



RAYNES
PARK
WINTER
CONCERT

FIND OUT MORE ON PAGES 14-18

Dear Families,

I can hardly believe we have reached the end of another calendar year. The beginning of this academic year signalled a real return to normality after all that had been missed due to Covid the previous two years and there have been many highlights and successes for which our Raynes Park High School community can be extremely proud.

Whilst we were disappointed to have to postpone the Awards Evening this week due to the icy conditions on the site, we have been delighted to welcome visitors back this term, running successful open events for the Sixth Form and entry into Year 7, along with Academic Target Setting Day, Progress Evening for Year 7, Year 11 Revision session and the Winter Concert which highlighted the diversity, inclusiveness and talents of our wonderful student population. Thank you so much to those families who were able to join us for these events. We were also delighted to hold the first whole school assembly for three years; it was so uplifting for the KS3 and KS4 students to fill our Sports Hall and for us to be able to celebrate our students' brilliant achievements together. On a personal level, I was so pleased to be able to thank your children for their smiles and hellos that have kept me going through some difficult times and I will always be grateful to them for this.

We are also pleased that trips have resumed to pre-Covid regularity and this term many of our students have again been experiencing learning activities as part of the wider curriculum, both in school, as part of the King's Aspiration Programme and the various visits including field trips and performances at the theatre. Staff have also run a range of after school clubs in addition to the daily homework support that is available. Exciting sporting events have been in abundance this term and students have accessed a range of sports within their lessons and by attending extra-curricular clubs. We have had some impressive team wins and individual performances, and you can read more about our sporting achievements in this newsletter. This term also saw us celebrate Jeans for Jeans Day, Macmillan Coffee Morning, Children in Need, National Anti-Bullying Week, World Diabetes Day and Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day. We also celebrated Black History Month both in and outside of the classroom and Movember raised the profile of mental

health throughout November. My thanks go to those staff and students who have made all of these events possible and to our families for supporting us with these.

At Raynes Park High School we continually reflect on and review teaching and learning and this term we have been carrying out 'book looks' as part of our quality assurance programme. The class work in the books seen was of a high standard and of particular note was the much improved presentation, demonstrating pride in exercise books and engagement with learning. We have also been piloting a change to the setting of homework in KS3 and Mr Liyanage will be sharing the findings with staff, Governors and families next term. In the Spring Term we will be reviewing our curriculum through a series of 'deep dives' and lesson observations to ensure that what we deliver in the classroom enables your child to achieve their personal best by building on prior knowledge and skills; details of our Curriculum offer are on the website.

At the time of writing, we are all looking forward to a well-earned break after a busy week of Christmas lunches and the eagerly awaited Staff Panto and this term concludes with us saying thank you and farewell to Ms Patel and Ms Massey who take up new posts in January; we wish them our very best. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your unwavering support this year and on behalf of the staff and Governors and everyone associated with Raynes Park High School, we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and all good wishes for New Year.

Best wishes

KJ Taylor
Miss K J Taylor
Headteacher

ATTENDANCE

It has been another busy half term here at Raynes Park High School, and attendance remains our key focus for the school. Our attendance figure stands at 92.7% which is lower than we would like it to be, however the positive is that this is above the national average.

This term, 236 students achieved 100% attendance and postcards are already on their way home. Well done to Kobi in Year 7 and Rochelle in Year 11 who received a prize for their attendance in the final assembly; remember if you are not in, you're not going to win!

Congratulations to Year 7 and Year 9, both year groups achieved the top attendance at 94% and a special mention goes to 7CM as the tutor group with the best attendance in the school at 97%.

As for the House attendance cup both Halliwells and Gibbs came in joint first, so I will look after the cup until we have an outright winner.

Next term we will have an attendance focus week where the names of all students who attend school 100% that week will be entered into a prize draw.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that we do expect all students in school 100% of the time unless medical evidence is provided. If your child is not able to come to school then you must call or email the school before 9.00am each day that they are off. Absences that we are not informed of will be unauthorised, and we do not authorise an entire day for medical appointments. For morning appointments students are expected in school after their appointment and for afternoon appointments they are expected in school before their appointment.

Wishing families a happy holiday.

Ms E Karadal
Senior Teacher

RAYNES PARK HIGH SCHOOL CHARITABLE TRUST



The Staging Project
and Bugsy Malone

Our aim – raising funds to support Raynes Park High School students!

The Eco Project has had a successful season, with the popular 'Raynes Park High School Horticultural Society' meeting every week throughout the summer. The four raised beds producing an array of vegetables for students to take home and savour. Another two beds have been added ready for the next growing season.

The Nature Study Area is progressing with the pond liner installed and the surrounding area tidied up. Unfortunately as the pond has yet to be filled, recent rain has caused it to lift. School physics students will understand that once the pond is full of water that this buoyancy problem will be resolved! The project has been funded through grants obtained by the Trust.

The Staging Project, using funds raised by the Former Pupils Association, parents and students has come to fruition. It had its baptism with a very fine performance of *Bugsy Malone*, enjoyed enormously by the audience and cast alike!

Yet again, I hope that you will not mind me reminding everyone that making online purchases through the Easyfundraising website means the school can benefit financially. Please sign up and nominate the Raynes Park High School Trust and buy online! Here is the link you need to participate.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs

Enjoy the festive season and have a very happy 2023!



Neil Jordan
Chair,
Raynes Park High School
Charitable Trust

RPHSTrust@outlook.com

With Christmas approaching, Ms Bowes has created a self-care advent calendar for the whole school community to take part in. We would love to see images of you taking part (families, friends and pets welcome to join in too!)

RAYNES SELF CARE ADVENT CALENDAR

An advent calendar made specially for the RPHS community to try 25 different forms of self-care in December. Email your #selfcare photos to jgarrido@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

1 Write down three things that made you happy today 1. 2. 3.	2 Go for a walk in nature 	3 Have a bubble bath or a long shower 	4 Read a poem 	5 Go on a jog 
6 Have a go at drawing or colouring 	7 Take a nap or relax on your bed 	8 Put your favourite music on and sing your heart out 	9 Have a go at yoga 	10 Watch the clouds 
11 And breathe... 	12 Light a candle 	13 Try meditation 	14 Put your phone in a draw for an hour 	15 Do your favourite kind of exercise 
16 Listen to this 	17 Go stargazing 	18 Make your favourite food 	19 Call a friend 	20 Spend time in your garden or looking after house plants 
21 Watch the sun set 	22 Watch a funny video 	23 Write down three things you love about yourself 1. 2. 3.	24 Watch a film 	25 Spend time with someone you care about 

How have we been promoting wellbeing in school?

