



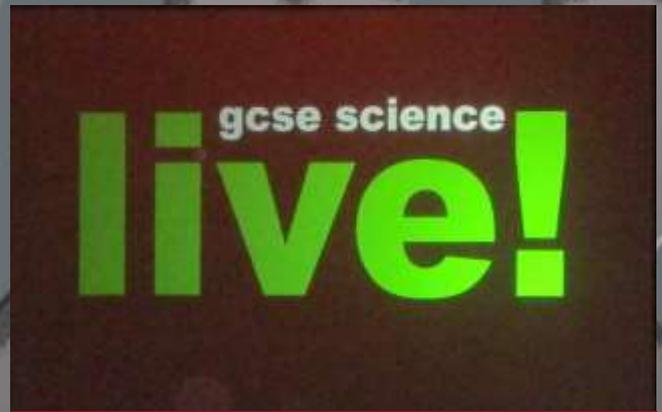
Hodge Hill Girls' School

Newsletter

February 2019



Big Physics Quiz



Science Live Conference

Remembering the
Holocaust



Year 11 Parents' Coffee
Morning



Educating Tomorrow's Women Today

Headteacher's Message

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

It is hard to believe that we are already in February and the half term holiday is upon us. This has been a busy term for everyone, and I would like to thank staff and volunteers who have enabled so many wonderful opportunities to take place.

We have welcomed many families to our Year 9 and Year 11 Parents Evening as well as the Year 11 Coffee Morning and Year 9 Curriculum Evening. As parents/carers you can be a huge influence in your child's education. We thank you for playing your part in encouraging your daughter to make every lesson count and by supporting them in their learning.



Our Year 11 students have been preparing for their upcoming GCSE exams. These start shortly and I know that staff are working hard to prepare the students and ensure that they are able to perform at their very best. Students should now be taking their preparation seriously and working hard at home too.

Attendance at school is extremely important for future success. Students will not make the progress they need to make if they are not in school. Holidays in term time should therefore not be booked.

Our weekly Parent Bulletin has become established and contains lots of useful information and weekly news updates. It is emailed directly to parents using ParentPay every Friday. If you haven't done so already, please ensure that you have a current email address in your ParentPay account to ensure that you receive it straight to your inbox. Alternatively, it is published on the school website each week.

I wish you all a relaxing half term holiday. School will resume at the normal time on Monday 25th February 2019.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Adu
Head Teacher

Message from Chair of Governors

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Governors continue to play an active part in the life of the school. This term governors have met with many families at parent's evenings to congratulate pupils on their work ethic and achievement.

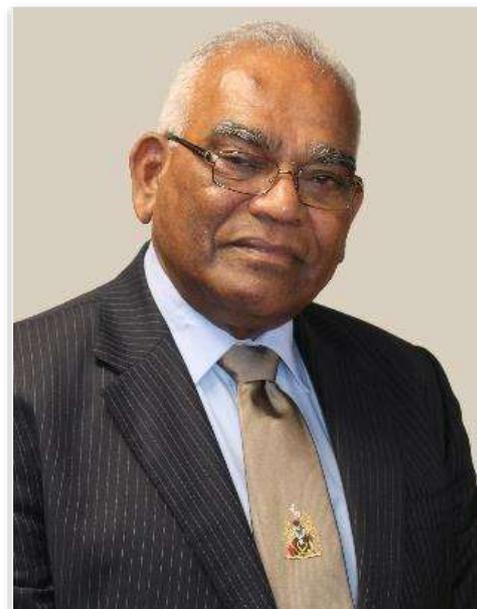
Our new reception area has almost reached completion and we look forward to welcoming visitors there in the future. We will also shortly begin the process of extending our fencing around the site. The lower ILZ has recently been updated and provides a welcoming area for pupils during break times.

The Governing Body continues to meet regularly with meetings calendared throughout the year. I continue to meet with the Headteacher, Mrs Adu, on alternate Friday afternoons and I am available to meet with parents by appointment at this time. Please contact me via the Clerk, Mr David Wallis, who can be reached by post at the school address.

Yours sincerely,

K Siva Yogaiswaran

Chair of Governors



Live Orchestra at Symphony Hall

On Thursday 17th January a group of Year 7 pupils visited Birmingham Symphony Hall to see the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra perform their 'CBSO Dissected' concert.

Halima (7,12) explained, "It was an amazing trip. I have learnt that musical instruments can create brilliant backgrounds and tunes. I was amazed at the sounds of the drums, trumpets, guitar, piano and other instruments. I learnt a lot on this trip and it would be a pleasure to go again."



