

NEWSLETTER



23rd November 2020

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**Sixth Form Open
Experience Edition**

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Welcome to Bexley Grammar Sixth Form

As an external student, I was so nervous to move to a new school, especially since that would mean that I would have to study the IB, make a completely new set of friends, and learn how to get around a new school. I was so comfortable with my old school and since Covid had cut Year 11 short, I never had the chance to say goodbye. However, my move to Bexley Grammar School so far, has honestly been one of the best experiences I have ever had.



Before joining Bexley Grammar, I really struggled with choosing between A levels and the IB, however, I can clearly now see that the IB was definitely the right option for me. Studying the IB these past weeks has actually been amazing. I'm actually enjoying subjects that I didn't at GCSE, such as Spanish and could even say that it is now one of my favourite subjects. I also really enjoy Psychology even though I didn't study it at GCSE. When starting Year 12, you are free to change subjects within the first few weeks so I wouldn't worry about your subject choices too much. One of my favourite things about studying the IB would be CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service). This is what helps to create a well-rounded student because it allows you to be creative, for example and create a club such as cheerleading, however due to coronavirus this isn't possible yet. I originally thought that going to a grammar school would be extremely hard and not enjoyable, however, now I am at a grammar school it isn't anywhere near what I had previously thought.

The students and teachers are so welcoming; it really does feel like I have known them for the past 5 years. Everyone is so open to help you, whether it's finding your way around school, or with one of your subjects, the list is endless. I can confidently tell a teacher that I need help, and they will go out of their way to help me. Making new friends honestly has never been so easy, everyone is so friendly, you can just be yourself, and fit in. I really feel as if I belong, I can't even tell the difference between internal and external students because everyone is so open with you.

If I had to choose one thing that is my favourite about Bexley Grammar it would be that the atmosphere in the school is honestly out of this world. I didn't know it was possible for there to be such a warm and friendly environment.

Abrianna, Former St Catherine's Student



Choosing a school for Sixth Form studies was a complex decision for me. Coming straight from India for the first time to the UK, I was afraid I may not be admitted into a reputed school, be able to make some friends, work in a positive environment and most essentially receive the good quality education that I was looking for. So after discussing with many people, the best recommendation was Bexley Grammar School and it is unarguably, a great school which provides high quality education with the most intellectual faculty and upgraded resources for studying.



I've made lots of friends who help me with my work and they have a positive attitude towards me. If you're thinking of applying to an excellent university, this school gives you the platform to fulfil your dreams. In addition, to these wonderful things, BGS has extraordinary co-curricular activities like the best sports and fitness programs, music, theatre, filming, baking, photography and many others. I would definitely recommend choosing BGS for a lovely Sixth Form experience.

Aditya, former student, Shemrock Senior School, India



We have been working towards the IB since starting Year 7 at BGS, but knowing about something and actually experiencing it are two completely different things. However, the change isn't all that big. Starting Sixth Form at BGS just instantly makes you feel more grown up, more responsible for what you do and like, together with having more control. You pick the subjects, and you pick the level at which you take them, everything is up to you, but don't worry you're not alone, there is someone to offer a helping hand around every corner, whether that be a friend, a teacher or a member of your Sixth Form team, they are here to assist you, advise you and guide you in the right direction to achieve great things.

As internal students you have a responsibility. You already know the school, the teachers, and the other pupils, you have a sort of head start in the game. But it's our job to make sure others feel welcome, to show them around this great school that we love and take pride in, and welcome them into the BGS family.

The opportunities that are open up to you as members of the Sixth Form are endless, you have more freedom, more power, more responsibility. Using these new opportunities to get involved in the school community, whether you're an internal or external student. Become a Subject Prefect, a Student Ambassador, apply for Peer Mentor or House Captain. Guide the younger students in ways you wish you had been guided or to replicate the dedication of previous students who made an impact on our younger school selves.

Being a Sixth Former is different, I won't lie, the IB will be hard work, but it's nothing that we haven't already undertaken before, so the jump isn't enormous, but take that jump, take any opportunity you can to put yourself ahead in this world, to give yourself the best head start. The IB is such an admirable qualification to have and exhibits you as such a well-rounded student and adult.

Emily, student continuing to study at BGS



To leave a school that feels so similar, a place where you are very comfortable and know many people may seem daunting and possibly futile. Nevertheless, I chose to come here, mostly because of the Headmaster's convincing speech at the open evening and the widely recognised and accredited International Baccalaureate. Although I was certain of my choice to enrol here, my first days came alongside an overwhelming feeling and I instantly felt out of my depth. A stranger in an immense and well connected community. However, these fears vanished as I realised that Bexley Grammar's ethos had been extremely welcoming and kind. This is largely due to the amazing teachers. Despite their different teaching methods, they all have a way to make their lessons engaging, intriguing and challenging whilst maintaining a light and less stressful working environment.



However, not only is Bexley Grammar's magnificent environment thanks to the teachers, it is also thanks to the internal students who personally played a greater role in me finding my place within the school. From giving me directions to classes to inviting me to have lunch with them, their overall helpfulness and understanding was exceptional.

Within my chosen subjects, I have been tested and pushed as the teachers without a doubt believe in you and want you to achieve the highest grades. Moreover, if you underperform in class or in a test, whilst you might initially feel disappointed and discouraged, the teachers lift you up and inspire you to improve. Furthermore, my classmates are outstanding and as a class we encourage everyone to do better.

The more time I spent at this fascinating school, the more I've seen how unique the IB is. In addition to being very appealing to universities, it'll shape you into a more balanced and educated person.

I seriously hope that you consider applying to Bexley Grammar and if you do, I believe you won't regret just like me.

Matthew, former Hurstmere School student



I remember the first day at BGS vividly. Returning to a school environment was daunting enough after months of lockdown, let alone starting a new school. Whilst I was very nervous about the prospect of the IB and meeting new people, I very much enjoyed the first week and was surprised at how welcoming and friendly the pupils and teaching staff were. I thoroughly enjoy all of my classes and the opportunity to be able to study a range of subjects at this level along with many extracurricular activities, is not only fulfilling, but will provide the best foundation for me to study Architecture.

The sense of family here is so strong and I couldn't be happier with my decision. I am very excited for what the next two years here have in store for me.

I hope you consider applying to Bexley Grammar school, and the best of luck in your GCSEs.

Maya, former Prendergast Student



I am currently in my first year of Sixth Form at BGS and have been a student here since Year 7. From the start I felt supported and settled and knew that I wouldn't want to leave after completing my GCSEs. Most of my friends also stayed on in the Sixth Form. I particularly liked the variety of options on offer as I'm still uncertain about what I want to do in the future. The IB enables me to keep my options open and also study subjects that I would not normally have considered, for example Government and Politics.



Sixth Form has got off to a good start and I have really enjoyed my choices. In Year 12 you are treated as an adult and are given more responsibility over your own learning. However, the teachers are there for you to give you the support if and when you need it. Study periods are also very useful as they enable you to get on top of your workload so you have less to complete at home. The transition from GCSE to IB has been far simpler than I expected with the workload being manageable. My experience so far of the Sixth Form has been a positive one; it has been a good challenge.

Jacob, student continuing to study at BGS

The first day can always be overwhelming for everyone, especially if you hardly know anyone and you are new to the school as you are not familiar with the environment. Not to mention the fact that you've been at home for the past 6 months. But surprisingly I found that the first few days weren't as bad as I had imagined, the teachers were really friendly and happy to help as well as the internal students who made settling in so much easier.



The teachers have done an excellent job in settling us all in or the new academic year as it can be overwhelming and difficult to get back into the routine of studying. I have found all my lessons enjoyable and I have realised that choosing to do the IB is by far the best decision for me. I am excited about what the next two years will be like.

Karol, former St Ursula's Student



The first half term at BGS "It is challenging, but rewarding"

Six months of lockdown because of Covid-19 and GCSE exams cancelled meant it would be an even more difficult year. The first few days were quite overwhelming and scary as I had to be on time to my lessons even though I could not manage to find my way. Luckily, I had lots of support from both internal students and teachers who helped me settle in, everyone has been extremely welcoming, the teachers are passionate, hard-working and inspiring, and they constantly challenge our abilities to push us even further, helping to prepare us for the future.

Although IB offers 6 subjects which are a lot of hard-work, it is very rewarding as we have a wide variety of options to choose from in college or university, they teach us how to be better individuals and teach us to question the world. I believe it is much better than A Levels because I can be an internationally recognized student and study in top universities around



the world, giving me lots of opportunities; I believe I must put in the work now so it will all be worth it in the future. It has been a different start to the first term due to the current situation, but the school has helped to put our safety first. I am extremely grateful to be studying in such an excellent school and I hope you also make the right decision.

Alejandro, former Halley Academy student

As an external student, I was amazed at how friendly and welcoming Bexley Grammar was. When I arrived, I expected to feel out of sorts for the first few days, having come over with no friends and no knowledge of where my classes were. However, I found out very quickly just how accommodating the students can be. Everyone was extremely friendly, and were amazing in helping me settle down as fast as I could. I soon not only had several friends, but a firm grasp of my role in the school. The teachers, as well, went to great lengths to remember everyone's names and to include them in classroom discussions. As such, I very quickly became comfortable with speaking out and joining the lively debates with my peers and have been able to learn a great deal. I have managed to seamlessly integrate myself into the school life, becoming a prefect in three separate subjects, and feel safe in the knowledge that I have a large pool of people, teachers and students alike, who I can fall back on if I find myself struggling.



All in all, I am extremely pleased with my choice to join Bexley Grammar School. The warm, friendly atmosphere on the open day has continued throughout my first term here and I now can't even imagine a time where I didn't know this school or its people. I hope to see you here next year!

Sasha, former Blackheath High School student



After the summer break, we were eased back into school life. Although it was sad to see old friends moving on, it was great to meet the new people joining BGS from other schools, and to make new friends.

Moving on to the IB, we study far fewer subjects, allowing us to focus more on what we're passionate about, and what we want to do in the future. In contrast with the intense revision and the pressure of GCSEs, being right at the beginning of the IB course feels like a nice reset. In our first lessons, instead of being bombarded with course outlines, we got straight down to learning.

The IB also introduces TOK (Theory of Knowledge), which is really interesting - rather than solely learning information, as you do in most other subjects, you learn *how* to think. We've also started CAS (Creativity, Activity and Service), which gives us a chance to try new things, stay active, help people, and contribute to the school.

Having become Sixth Formers, we have gained a lot more responsibility within the school community. In the first few weeks of term, teachers from various subjects were looking for subject prefects to help their departments. There'll be many more opportunities like that in the future, too. We also enjoy far more freedom - we can leave for lunch, and there are lots of places specifically for Sixth Form study. We no longer have a uniform, only a dress code, and we get free periods to study in whichever way suits us best.



Overall, the transition from Year 11 to Year 12 feels like a big step into the future - it's both daunting, and incredibly exciting. Right from the first day of Year 12, we got, and continue to get, lots of opportunities, which we try to grasp with both hands, and work as hard as we can to achieve, and to exceed, our dreams.

Sam, student continuing to study at BGS

My transition from my secondary school to Bexley Grammar was much smoother than I expected. I felt very welcomed by my teachers and peers who introduced me to the school and helped me to get to know the new environment. I settled in well and found myself enjoying the subjects I had chosen. The teachers here are supportive, encouraging and guide you in what you need to do in order to succeed in the IB. Coming from an all-girls school, being at Bexley Grammar was a new experience for me, but I'm happy I made the decision to move. Even though I know it will be challenging, I chose to do the IB because I know as a student it will make you stand out. I believe that it has a variety of subject choices and will also give me many opportunities in the near future. Lastly, I am excited to see what the next two years will bring.



