions or perhaps trillions of undiscovered new species that have the potential to treat diseases like cancer, battle climate change,

and fossil fuel use. But why is NASA no longer monitoring the ocean and making attempts to get us out of this planet ASAP?

“NASA found something so horrific that they started researching outer space to try and get humans off Earth”. That is what NASA, the US government and numerous other people called a fake story.

I believe that the ocean is so big and fascinating that NASA must be hiding something. On the outside it's a massive government agency

that studies space, but on the inside is it an agency full of lies and secrets?

What actually happened in 1978 when NASA stopped exploring the oceans?

Did they find something so catastrophic that they want the human race off the planet with immediate effect?

BY RAUL P



STARSHIP SOARS BEFORE EXCITING EXPLOSION

SpaceX on the 20th of April had their first test flight of the starship, the newest rocket of the SpaceX family. Built of two reusable stages, this rocket is now the biggest and most powerful rocket to ever launch, overtaking Nasa's Space Launch System (SLS) which took the record off the famous Saturn V rocket, which took humans to the moon in the late 60s and 70s.

The Starship left Boca Chica Space Port, Texas, at 14:33 uk time (8:33 local time) and flew for 4 minutes. The original goal for the mission was to do an orbit and crash into the pacific ocean around 90 mins later, however it all got exciting...

SpaceX said that if the rocket cleared the launchpad then the mission was a success, which it did. However this would be the start of the rocket's fatality. The rocket's 30 raptor engines had so much power that the rocket destroyed the launchpad, causing debris to hit the engines and eventually put them out.

The rocket still carried on towards stage separation, after breezing through Max-Q, the moment of most aerodynamic pressure. However with the engines not all working, the rocket did not meet

its stage separation height and started spinning uncontrollably, leading to SpaceX triggering the LAS (launch abort system) which is effectively a bomb in the rocket, leaving debris flying all over the Gulf of Mexico.

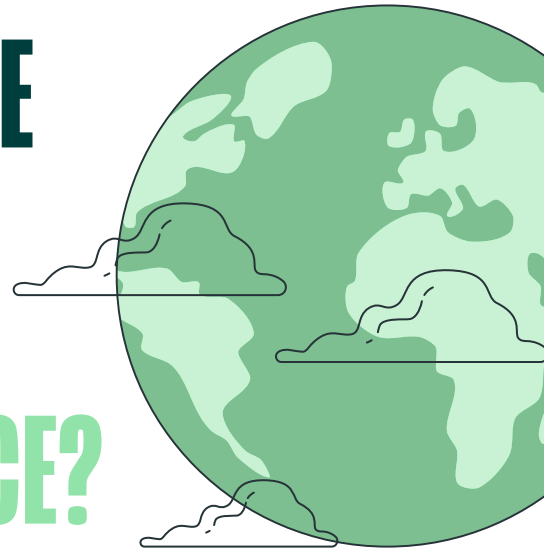
The launch however was a massive step for space travel, as this rocket will take people to the moon and beyond. SpaceX plans to launch a starship again soon, with the objective of collecting more flight data. This was however a massive historical event for Space lovers and one that will be remembered for a long time.

BY HARRY F



ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

HOW CAN WE MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?



Today I am writing about the importance of recycling and being eco-friendly. We are currently living in a climate that is slowly becoming uninhabitable due to the rapid use of natural resources.

At the current rate of deforestation, 5-10% of tropical forest species will become extinct every decade. Every hour, 1,692 acres of productive dry land become desert. As we selfishly destroy the habitat for our own benefit, we have taken it to the extreme, killing rare species of animals in the process, and taking the world we live in, the home of our future children and ruining it for our own advantages. You may wonder what you can do to help. One thing is recycling, making sure we can reduce waste and reuse products is extremely

important. Also supporting companies such as L'Oreal, Kellogg's and Consumer Goods Forum, who are all working to help end deforestation.

Often, it's as easy as doing your own research to find which companies you'd prefer to support. All of this contributes to helping the climate and end deforestation.

BY MAEB



THE WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR – THE BIG BUZZ

BY ZACK M

Every year I go to the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition with my family, which is held at the Natural History Museum in London. There are many different categories such as the 'Ocean', 'Urban Wildlife', 'Photojournalism', 'Animals in their Environment' and 'Amphibians & Reptiles'.

Many of these astonishing images depict a message of warning. If we don't try to get the message out, many natural habitats will be lost. For example, in the urban wildlife category, a Russian photographer Dmitry Kokh depicts the haunting repercussions of the war on Russia's

environment in his photo called "Polar Frame" where starving polar bears inhabit a derelict house. One of the prime examples of this message is also carried by the overall winning photograph called "The Big Buzz". This award-winning photograph was taken in South Texas by photographer Karine Aigner and features the bees' fight for supremacy. Bees are a vitally important part of this planet's ecosystem and humans can't live without them. They help spread the pollen of flowers and are responsible for 35% of the world's crops and 75% of the world's flowering plants. If bees went extinct, it would lead to a global

disaster as many food products would cease to exist as the food chain collapses.

The bees are dying due to overuse of pesticides, habitat destruction, global warming and other factors. This is one of many reasons why we should try to work together to stop climate change from ruining their home.

Overall, the exhibition shows stunning artwork but it is also trying to convey a strong message of survival and co-existence for the sake of our environment, our planet and most importantly ourselves.



THE IMPORTANCE OF BEES

As some of you may already know, bees are under threat of extinction and this is really bad. But there are many things you can still do to help.

There are many different types of bees from all over the world. Some of the most common types of bees in the UK are bumblebees, honey bees and carpenter bees.

Bumblebees are very different in appearance but they are mainly fuzzy. Honey bees are usually slim with a long tail and they are the bees that produce honey that we eat. Carpenter bees are mainly black and they make their nests by tunnelling into hard plant material like wood or bamboo.

Bees are very important to this world because of some of the things that they do. For example bumblebees help with pollination of flowers and without them all sorts of species would die out from not having enough flowers. Honey bees produce food that other animals can eat including us as well as help plants to grow. Carpenter bees pollinate about 15% of all farm crops in the UK.