Throughout the Autumn Term, promoting and supporting wellbeing at Raynes Park High School has continued to be a key area of focus for us.

In October, assemblies were delivered to all year groups on the topic of Safeguarding, what this means, how this is done and why this is important. These assemblies highlighted who the members of the Safeguarding team are, and what support is available for students if needed.

In November, we partnered with Educational Wellbeing Practitioners (EWPs) from the Trailblazer Project to deliver exam stress workshops to identified Year 11 and 13 students. These workshops taught students about the cycles of stress and anxiety, alongside also teaching them strategies to cope with both feelings in the lead up to the exam season. We look forward to continuing our work alongside the EWPs to deliver more of these workshops next term. If you are in Year 11 or Sixth Form and did not have a chance to take part in this during the Autumn Term, however, would be interested in joining one of these workshop groups in the Spring Term, then please speak with Ms Yusuf.

Throughout the whole of November, Raynes Park High School also took part in raising awareness and money for 'Movember'. The Movember Charity is a leading charity which focuses on looking to support and break the stigma surrounding men's mental and physical health. Thank you so much to all of our students and staff who helped support in our cake sales and helped to spread the word. A massive thank you also to Mr Wheel who did a brilliant job at leading on this initiative and helping raise money for such a good cause, all while sporting such a killer moustache! With the support of all involved, Raynes Park High School are excited to announce that we were able to raise over £400 for The Movember Charity!

The PASS Survey

Over the past month, each year group was invited to complete the PASS survey in school. The PASS survey runs every year and provides students with the opportunity to share how they are feeling and emotionally coping. Thank you all for taking part in completing the PASS survey. Please note that identified students will have the chance to have a check in and discuss any concerns with a member of the Pastoral or Inclusion team upon return from the Christmas holidays.

Ms S Yusuf
Senior Mental Health Lead

Safeguarding

Challenge Yourself:

Can you remember all members of the Safeguarding Team? Write them below if so

.....

.....

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.....



.....



Support available over the holidays
Understandably the holidays are an exciting time for many young people, however for some this period of time can be stressful and difficult to get through. We want you to know that you do not have to suffer in silence and that there is support readily available should you be interested. Please see below for a list of helplines and websites to visit for some support over the Christmas break.



We also feature a mental health page on our school website, this can be found under the student welfare tab and features a great selection of resources for both yourself and your parents/carers to access.

Working with local services to support our student's emotional wellbeing
Student wellbeing has continued to be a main focus at Raynes Park High School, with this being supported and promoted by in school interventions supporting issues such as stress, anxiety, loss of motivation and low mood. We have continued to have virtual and face-to-face appointments with a number of external agencies.

Please see below for some more information on the agencies that we work with and the projects which we have been running in school:








Where to get support for you or a friend when you are not in school


For support with mental health & wellbeing



kooth
Free, safe, and anonymous
counselling support for young people
www.kooth.com


www.kooth.com offers online confidential one-to-one support for young people, plus access to online self-help materials.






**TALK TO US
OFF THE RECORD**


In non-covid times they offer face to face counselling in Merton, Croydon & Sutton. At the moment they offer a text-based counselling service or telephone/video call counselling.
www.talkofftherecord.org





childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Childline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. So you can talk to us any time. When you call us on **0800 1111** you'll get through to a counsellor, they're there to listen and support you with anything you'd like to talk about. Or you can have a 1-2-1 counsellor chat online. They can provide help and support for people up to their 19th birthday.




For support in a crisis



NHS
South West London
CAMHS
Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Services

Crisis Line 0203 228 5980
For young people or parents/carers worried about a young person's mental health.
Open: Monday to Friday 5pm – 11pm,
Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays 9am – 11pm.



YOUNG MINDS
Crisis Messenger

Young People can use the Young Minds Crisis Messenger by texting 'YM' to 85258


or



SAMARITANS
Call us free 24/7 on
116 123
samaritans.org

contact Samaritans 24/7 on 116 123

For support in an emergency



In an immediate health or mental health emergency, contact **999** or attend **A&E**

Jigsaw4U deliver two projects in Raynes Park High School, these are the Headlight Project and the Glasshouse Project. For more information, please see: www.jigsaw4u.org.uk/what-we-do/

St Giles Trust work with young people facing disadvantages such as those at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), those with issues surrounding substance misuse, an offending background or involvement in gang's/gang culture.

Spectra support young people with mentoring around safe and healthy relationships and provide counselling for young people who identify as LGBTQIA+

Catch 22 provide counselling to young people who need support with their mental health and wellbeing needs. Catch 22 also deliver Drug & Alcohol prevention work.

Educational Wellbeing Practitioners from the Education Wellbeing Service have provide emotional wellbeing guided self-help work for low level anxiety and low mood.

MyFutures support young people aged 13-19 in Merton either at risk of becoming NEET or who are currently NEET. They offer 1:1 mentoring sessions which can involve emotional support to address barriers to education.

ASSEMBLY OF REMEMBRANCE

On 11th November, the school held its annual Assembly of Remembrance.

On this 104th anniversary of the original Armistice Day, we were privileged to welcome a number of guests, including former staff and students and a representative from the local authority. All Year 7 students attended the event and were informed of the origins and continued significance of the occasion.

Two of our students, Sumitra and Dylan from Year 11, read poems from World War One. Both were praised for the quality of their recitals.

A particularly poignant moment saw Year 7 students represent and recall the names of Raynes Park students killed in World War II. It was sobering and thought-provoking to see a photograph of students in 1939 sitting in the very same assembly hall as ourselves. Among the many who would go on to fight in the war, twenty made the ultimate sacrifice and did not return alive.

We will remember them.

Mr G Collman
Head of Humanities

PAGE 6 | RAYNES PARK HIGH SCHOOL TIMES

RAYNES PARK HIGH SCHOOL TIMES | PAGE 7



SPORTS UPDATE

It gives me immense pleasure to share with you all a summary of our achievements in PE and School Sport in the Autumn Term.

