



ROOKS HEATH LIFE

Newsletter of Rooks Heath School Community



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Head Teacher's Seasonal Greetings

BY MRS M. MANDERSON

Welcome to our Autumn/Winter Newsletter. We have made it to December! We have come to the end of a long term. There have been so many highlights this term that it would take the whole page to list these out but I hope you will have an insight into this as you read our newsletter. For me it has been seeing our students reengage in off-site activities once more on a fuller scale. I was fortunate to accompany one myself to see Hamilton but there were many others. We have appointed new staff, celebrated student achievements, including those making progress with our attendance drive, prepared examination students and more. Our annual Winter Concert saw us finish that week with joy. Rooks Heath certainly has talent! I hope you have a safe and enjoyable Christmas season and look forward to seeing you all next year.



Dexter's First Week at Rooks Heath!

By Miss S. Collins

As you may know we have been given 'Dexter', The Inclusion Quality Mark Bear. He will be documenting all the adventures he gets up to, under our care, on social media. His first week at Rooks Heath was very eventful. He visited the English Department to learn about the Aristotelian Triad and then into Science to participate in two practical lessons



where he wore the appropriate eye protection to conduct the Bunsen burner experiments! He is hoping his future weeks will be just as exciting and he would really like to visit all departments if he can and maybe go on a few school trips?

So, if staff and students have any fun activities that Dexter could take part in over the coming weeks please do let me know so I can bring him along. He only needs to stay a few minutes as his bear brain finds it all a bit much to take in and he doesn't want to disrupt your classes!

Year 7 Gold

By Miss V. Gong



On Sunday, the 25th of September 2022, one of our Year 7 students Yusuf Safi, participated in the British Taekwondo National Championships.

The competition was held at the English Institute of Sports in Sheffield. Yusuf was wearing a blue vest, and he had four fights. According to Yusuf's mum, he won all fights with knockouts! His family was very proud and hope that he has more successes in the future.

The Challenge of China

By Miss V. Gong

On Wednesday 5th October, six of the Year 10 students of Chinese were selected for a virtual business challenge. The event took place from 9am-12pm and students were competing with five other teams from other schools. Two teams were A-level students of Chinese! Within these 3 hours, students were given five different tasks to accomplish in Chinese: product justification, creating a promotional flyer, a phone call conference with "the manager of Walmart", sending out a Walmart confirmation email, and producing a TV advert for their chosen product.



The result? Rooks Heath won the final competition! Our students echoed our school motto to strive for their best, and they showed brilliant teamwork throughout the competition.

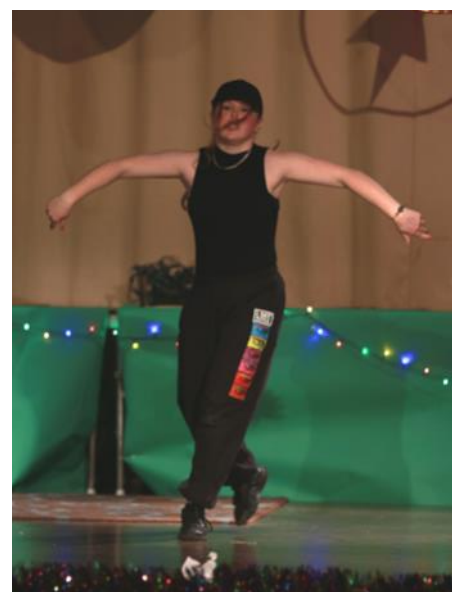
Winter Concert

By Mr P. Turner

This year Rooks Heath Performing Arts put on a Winter Concert, showcasing the amazing talent at Rooks Heath across all Year Groups. Over 80 students were involved as performers or tech crew, performing to excited Earlsmead students in the afternoon, and a sold out hall in the evening. The atmosphere was amazing with parents and friends filling the auditorium! As this was my first ever Rooks Heath concert, I was truly impressed with the level of dedication from performers, and support from the parents. It was a wonderful evening, with a wide range of entertaining



acts, including music and dance ranging from classical to contemporary. Both concerts were very successful, receiving positive feedback from staff, students and parents. I have to express heartfelt thanks to all students and staff who were involved, as their hard work and talent made it a very special day/evening! I look forward to many more future performances at Rooks Heath events.