Although bees are amazing, some people still don't like them. For example farmers try to remove carpenter bees because they could

damage wooden structures. However conservationists are trying very hard to protect bees and there are things you can do to help this struggling species:

- **Planting wildflowers in your garden or in pots.**
- **Provide water for these insects, for example in a saucer outside.**
- **Providing places for bees to nest, such as logs for carpenter bees or bug houses.**
- **Avoid the use of pesticides or insecticides in your garden.**
- **Try to keep an area of your garden wild, where nature and bees can thrive.**



GLOBAL WARMING THE BIG PROBLEM

Countries are at risk of being submerged; animals' homes are becoming uninhabitable. Violent and unpredictable storms are becoming much more frequent across the globe. These are all caused by one thing: fossil fuels.

When fossil fuels are burned they release large amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into the air. These greenhouse gases trap heat in our atmosphere, causing

global warming. Already the average global temperature has gone up by 1C. Warming above 1.5°C risks further sea level rise, extreme weather, food scarcity and much more.

Coal is a fossil fuel, and is the dirtiest of them all, responsible for over 0.3C of the 1C increase in global average temperatures. This makes it the single largest source of global temperature rise.

Another fossil fuel: oil; releases a huge amount of carbon when burned - approximately a third of the world's total carbon emissions. There have also been a number of oil spills in recent years that have a devastating impact on our ocean's ecosystem.

BY JOEP

COEVOLUTION

BY JOSH S

Coevolution is a process in which two or more species directly influence each other's evolution. It takes place when changes in one species leads to adaptations in the other. This can occur in many ways, such as between pollinators and plants, between predators and prey and between parasites and their hosts.

One fairly obvious example of coevolution is the relationship between flowers and their pollinators. Over time, flowers evolved to be brightly coloured, fragrant and to produce nectar all of which encouraged

pollinators to feed on them. Meanwhile, pollinators developed specialised mouthparts and other adaptations to access the nectar more effectively. This mutualistic relationship is essential for the survival of both groups, as the plants rely on pollinators to spread their pollen and reproduce, while pollinators rely on the plant for food.

Coevolution can also occur between prey and predator species. As predators evolve to become more effective at catching their prey, the prey species adapt to avoid predation. For example

the evolution of venom in snakes led to the development of immunity in some prey species, while others developed camouflage or warning colouration.

Overall, coevolution is an important process that results in the diversification of organisms into many unique and fascinating species. These examples demonstrate its power and the importance of the interactions between species in shaping the world around us.



THE UNKOWN

Strolling in the dark,
desolate, dead forest in
NeverWinter, humid air
ran through my fingers.

Bang!

I fell on the bark terrain and pain
crawled up my spine. Blood
slowly ran out of my leg, then it
was all pitch black...

Lying on the ground, I felt
pain still in my body as I
passed out from shock.

Suddenly a second bullet hurled
through my arm, something was
chasing me.

A second later I pictured this
creature, it looked like a dark
man with no legs and no arms.
Then it was mysteriously floating
away from me, three men with
guns chased it, one man came
up to me and put a scratchy
wool hood on my head, then
cuffed my hands.

I was blinded.

I screamed in terror as I felt four
hands grab me and lift me up.

The three men had taken me to an
abandoned cabin. They lifted the
mask off my face; the second I
looked at them, the pain in my
body was numbed with fear, scars
were all over their misshapen faces.

I stopped screaming. They took me
to a dark room, and then bashed
my head once with their gun, and I
passed out.

BY SEB B



THE SILENCING THE SILENCING T

Suddenly, he was angry. The children wouldn't stop talking; the buzzing in his ear was driving him mad; the onions stung his eyes. He wiped his palm across his face, making sure to avoid the edge of the knife.

Muttering incoherently...the issues that had invaded his home chattered upstairs. If he didn't stop them, why, they would continue to fill the house - to talk. The neighbourhood would hear them.

'Quiet!' He roared, glaring at the ceiling. He scratched his hand. His head throbbed. He needed medicine, needed to stop them from talking. If he didn't, he feared his temples would implode - and then... just like that, the buzzing died down. The little brats were no longer whispering, conferring with each other how to further dampen the man's life. From that issued a silence...a stillness of sorts that the man was so used to.

He turned back to his onions, trying to remember the purpose of slicing them. The layers gave away little by little, and with each layer came tears streaking down the man's side. The silence was infectious, a wonderful moment of mirth.

Until it began again.

Of course, he had expected it to happen. Having once been a child, he knew first hand that children would always find a way to break the rule or order that they'd been given, even if it meant the unhappiness or disturbing of others around them.

What he hadn't expected; what he had had no intention of ever believing for a second would happen, was for them to say, 'Feeblebug.'

He swivelled round, facing the fridge. Silence. Nothing moved. There was no barking from the neighbour's dog, not a single car passing by.

'Feeblebug...Yes.'

He heard it again. It occurred to the man that in the terror, he was so still, he could hear his own breathing...the tap tap tap of the water. It seemed that there was nothing moving.

'Feeblebug..'

'Feeblebug...'

'Feeblebug...'

'Yes. He's a Feeblebug.'

All at once, the voices came to him in a dismal chorus. Different voices,

yet all saying the same thing, rolling the terrible word in their tongue... had they no shame?

His head spun. In the confusion, he tried - and failed- to steady himself, instead collapsing onto the floor, clutching his knees.

Why were they calling him?

For what reason were they saying the word? Tormenting him.

It was chaotic: the stillness, the sense of control was broken; as if the neighbour's dog was free, it began to bark furiously rabidly, screaming; a car zoomed by, followed by another, and that one with its own predator, and that one, prey to a motorbike. The tap in the kitchen continued to drip faster, louder: drip drip drip! 'No!' He gasped, moaned. He pushed himself up, trying to edge away from the noises, moving towards the wall. The knife clattered to the ground. He shuddered, attempting to hide, but he couldn't.

His heart was racing, his legs noodles. His feet suffered from fever as he was taken far back to before he became an uncle to the pests known as his nieces and nephews. Back to the time when he found himself alone on the playground, swinging on the

THE SILENCING THE SILENCING THE

swingset back and forth in the cycle of loneliness.

