



Ashley College Gazette

Autumn 2021 Edition

Dear Parents and Carers,

Message from the Headteacher

During this challenging time, Autumn term has been a great start to the academic year for Ashley College students. It has been amazing to see how our staff and parents found ways to overcome personal anxieties and fears in order to support each other and the children.

We have tried to return to some form of normality and have all our students and staff back in school. During the term we have continued to use the hybrid model of teaching and learning by using online platforms such as Google Classrooms to ensure our students are able to adapt quickly if they or a teacher needed to work from home. I am pleased to report we did not have to implement this plan during this term.

We have also encouraged trips and off site learning to ensure our students stay resilient and gain wider cultural and life experiences.

The term has now come to an end and I am sure you are all looking forward to a restful Christmas break. I wish you and your families a restful and peaceful break over the Christmas period and all the best for a safe and prosperous new year. During the holiday we ask for your continued support by ensuring students focus on wellbeing and you follow appropriate guidelines to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Covid 19 testing arrangements for the return to school in January

We ask that you and your children continue to monitor COVID by taking the Lateral Flow Tests during the Christmas holiday. On return after Christmas we will continue to test twice weekly in school. If you do get a positive test during the holiday, please inform us via: admin@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk. We will continue to test students twice weekly on site in January.

Spring Term

School reopens for students on **Wednesday 5th January** and we have the Spring parents evening/afternoon on Wednesday 12th January from 2.30pm

As usual this newsletter contains articles about events that took place during the Autumn term and other information including where to seek support and wellbeing activities. It has been a long and busy term, we are all looking forward to the Christmas break, our staff team and I would like to wish you all a very happy, restful Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Ranjna Shiyani

Cheesy Muffin Bake Off!

Our students love their home cooking lessons, learning a range of cooking skills and delicious recipes. Our HLTA, Corinne, decided to run a Bake Off competition this term and our student took up the challenge with excitement and enthusiasm.

Each student was given the same ingredients hidden under a cloth and they each had 1 hour 15 minutes to make a dish of their choice. Not only did the final dishes smell and look delicious they tasted amazing, which made judg-



ing very difficult for the staff.

The staff '*deliberated, cogitated and digested*' (Lloyd Grossman) before reaching their decision on the winner, - Niah Ashman.

Anne-Marie Mika



New Library Books

This term, we purchased a range of stimulating and exciting books for the Library which reflect the diversity within our society. The students have been very keen to try out these new books which explore a wide range of themes and include both fiction and non-fiction texts.

These are just some of the new titles:

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe; *If Beale Street Could Talk* by James Baldwin; *Homecoming: Voices of the Windrush Generation* by Colin Grant; *Black and British: A short, essential history* by David Olusoga; *Don't Touch My Hair* by Emma Dabiri; *A Pocketful of Stars* by Aisha Bushby and *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas.

Caroline O' Gara



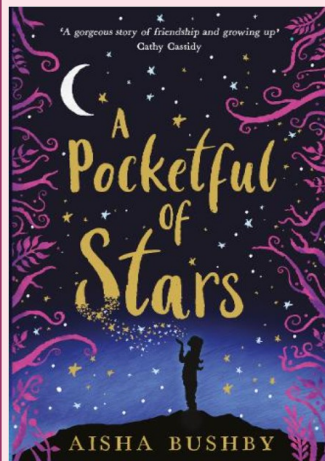
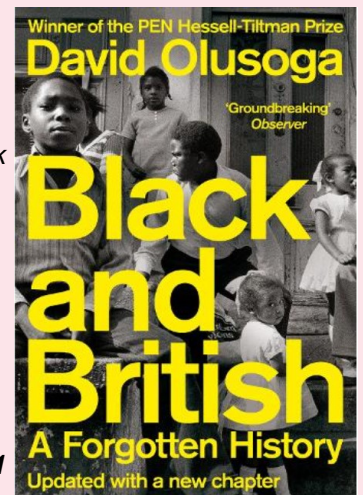
Book reviews by the students:

Name of book: 'Black and British'

Author: David Olusoga

I chose to read the book 'Black and British' by David Olusoga. I was drawn to this book because I had heard of the author and his work before through his many appearances on the BBC. Knowing a small bit about what the book was about really made me feel that this book really related to me, as I have lived in the UK all my life but I am from Black Caribbean heritage. This book really opens your eyes to the amazing achievements that Black people have succeeded in that we would never otherwise know or think about. I don't really like reading all that much but the book's target audience made this book easy to read for teens and adults. I would highly recommend this book to anyone because it is a good read and it really makes you think.

