



# ROOKS HEATH LIFE

## Newsletter of Rooks Heath College Community

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## 2020—A year with a difference

BY MRS M. MANDERSON

What a tremendously interesting year that 2019 – 2020 has turned into. Without a doubt, events since March have been unprecedented and we commend our students and their families for the way in which you have adjusted to the new circumstances. Our Year 11 and 13 students were robbed of the experience of end of year formal examinations. We saw unusual socially distant observance of Ramadan and Eid, and schools were shutdown. The school closures led to a number of wide-reaching uncertainties. Despite this, so much continues to happen at Rooks Heath which I hope you will enjoy reading about in this newsletter. Staff at Rooks Heath continue to work tirelessly for our students, and we are all missing the interactions of everyday school life. Nevertheless, they have continued to soldier on to ensure everything is in order and that learning and progress continue as best as possible for your children.

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# 2020—A year with a difference

BY MRS M. MANDERSON

We quickly embraced the remote learning opportunities to provide a comprehensive range of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) and I am extremely proud of our students who seamlessly shifted to the new ways of learning. In a recent survey for Years 10 and 12 in preparation for their return, 80% of you reported that your child had an 'excellent' or 'good' level of engagement. This is very encouraging.

You have provided useful feedback which we continue to use to improve things for your children. We have moved to a blended learning approach and will extend live lessons more widely across the year groups. Later this month, we will share with you a different kind of progress tracker to help you see how well your children have engaged in our remote learning platform.

You may have heard about the 'laptops for schools' scheme. It may be helpful to note that this is a DfE scheme which allocates laptops or internet access to students in Year 10 only and who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium funding. If your child has difficulty accessing the internet, please get in contact with us and we will do our best to help.

The first phase of wider opening to students in Years 10 and 12 has been a success. It was a pleasure for many staff and students to see each other on site again. I know the students were very appreciative of the individualised and personalised attention they received. Our premises team did a fine job ensuring we meet all the government's guidelines to observe social distancing making our College premises feel very safe.

There has been much to celebrate during a time many may view as undesirable. Someone said, "don't waste a good crisis" and we have not. May saw the month of Kindness and staff put together a worthy [tribute](#) for our students. I hope you have found some time to view this, as well as all the [virtual assemblies](#). We recently received news of a couple of Year 13 students receiving offers at Oxford University and I am pleased to inform you that one of our teachers, Mr Stuart Macaulay, was nominated for a University of Oxford Inspirational Teachers Award by a former student.

We are not a 'silent school'. The protests to address the racial inequality around the world have taken the importance of having a voice to another level. This world is experiencing a huge social change and hopefully for the better. To help our community understand the issues and support the various conversations that will inevitably be taking place in our homes, with family, friends and colleagues, we are putting together some resources to support our community to understand and engage with the Black Lives Matter movement. Please click this link to find a useful [Parents Guide](#) to tips and resources to support with the conversations you may wish to have with your children to better understand the events around the death of George Floyd and the dialogue around racial equality. I am sure that in a richly diverse school like ours, such conversations will already be taking place, ensuring we continue to serve our community and guarantee racial harmony and maintain the inclusive ethos on which we thrive.





Safeguarding remains a number one priority. We all have a duty to educate our students in the responsible use of digital technology. For support please see our Student Support pages of our website. As a new and different summer term forges ahead, and after receiving a collection of 14 letters since the shutdown of schools, I would like to thank all parents and carers for your hard work in supporting your children at home. Please do not worry about the gaps that you feel your children may have. The dedicated staff at Rooks Heath will set them up for the summer and will plan purposefully so that when they return to us, in what will hopefully be a normal Autumn term, we will ensure that we meet them where they are and deliver a curriculum that takes them forward.

I have every confidence that we have considered the best actions for our entire College community and want to wish you a restful summer holiday when it comes.