Lunchtime had come all too early for him, and he found himself an area of his own thoughts, chewing down a fish sandwich which was colder than yesterday; which would be colder tomorrow. Halfway through finishing, he had sensed that something was amiss, and he looked up to three tall, infamous frames and shuddered.

They were known as the J's, simply because they were too dim to think of any other names for their nasty band. He had understood that in every school, or at least in most schools, there was a chain, quite unnervingly similar to the food chain. To put it another way, there were three groups: popular, bullies and unpopular. He fell just below unpopular, and although he had never seen anything like it, the Js, composed of Jack, John and Jason were popular and bullies.

They strolled menacingly towards him, and Jack leered. They were all broad-shouldered, except Jack, who was skinnier and paler than the others. John and Jason were built like athletes, and were Jack's equals. Jack had green, notorious eyes, blond hair, and a threatening grin, which if you saw, you knew that some trouble was to follow. Jason and John, both brothers,

had brown eyes and brown hair, however, John had a round, large forehead, whilst Jason had a handsome, chiselled face. They reached him with malevolence in their eyes.

'Hey Stevie!' Roared John, perhaps the stupidest of the group. He never said it aloud, however.

'Stevie, got our lunch money?' John continued.

Quietly, he murmured, 'no' and winced as a hand cynically smacked him, knocking his glasses askew. 'What's wrong, Stevie? Afraid? We just want a friendly conversation, right buddies?' John asked sardonically, and the two other bullies nodded, grinning.

'P-p-please. J-j-jus-st leave m-me a-a-a-a' was interrupted by Jack's intimidating tone.

'Uh oh. Stevie's s-stuttering again! Someone get him a dictionary!' Jack bellowed. His friends closely guffawed behind. Sitting on the swing, he noted that the area of desertion was noticeably becoming crowded, bombarded by students. Jack stared around, surveying everyone, then leaned in closer to him and said quietly, 'Let's give 'em a show, ay Stevie?' Then he grew back to his hideous size and said to him, 'You're a freak, you know

that?'

He could feel hot tears filling up in his eyes, and knew that Jack had seen it too. Jack's eyes grew wide, before he gave an odd guffaw and said tauntingly, 'Oh no! Someone get the tissue, I think Stevie's g-gonna c-c-c-cry! Gonna tell you're mummy-'

'At least I have a mum, Jack! W-w-where's yours?' He said loudly, in inchoate anger. There was a palpable silence on the playground, and breathing heavily, he heard student's murmurs apprehensively. Jack looked taken aback, worse than stunned, and in hot tears, Jack slapped him hard, and his glasses were completely knocked off his face once more. Disoriented, he bent down and crawled, searching hastily for them, when he felt a painful jab in his stomach, and the air went out of him like a deflated balloon. He tried to get up again but this time, he felt his lips get knocked into his mouth, and he started bleeding at an alarming rate. He spat out blood. Before he could compose himself again...a kick once more in the belly, and another kick, then a strike in the temples. He could vaguely hear the cries from the students.

STORY CONTINUED >

THE SILENCING THE SILENCING T

'Ow. Stop!' He groaned weakly, blinded by red. He felt a punch in his nose and heard a miniscule 'crack'. He hadn't felt worse before, pain hitting him all at once. Then he felt hands, wrapping around his throat and squeezing him like a sponge. That was when panic rose.

'Nothing now are you, ya-ya feeblebug?!' Jack screeched.

'Feeblebug! Feeblebug! Stevie is a Feeblebug!' Chanted John. 'Stevie is a Feeblebug!'

'Sing!' Jason screeched, and the students started to worriedly sing along. They sang and sang, but he hadn't heard it. Lying on the ground in a bloody heap, helpless as he was maimed, everything went 'dark; he was in the present.

Eventually, the J's (to his relief) were expelled, but they had left scars buried deep into his mind. From that day on, he'd never had the peace he'd so desperately desired again.

Even now he could hear them taunting him in the form of the miserable, worthless brats And they were still going on. During his time of reminiscing, the chant had apparently grown louder: 'Uncle Steve's a Feeblebug!

Feeblebug and weak!'

'I-I am not!' He thundered, hammering his fist down on the floor, now forcing himself to his feet.. 'I-AM-NOT!' But it seemed he wasn't loud enough as he was ignored. How had they known the name he'd been taunted with when he was in his youth?

'Uncle Steve's a Feeblebug! A Feeblebug and loser!' They giggled...and he started to twitch. His mouth opened and closed continuously, as he busied himself, scratching his neck and arm. It was then he decided: he was going to make sure they were totally silenced. Still dazed, he reached for the floor, strolled across the sitting room, almost blank; he felt light, couldn't feel himself walking, and surprisingly calm, up the stairs.

There were a fair few doors. The first door: that was the public bathroom. The second door: his own room, the third door; he never revealed that door to anyone except "the Specials".

Finally, at the end of the narrow hallway, a single, wooden door, newly refurbished to a satisfactory end. It had a doorknob, metal and round, and as he touched it, he hesitated, pressing his ear against

the door. He heard them; the mad voices squealing, but their voices were muffled.

'Uncle's not weak!' He heard a tiny voice, whom he guessed as his niece, murmur.

'Yes he is.' The other voices, he guessed as his other nephews and nieces, agreed in unison. 'He isn't!' His niece replied defensively.

For the first time in a long while, he did something he hadn't thought he'd ever do again- he smiled. It wasn't a smile of delight, but of confidence - a luxury he believed he would never have. Then his heart sank at the rest of the words of his niece: 'He's not just weak... he's boring and old as well!' The kids chortled together before picking back up where they left off.

His hands shook, his feet no longer made of bone and flesh but something weak; perhaps rotting wood or feather, or even clouds, for he could not feel them anymore. Then he straightened up, opened the door, and went in.