Year 11 Geography Residential Trip to Swanage

By Gabriela Dias Sousa – 11V

Back in September, a group of Year 11 students went on the annual Geography residential trip to Swanage, in Dorset. The weekend was packed with sunshine, long walks and coastal landforms. Despite the trip having to be cut short by one day, because of the Queen's funeral, an excellent time was had by all. Mr Simpson would like to thank all the students for being absolutely delightful and a real credit to themselves and the school. Gabriela in 11V, wrote the following about the trip:

On Friday 16th September, we embarked upon an exciting field trip, staying in the lovely town of Swanage for three days; an adventure nobody would ever forget. Day 1: We gathered outside reception at 7:30am, and then piled onto the minibuses. Rumbling across the motorway in our bumping minibuses, every child on their headphones (teenagers, am I right?!) A couple of hours later, we arrived at a pit stop, where we filled our hungry stomachs, once again embarking on the road, chatting more, until we arrived at the sea, splendid in front of us. Here, we took a ferry across the calm blue water, for about five minutes and travelled again until we reached Shell Beach, where everyone went wild at the sight of sand and sea. From there, we went to Winspit Quarry. My breath was taken away by the magnificent view. I was also fascinated by the story of the old, abandoned quarry and, of course, the rock formations (thank you Mr Wright for explaining!) Finally, we, the weary travellers, arrived at the youth hostel, to find we had really nice rooms, and a chance to explore the town at night following a lesson in the classroom. Here, I experienced the highlight of the trip-glorious freedom in the night air of the quaint town of Swanage. Every student rushed down to the town as soon as we were let out. I was enchanted by the lit-up streets. And then I saw perhaps the most beautiful thing of the whole trip -the sea at night. I had never before seen something so pitch black, so quiet, and so enchanting. I could hear the quiet swash of the waves, like a magical lullaby, and looking up in wonder, I saw the sky filled with thousands upon thousands of stars. It took my breath away; it made me want to stay there forever.

I knew I would never forget it. Tearing myself away, we carried on exploring the town. After an amazing hour in the town, looking into a closed library and having fun in the arcade, everyone piled into their rooms, where, of course, we talked for hours until the next day. Day 2: We were awoken by the sound of knocking, and Mr Simpson telling us we had to get up. Groggily, we got dressed and made our way downstairs, eating a delicious breakfast which my friends would not stop talking about, before making our way to Knoll Beach. Here, we carried out bipolar surveys and questionnaires, measured wind speed and marram grass (marram grass is now a name no one will forget), and got into a pinecone war with Mr Wright. Promptly after that, we headed to Old Harry Rocks, which we had heard so much about, and I felt a bubble of excitement to see the famous landform. After walking for a while up a steep incline, and along country roads lined with trees, the road thinned out to open fields. Soon, we saw the edge of cliffs, filled with hope that the trek was over, and then, finally Old Harry. Standing on the cliff,



I was gobsmacked by the magnificent view and how huge, and awe-inspiring Old Harry looked in real life. We gazed at the view for a few minutes and then everyone sat down, breathing sighs of relief, to sketch Old Harry.

It was an incredibly peaceful moment. Soon we returned to Swanage, going down from the chalk cliffs to the Purbeck limestone. The scenery was some of the most beautiful I have ever seen in my life. Reluctantly leaving it behind, we arrived at Swanage and enjoyed some free time. After the evening lesson, we ventured into the town again and this time it was even better.

We all more or less knew where we were going and had more time to enjoy the exhilaration of night-time in Swanage. And then, as if planned for us: BOOM! Looking out to the sea, my friends and I saw a huge boat releasing dozens and dozens of fireworks into the sky, in a fantastic and incredibly loud display.



It was colourful, wonderful and exciting, and we all stopped immediately to watch it; eyes wide.

It was like an exuberant goodbye. Day 3: Once again awoken by Mr Simpson, we rushed, almost late, to breakfast, everyone sad, as we knew we would soon have to leave our amazing holiday. But we barely had time to dwell on it as we all headed on the mini buses to Durdle Door. This is where we faced the hardest trek yet. I had never seen something so steep and difficult to walk up; everyone was breathing hard, everyone's legs ached, and I felt as if I had run ten marathons. But it was worth it when we arrived, triumphant, to the top, gazing down at Durdle Door. It was

