



ROOKS HEATH LIFE

Newsletter of Rooks Heath School Community



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The most colourful day of the year

Head Teacher's Message

BY MRS M. MANDERSON

The year has been characterised by exceptional parent partnerships with school staff. I would like to thank all the parents / carers who took advantage of my Headteacher Parent Surgeries this year. It has been very helpful to discuss various matters with you. The school goes from strength to strength with the continued partnership between school and home. I cannot stress enough, how important and critical it is for parents and carers to be engaged in their child's school experience. I look forward to seeing more of you join our PTFA – a great way to keep in touch and abreast of school business and meet staff. We are almost back to our pre-pandemic levels of school trips and extra-curricular activities. We were given the title of an 'effective school' by Challenge Partners, and we make good progress towards being a flagship school for inclusion. Learning continued throughout the year whether strike days or additional Bank Holidays and we celebrated all that is Rooks Heath at several events through the year. Our next big and exciting project is the erection of our new building and the demolition of our M block. Everything we do, we do with our students' interests at the core. So please, go ahead and enjoy reading about life at Rooks Heath School during the summer term and I wish you all a very fun filled summer break.

Music Matters

BY MR. P. TURNER

A big congratulations to all of our instrumental students who performed in our after-school Summer Music Showcase concert series earlier this term. Some are now “old hands” at these concerts; for others, it was their debut performance. It was wonderful to hear our students perform live, and for parents and friends to see the progress they have made on their instruments over the course of the year. Thank you to Mr Pitchforth, Ms Logan and Mr Sharp who assisted in the smooth running of this event.



Junior Mathematical Challenge Awards 2023

BY MS. S. SRITHARAN

Twenty-six (Years 7 and 8) students took part in this year's Junior Mathematical Challenge in April and eighteen of them ended up achieving awards!

Gold: 5 - Silver: 7 - Bronze: 6

Well done to all of them on their achievements!

Rian Patel (Year 7) and Kavya Patel (Year 8) also qualified for the follow-on round called the 'Junior Kangaroo'.

Parent praise for staff

It is always wonderful to hear about the good work of members of the Rooks Heath staff body. Staff mentioned to the headteacher by parents who recognised them include Mr Bissoon, Mrs Rahman and Mr Mall. Staff are described as 'doing a great job', 'addressed my concerns straight away', 'brilliant' and 'amazing'. What accolades. One parent was specifically pleased with the booklets for revision and the Strive to be your Best Evening to support students in the lead up to the exams, quoting "this is what was needed". Another quote that resonates was "the teacher knows my child and was able to find ways to channel the strategies which worked for some time and also offered science after school. Other staff include Ms Shrestha, Ms Thakker, Mr Todd and Ms Liu. The hope is that every teacher and associate staff member is revered in the same way by the families they work with.

Culture Day

BY MR. S. SHARP

On Tuesday 11th July we had our second annual Culture Day. On this day, everyone in our community is encouraged to wear outfits that celebrate their cultural heritage, or something that represents an element of culture they are passionate about. This has become a highlight of the year for our students and our staff. Once again, everyone made an effort and looked incredible.



Later in the day we had our Culture Evening performance event. An excitable and supportive audience experienced music, drama and dance, as well as a fashion show where students cheered as each country represented took to the stage.

Culture Day is an event planned and organised by our Student Council, who were brilliant at pulling the day together...but more thanks should go to Mr. Pitchforth, Miss Walker, Mr. Turner, Miss Selvarajah and Miss Webb for their tireless help and support.

We are already looking forward to the next one!



Rooks Heath Alumni

BY MISS O. OLIVERO

A few Saturdays ago I had a long overdue catch up with our former students who are currently studying at Oxford University. From left: Sara Tabassum (class of 2020) who is reading Classics and French at Worcester College; Fathiya Abdillahi (class of 2019) who is reading Classics at Queen's College; and Talitha Saravannamuttu (class of 2022) who is reading Classics at Jesus College. They are all doing well - Oxford has its challenges and many of the other Classicists at the University are from a very different background to these young women. Each time I see them I am reminded of how important the work we do at Rooks Heath is! The more we offer an inclusive curriculum in a school like ours the more the world of Academia will reflect this. In these tough times it is good to be reminded that we all played a part in inspiring them to do what they are doing today. They send their love to the Classics Department and their former teachers at Rooks Heath. Sara wanted to especially send her regards to Mr. Simpson!