He noted that almost immediately, everything changed; the lights were off and the children were under the warmth of their duvets. None of them stirred as new light

THE SILENCING THE SILENCING THE

creeped in from the corridor. 'Children...' he murmured softly, swiftly gliding over to the youngest one. 'I have something for you...' The youngest snored lightly, and did not wake even as he stroked her chin, brushing her blond hair away from her face. How wonderfully a child could feign sleep... he thought.

Suddenly, he clamped his hand over her mouth and only then did she awaken, alarmed by the sudden suffocation, blindly defending herself. She was too late. As the knife's edge met with her back, she struggled, half asleep, half awake, unsure of what was happening to her, only partially aware that she was in pain. He could tell she was in shock, but he refused to let go. Instead, he urged the knife deeper into her flesh, slowly drawing it upwards in a haphazard way. A couple of seconds passed until the girl remained limp and frozen as a rag doll. A rag doll soaked in crimson liquid in her bed. He took heavy breaths, forcing the oxygen into his lungs, not wanting to awaken the six other children. He retracted the knife. It had been so...simple and quick. As he did it he felt...nothing? No. That was wrong. He had felt something, something he had never felt in the whole 36 years of his existence.

Could it be...? He had to make sure. Practically a ghost, pale as a bed sheet, he soared over to the next child, this time snuffing them with a pillow, before slashing his knife against their neck. Just like the last one they put up a struggle, but when it was done, they rolled over, almost falling to the ground, only pushed back into bed by him. This time he was certain. It was enjoyable, unusually fun. But he quickly felt it rushing out of him like sand from an hourglass, and desperately, he moved onto the next child, then the next child, then the next, until he reached the penultimate child, who, unfortunately, screamed, before they drew their final breath.

He was covered in blood, fast drying, but before he could have a shower, he had to finish it. As he turned to the final boy, he knew that something was wrong. He peered closer... just as he'd feared. Silas shot up drowsily in bed. Like the others, he was astonishingly handsome, with fair hair and a pale, bony face and (although it couldn't be seen) brown eyes. Many joked he could pass off as a ken doll anyday. Sleepily, he rubbed his eyes, seemingly oblivious to the chaos, and looked up.

'Uncle Steve? What- what are you doing?' Silas asked interestedly. He ignored Silas.

'Did you know I'd been bullied at school? I bet you didn't.' He said quietly, sweeping closer to the deck of the bed.

'W-what are you talking about? Why would I-' Silas began, getting out of the bed.

'Into bed- now!' He ordered. Silas did so with wary eyes.

'Answer me!' He pressed on. 'Did you know I'd been bullied at school? And I was called a ridiculous name, really: Feeblebug!' He shuddered slightly, and soon, he'd come to the side of Silas' bed. 'Where did you hear the name, my dear nephew? Procured it from one of the J's perhaps? Or been mixing with their kids to spite me?' His voice had started rising uncontrollably. He couldn't help it. Perplexed, Silas replied,

'What are you on about? F-Feeblebug? What is that?' 'Don't lie!' He roared, gripping the knife tighter. His hand with the knife shook. His whole body was

THE SILENCING THE SILENCING

shaking. He had to end this before he collapsed. He brandished his knife, and in the moonlight the weapon was lit, striking terror into the boy. The knife was coated with thick blood.

‘Why do you- what have you-’ Silas whispered, scanning the room one more time. And it dawned on him what he was witnessing. ‘They’re-’ Silas had never known he could reach such a falsetto.

‘Dead.’ He muttered, waving his knife at each of them. ‘But I’ll let you go only if you just answer me.’ He pleaded. In the back of his mind, he knew it was a lie.

Silas probably knew as well. ‘You’re insane! A mad man!’

‘No.’ He replied quite calmly, shaking his head. ‘I-I just need to know why you were up! How you- how you know of the name-’

‘Mum was right!’ Silas interrupted. ‘You do have your issues! I never should have come!’

He had enough. Screaming, he wrapped his hands around the boy’s throat, driving the knife forward through the boy’s growing Adam’s apple. Blood streaked out as the edge met with the skin. Silas started to cough, then slowly choked.

‘Why were you awake?’ He exclaimed, shaking uncontrollably.

‘We weren’t!’ Silas choked.

‘Liar!’ He bellowed, and he pushed the knife, willing it deeper into the boy. Silas screamed, tearing up, having a spasm, before twitching. His head slumped forward, which propelled his body towards the floorboards, and this time, the man didn’t bother catching him. The corpse of the once handsome boy hit the floor with a loud thud, and Silas’ body twitched no more.

It was silent once more. And in the terrible sweet silence, the man heard his own breathing. It was a cold night, yet strangely enough warmth rushed into his body. The neighbour’s dog was asleep. A single car passed by and in the distance, the man heard something like sirens. But he didn’t care. The J’s will never bane me again. He thought grimly. Not a single child moved anymore, and honestly, he was pleased.

He stepped out of the room, his fingers and feet numb, and he moved, as if in a trance, and he started towards the stairs.

Everything became blurry after that. He didn’t remember getting to the kitchen, nor rinsing the blood off himself or the blade. He didn’t remember as the first flashes of blue and red arrived, accompanied by the alarms blaring their warning. He didn’t remember as his door was barged down, and he was found, then suddenly forced down to his knees, apprehended. All he remembered were the horrified faces of the children, and the silence that had followed the deed.

And the silence was bliss.

BY DANIEL I.



ST ALBANS YOUTH COUNCIL

The St Albans Youth Council are a group of young people from Years 7 - 13 who meet on Mondays in Harpenden or online. As a youth council, we aim to raise money for the community through charity events or volunteer work.

In the past, we have organised a charity film night, a self guided walk to boost mental health, a tea for the elderly in Redbourn, custom made care packages for a care home, in addition to many litter picks. We also listen to speakers and discuss how they can improve the community. Furthermore, we do fun stuff such as cooking, play games and table tennis. We are always looking for more people so why not raise money for good causes while having fun? Youth Council is equally a good thing to add to your CV which can increase your opportunities for better jobs and universities in the future.

We are always looking for new members so If you want to join email: sfyp@hertfordshire.gov.uk

BY CROSBY C

IS CHESS THE NEW FORTNITE?