Elsa, former St Catherine's student

A Message from Mr Elphick, Headteacher, to Year 11 Students

Abrianna, Aditya, Emily, Matthew, Maya, Jacob, Karol, Alejandro, Sasha, Sam and Elsa have welcomed you to this special edition newsletter, which is by students and for students, to celebrate our Virtual Sixth Form Open Experience in the absence of being able to meet together at an Open Evening.

If you are currently at another school looking at our Sixth Form, I hope this newsletter helps you to understand more about the IB Diploma (International Baccalaureate) which is explained further on our website and through our Virtual Open Experience. I hope too (although many of our activities cannot take place right now due to the pandemic), that it gives you a flavour of the energy, vibrancy and variety in the life of the school beyond academic study - there are so many opportunities available in 'normal' times.

If you are a BGS Year 11 student, you already know about the life of the school but I hope this has added insight into the IB Diploma Programme, coming as it does, from student perspectives.

To all of you: Our students make us the outstanding school that we are; I hope this virtual experience is a useful substitute to actually meeting them. I hope it conveys successfully our reasons for why we believe the IB is the right choice for you and why universities and employers now recognise its massive advantages over A levels. We are the only fully IB Sixth Form in a South East London Borough; we believe that Bexley Grammar School is the right choice for committed students who want to make their mark on the world.

***Mr Elphick
Headteacher***





A day in the life of an IB Student

Higher Level: Chemistry, Biology and English

Standard Level: German, Maths (Applications and Interpretations) and Anthropology

A typical day for me will start at 8:30, when I register with my form group and take down any whole school or year group notices I'll need for the rest of the week (sometimes, I have early morning extra-curricular activities or rehearsals for house activities, so this means I'm in school earlier). Then it's off to my first lesson which is usually chemistry- this can involve anything, from learning about mass spectrometry to drawing lewis structures for different molecules. At the moment, our focus is on designing and carrying out our Internal Assessments (worth 20% of our overall grade) which are a great way to show independent thinking and research skills. My next lesson is German where the topics range from 'Experiences' ('Erfahrungen') to 'Human Ingenuity' ('Menschliche Erfindungsgabe') and the whole lesson is entirely in German- this can be challenging, but is actually amazing preparation for the final exams!



After this I have a session of academic monitoring, where we cover topics such as PSHCE and UCAS applications as well as personal statements and mental health. Once a week I will have a Prefect meeting, where I get together with the Senior Leadership Team and the other Prefects to discuss ideas, proposals and issues that have been brought to us by the rest of the school. I also have a 'Top Universities' meeting, where we learn about applying to Russell group institutions and how best we can maximise our chances of having a successful application. After break, I have English where we study and discuss a range of literature including 'The Great Gatsby' and '1984'- doing two sciences at a higher level can be hard work, so I really enjoy taking a non-scientific higher subject as it allows me to explore a separate passion for reading and develop a different way of thinking.

Then it's into Maths where we are looking at calculus and differentiation- I found it quite tricky to pick which Maths course to study, so I would definitely recommend looking at the content of each of them and then basing your decision on that. My penultimate lesson is Biology, a really broad subject where we study lots of topics- from genetics and inheritance to plant biology, I really enjoy the content of the course and how it is structured. Lunch is next, where I can either go out to the local high street or eat inside our newly-refurbished Sixth-Form centre. There are also lots of lunchtime extracurricular, such as the Environmental Action group and Senior Science Society, which I got involved in at the start of Year 12. There are also Medicine and Law groups which are run to support students (like me) who are applying to these types of courses at university.

My final lesson of the day is Anthropology, a subject I had never heard of before the first year of IB. Despite only being a standard subject, I really enjoy it because we read lots of interesting ethnographies and study important contemporary topics like the Black Lives Matter movement and the Mediterranean Refugee Crisis. My advice for the lesser-known subjects would be to go for it! You never know what secret passions you might discover, if you don't give it a try. After school, I take part in activities such as being a 'Science Leader' or helping to tutor students lower down the school. As you can see, a day in the life of an IB student is never boring- one minute you are studying the structure of the heart, the next you are looking at the impact of Coronavirus on the German economy. After such a busy day, it's time to go home, finish my homework and then rewind!

Charlotte, Year 13



The IB Diploma at BGS

Students choose one subject from each of the groups 1 - 6 but in group 6 may select a further choice from groups 2, 3 or 4 instead of those offered in group 6. Students will choose three subjects to study at Higher Level and three at Standard Level and their choices should follow their interests and enjoyment of a subject. The IB structure encourages a balanced choice which includes the essential further study of English and Maths but also the depth required through the Higher Subject.



| Group | Subjects on offer | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. English | English Literature Literature & Performance | |
| 2. Languages | Chinese French German Italian | Japanese Latin Spanish |
| 3. Individuals and Societies | Business & Management Classical Greek & Roman Studies Economics Geography Philosophy | History Politics Psychology Social & Cultural Anthropology |
| 4. Sciences | Biology Chemistry Computer Science Design & Technology | Environmental Systems Physics Sports, Exercise & Health Science |
| 5. Mathematics | Mathematics | |
| 6. Arts and Electives (or a further choice from groups 2, 3 and 4 above) | Film Music Theatre Visual Arts | |



10 REASONS

WHY THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME IS IDEAL PREPARATION FOR UNIVERSITY

1 IT OFFERS ACADEMIC BREADTH & DEPTH

IB Diploma Programme students are 21% more likely to be admitted into 10 of the most prestigious universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Stanford.



2 COLLEGES VALUE STUDENTS WITH MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Creativity, action, service (CAS) encourages learning through direct experience.



3 IT'S A QUALIFICATION RECOGNIZED BY UNIVERSITIES

AROUND THE

The IB Diploma Programme is internationally benchmarked, allowing graduates to continue their studies anywhere in the world.

4 IT CREATES INDEPENDENT LEARNERS & STRONG WRITERS

The extended essay requires independent research through an in-depth study and a 4,000 word essay.



6 IT ASSESSES MORE THAN EXAMINATION TECHNIQUES

IB never teaches to the test—exams are externally assessed with no grade inflation for more than 30 years.

5 IT CULTIVATES AN INTERNATIONAL MINDSET



An international mindset is a key 21st century learning skill. Second language learning—an IB requirement—has been linked to higher achievement in school and university.

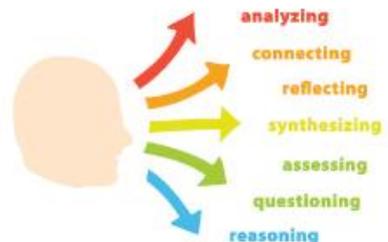
7 IB STUDENTS HAVE PROVEN TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Research has found that IB students develop strong study habits and critical time management skills, key indicators of college readiness.



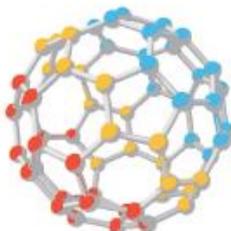
8 THE IB ENCOURAGES CRITICAL THINKING

Inquisitiveness and interpretation are among the key cognitive properties of an IB education.



9 SUBJECTS AREN'T TAUGHT IN ISOLATION

Theory of knowledge classes encourage students to make connections between subjects and gain the skills they need to be critical thinkers.



AND HERE ARE 10 MORE REASONS...

The IB learner profile offers 10 qualities underpinning the Diploma Programme—from open-minded to risk-taker to balanced, they form a framework for an international education that meets the needs of a changing world.

For source attribution of any data contained herein, please refer to <http://www.ibo.org/research/>





The Journey to University starts Here

At Bexley Grammar School we are constantly providing opportunities for students to engage with the wider community particularly regarding careers. There are many things that our students can take part in that are extremely beneficial when deciding which university courses or career paths they are interested in and also to provide excellent material for those all-important UCAS personal statements.

Since September, our Sixth Formers have attended a number of talks in school delivered by professionals from a range of different specialisms. Firstly, an ex-student, Tommy Adeyefa, gave some insights into what it is like to study Law and provided some inspiration for our budding lawyers. This was particularly important as a number of students will be attending a mock bar trial later in the year. They will be competing against other schools and experiencing the pressures of a real courtroom for themselves. To prepare for this we have arranged a qualified barrister, John Robb of Essex Court Chambers to visit our students twice to work with them on their preparation- he has also invited students in the past to attend actual trials and given them mock interviews if they need them.

Additionally, a large number of BGS students go on to study STEM subjects at university and they were treated to three further lectures highlighting just a few of the exciting careers that we anticipate they will be moving on to. Dr Siew described her own varied career in biochemical research and lecturing that spanned the Atlantic and Ms Sophie Albosh outlined her PhD research on quantum technology. Finally, another ex-student, Dr Adam Ling spoke to our medical group about his experiences in this challenging career. He is also going to train some of our Year 12s to help him support a charity called Eye Heroes: once trained, they will be visiting primary schools to teach children to become ambassadors for eye health.

"Almost all students leave the school for higher education, with very many applying and being accepted into the most prestigious universities." - Latest Ofsted report

The Sixth Form team led by Ms Stoddard, runs three groups for Sixth Formers - the Medicine Group, the Law Group and the Top Universities Group. In the first two, they discuss relevant issues in the news and prepare for interviews and entrance tests. In the third, they discuss current affairs, philosophical ideas and how to strengthen an application. These support groups are invaluable in preparing for university application processes for both the Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities.

We hope that by providing this support and access to these speakers in school, we can demonstrate to our students the immense opportunities they have before them and encourage them to aim high and challenge themselves to strive for these top careers as we know that our students are capable of amazing things and we enjoy celebrating their successes year on year.

Ms Lusted, STEM coordinator





The Group 4 Project

A compulsory part of the IB is the 'Group 4' project, which requires a group of students (each from a different science) to come together and research/present a chosen topic. This year, our theme was 'The Science of Superheroes'- a topic which elicited a variety of responses as some of us were huge superhero fans (and others weren't!).

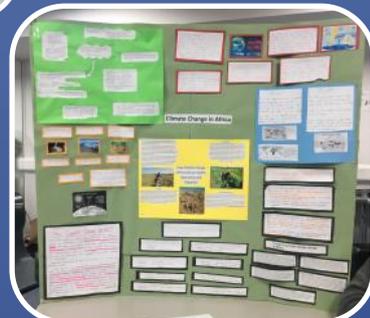
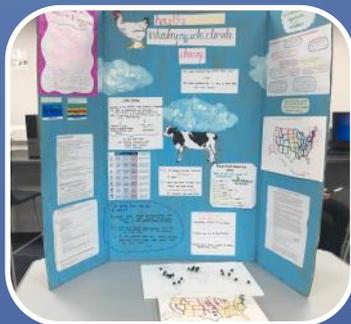
The first stage was the Introduction Phase, where we met our groups and started thinking about who we wanted to focus on and how we would fit the Sciences in. My group chose the 'X-Men' and we split the research between us- Environmental Systems would take weather patterns created by Storm, Chemistry would take the elements that make up the characters, Biology would take the genetic mutations featured and Sports Science would look at the different muscles used and how to train each character.

