



Orchard Park High School

# NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM 2023

## Celebrating in style at the Winter Showcase!

Our winter show this year was a huge success, thanks to the efforts from students involved across dance, drama and music. There were performances from students in every year group and we enjoyed welcoming the new Year 7s to the performing arts department and seeing them display some of the highlights from this term.

The Year 7 and 8 choir performed a range of Christmas songs, solo and duet performances. The dance companies dazzled us with spectacular

routines and acrobatics, whilst music students entertained us throughout the night from solo piano recitals, band performances and songs from the steel pans groups and Djembe drums.

Thank you to all the students involved for their hard work and dedication providing such a professional show, family and friends for their continued support, and all the staff involved.

**The Creative and Performing Arts Team**



## A message from the Headteacher

We've had a fantastic term at Orchard Park filled with hard work, (healthy) House competitions, singing, dancing, acting and charity. The Winter Show encapsulated all that is wonderful about our school: fun, full of talent and inclusive. I don't think many schools can say they had 25% of the student population in their end of term performance, but we can!

I know from the loud cheers and wet eyes of parents that they share our pride in the wonderful young people in this school.

Whilst we get excited about the prospect of presents and plenty of food at Christmas, let's also remember that the backdrop of conflict in our world and sometimes the tension within our community needs us to spread kindness, gentleness and compassion for others. I wish you a restful and joyful holiday and a happy new year.

**Ms C Moran, Headteacher**



## Year 11 students Moon walk in Belgium!

A group of our Year 11 students were fortunate to visit the Eurospace Centre in Belgium for four nights this term.

At the Space Centre, the students engaged in various exciting activities such as Moon walks, trying out a multi-axis chair and shuttle missions!

They visited many other exciting places in the city over the three days. They thoroughly enjoyed *Choco-Story Brussels*, where they learned about the history behind Belgian chocolate; they were astounded at the *Planetarium de Bruxelles*; they tried festive treats and enjoyed hot chocolate at the *Plaisirs d'Hiver* – the location of the famous Winter Wonderland and Christmas market.

Senior Prefect, Zakaria, said: "Our trip to Belgium was a life-changing experience, and I made many memories I will cherish forever.

Another student, Olivia, said: "I spoke to many people on the trip and made new friends. My best experience was the zero gravity and the Christmas market."

It was a hugely successful trip thoroughly enjoyed by the students. Thank you to Mr Ramnarain, Ms Friday and Ms Coupland for their support in making the trip such a success.

**Mr Alabi, Science Teacher**

## An update on Year 7

As Year 7 come to the end of their first full term at Orchard Park, I'd like to say how much pride I have in these children. The jump from primary to secondary school is huge, but these students have made the transition with such determination and vigour and have settled into the school community with ease. It feels like they have been here a lot longer than three months. Their commitment, dedication and drive every day is so impressive, and they continually show such integrity and empathy for one another which is just as important. I feel extremely proud of them all.

We have had many highs this half term, starting with so many of our students winning prizes and points for full character cards and fantastic behaviour. We've had karaoke in the theatre for Fun Friday, House baking competitions and Brilliant club. We have also had some fantastic wins for our football and netball teams – the collaboration in this year group is really something to celebrate.

We enjoyed appreciation week with Year 7 students sending some beautiful messages of thanks and appreciation to their teachers, peers and family. We also made a ripple of kindness through the school for Anti-Bullying Week. Each student was given a Ripple chocolate bar to give to someone else, and not one Year 7 kept it for themselves, which I think

shows what a wonderful cohort we have.

My favourite part of this term has been my Year 7 choir sessions. It is a real highlight for me. I am very excited about their performance in the Winter Show this year.

Year 7 have been working hard across the board. I often get emails from different members of staff commenting on their behaviour, politeness and work ethic. Something we are really trying to drive with Year 7 is attendance, punctuality and organisation. Making sure they are at roll call and in their lessons on time, with the right equipment every day is so important. Please support this at home with your children too. We want the students to value how important it is to be punctual, focused and ready to learn. A reminder to please name everything your child brings to school – it makes our job a lot easier.

