

*Personal, Social, Health &
Citizenship Education*
NEWSLETTER

Open Day 2021

Achievements, stories &
events of the past year
from the PSHCE Department

NEWS LETTER



12th October 2021

www.bexleygs.co.uk

INTELLECT, EMPATHY &
COURAGE

NEWS LETTER



15th October 2020

www.bexleygs.co.uk

Black History Month in the Library

A big thank you to Samantha Hayes-Holgate (Year 13) for donating her Jack Petchey prize money to the library and helping to increase our book collection celebrating Black History and authors. Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions not all students will be able to visit the library to see the collection, but if you visit the Virtual Library on Google Classroom I am posting information about our new books during the Black History Month. If you would like to borrow any books, please email carey_r@bexleygs.co.uk.

Mrs Carey, School Librarian





Black History Month

While black history is celebrated year round, Black History Month is marked annually. Black History is British History and we are committed to recognising this in our curriculum. It recognises and values the inspirational individuals and events that have shaped the black generation. During Black History Month, we remember and celebrate the important people from the past and also those who contribute to and help our society today.

While the UK celebrates Black History Month in October, across the pond where it originated commemorations take place throughout February. After visiting America in the 1970s, Ghanaian-born Akyaaba Addai Sebo, a special projects officer at the Greater London Council, founded the UK's version of Black History Month in 1987. Traditionally, October is when African chiefs and leaders would gather to settle their differences, so Akyaaba chose this month to reconnect with African roots.

The month of October is Black History Month in the UK, and teachers at Bexley Grammar School have planned a series of lessons and activities to take place in October designed to explore this area of the curriculum. A special thank you to Miss Fuwa, Miss Contini, Heads of Departments and the Afro-Caribbean Society for all of their hard work.

Topics covered and activities include:

- ◆ Introduction to Black History Month and discussions, including; Why is Black History Month important? What would you like to know about Black British history? What changes would you like to see to the curriculum?
- ◆ Exploring the history of Black migrants in England during the Tudor times (Year 7)
- ◆ The origins of Notting Hill Carnival and African Civilisation (Year 8)
- ◆ The significance of Stormzy headlining Glastonbury Festival in 2019 and the British Black Panther Movement (Year 9)
- ◆ Exploring the idea of appropriation and appreciation (Year 10)
- ◆ Exploring the legacy of Stephen Lawrence (Year 11)
- ◆ The Bristol Bus Boycott (Sixth Form)

Following on from the recent Black Lives Matter newsletter, below is a link to a useful document which has resources, activities and tips to support families. [Parents Guide to Black Lives Matter. pdf](#)

Bexley Council is also providing a competition to celebrate Black History Month. Below is a link providing further details: [Bexley School Competition](#)

Mrs Moore

**BLACK
HISTORY MONTH
2020**

NEWSLETTER



19th November
2020

www.bexleygs.co.uk

Henrietta Lacks' contribution to Science

Henrietta Lacks was a 31 year-old poor black woman working as a tobacco farmer in Maryland, who was being treated for cervical cancer in 1951. The doctors at the time removed her tumour cells without her consent (which was typical at the time) and her cells were the first human cells that could grow outside of a human body, in a laboratory. This discovery was astonishing in the scientific world as her genetic material was a catalyst for many developments in areas such as vaccines, cancer and fertility treatments, which I believe is amazing! Lacks' tumour cells, which were originally affected due to her suffering from cervical cancer, also led to the development of the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccines used in many countries to protect young girls developing HPV infections leading to cervical cancer. Estimates even suggest that this vaccination will reduce the deaths from cervical cancer by 70%!



Her transformation of biomedicine was made famous in 2010 by a best-selling book named 'The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks', which highlights the ethical and medical aspects of her non-consensual cell extraction and is a story connected to the dark history of experimentation on African Americans at the time. It also sparked the legal battles over whether we control the things we are made of.

Her relatives were not informed about her cells being extracted and used for research until 22 years later in 1973, when a scientist called to request a blood sample. Her cells were a foundation for the now billion-dollar biotech industry and her relatives, who cannot afford health insurance, were not compensated for this major leap in scientific research. The book's author had said that the family had never asked for money; however, the family, still poor and at odds with racism and classism, possibly did not feel like they were able to ask, which is evidently a fault of the scientists at the time who did not even inform them about the cell extraction or the compensation they could earn.

