

VERULAMVOX

*Your school, your voice,
your magazine.*

THE CREATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

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CREATIVE WRITING

Read stories created by
our amazing students!

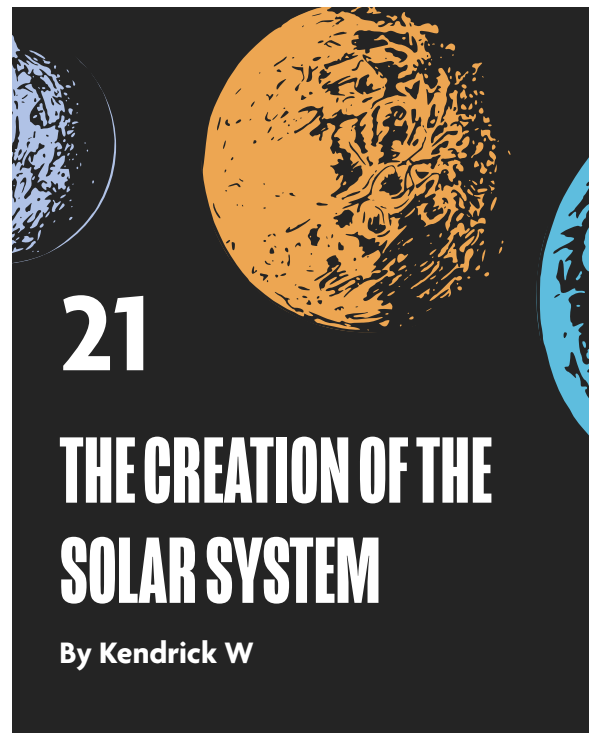
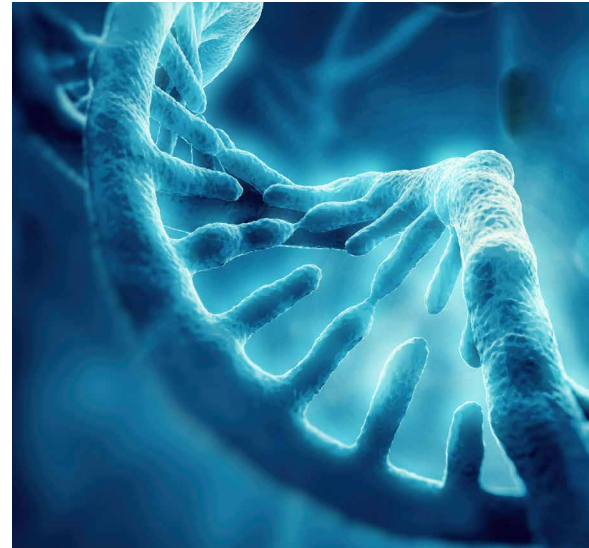


VERULAM
SCHOOL

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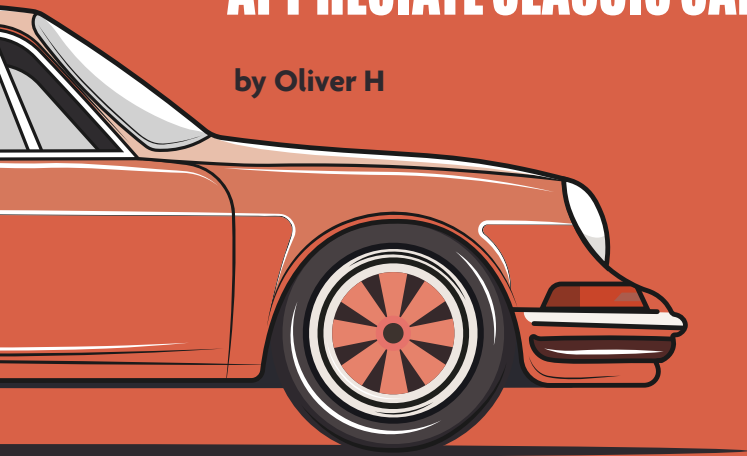
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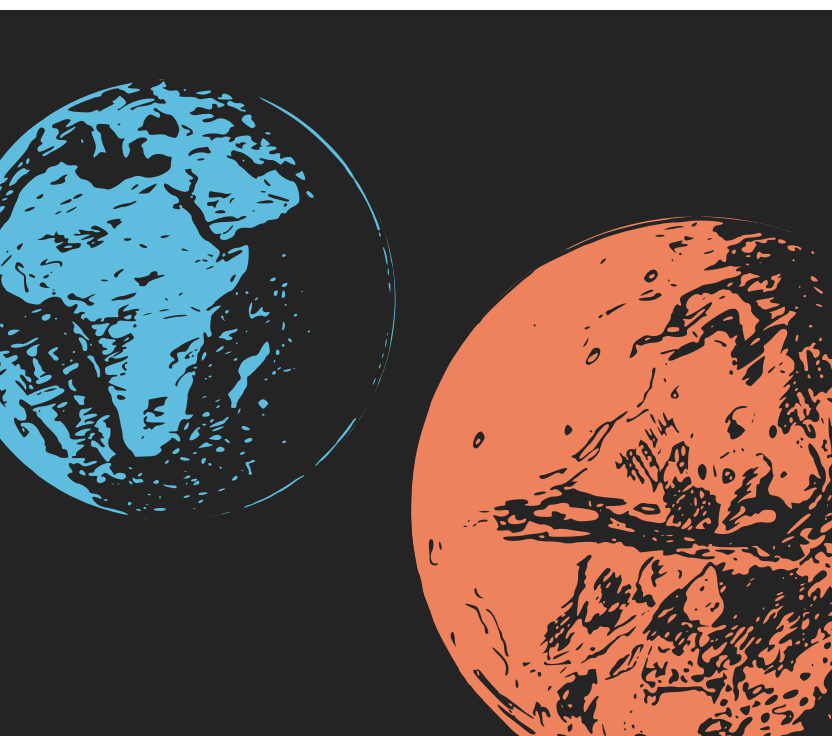
by Oliver H



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SCIENCE AT VERULAM

By Gamal S-M



WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Students,

Welcome to the first edition of Verulam Vox for this academic year. The first half term has been busy but despite this our student contributors have found time to put together an impressive edition of Verulam Vox.

As usual, all the articles are written by students. They have covered a vast array of topics from informative articles exploring science and philosophy, to creative writing, environmental issues affecting all of us, music, and the ever-popular sporting interests of our students.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition and perhaps feel inspired to try a new musical instrument, hobby or sport having read what others have to say about it. Half term would be a perfect time to try something new!

Best wishes,
Miss J Richardson

SENIOR TEAM

UPDATE

BY BILLY J, SCHOOL CAPTAIN

SENIOR PREFECT TEAM UPDATE:

After what I hope has been an enjoyable and restful summer break, I would like to welcome you all back to the most recent version of the Verulam Vox.

Before we get into some of the other articles written by the House team in Years 8 to 11, I would like to draw attention to some events that have recently taken place and furthermore look forward to some exciting events on the near horizon.

OPEN EVENING:

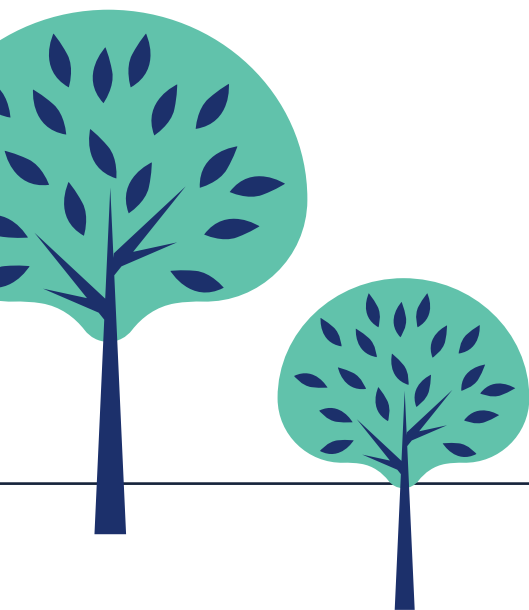
Recently, our school opened its doors for the Open Evening which once again ran very smoothly. I still remember vividly when I visited the school for the Open Evening, which helped to sway my opinion when I was deciding which school, I would end up joining in the area. It is always very exciting to see how each subject gets ready to present their curriculum.

From a Senior Prefect standpoint, a significant portion of the team took time out of their evening to come and help and give back to the school, which I am sure many of the staff were grateful for, as well as myself. Furthermore, some of the students from different year groups delivered speeches at the event, which is certainly something to be proud of.

ABBAY SERVICE:

Looking forward a little bit to the Abbey Service; some of the Senior Prefect team have already started planning to make sure that the event goes as smoothly as possible.

The service offers the opportunity to speak in front of a large audience and to reflect; I am hoping that many of the Senior Prefect team will be eager to volunteer for an active role and really do themselves proud in front of our school community. I hope that I will see some of you on the day, both parents and students alike, and that the event is a memorable occasion.



ECO PROJECT:

Introducing an exciting new project in the works: our Senior Prefect team is working toward achieving the eco checkmark for our school during the duration of our time in post. The process involves working to achieve a variety of points from completing activities linked to a range of environmental goals such as: student awareness through assemblies; exploring the environment of our school grounds and being aware of what lives there – we aim to protect our natural biodiversity, by making sure that our outside areas are densely populated with both plant life and other forms of life.

Look forward to the changes that will be seen around the school site, changes will start to be made soon!

VERULAMVOX

VERULAM REPS

Hello my name is George R, form representative of 9C and in this term's Verulam Vox I will be writing about Verulam school's motto: faire mon devoir.

Faire mon devoir is French for 'do my duty'. As a student you have two main duties in school and out of school. In school I have a duty to attend lessons on time and look smart also to pay attention in lessons. Most of those duties apply for out of school. Out of school you have many more such as being respectful and kind to friends, family and members of the public. Duties are about responsibilities which is something that someone is expected or required to do by moral or legal obligation.

As a form representative of 9C it is my duty and responsibility to write an article for Verulam Vox every term. Also being a form rep comes with other responsibilities such as, being early for assembly to let my form in their seats and to make sure the donations for FEED go to the canteen. Also in general being a good role model for my form.

BY GEORGE R.

SCHOOL LIFE

NURTURING TOMORROW'S LEADERS: THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF VERULAM SCHOOL

In the heart of our community lies a place of learning, growth, and inspiration - Verulam school. This unassuming institution has been silently shaping the future for countless students over the years, fostering an environment where young minds flourish and dreams take flight.

In this article, we'll take a closer look at the incredible journey of Verulam, celebrating its achievements, its dedicated staff, and the bright future it continues to shape for many students.

A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

Verulam school has a rich history dating back to 1938, when it first opened its doors to eager young learners. Over the decades, it has evolved into a beacon of education, providing a solid foundation for students from diverse backgrounds. The school's commitment to fostering academic, social, and emotional growth has remained unwavering throughout the years.

DEDICATED STAFF

One of the school's most significant assets is its dedicated staff. The teachers at Verulam are not just educators; they are mentors, role models, and sources of inspiration. They go above and beyond to create engaging lessons, promote critical thinking, and instill a lifelong love of learning in their students. The support staff also work tirelessly to ensure a safe and nurturing environment.

INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM

Verulam school prides itself on its innovative curriculum that caters to the unique needs of every student. Whether it's through the use of cutting-edge technology, interactive learning experiences, or creative extracurricular activities, the school is dedicated to providing a well-rounded education that prepares students for success in a rapidly changing world.

SCHOOL LIFE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Verulam school recognises the importance of community involvement in education. The school actively collaborates with parents, local businesses, and community organisations to enrich the educational experience. Through partnerships and volunteer programmes, students learn the value of giving back, further enhancing their personal growth.

A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY

Inclusivity is at the core of Verulam school's values. The school celebrates diversity and strives to create a welcoming environment where every student feels valued and respected. It fosters a culture of empathy and understanding, teaching students the importance of embracing differences and working together harmoniously.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESS STORIES

Numerous alumni have gone on to excel in various fields, proving that the foundation laid at Verulam paves the way for a bright future.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we celebrate the legacy of Verulam school, we also look to the future with optimism and excitement. The school continues to evolve, adapting to the ever-changing educational landscape. Its unwavering commitment to nurturing young minds and preparing them for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead ensures that Verulam will remain a pillar of the community for generations to come.

Verulam School is more than just a place of learning; it is a hub of inspiration, growth, and community. As we reflect on its inspiring journey, we can only imagine the countless dreams it will continue to nurture and the leaders it will help shape in the years to come.



BY SAMERA H

A well-rounded set of A-level subjects is often a wise choice. It keeps your options open for a variety of degrees and careers. While specialising can be beneficial in certain cases, a balanced combination of subjects can offer flexibility. For instance, pairing a science subject with a humanities subject can provide a broad foundation.

SCHOOL LIFE



Seek Guidance

Don't hesitate to seek guidance from teachers, parents, or career counsellors. They can provide valuable insights and advice based on their experience. Teachers, in particular, can offer recommendations based on your academic performance and aptitude in specific subjects.

Be Realistic

While pursuing your passions is important, be realistic about your abilities and workload. Some subjects may be more challenging than others, and taking on too many demanding subjects simultaneously can lead to burnout. Strike a balance between ambition and feasibility.

By reflecting on your interests, career goals, and seeking guidance, you can make informed choices that set you on a path to success. Remember that your A-levels are a steppingstone to your future, so choose wisely and keep an open mind at the outset.