Today I'm going to write about why chess has taken off all of a sudden. Firstly, on the 23rd of October 2020 'The Queen's Gambit' came out on Netflix which was a huge hit for chess in general. This is suggested by the sales of chess sets which went by 215% from October to November 2020 (this is when 'The Queen's Gambit' was released).

Let's look at why this has happened:

Well, in 2007 chess.com started as a small website mainly used by advanced chess players but as it grew in size more beginners began to join and by 2018 chess.com had racked up 23 million members. Now, in 2023 it has around 131 million members. This is mainly due to those like Gotham Chess who make chess seem very fun and personally I enjoy his videos and streams.

Mainly tiktok and youtube shorts have saved chess with viral videos like Gotham Chess 'sacrificing the rook'.

BY BENKY M

LONDON ELSTREE AERODROME

BY THOMAS H



Hello I am Thomas and am writing about where I will be doing my work experience in October 2023 and a little bit about the physics of how planes fly.

I will be completing a week at the London Elstree Aerodrome where I will be mostly working on the maintenance of small prop planes such as Cessna 182 or 152. I will be able to extend my knowledge of planes and finally be able to work on their engines and begin to learn how they are put together from the inside out. Furthermore, I will not just be learning about the engines but all other aspects of planes such as the electronics and aerodynamics which also contribute to planes being able to fly.

Believe it or not there is also a massive amount of physics to do with planes being able to fly. An example of this is generating lift. This is done by the shape of a wing also known as its airfoil. As the plane increases its airspeed, the air hitting the front of the wing almost gets split. Half of it will go up and over the wing at a high velocity and low pressure whilst the other half goes below the wing at a low velocity and high pressure. This means that the air going below the wing travels slower than the air above simply creating lift allowing a plane to increase altitude.

Hope you enjoyed reading about what I will be doing at London Elstree Aerodrome and some simple physics about how planes fly.



WALKING

My article is about walking and you are probably thinking: why walking?

Here is why: I love walking because you can walk, get fresh air and clear your mind after a long day whilst burning calories, or sometimes you can go on a walk with your friends ,catch up with them have some fun and see how they are doing with mental health or just how their day has been in general.

I go on walks at least once a day: I walk to school everyday and back. On the weekends I try to go on a long walk or just a walk round the block. I do this to clear my mind and be peaceful, it's like you are in your own world and you don't have to focus on anything around you and it is just you and your own world.

After I go on a walk I feel refreshed. It feels like I have been out today and done something compared to sitting down and doing nothing. It changes my whole mood for the rest of the day.

BY BECK W

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD



Verulam School, along with many others country-wide, has given students the remarkable and formative opportunity to partake in the Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE). But, why is DofE so important and what does it entail?

While many people would have at least heard of the expedition culminating the DofE journey, there is far more work mostly untalked of. To be permitted to go on the expedition, the applicant needs to complete three activities:

one physical, one volunteering and one skill. Two of these you must partake in for three months and one must be done for six months.

This range of activities is incredibly helpful for a child - not only pushing them to try new and varied things but also pushing them slightly out of their comfort zones with incredible results. No matter what physical, skill or volunteering you pick, you are almost guaranteed to learn skills for life.

Once these events have been completed, the student is prepared for the expedition - a walk taking place over two days and including a one-night camp. While sometimes the most foreboding for people unfamiliar with camping from events such as scouting, it is this part of the DofE experience that will be most enjoyable and memorable for the student.

BY REUBEN H

THE WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

The World Chess Championship has just ended, crowning Ding Liren as the World Champion. The World Championship is a yearly event within the world of Chess being dominated by Magnus Carlsen from 2013 until now where he announced he would not defend his title, despite being the strongest classical player in the world.

Ding Liren would face Ian Nepomniachtchi as his foe in the Championship, narrowly escaping defeat in the fourteen classical games. Each player would end this round on equal scores of seven points.

This would see the Classical tournament change to Blitz games, with each game going from many hours to just minutes. The first three of four Blitz would all end in draws, and the fourth was poised to end the same.

However, in the last moment before a draw would occur further extending the Championship, Ding Liren would move himself into danger, risking the Championship. But mere minutes later Ding's risk would pay off as a shaking Ian Nepomniachtchi would resign after Ding Liren overpowered him, winning China their first Classical World Championship.

BY DAN H



WHY DO SOME PEOPLE HATE SKATEBOARDING?

As you may know, skateboarding was so popular in the 60s that there were over 50 million skateboards sold in the US. But toward the end of the 80s, some older people started to say that skateboarding was associated with crime (which it isn't).

The reason they dislike it is because they think skateboarding is just young people riding on a piece of wood with 4 wheels and jumping and flicking it. So that still doesn't make sense as to why people HATE skateboarding. While some people think that skateboarding is mostly

popular among young people, and some people distrust young people and spread fake news about skateboarders being criminals and this then makes people hate it. People think that people would be easier to control if they did not skateboard.

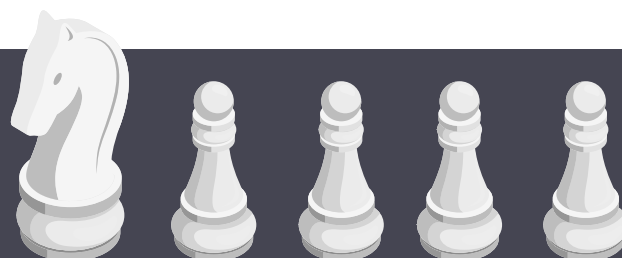
Of course some people wouldn't hate skateboarding if they thought it was safe, but they don't like it because of its safety issue. But in fact, skateboarding injuries and deaths are less than other extreme sports in a year. In fact, football injuries are more than



skateboarding in the US and most of them happen on roads so if you ride a skateboard in a skate park, not much serious injuries will happen. This is why people hate skateboarding and some facts about it.

BY KENDRICK W

MY CHESS JOURNEY



I started playing chess when I was about 5 years old. I went to a club in Ukraine. I really enjoyed playing it for the first time but it was really difficult. We learned loads of different things there, from basics to playing tournaments. In fact I played in a tournament the first time when I was 6. It went as well as you would expect. All the time I could, I played chess with my dad. I always wanted to beat him fair and square. That was the goal I wanted to reach. I went to the chess club until I was 9. That was when I moved to England.

