



INSPIRING LEARNING; ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Raynes Park High School teachers graduate from their MA at St. Mary's University

Raynes Park High School staff have been leading by example and we are thrilled to share photographs from Mr Mba, Mr Barnicott and Ms Mistry's graduation ceremony at St. Mary's. We are incredibly proud of our staff for pursuing excellent professional development alongside their tremendous dedication to teaching their students at RPHS. St. Mary's University has a long tradition of excellence in teacher education, and their MA in Education "Leading Innovation and Change" is a well-established course focused on developing evidence-based, innovative educational practice. St Mary's congratulated our staff on their achievement and wished them the best of luck in their careers with RPHS.

"This Masters programme has been a fantastic opportunity for teachers to practice what they preach," said Assistant Headteacher, Mr Mba. "We've had an opportunity to continue our lifelong learning and are very pleased to have completed our studies. We explored a range of important topics from growth mindset to how to accelerate learning for all students. We would highly recommend anyone interested in developing their own professional learning to find out more about the Masters at St. Mary's. We hope that what we have learnt will have a positive impact on our young people, the school and the wider community."

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STUDENTS ELECTED TO MERTON YOUTH PARLIAMENT

We are thrilled to announce that Year 9 students Jetta and Summer have been elected to the Merton Youth Parliament. The MYP is a forum for young people aged 11 – 19 years and up to 25 years for Special Needs.

It ensures that young people in Merton are listened to and consulted on issues to do with young people, one of the largest politically under-represented groups. The parliament has a say on improving education, leisure, open spaces and transport to make Merton a better place for young people.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On International Women's Day this term, the boys of 11EAL surprised our 11EAL ladies (including tutors) with a bunch of flowers each. We were told that in Russia it is traditional on International Women's Day to gift flowers to mothers, sisters, daughters, co-workers and peers. We're always so proud to hear about our students' small acts of kindness!



CHALLENGE WEEK

This term's Challenge Week was bigger and better than ever. As always, our teachers pulled out all the stops to create outstanding lessons, and our students tackled each challenge with enthusiasm and patience. "Our third Challenge Week was absolutely amazing," says Assistant Headteacher, Mr Mba. "From poems about the periodic table in Science to Guinness World Record attempts, students stretched themselves, expanded their minds and developed their skills."

At the end of the week one Year 8 Languages class was seen taking on an A-Level grade challenge in French, and succeeding! Again, this just shows what phenomenal things our students can achieve. Mr Mba is already busy planning how we can possibly beat this term's Challenge Week, and says "There are even more fantastic lessons to come. We look forward to Challenge Week Four, coming soon to a school near you."





WORLD BOOK DAY

Raynes Park High School's library was packed with students dressed as literary characters to celebrate World Book Day. There were so many activities to get involved in, including Bookmark Making and the Book Board of Evidence. Raynes Park's Doctors of Poetry were ready to hear students' problems and suggest a suitable poem to cure their complaint. The Blind Date with a Book stall was extremely popular, with books covered in wrapping paper and a short synopsis on the front; you weren't able to judge a book by its cover! The book design for the self-published novella which five of our Year 10s have recently written was unveiled, and we can't wait to be able to buy a copy for ourselves. Many RPHS staff dressed up as well, with the Science Department impressing everyone with their DIY Mr. Men & Little Miss costumes. William Shakespeare himself (!) made an appearance, and had students performing excerpts from his plays in exchange for chocolate gold coins.

A fantastic day was had by all, and a big 'thank you' must go to the staff and students involved in making World Book Day a success. Ms Smith, our school librarian deserves special recognition for successfully organising such a memorable day.





SILVER MEDAL FOR RPHS DANCE

Year 8 to 11 dance students travelled to the Copperbox Arena on Wednesday 8th March to represent the London Borough of Merton in the London Youth Games. Our dance troupe was competing against twenty-three schools, in the KS4 mixed category. The students performed a dance piece inspired by the Wizard of Oz, with each dancer taking on a character with a different style of dance.

Raynes Park High School closed the show with an excellent, energetic performance which got the crowd on their feet. Following an agonising deliberation, the results were announced. We are thrilled to say that Raynes Park came an

impressive 2nd, winning the silver medal. This means that Raynes Park High School came 2nd out of the twenty-three schools within London.

When speaking to the judge, Turbo from Got to Dance stated 'I would pay money to come and see your performance' and that the troupe reminded him of the professional company 'Zonation'. He also praised Adriana Linton (Year 11) who played Dorothy, saying that she should be 'on the big screen'. We had an amazing day with an excellent outcome - congratulations to all the dancers; Shemiah, Naseema, Cachel, Deborah, Alex, Adriana and Beyoncé.