In lessons, our students again have shown incredible desire to be their best and have worked hard coupled with excellent attitudes to learning and respect shown towards each other. Standards of PE kit worn, presentation and organisation have been outstanding and it is important that this is maintained into the New Year and beyond. Students have studied a wide variety of activities this term including Handball, Football, Tag Rugby, Basketball, Table Tennis and Cross-Country to name but a few.

It has been a pleasure to see so many of our students attend our wide range of extra-curricular clubs available here at Raynes Park. These activities include Basketball, Football, Wimbledon Tennis Ball Boy and Girl Training, Dance Club, Table Tennis, and Netball. It has also been positive to see the reintroduction of Rugby and Hockey and we hope these teams will be involved in their first fixtures in the new year. We have also looked to create more competitive opportunities for our students such as entering the Surrey Cup in football.



SPORTS UPDATE

It is great to report that we have been involved in a total of 30 fixtures in this first term and look to continue to add that in the remainder of the year. The good news is that we will continue to have a thriving extra-curricular timetable with more exciting opportunities to be added in 2023!

The students that have attended these sessions have shown considerable dedication, effort and hard work throughout this term which is the ideal preparation for the term ahead, when there will be even more Borough Events and Fixtures. The PE department are enormously proud of the engagement and attitude of all those who have dedicated their time to the different clubs.

Here are some of the stand out moments from Term 1.

Girls Football

Raynes Park Girls Football Team march onwards in the Surrey County Cup!

Further to our success at Ursuline, our U16 Girls Football Team progressed through to the 2nd round of the County Cup after victory at Orleans Park School, Twickenham on Wednesday 9th November.

Being 0-1 down at Half Time, the girls performed admirably in the second half Sophie scored an equalised from the penalty spot to make it 1-1. The score line remained the same after extra time and the match then went to penalties where Raynes Park came out as winners 3-1 thanks to two

superb saves by Annee plus goals from Maya, Lily and Annee.

The Girls now march on into the second round where we will face Riddlesdown School at Home.

Raynes Park High School are Borough Champions once again!

Our U16 Girls Football Team are the pride of the Borough yet again following their impressive performances in the Merton Borough Six a Side Tournament on Friday 4th November at Ursuline High School. Both our Teams topped their groups in the Round Robin stage beating the likes of Ursuline, Ricards Lodge and Harris Wimbledon along the way!

This led to both our Teams qualifying for the 1st v 2nd place playoff Final. As a result, our Raynes Park High School 'A' Team narrowly beat our 'B' Team on Penalties after a fantastic final which finished 1-1. Out of nine Teams at the event, our Girls finished 1st and 2nd which is an amazing achievement and fully deserved. A special mention to Maya who scored five goals!

On the back of our Upper School Girls becoming Borough Champions, Raynes Park High School go into this event with confidence and belief that our Lower School students can hopefully repeat this effort!

The Girls Borough Football League also begins for our Girls in the New Year so we wish them all the best of luck!



Boys Football

The year 11 boys have shown great commitment to being successful this year, even having training session starting at 07:30 before school. This has been fully rewarded as they made an extremely positive start to their Surrey Cup campaign, beating Fullbrook School 8-0! In the first round. This set up an extremely competitive fixture with local derby Glyn Boys school. A huge crowd and tense game that could see neither team take total control saw the game finish at a deadlock (1-1), leading into penalties. The Raynes Park boys kept their cool during the penalties – with gamesmanship being shown by the Glyn team throughout – to score

all five of their penalties (Aksel, Noel, Jonathan, Luca, and Harry). It came down to the last penalty for Glyn. Bobby (GK) was already the player of the match after several important saves during regular time but became the hero with a superb left-handed save of the final penalty. A stampede of Raynes Park High School players, crowd, staff, and parents charged towards Bobby after he saved the penalty! Cheers and screams which were off the Richter scale followed with a crescendo of chants aimed towards the hero of the day!

Cross Country

Following on from the success of the house cross country competition within PE lessons, we were able to select a competitive squad going into the borough competition. This produced our most successful team to date.

We were able to secure 1st and 2nd in the Year 7 boys race with Theo coming 1st and Ronnie 2nd. They have both been selected for Merton in the London Youth Games and qualified for the next round.

Lily and Ebenezer in Year 9 both came second in their race and again secured a place for Merton for the London Youth Games and qualification to the next round.

Louie came second and Jamie came 3rd in the Years 10 and 11 race. Within that race we also had



four students in the top ten, which is an amazing achievement. With Louie (2nd), Jamie (3rd), Ashraf (5th) and Adam (9th), with all top ten students qualifying for the next round of the competition.

Finally, Madison was the only year 11 student from Raynes Park High School who attended and was able to secure a bronze medal!

Netball

At the end of November, the Year 10 and 11 netball teams combined forces to compete in a Merton Borough fixture hosted by Ursuline. A very emotional experience for the Year 11 students, as it was their last borough tournament representing Raynes Park. Skye captained the team with exceptional leadership and motivational skills. The team played fantastically well, playing seven matches. They ended up coming 4th overall, which was a fantastic achievement against some tough opposition.

Basketball

The U14 boys Basketball team got their campaign off to a flying start in the Merton Borough League with a 16-6 win over Harris Wimbledon. The team, captained by David started strong and showed great resilience to lead throughout the game. The U16 team started their campaign with a thrilling game which unfortunately ended in a 73-64 defeat to Harris Merton. The boys showed fantastic determination to dig deep and remain competitive until the end against a well drilled and talented Harris side, but they ultimately came up short. A special mention must be made to Demari, whose talents were on display throughout the game and saw him finish with the highest scoring tally from both teams on the night.

