



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM
SCHOOL

UOB SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Autumn Edition 2020 | Issue 02



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents, Carers, and Friends of the School.

As our autumn term draws to a close, we find ourselves steeped on-going in the many challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic – yet no less determined as individuals and a School community to foster a caring, safe, and ambitious environment for personal and academic growth. It would be naïve not to recognise the need for a welcome break ahead for families, pupils, students, and without question my staff – to whom I pay particular tribute for their commitment and fortitude since the return in September, from national lockdown.

Our children have embraced different forms of learning and adaptations to structures and daily routines at this exceptional time, impressively.

I am struck by how they remain upbeat and understanding about current needs and circumstances – including where many on numerous occasions have been asked to self-isolate away from school and others.

We have in recent months been considering the benefits of fostering a crisper focus on core virtues. As a School of Character and Virtues we understand that virtue knowledge and development is rich and broad, but we also recognise purpose in identifying and amplifying those virtues which lie at the heart of our learning community – and our aims moving forward. To this end, curiosity, humility, kindness, and responsibility are centre stage, as we actively and collectively nurture strength throughout and beyond the pandemic as flourishing citizens, and successful scholars. In my view, these virtues are certainly also most apt for our current times.

Life for the School across this term has not been all hand-gel, bubbles, distancing, and ventilation – much as those have been essential – and will continue to be so. I segue to this newsletter, which I invite you to engage with and enjoy, and to reference some of the highlights and accomplishments that belie the many restrictions and contexts at this time.

I am keenly aware that the holiday period ahead will bring a mix of joy and difficulty for many members of our community. My hope is that, however you will be spending the festive period, the scales tip for you in favour of joy – and relaxation. Wishing you Season's Greetings, and a peaceful Christmas.

Colin Townsend, Principal

“

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less.

C.S. Lewis 1898 – 1963 British Writer

”



ASPIRING MEDICS SECURE WORK EXPERIENCE WITH UK'S LARGEST MEDICAL ORGANISATION

Six pupils at University of Birmingham School secured a place on the University Hospital Birmingham Medical Mentorship Programme.

"This work experience programme is completely unique because unlike other virtual work experience programmes, it is LIVE, using high fidelity simulation in the best state-of-the-art-simulation centre in the country, at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham." – Medic Mentor.

The virtual work experience allowed them to work directly with a number of doctors and medical professionals, receiving invaluable insight into healthcare careers and support with educational routes and access. As part of the application pupils had to write a personal statement and were selected for the experience based on this.

"As their Year Lead, I am hugely proud of their hard work and dedication, taking the initiative to seek out and apply to a programme such as this. I was excited for them to take part." Mrs Exton, Year 10 Leader.

Congratulations to Mayah, Zain, Hannah, Tara, Sumaiyah, and Duaa. We can't wait to see where your journey takes you in the near future as aspiring medical students!



PUPIL VOICE AT SEND YOUTH FORUM

Earlier this month, Year 11 pupil Lewis Forster was selected to represent UoB School and youth voices across Birmingham in the SEND Youth Forum during Birmingham City Council's Programme board meeting.

Lewis prepared a statement to discuss awareness around additional needs of pupils across the city and the need to "work together to help understand young people, including our peers as well as adults." Lewis will also be working with the Youth Forum and the board to design training packages to support schools, co-produce posters and campaigns around the issues raised and develop a video to share awareness and understanding of additional needs.

"Lewis gave many positive contributions. The meeting went incredibly well and the response from the board was very positive." *Ms K. Hamilton – Youth Forum Lead.*

The panel included senior figures from Birmingham City Council (Councillors, MP's, the Assistant Director for SEND and the Birmingham City Council Chief Executive).

We're very proud of Lewis and his involvement on the panel. We're looking forward to seeing the changes and impact that the meeting will have around additional needs awareness.

PUPIL LEADERSHIP

Congratulations to our newly appointed Head Prefects and Deputy Head Prefects for 2020/21.

All four pupils have taken on their roles with confidence and competence and have already represented the school well when welcoming the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Sir David Eastwood to the school. Head Pupil Prefects, alongside Sixth Form representatives, met the VC to discuss their experiences of education and learning in the context of Covid-19 with Principal Colin Townsend.



DofE UPDATES

BRONZE AWARD

All Year 9 pupils will begin their Bronze DofE journey in the Spring 2021 Term, experiencing a range of fun and challenging activities. All pupils will also receive an Emergency First Aid certificate for participating in a 3-hour course. This training will equip them with the necessary skills to be safe and independent for their Qualifying Expedition in July 2021.