## The Black Lives Matter Movement

As a school which is so richly diverse, it is painful to read what is happening around the world but at the same time heartening to see such a diverse support for the injustice that has occurred. Nevertheless, it exists, and it is important to be open and address this. Particularly for our students who will be watching the news and feeling in some senses traumatised by recent events. We will put together some reflections to show that we too, are a tolerant school that is anti racist. One thing I know for sure is that as an institution which is all about education, we cannot remain silent.

The protests to address the racial inequality around the world has taken the importance of having a voice to another level. This world is experiencing a huge social change and hopefully for the better. To help our community understand the issues and support the various conversations that will inevitably be taking place in our homes, with family, friends and colleagues. Some colleagues, many of whom are parents, are putting together some resources. Please use the articles and resources [linked](#) to help support the dialogue around racial equality.

## Thoughts From Year 10

Here at Rooks Heath College we believe in open communication. Listening and being unafraid to ask questions is integral to connecting with and understanding others. Ms Grover surveyed the Year 10 students' thoughts on George Floyd, the BLM movement and recent protests. Mrs Hyde and Mrs Hargrave then compiled a presentation. Please [click here](#) to view this presentation.

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"Regardless of our appearance; we are all human"

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"I can see change happening if more people  
gather awareness"

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# Recommended Reading

BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

## Poetry

Limbo - Edward Kamau Brathwaite

Island Man/Hurricane Hits England – Grace Nichols

Half Caste – John Agard

Vultures – Chinua Achebe

Not my business - Niyi Osundare

The Living Photograph – Jackie Kay

Before we get into this – Lemn Sissay

What Stephen Lawrence has taught us – Benjamin Zephaniah

The British – Benjamin Zephaniah