I'm sure that Year 7 are ready for the Christmas break after such a full term. I hope everyone has the chance to rest and relax and enjoy time with friends and family over this period and come back refreshed and raring to go for another term of hard work and wins. Thank you all again for all your support during your child's first term with us.

**Ms Ruby, Head of Year 7**

## An update on Year 8

I am delighted by the great start that Year 8 has made to the academic year so far. The students have shown a great attitude to their studies and I am often emailed by teachers praising the Year 8s on their learning. In order for them to continue to reach their potential, it is essential you support our big push on attendance and punctuality so that students are in school to enhance their learning.

We have had many outstanding achievements already this year, starting with many students winning prizes and house points for full character cards. Year 8 have represented the school in football, rugby, netball and indoor athletics competitions and have also been involved in a Fun Friday karaoke competition, the Christmas card competition, Shrublands food bank drive, the Christmas tree decorating competition, and House charity events such as the dodgeball tournament, bake sales, beat the goalie and 'Around the Hawkes' basketball shooting challenge.

We recently celebrated gratitude and appreciation week with Year 8 students sending some lovely messages of thanks to their teachers, family and peers. Receiving these messages made my day and I hope they made yours too.

Congratulations to Falisha, Alfie, Ibrahim, Amalie, Temur, Shamgar, Emeka, Alexandra, Beatrice, Daniel and Ruby who have already received more than 200 character points this term. 8 Parks have led the way with the most Character points so far (2,884). It is wonderful to see the students work so hard to earn these character points.

I am sure that all Year 8 students are ready for the Christmas break after such a busy term. I hope everyone gets a chance to recharge their batteries and come back refreshed and raring to go in 2024. I wish you all a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

**Miss Goodwin, Head of Year 8**

# An update on Year 9

It has been a real treat to see Year 9 students continue to flourish and mature this term. They have taken on the increased load of homework and expectation with such determination and verve that the transition to Year 9 has been done with ease. I am always keen for them to excel further, and in order to be able to do this, the students need to ensure that they are in every day and on time. With increased expectation comes extra responsibilities and students are responsible that they have everything they need in order to complete their studies, both in school and at home. If they have issues with any of their log ins, they should come and find me or go directly to their subject teacher to get any issues sorted.

Year 9 students continue to impress with their attitude to learning. I am regularly inundated with emails from teachers about

individual students, or a whole class in general, and the outstanding work they have produced in a lesson. The year group goes from strength to strength in Sparx Maths and it continues to bring out the competitive streak in all of us. Year 9 have regularly finished on top of the leaderboard – ahead of both Year 7 and 8, proving their motivation within their studies. A particular mention to 9 Rashford and 9 Yousafzai, who regularly get 100% completion rate. Recently, three tutor groups achieved this feat in one week, which is unheard of.

The students have not lost their appetite for Character points. Our congratulations go to Zachary, Kamari, Christos, Ben, Emmi, Abdulsamad, Leah, Molly, Lexi and Tegan who are the top ten so far this year. Zachary has earned more than 400 Character Points. 9 Parks leads the way with 3906 points so far.

Participation in extra-curricular clubs is at an all time high, including debate club, equality club, music, STEM, film club, LAMDA, dance and sports clubs. A reminder that it is compulsory for all students in Key Stage 3 to be attending at least one Character club. If your child is not already doing so, please have that conversation with them and encourage them to sign up to a club in the new year.

Lastly, I would just like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and new year. I hope everyone has the chance to relax and spend time with their family and friends over this period and come back refreshed ready to go for another term of hard work and big decisions where Year 9 will start to look at their GCSE options. I look forward to seeing what 2024 has in store for everyone.

**Miss Goodwin, Head of Year 9**

# An update on Year 10

Year 10 have been demonstrating excellent commitment to their learning this term, with eight students already achieving over 200 character education points so far.

An improved rigour at their line ups and excellent feedback from many of their teachers demonstrate that this is a year group ready to take on the upcoming challenge of facing their GCSE exams, which are right around the corner.