Henrietta Lacks is someone who should be wholly recognised in the scientific world as a woman whose cells paved the way for groundbreaking discoveries such as the HPV and the polio vaccine. Her exploitation by the doctors and scientists treating her and the further exploitation of her relatives should also be recognised and as an eye-opener to society about the ill-treatment of a suffering African American woman and her family.

Damilola Hassan, ACS Vice-President

BLACK LIVES MATTER



LGBT HISTORY MONTH

LGBT+ History Month is Every February!

We celebrate:

- * Equality;
- * Freedom to be one's true self;
- * The contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-binary, gender non-conforming, intersex people, and anyone who identifies as a member of the LGBT+ community;
- * How much progress has been made in our society, but also recognising how much more still needs to be done!
- * Check out this [chart](#) (or scroll to the next page) to find out more about significant historical events surrounding the LGBT+ community. A copy of the chart

LGBT+ History Month at BGS:

Every week you will be sent a story about an LGBT+ hero - someone amazing who will definitely inspire you!

If you would like to suggest who we should learn about, please fill in this form [here](#).

This week's LGBT+ hero: Lily Parr

Watch this clip about this awesome footballer and trailblazer, who played against both men and women in the 1920s and lived as an openly lesbian woman. For more info:

https://lgbt.wikia.org/wiki/Lily_Parr



Miss Contini

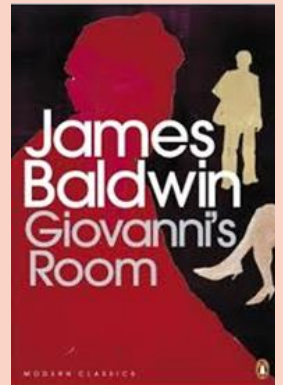


LGBT+ History Month

This week's LGBT+ hero: James Baldwin



Novelist and poet James Baldwin is a towering figure in black gay literary history. With his powerful and deliberate words, Baldwin also became one of the loudest, most respected, and celebrated voices of the Civil Rights Movement.



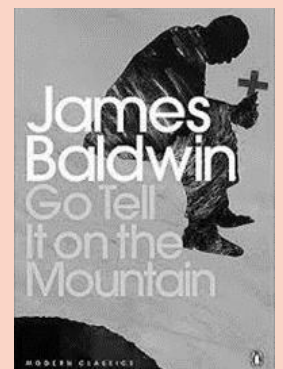
Despite not having expressed his sexuality early on in his career, Baldwin eventually became increasingly opinionated and vocal on the subject of what was seen at the time as "taboo". James Baldwin often communicated his own struggles concerning his sexuality throughout his literature;

In particular, one of his best known books "Giovanni's Room" explores the life of an American man enduring frustrations with his relationships with other men in his life.

By Marie Touray

One of the many reasons that Baldwin is seen as one of the most influential LGBT + figures, is due to him using his platform to raise awareness surrounding **intersectionality**, especially in the 1950s. He depicted the ways in which he experienced multiple forms of oppression due to both his race and sexuality, which was a prominent conflict for several black men in this time period as well as today.

Baldwin was often open about his sexual orientation, nevertheless he constantly received backlash from critics in attempts to silence him as well as criticism from his own community. However this didn't change Baldwin's approach concerning the ways he utilised his platform and voice which many people lacked. Regardless of the disapproval and condemnation towards him from some, many continued to idolise him and his influential words which has had a significant impact on the world to this day.



Click [here](#) to learn more about this hero!





Week 3

LGBT+ History Month

This week's LGBT+ hero: Marsha P Johnson



Marsha P. Johnson was an activist, self-identified drag queen, performer, and survivor. She was a prominent figure in the Stonewall uprising of 1969. Marsha went by "Black Marsha" before settling on Marsha P. Johnson. The "P" stood for "Pay It No Mind," which is what Marsha would say in response to questions about her gender.

At that time, being gay or trans was classified as a mental illness in the United States. People from the LGBT+ community were regularly threatened and beaten by police, and were shunned by many in society.

In June 1969, when Marsha was 23 years old, police raided a gay bar in New York called The Stonewall Inn.

The police forced over 200 people out of the bar and onto the streets, and then used excessive violence against them. Marsha, who was living and working in New York at the time, was one of the key figures who stood up to the police during the raids.