The second stage was the most fun part- the Action Phase. This was where we got 'hands-on' and created our posterboards. Personally, I thought that this was the best part as we got to find out what everyone else had researched and then had to come up with a creative way to display it all- credit to Ash and Julian for their fantastic painting skills!

The final stage was the Presentation Phase which involved talking about what we had learned, explaining our role in the project and what we would do differently next time. Our group did really well, as we all understood the theory behind what we had found out and could all explain how each of us contributed to our project.

Overall, I would say that I really enjoyed taking part in the 'Group 4' project, as it was a fantastic way to apply what we have learnt in lessons to a more challenging and interesting theme and meet new people from across the year group.

Charlotte, Year 13



X-MEN



What is CAS?

Creativity, activity, service (CAS) is one of the three essential elements that every student must complete as part of the Diploma Programme (DP).

How is CAS structured?

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

- Creativity – arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.
- Activity – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the DP.
- Service – an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

In order to demonstrate these concepts, students are required to undertake a CAS Project. The project challenges students to:

- Show initiative.
- Demonstrate perseverance.
- Develop skills such as collaboration, problem solving and decision making.

What is the significance of CAS?

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development by learning through experience. It provides opportunities for self-determination and collaboration with others, fostering a sense of accomplishment and enjoyment from their work. At the same time, CAS is an important counterbalance to the academic pressures of the DP.

Building experience in leadership roles through CAS opportunities

Beyond just sparking an interest in a range of different careers, here at BGS students get a wealth of opportunities to stand out from their peers in their university applications. The CAS programme within the IB encourages students to take full advantage of these.

By becoming prefects they can develop leadership skills and confidence that will support them in their university careers and beyond. The activities that they can be involved in within this role will further demonstrate an extended interest in their chosen subject area as well as equipping them with key skills of teamwork, responsibility and communication.

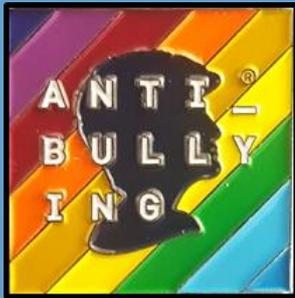
For example, as part of the Enthuse Project BGS runs a number of science clubs in local primary schools which are completely delivered by our science prefect team. The science prefects and leaders also act as mentors to lower school students supporting them in booster sessions and clinics. They support Year 7 and 8 students in the science clubs, carrying out practical work and demonstrating excellent lab safety.

Ms Lusted





Being a Peer Mentor at Bexley Grammar



Peer mentors are a pastoral backbone for many students. They learn how to listen and solve problems effectively and also how to deal with their peers disclosing details for which they may need professional help, and how to pass this information on. They deal with a wide variety of problems and are passionate about helping others!

"I love working with the younger students and seeing their confidence grow!"

Jenni, Peer Mentor

Here is what happened at one of our Peer Mentor training days:

On Wednesday 11th March, a few Year 12 students and I attended a peer mentor training day where we learned a number of different skills that will be beneficial to us as peer mentors. We started by defining what a peer mentor was in our own terms and doing some exercises in listening to others. We then discussed how to effectively listen and respond when talking to students as well as what not to do. In addition to this, we had interesting discussions about what was important to us and took part in a fun trust exercise!

This training day was not only useful in learning how to be a good peer mentor and getting to know each other, but it was also incredibly important in establishing a safe space to explore personal experiences as well as worries, which will assist us in creating a similar environment for the students that we are going to help. As a whole, the training reinforced my reasons for wanting to become a peer mentor, as everything we learned, demonstrated the importance of having peer mentors and how much we could help people. It also allowed me to become more comfortable in talking about issues that may come up during my time as a peer mentor and assisted me in developing my confidence in speaking to others.

Sarah, Year 13





LGBTQ+ Alliance

LGBTQ+ alliance is a club that runs every week after school and is run by two Year 13s, myself and Sam Gee. Within the alliance, we discuss a range of different topics centred around LGBTQ+ issues or the LGBTQ+ community in general. Every week we have a new and interesting discussion lead by a member of the alliance, however, everyone can participate and they are encouraged to. We raise controversial questions and discuss how we can make the school a safer and more inclusive space for LGBTQ+ youth. Nonetheless, we are primarily a safe space for those in the school who are part of the LGBTQ+ community or allies who want to support each other. Some interesting conversations that have taken place already are discussions about whether or not Pride should be a protest or a party, an in-depth dialogue about discrimination within the community and how sometimes, hate towards LGBTQ+ people can come from other members of the community. Having these thought-provoking discussions makes the LGBTQ+ alliance a brilliant place to spark change, not only in the school, but also within the wider community.

We recently had an interesting discussion about the representation of LGBTQ+ people within different forms of media, i.e. film, tv shows etc. We spoke about the lack of representation and the misleading representation of various members of the community, from the over-sexualisation of lesbians in the media for the lack of representation of transgender character. We also considered the question of whether the bad representation is better than no representation at all. Our conversation highlighted a huge problem in the film and tv industry; it appears that making some people happy is more important than representing everybody, so that members of the LGBTQ+ community can see themselves on the screen. The media shapes us in many ways: we learn about the world, we discover things about ourselves, we form our own biases, etc., so it's incredibly important to represent everybody, to show people who they can be, not just who others think they should be.

We ourselves hope to grow as a group of people who care about each other and everyone who is a part of the LGBTQ+ community, and we would be happy to welcome more people to the alliance!

Sarah, Year 13

BGS Feminist Society

So far this term, the BGS Feminist Society has explored the depths of both the 1978 iconic film Grease and the underlying, but equally as toxic, sexism within the well-loved, good classic.

Despite passing the Bechdel test by miles, the film still portrays many common stereotypes and consequences of the intrinsic misogyny. The Bechdel Test is a test derived by Alison Bechdel an American cartoonist; the test is designed to express a film's representation of women and in order to pass, a work of fiction just has to have two named female characters who have one conversation that is not about men. Ratatouille, The Imitation Game and Avatar are just some names of films that cannot pass this one simple test.

Grease focuses on the not-so-romantic love story of Sandy and Danny, two students in their final year of high school; one of the key messages of their relationship and a key theme throughout the whole film is about who we are in front of our partners or friends vs other people and whether we change who we are to impress others. Not so surprisingly, this doesn't work out well for Danny when he completely changes his personality in order to impress his friends in front of Sandy and I can't say that I sympathise very much with him.

After half term, we started looking at different independent topics and how sexism is very much a key part of problems like knife crime, rising mental health issues and drug problems in





young people. These are all very prevalent issues in the lives of young people, especially here within London and by understanding what is happening, we can look at what we can do to help prevent these problems from arising!

Francesca, Year 13

The BGS Environmental Action Group

The BGS Environmental Action Group started out as committed and compassionate students ready to empower each other to make change happen. We wanted to make the school a leader on ecological issues and a champion of environmental education. We put the message out, and at an initial meeting, the room was *packed*, full of students of all ages, all wanting to make a difference.

We know that globally, caring is not enough, but nor is simply sorting our rubbish and turning the tap off while we're brushing our teeth. Important though these are, to tackle an emergency on the scale of climate collapse and wildlife loss, we need decisive action and system change. Individually, we can make a difference. Together we are unstoppable.

That's why schools are so important, because where we lead, others will follow. We're using the Eco-Schools programme as our framework. It's the **biggest schools programme on Earth**, involving millions of students in 59 000 schools across 68 countries. All Eco-Schools follow the same simple **Seven Steps** working on some of the **Ten Topics**.



The Sixth Blog

Some of our fantastic Year 12s have revived The Sixth Blog- a space for Sixth Formers to write about issues they feel are important. It's a great example of the initiative students take whilst completing their IB and shows just how passionate they can be! Find the blog [here](#) and check out some of the issues discussed below:

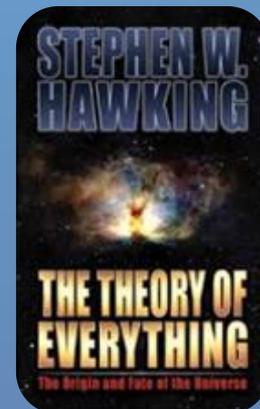
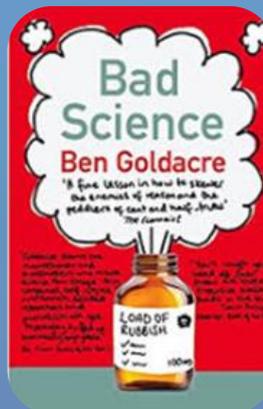
- **[A Blind Eye to Black History](#)** - Maya takes us through her thoughts on studying History and how important it is to educate people on Black History
- **[Why Writing is Tough](#)** - Alison talks about the difficulties she sometimes faces when trying to come up with ideas for her English essays
- **[The Productivity Slump](#)** - Maya explains how difficult it can be to work when you're feeling tired or overwhelmed and why it's vital that you ask for help
- **[Why Not Hating Yourself is a Political Act](#)** - Alison discusses how important self-care is in today's difficult world and her personal experiences of gaining confidence
- **[Women in STEM](#)** - Aakankshya explores the theme of gender within the STEM world and her thoughts on this important issue





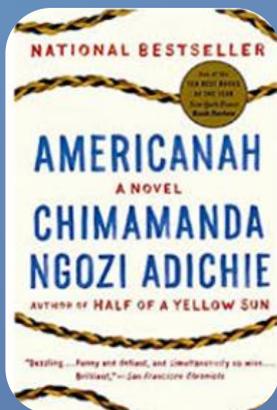
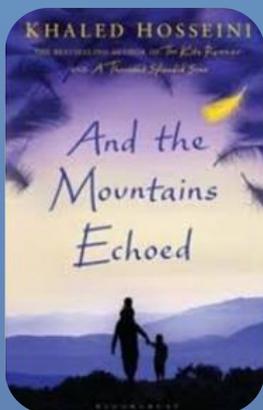
Senior Science Society

Within the Bexley Grammar School Science Department, there are a variety of opportunities for Sixth Form students to get involved in- one of which is joining the Senior Science Society. This is where a group of students interested in science come together to discuss issues such as Stem Cell research or Nanotechnology. It runs once a fortnight and each week a different student will research and present an issue. During our time off, we have created a lecture series on different STEM issues- the first topic discussed is 'Microelectronics and Diabetes', where we explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in health. The link to the presentation can be found [here](#) (present on your device, audio should play automatically). Make sure you stay tuned for more!



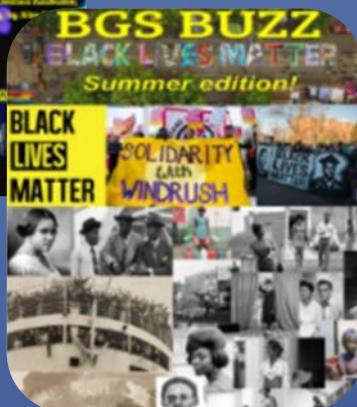
Senior Book Club

The Senior Book Club meets on a bi-monthly basis to discuss their chosen book and think about the global issues behind it. This was a society founded by a student (which is very common in BGS) so it is a great CAS and leadership opportunity! We read and discussed the themes of identity, love and race in 'Americanah' and talked about how we found the ending dissatisfying. We also looked at the cultural criticism that features so heavily in the novel, along with the topics of race and racism.



School Magazine Editor

As a member of the School Magazine team, you would work with other members of your year group to showcase all the work that the school has been taking part in over the last term. This year, for example, we had extracts from our school's Black Lives Matter celebrations, updates from our STEM competitions and even featured performances through the music department! You can also write articles on topics that you feel passionate about- this year, we had topics ranging from philosophical investigations to Black Lives Matter and celebrating our NHS heroes.