# An update on Year 11

Our Year 11 students have been outstanding this term, showing great dedication and commitment to achieving the best possible grades in the Pre Public Examinations (PPEs). I was absolutely delighted with their attitude to their PPEs – they really took advantage of the extra opportunities for revision that were offered by teachers and staff during the mornings, break time, lunch time and after school. We had visitors commenting on their exemplary conduct in and around their exams.

We are delighted that, for many students, this hard work has resulted in some significant improvements in their outcomes since the end of Year 10. It is important now that they build

on this positive start, with outstanding focus and effort in every lesson and by attending Champions Hour, Working Lunch, tutoring and committing to more independent study. We want them to take confidence from this round of PPEs and focus now on the actionable steps that their teachers have given them to improve.

So many of our students have won prizes, received lots of Character card points and have had many shout outs during assemblies and line ups to classes and students from staff congratulating them on fantastic work.

Thank you to the families who attended parents' evening – I know that many useful

conversations were had. Something that we are really trying to drive with Year 11 is attendance and punctuality, with applications and references for colleges and sixth forms this is an important part of their final school year! Please drive this at home with your children too.

It has been a pleasure having Year 11 students this term and I look forward to the next. Thank you all again for all your support, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I am very much looking forward to seeing what 2024 has in store for Year 11.

**Ms Walsh, Head of Year 11**

# Celebrating Black History Month at Orchard Park

Orchard Park High School celebrated Black History Month in October with a host of different activities

Our House assemblies at the beginning of the month were led by Mr Shah, exploring 'Black Excellence' as part of Black History Month. Thank you to Kemari and Nathan who helped deliver this to their peers. As part of 'celebrating our sisters', at each roll call Ms Ruby has challenged students to research a woman pivotal to black history and she loved hearing what they discovered.

Students enjoyed tutor group activities celebrating Great Black Britons who have made an important contribution to British society past and present. They also took part in an online quiz – congratulations to the 100 students who entered the competition and to Eva and Melissa in Year 7, who achieved 100% and won 50 points each for their houses.

The equality club held a 'Saluting our Sisters' speech event where lots of students came to give speeches about Black women of significance.

Finally, our Fun Friday activity also encouraged students to create posters celebrating Black women of significance, we had 42 excellent entries and all students received points for their houses.



## Building character!

What a term it has been for our Character education programme.

This term, we launched our House charity fundraiser competition and a huge well done to the Heads of House and their teams for their efforts. Not only did we raise lots of money, we also had fun doing penalty shoot outs, playing dodgeball, selling cakes and shooting hoops.

Position	House	Total raised	House charity
1st	Parks	£139.14	Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation
2nd	Rashford	£48.07	Crisis
3rd	Yousafzai	£33.81	Malala Fund
4th	Hawking	£17.50	MND
5th	Attenborough	£10	WWF



We have had a fantastic turn out for all of our House competitions and a huge shout out goes to:

- Attenborough House – winners of our Halloween bake off (pictured above, left)
- Rashford House – winners of the House dodgeball competition.
- Ruby T – winner of the Christmas card competition (pictured above, centre).
- Parks House – winners of the House Christmas tree competition (pictured above, right).
- Rashford House – winners of the food bank drive competition.

We have had the best ever turnout to Character clubs, with record numbers of clubs running and more students attending than ever before.

Well done to all of our Zero Heroes, who have completed the autumn term without a single negative conduct point. We all celebrated together with a hot chocolate with Ms Moran.

We would also like to congratulate the students below, who have achieved the highest Character points in the school this term and to all those who have received our student of the term awards.