I joined Year 4 but I didn't play chess until Year 5. I realised that there was a chess club in my primary school so I went there. Most of the time we would just play there but I personally found myself making friends with other people. Around that time I qualified to play for St Albans. The lessons had helped me so much that I finally beat my dad for the first time.

In Year 6 I went to a school tournament where loads of students from different areas

played for their school. Our school came third, so all of us got a bronze medal. That was the same year that I nearly qualified to play for Hertfordshire. With half a point away I was really disappointed. But I haven't given up, I still do chess lessons and I have a long way to go to becoming the chess player I want to become.

BY DMITRII D



SECRETS OF THE LONDON UNDERGROUND

Last year I compiled some photos from my journey around Britain by rail, so continuing with a similar theme, I've compiled my best secrets, facts and hidden gems of the London Underground.

On the Circle line there are many different secrets. You may have thought 'is it possible to ride a full loop on the Circle line?' Given the name you would be quite right to ask this, but the answer is: no - it is no longer possible. You will have to change platforms at Edgware Road to continue your journey. However, until December 2009 it was possible to complete the full circle without changing trains.

Alight at Bayswater, and take a short walk to 24 Leinster Gardens, where two false facades were built to hide the railway below. Here there is a gap between the houses, dating back to the time when steam trains were operated. This allowed the steam to escape from the tunnels.

At Baker Street, look out for the patterns depicting Sherlock Holmes, a reference to Arthur Conan Doyle's fictitious 'Sherlock Holmes' character who lived at 221B Baker Street.



We continue our journey on the Bakerloo line to Piccadilly Circus. If you exit at the rear of the train travelling southbound, there is a large gap in the wall allowing you to see onto the northbound Bakerloo line platform.



On your travels around the tube, you may have noticed one of the 270 framed labyrinth pictures. Part of a 2013 project called 'Art on the Underground' celebrating London Underground's 150th anniversary, a labyrinth was designed and erected in every one of the tube's stations. The birthplace of these labyrinths is Warren Street, where you can find many original mazes tiled onto the wall at platform level. These mazes were designed to be completed in the waiting time between trains. However, with 36 trains per hour on the Victoria Line now, there is little time between trains for the commuter to complete each puzzle.

On the extremities of the western end of the Metropolitan Line, trains hit the highest speed on all of the network, at 60 miles per hour between Chesham and Chalfont and Latimer. This is also the longest distance between two tube stations, at 4.5 miles.

At Greenford, situated on the western end of the Central line, a diagonal lift runs parallel to the escalators - the only one of its kind on the London Underground. The only other station where a diagonal lift can be found is down to the Elizabeth Line platforms at Liverpool Street, however the Elizabeth Line is not classified as the London Underground, but National Rail instead.

Next we arrive at Finsbury Park on the Victoria line, one of few stations on the London Underground without ticket barriers. At Euston Square it is also possible to negate the ticket barriers by using the lift down to platform level.

Highgate, on the Northern line, is the deepest station below street level at 58.5 metres. You can ascend (or descend, it's easier!) the highest number of steps on the network here at 320 steps, if you choose not to take the lift.

This is possibly my favourite secret of the London Underground: at Kennington, it is the only station where you can board a train and arrive back at the same station. Walk to platform 4 and board a terminating southbound train. Your train will then traverse a loop outside the station, and after roughly 7 minutes, you'll arrive back at Kennington on platform 1.

BY TOM R

HOW TO GET STARTED, AND STAY MOTIVATED, PLAYING YOUR FIRST INSTRUMENT

I've been playing electric guitar for roughly three years now and it has become one of the the main activities of my day. However, during my years in primary school I decided to learn cello, which I didn't like as much and I dropped it after 1 grade and 3 years of playing.

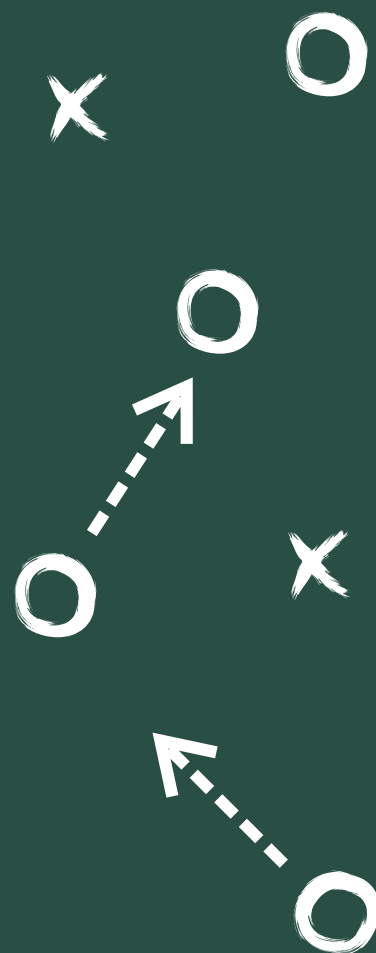
I've since discovered the reasons why this happened and maybe others could learn from my mistakes. Do take what I'm about to say with a grain of salt as this may not apply to you: the first mistake I made was that I went into playing with very high expectations of what I would accomplish. I saw someone play a cool jazz piece and thought I could play that within days; I was wrong.

Second, keep a nice balance between music theory and practical work. Too much theory is very boring and was the main reason I dropped cello. On the contrary, a lack of theory and technique will result in you being unable to play what you want to play. This almost happened to me when playing electric guitar, however my teacher was able to point it out.

Finally, give yourself a reason to play. If you treat learning an instrument like a mandatory school subject, you are going to enjoy it like one. For me, I find playing satisfying and relaxing, however other people may not find that same enjoyment when playing, and that's fine.

If you aren't enjoying playing an instrument, give it a few months and if you still don't enjoy it then maybe it's not for you.