Explore Your Interests

Choose subjects that genuinely interest you. A-levels demand dedication and effort, so studying something you're passionate about can make the journey more enjoyable and rewarding. Explore subjects beyond the curriculum by reading books, attending lectures, or joining clubs related to your interests.

Future-Proofing

Consider the evolving job market and technological advancements. Some A-level subjects, like computer science or mathematics, can provide a strong foundation for future careers. Keep an eye on emerging fields and trends in the job market when making your choices.

BY ETIENNE C.

SCHOOL LIFE

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BATTLEFIELDS TRIP LAST SUMMER



BY OLLIE B.

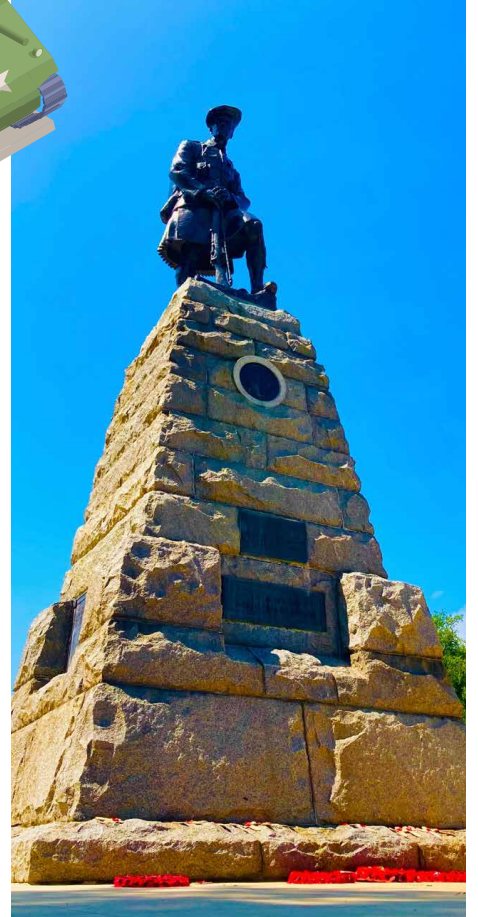
The Battlefield trip took place in June. It was five days, three nights in France and Belgium. We took the Eurotunnel over and went to multiple battlefields mainly from the First World War.

We started out at the second biggest cemetery, then off to Ypres to see the Menin Gate. We were unlucky because it was under scaffolding, but still took glimpses at the number of names from the conflict. The city had been almost entirely rebuilt, because everything had fallen during the conflict.

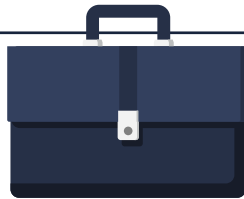
The next day we visited a trench, and a war museum. This only gave us glimpses of the horror and living conditions. We then went to the Somme and walked round the fields. The size of the battle was horrific, size and statistics.

On Thursday, we tried to go and see the Battle of Waterloo, but rain made us stick with the museum. On the final day, time restricted us to a fly by at Dunkirk.

The trip was really interesting, and everyone had a lot of fun.



WORK EXPERIENCE



At Verulam (and most schools in the UK) in October students of Year 11 get the opportunity to spend a week off school for 'Work Experience'. But what is work experience and why is it so important?

While not mandatory for every school to put on, work experience is a highly recommended and beneficial time for students prior

to Sixth Form and A-Levels. Work experience is when a student contacts an organisation - charity or business requesting to work unpaid at their establishment.

This is incredibly helpful for students as not only does it give them an idea of what it is like working in general but can also more specifically give them a feel of a specific job they may wish to

do in the future. Not only this, but work experience can also be placed on a future CV showing experience making it easier to get future jobs. Hence, work experience marks a rewarding, enlightening and essential experience for those almost ready to start work themselves.

BY RUEBEN H.

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SCIENCE AT VERULAM

Verulam school has a lot of great subjects on offer to students. I am going to focus on Science: In Year 7 science the class you are in is the same for all of the other subjects. For example, you would be in the class of 7 V,R,U,E,L the letters decide on which letter class you are in. You would also do a lot of amazing things such as, practicals which involve experiments. Year 8 science is similarly organised.

Year 9 (the last year I was in) had a lot of practicals in the beginning. This is because we missed a lot of practicals due to Covid.

Year 10 you won't do many at the start because we are starting our GCSE courses but when you get to the end of the year you will do lots of practicals and fun experiments including dissecting animals - which is something I'm not looking forward to.

In Year 11 you would not do so many practicals because they have exams coming up. To be honest, science is one of my favourite subjects, it has lots of great activities to offer. Also, the start of Year 10 has three different Science which are Chemistry, Physics and Biology and they are all very different and interesting.

BY GAMAL S-M



SCHOOL LIFE



THE BEST WAY TO REVISE: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE STUDY

Revision is a critical phase in the learning process, whether you're a student preparing for exams or a professional looking to master new skills. The way you revise can make a significant difference in how well you retain and understand the material. In this article, we will explore the best way to revise, offering strategies and techniques that can help you maximise your study sessions and achieve better results.

CREATE A SCHEDULE

Plan your study sessions with a timetable. Break tasks into manageable chunks, allowing for focused, timed intervals of study followed by short breaks.



ORGANISE YOUR SPACE

Start with a clutter-free, quiet study area. A well-organised space minimises distractions and sets the stage for productive revision.

ACTIVE LEARNING

Engage with the material actively. Summarise, teach, or discuss concepts aloud. Active learning promotes understanding and retention.

STAY POSITIVE

Maintain a positive mindset. Stress hampers learning. Incorporate relaxation techniques and celebrate small victories.

USE VISUAL AIDS

You might benefit from diagrams, charts, and mind maps. These aids simplify complex information and enhance comprehension.

PRACTICE REGULARLY

Consistent practice is key. Solve problems, take quizzes, and review past materials to reinforce your understanding.

GROUP STUDY

Collaborative study sessions with peers can provide diverse perspectives and insights. Explaining concepts to others solidifies your own understanding.



SCHOOL LIFE

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TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE

Leverage educational apps and online resources for interactive learning. Flashcards, e-learning platforms, and educational videos can be valuable tools. Make sure they are giving the correct information though – check sites you want to use with your teacher first!

STAY HEALTHY

Prioritise sleep, eat well, and exercise regularly. A healthy body supports a sharp mind.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Regularly evaluate your progress. Identify weak areas and allocate more time to them.

In conclusion, revision isn't about cramming but adopting a holistic approach that suits your learning style and needs. Customise your strategy, stay disciplined, and success will follow.

BY MARKOV.

REVISION STRESS

BY RYAN F.

With exams coming closer and closer every day for Year 10s, Year 11s and Sixth Form, the next few terms of school are going to be stressful.

This stress can have a massive impact on a person's mental health. I encourage starting a sporting activity or becoming a member of a gym to help with your mental health and here's why:

Working out at least an hour a day can greatly increase your mental health and help you feel better about yourself as a person. In my own experience I have found working out makes me a lot happier and helps me concentrate on revision and classwork preparing for exams. These activities could be

anything such as martial arts like Muay Thai and Jiu Jitsu or sports like football or rugby. On beginning the sport or activity you won't notice much difference until you participate a few more times, then you will start to notice an increase in strength fitness and mental health. Why not give it a try?



SCHOOL LIFE



GOING INTO YEAR 11

BY OLIVER B

As a Year 11 student, GCSEs are stressful for any student, especially for me; revision has always been hard for me. I find it hard to sit down and revise for even 30 minutes.

Revision isn't the only thing; as I grow into a young adult, I have to make serious life decisions regarding friends, exams, and my further education. All of this is a lot for a 15–16-year-old boy. Despite all of this, Verulam has

made it an easy transition for me and many others.

The school has provided me with good revision sources, and guidance on how to manage my time effectively as a Year 11 student. Furthermore, the school provide a wide range of after-school learning sessions for those struggling or in need of some help with their work. To add to this, they have also given me guidance towards friendships and further

education. Verulam offers a wide range of options at Sixth Form, and I anticipate going to the Open Evening to hear more about Sixth Form courses. It will give me a wide range of options which will help to make me into a successful young adult.

To conclude, Verulam has made it an easy and stress-free transition into Year 11.

IMPORTANCE OF TIME MANAGEMENT

BY ERIN P



During exam time through any school year, it is very important to allow yourself enough time in advance to properly prepare. This means ensuring you have good time management, which can be achieved through sticking to timetables or making a revision plan. Having good time management allows you to accomplish better results in the long run and

lowers your stress levels, as you are making sure everything you need to get done will be completed in good time.

Time management allows you to be more productive, it also allows you to achieve more and show evidence that your time has been spent wisely. By ensuring your time has been managed, it can also mean you

allow time left to be spent with the people that matter most, whilst also giving you a break.

The earlier you start to plan your time and make a revision timetable for example, the more quickly you can get into a routine and this can put you in the best position ready for any exams or assessments.

SCHOOL LIFE

BALANCING WORK, LIFE AND SCHOOL

BY AYESHA R



Juggling work and school can be tough, but with a little planning and some smart strategies, you can find a balance that works for you.

Here are some tips to help you navigate this busy time in your life: First, prioritise your tasks. Perhaps make a 'to-do' list and rank your tasks based on their importance and deadlines. This will help you stay organised and

focused. Next, create a schedule that allows for dedicated time for both work and school. Set aside specific blocks of time for studying, attending classes, and completing assignments.

By sticking to a schedule, you can ensure that you're devoting enough time to each area of your life. It's also important to take breaks and recharge. Give yourself permission to step away from work or school

for a little while and do something you enjoy. This will help prevent burnout and keep you motivated.

Remember, finding a balance between work, life and school is a personal journey. What works for someone else may not work for you, so adjust your approach as needed. It's all about finding a rhythm that allows you to excel in both work and school while also taking care of yourself.

“WORK SMART NOT HARD”

BY AARON L.

Revision is a crucial phase in the learning journey. It's important to recognise that revision methods are highly individual, and there's no one way that works for everyone. This article aims to provide effective revision techniques while delving into Allen Morgenstein's famous advice: “Work smart, not hard.” Create an effective schedule – ensure it allows for breaks, social activities, and exercise to prevent burnout.

Have a clear space to work to allow yourself to adopt a clear mindset to fully focus.

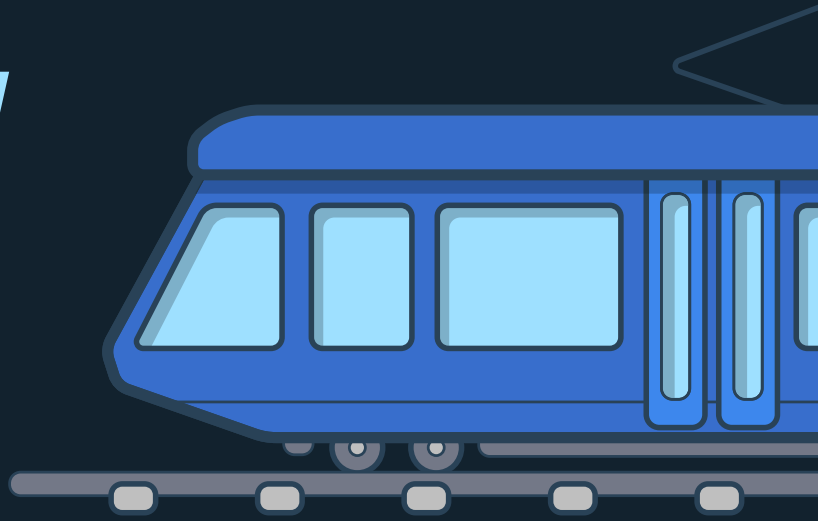
Condense your study materials in the form of mind maps, highlighted notes, bullet points, or flashcards. Regularly complete past exam papers to familiarise yourself with question formats. This ties back to the “work smart, not hard” concept, as it accentuates practical application rather than inefficient forms of revising such as reading

over notes. While revising content is beneficial, exams require applying knowledge through questions, including higher-mark essay questions.

The crucial takeaway is that although revision can be challenging, you can optimise your chances for success by incorporating regular breaks and physical activity or by stepping out for a mental reset, such as a day trip to town or London.

TEN VS ONE

THE TROLLY PROBLEM



As a philosophy and ethics student I am often faced with ethical questions that truly have no answer. In some cases, you can refer to scholars and philosophers in hope you'll gain a slight understanding of the large questions about life the universe and everything (the answer is 42 by the way) but most of the time there is no right, no wrong, no this way or that way, only subjective opinion. Due to this I would like to share my own thoughts on the trolley problem: the idea of a life for a life. The trolley problem initially begins with the question: would you turn the trolley and hit one person or leave the trolley on the path it's going on and allow it to hit two people?

Many would argue that by leaving the trolley you are doing nothing and therefore cannot be blamed for any of the fatalities, whereas others suggest that by doing nothing you are still doing something, and instead killing two people when you could have only killed one. This beginning part of the problem is fairly simple (though it still causes arguments).

It starts to become more complicated when you introduce the idea: can someone's life be worth more than another's? So now the new question is do you kill the two people, or do you kill the one person who is now one of your closest family members?

This often stumps people as their initial reaction is to obviously save their family - as human beings we are naturally selfish and would do anything for the ones we love. This then begs the question: how can their life be more valuable than the other two people on the trolley tracks? Just because they know you and are loved by you, their life gains more worth in this dilemma.

Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism would suggest that in every situation within the trolley problem, whether the one person can now cure cancer or the two people are fascist dictators; whatever the circumstances are, you must always choose the option that will lead to the most happiness for the largest amount of people. So, in the version where the one person is a family member you would

have to choose to kill your family, as this would lead to the most happiness, even though it is not one's own happiness.

As human beings this would never be our initial response. It does make you think of what is morally correct in these situations, even if it is not the choice you would make.

Concluding, my final thoughts on the trolley problem led me to believe that humans cannot be perfect, and in fact subjectively in our minds, some lives are valued more than others even if it is not the right choice morally. This then leads to the question of what is good and bad? Which has yet to be answered by scholars so I believe finding what is the correct thing to do within the trolley problem cannot be answered.

BY MAEB

LET'S TALK ABOUT LANGUAGES

Language is a weird thing for me because I am bilingual (can speak 2 languages fluently) I don't really know how to use this skill though. I can speak English and Russian as well as learning French at school.

Although some parts of the Russian language do look and sound similar to Ukrainian I am unable to speak Ukranian yet alone understand it.

I lived in Ukraine for two more years than I have lived in Russia, but I was raised learning Russian so I have kind of been ripped apart when the war started as it was between the two countries which I called home - I was heartbroken.

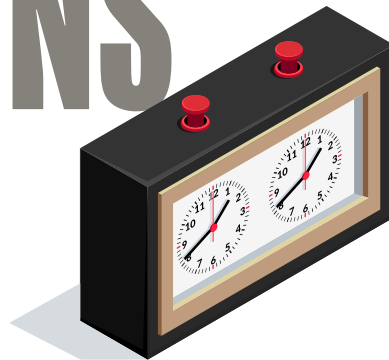
It is hard learning other languages now as I already know two, but I keep trying to learn more and more. If I could speak three

languages fluently I could have an 'many different opportunities in life.

Languages are hard to learn thoroughly, but rewarding and that is the message that I want to leave you with.

BY DMITRI D

THE ORIGINS OF CHESS



Chess is a popular game which has its roots from over a millennia ago. It has since gained popularity and has become a competitive game where strategy and tactics will win you the game.

Chess dates back to around 600 CE in the Gupta empire of northern India. It was initially known as Chaturanga, which translates to four divisions of the military in Sanskrit. The four divisions were infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariotry. The games were usually very long, because the pieces could not move as much as in modern

chess, and the queen piece was a male counsellor to the king.

Chess then spread to Persia, where it became known as Shatranj, and some of the pieces were modified, making it closer to modern day chess. Then, it was introduced to Europe through trade like the silk road. By the 15th century, the pieces and rules were very similar to nowadays, with the elephant becoming a bishop and the vizier (male counsellor) was replaced with a queen, making games more fast paced and dramatic.

Since then, chess evolved with official rules, organisations and world championships, making it the well-known game that it is today.

BY ERNEST J



BREXIT'S IMPACT ON BRITISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS: **A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS**

Brexit, the historic decision by the United Kingdom to exit the European Union, has had far-reaching consequences across various sectors of society. In this article, I will explore how Brexit has affected secondary schools in Britain.

The Pro-Brexit Perspective:

Proponents of Brexit argue that leaving the European Union allows the UK to regain control over its policies and finances. They contend that this newfound autonomy can be beneficial for British secondary schools in several ways: firstly, by ending the free movement of EU citizens, Brexit has allowed the UK to exercise greater control over immigration policies, potentially reducing the strain on school resources such as classroom space and funding.

The Anti-Brexit Perspective:

Critics of Brexit argue that the decision has had several detrimental impacts on British secondary schools. One significant concern is the loss of EU funding. Prior to Brexit, British schools benefited from financial

contributions from the EU, supporting initiatives such as research programmes and infrastructure development. With the UK's exit, these funds have diminished, putting increased pressure on the education sector.

Brexit has also affected the mobility of teachers and students. European teachers contributed to the diversity and expertise of the British teaching workforce, while students enjoyed opportunities for cultural exchange through EU programmes like Erasmus+. The termination of these programmes has been viewed as a loss in terms of both education quality and global exposure.

Statistics and Figures:

To substantiate these claims, it is important to consider relevant statistics and figures. According to a report by the National Audit Office (NAO) in 2020, the UK's departure from the EU resulted in a substantial reduction in funding for schools. It estimated that the loss of EU funding programme could lead to a £2.2 billion funding gap in education by 2027.

Furthermore, data from the Department for Education shows that the number of EU teachers in British schools declined by 38% in the year following the Brexit vote. This decline has raised concerns about teacher shortages and the impact of this on the quality of education in the UK.

Brexit's impact on British secondary schools is a complex issue with valid arguments from both sides. Proponents emphasise the potential for greater autonomy and control, while critics point to the loss of funding and opportunities for students and educators. It is crucial to consider the facts and figures presented in this analysis when forming an opinion on this matter. As Brexit continues to shape the future of the UK, its effects on education will remain a topic of significant importance and debate.

BY TOBI I

THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE WORKING AND EDUCATIONAL WORLDS

In 2023, technology has been rooted into the everyday life of this country, from using devices to complete work at school to the sudden increase to remote working post the Covid pandemic. In recent years, the development of AI has rapidly sped up, with more and more sophisticated models doing basically anything you need. This swift evolution of the industry aids our generation in so many ways, but of course everything has can have some sort of disadvantage as well.

Advantages revolve mostly around the working world, with the ability to be able to talk and get in touch with colleagues remotely and communicate as if you are in the same room. In school, any topics you need are extremely accessible on the internet: work and revision are boosted in efficiency with the use of educational websites and videos such as the ones we use in class today, like Massolit, GCSEpod, Seneca, etc.

However, there are multiple drawbacks for this amazing tool as well (especially for the youth, who have grown up with it). For instance, addiction. AI can be unhealthy as it prevents you from a face-to-face social life, and overuse can cause bad habits like

a poor posture and neck pain from looking down at our phone all the time. Misuse can be an issue as well. There are so many amazing features, but people can be more focused on the thousands of games and videos, causing distraction and leading to people forgetting what they were doing in the first place.

Also, through the use of apps like Tiktok, people's attention span has

declined significantly, with people only being interested for a matter of seconds online.

Overall, by using these resources wisely, we can maximise the benefits, and minimise its negative impacts.

BY ALEX E



THE BIG IFs SURROUNDING THE RISE OF MULTICELLULARITY

After the first version of the upcoming trilogy of “The Big Ifs” around the emergence of life, it is only fitting to discuss The Big Ifs Surrounding the Rise of Multicellularity.

For approximately three billion years, life continued to be unicellular. Between 542-585 billion years ago, the Ediacaran Fauna suggest the first multicellular organisms emerged and were later discovered in Australia.

We are still unsure what caused the first multicellular organisms to emerge, but scientists are certain that at some point in time, DNA underwent a drastic change and led to mutations that allowed cells to have a specific function and to remain in communication with each other. Many other questions have been raised as we get closer to a plausible expansion, such as: do all lineages share an ancestral developmental predisposition for multicellularity emerging from certain motifs shared from a last common

ancestor, or are the multiple origins of multicellularity truly independent evolutionary events?


However, an additional event that many researchers agree may have led to the promotion of multicellularity was environmental changes, specifically the rise of oxygen levels during the Great Oxidation Event. The increased oxygen levels may have allowed unicellular organisms to potentially have greater metabolic rates and thus a greater dependence on anaerobic respiration to release more energy. This additional requirement in respiration may have also contributed to the mutations in DNA and introduced a selection pressure on unicellular organisms that carry these specific advantageous DNA sequences. Selection pressures urge organisms to be best fit to a specific environment, and if their physiological/physical features are not up to par, they are less likely to survive and successfully reproduce, hence ending their lineage - so say thank you to your 2,097,150

ancestors' genes for being favoured by the different selection pressures!

Some further selection pressures may have been bacteria that fed on our ancient ancestors. Therefore, this likely required proto-animals to develop systems to recognize the best bacterial prey and to capture and engulf them. For this to happen, it is crucial for the proto-animals to be much larger and resistant to the bacteria, and thus substantially greater unicellular organisms were likely to survive.

With every new advancement we make around the query for an answer around the rise of multicellularity, we are a discovery closer to the great revelation. Whether that be in one, ten or fifty years our curiosity to find answers to our emergence will always reign in our consciousness.

BY RISHABH H



THE FORMATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The Solar System, our home in space, is a star system that has a history of 4.6 billion years. Compared to a person's life, it is as big as Mount Everest. But how did we come to this era because the environment here on earth is very rare indeed?

It all began 4.6 billion years ago with a supernova which planted the seeds of the solar system. As gases of hydrogen and helium started spinning and as a result of gravity, they formed a gas ball. But it still wasn't the sun yet, compared to the sun now, it was still a baby. It was still missing one big part to mature: as gravity pushes the gas ball inwards, the inner pressure of the baby sun's core is so intense that hydrogen starts to merge to form helium and kickstarts the nuclear fusion that brings light and heat to everything.

But the first planets to form were not the inner terrestrial planets, but the outer planets, the gas giants. The first and the largest of all is Jupiter. It is also my favourite one amongst the 8 planets. It has a radius of 43,440.7 miles and a mass of 1.898×10^{27} kg which would be 1898 with 24 0s behind. Its largest storm is the great red spot which could fit 3 Earths in it.

It also has 95 moons. While Jupiter was growing, its speed slowed down and started going inwards to the sun pulled by gravity. And at that time, the inner planets were growing. As Jupiter went through the asteroid belt, it pushed and swallowed loads of asteroids. Some of which were not encountered but were affected by its trail left behind.

A growing planet's growth, cut short. But before Jupiter could bring damage to us, something pulled it back: Saturn. This also explains why star systems like the solar system are so rare because most of them would have a planet like Jupiter and have the inner planets kick to the star or out of the system.

Saturn was the second largest planet of the solar system. It has 146 moons. Saturn is the least dense planet of all. If you have a big enough tub, you can put Saturn in it and it floats. The most fascinating thing about Saturn is its ring.

Mercury is one fascinating planet as well although it looks boring, it had a very interesting history. Most of Mercury's components are proof that mercury was not where it

should be. It had a major collision with another small planet and was pushed from a promising position to a place where no water or life could exist.

Although Earth is formed, it has no water so where did the water come from? The answer is the comets you see in the night sky. Since comets are made mostly of ice and dust, as it crashed on Earth it melted and brought water to Earth. And hence life is formed.

This is a small and simple story of the Solar System. And in about 5 billion years, the solar system will enter the final moments of its life as the sun enters the red giant phase which will consume Mercury, Venus, Earth and possibly Mars as well. Also if you ask me why am I interested in things like this, I would tell you that I have no answer to this question.

It is just interesting to know how this place came to be.

BY KENDRICK W



COMPUTERS

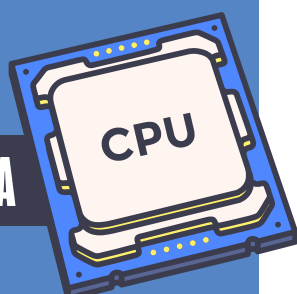
A pc (personal computer) has many base components such as: a motherboard, a cpu, a gpu, psu, ram and an ssd or hdd. But what do these actually do?

Well, a motherboard connects all your components into one circuit and uses the psu to power the other components. The cpu (central processing unit) however, is like the brain of the computer and controls all the functions of the pc.

A gpu (graphics processing unit) on the other hand, only controls the graphics and display shown.

The psu is a vital component to a functioning computer as it supplies all the necessary power to the rest of your pc. Ram simply stores data that the computer needs to receive quickly whereas a ssd (solid state drive) and hdd (hard disk drive) stores and accesses data such as an application or game.

However it should be noted that a hdd is significantly slower than a ssd but a lot less expensive. You can add more accessories to your pc but for a functioning computer these are just the base components.



BY JORDIS.A

THE INTERCITY 225 - BRITAIN'S LAST ICON

The 26th of September marked the end of an era for rail travel. After 47 years, the final proper Class 43 or Intercity 125 service left Leeds. The train ran two services that day, operated as part of a charity rail tour by CrossCountry Trains: the 06:35 from Leeds to Swanage, and the 16:10 from Swanage to Leeds. Fortunately for me and many other railway enthusiasts, I was able to give my farewell to the British workhorses at Reading.

The Intercity 125 (which is the whole train - 2 locomotives and 7 to 9 coaches in between) was built between 1975 and 1982, meaning some of the Class 43 locomotives (two locomotives are used on each Intercity 125 train - they provide the traction) are over 47 years old. A total of 197 locomotives were built, as a planned 'stop gap' train to be used in the time between the withdrawal of steam trains and electrification of Britain's railways. However, the Intercity 125s proved very reliable and there was not much money for electrification in the 1970s, so they were used on nearly all

long-distance intercity services. They were the backbone of rail travel for many years.

This last proper Intercity 125 was formed of two Class 43 locomotives, 43007 and 43008. The former had been repainted into retro British Rail blue and yellow colours, while the latter was adorned with the classic 'Intercity Swallow' livery. In between the two locomotives were eight recently refurbished Mark 3 coaches, wearing the standard corporate CrossCountry colours. An extra coach had been added to aid capacity for the farewell charter, which was a great success for the passengers, CrossCountry staff and for charity.