“NOT ALL HEROES WEAR CAPES”



To raise money for Comic Relief and the school defibrillator fund, RPHS staff donned superhero costumes and posed for 'superhero selfies' in exchange for donations. There were a fantastic range of costumes including Iron Man, Harley Quinn, Powerpuff Girls and Buffy the Vampire Slayer. It was comforting to see the number of superheroes outnumbering the super-villain costumes four-to-one! As requested by many students, half of the money raised on Friday will go to Comic Relief, with the other half going towards purchasing defibrillators for the school site in memory of Ms Dexter. Ms Holland would like to say a big thank you to everyone who got involved and says that she “was genuinely moved by the support shown.” Keep an eye on our Twitter and website to find out how much was raised!



£1500 WON FOR LOCAL CHARITIES



Year 9 students took part in the First Give Final this term, a rewarding project designed to help young people give their time and talent to improve their community. Finalists from each tutor group competed to win £1000 for their chosen local charities, which involved planning and delivering a presentation after researching social issues which most affected their locality.

Students Salome and Laxmini won £250 towards STEM 4 (www.stem4.org.uk), a teenage mental health charity focused on tackling commonly occurring mental health problems at an early age. Merton Talking Newspaper (www.mtn.org.uk) was awarded £250 thanks to the efforts of students Gagan, Harry, Aran and Kris. This money will go towards making local news accessible to visually impaired and blind residents

in Merton. The top prize of £1000 was awarded to Izzy, Emily and Wiktor, whose donation will go to Faith in Action, a Merton charity offering support and advice to the homeless and vulnerably housed (www.mertonfaithinaction.org).

Councillor Brenda Fraser was in attendance and congratulated the finalists on their successes, praising them for the "great work from the students of Raynes Park High School". We were proud to see our students making the most of this opportunity, and are incredibly impressed with the professionalism and commitment shown by all of the Raynes Park finalists. Congratulations to all finalists that took part and to First Give for providing the resources and expertise to make this scheme possible.



STAFF VS. STUDENTS FOOTBALL MATCH

To raise money for the Aimee Dexter Fund for purchasing a school defibrillator, the Access Centre & SEND students played a football match against the staff on Friday afternoon. The weather was beautiful, the competition was fierce and everyone had lots of fun, with staff members and students cheering their support. The game was very close, but the staff came out on top, therefore, there will be a rematch during the Summer term.



RED NOSE DAY BAKE SALE



RPHS students produced a huge array of Red Nose Day themed bakes for charity this term. We're always so impressed with how proactive our students are when it comes to raising money for charity. Well done all!



V&A CHILDHOOD MUSEUM

Sociology Sixth Formers visited the V&A this term to investigate childhood through the ages. The V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green is the largest institution of its kind in the world. We were given a fantastic, illustrated workshop and hands-on session exploring The Social Construction of Childhood from 14th Century to present. We then explored consumerism and gender stereotypes in regards to childhood toys and toy marketing, a very current topic of discussion. The visit really helped us to put what the Sixth Formers have learned so far in Sociology into practice.



INTERMEDIATE MATHS CHALLENGE

Forty of our most able Mathematicians from Years 9 - 11 sat the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge this term. The IMC is a lively, intriguing multiple choice question paper which is designed to encourage and develop an interest in problem solving. Our students did fantastically achieving 14 bronze, 8 silver and 1 gold certificate overall.

Special mentions should go to Viktor for achieving the gold certificate and the highest in Year 11, Tibi for achieving the highest in Year 10 and a super special mention should go to Alex in Year 9 who did so well he has qualified for the next round, the Grey Kangaroo! Well done to all who took part this year.

NEWS FROM THE *Governors*



The Governors have had a busy term. Our main focus has been on the continuing drive to improve the school's academic results still further – a task made more

complicated by the Government's new Progress 8 and Achievement 8 measures, which both tend to decrease transparency. We are monitoring pupils' progress closely, and especially with respect to particular groups – our Gifted and Able students, our SEND students, and those for whom we receive Pupil Premium funds. As we approach the final term before GCSE and A-level examinations, we know good progress is being made.

We have been especially pleased with the new Literacy initiative, which is already showing improved reading levels among students at Key Stages 3 and 4 – and big increases in the numbers of books borrowed from our Library!

The school budget has been another focus, and we are pleased that this is on course to be brought in on target. We have commented on the Government's much-publicised proposed New Funding Formula. This looks set to benefit RPHS

and will go some way to offset the increased costs we are facing on a number of fronts.

We held two Strategic Visits to the school during the term. The first focused on Modern Foreign Languages and Personal, Social and Health Education, while the second concerned the important topic of how the school engages with students' parents

We are delighted to see the school's sports strategy advancing. There are some important initiatives now in prospect, and I look forward to sharing more information with you in the future.