Mr J Sanderson
Head of PE

GIRLS FOOTBALL IN EDUCATION PROGRAMME



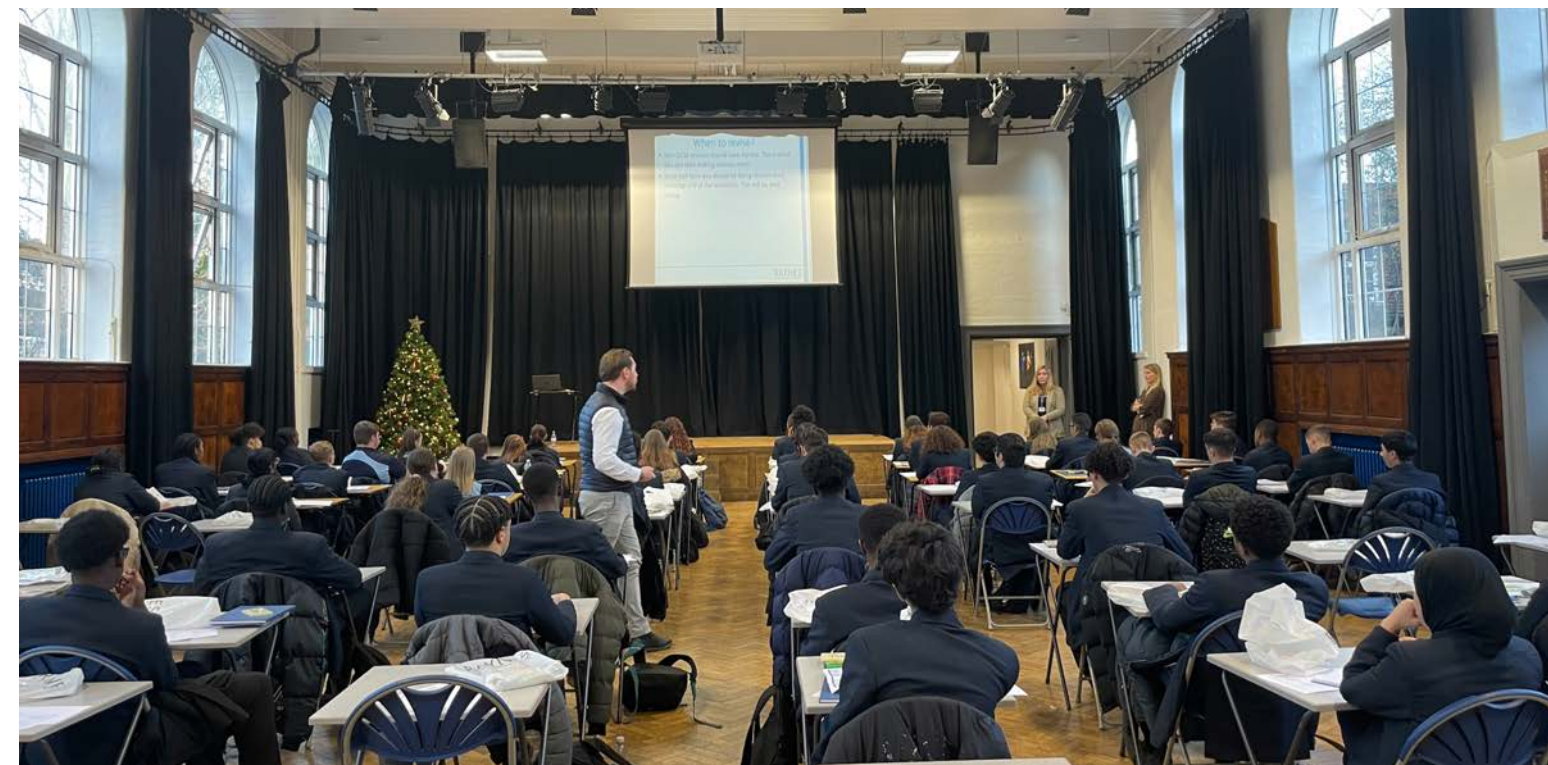
The launch of Girls Football in Education Programme in partnership with Fulham Football Club, mirroring that of the boys that has successfully run for the last six years, is gathering speed and is on track to welcome its first cohort in September 2023.

Students from both Raynes Park High School and from other schools locally, have applied to join our programme and taken part in trials. The first trial was a real success with 24 girls attending at Motspur Park (the training ground of FFC's first team).

The number of students interested has continued to grow and will do so again following the latest round of trials at Motspur Park that will take place during the first week of the Christmas break on 21st December 2022 at 4.30pm.

For more information about the programme please do refer to our website – Raynes Park High School – Fulham Football & Education Programme (rphs.org.uk).

Mr A Hogarth
Deputy Headteacher



YEAR 11 EXAM AND REVISION CONFERENCE

As the exam window quickly approaches us, our Year 11 students have been hard at work in their lessons, in intervention both before and after school, in our daily after school study club and whilst they are at home. They have all taken a responsible and proactive approach to their revision which has been supported by a number of events at school.

The first of these events was our Year 11 Exam Information Evening on the 1st December, hosted by Mr Hogarth and myself. On the night, families and students were welcomed in to the Main Hall where they were given a comprehensive outline on what to expect from the impending Mock Exams and the GCSEs later in the year. Mr Hogarth delivered key information regarding what the exams will look like, i.e. timetable, key dates and events, rules and regulations and systems of operation. A vast number of families are facing the upcoming exams for the first time as parents/carers and this information will prove to be invaluable. I then spoke at length on how to prepare and create successful routines in the build up to the exams and what a healthy approach to these exams will be. Other speakers on the night were Ms Finan, who focused on wellbeing and how to balance our mental and physical health with our studies, Mr Wheel, who outlined key information for the Sixth Form transition process, and a speaker from Merton Borough who discussed the careers interviews the students have been accessing and future events. Towards the end of the event, families were invited to remain in the hall whilst students left in order to write good luck postcards

to be given to students before the Christmas Break. Families were given a pack to take away which included comprehensive break-downs of subject exams, examination boards of control, dietary tips and revision timetables amongst others.

We then hosted a Revision Conference for key students on the 9th December which was hosted by Mr Liyanage and myself. This conference was designed to support students who had been identified as needing some additional support with how to revise for key subject areas. Students were welcomed into the Main Hall during Period 5 and were met with a goody bag filled with stationery to help support independent study over the Christmas break. Students were then treated to talks by myself, focusing on the basics of revision i.e. how to design a timetable, how to utilise revision materials and how to apply these to their existing subject resources. Heads of Core Subjects Ms Scott, Mr Tombs and Ms Bowes also gave a comprehensive break down of subject specific tips and tricks which the students will be able to use when preparing for their Mock Exams after Christmas.