BY JOE



SPORTS ROUNDUP

THE BENEFITS OF SPORT IN SCHOOL

BY JOSHUA B

Playing sport in school offers a myriad of benefits for students beyond just physical exercise. Engaging in sport can help students build confidence, develop social skills, improve their mental health, and learn important life skills.

Firstly, playing sport in school can boost a student's self-esteem and confidence. Through participation in sport, students develop a sense of accomplishment and pride in their abilities which can translate into other areas of their lives, such as academics and personal relationships.

In addition to this, sports provide an excellent opportunity for

students to develop social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and leadership. Team sports, in particular, require players to work together towards a common goal which can foster a sense of camaraderie and encourage students to learn how to support one another.

Participating in sport can have a positive impact on students' mental health. Exercise releases endorphins, which are feel-good chemicals that can boost mood and reduce stress and anxiety. Regular exercise has also been linked to improved cognitive function, which can lead to better academic performance.

Playing sport in school can help students learn important life skills, such as time management, goal setting, and perseverance. These skills are crucial for success in all areas of life, and sports provide a fun and engaging way to develop them.

In conclusion, playing sports in school offers numerous benefits for students. It can boost confidence, develop social skills, improve mental health, and teach important life skills. As such, schools should encourage and provide opportunities for students to engage in sports, both as part of the curriculum and through extracurricular activities.

FOOTBALL

BY DAN L

Hello, I am Dan L, a member of the amazing school: Verulam. Verulam has taught me how to be a better ME! The school's saying is 'faire mon devoir' which in French means: do my duty. This saying means a lot in my outside of school life. I play for a football team and if we want to win we all have to play a big role in the match. We have to score goals, assist goals and when we lose the

ball to win it back. The saying, *faire mon devoir*, runs through my head when in a match because if I don't do my duty then I let my team down and we might lose.

The football season has ended now, but now I have two tournaments coming up. They are 9 a side and the coaches picked the two teams.

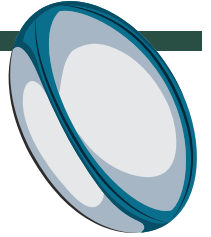
Over the whole season I have tried my hardest. I did my duty and the coaches saw that and picked me for not only one, but two whole tournaments!

That just proves that if you try your hardest you can succeed.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

THE 2023 RUGBY WORLD CUP



This year the Rugby World Cup will be taking place in France and will be from Friday 8th September to Saturday 28th October 2023, with the opening match being an exciting France vs New Zealand match from Pool A.

The tournament is expected to be one of the most fascinating yet, with a more even playing field providing more chances for upsets

and shocking results. The Rugby World Cup will have 20 teams, and some of the strong teams we are going to see this year include France, England, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, Japan, Wales, and South Africa. The event is expected to be one of the best yet, not only because of all the strong teams but because of the exceptional fan experiences and massive impact on the sport.

Such as France having a strong shot at their first RWC win as well as South Africa and New Zealand competing for their fourth win. It will surely be a very exciting event in sports history

BY JAMES G



MY RUGBY JOURNEY

From around the age of 2 I have been going down to watch my brother play. I was always interested in running around and I would just play with a ball on the sidelines with my dad. As my dad was a sporty kid when he was younger he was quite eager for me to join rugby and a football team from the age of 6 as young as possible. I would play football on Saturday and rugby on a Sunday up until the age of 11 when you have to make a choice between rugby and football as there was no longer a Saturday league in football.

I still continue to play rugby as a teenager and I am planning on playing for a long time into the future.

My dad is just waiting for one more game when I turn 18, so he can play against his two sons who he still believes he will beat...

BY ARTHUR R-S

NOTTINGHAM FOREST FC 21/22



Nottingham Forest started the season and had a shocker. We had lost 5 games in a row and were sitting in last place. Chris Hughton, the manager, got sacked and we were searching for a new manager. The man we got in was called Steve Cooper; he had the biggest job to do to get Forest out of the relegation zone.

But guess what? He took Forest all the way to the playoffs final! This man, Steve Cooper, did the unthinkable! He took Forest all the way from last place to getting promoted to the Premier League.

Guess how long it took Nottingham Forest FC to get promoted?

Answer: 23 years!

What I took away from that season is all a team needs is resilience and character and I think that's what Steve Cooper made that team think.

The respect he has received from this is unbelievable. This is how Steve Cooper picked up this Forest side and took them to the top.

BY WILLS



SPORTS ROUNDUP

BEING A FOOTBALL FAN

As a football fan, there is nothing more exhilarating than the thrill of watching your team win. As a fan of both Luton Town and Arsenal, I have had the privilege of experiencing this feeling on multiple occasions, especially this season.

Luton Town, a team that plays in the EFL Championship, holds a special place in my heart as it is located in my hometown. Despite not being a big-name club, Luton Town has a rich history for going through the ranks of English Football from non-league semi-pro football to the Championship and now have the opportunity to get promoted to the Premier League for the upcoming season. Watching the team play at Kenilworth Road, with the chants of “Come on you Hatters” ringing in my ears, is an experience like no other.

On the other hand, Arsenal is a club with a global following and a rich legacy of success. From the “Invincibles” of 2003-04 to the FA Cup triumphs in recent years. To add to all of this success, the

Emirates Stadium, with its state-of-the-art facilities, is a sight to behold.

However, supporting these clubs has brought a time of disappointment and sadness on occasions. For example, Luton Town missed the chance to get promoted to the Premier League last season due to a playoff semi-final loss to Huddersfield Town.

Or the Arsenal loss to Newcastle United last season that destroyed Arsenal’s chances to play in the sport’s most privileged club competition, the Champions’ League.

Supporting any sort of team is going to come with its ups and downs but sticking with them is a sign of loyalty and gives you an even better reason to support them.

BY PATRICK.S





DO FOOTBALL MANAGERS GET ENOUGH TIME TO SETTLE IN?

When it comes to football managers, people either say that they are doing well or doing really badly. But, do they get enough time to settle into new clubs?

As a Watford FC fan, I know that many managers get appointed and sacked within a few games. Watford haven't been on form this season but I think the managers should still get at least a season in charge of the team, to get to know the players, understand their strengths and weaknesses, and work out how to play together.