We Refugees – Benjamin Zephaniah

No Problem – Benjamin Zephaniah

I too am American – Langston Hughes

Miz Rosa rides the bus – Amiri Baraka

Canary – Rita Dove

Praise Song for the day – Elizabeth Alexander

Still I rise – Maya Angelou

Caged Bird – Maya Angelou

Solid lines – Ayesha Williams

Middle Passage – Robert Hayden

Riot – Gwendolyn Brooks

Frederick Douglass – Robert Hayden

## Fiction

Roll of thunder Hear my cry – Mildred D Taylor

Friends - Rosa Guy

Ghost Boys – Jewell Parker Rhodes

Black Brother, Black Brother – Jewell Parker Rhodes

The Hate u Give - Angie Thomas

On the Come up – Angie Thomas

Refugee Boy – Benjamin Zephaniah

Gangsta Rap – Benjamin Zephaniah

Noughts and Crosses – Malorie Blackman

Unheard Voices – Malorie Blackman

Orangeboy – Patrice Lawrence

Rose Interrupted – Patrice Lawrence

Liclle Bit – Alex Wheatle

Crongton Knights - Alex Wheatle

Children of Blood and Bone – Tomi Adeyemi

Purple Hibiscus – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

I know why the caged bird sing – Maya Angelou

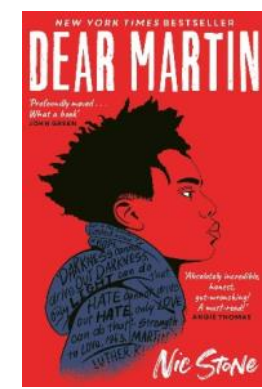
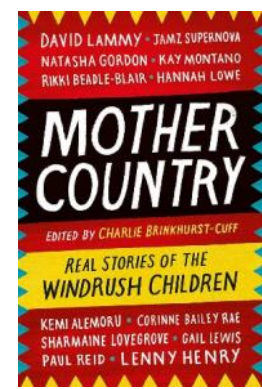
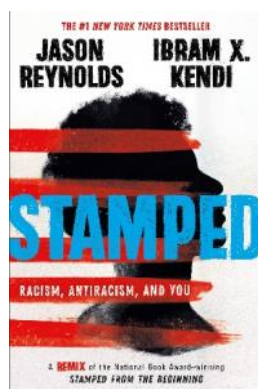
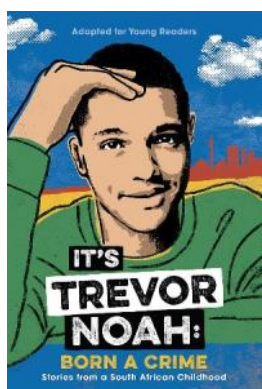
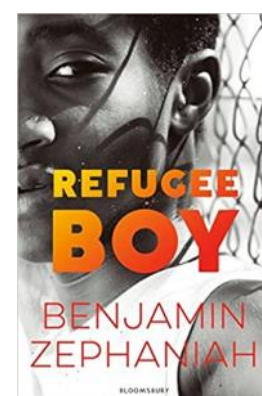
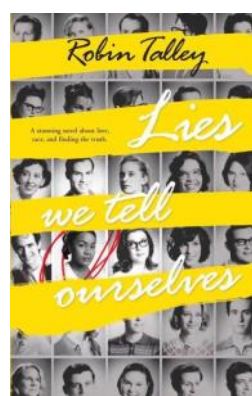
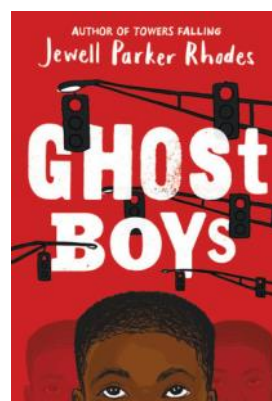
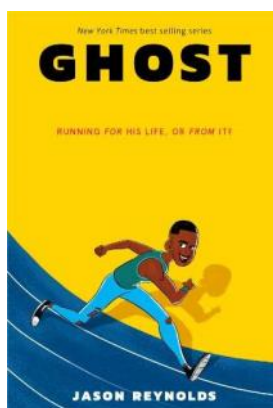
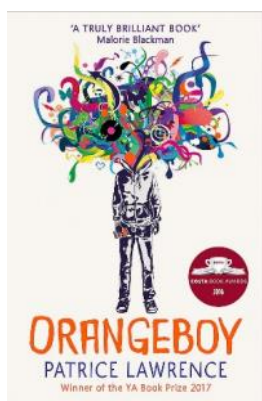
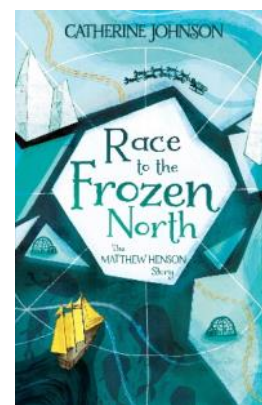
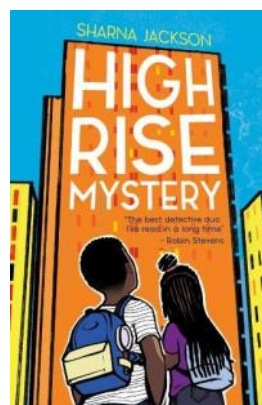
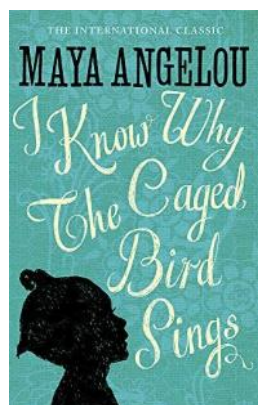
## 500 Words Competition

BY MRS G. COURT

The 500 words is the world's largest story-writing competition for children, since 2011 over a million stories have been submitted. This year they are holding a special edition of the competition with the theme Black Lives Matter. Students aged up to 13 can enter so we have invited students in Year 7 & Year 8 to take part, entries can be submitted to the 500 words website [www.500words.me](http://www.500words.me) from Monday 6.30 am on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020. The narratives we write and share matter. We ask children to draw on their own experiences and feelings to create a story that can be as imaginative and visionary as they want. Storytelling is a must!