SILVER AWARD

A number of Year 11 pupils and Year 13 students are finishing their existing Silver Award which was hindered by the current Covid-19 situation. Their Practice Expedition is due to take place in the new year and their Qualifying Expedition is scheduled for 26 to 28 March 2021.

Pupils and students have shown excellent resilience and commitment to overcome a multitude of barriers and adversity – the end is in sight! Secondly, pupils in Year 10 are currently in the process of applying for places on the School's 2020/21 Silver Programme. Pupils are becoming increasingly interested in taking on this added challenge for they see and appreciate the great benefit it has on developing their character, personal skills and purpose in life.

The Silver Award enables pupils to stand out from the crowd, and it is highly regarded among employers and post-16 institutions. Year 10 pupils are encouraged to complete their enrolment form and return it by Friday 08 January 2021.

GOLD AWARD

This is the first year the School will be running the Gold Award Programme. It's extremely exciting to be delivering the highest-level of the award after only 3 years of running the DofE Scheme at School. Thus far we've had a very impressive 24 applications from our Year 12 students; a large cohort in comparison to most centres across the country. Our Gold participants will embark on their 12 month journey in January 2021 and experience their first 3-day, 4-night expedition in April 2021. Exciting times ahead!

As you can see, the DofE Award has a huge impact across the School in various ways and at different levels. The School is hugely proud of all pupils and students who are embarking on the Duke of Edinburgh Award this academic year, for it takes a lot of courage, commitment and resilience to step beyond your comfort zone. We applaud and celebrate all of our Award holders across the School who continue to role model excellence for their DofE achievements.



Images from previous DofE events

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AT UOB SCHOOL

Physical Education at the University of Birmingham School has looked slightly different this term compared to usual, when we would be focussing on rugby in preparation for our annual 'Rugby Festival'.

After being off school for six months and competitive sport across the country coming to a halt, we wanted to ensure the focus of our lessons was on increasing the health and well-being of all pupils.

We understood the pupils longing to communicate and compete with peers outside of a classroom setting and with this in mind, we have undertaken a variety of different, new and exciting activities which our students have thoroughly enjoyed. The pupils have taken part in 6 mile walks in the local community exploring Selly Oak and Bournville, competing against one another in photo and map orienteering, and also looking at a variety of athletics events which we were unable to explore in the summer term including relay, sprinting and long distance events.

For pupils learning remotely, we encourage them to participate in short high intensity interval training (HIIT) or Cross-Fit related fitness challenges at home, which allow the pupils to reflect post-workout on how their mood, engagement and concentration levels improved.

We wanted to show the pupils that you can be physically active in the comfort of your own home and where you can access online workouts for free. The pupils have really grasped the variety of health benefits associated with being physically active and we hope this has acted as a vehicle for life long participation in physical activity for all.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Marking Remembrance Day was a little different this year...

Armistice Day, also known as Remembrance Day, was marked slightly differently this year. In the past, the design of the building with our large atrium allowed pupils, students and staff to gather together in one central place for the two minute silence.

This year, the *Last Post* was played over our new speaker system for all to hear within their own year group bubbles and classrooms observing the two minute silence. We also had the chance to commemorate the event within our community by creating an outdoor poppy display on our school building.



SIXTH FORM APPLICATIONS

Our Virtual Open Event for Sixth Form is live on our website. Designed to support applicants and parents/carers approaching transition to post-16 study in September 2021, our online hub has a range of videos and resources. Visit www.uobschool.org.uk. A level courses available:

Art	History
Biology	Mathematics & Further Mathematics
Business Studies	Music
Chemistry	Physical Education
Computer Science	Physics
Design Engineering	Politics
English Literature	Psychology
French	Religious Studies
Geography	Sociology

Applications are now open and the deadline to apply is 31 January 2021.

THE BOOK NOOK

Updates from our School Library...



BOOKBUZZ

Once again, we took part in Booktrust's Bookbuzz programme for schools which celebrates reading for pleasure. Each Year 7 and 8 pupil had the opportunity to choose a book (from a range of 17) to take home and keep. We had extensive discussions around the kinds of books we like to read and which were our favourites!

AUTHOR EVENTS

For National Poetry Day in October, the novelist Louisa Reid delivered a virtual lesson for our Year 9 pupils, talking about her books and offering tips on writing in verse.