breath-taking. The water was a myriad of dark blues and enchanting turquoise, like I had never seen in England, and way below, I could see people swimming, so far out I was in complete awe. From here, we descended to a pebbly beach where Mr Wright taught us to skim stones, and then to Durdle Door itself – a sight straight from a travel brochure, with its enormous, strangely-shaped arch. After that, we assumed the long hike again, where we were allowed some free time in the village of Lulworth. Most of the students bought ice cream – one of my favourite moments of the trip. Then, we ambled to Lulworth Cove, a picturesque place shaped like a perfect seashell. This is where we learnt about the differences between a bay and a cove! The whole time I just stared at it; the dramatic cliffs, the opening of the cove, the spotless beach, the boats. I did not want to forget it. Finally, we all knew it was time to go. On the way back from the minibuses, we sang to an incredible amount of pop songs, almost killing my voice, but it was worth it. It made me feel a little less sad about leaving after having had the time of my life. Arriving back at the hostel, we packed our things. Everyone was sad to go. Then, we climbed into the minibuses, and headed back home. The trip to Swanage was an incredibly fun, fascinating, and new experience, during which I experienced the exhilaration of a holiday with my friends, and the fascination of learning about the geography of a beautiful area. On this trip, everyone learnt new things, made stronger relationships with their friends and teachers, and saw the natural beauty of Dorset. It was a trip no-one will forget any time soon.

Thank you so much to the wonderful teachers who organised it: Ms Rockell, Mr Wright, Mrs Wright, and Mr Simpson. It was an amazing and incredibly well-organised trip, and your presence made it ten times more fun!

Classics Trips to the Museum of London

By Miss O. Olivero

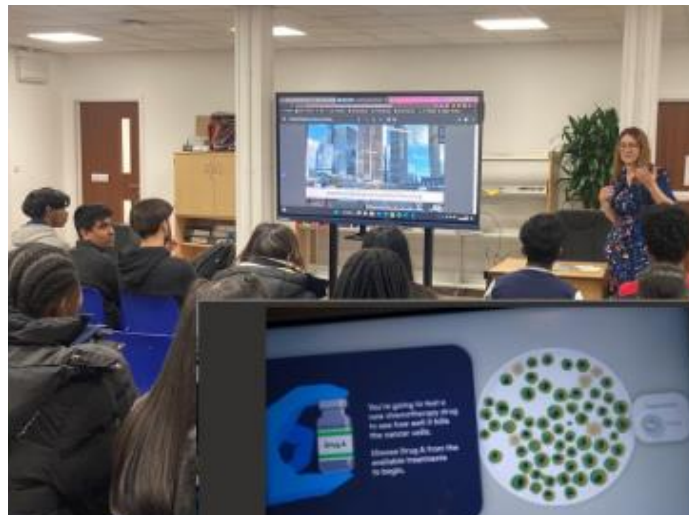
The Classics department ran two very successful trips to the Museum of London on Wednesday 5th October (Year 8) and Wednesday 12th October (Year 9). Students were able to explore how the Ancient Romans lived when they settled in ancient London (Londinium) and were able to see and touch original Roman artifacts that were discovered in London in a very interesting hands-on archaeology session. Students were wonderfully behaved and engaged, and were praised by Museum staff for this!



6th Form Business Talk

By Mrs J. Chambers

On Tuesday 29th November, we had a speaker, Karen Heaven, come in for the Year 12 & 13 Business and Economics students. Karen is part of the Speakers for Schools Programme and also a member of the 30% Club. This is part of the Schoolroom to Boardroom Initiative which is interested in encouraging girls to see their potential in leadership positions, and the need to challenge the status quo when it comes to gender in business. Karen spoke about her role and career journey in Corporate Banking and working as a Managing Director for Reddington Investment consultants. She joined Reddington as an Investment Consultant after eight years at Morgan Stanley, where she was a Vice President in the European Pensions Group, focusing on risk management for UK pension schemes. Prior to joining the pensions group, Karen held roles in both equity and debt capital markets. She gave a very informative talk on the UK workforce and how big the market was for Banking and Finance, factors that affect pensions and what happens if external shocks affect the stock market and the implications for businesses and sustainable investments. She also gave advice on applying for apprenticeships and jobs in the future and how life can take you in different directions. Our students gained valuable knowledge and insight into working in the Banking sector and asked some very pertinent questions to Karen. The students seemed to gain a lot from the experience and quite a few have shown a keen interest in pursuing a career in the Banking sector or applying for an apprenticeship in her firm.



Year 13 Applied Scientists Participate in the Cancer Revolution

By Mrs M. Thobhani

On 7th November, our 6th form science students visited the Science Museum. The class engaged in reading the exhibits, discussing models of cancer cells, quizzes, animation on drugs to treat cancer cells. This is a model of the tumour build by Fran Balkwill and the team of scientists that engineer mini tumours that can grow, change and spread like human cancer. This enables them to improve new treatments and look for new therapies that target the range of cells that support tumour growth.