BGS House System

The house system is particularly important at BGS and this is yet another great opportunity to get to know students throughout the school. Their general responsibilities are to help with the running of the house events, and to advertise these events to members of their house to encourage participation. They will supervise, house events during and after school, particularly sport, and are expected to run rehearsals for house music, drama and dance.

We interviewed Erin Acheson, one of the new Kirkman Senior House Captains, to find out more about this leadership role:

Why did you apply to be a House Captain?

I applied for this role because I have been in the school since Year 7 and always thought it would be an amazing job to do, as I looked up to the captains a lot when I was younger. It means that I can work closely with the rest of the house so that we can take part in all the competitions that I loved doing, lower down the school.

What's the best thing about being a House Captain?

Being a house captain allows me to get experience in leadership that will be really useful if I ever want to take on such a role in the future. Especially at a senior level, we have to make decisions about resources and think about how we can organise different events to make sure we have a full team.

What sort of things do you do?

We organise teams for house events, help our head of house to make important decisions for the rest of Kirkman and advertise events to other year groups. We also prepare PowerPoints for assemblies and the weekly house form time- it has definitely been a great exercise in time management skills and working towards deadlines!





BGS Mock Election

On the 12th December 2019, BGS held a shadow election to mirror the national one, as we also did in 2015 and 2017, when I was in Year 7 and Year 9. For each shadow election we have also held mock debates. So, I assumed that this year would be no different and when I realised nothing was in place, I set about organising it myself.

On Election Day itself, and while the nation's fate was being decided in favour of the Conservatives, a different tale was being told within the walls of BGS. Students from Year 7 to 10 were taken out of lessons to vote while Years 11 to 13 came in when they could as Year 11 and 13 were on exam leave, and Year 12 voted at lunch and break. A team of Year 12s with help from Mr Gilmore, handed out ballots while I constantly reminded them that they were not allowed to campaign inside a polling station. We stopped several attempts at election fraud from certain Year 12s who tried to vote twice and one Year 8 who attempted to vote for all of the parties which just goes to show how... invested some people became during the campaign.

After a quick count that afternoon, we knew the result and after a well-run campaign Sam Gee and Dan Faulkner's Green Party won the day with 325 votes (30.2%) to second place Labour's 285 votes (26.5%). The final turnout for the whole school was 70.3%

Congratulations to the Green Party for being the winner of the Mock Election!



Other CAS opportunities that students have participated in

The Legal Apprentice Competition

The Legal Apprentice is a competition run by law firm Kingsley Napley, where students are invited to work as part of a team to complete a series of tasks, using skills and logic to provide legal advice for fictional clients. This year, Bexley Grammar entered three teams of four Year 12 students, of which two teams got to the final round of spring stage.



The competition aims to provide students with first-hand experience of what it is like to be a solicitor. Although it could be argued that the only skills a solicitor needs are to understand the law and to work with a client and a barrister to put forward a good argument, the legal apprentice focuses on developing the other great qualities such as inquisitiveness, communication and teamwork, although of course there is a lot of learning about the law. If the school's team(s) go through to the Final in June, as well as being gifted with the skills and knowledge development, they will be in with a chance of receiving £500 each and a legal apprenticeship with Kingsley Napley.

For me personally, The Legal Apprentice was a great opportunity to not only gain real experience into what it is like to be a solicitor, but also develop my other skills that I will need in my future life/ career such as creativity, organisation and listening skills. It was also amazing to work collaboratively, as I was in a group with people I had just met so the difference of opinions were really refreshing and opened my eyes to new ideas.

Esther, Year 12





National Citizen Service (NCS)

NCS is a fantastic way to gain CAS whilst also improving life skills. Our students have participated in activities and even more have signed up for future events, including being involved in NCS.

Many of our students undertook The Challenge (NCS) – a national charity whose mission is to connect and inspire people to strengthen their communities, bringing together local people across all generations, ethnic groups and incomes to build a stronger society. One student reflected on her involvement in The Challenge:

National Citizen Service ~ 'The Challenge'

During my time at NCS, I met many new people and made many new friends. Throughout this experience of four weeks we did many enjoyable things. For the first week I went on a residential trip where I was able to take part in many amazing new adventurous activities such as rock-climbing, abseiling, raft-building and orienteering. For the second week we were required to go and stay at a university campus. We went to Greenwich University and all stayed in flats like typical university students. Here I had to cook for myself and improve and learn life skills. For the last 2 weeks I was required to do a volunteering project. During these 2 weeks I spoke on topics such as littering and worked with Wide Horizons. This required a lot of initiation and planning.



This CAS experience allowed me to and helped me identify my own strengths as well as develop areas for growth. I was able to demonstrate my public speaking and communication skills as well as discover how much Improvement I required at public speaking. I showed perseverance in this experience since I wasn't always sure how and what to say to those around me; this required me to think carefully about what to say and was quite a challenging process which allowed me to develop new skills. The environment is an important issue worldwide and littering is a problem everywhere, I was able to demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance. This experience helped me to recognise and consider ethical decisions since I was required to take some important decisions for our group project.

Volunteering at Demelza House

At the beginning of the year, I wanted to start volunteering so I looked online for places where I could volunteer and also asked my friends and family. Eventually, I found a place at Demelza, Children's Hospice, which provides hospice care for children all over the country. I hoped to help the other workers and volunteers, but also the children and their families, to make their lives easier, a little happier, and to make a difference. I was excited to gain a new perspective and become part of the community. As I was working mainly in the kitchens, I was also keen to learn more about preparing and serving food as this is an essential life skill.

I hoped to help the other workers and volunteers at the hospice, but also the children and their families, to make a difference. I had not volunteered on a long term basis outside of school before, so at first it was difficult for me to find time whilst also committing to my school responsibilities and duties too. However, I made sure to go during times when I knew I would not be busy so that I would not feel stressed when volunteering, but to rather feel calmer and relaxed. I felt very good when I was volunteering and happy that I could help out other people in such a simple and easy way. As a result, I feel that I have achieved so much. I have contributed by volunteering my services, by supporting and listening to the children, but also by cooking for them and the staff. I feel that I have grown as an individual and matured. This was made easier with





the support of the staff who all ensure that the team works efficiently and also stays organised.

I got to meet some of the children and spoke to them briefly to make them feel at ease with me. I am particularly good at working with children as I have many younger siblings and help out at school with the younger students; however, I have not worked with children with SEN so it was a new experience for me. One of the weeks was incredibly emotional, there were butterfly pictures all over the Hospice with a butterfly being projected in the main entrance. This was because during that week two of the children had passed away and at Demelza butterflies are used to signify that the butterfly suite was in use. The butterfly suite was used by the families who devastatingly, have had a child pass away. This allows the staff and volunteers to be aware and so we could pay our respects to the family.

I am very happy that I gained a new perspective and became part of the community; this was important because we should always try to be part of the community and help others where we can. I was also keen to learn more about preparing and serving food as this is an essential life skill that will take time to build and improve. As I am working towards a career in Dentistry, volunteering has really prepared me for the future and has taught me how to tailor the way I speak to different people to ensure they understand me and also to help them feel comfortable and at ease.



Water Project in The Gambia

My family and I wanted to fund a bespoke charitable project which we could be solely responsible for, so we researched a project we could get involved in. We wanted to help people in need in the best way possible, ensuring that any money that we raised went directly to the people, and not to the salaries of the charity workers in London offices. We intended to find a charity which would allow us to fund a bespoke project that made a real difference, and maybe in the end travel out to the country to see in action who we had helped and in what way.

The first thing that we had to organise was which charity we would work with to create and fund our bespoke project. We decided that it would be amazing if we could fund a project which provided a specific village with water, and if we could be responsible for it. After contacting multiple charities such as Save the Children, we were given incredibly high numbers, upwards of £200,000 to fund the project, which was far too high for us to be able to manage. However, finally my father found a charity called Water for Africa. Water for Africa was a charity set up by businessmen in England to fund water projects in The Gambia. They do not receive any money and are not paid salaries by the charity, and therefore all the money donated to the charity goes straight to the people who need it. This charity gave a more realistic number, just over £10,000. This was solely funding the equipment and installation of a solar powered water pump which provides clean water on tap sustainably for the people of the village. The monies we raised would be paying for a borehole to be drilled in the village down to water sources under the ground, and solar powered generators would then draw up the water into tanks held above ground. Then the water can be accessible to all the people of the village on demand.

After successfully raising the required sum, we made the payment to the charity, who then began the process of sorting out the payments for the project. We had wanted to visit the people we were helping from the outset, and after contacting and discussing this as a possibility with the members of the charity it was planned. At my father's expense, we (my two brothers, my father and I) flew to Banjul the capital of The Gambia, for three days. One full day was spent in The Gambia, where we met with a Gambian associate, who we later found out was actively involved in the drilling of the borehole. He was to be our guide for the time we





were there. Before we went, we packed bags full of things to donate to the people we would meet: clothing, school supplies and footballs. Some were donated by others, and we even received football kits from Welling United. Our guide took us to the hotel we would be staying in on the coast, as there is a small tourist industry in the country. The drive there was an experience in itself, and we saw instantly a different world from that in Europe. The poverty was immediate, with people in the streets and vendors in dirty conditions selling all kinds of produce. When we arrived at the resort, we were staying in, it was a different world. An oasis of tranquillity and luxury surrounded by a different way of living. At first I felt guilty for being there, but my father reminded me that this tourist industry has provided incomes for many of the native people, as well as contributing to the economy. Gambia is a relatively safe country, and violence towards tourists is not a problem, so after we settled in we went out of the resort to find somewhere to buy bottled water. We walked down the street behind the resort, which was bustling with activity from a multitude of bars and restaurants. The street was filled with people advertising their bars, trying to get people to come in, especially tourists. We were targeted quickly, and at first it was intimidating, however, after actually speaking to the people who spoke to us everybody was friendly and welcoming to their country. Straightaway the kindness of the strangers was apparent, ironically, something which contrasted from the people of the western world.



On the second day, we drove away from the coastal areas into the rural regions, where we visited the villages. The first village, Dobong, we visited was the village we were funding a pump to be installed into, so we were anxious to meet the people. When we arrived, we saw a different way of living; simplistic and purely agricultural, the people living there led a completely different lifestyle. We visited the hand pump and well that were the sources of water for the village. They were in horrible condition, and it was good to see that the pump would make a real difference to the people there. At this village, we were invited into a meeting of the village elders, where through our guide and translator we spoke about the needs of the village and how we could help. We then distributed what we had brought to help the villagers, which they happily received with great gratitude. We then visited a village which had had the pump and system installed already, and the difference in atmosphere and the health of the villagers was immediately apparent. It was heart-warming to see what a difference our funding would make. Finally, we visited a third village which also needed a pump. Despite all the residents living in impoverished conditions, they were incredibly happy and friendly. This third village was one that we were hoping to be able to fund in the future, and with our extravagant Christmas Lights we have managed to raise almost £11,000 to fund this second village to have water. We gave the majority of our items to the people of this village, who were more in need.

The whole experience has been incredible. Seeing what is genuinely another world was shocking and incredibly educational, and has genuinely made me far more aware of the issues within the world today. I want to go back, and we intend to once the project is over and the water is installed. I cannot wait to see what a difference that what we did can make to people's lives.