Review by Niah Ashman, Year 11



Name of book: 'A Pocketful of Stars'

Author: Aisha Bushby

The novel 'A Pocketful of Stars' was written by Aisha Bushby. The author was born in Bahrain but has also lived in Kuwait, England and Canada and in this novel the author is exploring her cultural background. It is the story of a family and the relationship between the daughter Safiya and her mother. It also appealed to me because the novel includes time travel as the main character, Safiya is transported back to her mother's childhood home in Kuwait.

Review by Amber Colaco, Year 11

Survey on Brent's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Brent Council is developing its Health and Wellbeing Strategy which outlines actions needed to improve Brent residents' health and wellbeing. Brent Council is inviting residents to participate in a survey to provide comments and/or feedback on the draft strategy.

We have enclosed a letter from Brent on how you can get involved and have you say.

Have your say

Register and have your say



Sign up



Racism and Human Rights

In Religious Education and Philosophy, students have been studying Racism and Human Rights as part of a Unit on Living in Britain. Daina wrote this poem on Racism for homework and has performed it in the lesson as part of a spoken word presentation. It is so good we wanted to share it here.

Veronica Patten



The Thin Line Between Freedom...

Am I finally free...

I watch as your hands gripped on my throat snatching my speech

Your hands full of glory

Mine full of defeat

Your every chuckle sends tingles through my feet

And I watch as the bloody scar thickens on my cheek

Though they say I am free away from the brutality

I feel silenced by the brighter

The lighter

The fighter

The igniter

The bone brothing fire

Taking matches to my attire lighting me on

Fire...

Though I am a sinner no winner captive with shackles

Bone aching by tackles

Every cackle, every tear and all we hear are crackles.

I yearn for mercy

Like a doll on a string

Make me do a curtsey

Play me like a puppet loose strings

Call me a character from the muppets

Coz what difference is there

If you tangle my feelings up and contain me like some

Type of

Slave...

Oh right, I forgot.

My skin scares the living daylights out of

You.

Must give you some type of brain rot

That's why my kind must get

Shot

Got

locked

Coz though we are free

Running away from the brutality

I see no hope in humanity...

A slave they say while every day they make us pay when

I only wish to stay in the land of which my fore fathers lay

We worked all day.

Our minds rot away.

cause you grab that stick

and take your whip

and sling your hips

and kiss your lips

And take away priceless lives

With one sway.

No one we can trust...

The police sure as heck made it that way

He can't breathe that's what they say

He gasped for air we let out a prey

And when we take it up with the people of the UK

Terrorists they call us. Terrorists they say...

In my mirror I see a human with all their pride and dignity

in their eyes they see the shackles that bond me and my

ancestors

the ones that control my speech and take away my rights

to speak.

So, don't tell us that we are free...

coz the shackles that bond us-

don't break by a single key!

Composed by Daina Earlington-Stephenson

Welcome to our new Assistant Headteacher/SENCO

I am very pleased to introduce myself as the recently appointed Assistant Headteacher/SENCo at Ashley College. I am so pleased to be working in such a caring and nurturing environment where we can tailor our support to meet the individual needs of students and help them to achieve their full potential. I have worked in Brent for over 30 years in a variety of roles within schools, alternative educational provisions and the Local Authority. I am a qualified counsellor and have a particular interest in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. I look forward to working with you and supporting you and your children during their time with us.

