

VERULAM SCHOOL

# SPOTLIGHT



EDITION 3 : 29/09/23

HPQ and EPQ AT VERULAM

Toward the end of Year 9 students begin to think about what they can do to stand out from the crowd academically at Verulam and later when they are chasing top University places and Apprenticeships. One opportunity available to our students as they enter Year 10 is HPQ. Students can undertake to complete an accredited Higher Project Qualification (HPQ). This is taught after school for one hour twice a week for two terms. Sound familiar? If you have a child who has been in/is currently in Sixth Form you may rightly think this sounds like the EPQ many students complete in Sixth Form. They are linked. HPQ is the KS4 version of EPQ. It is accredited by the same exam board, AQA and develops similar skills but at a KS4 level.

If you are not familiar with these qualifications, let me explain a little more about the HPQ: students form an enquiry question around a topic of personal interest to them. They can then choose to either produce a 2,000 word research based project or create an artefact and shorter 500 word report explaining how research has informed their creation of the artefact. The course teaches students how to research (and avoid plagiarism), how to select relevant research material, how to deal with bias in research material and how to manage their time. All useful study skills. Last year's topics ranged from 'What is art?' to 'What makes the ultimate hedgehog house?' which was an artefact project that included a handmade hedgehog house designed and built by the student.

This year, we are currently in the process of refining the research questions and I can confidently say that the students' interests are as diverse and inspired as ever. We have a number of students considering ideas around the topic of artificial intelligence and its use in society; some topics around space exploration and some interesting ideas forming related to sport.

This year our Year 10 group will also spend a day at Southampton University where we will be shown how to use the University library research facilities to aid the research process.



Southampton University is one of a number of Universities to really value 'project qualifications' such as HPQ and in Sixth Form, EPQ (Extended Project Qualification). The University recognises the excellent independent study training the courses offer and really value students who have a proven track record in this type of study.

For those of you with sons currently following the HPQ course, look out for your invitation to the Presentation Evening in the Spring term when our students will tell you all about the work they have done and invite questions from the audience. Last year's presentations were outstanding!



# COMING UP SOON:

| Date   | Event  | Time         |
|--|--|--------------|
| Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October | Flu vaccinations (only if consent has been received) | 8:30am – 3pm |
| Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October                            | Senior Maths Challenge                               |              |
| Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October                            | Year 10 Information Evening                          | 6pm - 6:45pm |
| Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> October                           | Cantonese Parents' Evening Talk                      | 5:30pm - 7pm |
| Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> October                             | DofE Silver departs                                  |              |
| Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> October                             | DofE Silver returns                                  |              |
| Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October                           | Year 9 Parents' Information Evening                  | 6pm – 6:45pm |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> October                          | Yr10 HPQ visit to Southampton University             | All day      |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> October                          | Year 10 DPR drop in                                  | 6pm-7pm      |