The Mark Evison Foundation...

The Idea

The Mark Evison Foundation's mission is to promote the personal development of young people through the undertaking of challenges. We invite young people to create and plan projects which are personally challenging. Such projects develop confidence, strength, resilience and breadth, as applicants take independent ownership of something they are keen to do. Applications are self-designed.



The Awards

Primarily, we offer grants through three main schemes:

- Annual School Awards (up to £500) are available for students aged 16-18 at our partner state-run schools. We visit schools to encourage students to apply and select successful applications. Applicants (whether individuals or groups) are asked to create and plan their chosen project, present this to us, carry through their plans and then tell us about it afterwards. These are the majority of our awards, and most of the schools have high indices of deprivation and are located in disadvantaged areas of London.
- Memorial School Awards (up to £500) are given annually in the two schools that Mark attended: Dulwich College and Charterhouse.
- Major Awards (up to £5,000) are for young people aged 19 - 25 for more demanding challenges. Applicants can be based anywhere in the UK.

High Weald AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

Our aim was to complete a 100km walk in High Weald across 4 days and camp 3 nights.

Day 1

The first day we all met up at the Welling station, bus stop at 9:00 am with all our bags and tent to get the bus to Orpington station then took a train to Tunbridge wells. Once arriving at the campsite we put up our tent and started to unpack and after eating lunch start a trail. The first trail we followed was a footpath towards the nearest village. Once admiring the local village we made our way back down to our campsite where we prepared our own dinner. Cooking for ourselves was not something we were used to and I really enjoyed the freedom of it, I think this has made us want to cook more at home for ourselves. After doing the washing up, we put the kettle on the boil to make some hot chocolate. However, as lighting became progressively worse, we decided it was time to pack everything up and go to bed. We were all slightly exhausted from the whole day and it was a relief to be able to lie down in the tent.





Day 2

After waking up early the next morning, we cooked our breakfast so that we would be full of the energy needed for our hike. As planned, we set off early and used our map of High Weald in order to follow the trails that we had previously selected before our hike. Whilst the walk itself was gruelling, the beautiful countryside and pleasant weather kept our spirits high, therefore we would definitely say that this experience has allowed us to connect with nature in a way that we've never been able to before, especially as we also took a break from our mobile phones. From this first full day of walking, we were definitely sore and tired, but the feeling of completing our desired walking distance was gratifying, to say the least.



Day 3

For the next day, we set off, similar to the previous day, so that we could complete our walk for the day. However, we noticed that the pathway that we were taking for the lake conjoined onto a motorway, therefore, we decided that this would be too dangerous to continue so we turned back. After this decision, we then took another footpath in another direction so that we could complete the required distance needed for the walk. We were disappointed that we didn't get to visit the lake, however, we were determined not to let this affect our mood for the rest of the evening. Eventually, we made our way back to camp, cooked dinner, played some card games together and went to bed, ready for our last day.



Day 4

On the last day, we prepared to leave the campsite. Waking up at around 8 am, we got up to prepare our last breakfast together at the campsite and go for the last hike. The last hike took us through many fields and hills, which was very nice and would definitely be missed when we came back home; we felt like this hike was a good time to reminisce about all the memories we made along the whole journey and how we became closer as friends. At around 7:45 pm, we arrived back where we started and parted ways. This trip really made our summer and we are grateful to the Mark Evison Foundation for supporting us and challenging us to do something new.



Benefits of the trip

- Doing exercise every day
- Working together to get to places
- Learning how to read a map
- Cooking for ourselves
- Being around nature
- Learning to organise ourselves and money
- Strengthening our friendship

Natacha, Year 13





IB & Medicine

Typically, medical applicants have taken three A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Maths (indeed, this was mainly the case in our school before we switched to a completely IB cohort). In other schools across the country, this continues to be the case as many aspiring medics disregard the IB as a route which is 'too complicated' or 'too much work'. But for me, the IB provided a fantastic opportunity not only to study a wider breadth of subjects, but also to develop the time management and research skills required in such a demanding career.



Were I to take the traditional route to medical school, I would probably not have been able to study a language- an increasingly sought after skill in today's world. I would also not have had the chance to study anthropology, a subject which has proven crucial in furthering my understanding of the society that our NHS treats. But most of all, the IB has taught me that I can do independent investigations to produce a piece of research that I am proud of; my Extended Essay in Chemistry allowed me to delve into an area that I was really interested in (and is something that will doubtless prove invaluable in an interview setting). So if you're thinking of applying to medicine, don't write off the IB at first glance- there's a reason why more and more students are choosing to study it!

Charlotte Allen, Year 13

Medicine & Science in the BGS Newsletter

Calling all budding medics, biologists, chemists or pharmacists!



If you are thinking about going on to university to study something in the realms of medicine, biology, chemistry or pharmacy, we have a very exciting opportunity for you!

We are being visited by Ms Siew a **Director at eValue8**. She works for a company that ensures the smooth and effective provision of healthcare. She has also previously worked in pharmaceutical research and has lectured in chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania. She will be delivering an assembly for students interested in attending in Years 11, 12 and 13.



Applications must be made via the google form circulated by email to students.

What a fantastic opportunity to learn a bit more about healthcare provision and also career pathways into the field of medicine that might not be the traditional doctor route.



Also, this term:



The House STEM competition will be running from November 4th to December 9th with teams competing to design, build and race model cars. Teams include two Year 8s and two Year 9s with a Sixth Former to support. There must be an even mix of boys and girls in each team. Traditionally a closely

fought battle the House STEM event allows students to showcase their engineering and creative skills in a way that no other house competition does. I look forward to seeing what this year's teams will come up with!

Ms Lusted, Stem Coordinator





National Women and Girls in Science Day

To celebrate this event, I took a small group of girls from Years 11 and 12 along to a conference at Imperial College. Firstly, just visiting the campus was pretty impressive, I definitely didn't have organic farmers' market style food stalls outside my uni buildings! Aside from the fantastic lunch choices the girls and I were treated to a number of talks by a range of extremely impressive women. All were staff at Imperial, but from a variety of backgrounds. The overarching message was that anyone can work in STEM and it is not even essential that are a fantastic scientist at school. You should just do what you love and if you work hard you can carve yourself an amazing career, working with the greatest minds and travelling the world. I hope the girls were as inspired and impressed as I was.



Ms R Lusted, STEM Coordinator

Whilst I knew that I was interested in the field of STEM, and had an idea of roughly what area of STEM particularly interested me, I found that the "Women in STEM" conference at Imperial college not only assured me of the potential to be successful in it (as two of the female speakers were working in said field), but it also encouraged me to consider a wider range of STEM areas, which I never would have considered otherwise. I would say that the main things which I gained from the event were firstly, the extent to which women are more than able to excel in Science and Technology, knowledge of just how broad the STEM field can be, and that the (subject) choices we have made at this age do not actually constrain us in our future careers.



Azeezat Hassan, Year 12





Year 12 Chemistry Higher Education Conference at Queen Mary University London

On the 15th January, current IB Chemistry Higher Level Year 12 students were given an amazing opportunity to experience a day in the life of a Queen Mary University London student by the University's Chemistry Department. The opportunity was supported by the Royal Society of Chemistry.

The experience was insightful and extremely helpful surrounding the topic of University life. One of the biggest opportunities was a short, but highly in-depth, discussion held by the head of Queen Mary Chemistry Department in which she gave insight and shed light upon how University applications work and the real keys to making Personal Statements successful, this topic was, initially, something that caused me and many of my peers a lot of stress so seeing it get acknowledged was extremely helpful.

The highlight of the day was when our group of six BGS students won the quiz competition that was held there. The reason it felt amazing is due to the fact that it was very unexpected and that we actually won a prize. The experience was an all-around success and felt more eye-opening than I initially expected. I would wholeheartedly encourage both, current and future, university hopefuls to take up this and all future experiences regarding university. Thank you to Mrs Moore for organising this event.

Aasanna Adhikari, Year 12



Queen Mary
University of London





The Post-Mortem Live

A thrilling experience aimed at Years 11-13 budding doctors, surgeons or simply those interested in a medical base career.

A unique opportunity from ITAE Learning regarding their new live broadcast called 'The Post Mortem Live'. It is an exciting new interactive live stream running daily, starting on 25th May 2020, at 7pm, for one week. There will be 5 episodes in which they will take you on a trip through the human body like never before. Each session will be live and interactive as you watch and there will also be an opportunity to ask questions online. The program has been written by a team of teachers & surgeons and is aimed at the general public, with GCSE & IB content sewn into it. A ground breaking semi-synthetic human cadaver and porcine organs are used to recreate a post mortem. It is incredible! The company has visited BGS in the past as the reviews from students and staff alike were glowing. In the current circumstances, it is unlikely they will be visiting schools in the next year, so this is the next best way to gain inspiration and experience.

To cover production costs the sessions are £1.99 each and they encourage viewers to visit their local butcher and grab some specimens themselves to dissect along with. There are downloadable learning aids to accompany the series which will help students record their learning. Some students may wish to watch at home with a parent, live or later in the week as each episode will be online in the catch up area for 30 days after the broadcast. It will make compelling viewing and give you the chance to interact (via socials) in real time with your teachers and experts in the field.

Mrs Gradley, Science Department

Post-Mortem Live

BRAND NEW 5 PART WEB SERIES

WATCH LIVE HERE at 7.00 pm

Starts Monday 25th May 2020

An interactive recreated Post-Mortem like never before with the **world's first semi-synthetic cadaver**. Watch online on your computer, laptop, TV, smartphone, or Ipad.

Even dissect REAL specimens at home.





MMI St George's University Interviews

A group of Year 12 and 13 students attended a session run by St. George's University Hospital about the MMI (Multiple Mini Interview) for Medicine. Many universities now give applicants 6-8, five minute sessions on different aspects of an interview, rather than giving them one traditional interview where several questions are asked in the one session. We were split into our two year groups (with the Year 13 students receiving the harder questions) and each got a turn at being the 'interviewer' and 'interviewee'. The questions ranged from ethical conundrums to instructions for tying a shoelace. The best station was the one that asked you to talk about research you had read, because I was able to discuss all the fantastic articles that I had discovered (like Spider-inspired double-sided sticky tape for wounds, when stitching is difficult). Opportunities like this are great as they prepare you for the intense (not to mention extremely competitive) application process for Medicine. Thank you to Miss Caley-Gardiner and Mrs Moore for organising this.

Charlotte Allen



Science, Science and more Science!

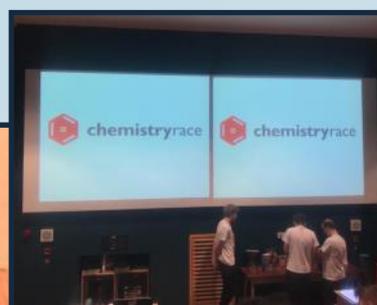
Cambridge Chemistry Race 2020

Five of our Year 12 Chemistry students took part in the first annual Cambridge Chemistry Race held at Cambridge University.

Just wanted to update you on the Cambridge Chemistry Race - it was a really good event and we thoroughly enjoyed it! I've attached some photos. Unfortunately, out of 24 schools, they didn't make it to the top 3, but they had a great time and learnt a lot. However, hopefully this will be great practice for the Olympiad Competition, and potentially help train next year's team of Year 12s!

Thank you to Sam Gee, Katie Henderson, Luca Varela, Moshope Iroko and Natacha Loison for your involvement.