The National Careers Challenge

BY MRS S. SUBRA

On the 27th June 2023, our school hosted the National Careers Challenge. This was conducted in partnership with NatWest Bank. All 219 students in Year 9 participated in this challenge where they were tasked with the designing of a product catered for the teenage market. Throughout the day the visitors encouraged students to come up with innovative ideas and bring to life a product that could be The Next Big Thing. Students' entrepreneurial skills were very much sharpened, teaching them skills that ranged from team building to leadership to design, marketing and finance. I am pleased to say that most of our students were superbly engaged, and many of them came up with variety of different products. The runners-up designed a virtual holiday company/product called VR that catered for virtual holidays for those who could not afford to go on trips or those who were confined to their homes due to disabilities. However, the winning team designed an app called TechModz. This app allowed young people the opportunity to get their mobile devices repaired and buy affordable products through the app. The team pitched their product to the judges in a very articulate manner, allowing all team members to participate during the presentation, showing a strong team spirit. The winning team comprised of the following students from 9 Yellow:



Marshall , Shane , Oscar , Rayan , Samar , Harish.

Teaching Research

BY MISS V. GONG

A piece of research that Ms Gong completed with Year 9 students of Chinese had been selected for a presentation at the European Association of Chinese Teaching (EACT)'s 4th International Symposium at the University of Southampton.

The conference focused on Chinese Language Education in Secondary and Higher Education from a Multilingual and Multicultural Perspective. This research was led by Victor Wu from the Institution of Education (IOE), UCL and cooperated with 4 other secondary schools in the UK. In the presentation, Ms Gong's research group introduced the idea of launching soft CLIL in Chinese, which means some curricular topics are taught during a language course. Despite the difficulties in promoting secondary schools in the UK, we found that over 67% of our participants would like to learn Mandarin more innovatively (combined with other school subjects). This research was also selected for presentation at the 4th Biannual International CLIL conference at Sheffield Hallam University on 16th June 2023.



From left to right; Mengru Xie (Dulwich College UK), Joël Bellassen (former professor of Chinese at Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales and the first Inspector General in the field of Chinese Language Teaching at the Ministry of Education in France), Ms V Gong (Rooks Heath School).

Celebration Evenings

Congratulations to all our students who were celebrated for their progress and achievements. The celebration evenings were so well organised and punctuated with moments of brilliance which included the celebration of Tyler in Year 8 who went up several times to collect awards, and the special treat to a speech conveyed to the audience completely in sign language by Mr Bissoon



Chinatown and The British Museum

BY ALESHA 71

The Journey

At 9:10am, we all met at the Reception with our teachers, excited and ready to begin the trip. First, we took the bus to South Harrow train station. When we got on the train from South Harrow to Holborn. The train journey lasted about an hour until we finally reached Central London. We were so scared of the escalator because of how high it was! After exiting the train station, we were all astonished at how many people there were!



The British Museum

Once we got to the museum, we were told that we could go in our groups and venture around the Chinese rooms and to finish the tasks on the booklet. We discovered many interesting facts, including that some ceramics were created from strong and expensive materials. There were different sculptures and stones that seemed especially important in Chinese culture. Our group had lots of fun exploring and got lost in the museum, going to different rooms, such as the South Asian and African rooms! Miraculously, we found the rest of the groups, which relieved us. We all gathered to leave the museum and walk to the Chinese restaurant in Chinatown.



The Chinese Restaurant

When we got to the restaurant, our groups sat around circular tables, hungry to eat. We were all trying to master the use of chopsticks! First came the noodles and rice, then the dim sum. Overall, the Chinese food was very yummy, appetising, and nice to try. Even though most of my classmates did not like one of the dim sum dishes as they were quite sweet, and they expected it to be savoury. We remembered our manners and said 谢谢 (thank you) after being served a delicious meal. One classmate from my group, Anureet, said: "I really liked the food as it was like a taste of China."