The retirement of CrossCountry's 'proper' Intercity 125s leaves only Great Western Railway and ScotRail as operators of the iconic train. However, these Intercity 125s are much less interesting for the enthusiast and passenger than they used to be. The doors have been refurbished to automatic sliding doors, like most other trains. The seats are thinner, less comfy and more have been squeezed into the saloon in an 'airline style' fashion. Gone are the days of droplight windows and slam doors (where you have to lean out the window



and open the door yourself), and also gone are the days of comfy rail travel. Nearly all that is left are soulless, overseas built, plastic trains that prioritise packing as many people onboard as they can (which means more revenue for the train company) over passenger comfort.

But hope is not lost: The Class 91 locomotive, or Intercity 225 train is now the oldest locomotive hauled stock on long-distance, high-speed services. London North Eastern Railway, or LNER, operates 28 services a day between London, Leeds and York with 5 different Intercity 225 trains, from a pool of 12 Class 91 locomotives and 8 sets of coaches. In 2022, LNER redesigned the Intercity 225's livery, and now all 12 locomotives carry a revised take on the iconic Intercity Swallow livery.

Built between 1988 and 1991, the Intercity 225 was far ahead of its time, and it still is. By suspending the traction motor from the chassis rather than the bogies, the Intercity 225 could run at up to speeds of 140mph, while putting less strain on the track. Class 91 numbered 91010 set the British speed record for an electric locomotive at 161.7mph in September 1989. The locomotive

still holds the record today and is very unlikely to ever be beaten. Furthermore, Class 91 numbered 91012 holds the record for the fastest time between London and Edinburgh, at 3 hours and 29 minutes. Again, a record unlikely to be beaten because today's fastest journey time is 4 hours, operated with an LNER Azuma train at 125mph.

The ride is superb onboard one of LNER's Intercity 225s. The locomotive hauled nature of this train means that there are no engines below the floor; all the power is concentrated in the Class 91 locomotive at the front of the train. As a result, the journey is very quiet and smooth all the time. The train is fitted with power sockets, large tables and the seats are aligned with the windows - these are features that some modern-day trains do not have. Most of the services the Intercity 225 operates aren't very busy, as the Leeds and York services they operate on are half-hourly at a minimum throughout the day.

First Class onboard is on par with some rail tours and special charter trains - you'll find yourself very comfortable in the large, leather, reclining seats before being served hot drinks and food throughout

your journey. The soft purple lighting is calming, and you can draw the curtains over your own window if you wish. To say that the Intercity 225 is a premium service is an understatement.

All the details of the services operated by these trains are on the 225 Group's website - [225group.org.uk](https://www.225group.org.uk). If you enjoy rail travel or would like to visit Yorkshire, take the opportunity to travel before it's too late on the Intercity 225 - Britain's last icon.



BY TOM R

STOP VAPING

IT'S BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH

BY PATRICK S

Vaping has become increasingly popular in recent years, especially among teenagers and young adults. However, the health risks associated with vaping are very real and concerning. As a society, we need to take a stand against this dangerous trend.

Although vaping is illegal for anyone under the age of 18, it is very easily accessible to young teenagers due to some shops buying hundreds of them and then selling them to teenagers at an inflated price, you could even say that some shop owners are exploiting these teenagers because of how they appeal to them and how easy it is to get addicted.

While vaping is often touted as a “safer” alternative to smoking cigarettes, the reality is that it still exposes users to harmful

chemicals. The liquid used in vaping devices contains nicotine along with various flavourings and other chemicals. When heated, these substances produce toxic fumes that are inhaled deeply into the lungs.

Another issue is that vaping has introduced a new generation to the power of nicotine addiction. Teens who vape are much more likely to go on to become cigarette smokers later in life.

Rather than brushing off vaping as harmless, we should be having honest conversations about the established health risks. Parents should educate themselves on the dangers and watch for warning signs of vaping addiction in their kids. Schools need clear policies prohibiting vaping devices on site. Locals and officials must take

actions to curb youth vaping rates that have skyrocketed in recent years.

The bottom line is that vaping is not safe. As a school, we make it very clear that vaping is unacceptable. The best option is simply to avoid vaping and smoking altogether. The stakes are too high to ignore the threat posed by these addictive, toxic devices.





WAR

After decades of wars, skirmishes, high tensions and rivalry, the millennia long history of the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Artsakh, may be in its final chapter.

On the 19th September 2023, Azerbaijani troops launched a lightning operation into the disputed region, resulting in a surrender and disarmament of the separatist province and its military, which begs the question - why has this small patch of the South Caucasus invited such violence?

The origins of Armenian population in the region stretch back well before OAD, but the modern struggle for the province begun in 1918, when the collapse of the Russian Empire saw the breakaway states of Armenia and Azerbaijan go to war over the territory. The conflict ended when both territories were absorbed into the rising Soviet Union, with Nagorno-Karabakh remaining part of Azerbaijan, although the population was overwhelmingly Armenian. Still, the issues between the two republics remained unresolved, at least until the fall of the Soviet Union.

War broke out immediately after the fall, with Nagorno-Karabakh breaking away under the Republic of Artsakh, an Armenian separatist government that oversaw the province. Together with the

Armenian government, they won the First Nagorno-Karabakh War in 1994 after as many as 38,000 deaths. The conflict had been bloody and both sides committed atrocities, but the end result was a large swathe of Azerbaijan was occupied by Armenia and Artsakh was self-governing, although it was formally recognised as part of Azerbaijan and never as an independent nation.

The region remained relatively peaceful besides the odd border skirmish until 2020, when Azerbaijan launched a six-week war against the breakaway state and Armenia. Azerbaijan's oil wealth, now free on the global market after the fall of the Union, had brought enough revenue into the country to fund a large army. With three times the population, four times the GDP and five times the military spending, the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War was a decisive victory for Azerbaijan, in part due to their use of Turkish drones that destroyed many tanks and artillery. After 7,000 dead, all occupied territories were returned to Azerbaijan, leaving Artsakh trapped within Azeri borders. The only way in or out was through a single road called the Lachin Corridor, while the ceasefire was kept by Russian peacekeepers. In late 2022, the corridor was blockaded, leading to crippling shortages of supplies within the republic.

When war broke out again in 2023, the fighting ended after a single day. Surrounded by overwhelming force, unsupported by Armenia or the Russian peacekeepers and short on supplies, Artsakh was forced to capitulate and disband their entire army, bringing Nagorno-Karabakh under full Azeri control for the first time since the Soviet Union existed. The 120,000 strong Armenian population has begun leaving en masse, travelling with what possessions they can bring with them as they turn their backs on homes they may very well never see again. As of the 28th, over half the population has gone and the exodus shows no signs of abating.

The end of the Republic of Artsakh may very well be the end of the conflict, but it is by no means something to celebrate. While it is unlikely that a war to retake the region will break out again - Armenia is too weak and lacks the geopolitical allies - the fact it was resolved with more violence and death instead of peaceful negotiation is disheartening. We can only hope now that, with Azerbaijan's territorial integrity restored and Armenia passive on the issue, there will be a lasting peace in this corner of the world once more.

BY CHARLIE'S



THE UK REFUGEE CRISIS, A CALL FOR COMPASSION AND COOPERATION:

The United Kingdom, like many other countries, has faced its share of challenges related to the global refugee crisis. This crisis is not merely a distant concern; it is a human tragedy unfolding on our doorstep. With millions of people fleeing conflict, persecution, and environmental disasters, the UK has a moral duty to respond with compassion and humanity.

One of the key issues in the UK refugee crisis is the treatment of asylum seekers. Lengthy processing times, overcrowded detention centres, and a lack of proper support systems have left many

refugees in limbo, living in precarious conditions. It is essential that the UK government streamlines its asylum process, providing swifter decisions and access to essential services for those seeking refuge.

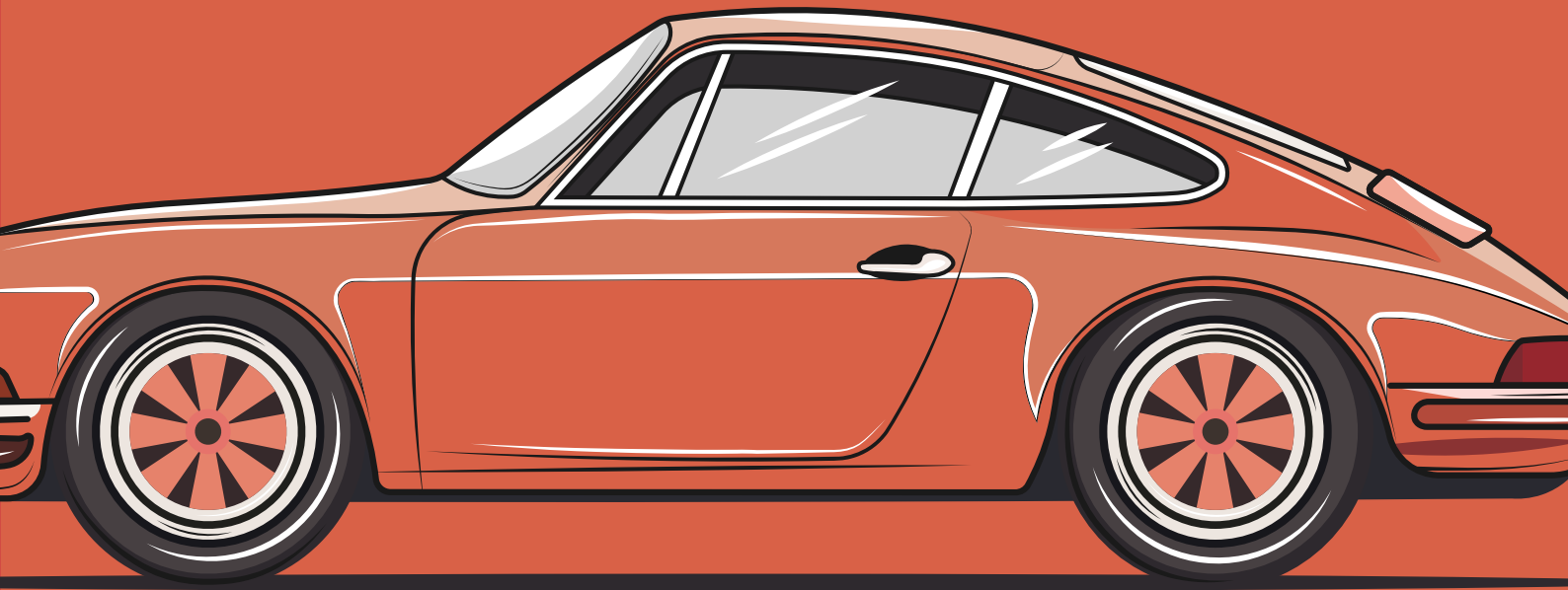
Moreover, the UK must work closely with international organisations and neighbouring countries to address the root causes of displacement.

Investing in conflict prevention, peacekeeping efforts, and development initiatives can contribute to a more stable world

and reduce the flow of refugees. In conclusion, the UK refugee crisis is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach.

Compassion, cooperation, and proactive measures are essential to addressing the plight of refugees, ensuring their safety, and upholding the values of a just and humane society.

BY JAMES G



WHY SHOULD WE APPRECIATE OUR CLASSIC CARS?

Classic cars are more than just vehicles; they are a window into our automotive heritage and a testament to the timeless craftsmanship of a bygone era. These vintage automobiles, typically defined as those built between the 1920s and the 1970s, possess a unique charm and character that modern cars often lack.

One reason to appreciate classic cars is their aesthetic appeal. These vehicles feature elegant designs, graceful curves, and intricate detailing that reflect the artistry of their time. From the iconic lines of a key piece of British engineering in the Jaguar E-Type to the sheer opulence of a 1930s Rolls-Royce, classic cars are rolling pieces of art that evoke nostalgia and capture the spirit of their respective eras.

Moreover, classic cars offer a glimpse into the evolution of automotive technology. Many of these vehicles were pioneering in their day, introducing innovations that paved the way for modern cars. Exploring the mechanical intricacies of classic engines and manual transmissions can deepen one's appreciation for the engineering feats of the past.

Beyond their technical and aesthetic merits, classic cars also foster a sense of community. Enthusiasts gather at car shows such as The Goodwood Revival which takes place in late September and is a hub for people who love the aura of old cars. These events help to preserve automotive history and ensure that these classic beauties continue to grace our roads for generations to come.

In conclusion, classic cars are more than just a mode of transportation; they are a testament to our heritage, a celebration of design and engineering, and a source of connection among enthusiasts. So, next time you spot one of these vintage gems cruising down the road, take a moment to appreciate the history and artistry they represent.

BY OLIVER H

XL BULLY DOGS

- A DANGER OR DISCRIMINATED?

BY DAN H



Recent government legislation has seen Rishi Sunak announce American XL bullies will be banned in the UK by the end of 2025. The first political move since John Major oversaw the Dangerous Dogs Act in 1991 which saw the Pitbull terrier, Japanese Tosa, dogo Argentino, and Fila Brasileiro all banned from being owned, sold or bred. It would be expected similar actions would be introduced for XLs, a breed that can weigh upwards of 60kg.

While this breed makes up less than 1% of the overall population of owned dogs, they have been responsible for 50% of deaths caused by dogs since 2021 and 44% of non-fatal attacks this year.

A non-fatal attack has sparked this move by the Conservative government to ban them, with an attack on an 11-year-old girl in Birmingham sparking this in early September. The calls first started

by Suella Braverman quickly ascended to confirmation of the plan.

However, should these dogs be banned?

