

## Students celebrate highest ever attainment and progress in 2023

Orchard Park has once again achieved very strong GCSE results. Within a reported national picture of lower grades, a return to 2019 grade boundaries and a cohort who have experienced Covid-related disruptions to their education, we are extremely proud of our students. Our community obtained results that are significantly higher than our pre-pandemic outcomes and our highest ever attainment and progress.

Ms Moran, Headteacher, said: "I am so pleased with these well-deserved GCSE results. They are only possible with hard work from students and staff, along with the support of our families: well done to you all! We should not underestimate the challenges this cohort has faced over the last three years: their determination and expert guidance from their teachers has secured this success. We will miss this special group of young people and wish them the very best of luck for their futures."

Achievement in GCSE English and Maths has remained high, with the percentage of students achieving a Grade 4+ in both of these core subjects continuing to be very strong. A range of other subjects including the sciences, geography, languages, drama, music and PE also performed superbly.

We are very proud of all students' achievements this summer, but a special mention must go to those students who have achieved the best progress and achievement scores in the school: Joseph, Abi, Remus, Eva, Mark, Sophie, Zacahi, Jackie, Aimee and Levi who achieved the highest grades in several subjects. The following students have made exceptional progress: Grace, Inara, Avangeline, Bhavesh, Daniela, Georgeet and Jada. We congratulate all our students and wish them well in their future destinations.

## Year 7 students make a great start to the year

As our new Year 7 cohort come to the end of their first half term at Orchard Park, I would like to take this opportunity to say how proud I am of every single student. They have had such a fantastic start with us and it is a joy to see them shine and impress us daily. They are continually striving to display our four school values – Excellence, Drive, Integrity and Collaboration, and they arrive each day with a real energy and thirst to learn, develop and earn as many character points as possible.

Already this half term, we have seen students sign up for numerous clubs and activities, and our Year 7 football team are looking like champions already. Fun Friday karaoke competition was filled with Year 7 students singing their hearts out, they bring a real buzz to

everything they take part in. You can find a full list of our Character Clubs on the school website [here](#).

My favourite part of this half term has been my Year 7 choir sessions. It is a real highlight for me, and by the energy and volume the students give, I'd say they feel the same. I am very excited about their performance in the winter show this year. Watch this space!

I hope everyone has a well deserved break and are ready and raring to go on their return, with lots more activities, challenges, hard work and fun to come. Year 7 have made such an impact already: I am very excited to see what the future holds for them all.

**Mrs C Ruby, Head of Year 7**



# Getting creative!

The creative and performing arts department has had a wonderful start to this academic year. Our artists, actors/actresses, musicians and dancers have all shown such drive and enthusiasm for their learning.

Musicians have made a great start in Year 7. Learning rhythm through playing the three tones produced on the Djembe. Our musicians in Year 8 have enjoyed playing the keyboard, exploring the Blues. In Year 9, musicians have explored music at the movies, enjoying the suspense motifs behind the *James Bond* films.

Artists in Year 7 have been introduced to observational drawing with a focus on the formal elements of line, shape, tone, form and texture. They have recorded confidently from observation a range of seasonal natural forms such as pumpkins and gourds. Year 8 artists have been refining the accuracy of their drawing recording individual facial features and portraits in proportion. Year 9 artists have focused on mark making, recording both man-made and natural textured surfaces.

Year 7 actors and actresses have had an exciting introduction to LAMDA, learning difficult tongue twisters and practising their diction and articulation. Year 8 have focused on mime thinking hard about their physicality. Year 9 have been introduced to drama practitioners and naturalism.

It has been a very successful half term in dance and all of our students have continued to impress us with their continued commitment and enthusiasm for their learning. Our Key

Stage 3 students have been busy creating dance motifs using greetings gestures as a stimulus in Year 7, studying the history of Black American dance crazes in Year 8 and creating their own choreographies in response to the professional work *Shadows* in Year 9. We welcome back Cynthia and Vivian from the Royal Academy of Dance, who are teaching our extra-curricular provision, as well as the fabulous Sim from Birdgang dance company who has already started creating a piece for the show with his very committed performers.

GCSE Art students have started to explore their personal investigations connected to the theme of Collections. Our Year 11 actors and actresses have been questioning their character's backgrounds, behaviours and motivation by hot seating each other, and have been fleshing out their characters in *DNA* by Dennis Kelly. Musicians in Year 10 have been improving their musical knowledge, exploring a variety of products and styles. GCSE Photography students have been busy researching a wide range of photographers.

Character clubs have begun and there are so many amazing options to choose from. Most students have chosen to attend more than one club this year.

Our ever popular winter show will be held on Thursday 14th December, so save the date. The Year 8 and Year 7 choir is already sounding amazing!

**Ms Maddocks,**  
**Head of Creative and Performing Arts**

## Exploring the Science Museum in London

On Saturday 7th October, a group of our students from across the school visited the Science Museum in central London.