Governors have also been pleased to note the renaissance of our Parent Teachers Association, to which a number of Parent Governors have contributed, and our Parents Forum. Our thanks to Assistant Headteacher Ms Lach for her initiative here.

Finally, we have continued our discussions with the London Borough of Merton on forging close links with other local schools. These can only benefit both those schools and RPHS itself.

MICHAEL ROSS
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

JIM CARRINGTON VISITS RPHS



Jim Carrington, author of a number of young adult fiction novels, visited our Year 7 and 8 students this term. His novels, *Inside My Head*, *In The Bag*, *Drive By*, and most recently, *Boy 23* explore themes such as bullying, anti-social behaviour, mental health issues, identity and relationships. He was very complimentary about how eager our students were to participate in the workshops and share ideas. They discussed where authors get their ideas from, tried out techniques for getting started in creative writing, invented book characters, and wrote 100 word stories for themselves.



Alumni News



CORRINE HALL *Gold Medalist*

Corrine Hall, MBE, now has another three Gold medals to add to her growing collection after competing in the UCI Para-cycling Track World Championships, piloting Sophie Thornhill. Together, this new pairing won three world titles in Los Angeles, taking home Gold in the tandem pursuit, kilo and sprint. Speaking with Estrella Bikes, Corrine said that she never expected to take home three Golds at the competition in LA, "Especially as we only had seven weeks notice and British Cycling decided to mix the tandem pairing up for these world championships, so to come away with three World titles was unbelievable."

In 2016, Corrine won Gold and Bronze piloting Lora Turnham at the Paralympic Games in Rio. She was also recognised on the 2017 New Year's Honors List, being awarded an MBE for her services to athletics. (Photo credit @CorrineHall)

Do you have alumni news which you think we should know about? Please e-mail
rburnham@raynespark.merton.sch.uk



HOUSE DODGEBALL RESULTS

Well done to all the students who got involved in the House Dodgeball competition and represented their house. The winners are as follows;

Monday Year 7: **GIBBS**

Tuesday Year 8: **NEWSOMS**

Wednesday Year 9: **MILTONS**

Thursday Year 10: **NEWSOMS**

Overall Winner:
MILTONS



PANCAKE PARTY

"This school and their pupils have done us proud today. All monies kindly raised will be used to support people affected by Cardiomyopathy. Thank you Raynes Park, you're the best. We really appreciate your support."

- CARDIOMYOPATHY UK



Our annual Pancake Party to support Cardiomyopathy UK was this term and we were blown away by the number of students who volunteered to help. Over a hundred pancakes were prepared by our students, and it was great to see so many people flocking to the DT Building during lunchtime to purchase delicious pancakes and take part in our pancake flipping competition. The pancake flipping competition had an impressive final leader board, and Mr Myton beat last year's record with 102 flips in a minute. Mr Hatch came a close second with 87. Commiserations to Mr Saunders, Mr Ngyuen and Ms Lawner - you made a valiant effort, but it wasn't quite enough to push Mr Myton off his top spot! Thank you so much to Ms Murray and other staff who helped to organise such a fantastic event, and to the numerous students who gave their time to this fantastic cause.



YEAR 9 CAREERS DAY



On Friday 10th March, Year 9 took part in their Careers Day. The focus was on researching their GCSE options and linking it to their future career ideas. The students also had an opportunity to develop their interview skills with the help of Graham Vick from Learning Performance and learned about the importance of body language in making a good impression. Richard and Chandni from CragRats delivered an enterprise and personal branding session and had the following comments:

"Lovely day today at Raynes Park. It's always a pleasure to return to this school. Huge thanks to all the students who were brilliant in all sessions. They contributed hugely in the discussions and listened attentively throughout. The staff as always were very supportive. Looking forward to next time."

"Fabulous day at Raynes Park! The students were so engaged and I loved their enthusiasm in the task of building the paper towers. The way they approached working in groups and using their STEM skills was very impressive. The teamwork was some of the best I've seen so well done!"

Finally, Ms Brake led a session encouraging the students to think ahead to what they hope to have achieved by the time they are 25 and to plan how they will achieve this by setting personal goals along the way. Ms Brake was very impressed with the range of career goals in Year 9 and wishes the year group the best of luck as they continue on their career journey.



DANISH STUDENTS VISIT RPHS

Students from Horsens, Denmark visited us this term to talk with our students and experience life in an English school. They took part in a 'speed dating' activity which got the students from both schools chatting about the differences between their day-to-day life at secondary school. "It was a hugely successful visit and the students (and the Danish teachers) were extremely impressed with all aspects of our school." Says Mr Duus, "We all have an open invitation to visit their school in Horsens, Denmark!"



