Ashley College Newsletter

Autumn 2025 Edition

Dear Parents/Carers,

Leadership Update

Earlier this term, our school community was informed of an important change to our leadership structure. I have reduced my working pattern to four days per week, and our Deputy Headteacher, Anne-Marie Mika, has stepped up to the role of Co-Headteacher, leading the school on Fridays. I know that, like me and all our staff, you will join me in supporting Anne-Marie in this role as we continue to ensure Ashley College remains the outstanding provision it is.

Celebrating 2025

As we approach the festive season, it's a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the year and celebrate our pupils' achievements. 2025 has been a year of growth, learning and determination, and I'm incredibly proud of the hard work, enthusiasm and compassion our students have shown towards one another.

I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our staff, who work tirelessly to inspire, guide and support our pupils, ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive. I'm also grateful to our parents and carers for your continued support and partnership. Together, we've built a strong community where pupils are encouraged and supported to re-engage with education, setting them up for future success.

Wishing You Well

As we head into a well-earned break, I hope this Christmas brings you joy, peace and quality time with your loved ones. For those who may find this time of year difficult, please remember to reach out to those who might need extra care and kindness.

Looking Ahead to 2026

I'm excited and optimistic about what we'll achieve together in the new year. Let's return refreshed and ready to build on the successes of this term.

Spring Term

School reopens for pupils on **Tuesday 6th January at 9.20 am** and we have the Spring parents evening/afternoon on **Wednesday 14th January from 3.10pm**

On behalf of everyone here at Ashley College, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May this holiday season bring warmth, laughter, and special memories to cherish. With best wishes, **Ranjna Shiyani—Head Teacher**

UNITED KINGDOM unicef | Rights Respecting Schools

On Wednesday, December 10th, our school welcomed an assessor for the UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) to evaluate our submission for the Silver award.

Having successfully achieved the Bronze award last September, students and staff dedicated considerable effort to implement new changes and meet the criteria for the next level. This involved not only conveying the message to all members of Ashley College but showing what activities were going on that supported our bid. The year 10 students had completely decorated the cabin again with fresh, repaired posters and filled notice boards with other supporting information. Paula gave a lot of her time to making sure the required materials were beautifully presented.

During the assessment, the assessor reviewed the evidence provided to demonstrate the school-wide changes. A crucial part of the assessment involved speaking directly with students to substantiate the evidence and understand their experience of a rights-respecting environment.

The assessor was particularly impressed by the insightful feedback and positive comments shared by the students. A very special mention has to go to Paula and Keiran who were so articulate and communicated all the required information so clearly. They were superb ambassadors for the school, their comments about humankind gave everyone great hope for the future. Our students demonstrated a good knowledge of the rights, their meanings and know how they are applied outside of the college in the local community as well as further afield nationally and globally. The assessor also spoke positively about how well different departments had integrated the RRS message into the curriculum as well as the student's efforts to raise money for a wide variety of charities and specifically for Unicef and the Children of Gaza. Ashley College had made enough progress to be awarded the silver award and wished us well for the future in applying for the gold standard in July 2027.

Frank Ofori-Sampong– Co-ordinator

Stop Hate UK

Students are currently taking part in a series of workshops run by Stop Hate UK. As part of the statutory PSHCE programme, schools have a legal duty to:

-build a culture that does not tolerate prejudice. Schools must address issues like sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and gender stereotypes. Pupils should learn about protected characteristics and legal rights to understand equality and respect. Education on discrimination and hate crime progresses from anti-bullying in early years to more specific learning later

Stop Hate are an excellent organisation we have worked with for several years, who deliver these vital messages clearly. Kamaria, the trainer, conveys the required knowledge very sensitively. Content is tailored to suit the specific needs of our learners.

Students are developing an understanding of exactly what hate crime is and how to report it.

Students learnt that an Upstander (as opposed to a bystander)

- Stands up and speaks out when someone is being treated wrongly/ unfairly
- Lets the offender know what they're doing is wrong
- Lets the victim know they're not alone, checks they are okay
- Gets help
- Encourages others to be upstanders too

These could be discussion prompts for you to have with your child.

What is Stop Hate UK?

Vision

A world which is free from hate, harassment, and discrimination.

Mission

To combat Hate,

To support those affected,

To educate towards a hate free world.



Stop Hate UK patron is Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE

unicef for every child



In October, our school community came together for a special fundraising initiative, inspired by our pupils' profound sense of empathy during a recent English literature discussion.