Tubah (7,12) said, "I really like the orchestra and I enjoyed myself. I had fun hearing slow music then loud music. I also heard the drum banging loudly. It was amazing."

Lina (7,16) elaborated, "The orchestra taught us many different things, the main being how the orchestra is structured. We learnt what is played by the different parts, (strings, brass or percussion) and the effect of them playing together to express the composer's feelings. Listening it felt like the music spoke and came to life, which was fascinating and showed us that although music has no words it can speak to you with greater expression. I loved the orchestra and if I was given another opportunity I would definitely go."

Charity Update

Thank you to everyone who supported our Charity Appeals at the end of last half term. A wonderful selection of food was donated to Stechford Food Bank. We also raised £467.66 on our charity non-uniform day for UNICEF.

Our next Charity non-uniform day is Friday 12th April. More information will be available in our Parent Bulletin closer to the date.

We are collecting Pringle (or similar) tubes

Please bring any empty pringle (or similar) tubes to IT1 by Monday 4th March. These tubes are required for a workshop organised by Bletchley Park at school on Wednesday 13th March. This is a great opportunity for our pupils to learn about the famous code breaking during the Second World War. Pupils will also be able to see one of the code breaking Enigma machines and take part in various coding activities.



Big Physics Quiz

On Tuesday 22nd January 2019, a small group of Year 9 pupils visited the University of Birmingham to take part in the Big Physics Quiz and compete against other schools. This was my first time ever seeing a university.

We were quite early before the quiz, so we were given a small tour of the university by a student who studied there. This helped me get an insight of what it was like to study at a university.

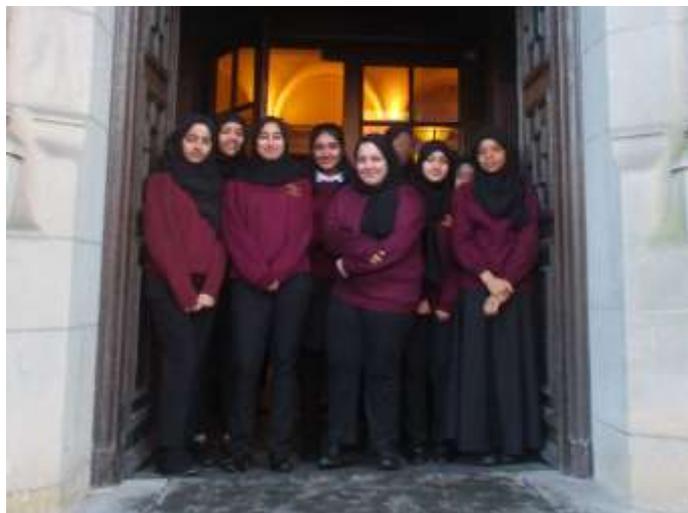
As soon as all of the other schools arrived it was time to begin the quiz! There were rounds for the different topics of physics (electricity, nuclear physics etc.) with mainly multiple-choice

questions. The questions were asked quite quickly, so we only had a couple of seconds to answer each question.

It was interesting to listen to a lecture by a professor who talked about the very first computer which dated back in the first century B.C, that was around the time of the Greeks! It was called the Antikythera Mechanism and was an ancient Greek analogue computer used to predict astronomical positions and eclipses for calendar and astrological purposes decades in advance.

The quiz continued after lunch, finishing with the announcement of the winners. really enjoyed my trip to the University of Birmingham. It is definitely going to help me decide about university for the future!

Wajeeha (9,ML4)



Speakers Trust Workshops

On Friday 25th January, 27 Year 10 pupils took part in a workshop to develop public speaking skills; this is a national scheme delivered by the Speakers Trust. Pupils spent the morning developing their verbal presentation skills and learnt how to construct a speech. In the afternoon, they presented to an audience in a most mature fashion; a huge range of topics was covered including mental health and abandoned animals. It was a great day and all our pupils did really well with their confidence growing.