Mrs Moore, KS5 Science Coordinator





Medicine in a Pandemic

At this time, when the media is dominated by the NHS and illness, there is a lot to think about when considering applying for Medicine. It's something that I have been giving a lot of thought to, during the pandemic and I believe that it has both changed and reaffirmed many beliefs that I have about the NHS and healthcare in general.



Firstly, it has taught me just how appreciated healthcare staff are and how the public recognise that they are on the Frontline against this virus whether that is through the weekly 'Clap for Carers' or online messages of support/ donations. I was also struck by the images of doctors interacting with patients at the end of their lives, and reflected on how now, more than ever, the values of empathy and compassion are key (especially when considering the limitations around visiting). In terms of applying to Medicine, it is obvious to me that the current community of healthcare professionals is more than willing to help potential applicants through webinar calls, virtual experience and Q&A sessions- the wealth of resources that have been made available to me is immeasurably beneficial.

Having thought about this, I interviewed two Year 13 students, who are very close to the prospect of becoming medical students, about applying to medicine during this pandemic.

How has the pandemic changed your ideas about what it is to become a doctor?

Saki: "Overall, it hasn't changed my ideas massively, but has definitely reinforced some of them. For example, whilst being a doctor can be rewarding when a patient's quality of life is improved, I've always known that a doctor can only work within the framework of existing medical techniques and strategies. So in a situation like this Covid19 Pandemic, where there is no 'cure', doctors are ultimately quite powerless. Whilst they can still save lives by running ventilators, it's not always successful (and also not a direct solution to the problem). I think that there have always been situations like this, but not on such a large scale and in this short a time-span".



Alfie: "My own ideas haven't changed much, but it has changed the nation's ideas of what it takes to become a doctor. Although this pandemic has caused pandemonium among scientists, politicians and many other groups, one thing we can all agree on is the sacrifice that doctors (and all other key workers for that matter) make when they work on the Frontline. This crisis has shown us all that doctors must have the ability to endure difficulty. When supplies are dwindling and they're equally susceptible to the virus, doctors have shown the need to be able to work under pressure and adapt to sudden changes in protocol".



Has it changed any of your ideas about healthcare?

Saki: "I think that researchers deserve a lot more credit than they generally receive (especially relative to doctors) - doctors mainly carry out and implement the results of their findings. I also feel like a key limitation of healthcare is the shortage of funds. The pandemic has meant that the NHS has received a lot of government attention, due to how many lives it has claimed (as it rightly should). But this has made me think about other diseases, which don't receive that much government attention- they may currently have no cure, even though one can be found with more funded research".

Alfie: "It has definitely made me question what I thought I knew about our healthcare system. It's been disheartening to see the large numbers of key workers from BAME backgrounds suffer from the virus. While this could be a genetic predisposition, I think this is also an opportunity to introduce support schemes for minority groups who often feel discriminated against. Our healthcare system should strive for camaraderie among its workers and this, of course, requires social equality".

Has it made you think any differently about the relationship between doctors (or healthcare workers more generally) and patients?

Saki: "It's made me think more about the use of PPE in hospitals and GPs, for the safety of both patients and staff. Particularly with reference to GPs, they aren't advised to wear PPE when encountering each patient (usually), however, they could be interacting with patients who have other contagious diseases unknowingly- after this pandemic, I think that more caution will be exercised".



Alfie: "It's definitely changed the way I used to view the role of community with regards to healthcare. Patients are not the passive targets of treatment that I once saw them as, but now they exist alongside healthcare workers in a mutualistic relationship. The NHS would struggle twice as much, were it not for the influx of volunteers and the support that they receive from everyone around them. This crisis has shown us just how interconnected we all are and the benefit of support from outside the NHS".

It was really interesting to get these different perspectives on such an important and topical issue that is featuring so heavily in the news at the moment.

Charlotte Allen, with Saki Okada and Alfie Tindall





"I'm an Engineer Stay at Home" ~ Interactive Sessions

Some of our Year 12 Chemistry students were involved with an online interactive session as part of "I'm an Engineer Stay at Home". This is an online activity where school students connect with real engineers. You sign up for a time slot and students and engineers join a chat room. There is a moderator to keep conversations flowing and students can ask the engineers all about their work.

Engineers are encouraged to take part by a weekly £500 prize to the engineer voted by students as the best at explaining their work. But also you can tell they really enjoy inspiring and encouraging the next generation.

It was amazing to get an insight into the students' thoughts about the next stages of their education and career possibilities. Questions included:

"Was life at uni significantly harder than Sixth Form?"

"From what age did you know you wanted to be an engineer, and how did you work it out?"

"How easy/ smooth is the transition from finishing your degree to actually getting an engineering job?"

"Are there any challenging engineering projects that you have been involved in?"

"How much do you work with other scientists and people of other disciplines in designing water treatment plants?"

"Which Cambridge College did you go to and how did you choose?"

"What do you wish you knew when you were 16 or 17, about engineering, or university/ employment more generally?"

Some of the students' responses to the information given during the interactive talk included, "Wow that sounds amazing! I can't wait to try out the engineering course!"

Some of the discussion included their current work in the Covid effort, "At the moment, lots of engineers are trying to help out the Covid effort as much as possible, from PPE to ventilators, it is really challenging because it is a highly regulated field - you don't want to accidentally kill someone, but very rewarding". Another quote included, "Study for the exam not the subject. Do practice questions and study what is needed to pass the exams. Practice maths like brushing teeth and spend the rest of your life learning a subject."

I want to extend a big thank you to all of the Year 12 Chemistry students who were involved.

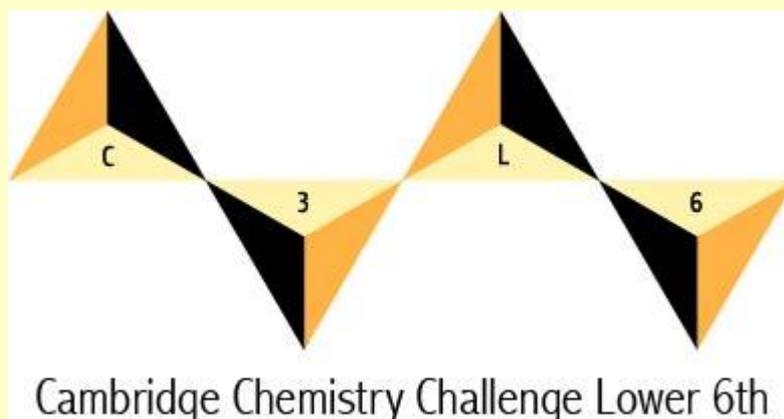
Mrs Moore, KS5 Science Leader

**I'm an
Engineer
Stay at home**





Chemistry Cambridge Challenge 2020

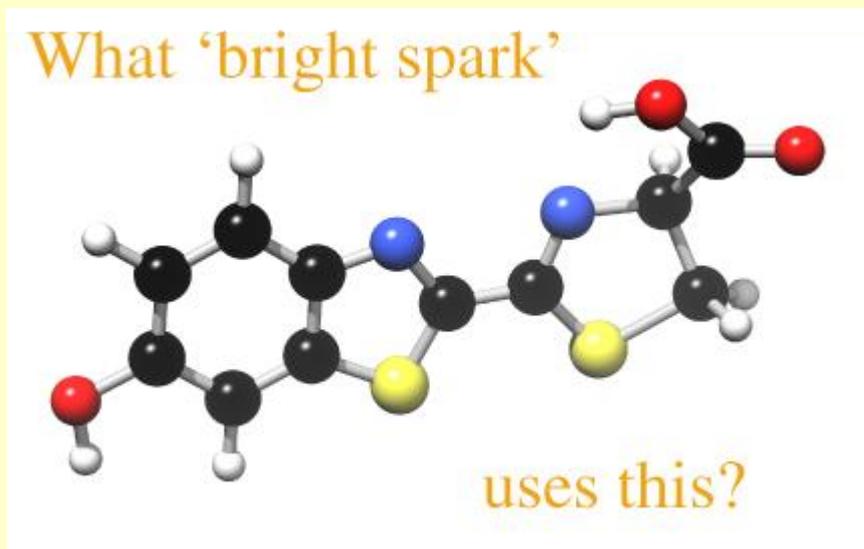


On Friday 26th June, some of our Year 12 Chemistry students took part in the annual Chemistry Cambridge Challenge Competition. Congratulations to Charlotte Allen, Samuel Gee, Damilola Hassan, Katherine Henderson, Natacha Loison and Ella Warren for taking part this year.

This competition aims to stretch and challenge students interested in chemistry, and provides an excellent experience for anyone considering taking their studies further. Set by an experienced team of teachers and university chemists, it is designed to be accessible to Year 12 students, but will take them significantly beyond the syllabus and encourage them to think about science in the way they would at university.

There are also online challenges at <http://www.c3l6.org/> with over 180 puzzles that are available to students. Each challenge has five levels. You can use whatever means you like to solve the problems, just type your answer in the box and click Submit. If your answer is correct, you will progress to the next level. Please see the example below

Mrs Moore, KS5, Science Leader



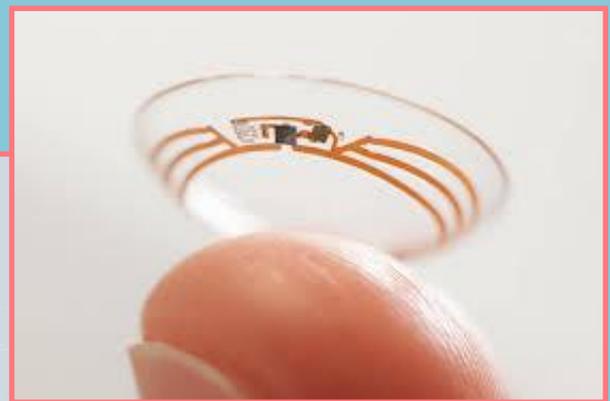


Senior Science Society Lecture

The BGS Senior Science Society is made up of a group of Year 12 students, who come together to learn about and explore scientific topics. We have been busy during lockdown amongst our book club meetings and STEM discussions, some of our members have come together to create our very first virtual lecture series!

The first topic discussed is 'Microelectronics and Diabetes', where we explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in health. The link to the presentation can be found [here](#) (present on your device, audio should play automatically). Make sure you stay tuned for more!

Charlotte Allen on behalf of The Senior Science Society



Centre of the Cell ~ Youth Membership Scheme

Centre of the Cell is an education centre based within Queen Mary's University biomedical research centre.

It aims to inspire and support the next generation of biomedical scientists and doctors through school visits, workshops and most importantly to you- the Youth Membership Scheme.

It is open to 14-19 year olds interested in a career in science and/or healthcare AND all activities are completely free of charge!

Please see their website for how to join and let me know if you get involved.

Ms Lusted, Science Department



Get involved in Languages at BGS

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved in languages at Bexley Grammar, whether by going on one of our trips, applying to be a Language Prefect or coming along to one of our regular lectures.

Exchange Trips

At BGS all Year 12 students have the opportunity to take part in exchanges to France, German, Italy and Spain.

Foreign exchanges are only one example of the vast opportunities available for languages at Bexley Grammar. Following my Year 12 exchange to Braunschweig, Germany, I have seen a huge improvement in my fluency of the German language and consider it to have been an invaluable experience which allowed me to immerse myself in the culture and also make new friends. Without that opportunity, I would not feel as confident in my German skills as I do today.