Our way back

On our way back to the school, surprisingly, none of us were tired and were still full of energy and excitement. We had an amazing time exploring the history of ancient China and studying the past about their emperors and resources. The food was just as nice and filled us all! My favourite part was exploring the sculptures of important Chinese people and examining Chinese art. I would strongly recommend going there as it is good if you want to explore a country or culture you don't know about but want to know.



Year 11 School Prom

BY MR PARKINSON

It was a great privilege and pleasure to celebrate the end of exams and the end point of High School with our current Year 11. They have shown huge effort, commitment and resilience to reach this far and for those 125 students who attended the Year 11 Prom, it was a fittingly happy, emotional and always joyous finale.



Our DJ for the evening was great at capturing the mood of the students and tailoring music accordingly. All musical tastes were provided for and one highlight was the en masse rendition of Abba's "Voulez Vous" proving that even music from 40 years ago can reach new audiences. Students loved making use of the photo booth, the buffet also was a massive hit and the atmosphere throughout the evening was lovely. They are such a connected and humble Year Group and will be greatly missed by all staff.



There was even a special performance by Ibrahim and Shankar who wowed the audience with their rapping and singing. This only added to the inclusive and supportive feel of the evening. Venue 5 was a fantastic place to hold the event and my thanks go out to the catering and support staff.

Thank you also to all staff who helped prepare for this event – the finance team for your tenacity and flexibility, Mrs Wright, Mr Ahmed, Miss Green, Miss Gill, Mrs Patel, Mr Todd, Mr Sharp. Thank you to the staff who attended, particularly to those staff who stayed until the last student had been collected. Can I also extend a special thank you to Miss Barry for organising so much and for your patience and creativity throughout.



Goodbyes!

Sadly, we are saying farewell to a few staff including Ms Olivero our Head of Classics, Ms Ives our Senior Science Technician, Ms Farzady who has worked to support our students in maths and Mr Williams a very long-standing member of staff contributing almost 19 brilliant years of service to Rooks Heath School who has decided to now retire. Mr Williams will be missed in particular by the students in Year 9 who are about to leap into Year 10 and begin their Key Stage 4 journey. Mr Williams has also played a key role in the basketball success of Rooks Heath School which has made us a force to be reckoned with across the borough, having led our teams to several successes over the years. Thank you, Mr Williams, and to all staff leaving us this summer. We wish you all the very best.



Year 7—Adventure Island



Barclay's Mentorship

BY MS S. GREEN

On 21st March volunteers from Barclays kindly came into Rooks Heath to run workshops for all of our Year 10 students as part of Barclays' mentorship programme. The programme is designed to help equip our students with the confidence that they will need to be able to succeed once they leave school. These workshops were the first part of the programme, which covered topics such as Personal Branding, Social Media Usage, and Recognising and Building Personal Skills. Students were also informed of the apprenticeship opportunities that Barclays offer. The second part of the programme will take place later this year, when some of our students will get to visit the headquarters of Barclays. Our students gained a lot from these workshops, and we hope that those who go to Barclays HQ will enjoy their trip.

DATES

- **Friday 21st July:** Last Day of Term
Students will be dismissed off site at 12:00pm
- **Monday 4th September:** Whole Staff Professional Development Day
- **Tuesday 5th September:** New Year 7 and new Year 12 Induction (a.m. only). All other students will have work set online during this morning and are expected to log in to Microsoft Teams
- **Wednesday 6th September:**
Whole Staff Professional Development (a.m. only)
Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 13 in school from 11:30am until 3:15pm.
- **Thursday 7th September:** All Year Groups in school, 8:45am—3:15pm
- **Tuesday 12th September:** Open Evening
- **Friday 22nd September:** Whole Staff Professional Development Day
- **Wednesday 27th September:** Celebration Evening (current) Year 10

We have once again been recognised as a Centre of Excellence for the Inclusion Quality Mark this summer. Rooks Heath is working towards becoming a Flagship School for Inclusion. Watch this space!

Thank you to all who donated and wore red on Red Nose Day this year.
Together as a school we raised £785.63 which is a huge achievement. Well done!



QPR Football Club

Kevin Wadman in 8V has recently signed for QPR Football Club as a full Academy Player. He had been on trial for 6 weeks; and he has worked hard and shown lots of talent and resilience. We look forward to seeing more of Kevin in the future as he is a great asset to the school teams.