Overall, these two events were a great success and gave both students and families the resources and information to push towards a successful Exam period.

Mr L Jones
Head of Year 11

WINTER CONCERT

I'd like to start by thanking all of the families, staff, governors and former pupils who joined us for our Winter Concert on Wednesday 14th December. This was the first time we've been able to welcome an audience into school for a concert since 2019 and I'm sure everyone will agree that the 80+ students involved absolutely excelled on the evening. I felt incredibly proud to oversee this event which was entirely led by our students, with students taking on technical as well as performance roles. Ella opened the evening as our fantastic compere, introducing a host of music and dance performances from students from across the entire school. Some stand-out performances from the evening were our 'Alex Knapp Music Award' winner Marcel who gave Ed Sheeran a run for his money; Leila, who wowed the audience with her vocal and guitar skills; Madison paid tribute to the late Christine McVie with a beautiful cover of Songbird; our choir of 36 voices, singing songs from musical theatre; and our dancers who both choreographed and performed some of their recent work. With this in mind, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ms Butler who has overseen our dancers this year. I'd also like to thank all of the support staff whose tireless efforts made this event possible. This concert felt really special, filling us all with lots of festive cheer. Most importantly, our students once again shone and the concert has really set the benchmark for next year's event.



Grease is the Word!

Following the success of *Bugsy Malone*, a truly remarkable 317 students from across the school signed up to take part in this year's production of *Grease*! Unfortunately, this sheer volume of interest forced us to take the hard decision to not allow Years 11 and 13 to be involved this year as they focus on their upcoming exams for which we wish them the best of luck. Our wonderful Ms Pope is taking the helm of this production and following her hard work through various rounds of call-backs it gives me great pleasure to say that this year's production is now fully cast. Our students once again amazed and astonished during the auditions, and I'm pleased to say we have unearthed lots of hidden gems from across the school. Now is where the hard work begins as preparations will begin in January. This really

wouldn't be possible without our 'extended performing arts team of committed staff' so as well as our own fantastic team, I must thank Ms McCourt, Mr N Robinson, Ms Bowes, Ms Wistow, Ms Crossfield, Ms Leon and Mr Forrester for all of the work you are continuing to do to give our students this opportunity. I will be in touch soon regarding tickets but please keep 5-6th July 2023 in your diaries and dig out your leather jackets as we will be transported back to the 1950s.

So on behalf of Ms Pope, Ms Hughes-Brown, Ms Butler, Ms McCourt, Mr Burnett and Mr Arnot, I wish you all a very happy festive season and look forward to an exciting 2023.

Mr M Robinson
Head of Performing Arts

WINTER CONCERT



WINTER CONCERT



WINTER CONCERT



STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

If I could summarise my first term in one word, it would be ... busy! From leading Black History Month, to taking on daily duties and assisting the KS3 Christmas Dinner, the Sixth Form Leadership Team have really stepped up to the challenge.

I must give a massive shout out to the Leadership Team for their assistance over the past term. We have been involved in nearly every event that has attracted the community to the school, such as the main school Open Evening as well as Sixth Form Open Evening, in addition to delivering speeches at both events.

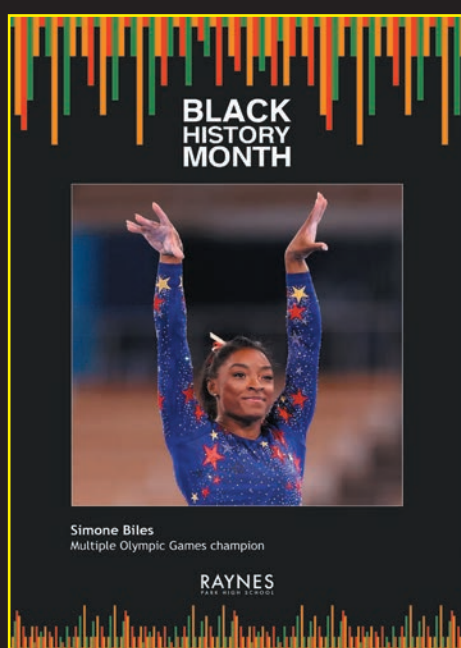
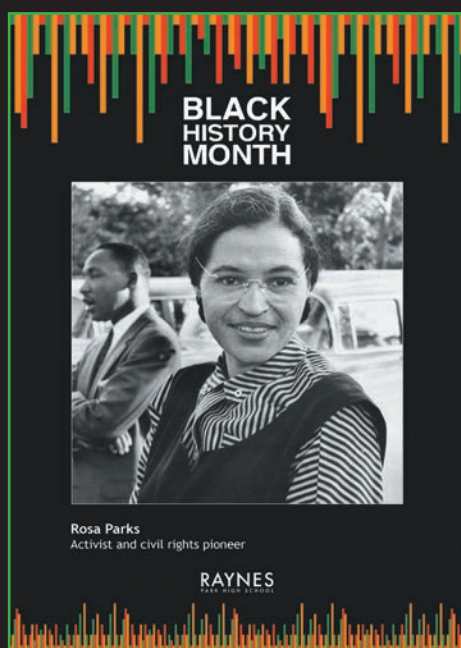
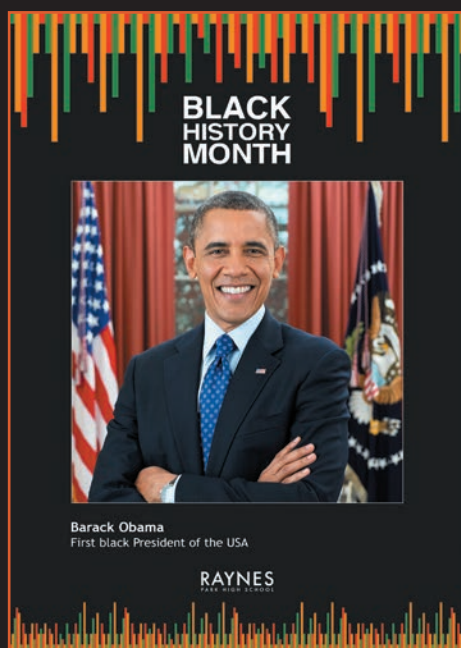
I must admit juggling our own school work and being part of the Leadership Team has been a bit of a challenge at times but, to be honest, it has been very rewarding to see the results of our hard work and we have enjoyed every minute of it.