Supporters of the breed have argued that this legislation would ban and punish innocent family dogs due to a certain group of poorly treated and bred dogs owned by a small proportion of owners who own them for the reasons of intimidation instead of simply owning a dog. Thus, proponents of the dog argue that banning XL bullies will not solve this problem but simply kick the ball down the road with a different large dog becoming a symbol of power in its place.

Ultimately, this issue is not black and white, some major anti-XL supporters argue for them to be killed, others neutered to remove the breed in a perhaps more ethical

manner. Possibly screen the owners for these larger and more dangerous breeds. Some very vocal proponents of the dog support the idea that literally nothing is to be done.

Overall, this is an issue that will remain controversial until official legislation is passed yet what do you believe should happen?





THE HISTORY OF THE GUITAR

The first identification of any guitar-like instrument isn't exactly clear, with the *guitarra morisca* (an instrument historians believe to be ancestor of the guitar) having a very long history linking it to the Spanish and the Moors (an old term for people from the Middle East specifically with darker skin).

Before I summarise the history of the *guitarra morisca*, bear in mind that my research only consists of a few articles and a video on an unrelated subject that only mentions the subject. In short, the Moors invaded modern day Spain with the Spanish eventually taking it back, marking the end of

the 15th century Granada War. So how does this link to the making of the *guitarra morisca*?

Well, the Moors arrived in Spain in the 8th century, giving them plenty of time to spread the culture; including music. As a result, in the early 9th century, a collection of 420 Portuguese musical poems called the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (at the time Portugal would have still been a part of Spain) mentioned the *guitarra morisca*. An instrument that was a combination of European combination of the *guitarra latina*, and the Arabic oud was brought to Spain and other parts of Europe by, you guessed it, the Moors.

People loved this new Spanish instrument, and around the 15th century, it had spread to France and England. Finally, in the 19th century, a Spanish man named Antonio de Torres Jurado had what was likely the finalised classical guitar. In the 1930s, the first electric guitar was made by George Beauchamp. And here we are today, with guitars being loved by many (including me) resulting in it being the second most popular instrument in the world.

BY JOEE



WHY I HAVE A PASSION FOR THE GUITAR

The guitar was never really something I ever thought about playing as a young boy. My family had always mostly been pianists and therefore as a child, I always believed that I would grow up to have a passion for the piano, however, when I first started having lessons, there was no enjoyment in plonking keys. As much respect as I have for pianists, it really wasn't for me. I struggled to play with both hands simultaneously and it wasn't really an instrument I could bop my head to very much (in my humble opinion).

When I turned 10, I started watching many people all over the internet playing the guitar, creating

beautiful melodies, blues, mellow songs and I watched in awe as their fingers would glide across the neck of the guitar. From that day onwards, I knew I wanted to play the guitar just like they did. So I got started right away. I bought my first ever guitar on Amazon (never again am I doing that) and started practising.

I got myself a teacher and over the next few years my guitar skills would improve rapidly. When I was around grade 2, I upgraded my guitar and bought one that had a cleaner tone, smoother neck and was able to handle more intense songs. And that brings us to the present day where I still play my guitar every day and have even

added to my collection with acoustic, electric and bass guitars.

Not only do I gain a lot of enjoyment from my guitar, but it helps me a lot with my revision as it acts as a way of escaping the stressful world of work and into a realm of melodies, riffs, rock solos and cool theme songs from movies.

I believe that everyone should try to have a passion for an instrument as it gives a lot of beneficial value to their mental wellbeing and can bring enjoyment they didn't realise it could.

BY VICTOR A



UNITED BY MUSIC

BY SUNNY K

The Eurovision Song Contest, probably everyone has heard of it. Not everyone would admit to liking it, well I don't like it. I LOVE it! It brings many communities together and is just silly, random and FUN. I'm sure all of us like music, right? But Eurovision to me is more than just music.

In 2022 Eurovision broadcast from Turin, a city in Northern Italy. They had won the previous year and as per Eurovision tradition, they had the honour of hosting the next contest. I was elated because it was the first Eurovision I would be watching live on TV.

My living room was overflowing with Eurovision decorations (which highly irritated my father!) The family were ready to cheer on our favourite artists. Ukraine were the favourites to win, and they gallantly lifted the trophy, they were fitting winners as the country was in a crippling state of war following Russia's invasion only 80 days before the contest. Sadly, due to the continued conflict they would be unable to host in 2023. The decision was made that second place, the UK (a remarkable feat as the UK are usually in the bottom 5!) would host on Ukraine's behalf, with Liverpool as the host city.

Showing the musical bond between the UK and Ukraine, 'United by Music', was chosen as the slogan.

The 2023 contest celebrated Ukrainian music with a twist. The first event was the flag parade. Ukrainian artists performed their songs with a more British or western twist on them. These singers included Jamala (2016 Winner) and Verka Serduchka (2007 Runner-up).

Next a fusion mix, the Liverpool Song Book, a musical triumph! It was composed of many famous songs from Liverpool artists such as The Beatles and Sonja. The artists performing these songs included Netta (2018 Winner) and Daði Freyr (2021 fourth place) and Sonja herself.

The whole thing ended with a musical harmony with all the guest artists, and even the hosts, singing together. The melody, harmony and happiness was clear for all to see.... they were UNITED BY MUSIC!

Other slogans of previous contests demonstrate a similar message of unity, such as Under the Same Sky (2004), Share the Moment (2010), We are One (2013), # Join Us (2014), Building Bridges (2015), Come

Together (2016) and Celebrate Diversity (2017).

Though Eurovision was made to be a neutral contest where countries could come together and ignore all political issues, there have been multiple - quite controversial times - when Eurovision and politics have met.

As Terry Wogan once said "I wonder where Greece's 12 points are going to go this year." This is a reference to Greek and Cypriot juries always giving each other the highest points. Another hilarious Eurovision moment was when Georgia decided to send the song, 'We don't want to put in' to the 2009 contest in Moscow. If you haven't already seen it, 'We don't want Putin' was a veiled reference about the Russian invasion of Georgia in that year. Another controversial Eurovision moment was when Austria chose to send artist Conchita Wurst (2014). She went on to win the contest with 290 points. She was criticised by many including Putin himself showing just how far the reach of Eurovision is.

Music is inclusive. It unifies countries and communities in a way not many other things can. In Eurovision, although it started that way, it is not just exclusively

European countries that compete. Over the years Eurovision has had contestants from all over the globe. With countries like Australia competing since 2015, Israel competing since 1973 and Morocco's one and only appearance in 1980. Many non-European countries hold EBU memberships; these include many North African countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan. Eurovision has associate members from a wide variety of places such as Brazil, USA, China and India maintaining its inclusivity across the globe.

The phrase 'united by music' runs deeper, even if we don't speak the same language or have the same culture, we all understand music and it can make us feel a certain way, it can transport you back in time to a memory made, a person you were with or even a place you visited. If the music is sad, well you guessed, it makes you feel sad. Happy or upbeat track? Ding ding, you got it. It builds bridges and connections between countries and societies that may not - at least- politically like each other.

For me, Eurovision is more than just a contest. To quote Käärijä (2023 Runner-up), "It's Crazy, It's Party". It's fun, silly, and just amazing. It brings together multiple interest groups, people who like music,

geography or different cultures, and most of all people who are a little bit silly. Me, I fall into all of these categories.

Eurovision has a wide range of songs titled from Space Man to Cha Cha Cha or In Corpore Sano, which criticises the Serbian health care and talks about Megan Markle, all while the artist is washing her hands on stage!

Our very own Mr. Knowles also loves Eurovision. He said, "I like Eurovision because it is fun, and I have a party every year". Vinny (7P, also my brother) says "Eurovision is inclusive, it doesn't matter where you're from, it's just a bit of fun."

As you can see Eurovision is a bit random and is one of many ways music brings us together and closer. Always remember we are forever united by music.





DIGITAL STORYTELLING EXHIBITION

BY ZACK M

A couple of weeks ago, I went to an exhibition on digital storytelling. The exhibition took place at the British Library in London. The library is a huge space with seven floors, a gift shop, a café and even underground sections, where a copy of every book printed in Britain is stored. The library is unusual because it doesn't have any books you can just pick up and borrow – it's more like a museum full of rare and valuable artefacts.

There were approximately 10 works that showed how different writers had tried to engage readers using new technologies. The basic idea of the exhibition was that some people will not respond to reading a book. Maybe they think it's not for them or find it dull. The exhibition suggested that using technology, people could feel like more active

participants in the story. For example, you get to choose which way you would respond to a situation. In the comedy “Astrologaster”, for example, you get to diagnose the medical problems of characters. When you do that well enough, enough times, your character obtains a medical licence. In this way, you feel drawn into the story as a participant who shapes the story, and not just as a reader.

Although the exhibition was innovative, I personally prefer just being drawn in when reading or listening to a story and I don't feel the need to make decisions in a story and just want to read and enjoy. However, some people could find it difficult to become absorbed in a book, so all in all, this exhibition had merit for those who find it hard to pick up and enjoy a story.



TRITON

BY CSONGOR G



Along the horizon, the ferocious, blazing red giant lackadaisical sun was receding behind the dilapidated skyscrapers which were the talons of a bird as they clawed at the smog-filled, moss-green sky. A pearlescent fog snaked over slanted roofs and between narrow alleyways. Melancholy gripped to the concrete paths and stretched to the tallest structure.

An abrupt noise woke Triton from his light slumber. His gas mask was still firmly attached to his bone-pale face, the mask incongruent next to the colourless tone of his surroundings like the pallid moon on this starless night. His lips were cold and devoid of pigment as if he were in space, filtered air running through his nostrils. He twisted his head like a crane to the digital watch on his lacerated arm, sweat sliding down his scaly back.

“37 hours,” he mumbled to himself, the strange voice resonating in his mind.

Triton sluggishly scrambled to stand upright, fighting the aggressive pull of gravity. He set out to find rations for the day, searching for scraps to repair his decrepit outfit. He never thought, even in the deepest, darkest depths of his mind, that he would ever enter the ‘Neutral Zone’ but now he had nothing to lose.

Decaying remains of machines covered in rust and bones succumbing to the environment were the only sordid figures his eyes could see. In the corner he glimpsed a cavern; curiosity got the best of him.

Where could it lead?

He walked step-by-step. One in front of the other. Pupils dilated.

He fell.

He awaited the cold kiss of death, but it never came. Sounds of fabric ripping and his rasp-like breathing filled the miniscule tunnel as he accelerated rapidly. His legs made contact with the ground; he collapsed, pain erupting within them, his source of movement lost.

With his oxygen depleted, he grasped the floor, pulling himself along to find a door. With his last burst of energy, he plunged at it, pushing it outwards...

MOUNT LATEBRUS MOUNT LATE

'I think we should round back.'
Al voiced his concern, far too late now that they were in the centre of the woods.

'Nah, mate.' Neeman said. **'Too late for that. It's already nighttime, and my feet are killing me. Right now, I just want to set up the tents, maybe talk around a campfire, then go to sleep.'**
'Agreed.' Agreed Preston.
'Yep.' Chorused the twins, Parker and Porter. Al realised that he couldn't change the minds of his friends anymore, knew that he wouldn't have been able to even at the start of the mountain. Now, they were in between the heart of the woods, and there was no turning back. Al knew all that, knew that he just wanted to talk, to be the voice of reason, yet he couldn't shake off the unnerving feeling that there was something lurking in the woods, watching them with invisible eyes.

They had finished their GCSEs only about a week ago, and to celebrate, Neeman had strongly suggested that they take a trip to Mount Latebras. At the time, none of them had understood why the sudden interest in nature; it wasn't as if any of the four had ever really enjoyed camping trips. In fact, out of them, Al was the one who hated the outdoors the most. His reasons? There were always too many bugs, and no signal in the wood, which meant that if a guide had no clue what they were doing,

they couldn't depend on using their phones to help them. It was better to stay indoors, with all the air conditioners, wifi and video games - 'and yes, sometimes books' - without insects. This was why Neeman had persuaded Al - quite a lot, and with bribes - to come along with them. Al guessed that perhaps Neeman knew he wanted to do something fun with his friends, which was why he'd been told to tag along.

Now, Al's back was creased with unease; the gathering darkness made it no better, as he wondered why he had finally folded and agreed to come. It made no sense, and usually he was the logical one. Did Neeman bring them this way.

Too sunk in his thoughts to fully notice anything around him, Al crashed into Preston. A quick glance - 'are you alright, mate?' -, an apology, then Preston turned back. Al cast his eyes towards Neeman and made his way there. Neeman stood, as if rooted into the ground, stock still, peering into the darkness. Al noticed and tapped him. The focus was broken, and Al was taken aback by the look of fury in his friend's eyes that appeared briefly, then disappeared just as quickly, leaving Al to believe he had imagined it. Neeman smiled. 'Yes?'

'Sorry. You were just staring blankly ahead- I thought something was

wrong.' Al said, studying his friend. 'Did you see-'

'No.' Neeman said abruptly. Brows raised; Al pressed on. 'But you-'

'Listen, Al, mate, I didn't see anything.' Neeman retorted, almost angry. 'I was only like that because I'm tired.' He paused. 'I think we can rest here.'

He dropped the matter, knowing that his friend was good at avoiding and changing a subject if he didn't want to talk about it. 'Ok.'

Moments later, much later to the point that Al could hear the crickets chiming with or without straining his ears, the tents were set up. The twins trekked into the woods for a bit and returned with a few logs and twigs, and a campfire later, the five boys gathered around a fire with marshmallows and sticks and young boyish dreams in their eyes.