Here is a selection of the pupil feedback:

“I think the workshop was very helpful. It was interactive and helped me to become more confident.” – Safah

“Alison and Jenny helped me overcome my fear – I feel much more confident!” – Suwaibah

“It helped boost my confidence in speaking to an audience.” - Fatheha

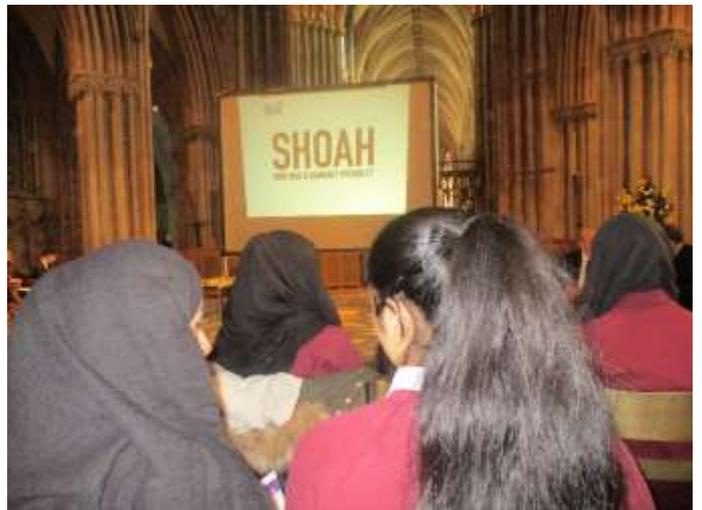
Congratulations to Jannat (10,10), Simra (10,11) and Halima (10,9) who were highly commended and to Taira (10,11), Kaha (10,10), Malaika (10,7), Nabila (10,7), Aisha (10,7) and Mahum (10,10), who will go on to present their speeches to a wider audience in school with a view to identifying a winner to represent the school in the next stage of the competition.

Based on the success of this workshop, we are hoping to continue to work with Speakers Trust to help other students be confident in themselves and their voice.



Remembering the Holocaust and Visit to Lichfield Cathedral

On Monday 28th January fourteen pupils from Year 9 spent the morning in Lichfield Cathedral taking part in their holocaust event 'Torn from Home'. The pupils remarked upon the beauty of the cathedral and its prominence in its surroundings. Although a glorious sunny morning, the purpose of this visit was much darker. The pupils listened intently to two A-level students who had recently visited Auschwitz and were now involved in promoting holocaust education in Birmingham. The pupils listened to a brief talk about history of antisemitism and its fatal revival in the 20th century in Germany and much of Europe. The truly inspiring story of John Dobai was to follow and the pupils, respectfully, listened to his story as a holocaust survivor. Although many of our pupils had prepared questions for John before the visit, his story was told so well that their questions had all been answered by the time he finished. It was truly an honour, as a teacher, to see my pupils move from holocaust education in the classroom to being placed face to face with a man who had survived the holocaust. His passionate plea for them to challenge discrimination, in all its forms, no matter how



small and whenever they see it, was a call many of our pupils answer on a daily basis. The visit ended with the pupils contributing their thoughts on a brown luggage tag that will form part of a larger memorial to the holocaust in the cathedral. Accompanied by piano, all visitors moved slowly through the cathedral to place their tag on a table. As the visit ended and other groups filed out of the cathedral to get coffee and lunch, our group stayed a while longer to read the luggage tags and explore the cathedral and it became very clear that, although young in their career as learners, our pupils had some very big thoughts on how they may use their education on the holocaust for positive change.

Science Live

On Monday 4th February, Year 10 pupils visited GCSE Science Live Conference at Birmingham Symphony Hall. This is an excellent opportunity for our pupils to hear and be inspired by five of Britain's top scientists (Prof Robert Winston, Prof Andrea Sella, Prof Jim Al-Khalil, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and Prof Alice Roberts) all of whom work at the cutting edge of their specialisms. The trip also includes GCSE



examination tips, inspiration for the application of science and explain opportunities to study science at A level and beyond. Below are the highlights of the conference from the perspective of three of our pupils.

Reflecting on the experience Halimah (10,11) explained, "I enjoyed the science convention as it inspired and motivated me to try harder to achieve my goal. Professor Winston's work was very useful and educational. He explained his aspiration in improving people's lives, even when they are just a small egg or tiny cells. Further in life I wish to hopefully join Professor Winston's work and help change people's lives. This is a dream I wish to achieve."

Akifa (10,3) was equally inspired and enthusiastic as she said, "I found this trip really engaging and fascinating. There were many scientists that specialised in various areas that interested me. They gave me an informative understanding of their field of work that has given me inspiration for what I may be in the future. The exam techniques were also very useful and will help with my exams."