Marsha resisted arrest, but in the following days, led a series of protests and riots demanding rights for LGBT+ people.

Much like the recent Black Lives Matter marches in the United States, news of these protests (known as the **Stonewall Riots**) spread around the world, inspiring others to join protests and rights groups to fight for equality.

A month after the protests, the first openly gay march took place in New York - a pivotal moment for the gay and trans community everywhere.

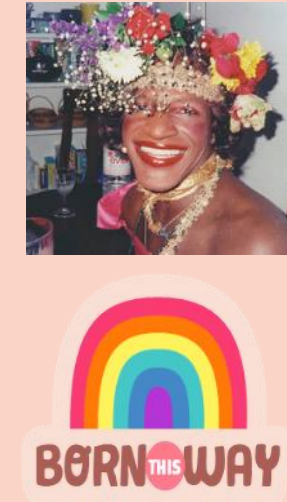
Marsha went missing in 1992 and six days later police found Marsha's body. They said nobody else had been responsible for the death. But many friends argued this ruling at the time, saying attacks on gay and trans people were common.

Others said they saw Marsha being harassed by a group of "thugs" a few days before they died.

Twenty years later, in 2012, campaigner Mariah Lopez was successful in getting the New York police department to reopen Marsha's case as a possible murder. After the NYPD reopened the case, the police reclassified Johnson's cause of death from "suicide" to undetermined.



A monument commemorating Marsha P Johnson will be unveiled in 2021 in Greenwich Village (NYC) near the Stonewall Inn.





Week 4

LGBT+ History Month

This week's LGBT+ hero: Sylvia Rivera



Sylvia Rivera was born in 1951 in New York. Her parents were Puerto Rican and Venezuelan. Rivera passed away in 2002. Sylvia Rivera was an iconic LGBTQ+ activist. As an adult, Rivera was a regular attendee of the famous Stonewall Inn and is believed to have been present during the venue's landmark 1969 **Stonewall Riots**.



What are the **Stonewall Riots**?

In 1969, during a period of time where homosexuality was illegal in America, police raids on gay bars were common. On this particular night, the LGBTQ+ community fought back, which sparked a series of protests and a revolution which changed LGBTQ+ rights forever.

Rivera co-founded **STAR** (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries), a group dedicated to providing housing and support for homeless queer youth in New York City. LGBTQ+ is a modern term which has united the community, however discrimination has and can still occur within the community.

Rivera challenged gay rights leaders who attempted to exclude drag queens and trans people in gay rights legislation, and fought for inclusion for people across the gender spectrum within mainstream LGBTQ organizations and events.





LGBT+ History Month

It's a wrap!



We have come to the end of LGBT+ History Month, but this doesn't mean we are no longer paying attention to the wonderful contributions made by LGBT+ people and also to the issues they still face.



The lockdowns have been challenging for us all, but for LGBT+ people they have been even more challenging: for many, this has meant being stuck at home with family members who are not accepting and often abusive. The restrictions on gatherings and socialising meant that many people haven't been able to access much needed support and to feel part of a community.

In the next slide, there will be some facts and data showing quite how much the LGBT+ community has been affected - it can be distressing to read, just to warn you...



The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on LGBT+ people

#Stayathome:

What if it isn't safe to stay at home? Almost **a quarter of young people** at risk of homelessness are LGBT, usually because their families reject them. **More than one in ten LGBT people** have faced domestic abuse from a partner, rising to 19 per cent for trans people. Stonewall.org.uk



Social isolation means that many are trapped inside with abusive partners or family members. Reports of domestic abuse have risen since safety measures were implemented. As LGBT people are more likely to experience domestic abuse this rise is likely to be disproportionately affecting LGBT people. Since the new safety measures came into effect, LGBT Foundation has seen a 30% increase in domestic abuse/violence calls to our helpline.



LGBT Foundation





LGBT+ History Month

Hidden Figures: The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on LGBT Communities is a culmination of the findings from LGBT Foundations online survey, existing research on LGBT health inequalities, and their own unpublished service user data. Their survey found that of LGBT people who responded:

- 42% would like to access support for their mental health at this time
- 8% do not feel safe where they are currently staying
- 18% are concerned that this situation is going to lead to substance or alcohol misuse or trigger a relapse
- 64% said that they would rather receive support during this time from an LGBT specific organisation
- 16% had been unable to access healthcare for non-Covid related issues
- 34% of people have had a medical appointment cancelled
- 23% were unable to access medication or were worried that they might not be able to access medication



Where can I get help and support?