Rosie, Year 13

Language Prefects

Being a language prefect is a fantastic opportunity that has allowed me to pass my passion for languages onto those in the younger years, while also developing mine further. Not only is it rewarding and fun to converse with others and practice my languages, of which BGS offers so many, it is also a brilliant way to expand your horizons as a linguistically inclined student, as my interest in the subjects only grows the more I learn.

Katie, Year 13

Lectures

Every term we put on a programme of language lectures from university academics. Last year's programme included a linguistics lecture by Dr Chris Poutain from Queen Mary University who spoke about how posh words become ordinary. Students also took part in a Portuguese Taster, lead by Dr Toby Green from King's College.

Trip to Japan

Every two years we organise trips to Russia, China and Japan. Last year a group of students went on a tour of Japan...

16 BGS students had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to embark on an action-packed trip to Japan. We explored the modern culture of Tokyo, the glorious temples of Kyoto, the eye-opening and unbelievably moving Peace Park of Hiroshima, and the ethereal island of Miyajima. We were also lucky enough to be welcomed into the renowned Keio Shonan Fujisawa high school, where we were reunited with our exchange partners. And on behalf of everyone who came on the trip, we would like to give a huge thank you to our Japanese teachers, who did a wonderful job in planning the trip, and making us all feel safe when we were so far away from home.

Niamh, Year 13





A Taste of BGS Life

Read some of our Sixth Form Newsletter articles.

Music News 'Virtual Visit'

On Thursday 22nd October, Year 12 music students were delighted to have a 'virtual visit' from TV, film and games composer, orchestrator and music copyist Tristan Noon. Tristan has been working in the industry for a number of years, and was more than happy to share with us his experiences and tips for succeeding in developing a music portfolio for the media industry.

We heard about Tristan's journey from GCSE music to present day, with importance placed upon developing a portfolio of music and making the most of networking opportunities. We also gained an insight into how to work in a studio, using Logic Pro, Pro Tools and Sibelius to create music as well as the importance of business skills and time management when working in the industry professionally.

Year 12 music students were able to ask Tristan questions about his work and the industry, and were impressed at Tristan's realistic approach to working in the music industry. They were also encouraged to keep portfolios, including work from their IB classes, for future use so that they have a variety of creative work available for the future.

Thank you Tristan for giving your time freely to talk to our students.

Mrs Goddard, Head of Music





Geography News

Who is Bob?

Bob is a flamingo! In 2016 he was injured when he flew smack into a hotel window, giving himself a concussion and damaging his wing. He was rescued by a vet, due to his injuries he cannot look after himself in the wild so he is looked after by his rescuer, veterinarian Odette Doest. Bob now lives in Odette's sanctuary with over 90 other birds and animals. Odette has realised that Bob had previously been domesticated - so started to take him with her on educational talks to students about wildlife and the environment. Students see this beautiful bird and make the link that leaving plastic litter can damage his natural environment and even lead to the deaths of wild birds and animals and are then able to take action to protect their environment.



Bob has become quite a celebrity with pictures of him appearing in National Geographic. To read his full story and see beautiful images of our flamingo friend Bob, go to:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/animals/2020/01/meet-flamingo-bob-the-poster-bird-conservation>

How can you be a Top Bob?

Simple actions such as avoiding plastic cups and cutlery, having different decorations to balloons at birthday celebrations and binning litter or taking it home can dramatically change the environment and everyone can do their part. You can also aim to become informed and aware of the impacts that humans have on the environment and talk to your friends and family to raise their awareness - you can use some of the links above for World Oceans Day and World Environmental Day to inspire you.



What's a Top Bob Award?

In Geography we are going to be awarding Top Bobs to anyone who, like Flamingo Bob, raises awareness about the importance of the environment or takes positive action to protect the environment.





WINNER

The first Top Bob award goes to Sam Gee, Year 12.

Sam has set up the schools Environmental group this year and has engaged with students and staff at BGS to meet, discuss and plan action to improve awareness of the environment. In addition, he ran in the BGS elections as the Green candidate and inspired students to vote Green and eventually WIN the election. Congratulations Sam, we are hugely impressed with your compassion, drive and impact.

Congratulations!

Sam Gee, Year 12





IB Geography trip to the River Darent

On the 9th October, all IB Geography students arrived early to school for the River Darent Trip. For our Internal Assessment (IA) we're examining 6 river characteristics to see if it conformed to the Bradshaw Model, a model which explains what would be expected of characteristics such as velocity or depth, as a river follows its course downstream. Our IA consists of a 2500 word report of the methods carried out and our overall findings for the trip, which forms 20% of our overall grade for Higher Level students and 25% of our overall grade for Standard students, which is why this trip is crucial as it has helped contribute to a large percentage of our final grade.

Fortunately, we were lucky with the weather, despite having our trip previously cancelled due to a storm. In fact, the fresh autumn weather made it pleasant, allowing us to carry out our investigation staying reasonably dry and comfortable - that's if your wellies didn't overflow! We made our way through each site, collecting pebbles, making measurements and taking photographs. From what felt like a never ending day, we finally made it through to our last site in Hawley, each student persevering and pushing for it to be completed. It was a surprisingly enjoyable experience, carry out data collection methods and being with our friends too.

The data, and consequently the trip, were vital for our IA and wouldn't have been possible without the help of the Geography Department who organised the trip and provided the equipment!

Ben Hunt & JJ Baker



English Lecture Series: Climate Change on Page and Screen

The English Department hosted a lecture by Harry Warwick, a former Bexley Grammar student. Harry, who recently graduated with a PhD in English Literature, came in to give a lecture about both some of the work he had done and some things he held interests in surrounding the topic. The main theme of his talk was eco-dystopias, as well as how they are displayed in modern media, with some of the philosophical and environmental views around the topic. Giving an insight into some of the aspects that formed key parts of his PhD, he talked broadly about the portrayal of climate catastrophes in modern pop culture, and more specifically about the influence the climate change has in the media, which he viewed to be apparent yet minimal. It was a thought-provoking and enjoyable lecture. I look forward to more in the series!

Sam Leighton





Sixth Form Culture Club Trip: Come From Away

A group of Sixth Form students saw "Come From Away: The Musical" at the Phoenix Theatre, the most recent winner of Best New Musical at the Olivier awards, a title which it most surely deserves. Set on the island of Gander, Newfoundland in Canada, the play relates the real-life story of a small community overwhelmed with stranded travellers from across the world in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. With cast members taking on two or more roles representing people from all cultures and backgrounds, the play provides a truly transformative experience, while at its core highlighting the immanence of compassion in times of darkness.

Yingfei Chen



COME
FROM
AWAY



Diploma
Programme





Culture Club Review

The Incident Room

"The feminine body is expected to be flesh, but discreetly so;" Simone De Beauvoir

On the 27th February, a small group of Sixth Formers took a trip to the New Diorama Theatre organised by Culture Club. Tucked away in central London, the intimate eighty-seat theatre became the Millgarth incident room: the epicentre of 'Britain's biggest manhunt'. Set between 1975 and 1980, the play follows Sargent Megan Winterburn and the police as they work to catch the Yorkshire Ripper.

The Ripper is never seen. His features reflected only by photo fits. Neither is he heard, except through reported speech. Yet his presence is felt and is as tangible as any actor mere metres away. Peter Sutcliffe's name bears a chilling gravitas, when it is spoken it falls upon a silent audience. The characters, unaware of his true identity, file his record away. His name is lost in obscurity amongst thousands. The cruel dramatic irony of it all is excruciating.

Though about the ripper, the real focus of the play is the women: their pain, their suffering, but ultimately their lives. Megan Winterburn's pain is palpable. Though set in the incident room, the play takes place within Megan's mind many years later. She bears the brunt of the case and is still crippled with guilt for filing Sutcliffe away. She never leaves the incident room and is almost always on set, seemingly unable to move on. The way she is treated is upsetting. She is completely invisible; especially to the dogmatic George Oldfield, who is in charge of the investigation. She is overlooked by her superiors, her skills underappreciated, and is belittled by her co-workers. The irreverent Maureen Long becomes the mouthpiece for the plays silenced women. In a poignant moment of desperation, Maureen begs Megan to take her off the list of victims. Hundreds of women have come forward, desperate for notoriety, but Maureen wants to fade into obscurity. She is a victim now, she has become wholly defined by one man's actions and is unable to form an identity outside of this.

The idea of feminine respectability is a central theme within the play. A question of innocence is raised by the victims. Those attacked by the ripper were dominantly sex workers and have their morality examined by the police. Their prominent sexual agency diminishes their victimhood. One of the first lines spoken by Oldfield haunted me for the duration of the play. Upon the death of Jane Macdonald, a young shop assistant, he says 'He's killing innocent women now'. The 'less respectable' women are found guilty, much like their brutal and violent murderer. Their actions, deemed immoral, make them seem more deserving of death. As a result of the ripper's actions, restrictions were placed on women. Their bodies were an object of power and subjected to institutional regulation. These regulations play into a long-standing tradition of victim-blaming, in which the victim is partially at fault for the harm that befell them.

The story of the Yorkshire Ripper is not a new one. But *The Incident Room* provides a fresh retelling of the infamous events, giving voice to those overlooked. It is deeply harrowing but absolutely unmissable.

Jennifer Lake

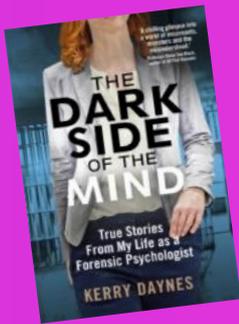




Super-Curricular Activities ~ Year 12

This is a selection of the extra reading, researching and participating that some of our Year 12 students have been doing in their own time to pursue their academic and career passions. These activities are really going to help them when they start applying to universities!

Ms Stoddard, Director of Learning, KS5

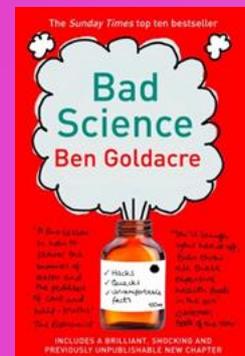


"I read *The Dark Side of the Mind* by Kerry Daynes which is various stories from her career as a forensic psychologist."

"I completed the Brighton & Sussex Medical School Virtual Work Experience and learnt about a range of specialties (including General Practice, Emergency Medicine, Surgery and Palliative Medicine). It showed the importance of good communication skills and how to reflect on experiences in a more structured way (I also learned about some of the day-to-day logistical challenges of working in the NHS)."



"I started and am continuing on the University of Cambridge's FutureLearn course about plant biotechnology and the future of food production systems. Along with other members of Science Society, I read *Bad Science* by Ben Goldacre, and we had a Zoom call to discuss our thoughts on it."



"I've read: *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf, *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *Daisy Miller* by Henry James, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte and *No Exit* by Jean Paul Sartre."

"I'm working on FutureLearn's course for Archaeology run by the University of Reading which focuses on excavations at the Vale of Pewsey in both a theoretical and technical sense."

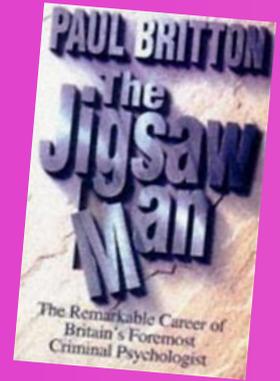


"I've been listening to the New Psychology of Depression podcast from Oxford University, and reading *The Better Angels of our Nature* by Steven Pinker."