CRACKING EASTER BAKE OFF

Sodexo 'Social Kitchen' held an Easter Bake off this week, and we were very impressed with the entries. Well done to Mia (8MZ), Riley (8MX) and Amber (8H) who baked the winning cupcakes. We hope you enjoy your vouchers!



WEST BARNES LIBRARY VISITS

A big "thank you" to West Barnes Library for accommodating so many of our students this term and setting them all up with library cards. We were treated to some hands-on investigative activities and were introduced to their current reading competition. We hope that these visits will encourage our students to spend even more time in their local Merton libraries.



Six Year 10 students had an exciting visit to the Southbank Centre this term to perform in the Clore Ballroom in collaboration with Rambert Dance Company. They performed with schools across the London Borough of Merton. The students have participated in workshops since the start of January with a Rambert professional dancer to create a piece based around their GCSE set work *A Linha Curva*. The performance was a great success, and students performed with amazing energy and focus. Big congratulations to our talented Year 10 GCSE dancers.

Later in the term, students were also able to visit and experience a day at Rambert, the oldest dance company in England. They were allowed to look through the archives, exploring different choreographers both past and present. They then got to participate in a workshop with a professional dancer and they learnt repertoire from Christopher Bruce's work; *Swansong* and *Ghost Dances*. A very enjoyable and inspiring experience!

RAMBERT DANCE COMPANY



Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

Katarina, Nomaan and Sophia in Year 10 attended the Merton Regional Final of the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge on 28th March. Jack Petchey's "Speak Out" Challenge is the world's biggest youth speaking event. With funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation, communication skills training is delivered by Speakers Trust – the UK's leading public speaking charity. Mr Mba, who attended the evening, was very impressed with our students' performances; "They were excellent ambassadors for our school." He says. "Katarina took second place in the Regional Final, a fantastic accomplishment and well-earned. These students deserve to be congratulated and commended for their hard work and commitment in preparing for this event."



WORK EXPERIENCE



Dons fan Tom had an amazing week with AFC Wimbledon, meeting 'Bayzo' and Lyle Taylor



Students had placements in a range of exciting jobs this term. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing the photographs from work experience and there was a great deal of generous feedback from the students' mentors. Many of the mentors mentioned how well students settled in and that they were impressed with RPHS students' work ethic and enthusiasm



Olivia worked in Animal Welfare



Hamzah helped with the Food Festival at Wimbledon Primary School



Work Experience at Wimbledon Theatre

Waitrose Community Matters

We support good causes.
You decide who gets what.



Waitrose has received a nomination for Raynes Park High School to be one of their chosen projects for Community Matters in the month of April. Community Matters is a scheme where each Waitrose Branch is given a £1000-a-month to split between 3 local good causes or charities. Customers choose what percentage of the money they would like each charity to receive.

From 1st April customers will be able to vote for Raynes Park High School by putting a token in our box. At the end of

the month RPHS will be contacted to let us know how much money customers have chosen to donate to us. We are delighted to have been nominated, and our thanks must go out to the anonymous member of the public who put us forward!

So, if you're shopping in Waitrose during the month of April, please consider dropping one of your green chips into our box so we can put it towards improving your school community.



BUSHTUCKER TRIALS

Teachers at RPHS proved that they would do almost anything for charity on Red Nose Day as they faced a gruelling seven rounds of disgusting, hilarious and occasionally impossible challenges. It began with challenges involving doughnuts, smarties and marshmallows, but the challenges quickly became much more unpleasant! The losing teacher of each round was eliminated, until only Mr Arnott, Mr Barnes and Ms Bartle remained. Mr Arnott did not finish eating his insects in time, so it was Mr Barnes and Ms Bartle in the final. The final challenge had teachers drinking a tankard of 'jungle slime', and although Ms Bartle gave a valiant effort, it was Mr Barnes who was crowned king of the jungle.





YEAR 7 NETBALL UNBEATEN

Our Year 7 Netball team did an admirable job winning the Wimbledon High School tournament this term - unbeaten in 5 games! Congratulations, we're so pleased to see all your hard work pay off.



‘DIGITAL RANGERS’ VISIT RPHS

Many students volunteered this term to teach our visiting ‘Digital Rangers’ how to use their mobiles and how to set up an e-mail address. We also practiced printing and making labels. “I’ve not sent a text to my daughter before,” said one visitor. “She’ll never believe it’s me!” One visitor had owned her

Kindle for two years but had been unable to set it up with any books - our students demonstrated how to download her books from the Cloud and she was thrilled to now know how to use it. Our students were patient, knowledgeable teachers and were a credit to our school.

CONTACT US:

☎ 020 8946 4112

🐦 @officialRPHS

✉ @school@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

REPORT AN ABSENCE:

☎ 020 8946 4112

or

✉ @absence@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

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