A particular highlight for me was launching the first Afro-Caribbean Society at Raynes Park High School and attending an author talk delivered by Femi Fadugba. We believe that everyone's culture deserves to be celebrated and look forward to planning future events in school.

2022 has been a very challenging but enriching year. I hope this continues through to 2023.

Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year!

Harry
Head Boy



We were delighted to announce that Black History Month this year was organised by our first ever Raynes Park High School African and Caribbean Society, set up by our Sixth Form students.

Due to their efforts, it was an enormous success with our school being adorned with posters of inspiring Black pioneers from past and present, as well as flags of African and Caribbean countries.

Instead of our usual school bell this month, music by black artists were played through the speakers at lesson changeover. Students have enjoyed listening to the great Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, TLC, Bob Marley and so many more.

Every Wednesday during Black History Month staff and students were treated to meals of African and Caribbean

cuisine in the canteen at lunch. Our wonderful canteen staff made delicious Jollof rice, plantain and Jerk Chicken.

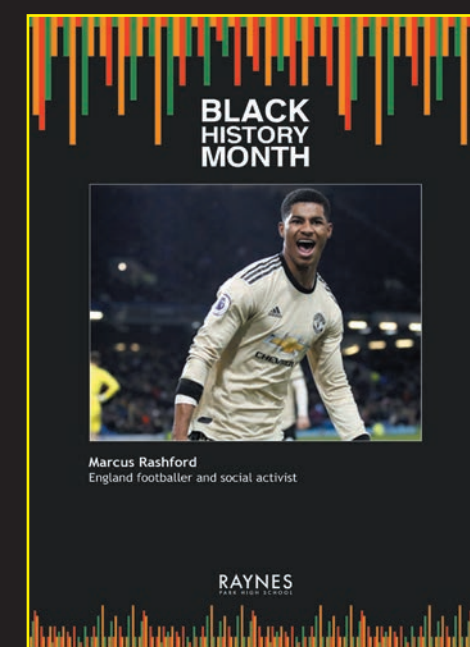
Throughout the month, each year group attended a Black History Month assembly that was coordinated and led by our Sixth Formers. Each assembly was as entertaining as it was educational and discussed important topics of BHM. Students were delighted by our own maths teachers, Mr Ekpoffiong, talents playing the saxophone, playing live music and the important message behind it. He quoted lyrics from the song that go as follows, 'emancipate yourself from mental slavery, non but ourselves can free our minds'. The message he discussed was that 'no matter what we go through, it is up to us to focus on the positives, this is not always easy of course and we may need help to do this, and if so, we should endeavour to seek it and not be embarrassed or ashamed to do so'.

On the final day of the term, students and staff were invited to wear their traditional clothing/dress as a final celebration of Black and Asian culture. It was captivating to see the variety of traditional dress and cultures we have and are so proud of at Raynes Park High School.

The month was an undoubted success and students and staff commented on how colourful and respectfully we acknowledged Black History Month. A special thank you to all our staff and students who participated in the month, and of course our African and Caribbean Society for their hard work to mark this event and to support our vision of promoting equality and diversity.

We look forward to next year for even more celebration.

Mr R Liyanage
Assistant Headteacher







FEMI FADUGBA VISIT



In November Raynes Park High School had an extremely exciting visit from author Femi Fadugba, who we welcomed into school to debut his novel *The Upper World* set in South London, Peckham and Brixton. *The Upper World* includes themes exploring free will, quantum physics, relationships, gang culture and many more and rumour has it that Oscar winning actor, Daniel Kaluuya, is currently working on creating a Netflix movie based on *The Upper World*. We cannot wait to watch it!

Some of our students were lucky enough to study this novel last year and upon hearing of Femi's visit they were really excited to meet him and have shown high levels of interest in this amazing book that champions diversity, representation, and relatability in young adult fiction! Our Geography teacher, Mr Collman also mentioned that last year some of his Year 9s were talking about this book in his lessons and in the corridors – clearly books do have powers!

Femi was joined by 65 of our students including the African Caribbean Society, in our Sixth Form drama room where they got to meet him and participate in a Q and A. Overall, our students where so excited to meet him and engage in conversations asking questions about his book, his inspirations, and experiences, as well as other wider questions about the themes explored in *The Upper World*.

Mr A Ahbab
English Teacher



MACMILLAN BAKE SALE

At the very start of the Autumn Term Raynes Park High School held a Macmillan Coffee Morning Bake sale in the school's playground to fundraise towards our very own Miss Wistow's wider fundraising efforts, which included running the London Marathon.

We raised a substantial amount of money, which went to such a great cause. We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who baked something and a huge congratulations to Miss Wistow for completing the Marathon in 5 hours and 3 minutes!

Ms J Fowler
Assistant Headteacher





DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

In October twenty-four students in total headed to Dorking to complete their qualifying expedition for the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award.

The students applied all of the skills acquired through their in-school training sessions, as well as their practice expedition, and braved some adverse, and very wet weather, to successfully navigate their way around their planned routes over two days. Luckily, the students enjoyed some more favourable weather during the evening of the overnight camping stay, which allowed the students to take part in some games and the whole group

to sit around a camp fire toasting marshmallows. The students all showed excellent teamwork and resilience to complete the expedition, and as always, conducted themselves fantastically well, representing the school in an excellent manner.

Mr J Sanderson
Head of PE





SCIENCE

It has been a very exciting and busy start to the academic year in Science with a lot of practicals, trips and extra-curricular clubs.

Students across key stages have been taking part in so many practicals to enrich their learning. These have been both required practicals from the specifications and those which stretch and challenge our students beyond the curriculum. Year 10 students have just completed a brain dissection to learn more about the nervous system. Grace, a student in Year 10, has said 'it is absolutely amazing to have the opportunity to actually see the brain in front of you' and it has helped with their learning of the functions of each part of the brain. Meanwhile, Year 11 students have been learning all about phototropism in plants by growing cress and doing chemical titrations. Saeed said 'it was so mind-blowing to see the colour change between pink and colourless and it really helped me work on my precision and practical techniques'. The practicals are a real highlight of student learning and they are helping students discover potential future career pathways from horticulturists to pharmaceutical chemists. Hussein said that 'Science is the most interesting subject because it is part of our daily lives and it is going to provide a great start for any job we want in the future. I am going to do Sciences at A-Level and I am really excited'.