(2022/23 season. Rob Edwards former Watford manager for 10 League games. I took the above



image in the stands of the Vicarage Road stadium.)

In what other profession or career would someone be given such a short period of time to be introduced into their role before being sacked for not performing? Being given time is really important when starting a new role especially when in charge of a football team.

Imagine only being given a short period of time to settle into a new school..... making new friends, and getting good test scores all takes time. Settling in anywhere new takes time.

You could argue that because managers' wages are large amounts of money, the expectation should also be high, however surely there is a balance.

Next time, before you are critical of a football manager, consider the amount of time they've had to get to know their job and team, and maybe give them a second chance.

BY SAMUEL M

CLUBS & SOCIETIES



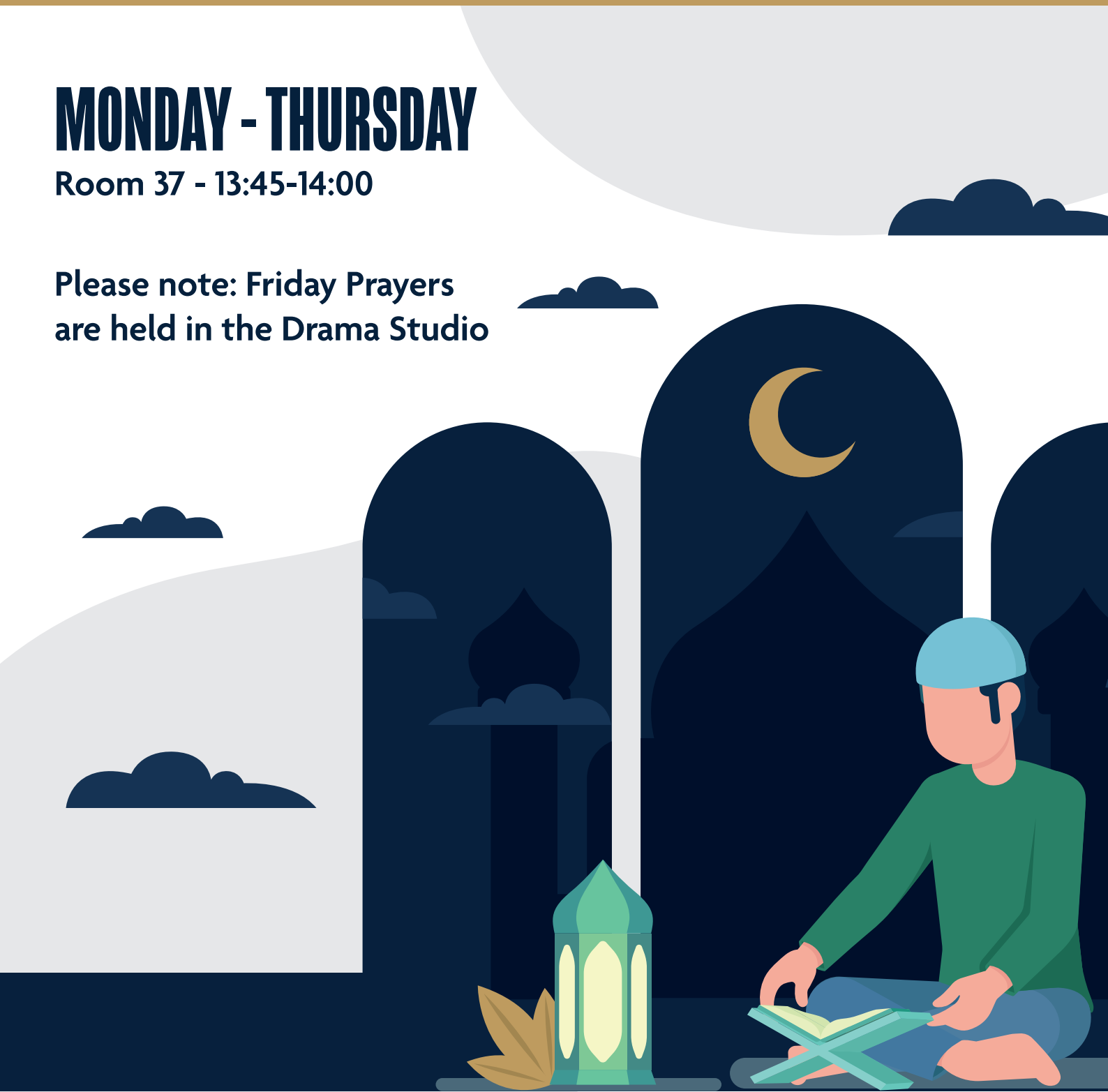
CLUB NAME	SUITABLE FOR	LOCATION	DAY	TIME
Drama Club	Years 7-9	Drama Studio	Monday	3:15-4:15pm
Drama Masterclass	All	Drama Studio	Friday	3:15pm – 4:30pm
Basketball Club	Years 7-9	Sports Hall	Wednesday	After school
Chinese and Mandarin Club	Years 7 & 8	A3	Tuesday	Lower Lunch
Mandarin Practise	Years 9-13	A3	Friday	Upper lunch
Coding Club	Years 9-13	LRC	Friday	Upper lunch
Debate Club	Open to all	Room 2	Wednesday	3:15pm – 4:15pm
HPQ qualification	Year 10 only	Room 4	Wednesday	3:10pm – 4:10pm
Social Science Club	Years 7 & 8	21	Friday	Lower Lunch
Watercolour Club	Year 9	A1	Monday	3:15pm-4:15pm
Chess club	Years 9-13	LIB1	Every day	Upper Lunch
Chess club	Years 7 & 8	Room 37	Every Friday	12:20 - 13:10
Table Tennis Club	All	Sports Hall	Tuesday	After school
Verulam Historical Society	Years 9-13	Room 30	Wednesday	Upper lunch
KS3 Maths club	Years 7 -8	B3	Wednesday	Lower lunch
KS4 Maths club	Years 9-11	B3	Friday	Upper lunch
Tennis Club	All	MUGA	Tuesday	3.10pm - 4.10pm
Warhammer Club	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

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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