'Is it my turn?' Preston asked as he retrieved his scorching marshmallow and squashed it in between two tasteless crackers. 'I think so.' Neeman replied, handing over the chocolate bottle to Parker.

'Ok.' Preston thought for a moment. 'Alright. I think I've got a story.'
'Ooh. Alright boys, prepare to listen up. It's going to be a long night.'
Said Porter mockingly. There was a

BRUS MOUNT LATEBRUS MOUNT

collective chuckle as the boys each turned to each other.

'Ha, ha.' Preston returned. 'Alright, listen up and listen well.' He moved closer to the fire, adjusting his log.

'A few years ago, yeah, there were uhh... five people gathered around the - a - fire, just like this,' - 'I like where this is going.' Al commented. 'Shush!' Preston hushed. - 'Now, where was I?' Some thinking. 'Oh yeah! Anyway, yeah, among these guys are a black man, an Asian man - from Hong Kong I believe - and an American. The black man notes that-' Preston stopped. Something in the woods shifted.

'What was that?' Parker asked, tentatively.

'Nothing.' Neeman said coolly. 'Probably some squirrel, or bird, or whatever.' Turned to Preston. 'Continue.' 'Okay, but-'

Neeman sighed, exasperated. 'Look, I don't know about you, but I'm exhausted. It's already a full moon! We need to go to bed, then continue the trek tomorrow.' Preston was flabbergasted. 'Okay, then.' He cleared his throat. 'Anyway, the black man said that there was a legend, right, that in these very mountains,' he lowered his voice and brought his head down, indicating for the others to do the same, 'there was a monster, a beast that lurked here, that caused men - and women - to

lose their limbs! And if not that, something much, much worse-' Neeman groaned.

'What now?' Preston asked, blatantly annoyed.

'I've heard this story before- a thousand times. Let's move on.' 'Mate, you're being not only rude, but a jerk.' Parker commented. 'Let him finish the story.'

Neeman seemed to be thinking about something, and Al darted his eyes towards him. There was a billowing silence; the wind seemingly spread it faster like an infection. Then Neeman stood up abruptly. 'I'm off to bed.'

He announced. 'See you all in the morning.' He turned, and retreated into a white, translucent tent. Because of the fire, they noticed his shadow shifting around.

The remaining four returned to the fire, although there was an awkward tension in the air. Even Al was perplexed. What had just happened? Why had Neeman stormed off to bed like that?

'Well...uh...anyway...' Parker attempted to revive the mood in the chill evening.

'Yes...umm...the monster...' Preston began. But this time, Al tuned everything about the story out, trying to replay all the events in his mind. Neeman was not the kind - usually - to back down from any argument, even if there was absolutely no point in doing so.

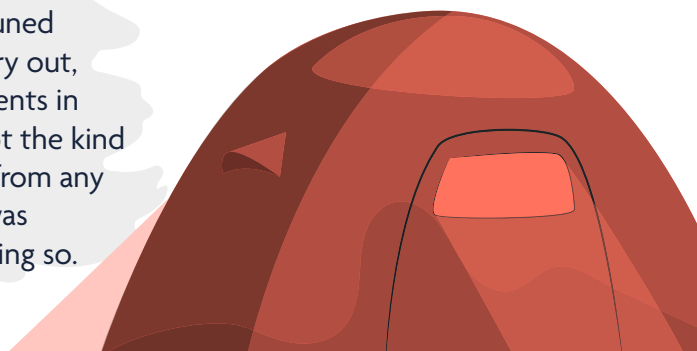
And yet, he had plainly said nothing, and had gone back to his tent. Quite unusually, he seemed a bit edgy about being here, even though he was the one that suggested that they come to the mountain. Additionally, it was as though he was trying to divert their attention from the woods and everything about it. That was also odd.

Best not to dwell on it. A voice echoed in his head, and hesitantly agreed. He turned his attention back to Preston.

'...newspaper articles. In fact, a man named Mr. Low was reportedly found here, paralysed from the waist down. His true name was apparently kept hidden, and some say he doesn't even exist. Others disagree.'

Yes. It was better to focus on the good things around him while he could; after all, he had finished his GCSEs and was now moving on to A-Levels. He only hoped that Neeman would be okay and back to normal in the morning.

BY DANIEL I



THE ENVIRONMENT

SAVING THE PLANET

Our planet has everything we need, but people are taking over from nature with their acts of unkindness as they are burning down forests, refuse to recycle and way more detrimental things, but we are just going to be focusing on the two.

Firstly, burning or cutting down forests could lead to the world losing more and more oxygen. It is said that “a football pitch-sized area of tropical rainforest is lost every six seconds”, this means that 1.2 kilometre by 900 metres of land burned down every 1 minute. This is a shocking fact.

Secondly, not recycling will result in landfill areas filling up much faster, so if we don't do anything about it all of the world will fill up and become a toxic land with trash lying around everywhere. Another issue will be caused if we don't recycle; all of the plastic will increase water and air pollution and we could potentially destroy our living environment for future generations.

BY KONRAD V

THE UNEXPECTED UK HEATWAVE

Whoa, the UK was extremely hot during the recent heatwave! The temperatures skyrocketed, breaking records left and right. Saturday, being the hottest day, was seen to be reaching 32.7C. People were seeking shade, devouring ice-cold drinks, and going swimming to cool off.

Sunscreen became everyone's best friend, and ice cream sales hit an all-time high. Despite the sweltering heat, people found ways to enjoy the summer vibes, whether it was picnicking in the park, having water balloon fights, or simply lounging by the beach.

Air conditioners were up to the max, fans were whirring non-stop, and ice cubes were in high demand. Within the fun and games, it was important to

stay safe. Sunscreen was very key, making sure to use a suitable SPF level. Hats, sunglasses, and lightweight clothing became essential fashion choices, protecting skin from the sun. As the heatwave continued, it became a topic of conversation everywhere you went.

However, as quickly as it arrived, the heatwave started to fade away. Temperatures gradually returned to more comfortable levels. The heatwave definitely left its mark, and we'll remember it as a scorching summer to beat all summers!!

BY TASNIMAH Z



POLLUTION



Pollution is an important topic for several reasons:

Environmental Impact: Pollution can have detrimental effects on ecosystems, wildlife, and natural resources. It disrupts the balance of ecosystems and can lead to habitat destruction and species extinction.

Human Health: Pollution, especially air and water pollution, can harm human health. Exposure to pollutants can cause respiratory problems, cancers, and various other illnesses, leading to significant public health concerns.

Economic Costs: Pollution can result in economic losses through healthcare expenditures, reduced productivity, and damage to infrastructure. It can also affect industries such as agriculture and tourism.

Climate Change: Some types of pollution, like greenhouse gas emissions, contribute to climate change. Addressing pollution is crucial in mitigating the impacts of climate change and achieving global climate goals.

Sustainable Development:

Pollution control is linked to sustainable development goals, as it ensures a cleaner, healthier, and more equitable future for all.

In summary, pollution is important because it has far-reaching consequences on the environment, human health, economics, and sustainability, making it a critical issue that requires attention and action.

BY MUSTAFA A

WOLVES IN THE UK

BY JOSHUA S

During the last ice age, a land bridge existed between the UK and continental Europe, allowing the Eurasian wolf (*Canis lupus lupus*) to migrate into the UK. These wolves played the crucial role of a keystone species, regulating the population of their prey such as deer and boar and thus shaping the ecosystem. However, approximately 7000 years ago the land bridge vanished, isolating the UK wolf population.

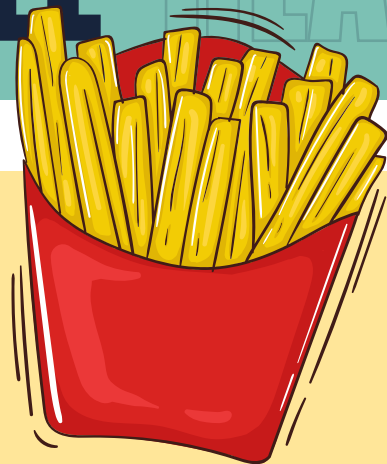
Increasing human population resulted in habitat destruction and wolves were hunted both to protect livestock and for enjoyment. By the 15th century, wolves were extinct in England, and in 1680, the last recorded wolf in the UK was shot dead in the Scottish Highlands.

The absence of wolves in the UK ecosystem has had significant consequences. For example, deer populations exploded leading to overgrazing and habitat

destruction, negatively impacting many species. To combat these 350,000 deer are culled annually, but their population still grows.

Reintroducing wolves could help to restore the ecological balance. This was apparent when in 1995 wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park, USA. However, careful planning, including public education and compensation schemes for farmers, should be carried out to ensure there are no problems with reintroduction.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



‘FROM FRIES TO FITNESS’ MAKING INFORMED FOOD CHOICES

We are what we eat. These five simple words hold an undeniable truth that resonates deeply in our lives. As teenagers, we often overlook the profound impact our food choices have on our present and future well-being. However, as we journey through adolescence into adulthood, it becomes increasingly crucial to consider the significance of healthy eating and nutrition in preventing debilitating health issues such as stroke, cancer, and diabetes.

In a world where fast food and sugary beverages beckon at every turn, the consequences of our dietary choices often escape our immediate attention. Recent research from the UK reveals an alarming trend: 26% of children consume fast food at least once a week, leading to diets with 15% more added sugars than recommended daily. Yet, beneath the surface of these everyday food choices lies a complex web of connections to life-altering diseases. Studies show that frequent indulgence

in processed meals is associated with a 35% higher risk of high blood pressure, a primary precursor to strokes. Additionally, diets rich in red meats correlate with a 25% increased risk of various cancers, underscoring the profound impact our diets have on long-term health.

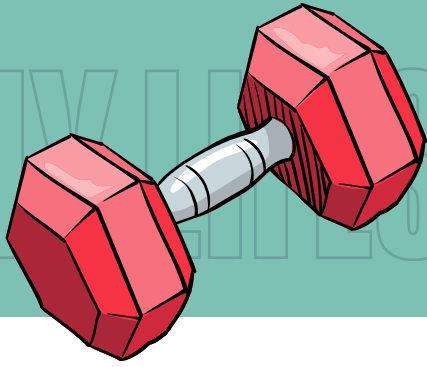
Cancer, the ubiquitous spectre that instils fear in us all, is profoundly influenced by our eating habits. Highly processed foods, red meats, fries and sugary beverages are linked to an elevated risk of cancer, while diets abundant in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains offer vital nutrients and antioxidants that safeguard our cells from harm. These findings serve as a stark reminder that the choices we make today can either stack the odds against us or fortify our defences against life's most formidable health challenges.

With some forms of diabetes, another pervasive health concern, closely intertwined with our dietary choices, the excessive consumption of sugary fare can precipitate obesity and insulin resistance, both pivotal factors in the onset of type 2 diabetes. However, picture a time in the

future when we can enjoy our favourite foods without having to worry about diabetes. Through the adoption of a balanced diet and the practice of mindful eating, this ideal is possibly within reach. By sticking to these principles, we not only take charge of our health but also reduce the strain on the healthcare systems, allowing us to live longer and in better condition.

Our path to a healthier life hinges on the daily choices we make. These choices, as simple as opting for an apple instead of sugary snacks or enjoying a home-cooked meal with loved ones instead of fast food alone, hold the key to shaping our futures. Ralph Waldo Emerson wisely said, “The first wealth is health,” reminding us, as teenagers, to prioritise our well-being. Healthy eating offers us numerous benefits, including the energy to chase our dreams, the resilience to conquer challenges, and the courage to embrace life's adventures.

BY KIITAN O



WHY EXERCISE IS IMPORTANT FOR TEENAGE BOYS

BY SEB B

Do you want to be fit and active? Well, keep reading if you do as regular exercise has many benefits that can make a big difference to your future adult life. Let's explore why staying fit matters.

One key reason you should want to keep fit is to become healthier and stronger as you grow through your teenage years. Let's set ourselves on a healthy journey.

Another reason why teenagers should strive to do frequent heart pumping activities is to prevent stress. Did you know 45% of teenagers feel stressed, what a surprise, so doing exercise will make you feel relaxed, simple right? Just going for a short walk or go harder and do a few push-ups, activity can make all the difference in reducing your daily stress levels. Instead of being lazy and watching television or playing video games or worse holding on to your mesmerising phone for the fun of brain rot. You can make a moody teenager into a happy teenager.

Moving on to your outward appearance, you should consider daily exercise to have healthier

skin. I know this is odd but doing regular exercise can really keep your skin healthy and reduce the chance of having a spot-infested face.

My final thought: give yourself a boost by developing a stronger self-image. Regular exercise can help self-esteem and gives you more confidence to do well in school or feel good about yourself around others.

You can unlock new levels of confidence by trying new workouts in the gym, challenge yourself and feel better.



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

HEALTHY

THE VERULAM SCHOOL GYM

BY PHILIP L.



A gym is a great asset in any place, especially a school, as students can get fit and workout with their friends. The Verulam School gym is an incredibly useful place with lots of different equipment to train any muscle.

This photo shows some of the weightlifting equipment found in the Verulam School gym.