Here is a [link](#) to Stonewall's website that will direct you to ways in which you can get support if you are experiencing difficulties during this period:

Let's look forward to happier, more positive times! Soon we will be back in school and we will be able to see our friends, and with restrictions lifting in the coming month's life will get a bit easier! Don't forget that Ms Contini, Ms Meacher and Ms Orchard will always be happy to listen to you and to support you.





International Women's Day is celebrated on the 8th March. On that day, we celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievements that women have accumulated for decades. March 8th is a significant day for women as it reminds us of how everything began. Women's Day started as a labour movement. In 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. The Socialist Party of America declared the first National Woman's Day in 1909.

A few students were asked "What does International Women's Day mean to you?" and these were the responses:

"International Women's Day is not just about embodying the empowerment that being a woman creates. It is a day that brings a sense of proudness and joy in the realisation that women have come so far and will continue to do so. The day highlights our accomplishments no matter their race or sexuality or beliefs." - **Jada Asraf-Clarke, 12CSL**

"International Women's Day is a time for reflection of the past to see how far we have come since then. Additionally, it is a day of appreciation for women, and a day to make ourselves known to struggles that women have had to face since they had no rights. However, there is still a lot that needs to be changed in regards to the gender gap, and equality in several countries around the world" - **Oluwatofunmi Onakoya, 12CSL**

"International Women's Day is important for recognising the women in our society, and our world, and their value, which is often disregarded. It's also quite sad because it highlights where we have failed to account for women and how we have to constantly remind ourselves to accommodate them. Its significance is twofold. On the one hand, it shows how we haven't given enough thought to women, yet on the other hand, through acknowledging this, we are on the way to securing women's rights and equality." - **Joy Hui, 12JMB**

“
Feminism isn't about
making women strong.
Women are already
strong. It's about
changing the way
the world **perceives**
that **strength**.
”

✧
G.D. ANDERSON

“
There is no **limit** to
what we, as women, can
accomplish.
”

✧
MICHELLE OBAMA

“
I do not wish women
to have power over men;
but over **themselves**.
”

✧
MARY SHELLEY

- *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou
- *Noughts & Crosses* by Malorie Blackman
- *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House* by Audre Lorde
- *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- *Swing Time* by Zadie Smith
- *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Sister Outsider* by Audre Lorde