Jay	7PARK	487	Faustas	7ATT	359
Zachary	9PARK	412	Imade	7RASH	358
Ahmed Ibrahim	7ATT	410	Matilda	7ATT	355
Shalika	7HAWK	399	Kayla	7ATT	344
Kamari	9PARK	390	Niall	7PARK	337
Christos	9PARK	390	Ibrahim	8HAWK	331
Falisha	8PARK	378	Nicole	7PARK	326
Nived	7PARK	373	Yusuf	7RASH	325
Alfie	8HAWK	365	Ben	9ATT	319
Betsy	7HAWK	364	Ellie	7ATT	316

# An exciting term in the creative and performing arts

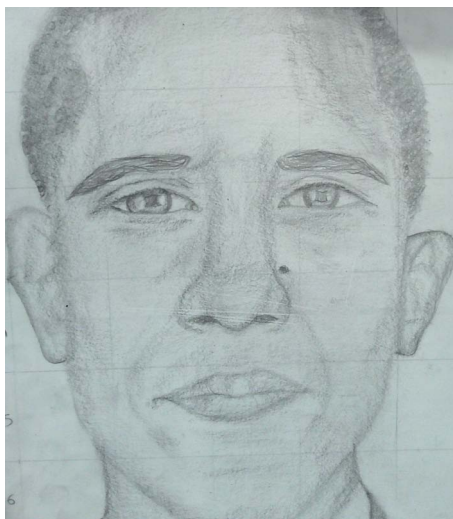
## Music

Year 7 musicians are working towards their performance assessment that will see them working in groups to perform rhythms they have learned on the Djembe drums. They have been working incredibly hard in lessons and have made lots of progress in their first term and we are excited to see their final performances.

Year 8 musicians are working towards their final performances of a 12 Bar Blues piece called *In the Mood* that they are performing with both hands on the keyboard. The piece is technically quite difficult as they have to perform a swung melody line with the right hand, supported by a 12 Bar Blues chord progression with the left hand. The bar has been set high and Year 8 are rising to meet it!

Year 9 musicians are preparing for their performance assessment of a film music theme tune from James Bond. They have learned different sections of the song that they are now putting together to create their own interpretation of this film music classic.

Year 10 musicians have been working on their knowledge of different music styles and putting that knowledge into practice with performances of 12 Bar Blues, The Beatles – *Love Me Do* and Oasis – *Wonderwall*. They are now starting on compositions using music technology in the Mac Studio and putting together a portfolio of work to support their completion of their BTEC Component 1.



Year 11 musicians are currently working on their Component 2 coursework that has them focusing on two musical areas of study from a choice of three – composing, production, performance. The standard of work has been very high and the level of dedication to success is inspiring.

## Drama

Drama lessons have been busy, with our actors and actresses rehearsing for their end of term assessments. Year 7 have learnt and performed the poem *Web of Life* by Jane Clarke and concentrated on vocal techniques with real drive and excellence. Year 8 have been introduced to the mime technique and created some very funny mimes including slapstick comedy and stage combat. Year 9 have been looking at naturalism and learning about Stanislavski, and writing their own monologues and we have been really impressed at their imagination and creative intentions.

## Art

Artists have been busy creating final responses to their thematic projects. In Year 7, a mixed media observation recording the line, tone and texture of natural forms. In Year 8, artists have been using the grid method to record celebrity portraits (*below left*). Year 9 have been mastering painting skills focusing on techniques and colour theory or the Impressionists and Fauvists. Year 10 and 11 have been learning underpainting skills – a technique which adds depth and dimension, creating contrast and enhancing area of light, dark and shadow.



## Dance

Our Key Stage 3 dancers have performed their own choreographies and demonstrated excellent performing and teamwork skills. Year 7 have created and developed motifs inspired by greetings gestures. Our fabulous Year 8 dancers have learnt a different dance style every lesson to have a better understanding of how popular dance has evolved including the Charleston, Lindy Hop, Twist, disco and break dance. Year 9 have created beautiful responses to the professional work *Shadows* by Christopher Bruce. Year 10 and 11 dancers were very fortunate to experience a repertoire workshop with the fantastic Mel Simpson and learnt sections of dance from Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, which they also performed at the Winter Show.

## The Creative and Performing Arts Team



## Supporting World Mental Health Day

At Orchard Park High School, our established mental health building, known as the STAR, commemorated World Mental Health Day by using coloured chalk to write and draw positive and encouraging messages outside the building. Students of The STAR contributed to this memorable event to raise awareness of mental health and well being, and also provide support to those having difficulty reaching out for help.