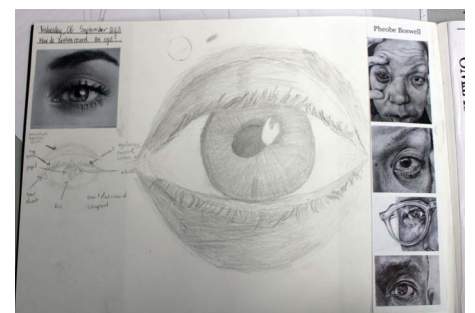
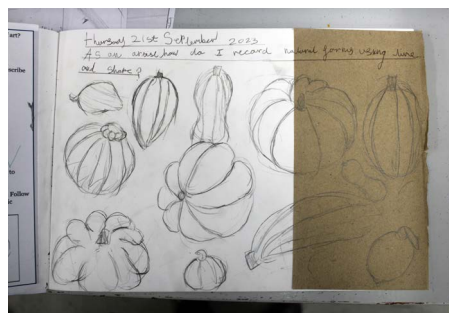
We visited all three floors, taking enough photos to document the entire collection on show, and then stopped for lunch at the third floor cafe, where most students took the opportunity to have a delicious ice cream.

Our students were incredibly excited to be visiting the museum and their behaviour was impeccable.

The trip was part of our 'Adventures in London' project, which was launched last year. This exciting opportunity takes children in all year groups to some of the city's most iconic landmarks and amusements, along with some tailor-made excursions linked to popular culture. The trips take place once a month on Saturdays during term time.

We are looking forward to our next trip to the Guildford Spectrum in November, where we will be going swimming and bowling.

**Mr D Wright, Music Teacher**







## Tales of the river bank

This term, Year 11 geographers visited the River Tillingbourne in Surrey to conduct their GCSE physical geography fieldwork. Students were investigating the enquiry question: 'How does the discharge of the River Tillingbourne change as you move downstream?'. In the wonderful sunshine, students carried out several primary data collection methods at three different sites, including width, depth and velocity.

Year 11 geographer, Plamena, said: "My hypothesis was that the River Tillingbourne's discharge will increase downstream. This is because in class we learnt that more tributaries join the river in the middle course. In addition, we would expect the width and depth to

increase, therefore the river can hold more water. From my data analysis, I was able to conclude that my hypothesis was correct. Overall, I enjoyed the field trip to the River Tillingbourne because I now understand rivers a lot more due to seeing river processes in real life."

The geography department would like to commend the Year 11 students for their hard work during the field trip and extend our gratitude to Mr Fallon, Mr Wright and Ms Byrne for their brilliant support throughout the day. We look forward to completing the human geography fieldwork enquiry with Year 11 next half term.

**Ms Coupland,**  
**Head of Geography**



## An adventure in the Surrey Hills

An intrepid group of Year 10 students completed their assessed expedition for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award on Saturday 23rd September and Sunday 24th September in the beautiful setting of the Surrey Hills.

We had an early start, meeting at school at 7.00am, when we made our way to Denbies Wine Estate near Dorking in Surrey. We were lucky with great weather and the students were excited to get started. There was great camaraderie, but also competition between the groups.

Students navigated their way around Dorking and made their way to Boider Hurst Campsite. Their evening was spent preparing dinner

and resting their tired feet, and it was quiet in the campsite by 10.00pm. The next day, the last group of students set off at 9.30am. There was a real sense of excitement and accomplishment amongst them all. The last group made it to the final checkpoint at Reigate Hill at 2.00pm.

Throughout the expedition, the assessors from Bright Expeditions could not praise the students enough. Their resilience and teamwork were evident throughout the weekend. I would like to thank the students and parents for their support in making this experience so successful.

**Miss Baatjies,**  
**Duke of Edinburgh Awards Coordinator**

## TERM DATES

### Autumn term 2023

Thursday 31st August to Tuesday 19th December 2023

**INSET day** – Friday 13th October 2023  
(school is closed to all students)

### Half term holiday

Monday 16th October to Friday 27th October 2023

### Christmas holiday

Wednesday 20th December 2023 to Tuesday 2nd January 2024

**INSET day** – Wednesday 3rd January 2024 (school is closed to all students)

### Spring term 2024

Wednesday 3rd January to Thursday 28th March 2024

### Half term holiday

Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2024

### Easter holiday

Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April 2024

**INSET day** – Monday 15th April 2024 (school is closed to all students)

### Summer term 2024

Monday 15th April to Wednesday 24th July 2024

**May Day bank holiday** – Monday 6th May 2024 (school is closed)

### Half term holiday

Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2024

**INSET day** – Friday 5th July 2024 (school is closed to all students)



Proud to be part of the



Orchard Park High School  
Orchard Way  
Croydon  
Surrey CR0 7NJ

Telephone: 020 8776 0220  
Fax: 020 8777 3904  
Email: [info@orchardparkhigh.net](mailto:info@orchardparkhigh.net)  
[www.orchardparkhigh.co.uk](http://www.orchardparkhigh.co.uk)