Gender-based violence: why we need to keep talking

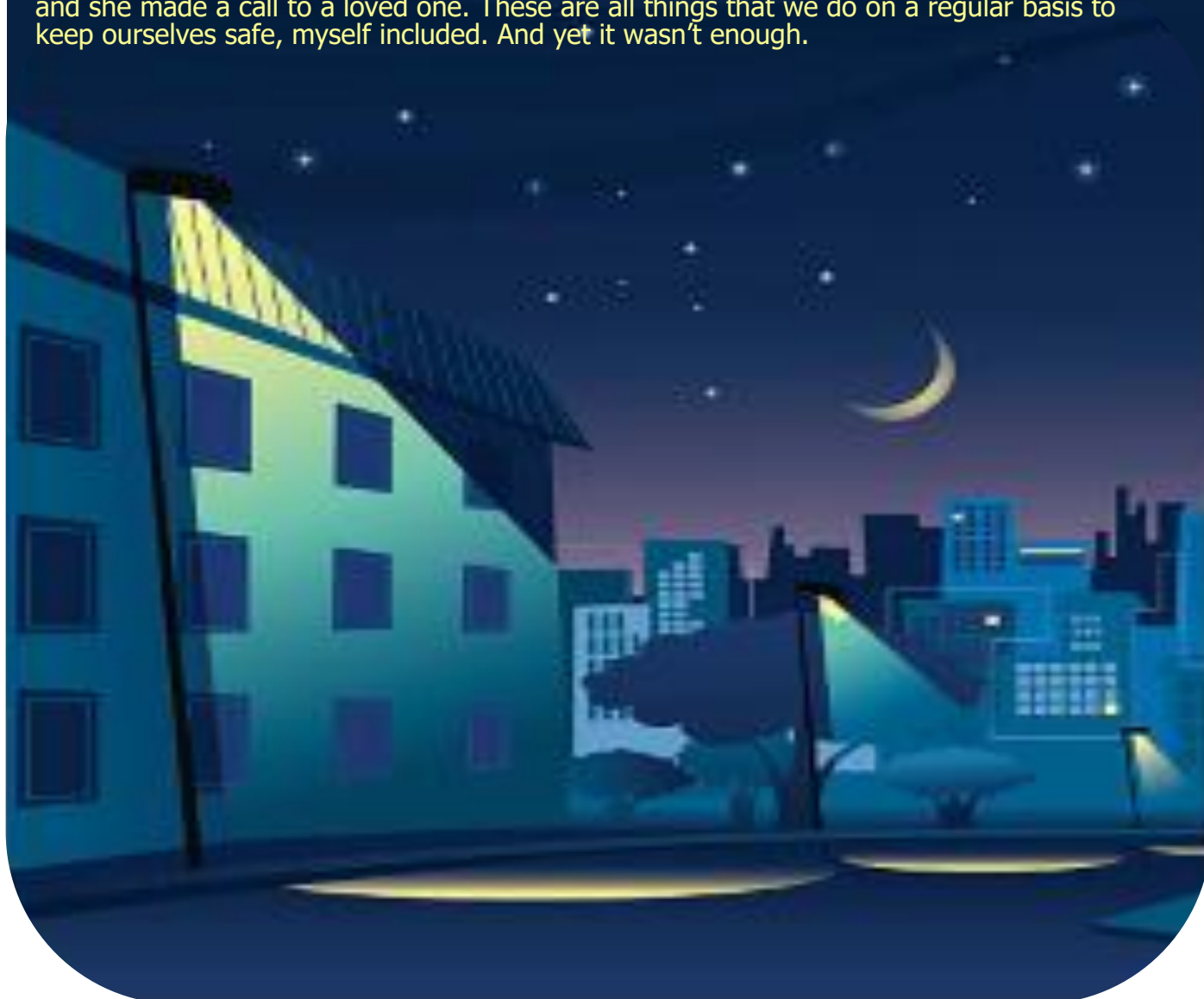
I'm sure that, like me, recently your world has been dominated by the murder of Sarah Everard and the subsequent outpour of accounts of harassment being shared on social media.

According to a recent UN Women UK report, 97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed, yet shockingly only 4% of these women then went on to report this. It's safe to say that young women growing up in the UK are not surprised by this number and many accept harassment as an unfortunate part of their everyday lives. Many women in the UK were struck by Everard's story as it resonates so deeply with them and their encounters, with some saying that they simply 'cannot stop thinking about her'.

The authors of the study say that the problem of gender-based violence is so prevalent in the UK because we perceive ourselves to be 'world-leading' in the fight for gender equality. We are quick to forget that many women, particularly those in marginalised groups, face fear and abuse right here on an everyday basis.

As a leader at my local youth group, I am torn between telling young women that they shouldn't have to change to accommodate strange behaviour and knowing that, in reality, this is what they must do to keep themselves safe.

Plastered across social media channels, the words 'she was just walking home' and 'she did everything right'. She wore a bright outfit and trainers, walked down well-lit, busy roads and she made a call to a loved one. These are all things that we do on a regular basis to keep ourselves safe, myself included. And yet it wasn't enough.





In the days following International Women's Day, the conversation around gender-based violence and harassment has taken centre stage. The UN Women UK organisation has recently launched a letter, [urging the government to make Safe Spaces now](#). The hashtags #everywomanyouknow and #IAmSarah have had thousands of retweets, with women across the globe sharing their experiences of sexual harassment and giving advice on how men can challenge this issue too.

It's so important that we continue to recognise and oppose the harassment of women, challenging the notion that it is 'just a part of everyday life'. Because ultimately, all I want is for my daughter to one day grow up in a world where she is safe to go wherever, whenever, in whatever she wants.

Here are some organisations to contact, if you've been affected by the issues raised:

<https://bexleywomensaid.org.uk/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Charlotte Allen, Year 13





Calling all Year 12s!

CARE ABOUT PEOPLE AND OUR PLANET?

You could help lead the BGS
Environmental Action Group!