This equipment comes with many different weights

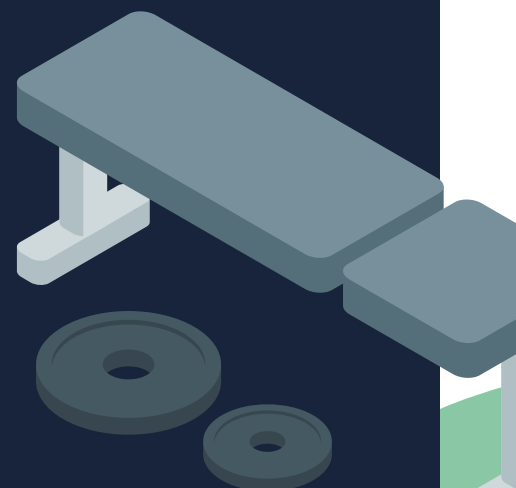
ranging from 2.5kg to 15kg to use while bench pressing. The chair can be pulled out to use the bar that rests on the bench press to deadlift. This activity is restricted to year 9s and above.

However the chairs can be dragged from the bench press and used as a place to lift weights that are offered on the other side of the gym. This activity is open to all students.

In the bottom half of the gym, there is a place to do activities that involve your body such as push ups

and planks. There is also equipment for jumping and squatting with weight.

The gym is open every Tuesday after school from 3:10 to 4:00.



PARKRUN parkrun

Like many people, at times, I struggle with my mental health, especially as homework and expectations increase as you go up the school years. As well as speaking to my form tutor and family, I decided to take responsibility for myself and take up something that would improve my mental wellbeing.

Something that I've found I really enjoy doing is Parkrun. Parkrun is a 5km run or walk around a wood, park or town in various local areas. The run I take part in is in Aldenham, however there are loads of other different locations to choose from in the UK.

In Aldenham there are 100 people or so who do it each week. Whether you run, jog or walk, everybody has a great time. At the end, you are given a ticket which you get scanned and will tell you your time and your placing. It sends a message to your phone and you'll be able to see your statistics. It is not a race; everybody goes at their own pace and it is a very supportive environment with lots of people cheering you along the way.

Taking care of your mental wellbeing is so important and exercise helps your body and mind. When I have a bad week, going for a run makes me feel so much better and I look forward to taking part. I can clear my head and get a break from difficult times.

Whatever age you are, I recommend you give Parkrun a try - what have you got to lose?

BY SAMUEL M



SPORTS ROUNDUP

SPORTS AT VERULAM

BY ABUBAKR A-R

My name is Abubakr and I am a form representative for 9B. I am going to be writing about my personal favourite subject: Physical Education.

Verulam is a brilliant school to give you confidence. I enjoy playing sports because it can get my mind off things. I am in lots of sports teams such as football, athletics, and cricket.

Firstly, how do you join the team? Well, you will need to go to the club you are looking for and give it your all so that the P.E teachers can add you to the team.

Secondly you don't need to be the best at all. The most important reason why P.E teachers pick you is because you are giving your best and trying your hardest.

Sports clubs can also give you self-confidence, raised self-esteem, and develop your social skills.

EXTRA SPORT ACTIVITIES

BY WILL G

At Verulam school there are many extra-curricular activities, from sporting activities after school and during lunch time and many more for students who aren't so interested in sport as well.

Some of the sporting activities include: Basketball, football, cricket (in the summer) and rugby team although for all of these you do have to trial after school to enter. However, there are many other sporting activities that you can join like table tennis and badminton etc and these do not need any trialling for and are free for all.

All these sporting activities are on different days of the week and for different age groups therefore they are enjoyable for everyone. This is also a perfect way sometimes to spend time if it is raining outside. The gym is also open some days during the week for different age groups of course at different times during the week.

The school teams are another way to represent your school in your sport in competitions and show your ability to your classmates and teachers.





FOOTBALL IN THE PARK

BY BECK W

My hobby is playing football at the park. I love doing this because it can help with mental health, and it is personal time with friends. It helps your health and helps you clear your mind and have a new fresh mindset. Try it, it will make you feel happy and positive.

I love doing this as well because if you have been stuck in all day and you feel like you have done nothing, this will help you because you are technically getting a workout whilst clearing your mind and getting into a better mindset.

You can also do this at any time of day - maybe when you have just woken up and want to get active at the start of the day so you can have time to do other things during the day or when you have just came back from work or school and it will give you time to improve your mental health.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

YEAR 10 **BY EVANT** LUNCHTIME FOOTBALL

I have never been a massive fan of football, but last year, in Year 9, I thought I might take part in the matches that my half of the Year group organised (BCH) every lunchtime.

I started in goal (which I wasn't very good at), then progressed to defending and the midfield. We split the teams into forms, so Brampton and Churchill play each other with students from Hamilton divided between each side. I didn't enjoy playing or watching the sport much previous to my taking part in this, but the sense of community and motivation throughout the games makes them very enjoyable.

Now that we're in Year 10, we've established proper teams and have daily 'man of the match' speeches, praising everyone's performance. We record every win or loss we have, ending each half term with a big match to determine who truly won overall.

There's also a sense of healthy competition between the forms, and I've found I've made a lot of

friends and talk to more people because of my experience in school lunchtime football.

Even if you aren't particularly into it, I highly recommend giving lunchtime football a go regardless of your Year.

One member of our team even created FIFA profiles for us, and I've attached mine. It's not the best, but I do appreciate it.

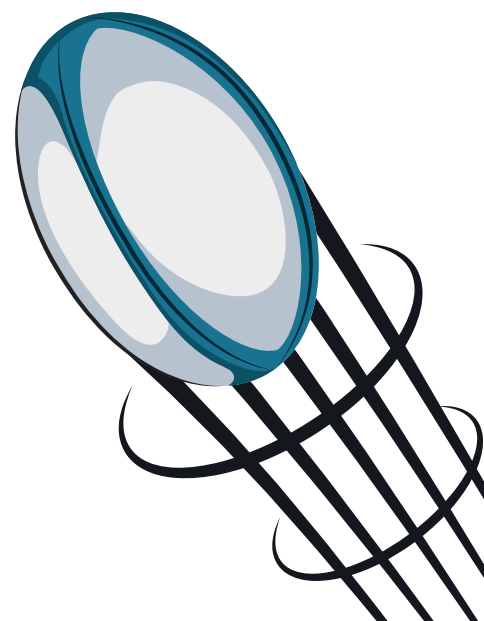


RUGBY

BY ARTHUR R-S.

I have been playing rugby since I was 5 but have been going down to my local club since I was 2 as my older brother was playing. I've fallen in love with the sport ever since, even having some great achievements like playing for the Hertfordshire County team and also getting a trial with London Broncos Academy.

I play down at Verulamium's RFC and we are always looking out for new players to join, so if you are interested why not join us?



RUGBY AT HARPENDEN RUGBY CLUB

BY SEBS

I started playing rugby at the age of 5. I first started playing at Tabards and really enjoyed the opportunity to have fun and play with my friends. The fact that it was a smaller group also meant that we all got a good amount of game time. Unfortunately, once I turned 12 there weren't enough players to keep our team going so I moved to Harpenden.

Here there are more players which means we have more teams but it also means there is more competition and less opportunities to play. Playing rugby is a great way to meet new people and exercise.

Training happens on a Monday and Sunday and matches take place on a Sunday morning. I recommend joining a club like Harpenden to anyone who is looking to meet new people (although it is not for the fragile at heart).

SWIMMING FIVE BENEFITS FOR YOUR HEALTH

BY BENJIM

I have written this article because I love swimming. I'd highly recommend it to anyone because of how much it improves your mental and physical health.

Number 1:

Swimming acts like a full body workout. It mainly improves your core, legs, arms and increases your lung capacity.

Number 2:

It improves your posture. Young people today spend most of their time hunched over watching a device so swimming will help you not get back problems. I myself have scoliosis (where your spine is curved) and swimming has helped a lot with my condition.

Number 3:

Swimming improves your sleep, this is because it helps you relax and your muscles recover from previous sports.

Number 4:

Swimming boosts your mood and happiness. It's proven that exercise releases endorphins which makes you happier.

Finally number 5:

Swimming is a life skill which could save your life, so if you haven't learnt to swim yet I would strongly recommend you to at least give it a go.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

CLUBS AT VERULAM

BY ALEXANDER J

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

At Sandpit Lane during games lessons, we can play a variety of sports and the school plays their home matches there.

At Verulam there are lots of opportunities for after school clubs and activities during your lunch time. In addition, if you want to go even further and join sports teams you can join clubs such as basketball, cricket (only in the summer term), football and athletics and there will also be many more.

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

The PE department has a large range of equipment for us to use during our lessons. There are lots of different extra-curricular activities for us to participate in at school, during lunch time or after school. These include sport, homework help, language and many different types. Whatever you like, there is something for you to work on and enjoy.

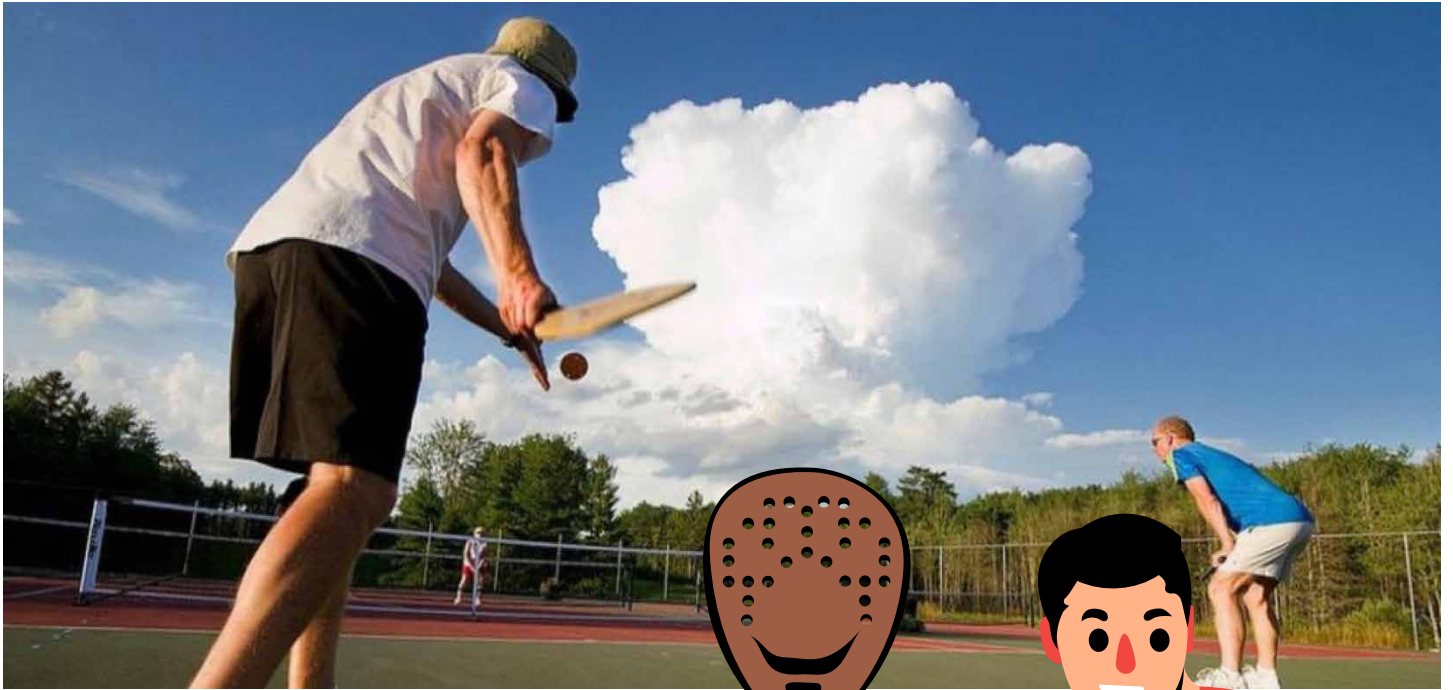
Students are encouraged to take part in lots of different activities and it is recommended that you partake in at least two to three extra-curricular activities which usually take place during lunch or after school on certain days.

Lots of teachers are very invested in their students and the sports even when outside of the school hours. I also know that multiple teachers help out

with the football and go to the matches to organise the teams nearly every other week during some of the much busier periods of the sporting year.

Almost all of the extra-curricular clubs are run by the teachers themselves and they spend their spare time creating fun activities, clubs and societies for all students.





THE DEVELOPMENT OF PICKLEBALL

BY CROSBY C

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the UK. It is a game with a combination of tennis and badminton.

You can play singles or doubles (one v one or two v two). All ages can play, and it is very easy to learn. Pickleball started in the US all the way back in 1965 in Seattle. Despite the fact that pickleball is mostly played by older people, it is getting more popular with the younger generation.

According to a survey, young people ages 6-17 make up 21% of the nearly 5 million people who played pickleball in 2021.

As of April 2023, more than 70% of pickleball players are between the ages of 18 and 44 while 25-34 yearolds only make up 40%. By 2025, the UK aim to have 25,000 people playing pickleball with a current amount of 7,000 in the UK.



SPORTS ROUNDUP

MY FOOTBALL JOURNEY

BY ALEXANDER J



I fondly remember playing football in the garden with my older brother. I have loved it ever since and now cherish that time.

I started my football journey at a football camp for infants called Football Futures.

Then eventually I got into a St Albans City West team for the Year above. I played for this team for five years. When I was in year five, the older boys had to decide between rugby or football. Most

of them chose rugby, so that meant the team folded and I had to move football teams.

