



Park Academy Newsletter

Issue 13

December 2022



A message from Ms Mohey, the Principal:

This half term it has been fantastic to see all students embracing the fun and exciting opportunities that they have been given. There has been a wide variety of events including trips, workshops, guest speakers, charity collections and student voice opportunities. We hope that you enjoy reading about some of these and we look forward to the next half term when we can continue with many more. The students are working with purpose and this is noticeable as you walk around the academy; they are engaged in their learning and eager to learn more and do well. We would like to thank you all for your continued support of the academy and wish all students and their families a restful and peaceful holidays.

Christmas Showcase

A highlight of our Autumn Term is our Christmas Showcase. This year it was great to see so many students and staff providing an evening of festive entertainment for an audience of over 180 family and friends. A range of performances entertained the audience, ranging from classical performances such as Jeremi Sam Peediakel's piano and vocal performance of *Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel* to more upbeat performances such as the Dance Group's performance to *Underneath the Tree*. There were so many stand out performances, but a very special mention must go to the Choir and the Staff Band that closed the evening in true style with a performance of *Merry Christmas Everyone* and *Feliz Navidad*.

Special mention must go to all the students that helped support the organisation of the event. They worked with such purpose to put the Showcase together, promoted the event and set up the box office, as well as organise the sale of Christmas decorations and cards and a charity cake sale.

Events such as this highlight the sense of belonging that the Park Academy community has, and it was fantastic to see students across all year groups working together and forming some fantastic friendships.





Christmas Lunch

Cucina, our catering provider, once again put on a superb festive lunch for students and staff. On Wednesday 14th December the students were able to enjoy a full Christmas menu which was served to them by the Cucina team who were dressed up in festive outfits. The students who took part in the lunch enjoyed themselves, with one student commenting 'this is such a nice way to celebrate Christmas with my friends, the food is good and the atmosphere is great'. We look forward to the same event next year.

Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday 9th December, the Academy definitely had the Festive Friday feel with staff and students participating in Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day. For a small donation, students and staff were invited to wear a festive jumper. This year, to promote sustainability, we encouraged everyone to wear an old jumper or to create their own! It was great to see so many Christmas jumpers around the building.

Some of the Student Leadership Team also ran a cake sale with all proceeds going to Save the Children. Throughout the day over £250 was raised which is a fantastic achievement! Thank you to everyone who got involved!



Food Bank Collection

Our annual food bank collection has had another successful year! Thanks to the generosity of the Park Academy community, a collection of over 1000 items were collected for the Yiewsley and West Drayton Food Bank. With the current cost of living crisis, many families are in need of support and we are so proud of the way that the students and staff have all pulled together to help.

For two weeks, members of the Student Leadership Team visited Academic Mentoring Groups, reminding staff and students of the collection. Their persistence definitely paid off as it was a closely fought competition between all the year groups but Year 7 did a fantastic job of collecting 210 items and the Sixth from collecting 236! The students then were able to travel to the food bank and deliver the items to the base. A big thank you to everyone who donated to the collection.



Year 7 – 10 Pantomime Trip

To ensure our students ended the term in the festive spirit, 160 students from Years 7-10 visited the Beck theatre to watch Cinderella the hilarious family pantomime. The show came with tons of slapstick comedy and stunning musical numbers with a modern twist. Two of our teachers, Ms Simon and Ms Mattis also made guest appearances! For many of our students it was their first visit to watch live theatre and they enjoyed the show so much, they have already asked when they can go again! The students were fantastic throughout the performance and did Park Academy proud.



Competition Winners

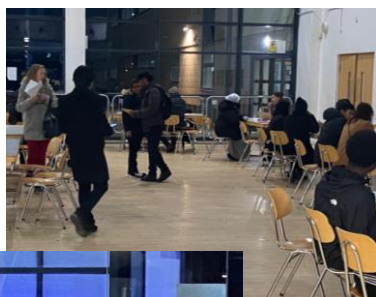
Each year, we ask our Key Stage 3 students to design a Christmas card that is then professionally printed and sent to other schools within the Trust and local businesses and organisations that have supported us throughout the last year. Congratulations to both of our winners!



Sara Bakshad
Year 8



Abbie Garland
Year 9



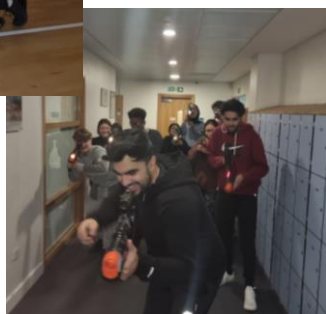
Year 11 Parents Evening

On Thursday, we welcomed the parents of our Year 11 students into the Academy for our Year 11 Parents Evening. Students received their results for their mock exams and the predicted grades which they will use for their Sixth Form and college applications. The evening was a real success with fantastic attendance and a purposeful atmosphere. Families were able to take away lots of useful information to help them prepare for the exams coming up later in the year. Parents were extremely positive about the evening with one saying *"It provided a great opportunity to speak to my son's teachers and discuss ways to support him over the next few months. Having Uxbridge College there as well as having the opportunity to discuss apprenticeships was really beneficial. Thank you!"* It was excellent to have families in the building to celebrate the success from the mock exams and to begin planning all of the improvements to be made for the summer exam series.