**INTERESTED OR WANT TO FIND OUT
MORE? COME TO AN INITIAL
MEETING IN H18 ON TUESDAY 20TH
APRIL AT 10:20AM**

Any questions? Email or talk
to Sam Wilson (Year 12),
Sam Gee (Year 13) or
Mrs Gradley





BGS Environmental Action Group

Hi Bexley,

We are BGS's very own Environmental Action Group. We just wanted to say "Hello!" on Earth Day and spread the word that, hopefully, over the next few months we will start some fun and obviously environmentally friendly projects! :)

***Lauren Dempsey,
BGS Environmental Action Group***





EARTH DAY 2021

THURSDAY 22ND APRIL is **EARTH DAY**,

and shows that real, meaningful change is possible:

The historic **PARIS AGREEMENT** was signed on **EARTH DAY** in 2016, and this Thursday, US President Joe Biden holds the virtual **LEADERS SUMMIT ON CLIMATE** to *galvanise efforts* in the fight against climate change.

Closer to home, in November, the UK will host the **UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP26)**.

EARTH DAY should give us hope in an uncertain world: we all have the power to make a difference.

OTHER LINKS

[EARTH DAY 2021](#)

[NASA: VITAL SIGNS OF THE PLANET](#)

[ECOSIA: TACKLE CLIMATE ANXIETY AND HELP THE PLANET](#)

BGS ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION GROUP

NEWSLETTER



20th May 2021
www.bexleygs.co.uk

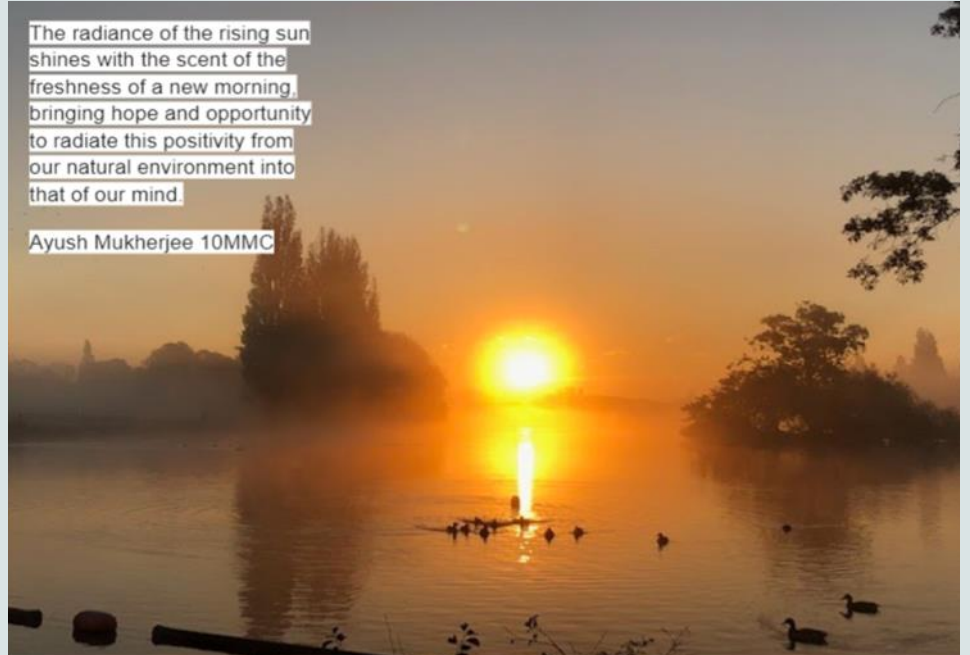
Mental Health Awareness Week (10th-16th May)



As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, students from across the school sent in their photos of nature along with a sentence about what nature meant to them. Here are some of our favourites.

The radiance of the rising sun shines with the scent of the freshness of a new morning, bringing hope and opportunity to radiate this positivity from our natural environment into that of our mind.