About three, four years ago I moved to St Albans City Lions who are in division two. Every year in that team I received a top goal scorer award, scoring over twenty goals for the season. In my last season there, I also received the player of the year award. This trophy was voted on by my teammates.

Very recently I moved to Harvesters North, the top team of Harvesters' Sunday league. At the end of the last school year I found out some good news: for the past year, I was trialling for St Albans City Academy and at the beginning of the summer holidays this year St Albans accepted me into the academy.

Now this year I am playing my first season at Harvesters and St Albans City Academy.

HOW TO GET INTO CRICKET

BY EVAN L

Cricket is a very interesting game with many different formats. For each format people share different opinions on all of them. All I want to do is to help you to understand as much as I do. Cricket is one of the many things I am passionate about, and I believe that it is lots of fun and if you can enjoy it you can benefit in multiple ways.

Cricket is a sport played between two teams of eleven players. One side bat and the other bowls.

When you bat you are given a wooden cricket bat. Your aim is to get as many runs as possible while making sure the bowling team does not get you out. When you bowl your goal is to throw the ball - bowl - at the stumps - three poles pointing out the ground. They need to get all ten wickets.

There are lots of clubs all around Hertfordshire. Some in the area around Verulam include:

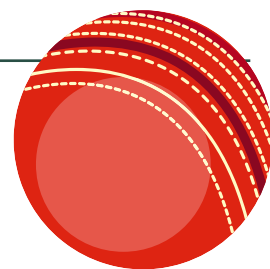
- Old Albanian
- St Albans

- Harpenden
- Redbourn
- Wheathampstead

Some more in the wider area include:

- West Herts
- Radlett
- St Margaretsbury
- Knebworth Park
- Hemel Hempstead Town

If you want to get involved, you can contact them. I hope that you now understand a little bit about cricket and that you can get started.





WHY SPORTS IS GOOD FOR SCHOOL KIDS



Sports are awesome for children at school. They have so many benefits. Sports help children stay active and healthy, develop important life skills, and build strong relationships with their peers. Plus, they're super fun. When children participate in sports, they get regular exercise, which is great for their physical health. It helps them build strong muscles and bones, improves their coordination, and maintains a healthy weight.

Sports also teach children valuable life skills. They learn about teamwork, cooperation, and how to work towards a common goal. They develop discipline, perseverance, and

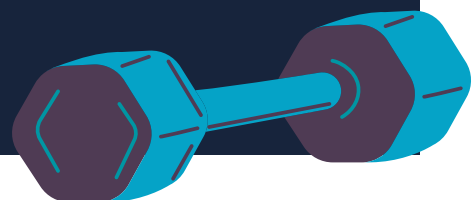
time management skills. Playing sports also boosts children's self-confidence and self-esteem. When they achieve personal goals, overcome challenges, and improve their skills, they feel proud of themselves. It's a great confidence booster.

Sports also provide an opportunity for children to make new friends and build social connections. They get to interact with teammates, coaches, and opponents, which helps them develop communication and social skills. Plus, it's a chance to have fun and create lifelong memories. Moreover, sports can improve academic performance. Regular physical activity has been linked to better concentration, improved memory, and enhanced cognitive

function. So, playing sports can help children excel in the classroom too.

In summary, sports are amazing for children at school. They promote physical health, teach important life skills, boost self-confidence, foster social connections, and even enhance academic performance. So, let's encourage all children to get involved in sports and enjoy all the benefits sport brings.

BY JOSHUA B



SPORTS ROUNDUP



CRICKET WORLD CUP

BY HARRY F

England are heading out to India for the 2023 world cup in the coming days, however this trip is different for England.

In 2019, England for the first time in the history of one day international cricket, won the world cup, beating New Zealand in a super over, after scores were tied in the 50 overs from each side. With one ball in the super over to go, after England set a score of 15, New Zealand needed 2 runs to win, but in the most dramatic fashion, England ran the New Zealand batsman out to

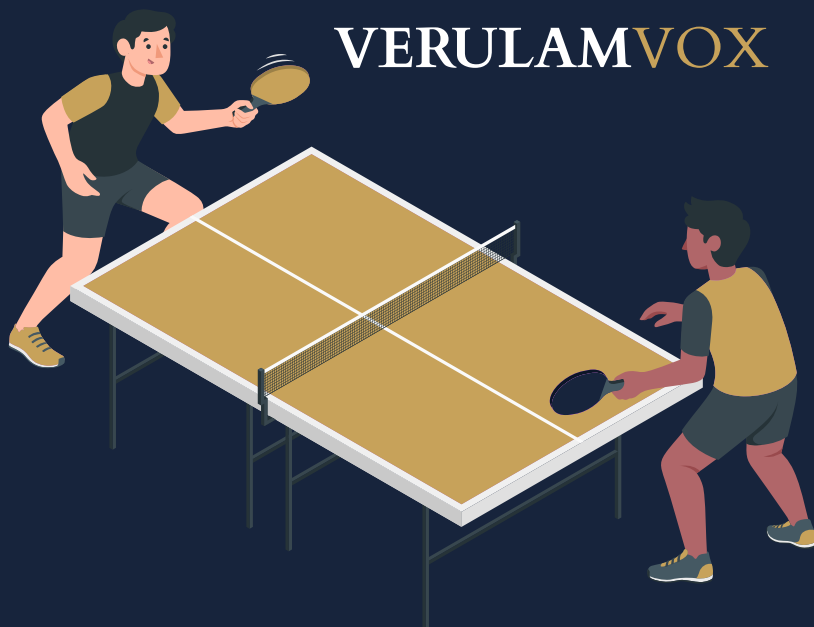
win the world cup. This means that now, in the next world cup, England are start as the title defenders.

England's first game is against the finalists from the last world cup, New Zealand, on the 5th of October, live on sky sports, starting at 9:30am BST. Then afterwards they are playing Bangladesh, Afghanistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, India, Australia, the Netherlands, and Pakistan in the group stage. If England qualify for the knockouts, then the dates that are important are the semi-finals,

as only 4 teams qualify from the group stage of 10 teams, which is on the 15th and 16th of November, with 1st playing 4th and 2nd vs 3rd, with the grand final set for the 19th of November at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad, at 8:30 am.

Hopefully the England team can defend their title and come home as world champions, again.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES



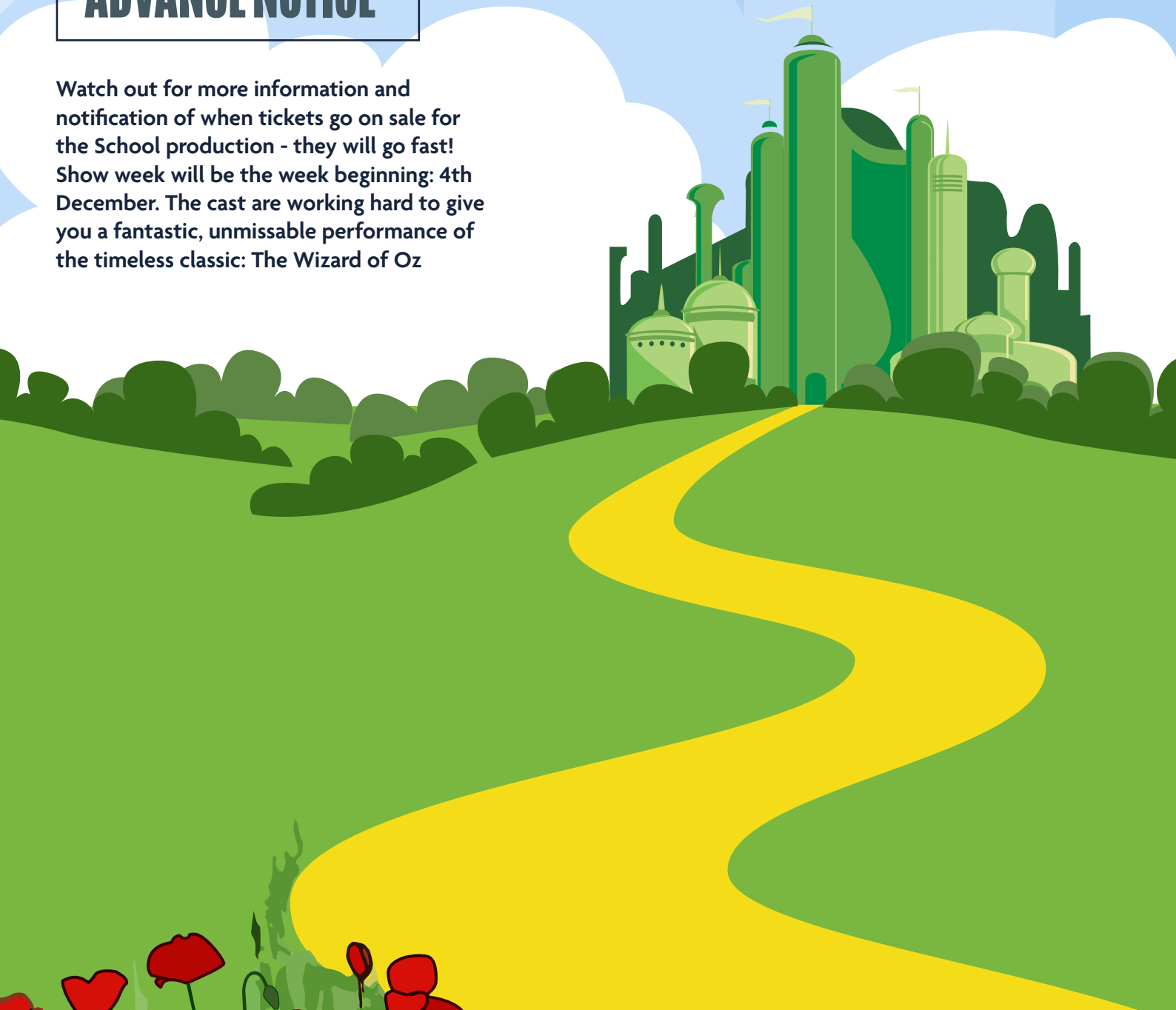
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
KS3 CLUBS & SOCIETIES YEARS 7 & 8	Lunchtime 	Lunchtime Year 7 & 8 Book Club - Room 4 Hub Club - Board Games	Lunchtime Hub Club - Lego Mastermind Quiz Club (Gold week) - Room 8 Christianity Unpacked - Room 21	Lunchtime KS3 Chior - Music Block MFL Cultural Society - Room 25 Hub Club - Doc Day Mastermind Quiz Club - Room 8	Lunchtime Social Science Club - Room 23 Maths HUB - Room B3 Hub Club - Free Play
	After School Year 7 & 8 Homework Club - Library WoZ Rehearsals Percussion Ensemble - Room MU2 Hub HW Club	After School Hub HW Club (4pm finish)	After School Year 7 & 8 Homework Club - Library WoZ Rehearsals Hub HW Club	After School Year 7 & 8 Homework Club - Library Year 7 Science Club - Verulam Room S1 Chamber Ensemble - Room MU2 Hub HW Club	After School Warhammer Club - Room 31 WoZ Rehearsals
KS4 CLUBS & SOCIETIES YEARS 9-11	Lunchtime Chess Club - Room 5 Politics Society - Room 32	Lunchtime Chess Club - Room 5	Lunchtime Verulam Historical Society - Room 30 Christianity Unpacked - Room 21	Lunchtime Chess Club - Room 5 MFL Cultural Society - Room 25 Young Carer Club - The Hub KS4 Philosophy Society - Room 21	Lunchtime Chess Club - Room 5 Maths HUB Higher Tier - Room B3 Talking about the economy - Room 39
	After School Year 9, 10 & 11 Homework Club - LRC WoZ Rehearsals Percussion Ensemble - Room MU2 Hub HW Club	After School Hub HW Club	After School Year 9, 10 & 11 Homework Club - LRC Debate Club - Room 4 WoZ Rehearsals Hub HW Club	After School Year 9, 10 & 11 Homework Club - LRC Art Club - Room A2 Chamber Ensemble - Room MU2 Hub HW Club	After School Warhammer Club - Room 31 WoZ Rehearsals
SIXTH FORM	The revision sessions / additional support for KS5 students is communicated via the Sixth Form team and course google classrooms.				

ALL WOZ REHEARSALS WILL BE COMMUNICATED SPECIFICALLY AND TAKE PLACE IN DRAMA OR MUSIC

CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCE

ADVANCE NOTICE

Watch out for more information and notification of when tickets go on sale for the School production - they will go fast! Show week will be the week beginning: 4th December. The cast are working hard to give you a fantastic, unmissable performance of the timeless classic: The Wizard of Oz



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

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.aat.school

Verulam Staff
Record on CPOMS

Students
Contact your Form Tutor or Head of Year
or email: concern@verulam.aat.school

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

Safeguarding Governor: Bola Macarthy

Our Safeguarding Team The Fab Eight!



Miss Perry
Designated Safeguarding Lead. Location: Deputy Head office by VLR



Miss Richardson
Location: Headteacher office behind Reception



Ms Moss
Deputy DSL
Location: Office in the first floor of the Inclusion Hub



Mrs Vasa
PA to the Deputy Headteachers
Location: Office next to Admin



Miss Hart
SENDCo
Location: Inclusion Hub



Mr Base
Director of Sixth Form
Location: Sixth Form Office



Mr Halsall
Associate SLT /Head of Year 9
Location: End of Geography/English corridor



Mr MacKenzie
Lead Practitioner
Location: Music Block

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