# Literature



We have also received a [Black History poster](#) from our History department showing a short history of the Black Lives Matter movement. Please feel free to use these resources as aids to promote discussion on the wider issues surrounding Black Lives Matter within your family unit.



# Young Carers trip to Oxygen Free-jumping, Acton

BY MS L. GEORGHEGAN

On Thursday 12th December, over 70 young carers attended the trip to Oxygen from across 7 secondary schools. Our students were beautifully behaved and a pleasure to be around. I observed our students mix with students from other schools and it was a joy to behold. The group has grown in confidence and were happy to join with others and have a great time!



## Harrow Choir Showcase

BY MS A. SLATER

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> of March, 16 students of the Rooks Heath Choir made the journey to the Harrow Arts Centre to perform as part of the Harrow Music Service Choir Showcase. The students had been working hard to prepare for this performance, participating in extra lunch time rehearsals as well as our regular after school sessions and were eagerly anticipating this performance opportunity.

We made our way to the Harrow Arts Centre from the College to meet with the other choirs who would be performing in the concert. Our billing as the 'special guests' for the evening had our students quite excited and they were embracing this opportunity to act as role models for the younger students from other schools. There was a bit of waiting around for our turn to rehearse on the stage, during which time some of our pupils took it upon themselves to mingle with students from the other schools and practise TikTok dances together. There was also quite a bit of karaoke fun to be had!

During the subsequent rehearsal, both for our own item and the massed choir number, our students behaved in an exemplary manner and sang their hearts out. The performance was successful and met with rapturous applause from the audience. I was particularly proud of how our students supported and encouraged the younger students from surrounding schools. They conducted themselves with maturity and were a credit to the College.

A big thank you to Mr Pitchforth who accompanied us on our trip and took some great action shots of the students during rehearsal. This was a positive and rewarding experience for our students, and we hope to be involved in many more performances such as this in the future.





# Trip to Wembley Stadium

BY MR P. TODD

A mixture of Year 7 and Year 8 students visited Wembley Stadium on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March. We were met at the Bobby Moore statue outside the entrance to the now world-famous stadium. All the students were excited to see all the places that the usual match day fans don't get the chance to visit. Quite rightly we started with a royal theme, and were shown where the royal family arrive for match day and the secret stairway to their seats.

This was quickly followed by visits to the press room and the changing rooms. One of which was brand new (2 weeks old) and had been designed by Gareth Southgate, and fitted for just over a 'cool' million pounds! No matter where the speaker stood, they would never have their back to any player. I have asked the designer to visit Rooks Heath and to redesign some of our classrooms, however I think it could stretch the budget somewhat!

Next, we went to the tunnel and lined up like two teams coming out for the FA cup final. We then sat in the manager's seat and climbed the stairs to lift the imaginary cup.

It was a fantastic experience for all and will live long in the memory of the students who participated. A big thank you to The John Lyon School who kindly donated these tickets to Rooks Heath.



BY B. KING

# Student Success

BY MS S. PATEL

As a part of the Pre-GCSE Year 9 Oxford Inspire Programme, students were asked to enter a competition. The prompt was for students to feature their favourite game in a photo with a short explanation, and the Oxford Team really appreciated the effort on historical accuracy that Nathan put into this entry. Oxford have published the prize-winning entries on the Inspire Digital site and Nathan also received a £20 Amazon voucher. This is a great achievement, and as you can see, only 4 students received prizes. Nathan is understandably very proud, so please do congratulate him on this achievement. Please see his competition entry below.



Nathan also won 1st place in yet another competition as a part of the Oxford Inspire Programme, where he won another £20 Amazon voucher. Here is the link to the competition results: [St John's Inspire Programme](#)

# Our Charitable Work

A huge thankyou to Ms Bennett and her team of volunteers for working hard over the Easter break to prepare and make headbands for NHS staff at Northwick Park hospital.