## Developing our students' employability skills

Maths4Girls organised an hour-long event for our Year 9 students in October, where business leaders shared insights, lessons and tips to motivate and inspire our students to make informed decisions about their future.

Speakers 'told a story' about their career journey, how maths played a part and how maths is relevant now to their career journey. They informed the students what inspired them to choose their career path, failures, and successes. They also shared:

- What their company does and why this is important
- What they enjoy most about their career
- Skills currently relevant in the jobs they are doing now.

By sharing their career insights, they were helping to raise awareness of the many opportunities that maths and STEM subjects can offer and to broaden the horizons of the

young people in our school.

Also, the IGD employability event (*pictured below*) was held in November for students in Years 7, 8, and 10. The session focused most explicitly on the transferable skills students can develop from the compulsory subjects they will study at Key Stage 4 and their options. Volunteers from Tesco and Waitrose in diverse roles – from scientists to salespeople – explained how their skills and experiences are connected to their school work. They also discussed some employability skills and why they are essential, e.g. teamwork, communication, creativity, and analytical skills.

Our students asked a lot of questions at the end of the sessions to know more about what they need to do next to prepare themselves for a career in the future (whatever that career might be).

**Mr Alabi, Science Teacher**



## Inspiring careers visit to Landsec in London

A group Year 10 students recently visited Landsec in their modern head office at Victoria, London. Landsec is one of the largest real estate companies in Europe, with a portfolio of retail, leisure, workspace and residential hubs.

On arrival, students and staff were greeted by two members of the Landsec team. We were then all shown to one of their many very modern meeting rooms for refreshments. The Landsec staff introduced themselves and their roles in the company, before a presentation about what the company does and its aims – to build positive and sustainable spaces. They also created a short multiple choice quiz for the students on their knowledge of the company and the buildings they own, such as Bluewater shopping centre, as well as their general real estate knowledge, which the

students knew little about. The group enjoyed a short tour of some of the hundreds of workspaces within the building – which were all very modern and high tech with kitchen spaces and snack/tea/coffee stations. Along the tour, they also saw 'resting' rooms with beds and dim lights for staff to nap or take breaks, as well as small meeting rooms with sound proof walls for quiet meetings.

A guest speaker gave an inspiring talk to the students about how he started a digital media company during his placement year at university, eventually getting busy with orders and hiring staff, before selling the company to a friend when he became interested in property investment. After a tasty lunch, students prepared questions for a question and answer session with Landsec senior staff members. They

asked questions such as 'What did you study at university?', 'Did you always know you wanted to work in real estate?', 'What is the biggest challenge in your job?', 'What do you enjoy about working in such a large office environment?', and had some really positive and informative conversations with the staff. It concluded a very inspiring experience for our students.

**Mr Mathys, Assistant Headteacher**





## Geographers collect data in the Olympic Park

This term, Year 11 Geographers completed their human geography fieldwork enquiry at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Year 11 geographer, Khalil, shared his experience:

"We went to the Olympic Park in Stratford to investigate whether or not the 2012 regeneration scheme has left a positive legacy. We visited various sites including East Village and London Stadium where we used data collection methods such as environmental quality surveys and questionnaires.

I concluded the regeneration of the area has left a positive legacy because it was a very well-maintained environment and many members of the public mentioned how peaceful the park is as well as its impressive tourist attractions. Overall, my hypothesis was correct and I will use the data collected in my Paper 3 Geography GCSE exam."

The geography department would like to commend Year 11 for their diligent preparation and exemplary efforts during the fieldwork day.

**Miss S Coupland, Head of Geography**



## Disneyland Paris – here we come!

The autumn term has been an exciting one for languages at Orchard Park. Planning for the trip to Paris in 2024 is well underway, with all spaces being filled. The trip will involve visiting lots of famous Parisian landmarks and then spending a day at Disneyland Paris! 40 students will be attending, and it will be a great opportunity to experience some culture, and visit the famous French capital. Watch this space!