Acclaimed author, Alex Wheatle, spoke about his inspiring life and work in a virtual assembly for Year 8 and 9 pupils. He discussed how he became an author and what inspired him to write. A few of our pupils also won copies of his new novel, *Cane Warriors*, about Tacky's slave rebellion in Jamaica in the 1700s.



MOST BORROWED BOOKS THIS TERM BY PUPILS

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes
The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas
Terror Kid by Benjamin Zephaniah
Tom Gates Extra Special Treats by Liz Pichon
Crater Lake by Jennifer Killick
Tom Gates: Spectacular School Trip by Liz Pichon
The Crossover by Kwame Alexander
Little Badman & The Invasion of the Killer Aunties by Humza Arshad
One Piece: East Blue 3-in-1 Edition by Eiichiro Oda
Dog Man by Dav Pilkey

Have you read any of these books?

You can reserve these and any other book via the Reading Cloud or fill in a book request form and our Librarian, Mrs Middleton, will drop them off to your form. It's as simple as that...happy reading!

STAR REVIEWER

Yeshin K

For contributing a staggering
44 reviews this term

STAR FORM GROUP

Form 7A

For borrowing the most books
this term

STAR BORROWER

Asma C

For borrowing the most books
this term

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

October marks Black History Month and during form time and lessons, pupils and students explored persons of Black heritage past and present and the impact of their role in the world we live in today, from political influencers, scientists, engineers, astronauts, to authors and musical artists.

Inclusion and diversity are core tenets of our School and by celebrating BHM we embrace diversity and the importance of raising awareness about positive BAME role models.

Pupils explored individuals who they found particularly influential:

Patrisse Khan-Cullors *by Hana Ceric*

Patrisse Khan-Cullors is an artist and activist based in America. She is one of the co-founders of the Black Lives Matter movement. She has inspired many people to stand up and speak out to eradicate and intervene against violence toward black communities. We all have the opportunity to continue with this legacy and make sure that everyone feels safe and heard – no matter what race they may be. We must ensure that we recognise and celebrate people like Patrisse so that we too can be brave, compassionate and kind.



Phillis Wheatley *by Malaika Arshad*

Phillis Wheatley has inspired generations of African Americans who fought for the abolition of slavery and civil rights. She is a role model to a lot of young people, especially women as she was the first female American slave of African descent to have her poetry and book published. She wrote her first poem at age 13 and it was published in the Newport Mercury Newspaper. Her first published book was a collection of poems about different religions, morals, equal rights, and subjects to inspire people from different ethnic backgrounds.



Bilal Ibn Rabah *by Hamaad Chaudhry*

Bilal Ibn Rabah was a black Ethiopian slave who was the first individual to make the call to prayer in Islam. He was also one of the earliest people to convert to Islam. Bilal is influential because his life story demonstrates how Islam changed society with respect for humanity, equality, anti-racism and social equity. His life story continues to inspire many individuals around the globe. He was persecuted for not only being black but also a Muslim, yet he never lost faith. Bilal is a role model for all generations by showing and teaching us how to overcome difficulties in day to day life.

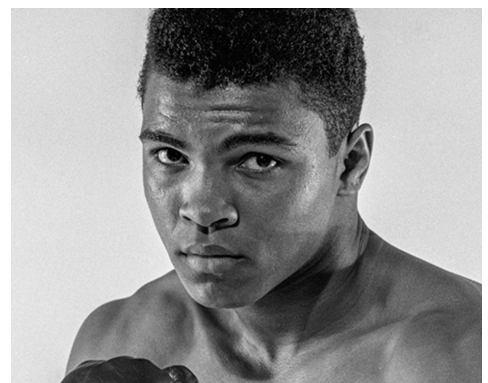
**Kendrick Lamar** *by Jaydon Scott*

Kendrick Lamar was surrounded by gangs and violence from a very young age, but he never succumbed to the peer pressure, he instead kept his ideas for a better life. He let his experiences influence his music and not himself.

He rose above the violence and became an award winning artist of a generation. As a black male myself I am inspired by Kendrick - he has shown me that despite your upbringing and surroundings you don't have to let it change you and you can rise above it all and make your own path. You can choose who you want to be, not what society expects you to be. Three words I would use to describe Kendrick Lamar are: innovator, powerful and inspirational. His music has won countless awards. With every word he reaches the masses and for the black community his lyrics and music are an outlet and dive into the black experience. One of his most acclaimed albums came out when the black lives matter movement was gaining popularity. Lyrics such as "If God got us then we gon' be alright" were powerful and allowed the black community to confide in each other and lift each other up. There is a strong message that carries in his music, all you have to do is listen.