## BY MS V. BENNETT

*I decided to set about cutting out and making buttoned hairbands for medical staff at Northwick Park Hospital after I'd seen a plea on Facebook for help from staff.*

*Face masks can be attached to a button on these headbands to save ears getting sore during long shifts. I managed to cut out about 50 and got most of the pieces through the school overlocker before coming home and carrying on using my industrial machines in my front room. Doesn't every D&T teacher have Industrial sewing machines in their front room? I was joined, at a distance, by Mrs Webber and Mrs Kilroy. Later Mrs J Wright, Mrs Verden and Mrs Harman also joined the team. It was like a little production line! What spurred me on was thinking about one of my first GCSE Textiles students from a previous school, who was fighting the virus and all of the medical staff.*

*Helping the medical key workers gave us all a purpose. In total, on the 16th of April, we successfully delivered about 100 headbands to the NHS staff at Northwick Park Hospital and then also delivered some to a doctor in Northampton and a midwife in Uxbridge who had contacted me directly after seeing my post. A huge thank you to everyone who supported what was a real Rook Heath team effort! Every little bit helps. The resources that we used were from donated to D&T department by Mrs Das, Mrs J Wright, Mrs Gharyal and Mrs Cox.*

## Follow Us:



[Twitter:@RHCollege](https://twitter.com/RHCollege)



[Facebook: Rooks Heath College](https://www.facebook.com/RooksHeathCollege)





A close-up photograph of a large pile of golden-brown, fried chicken pieces, likely fried chicken or chicken nuggets, resting on a white paper towel. A black strainer is visible in the upper right corner.



Since lockdown began in March, Learning Support and the Student Support Hub have been in regular contact with students with EHCPs, High SEN Needs, Young Carers and others. To many of the parents/carers that we have spoken to, they have appreciated our weekly phone calls and sometimes, we have been the only person that they have spoken to outside of their homes. We have been able to support by helping with completing FSM forms, enquiries about the voucher scheme, resetting Canvas logins, arranging for paper-based work and much, much more. We are currently working to aid the transition back to school for some students before the end of term and thinking ahead to September.

Please Click [here](#) to read some recent Issues of the RHC Learning support Newsletters.

## RHC Learning Support Newsletter Issue #7

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# Inspirational Teachers Award Oxford University

BY MRS J. HADDOW

Earlier this year, we were all delighted to hear that Mr. Macaulay had been successfully nominated for an Inspirational Teachers Award from Oxford University. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the awards ceremony was postponed but instead he received the email below with a link to a short video made especially for him. Many congratulations to him and the Classics team once again.

Dear Mr. Macaulay,



We hope you and your students are keeping well in these uncertain times.

We're very sorry that we're not able to celebrate your Inspirational Teacher Award with you and Fathiya today and wanted you to know that plans for an alternative celebration are very much underway and we'll be in touch about these as soon as we can. Fortunately, we were able to meet Fathiya at the very start of the year and we are very happy to be able to share with you now a short video about why they were motivated to nominate you to receive this award and why you were such an important influence on them and their journey to study here.

View your video: [Thank you, Stuart Macaulay](#)

We also wanted to share a message for you from the Director of Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach, Dr Samina Khan:

*Our Inspirational Teachers Awards have been an important landmark in our year for the last ten years now, as they recognise the vital work of teachers in encouraging students to realise their academic potential and make a successful application to Oxford – especially those who might not initially have believed Oxford was for them. Teachers like yourself motivate and inspire students with a huge range of abilities and interests, and the nominations written by the students reflect their appreciation for your creativity and enthusiasm to support them to be the best they possibly can be. As a former teacher, who worked in state schools, I want to add my personal appreciation of what you achieve everyday with every student. Thank you.*

Thank you for everything you do to support your students. All the best for the rest of this term, and we look forward to celebrating with you in Oxford, in person soon.

With very best wishes,  
Rachael Hall

## Thank a Teacher Day

Wednesday 20th May was 'Thank a Teacher Day'. Below is a heartfelt message of appreciation from Iliyaan, one of Mr Sharp's Year 7 students.