Sixth Form News

Aspirations Employability Diploma (AED) by by Akram Abokor and Davide Sanita (both Year 12)

Our latest AED assignment involves us working in teams alongside Cucina to invigorate the canteen menu. We were tasked with creating new innovative menu ideas which were healthy, tasty and cost effective. The assignment launch was delivered by the Cucina Regional Operations Manager and the Cucina in-house chef. We learnt about how the company runs and the different points that they have to consider when planning a menu. Part of the assignment has involved all of Year 12 completing work experience in the canteen to help us understand the processes that the organisation goes through each day in order for them to feed over 800 students and staff each day. We have conducted student voice surveys to gather the feedback from students in different year groups. During the assignment we are developing employability skills which will be useful in the future when we are pursuing our future careers; we have to manage our group and the tasks that we need to complete in order to fulfil the client brief. We are closing in on the final few weeks of the assignment and we are excited to launch our new menu ideas, hopefully they will be loved by all.



Sixth Form Social Event

To conclude a fantastic term for both Year 12 and 13s, the Sixth Formers were rewarded with another social event to unwind and de-stress from the usual day to day academic life. On Wednesday 7th December the Sixth form students participated in laser tag in the Sports Hall. Students divided themselves into teams of 25 to take on fellow peers and staff. Students thoroughly enjoyed themselves as they eliminated each other and staff in fashion. The game modes consisted of survival of the fittest and VIP.

The Sixth Formers really enjoyed the event! One student commented "It was a great event, it was really fun. It was my first time playing laser tag and I really enjoyed it. I'm really enjoying the mixture of studying hard and having the ability to take my mind off work and enjoy these events that we have in sixth form. I'm really looking forward to our next one".

Travel Smart by TFL

As our Sixth Form students reach 17 years of age, the prospect of learning to drive is very exciting. However, it is important that young people learn how to behave responsibly on the roads. All Sixth Form students participated in TfL's Travel Smart Programme aims to teach road safety skills to 16-19 year olds as they gain further independence as drivers, passengers, moped riders cyclists and pedestrians. Our students participated in interactive workshops where they discussed various scenarios and the impact that difference decisions can have. This is a key invent in our PSHCE programme for our Sixth Formers and the students found the workshops informative.



Sixth Form Well-Being Day

On Friday 2nd December, our Sixth Form students took part in a well-being day. Throughout the day students participated in a range of activities designed to focus on mental health. The students participated in two classes which were led by experts in Yoga and Gong Bath. The teaching was inspired by the precision and grace of Anusara yoga which connects heart, movement and breath. The aspirational purpose is to ignite self inquiry, creativity and exploration through these ancient practices - to encourage healing and transformation.

Students also had motivational talks on Brene Brown, an American professor, lecturer, author, and podcast host. Brown is known in particular for her research on shame, vulnerability, and leadership, and for her widely viewed TEDx talk in 2010. Jay Shetty is an English author, former Hindu monk, and life coach of British Indian descent. As the host of the podcast On Purpose, his guests have included Alicia Keys, Khloe Kardashian, and Kobe Bryant, resulting in over 300 million downloads.

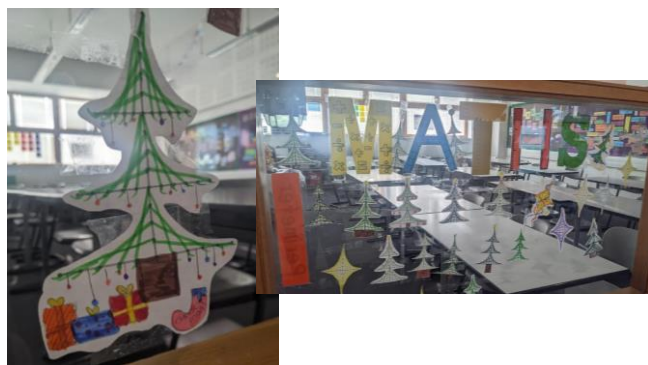
This day aimed to provide students with a range of new experiences to support their well-being. Students thoroughly enjoy the well-being day and one student commented, *"I found the well-being day was very relaxing and made everyone open to trying new things."*



Subject Areas

An update from the Maths Department

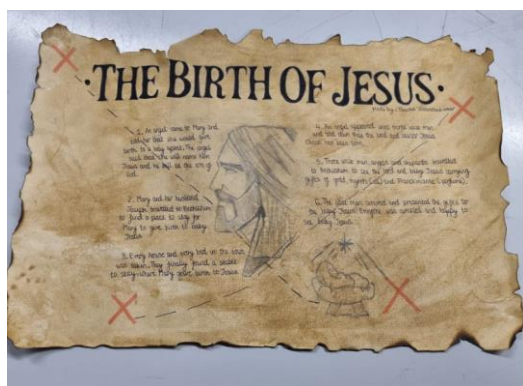
In Maths, Year 8 students have been getting in the festive spirit by creating Christmas trees and stars using curve stitching. Curve stitching is the process of drawing a series of straight lines in order to give the illusion of a curve. Students then decorated their trees with baubles and lights.