Our study of the profound themes of conflict and humanitarian law in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* prompted a discussion regarding the current situation and food scarcity in Gaza. They expressed a deep desire to help the children affected by the ongoing crisis and it was felt a school-wide effort to channel these feelings was important.



We are incredibly proud of our students for participating actively in the fundraising drive, which comprised the following activities: spelling bee, maths challenge, car wash, cake sale, gong session, basketball competition and a comfy clothes day.

This initiative exemplifies our school's commitment to developing global citizens who translate classroom lessons into real-world action and service.



The funds raised were donated to UNICEF to support their work in providing essential food, medical supplies, and clean water to families experiencing famine conditions in the region.

Thank you to all families, staff, and students for your generosity and for supporting the spirit of ensuring children in war receive necessary care and protection.

Caroline O'Gara– Co-ordinator

Analysing the Sigmund Freud Museum

Following a discussion regarding a potential Science trip during the autumn term, students proposed visiting the Freud Museum London. Many were familiar with the foundational work on psychoanalysis conducted by Sigmund Freud and his family .

The museum, located in the final London home of Sigmund Freud (the founder of psychoanalysis) and his daughter Anna Freud (a pioneer in child psychoanalysis), fascinated the students with its preserved condition. The displays detailed the Freud family's history, highlighting the socio-political climate in Germany at the time, their subsequent flight to the UK, their settlement in the Hampstead house, and insights into Freud's ground-breaking clinical methods.
Unfortunately, the museum's gardens were closed for renovations so we were unable to have our lunch there. In light of this we all went to the large Waterstones bookshop on the Finchley road where the students had their lunch and were able to look through the different books on offer. This trip was a big success!

' It was pretty interesting, There was a projection part which had everyday of Anna Freuds life. It was pretty interesting seeing the unfiltered pictures of her husband when he was unaware of himself being documented. The room with ancient artefacts it was interesting.'





' I liked seeing his study, because it had lots of cool artefacts. I also liked how he encouraged his patients to sit on a bed in order for them to feel comfortable and get people to open up to open up more. I liked how his daughter carried on his work and followed in his footsteps. '

Frank Ofori-Sampong– Science Lead

Artists in the making at Tate Britain

Our trip to Tate Britain had a two-pronged purpose: to welcome all our students in getting a glimpse at (recent) British art history, and for our GCSE artists to capture specific inspirations for their independent projects. The trip was well attended and it was brilliant for the students to explore the Tate Britain collection, which displays 500 years of art from Britain up to the present day, in many stories and voices.





We were able to explore outside too, and some students managed to capture inspiring imagery of the London skyline which is now being used in their work.





Darius enjoyed the immersive light installation by Mona Hatoum.

While Safa was intrigued by Damien Hirst's 'taxidermy' sculptures.

George Nesbitt - Art Lead

'I was surprised by how simple art can be, and considered the fact that anyone can be an artist it was inspiring. It is all down to how you interpret it. '

Encouraging Attendance- Winter Wonderland

On Friday 12th we took a select few students to Winter Wonderland as a reward for their fantastic punctuality this year. Two of the students showed us that they were dare devils by going on 2 of the biggest rides at the park, including XXL, which swings up to heights of 47m. This is one of the first high G-force pendulum-style mega rides in Europe. We stopped on the journey, to grab a meal deal at Tesco and found a beautiful spot to eat it, which had cover from the rain. Although it rained it did not stop us having a great day out! We gave the students the option of walking to a station slightly further away, which enabled us to see some of the famous Christmas lights in and around London's West End.

'The trip was pretty easy to get too, it was only two trains to get to green park, then around a 15-minute walk. When walking we took a detour to see a glimpse of the changing of guards at Buckingham palace, then carried on our walk to Hyde park, while there we went on 2 rides, one being a rollercoaster and the other was a swing in the air. I was most scared out of everyone, but I faced my fears nonetheless. We ate in a hut, which was like one from the alps! We then took a walk to baker street and saw all the Christmas decorations some of them were so bright! Thank you to my teachers and peers for taking and coming along with me on the trip and making it a magical Christmas experience!!!'



Jeanne Morrison—Teaching Assistant

Going to the Movies

On Monday 15th we took students to the cinema in Harrow as a reward for all of their hard work over the course of the term.



One of the students in particular took ownership of the trip and organised a school-wide questionnaire to decide what film to watch. Based on this, the students chose Zootropolis 2, which was a brilliant film.

Some of the students got treats from the cinema, others brought their own. We then ate a McDonalds lunch together which was a lovely treat. The students were incredibly well behaved and very grateful.