Ayush Mukherjee 10MMC



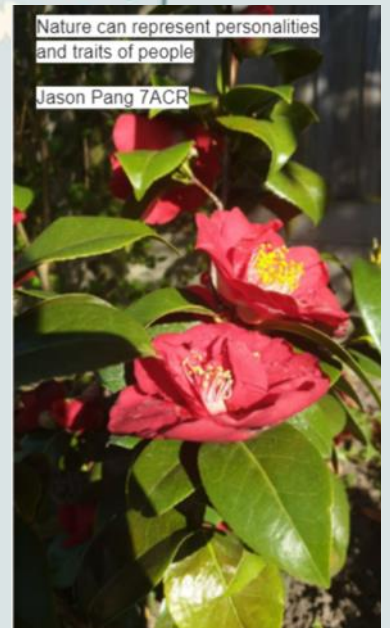
When I go for a walk it puts all of my worries out of my mind :)

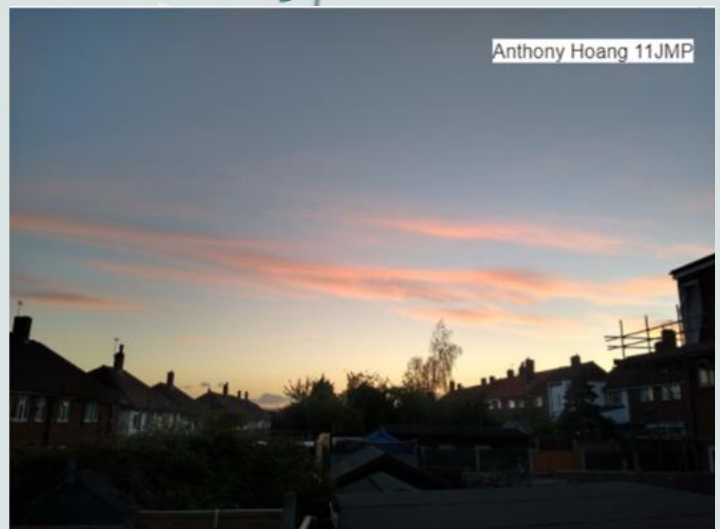
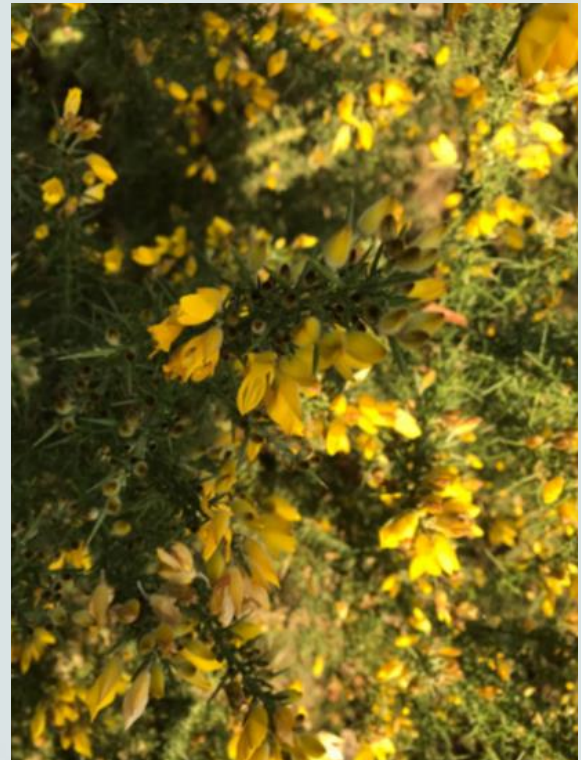
Hannah-Louise Donovan 11FTM



Nature can represent personalities and traits of people

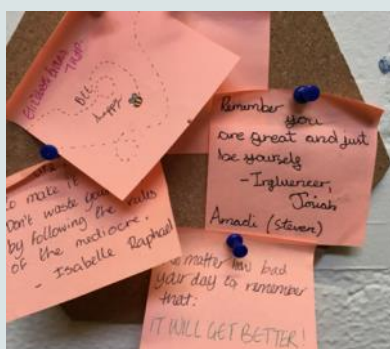
Jason Pang 7ACR







Emily Ross (12JJ) celebrated Mental Health Awareness week by putting up notice boards around the school as part of the [#Only7Seconds](#) movement, for which she is the UK Ambassador. The movement is based around the idea that it only takes seven seconds to connect with someone and these boards allow students to share positive messages that can be read quickly as you walk around the school. These particular messages were written by Year 7 students with the encouragement of the Year 7 Wellbeing Ambassadors during academic monitoring sessions.



Emily recently won the Jack Petchey Award and used the money to purchase these boards to place around the school.

Don't forget that even though Mental Health Awareness week is now over, you should still ensure that you take time to prioritise your wellbeing.

Ms Brand, Mental Health Lead Teacher