Dear Mr Sharp,

Today is Thank a Teacher Day, so I just wanted to say thank you for all your support and for your emails. Please can you also say a big thank you to all the teachers on my behalf, for all their hard work and support, during these tough times.

Thank you, best wishes  
Iliyaan



## Coping With Change

Are you finding it a challenge coping with all the change? We have included a link to this booklet from PiXL. We hope it is helpful to you. Please click to access:

[Coping With Change Booklet](#)





# With A Little Help from Our Friends

BY MR M. PITCHFORTH

During the lockdown month of May the Rooks Heath staff band was invited by me to take part in a remote, musical recording experiment. We wanted to keep people motivated by doing something creative and a little different while working from home. Once we had chosen a song and the different parts were arranged and sent to the band's musicians, each performer recorded their parts remotely using online software called Band Lab (our music students are very familiar with this app!).

These parts were then collected and organised into my tiny home studio computer. As I was so surprised that everything seemed to work so well together, we thought we could take it to the next level. Mr Sharp sent out instructions for staff to video themselves playing along to what they had already recorded and an invitation to all staff to sing a line. Once edited together we thought it would be a lovely message to our students who we had not seen in weeks.

We also submitted our video to Headstone Manor & Museum's 'COVID-19 in Harrow'. The aim of the collection is to capture Harrow's lived experiences, stories and material on the pandemic as it evolves for future preservation. It also aims to help with the healing process by allowing us to process what has happened, acknowledge the human costs, and understand how it has affected the people and places in Harrow. Stacy, a Museum curator, sent the following message: "This is really beautiful; it came out wonderfully! You guys have really come together and supported each other during this crisis! I would love to acquire it into the collection."

Well done to everyone involved. We hope we have gone a little way to capturing the spirit of our school. We also hope that next time we will be able to include our many talented students.

Watch our staff's musical message [here](#).



# DATES & DEADLINES

## ASSESSMENT CALENDAR

- 26/06/20—Years 7 and 8 Trackers published for parents
- 10/07/20 Years 9 and 10 Trackers published for parents

## EXAM RESULTS

- 13/08/20—AS, A-Level and Level 3 results day
- 20/08/20—GCSE, CAMNAT and Level 2 BTEC results day

# WELLBEING



Below are some resources that may help ease anxiety surrounding the return to school

- Khulisa [Managing Anxiety](#)
- Mentalhealth.org.uk [Returning to school after lockdown](#)
- Harrow EPS [Supporting students with transition back to school](#)
- Harrow EPS [Looking after ourselves](#)
- Harrow EPS [Helping children with loss and bereavement](#)

## SUMMER TERM 2020 DEADLINES

Due to the unprecedented times we are facing, we have made a decision not to publish Monitoring Reports for this term. We believe that it is important for us to share meaningful data with you, which, given current circumstances, is clearly not possible for us to do at the moment. We are, however, in a position to communicate with you in the form of a TRACKER to let you know how your child is engaging with the Assignments being set in the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) that we have been providing on the CANVAS platform. You can access these personalised Trackers from the end of June in the same way you would for reports on MCAS." They will comprise '**Engagement with the tasks in the MOOC**' and '**Quality of the work completed**'. The Trackers will **cover the time period** Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June.

## Virtual Assemblies

Please keep up to date with our online virtual assemblies that are accessible through Canvas.

[Please follow this link to the assemblies.](#)

 ROOKS HEATH COLLEGE VA14: Social distancing for... 221 views • 1 day ago	 ROOKS HEATH COLLEGE VA13: Creative writing... 367 views • 1 week ago	 ROOKS HEATH COLLEGE VA12: STEM Learning with... 387 views • 1 week ago	 ROOKS HEATH COLLEGE VA11: Interform results!... 763 views • 2 weeks ago
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ROOKS HEATH COLLEGE VA14: Social distancing for years 10 and 12.  
221 views • 24 Jun 2020

## CALLING ALL PARENTS / CARERS

Please consider being a member of our PTFA 'Parents, Teachers & Friends Association'.

Email Ms H Grover (via Contact Us) for further information.