Applied Scientists took turns to have a go at the animation on drug trials to find out which drug will be best suited by trying out animation on different drugs to kill cancer cells and keep other tissues healthy. Applied Scientists are comparing traditional therapy vs Adaptive therapy. Adaptive therapy is much more customised so that the patient can live longer and have a better quality of life. This also enables the consultant to decide when to give chemotherapy and radiotherapy. The doses are now lower and targeted to the specific cells so that rest of the tissues remain healthy. Year 13 Applied Scientists were very pleased to have engaged in the Cancer Revolution, timeline of cancer evolution and explored various options to treat cancer cells, finally pose for a photograph near the foyer creating memories.

End of the Summer at Thorpe Park

By Mr S. Sharp



Back on Friday 16th September, Years 10 and 11 enjoyed their postponed summer trip to Thorpe Park. The original date was rescheduled from July due to the 40 degree heat we were experiencing at the time. The change in date meant that the park had far fewer visitors than we would experience in the summer term, and this allowed our students to pack in ride after ride after ride! From the twists and turns of Colossus to the

terrifying speed of Stealth, the happy screams of Rooks Heath students could be heard throughout Surrey!

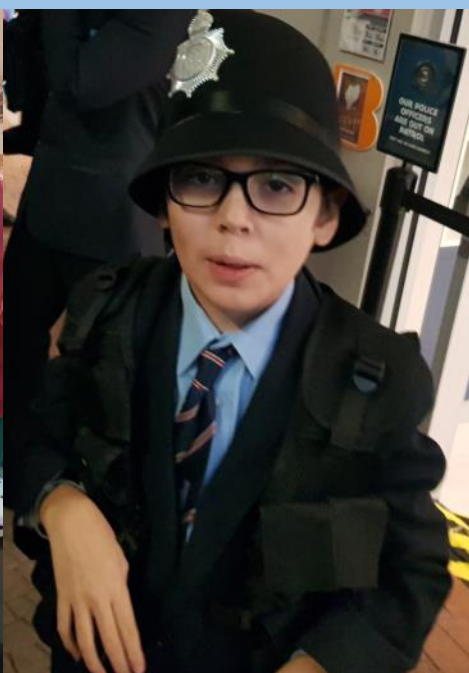
Most of our students agreed it was the perfect time of year to enjoy the park at its fullest, and every one of them was a credit to the school.



Year 7 Careers Trip to KIDZANIA!

By Mr M. Pitchforth

On the 2nd December all our Year 7 students travelled on the Central line to Westfield, London. Their final destination was KidZania, where they "tried" out different jobs for the day. Some of the jobs our students sampled were Veterinarian, Fire Fighter, Air Cabin Crew, newspaper journalist amongst others. It was interesting for the students to realise that the skills they acquire in school for subjects like English and Maths are essential for the world of work. The day also provided important lessons in time management and budgeting with some students having earned over 150 of the Kidzania currency to spend in the shop!



DATES

Tuesday 3rd January
STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DAY

•

Wednesday 4th January
START OF SPRING TERM - STUDENTS
RETURN TO SCHOOL

•

Tuesday 31st January
PTFA MEETING

•

Monday 13th —Friday 17th
February
HALF TERM HOLIDAY

Parent surgery is here!
9/1, 16/1, 6/2, 20/2, 6/3
4pm—5:pm

Contact Corrine Goodlitt:
cgoodlitt@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk
for a 15-minute slot.

Year 13 vs Year 12 Football

By Mr M. Pitchforth

The end of October saw the return of the 6th Form charity football match. This fixture is a firm favourite at the beginning of every year that establishes bragging rights in the 6th Form study room! Both teams started well. However, by half time it looked like a repeat of the drubbing the Year 13s took last year when they were 12s! The rain started to come down right on cue for the second half causing a few players to spend most of the rest of the game on the ground. By the time the whistle blew the 12s had triumphed over the 13s 7-2, an improvement for the 13s, last year's score being 10-2. Clearly the better prepared team, the 12s had certainly put a lot of thought into their post goal celebrations. I don't want to think what they were sliding through on their knees by the end of the game! Thanks, as always, to Mr Williams for refereeing. The teams all paid £1 to play, raising money for World Bicycle Relief. Watch this space for more inter-Year Group games between the 12 and 13s over the year. Hopefully the Year 13s can claw back some dignity next time...