Science experiments don't just happen in Science lessons thanks to our amazing KS3 science club which runs every week. It is a tailor-made program of practical investigations and activities that develop practical skills whilst also building curiosity and enthusiasm for science.

We also have a very popular gardening club, for all ages, where we are developing out eco-garden and have grown all sorts of vegetables including courgettes, potatoes and tomatoes. Ramat, a student in Year 8 said 'I like gardening club because I love vegetables. My favourite part was growing the radishes and taking them home!' This year, we are hoping to develop the garden further and build a pond!

We also have two extra-curricular clubs for Sixth Form Science students: STEM Leaders and Science super-curricular club. Both clubs are designed to enable students to develop their learning beyond the specification whilst gaining so many skills that will prepare them for university and beyond. So far, students have completed literature reviews and are currently creating presentations – all of which are supported by scientific literature. Topics for



these activities have been so varied, ranging from microplastics to targeted gene therapy.

Our Year 13 A-Level and BTEC Applied Science students have been busy preparing for their UCAS university applications with students applying to so many different courses from Natural Sciences and Biochemistry to Engineering and Sports Science. They have been able to use so many examples of super-curricular activities from Raynes Park High School to really showcase their love for learning Science including museum trips, guest speakers and competitions.

At the start of this year, A-Level Biology students were taken on a residential trip to Minehead alongside A-Level Geography students. The students had the most amazing time and worked really hard. There was so much love for learning their subject, carrying out practical investigations and exploring different environments, it was so wonderful to see. The students conducted themselves impeccably and were an excellent representation of Raynes Park High School at all times. Esther said 'It was the best trip I ever went on. I learned so much outside of the classroom and bonded with my classmates. My personal highlight was finding the most amazing ammonite fossil on the beach'.

As well as learning so much Biology, they also learned some invaluable life skills including: teamwork, resilience (working in the rain and wind with smiles on their faces!), independence and communication. Ajani said 'I learned how to cook for lots of people and feel like it prepared me for university in so many ways beyond my academic studies'.

There are so many exciting events booked in the calendar in the build up to Christmas including: a science lecture event at the Science Museum by Nobel scientists for A-Level Biology students and a behind-the-scenes visit to a local brewery to learn all about the applications of biochemistry in industry for A-Level Chemistry students. We really hope that these experiences will enable students to really understand the importance of their learning and inspire them to pursue further education and careers in Science. Esther, a Year 13 A-Level Biology and Chemistry student has said 'I am really excited to be able to see so many different ways that science is used in the world around us and I can't wait to one day be working in it'.

Ms M Bowes
Head of Science





ASPIRATIONS PROJECT



Two years after the COVID-19 lockdown, the Aspirations Project run by King's College School in Wimbledon has continued to partner with local schools. The Science Department at Raynes Park High School has been a regular participant to this project.

The Aspirations Project is a series of Science workshops aimed to develop the skills of more-able students in STEM subjects. These workshops provide our young people an opportunity to expand and increase their knowledge in Science. The sessions were held in the Science Building at King's College School, Wimbledon, being facilitated and taught by their GCSE and Sixth Form students and overseen by Miss Duncombe and Miss Yang, two of their Science teachers.

Our selected Year 8 students have this to say about their experience in attending the workshops:

'I have really enjoyed the Kings College Workshops. My favourite experiment was when we did the egg dropping and had to make parachutes to prevent them from breaking. I found it interesting how we built speakers using wires and electrical currents. I would definitely recommend doing the workshops as it is good fun and you learn a lot from it.' **Morgan**

'I really enjoyed going to King's College this term and I believe it was a great experience to learn something new in Science. The different experiments were wonderful like the egg drop, sound waves, chemical reactions and more.' **Sobia**

'Thank you for the King's College experience. I enjoyed the experiments especially the egg drop. We learnt how to protect an egg from breaking – we attached newspaper padding and a parachute to the egg.' **Nabil**

'I believe this was an amazing idea from King's College, to provide enhanced learning from more knowledgeable students preparing them for future lessons. I personally enjoyed this and found it extremely pleasing also to meet up with other students from King's and other schools. They were very welcoming and it is something to remember.' **Samir**

'I really enjoyed our weekly trips to King's College. I learnt so much from the experiments we did. The experiments were such a fun way to learn Science. My favourite experiment was the dropping of the egg and designing the rockets. I would like to thank all the teachers and students who taught us in such an enjoyable way. Thank you so much for this opportunity, it was such an amazing experience.' **Anna**

'I've really enjoyed the King's College Aspiration Course throughout my time there. It was fun seeing all the amazing experiments and participating in group activities with their kind and wonderful teachers and students. I would visit there again if I could in the future as it will be a memorable experience for me.' **Anthony**

'I think the experience was really cool and the experiments were super fun. I especially enjoyed the egg drop as my group actually succeeded in making the parachute and the egg did not break.' **Giara**

'I found the King's College trips very fun and exciting. The experiments were interesting as well as entertaining. I got to learn more about Chemistry and Physics. Even though the sessions were rather short the experience was really nice to have every Friday afternoon.' **Anna**

'I have really enjoyed my time at King's College and my favourite was the egg crack experiment. This experience has been great fun and very educational. Thank you so much.' **Amelie**

'I enjoyed my experience at King's College. My personal favourite experiment was the egg drop although the others were fun as well. I did learn new things like the word 'chemiluminescence' and overall it was very enjoyable.' **Dan**

'I enjoyed King's College a lot because when we first came they greeted us nicely and were always helpful – if I or my friends were stuck, they had great explanations on the topic so it made it easier for us to learn. I also liked the new science vocabulary, they taught some words whose meaning I did not know of or other scientific words that could help me in the future.' **Aaron**

'I would like to commend the Year 8 students who were at their utmost exceptional behaviour throughout the five-week course – they are truly excellent school ambassadors for Raynes Park High School.' **Mr Quitasol**



WARHAMMER

COMES TO RAYNES PARK HIGH SCHOOL

The Art & Design department is excited to announce its involvement with the Warhammer Alliance Team.