Religious Studies (RS)

The launch of RS extra-curricular club every Wednesday during break 1 has a splendid turn out this term. Students have participated in a range of presentations, quizzes and debates, and in the last few weeks students have explored the significance of the birth of Jesus and will be in a competition of creating the most creative Christmas cards for their families and teachers at Park Academy.

Students in Years 10-13, have been involved in some deep learning opportunities focusing on themes including criminal law, crime and punishment. We have had the opportunity to invite Becca Kirk from the Widening Participation team at the University of Warwick and the School of Law to deliver a series of workshops on criminal law and the justice system. Students were able to differentiate between a solicitor and barrister and worked through a real crime case in groups and were given the role of either the prosecutor or the defender. The students then participated in a mock trial where they defended their case and this led to a competitive debate. Following this, students were able to express their ideas and have group discussions on the importance of the justice system in the UK and worldwide and developed a range of skills such as communication, confidence and collaboration skills.





STEM Centre at Brunel University

During the last week of term, thirty Year 9 students were selected to visit the STEM Centre at Brunel University. They had a day full of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) activities that challenged students to solve problems by thinking outside the box and using their creativity working in teams to win prizes.

Students were provided a campus tour and a Q and A with STEM ambassadors. This gave students an insight into what life as an undergraduate would look like and find out more about what subjects the university has to offer.

This was an amazing opportunity for our students who gain greater appreciation to why STEM is such an important part of their lives and what doors it can hope to open for them in the future.

Key Stage 3 Girls Football

On Thursday 1st December, the Key Stage 3 Girls football team travelled to Rosedale College to take part in a 4-way tournament with Park Academy, Harlington, and two Rosedale teams. The team were confident but it was still nerve wracking and tense as this was the teams' first competitive experience.

The first game was against Rosedale B and the girls got off to a great start with Amy feeding an excellent cross for Donya to slot home. Another solo effort from Donya made the game safe, and Lily S put the icing on the cake with a clinical strike. 3 - 0 win and playing really well. The signs were great.

The next game was against Rosedale A and the game proved much tougher. A very good goal from Lily in the first half relieved some of the pressure, but the team stood firm with Amy, Vanessa and Grace being excellent in defence. Early in the second half, Abbie put the team 2 - 0 up and they were confident that the game was secured. A late strike by Rosedale made it 2- 1, and the last few minutes were a little nervy, but once again Amy cleared the danger and the girls were victorious.

The last game against Harlington was an exciting affair. The team knew that if they avoided defeat, they would be the tournament winners. The game was played at great speed, with both teams mounting promising attacks, only for the final pass to let them down. Early in the second half, Amy picked the ball up in mid-field, and drove forward past a Harlington player before releasing a rocket of a strike that sailed into the net and put Park ahead. From there on, the girls held on comfortably to win the game and the tournament! The team were unbeaten, scoring six goals and conceding just one. It was a fantastic achievement and the whole team played their part in achieving success.

The team:

Year 7: Lilly Baldwin, Lily Sharp, Donya Mirzad, Siham Abdirizak Ali, Paige Stanley

Year 8: Abbie McKenzie

Year 9: Amy Fryer (Captain), Grace Anstey, Vanessa Whittaker



Careers



Brunel Lecture Series

Our Brunel Lecture Series has continued over the past couple of weeks with a focus on Criminology and UK Politics. We have been lucky to have had Dr Ebony Reid talking to some Year 11, 12 and 13 students about Criminology and explored the psychosocial underpinnings of street crime in inner-city London. This was followed by Professor Justin Fisher who spoken about the changing landscape of UK elections

Our students found the lectures engaging, they asked interesting questions and linked some aspects of the lectures to their current learning. The academic staff from Brunel University were impressed with our student's engagement with the topics and have invited them to an open day at Brunel University.

We are hoping to continue to series in the Spring Term.

Year 8 Royal Navy Leadership

As part of our Careers Journey, our Year 7 and 8 students focus on developing skills that they can use, not only as they progress through Park Academy, but as they enter the world of work. The focus for Year 8 is the development of leadership skills. To support in this, the Royal Navy presented to the students and asked them 'what makes a good leader?' The students participated fully in the session which has laid foundations for the follow up workshops in the Spring Term. During these workshops, students will have more hands on opportunities to develop their leadership skills.



Students also learnt about different pathways into the Navy at the end of GCSEs or at the end of A Levels.

Year 11 Futures Interviews

As part of ensuring our Year 11 students are prepared for the next stage of their education, all Year 11 students are invited to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. These appointments provide a valuable opportunity for students to talk about their career aspirations and then explore avenues to how to get there. With so many opportunities available it can be daunting for students, but in these meetings students can explore and research them with a member of staff. All the appointments have provided a great opportunity to explore the wide range of courses at the varying providers in the local area.

These interviews will continue after the Winter Holidays and are the precursor to the Independent Careers Advisor appointments that all Year 11 students will have.