**Muhammad Ali** *by Jacob Callanan*

Originally named Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr, Ali changed his name after converting to Islam. Muhammad Ali is known as the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time. In 1966, he refused conscription into the military as the Vietnam War went against his beliefs - Ali was imprisoned for four years for this. Ali continued to help and spread the message of peace. He regularly donated millions to charity and actively took part in peace protests and marches. This is why he is so beloved, no matter the situation, he stood tall and believed in what was right. The three words I would use to describe him are: courageous, resilient and inspirational.



DIG DEEPER, LOOK CLOSER, THINK BIGGER

A powerful poem by Year 9 pupil Aleazar. As part of Black History Month and National Poetry Day, Aleazar wrote the poem 'Hate' showcasing his talent for writing and sharing his passion for the subject through poetry.

HATE by Aleazar, Year 9 Pupil

Hate is just like friction, something we all really need to stop, you could call it an addiction.

It is when our black brothers are being forced to put their hands up, we have not done anything, but they still call for backup.

When Muslims in China are being treated as unskilled,
And news programmes turn a blind eye and act like no one's getting killed.

It's unreal.

How can someone be hated for the colour of their skin, the religion they're in, or simply their gender, nobody can really win.

It's crazy.

The world needs change.
We are all different, but inside we are all the same.

People are called guilty until proven that they're innocent.
They can go on a walk and are abused with the word immigrant.

You didn't even notice that was just a rap line, because you think black rappers don't help causes online.

Now that's the end.
I hope I didn't offend.

I hope the world changes for the better, with no more hate
we could all go with being a bit more clever.

Hate.

Season's Greetings

From Team UoBS

This time of year brings to mind those things in life that are most important - family, friends, and community.

May the new year be filled with love, peace, and happiness for all.

TERM ENDS

Friday 18 December at 13.10

SPRING TERM STARTS

Tuesday 5 January

(individual arrangements for each year group will be communicated separately)



IN OTHER NEWS...



In October, we welcomed our new trainee teachers from University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University. Trainee teachers received an induction to the school and their subject area with UoBS subject mentors and ITE senior mentor, Mrs Stemp. We are excited for the journey ahead and look forward to being a part of their progress.



We were overwhelmed by the generosity of Team UoBS in response to our Foodbank Hamper Collection this year. Thank you so much for your continued support in helping local charities and communities, especially over the festive season.



Diwali, the five day festival of lights was celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs across the world this autumn. Year 7 pupil Manyojeet prepared and delivered a special presentation for all at UoB School to explain the importance of Diwali and why it's celebrated. "Diwali also known as deepavali, symbolizes the victory of good over evil." Thank you for taking the time to share this with us Manyojeet.



Year 13 student Ikrah Iqbal entered the prestigious John Locke Institute Essay Competition and was awarded a high commendation in her chosen category of theology. We are extremely proud of her achievement. Congratulations Ikrah.



Well done!

Pupil with the most green stamps this term:

Jhananvi Pavan Kumar in Year 7 with 395 stamps

Form Group with the most green stamps this term:

7G with 7111 stamps

Pupils with most green stamps in each year group:

Year 7 Jhananvi Pavan Kumar with 395 stamps

Year 8 Yeshin Kim with 336 stamps

Year 9 Hannah Washbourne with 316 stamps

Year 10 Kalkidan Abreham with 261 stamps

Year 11 Casey-Mae Shuter-Hart with 125 stamps

WINTER WELFARE

Useful Contacts

PAUSE - Forward Thinking Birmingham **0207 841 4470**

A mental health service provider for young people up to the age of 25 in Birmingham.

Childline **0800 1111** **childline.org.uk**

Support for children and young people in the UK, including a free 24-hour helpline.

Hope Again **0808 808 1677** **hopeagain.org.uk**

Support for young people when someone dies.

NSPCC **0800 800 5000** **nspcc.org.uk**

Support for children and anyone worried about a child.

NHS Go **nhs.go.uk**

NHS app with confidential health advice and support for 16-25 year olds.

Anxiety UK **03444 775 774 (helpline)** **07537 416 905 (text)** **anxietyuk.org.uk**

Advice and support for people living with anxiety.

For more support lines and useful contacts visit mind.org.uk

Supporting someone this Christmas

Check in daily with a call or text

Go for walks together - in person or through video calls

Let them know it's okay if they don't enjoy this time of year

The holiday season might be different this year, but checking in with a friend will always be a way to show that you care. A few small actions can help to lift the potential pressure of the festive period.

time-to-change.org.uk



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