Veronica Patten



Meet some of our Management Committee



Ketan Sheth - LA Member

Ketan is a councillor in the London Borough of Brent, having been first elected in 2010. He is Chair of Brent Council's Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. He is also Chair of North West London Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

Ketan is an experienced commercial solicitor, based in London. He has worked for several leading law firms in central London and the Home Countries. Also, he previously worked for a number of years for the Law Society. In his early years in the legal profession, he successfully managed a Judicial Review in the High Court. Additionally, he is a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and a member of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation.

Ketan also sits on a number public bodies, including as Chair of the Valuation Tribunal for England and the Lead Governor of Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust. Ketan joined our board in December as the LA member and as well as supporting Ashley College and its community, Ketan hopes to champion wellbeing.

Denyse Mitchell - Parent Member

Denyse worked in retail management for over 30 years. Her roles encompassed people management including recruitment, training and the disciplinary process. As a manager she took on an active role in pastoral care and built strong relationships with management and non management partners.

Denyse also managed branch legal compliance, ensuring Health and Safety legalities were maintained and liaised with third parties with regards to maintenance and security.

She currently is a volunteer for the Friends of Gladstone Park, currently gardening three days a week at the park. She enjoys badminton, walking holidays and photography. As member of the board she hopes to support the school and its parents/carers.



Navin Shah - Community Member



An architect by profession, Navin came to the UK as a University College London scholar in 1973. Navin served as an elected Harrow Councillor from 1994-2014 and he was Leader of Harrow Council from 2004 to 2006. Before standing down as an elected member in May 2021 Navin was Chair of the London Assembly and served as an elected member on the London Assembly representing Brent and Harrow for 13 years.

He is a founder member and trustee of the Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance, served as the Board Member of Harrow Equalities Centre. In his spare time, Navin enjoys art, music, travel and photography.

Navin has served as a member of governing body of a primary school in Harrow since 1994 and is chair of the finance and strategy committee. As a new member on the management committee of Ashley College, Navin is committed to actively supporting the school with its vision and improvement plan.

Using his professional and local government background Navin is keen to support the school with development / refurbishment projects; matters related to health and safety; engagement with families and outreach; and financial viability of the College.



Equine Therapy



During this term the many of the students have spent their Friday afternoons attending the stables in Edgware. The stables offer equine therapy and equine assisted learning where the students have been able to interact with the horses there.

It has been enlightening to watch most students slowly change from being wary around the horses to being confident and caring for these animals. The students have grown to trust and interact positively with the horses and what is interesting to see is that the horses have grown to know, respond to and trust the students.



Our students have been able to reflect on themselves and how to manage their emotions when around the horses. This creates a peaceful atmosphere encouraging interaction and friendship between each of them. Equine has also impacted on the growth and maturity of the students with noticeable changes in controlling their own body language and communication skills and reading the body language of the horses.

At the end of the 12 week programme the students were walking their horses by themselves along bridal paths for a number of kilometres. At all times the students were in complete control and confidently led their horses, it was an impressive sight to see how far they have come emotionally and developed their resilience.



These are some of the comments the students gave:

'I find equine very therapeutic to attend. I particularly like Bonny because I feel I know her really well and her likes and dislikes. I enjoy walking the horses outside of the stables in the nature.' **Tasha**

'I really enjoyed the walks with the horses up hill, as it was a good form of exercise' **Lewi**

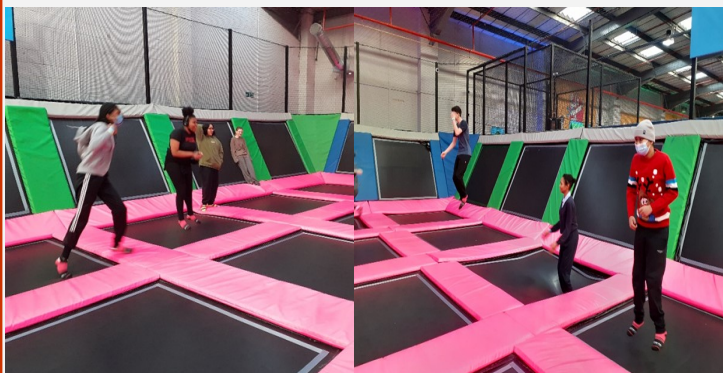
'I like equine sessions because I get to led the horses and talk to them when there.' **Jayden**



Frank Ofori-Sampong

This term our students voted for a reward trip to the trampoline park in Borehamwood. The students had great fun and they all took part in the many invigorating activities on offer from trampolines to gladiator battle beams, reaction walls and basketball.