'Overall I enjoyed the trip to see Zootopia 2 in the cinema. We went by mini bus to the VUE cinema in Harrow, when we got there we couldn't find any parking it was funny trying to look for a space.– we did find one in the end ! The movie was pretty good and I enjoyed most of it and found it quite funny at some parts. After the movie we went to Mc-Donald's and we all had our meals which we picked before hand. Overall even though we weren't out for long I had a good day, being out with friends and teachers and I wouldn't of changed anything about it.'

Jeanne Morrison– Teaching Assistant

Baking for Charity

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

The highlight of this term has been our successful contribution to fundraising through various events. Both I and pupils made cakes to help fundraise for the Macmillan Cancer Support charity and we raised £40! Along with the baking we did for the Gaza children event and this , there were over 15 cakes made and sold that week!

£40





Students showed off their skills and made a great range of baked goods from brownies, cookies and cupcakes to old school lemon cake.

I lost count of the amount of lemon drizzles that were made for staff to buy and take home!

We were also incredibly proud of the effort that was made to raise such a huge amount to support aid for children suffering the effects of the war in Gaza.

Lauran Brannigan– Food Tech Lead

Equine Theraphy

It was nice for our students to learn about how to take care of horse -brushing, cleaning , their hoover and putting their head collars on. In the arena when the horses were running around really fast, it seemed entertaining and a little scary at the same time.

Students and staff helped each other in the arena , which enabled us improve our communication and team work skills. Students learnt how to lead the horses arounds the arena, they had to be determined as the horses did not always move as they kept stopping to eat the grass!

Students learnt how to be patient, how to persevere and change plans when the horses were not moving or co-operating as they would like. Students tried to encourage the horses to jump over the obstacle course they had set out– but unfortunately they were too distracted by the other horses in the field. They all enjoyed grooming the horses by brushing the sand of their backs.



'The bigger horses could be scary at times because of how fast they were galloping. The people who worked there were friendly and helpful. I liked it when they made the oldest student clean up after the horses. It was also interesting to see the horses in their natural environment.'



'I liked working closely with the horses and putting the equipment on the horses. I learnt how to approach them safely and make them feel comfortable enough to trust me to put it on. I enjoyed looking after the horses by brushing them, and cleaning their hooves. I also learnt how to care for horses by feeding it and ensuring it had enough water.'

Frank Ofori – Sampong – Co-ordinator

Brent's Holiday Activities and Food Programme

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme provides free holiday provision including healthy food and enriching activities to eligible children and young people in Brent during the school holidays.

HAF programmes will all take place between (20th December- 5th January 2026), with eligible children able to access 4 days of HAF funded activities between these dates.

For more information : Winter 2025 HAF programme

Barham Park Studios, Wembley

Sun 21, Mon 22, Tue 23 Dec 2025

Join artist Monique Kaur Kellay for three days of free family sessions. Create, explore, and craft your own symbols, reflect and share your lives and stories through various South Asian textile techniques and production methods.



ACAVA Flourish
Free, no experience needed, all welcome!

When
10.30am–12.30pm

Where we are
Barham Park Studios
660 Harrow Road,
London HA0 2HB

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND LOTTERY FUNDED

Book a Place

More Information

Building Confidence for the

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE SPRING TERM 2026

Term Starts : **Tuesday 6th January - pupils return**

Parent Evening: **Wednesday 14th January – Parent/Carer Progress Review & Target Setting @ 3.10pm–7.00pm.**

HALF TERM : **Monday 16th February - Friday 20st February 2026**

Term Ends: **27th March 2026**

Wishing you all a peaceful holiday and a happy new year.

Elefriends (part of MIND UK)



A supportive online community where you can be yourself. We all know what it's like to struggle sometimes, but now there's a safe place to listen, share and be heard. Whether you're feeling good right now, or really low, it's a safe place to share experiences and listen to others. Elefriends is moderated daily by the Ele handler team from 10am-midnight.

https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/support-community-elefriends/

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

ChildLine
0800 1111



Kooth Parent Helpline:

0808 802 5544

Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4pm

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**

Brent foodbank

Info@brentfoodbank.org.uk

Tel: 0203 7455 972

https://brent.foodbank.org.uk/get-help

Hub of Hope

The Hub of Hope is the UK's leading mental health support database. It is provided by national mental health charity, Chasing the Stigma, and brings local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support and services together in one place for the first time. https://hubofhope.co.uk

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