Well done to our Year 11 students, who recently had a successful Pre Public Exam, performing admirably in their speaking element. This is a tricky exam, and it was their first time completing it.

**Mr Facey, Head of MFL**

## Our Adventures in (and out) of London

On Wednesday 8th November, a group of Orchard Park students were lucky enough to attend a drama trip into central London to see Harry Potter and the Cursed Child Parts 1 and 2, an opportunity much sought after by many staff and students.

The trip, led by Mr Wright and Miss Friday, took a selection of Year 9 and 11 students into the heart of theatre land in central London where they soaked up the buzz of the theatre, the opening of the Christmas markets and, by sheer luck, the premier of the latest Marvel movie! It was an incredibly long day for all involved but the excitement of the show, which astounded us all with its clever story line and magical effect, kept us going. Students behaved superbly and were wonderfully considerate of other members of the public both outside in public spaces and within the theatre.



On Saturday 11th November, the Adventures in London group headed off to Guildford Spectrum. There, supervised by Mr Wright, Miss Pain and Ms Baatjies, students from all year groups enjoyed time in the adventure pool, racing each other on the water slides and playing in the wave pool. After our swimming session, students had time to relax and enjoy some lunch before heading down to the bowling alley for a game of ten-pin bowling which they were very excited, and competitive, about. Another long day over and 26 exhausted, but happy, students made their way home excited about the next Adventure in London (or near by).

**Mr D Wright, Music Teacher**



# A successful term in sports

It has been a great first term for our sports teams, with an impressive number of students attending the clubs and representing the school in competitive fixtures. This term has seen netball, basketball, rugby, football and dodgeball activities running for our students.

Successes include:

- A new school record for the number of students signing up for girls' football.
- Both the Year 7 Football team and netball team remain undefeated.
- The under 13 rugby team played and won their first ever fixture.
- Orchard Park is undefeated in the netball pre-season matches.

## Indoor athletics

The following Year 7 and 8 students deserve recognition for their tremendous efforts in the Croydon Schools Indoor Athletics Competition:

Ayo, Micah, Josh, Ollie, Shalika, Fahmida, Lola, Tianii, Sean, Emeka, Las, Jahmal, Kelly, Keyanna, Amara, Taliyah and Gabby.

For many of them it was their first time at such an event and we were very proud of them, as they conducted themselves with integrity and respect. In Year 7, the boys came fourth and the girls came fifth out of all the schools in Croydon. Shalicka and Lola gave particularly stand out performances and won their races. In Year 8, both the boys and the girls came fourth out of all the schools in Croydon. Special mentions must go to Gabby and Keyanna who won the relay, Sean and Jahmal who won the Paarlauf distance run and the Orchard Park team who won the obstacle course.

## PE awards

The following students have been awarded athlete of the term in their respective year groups by the PE department. This award recognises the commitment of these students to attend training, the effort displayed in matches and the attitude that sets them apart.

### Boys

Year 7	Micah B
Year 8	Tommy M
Year 9	Keeten H
Year 10	Zachariah V-P
Year 11	Elvin N

### Girls

Year 7	Shalika A
Year 8	Sorayah S
Year 9	Jayda F
Year 10	Judith A
Year 11	Khyann J

Ms Hansford, Head of PE

## TERM DATES

### End of autumn term

Tuesday 19th December 2023

### Christmas holiday

Wednesday 20th December 2023 to  
Tuesday 2nd January 2024

### Spring term 2024

Wednesday 3rd January to Thursday 28th  
March 2024

**INSET day** – Wednesday 3rd January  
2024 **(School is closed for Years 7 to  
10. Year 11 in school as normal from  
8.25am to 3.40pm.)**

### Half term holiday

Monday 12th February to Friday 16th  
February 2024

### Easter holiday

Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April  
2024

### Summer term 2024

Monday 15th April to Wednesday 24th  
July 2024

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

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

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

### Half term holiday

Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2023

### End of summer term

Wednesday 24th July 2024



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)

**"Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high  
intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents  
the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance,  
determines your destiny." – Aristotle**