Jump-in Around!



All enjoying the ball game while on a trampoline!



Showing amazing balance on the beam!



A student 'tussling' with a giant- Kader

A fun time had by



Kader Benamara



Wonderlab– at the Science Museum

At last we were able to venture out after COVID restriction! Early in the autumn term we took our students to the Science museum. This trip was planned for last year but had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. We were lucky enough to be given a parking place right outside the museum which made it possible to use our mini-bus instead of public transport, as walking for long period of time would have proved difficult for a couple of our students. We went around most of the space section at first wondering how astronauts could fit in and survive the long trips they made.

We had booked into the Wonderlab and made our way there early. It was fascinating to see students making the most of all of the different hands-on experiments. The highlight was the competition between Cezary and Daina to see who could use the pulley system to get to the ceiling first. Though the event had several rounds the result was hotly disputed and therefore we called it a draw!

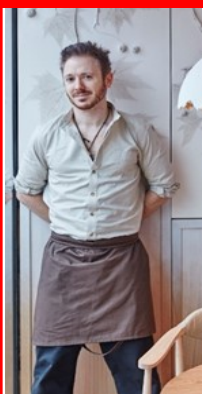
The another attraction was the giant slide that all the students had much fun sliding down. Unfortunately, we had to leave the Wonderlab when our time was up. We then made our way to the lecture theatre where we watched numerous chemistry demonstrations. Our students were keen answering all of the questions (correctly) asked by our host, who also congratulated our group for the very polite and caring way that they gave up their prime viewing positions to allow family groups to stay together with their young children.

The group were also interested in the medical section that we went on to view before examining equipment that most staff had grown up with in the (history) of household appliances department. A good day was had by all as you can see from the pictures.



Frank Ofori-Sampong

Visit to a working Restaurant



Ollie Dabbous opened his first restaurant Dabbous in 2012 to unprecedented critical acclaim. It fast became one of London's busiest restaurants.

He released his cookbook two years later, and maintained the Michelin star until he closed in 2017 in order to open Hide.

We were lucky enough to be invited to the restaurant and to meet Ollie Dabbous and staff, on 22nd September 2021. The students were shown how the kitchen operates and gain insight into how a top restaurant in London runs. Here's a few of students thought about the restaurant. A great experience for the Students both traveling on Public Transport and asking questions to Ollie Dabbous about his way to the top. Thank you, Lauren for arranging the trip.

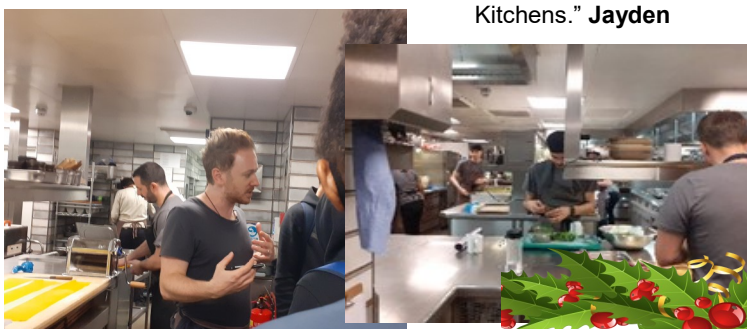


HIDE



"I would have liked a taster as the croissants looked good." **Dani**

"I thought the trip was excellent, because you saw how the Chefs made the food, we saw this happen in the Main Kitchens." **Jayden**



"I feel the trip was a great experience and opened my eyes to the life of a chef." **Niah**

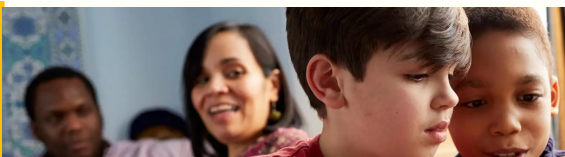


Supporting parents and carers

Our quick and effective snowflake activity can help families display how they are feeling then reflect and discuss this together. If you are experiencing loss this Christmas, visit our Parents A- Z guide for information and advice.