The Warhammer team gifted the school with a range of starter box sets that includes everything needed to develop and create models to complete in the Warhammer national programme. The programme was designed to support young people to improve their engineering, arts and maths skills. It involves a range of creative activities that includes; designing, modelling, and painting. Students can also develop their literacy skills by creating stories for campaigns that teams of players can battle against.

In preparation to complete in the new year the design students at Raynes Park High School have used the 3D printers to make scenery and create custom models. They have used their awareness of colour theory to create eye-catching concept designs for their custom models which will be later constructed and painted. It is clear that the student's engagement in design and making has increased and these transferable skills have advanced the student's outcomes in lessons. The cognitive demands of the

Warhammer hobby can in many ways also be deemed similar to those of chess. Improvement in maths skills and awareness of shape and form has also been evident.

The fun part is playing the game and making the models and as the students' progress with the programme throughout the year they will liaise with the Warhammer shop in Kingston to compete in battles with their creations. Outstanding models created by the students will also be showcased at the end of the year in the 2023 Art & Design exhibition.

If you would like your child to be involved in the new Warhammer extra curriculum club please contact Mr Harris, Head of the Art & Design Faculty, (rharris@raynespark.merton.sch.uk) to sign up.

Mr R Harris
Head of Art & Design



NEWSOMS

MILTONS

GIBBS

HALLIWELLS

HOUSE UPDATES

The start of the academic year saw a change in leadership of the House system, with four of the PE staff members stepping into the roles of House Leaders. Mr Sanderson (Newsoms) Miss McCourt (Miltons) Mr Bishop (Halliwells) and Mr Prichard (Gibbs). The first House competition took part in September, where all students from Years 7-11 took part in a House Cross Country competition. The students showed fantastic effort to complete the 2 kilometre course and earn points for their teams. The eventual winners of the event were Miltons, with all three of the other Houses tying for joint second place. Congratulations to the students who qualified to represent Raynes Park High School at the Merton Borough competition based on their performance in this event, and in particular, to those who then went on to gain a medal in this event.

October saw the students take part in the second House event of the year; House Benchball. All students across the year groups participated in the event during their PE lessons, and showed amazing effort, resilience, and great team spirit during the week. Halliwells took the overall win, with Newsoms finishing in second place. Gibbs came in third place, and Miltons finished fourth.

During November all students took part in their first House assemblies of the academic year. The students demonstrated all of the school values fantastically well, and the assemblies provided the opportunity for us to celebrate the events of the first term, as well as those of individual students. The current House standings at the end of Term 1 are shown below:

MILTONS	NEWSOMS	GIBBS	HALLIWELLS
1 st	2 nd		4 th



FOLLOW RPHS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

If you would like to hear about updates, see pictures and videos of special events and day to day life at Raynes Park High School, make sure you are following us on our social media platforms.

Scan the QR codes below with your camera phone or find us at @officialrphs on Twitter and Instagram and Raynes Park High School and Sixth Form on Facebook!



.....Do you shop online?

The school can get a donation when you do, for free!

Raynes Park High School Charitable Trust raises funds to support our students. The Trust has funded several projects including funding equipment for the Duke of Edinburgh Award as well as small grants to individual students. The trustees are keen to do more and need funds to do so.

One way you can donate to the Trust without it costing you anything is to shop online via 'easyfundraising' which turns your everyday online shopping into free donations for the school. There are over 3600 retailers including many big names such as Amazon, M&S, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Tesco, John Lewis, Ebay and Argos and many specialist retailers.

So next time you want to do some online shopping please go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs and click 'support this cause' then register for easyfundraising and find the retailer you want. Once you have chosen your retailer you will go to their website as normal to make your purchase. The retailers then make a small donation to the Trust. The size of the donation varies with the retailer – but every little helps!

It will cost you nothing but will help the school. You will get reminders once registered with easyfundraising.

Please give it a try!



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Support this cause

1

Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs click 'support this cause' and register

2

Choose your retailer and shop as normal

3

Retailers will make a small donation to the Trust at no extra cost to you

NEWS FROM THE Governors

The Governors would like to congratulate Miss Taylor, her Senior Leadership Team, all the teaching and support staff, and the wonderful Raynes Park High School students for an excellent Autumn Term.

Two strategic visits have taken place this term. The first visit focused on the Access Centre and Whole School Literacy and the second looking at Year 7 transition and the school's EAL provision. Governors were delighted with the clear strategic plans in place across these areas. The students spoken to across both visits were honest, eloquent and supported everything presented by the staff at the school to Governors. The students' abilities to speak about their school spoke volumes about how Raynes Park High School develops young people into leaders.

Governors were pleased with the plans to improve whole school literacy, and the creative ways in which this has been implemented. In particular, the focus on encouraging students to read through Book Before Bed, STAR Reader and Accelerated Reader shows the school's commitment to improve literacy levels by trying to embed a love of reading. Additionally, the Access Centre continues to be such an important resource for students that use it, and really is fantastic at integrating students into mainstream lessons.

The Year 7 transition programme is very well designed and thought out. The programme shows the schools' commitment to ensuring that students who join the school quickly build relationships and become a part of the Raynes Park family. Finally, the EAL department, although small, works tirelessly to support students' standards of English and the success stories of young people who have started off life at school with minimal levels of English and achieved fantastic GCSE and A-Level results is truly inspiring.

The Governors would like to thank all of the staff involved in planning the strategic visits, the teachers and support staff who we spoke to and visited lessons, and of course the brilliant students.

Congratulations to all students who achieved excellently in their GCSE and A-Level results in the Summer. The Governors would like to extend a thank you to all of the staff who worked so hard to get their students to pass their public examinations.

The Governors are pleased to share that there is a healthy budget this academic year and all school spend will be carefully spent on maximising the experiences and opportunities of students at the school.

Governors welcomed Will Bourke as our most recent co-opted governor. Will joins us from the Department for Education, with experience as a Deputy Headteacher within a secondary school. We would like to thank Chris Hopkins for his service to the school as he stands down as parent governor. We look forward to welcoming three new parent governors over the next few weeks.


We wish all the staff, students and their families a wonderful Christmas break. Governors are excited to see the school grow from strength to strength in the new year.




Dean Murphy
Vice Chair

Find out more about the work of our School Governors here:
www.rphs.org.uk/31/governors

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Do you have a story you'd like to share in our next newsletter?

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