"I've been listening to the New Psychology of Depression podcast from Oxford University which ties in very nicely with my Extended Essay topic as well as The ForenPsych Files podcast by Dr. N. I've also started reading *The Jigsaw Man* by Paul Britton."

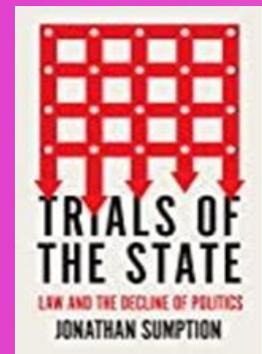


"I read part of *Bad Science*, and I also watched a documentary called 'Climate Change: The Facts' on BBC iPlayer, which is related to my Extended Essay topic."

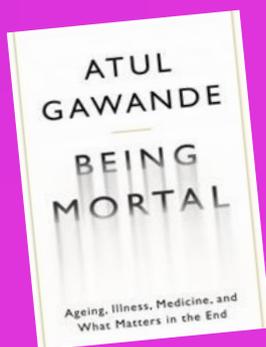


"I have been doing a first aid course and the science of medicine course on Future Learn, as well as writing volunteer messages for King's College Hospital."

"I've been following the debate around lockdown legislation and (over-) enforcement of the Lockdown by the Police."

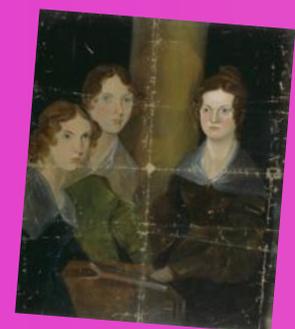


"I've started reading *Trials of the State* by Jonathan Sumption and I'm really enjoying it so far."



"I've joined the 'We are Medics' book club- every two weeks they set a book (this week it was *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande) and you send in a reflection on what it has taught you about medicine/what you have learnt. They give you a certificate after each reflection and then they (medical students and professors from Brighton & Sussex Medical School) discuss the book too."

"I've read *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte and *The Colour Purple* by Alice Walker. I've also watched *V for Vendetta*, and have been helping SHP make the youth hostel I'm currently living in have a better sense of community for the residents."



"I started reading *Physics of the Human Body* by Irving P Herman and I have also been listening to the 'Naked Scientist Podcast'. Currently, I'm doing the 'MedTech: AI and Robotics' course on Future Learn, which explores the future usage of artificial intelligence and robotics within healthcare."

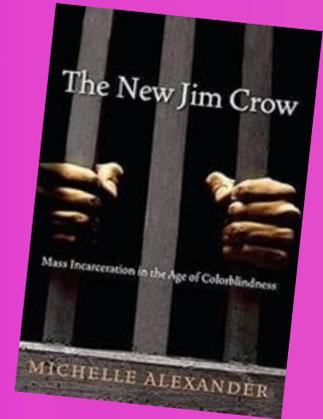


"I started reading *A Brief History Of Time* by Stephen Hawking with the Science Society, and also I am reading Richard Feynman's *Six Easy Pieces*.

"I was already volunteering at King's College Hospital; however, I think they are still open and accepting volunteers at <https://www.kch.nhs.uk/about/get-involved/volunteering.>"

"I am reading Richard Feynman's collection of short works *The Pleasure of Finding Things out.*"

"During the holiday, I began reading *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colourblindness* by Michelle Alexander. I also participated in a webinar, 'Success Talk in the City', which aimed to give an overview of how hedge funds, private equity and venture capital work."



"I started listening to a surgery podcast called 'Behind the Knife' and have also been doing a 'Food as Medicine' and the 'Science of Medicines' course on FutureLearn."





Year 12 Anthropology Trip

*Cash flow runs deep
But spirit deeper.
You ask am I my
Brother's keeper?*

As much as idealists and populists yearn to frame it as such, London has never been a homogeneous place; through the various ethnic groups seeking refuge from an importunate world of hatred, or the slave trade commonly paralleled with the USA's as being less worthy of consideration, the capital's roots were not just flavoured by immigration, but essentially founded upon it.



Our anthropology trip consisted of a tour from the Migration Museum around London, and a subsequent ethnographic study within and regarding an area of our choosing. We met outside of the Royal Exchange at 9:30 sharp(ish). The sun was bright and surprisingly warm for an autumn morning, but we were soon disappointed by the rain's sudden entrance, unfortunately continuing sporadically throughout the day. Luckily, this did not in any way hinder the enrichment which was provided to us through the tour around the East of London.



The main focus was of course migration, thus the different areas we explored throughout the first half of the day helped to illustrate the constant oppression and prejudice faced by immigrants, from the Jews and the Huguenots for centuries, to the rise of fascism from the likes of Oswald Mosley and the National Front. An important factor in our analysis of history should also be its effects on the present - fascism is still very present in today's society, and radicalisation is growing constantly due to alienation and racial division.



What was most interesting was the extreme locality of fascism, as members of groups such as the National Front or the EDL would even be recruiting outside the gates of Danson Park; one should not make the mistake of disregarding far right ideologies as mere histories, but rather realise that our current time is essentially part of history and is definitely not void of extremist rhetoric leading to extreme actions.

After the tour, which discussed a variety of different significant people and locations (synagogues, poorhouses, and so on), we arrived at Brick Lane: a powerful microcosm of rampant gentrification and recuperation. At one end, exists the plethora of independent shops, street art, and diversity among its residents. The other end's antithesis to this is perhaps best explained by the mere existence of a Pret and a Premier Inn. When walking in the extremely commodified portion of the road, there is a palpable atmosphere of the uncanny; it was as if the feeling of a former run-down part of London was currently merely simulated as to give the white middle-class residents the illusion of struggle in their day-to-day life, when in actuality, everybody around them earns six figure salaries and are there for the same reason.

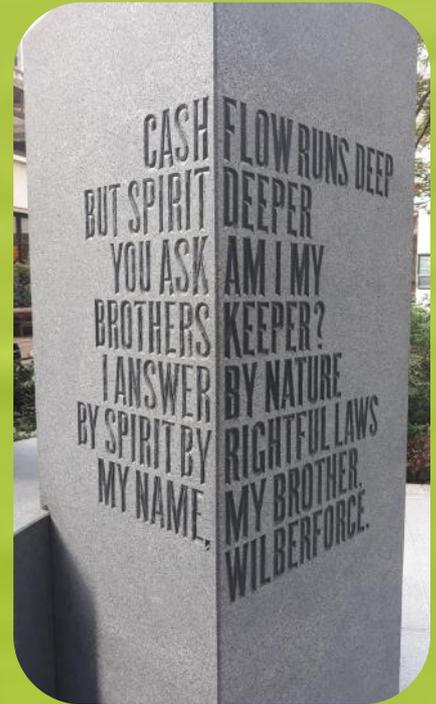


We then had to perform the first part of our Internal Assessment, which was an ethnographic study; I chose to do mine in the heart of the gentrification of Brick Lane: Pret A Manger. I wrote notes on who I saw, what they presented themselves as, and how they acted in relation to other people of the same or different identities. It was insightful to see how all the different individuals contributed to the overall character of the location.

The trip was definitely an enriching experience. I believe that the study of anthropology is a very important one in the pursuit of making the world a more free and accepting place.

*I answer by nature
By spirit by rightful laws
My name, my brother,
Wilberforce.*

Alex Offen



BGS Horticultural Society

After an extremely successful summer, the BGS Horticultural Society has resumed its activity at the start of September. Thanks to a wonderful team of student helpers, from Year 7 through to Year 13, lots of new baby plants have been planted, including broccoli, artichokes, kale, cabbage, all sorts of lettuce, turnips, carrots, potatoes and more! I am very proud of the work our students are putting in; the skills and knowledge they are developing are essential in life: dedication, patience, perseverance in the face of difficulties (e.g. foxes and slugs!), but also awareness of healthy eating. Here's a selection of pictures, including last summer's harvest and the newcomers in the allotment (aka The Lottie). This is a fantastic activity for anyone to enjoy, and the health benefits of gardening are absolutely amazing. So come and get involved!

Miss Contini





Young Enterprise Team

Members of the Year 12 Young Enterprise (YE) team went on a visit into central London to attend the YE introduction event. This was held at one of Intel's buildings. Intel is a company that specializes in predicting where certain markets will be next, using their data & market research.

YE aims to assist students, such as ourselves, to develop key employability & entrepreneurial skills. They also help us understand how business works and prepares us for the future. At this event, we were given a presentation with important tips for a successful start-up and they offered us an insight into how YE will give us opportunities along the way.

A guest speaker, Husayn Kassai, who co-founded the company Onfido whilst attending Oxford University, was invited to give us his experience and share knowledge from it. His emphasis was on innovation and collaboration as core values for a team & when creating a product.

Travelling with friends who are all motivated and excited for this project is amazing in itself, sharing ideas and thoughts throughout the trip.

After having relayed this to the rest of the team at our meeting on Monday, we looked forward to our first-ever fundraiser. Our bake sale turned out to be a huge success, and we sold out very quickly. I am extremely pleased with the outcome and really proud of the hard work from every single person in the team.

I hope everyone will continue to support us in the future.

Thank you,

Aisha Abba



Diploma Programme





Year 12 ~ BGS Young Enterprise Team 'Best in Bexley'!

This Year's Young Enterprise team, Esscents, needed to adapt to the climate when their competition was cancelled in its physical form and digital participation was called for. The team has developed The Diffusion Necklace which can be combined with aromatherapy scents to help calm, energise or bring a sense of romance! Students had to write and submit a business report, set up and photograph their trade stand and film their presentation ready for remote judging. Despite illness and self-isolation taking many of the team, the team managed to pull all elements together. They worked incredibly hard and the judges clearly thought so too, awarding them with 'Best Marketing', 'Best Presentation' and most importantly, 'Best Company in Bexley'!

Congratulations to the Year 12 team! You can see their business presentation [here](#). (Featuring Poppy Lucas, Alex Quan, Julian Wokeh, Daniel Faulkner and Shrawak Kansakar).

Mrs Harris and Mr Joe





Excellent results from our second fully IB cohort!

Congratulations to year 13 students in extraordinary circumstances!

Year 13 students are celebrating the end of over three months of uncertainty with a set of IB results that vindicate all the hard work they have put in since September 2018. We feel the frustration they feel in having been unable to demonstrate their performance in final examinations due to the pandemic but they should now be proud of what they have achieved through their hard work and commitment.

The 182 students of our second fully IB cohort improved on last year's results with an average of 5.3 points per subject (world average = 4.6 in 2019), an average of 33.4 total points per student (world average = 29.6 in 2019) and the best progress (value-added) in four years. It is remarkable that the *average achievement in UCAS points (189 points) of our students exceeds the equivalent of 3 A* grades at A level.*

Isabel Hosier, Koner Kalkanel and Daniel Constantini all achieved 42 points out of the maximum 45 points, 4 grade 7s and 2 grade 6s each! Five students achieved 41 points: Kate Leadbetter, Alice Brayford, James Du, Stacy Kindred and Heather May; and another five achieved 40 points: Ibrahim Khan, Mariah Bennett, Megan Mitchell-Woodford, Rosie Burrows and Elisabeth Enechi. These are remarkable achievements which demonstrate the aspiration and resilience of our students.

One in six students gained 38 points or more, a typical Oxford University offer. 43% of all the grades awarded were a 7 or a 6. Perhaps the most pleasing, the value-added measure



NEWS LETTER



9th July 2020

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