[Visit their Parents A-Z guide](#)

You will also find some activities that you and your child can do over the holidays, inside of this newsletter.



Parents A-Z guide to support

Our A-Z guide gives you advice on how to help your child with their feelings and behaviour, as well as mental health conditions and life events. We'll also show you where you can get help.

CW+, the official charity of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, has recently launched **Best For You**, a new patient-centred model of care to help the increasing numbers of young people and families requiring urgent mental health support. Best For You combines and integrates specialist medical and mental health care with community services and digital tools to provide comprehensive, rapid and long-term care in a way that best meets the needs of the individual and their family.

<https://www.cwplus.org.uk/best-for-you/>

BEST FOR YOU



Healthy London Partnership

Healthy London Partnership (HLP) has launched a campaign to raise awareness among young people and their families of London's free NHS mental health crisis lines. The campaign has been developed with feedback and input from young people and parents, and will be largely based on social media, and for use in education and community settings, GP surgeries, etc.

In response to an increase in number of young people needing urgent mental health support, every mental health trust in London has put in place a free crisis line, supported by trained mental health advisors and clinicians which is open 365 days a year.

A toolkit of the social media assets, posters, and articles for school's own publications and website can be downloaded here. <https://www.healthylondon.org/our-work/resources/>



Bookings for Brent's DfE-funded winter HAF programme are now open and activities are taking place across the school Christmas holidays. Children and young people who are eligible for the HAF programme can access four days of holiday activities, including a meal, for free over the Christmas school holidays. Please see below for further details on programme eligibility and accessing a place.

HAF programme for families

To be eligible for a free place at holiday activities via Brent's HAF programme children and young people must be:

- Currently in Reception to Year 11; **and**
- Permanently resident in Brent or attending a Brent school; **and**

Eligible for and in receipt of benefits-related free school meals **or** have had their eligibility confirmed by their school or other professionals.

When booking a place, you may be asked to confirm your eligibility by:

- Showing a copy of your school holiday supermarket voucher email.
- Quoting your supermarket voucher eCode.

Providing a confirmation email, letter, phone call or code from your school, social worker, youth worker or other professional.

If you believe you are eligible for the HAF programme but have not yet received confirmation of eligibility, please speak to the relevant holiday club provider, who will be able to assist you in booking a HAF place.

All Winter HAF Activities are listed below by location. Please click on :

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/children-and-family-support/childcare/out-of-school-and-holiday-care/holiday-activities-and-food-haf-programme/haf-programme-for-families/>



Building Confidence for the Future

Important dates for the Spring Term

Tuesday 4th January 2022 - Staff INSET

Wednesday 5th January 2022 - Students return to School.

Wednesday 12th January 2022 - Parent/Carer Progress Review and Target Setting Day @ 2:30pm – 6.30pm.

HALF TERM : MONDAY 14TH FEBRUARY – FRIDAY 18TH FEBRUARY

Wednesday 2nd March, 2022 - Year 11 Parents' Evening. @ 2:30pm – 6.30pm.

END OF SPRING TERM : Friday 1st April 2022

For Activities over the holidays and outside of school hours for pupils with ASD please visit the BOAT website:

www.brent.gov.uk/boat

Or contact them :

boat@brent.gov.uk



NSPCC 
HELPLINE
0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

Child Bereavement UK
REBUILDING LIVES TOGETHER

Support and advice from bereaved young people, for bereaved young people.

Tel: 0800 02 888 40

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/get-support>

ASHLEY COLLEGE

ASHLEY GARDENS

WEMBLEY HA9 8NP

Tel: 020 8937 3330

Email: admin@ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk



When there is adverse weather, don't forget to check our website for information about school opening at:

www.ashleycollege.brent.sch.uk

Wishing you all a peaceful holiday and a happy new year. We look forward to seeing you all on :

Monday 6th January 2022