Auyoon (10,11) recalled, "I loved the trip because it helped me with my scientific knowledge and was fun at the same time. The hall was beautiful and well organised, the scientists and professors were great at explaining hard topics. I especially loved Professor Andrea Stella's explanation that ice is an anomaly when it floats in drinks because normally frozen objects sink."

Bully 4U

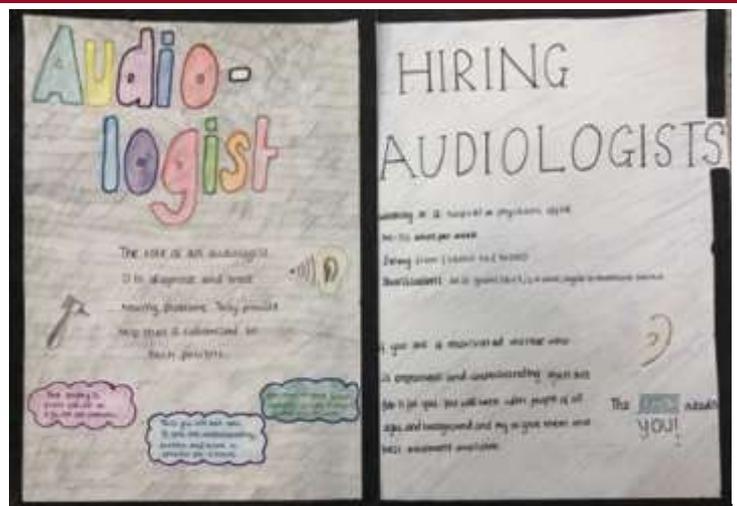
On 7th February we continued our exploration of online safety as our Year 7 pupils watched the Bully 4U theatre performances by the Loudmouth Theatre Group. Bully 4U is a series of short plays that explored and highlighted many concerns around sharing digital content, online safety and different types of bullying. Pupils can seek help within school if they have concerns, here are some useful website that can provide information and support pupils and families: Bullying.co.uk | CEOP | Childline | NOBullying.com | STOP CYBERBULLYING | UK Safer Internet Centre

Careers

Pupils in Year 8 and Year 9 have been taking part in the NHS Careers Competition. They have been learning that there is much more to working in the NHS than being a doctor or nurse. There are actually 350 different careers in the NHS, with such a variety on offer there is something for everyone's interests and skills.

Our pupils have spent time researching many of the different careers in the NHS. With creativity they have used this knowledge to produce a job advertisement and job description for their chosen career. Their entries have been submitted to the 'Step into

the NHS Competition', which is a national competition with prizes of tablets and gift vouchers for the winning entries.



Year 11 Parents Coffee Morning

The parent coffee morning was an opportunity to engage with Year 11 parents. This was in addition to parents evening..

It was also a great opportunity for parents to ask about information regarding up and coming exams and gain information about how to support their daughter through this very important period of academic life.

As a result, it allowed parents to engage with each other and have discussions regarding similar worries or concerns, members of staff were available to support parents with individual



needs. Parents felt reassured and went away equipped with the knowledge they required. We had very positive feedback; parents felt it was a great way of engaging with the school and meeting other parents. A presentation was held by Mrs Khatun in which parents were informed about revision techniques, how parents can help with exam stress for example; these are things that can really make a difference:

- Work with your child to find what revision style works for them.
- Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing.
- Make sure they are eating and drinking at regular intervals.
- Encourage them to take some time after revising to wind down.
- Reassure them – reinforce that you are and will be proud of them no matter what happens.
- Remain positive and hopeful!

Year 11 Revision

February half-term is a great opportunity for our Year 11 pupils to continue their preparation for their GCSEs as well as having some much-deserved rest. The pupils have been provided with a multitude of resources; these include revision guides, revision timetable planning materials, blank cards to help them to make their own revision resources, question papers and GCSE Pod information. Many of these resources were requested by pupils in post-mock questionnaires and we are delighted that we have been able to support many of their individual requests. Please encourage your daughter to use her time wisely over the half-term break and to make the most of the additional revision time.

Pupils have also requested further sessions focussing specifically on examination technique rather than content. We have scheduled a number of 'masterclasses' to take place at various times after half-term, including during STEAM Week (11th to 15th March). Please discuss examination technique with your daughter as using these skills is vital for securing success.

Handwriting is also an area which we have discussed with some pupils; an examiner's first impression will be a pupil's handwriting and it is so important that it is legible and easy to read. Sometimes the pupils find that as they get towards the end of an examination paper, their handwriting becomes increasingly rushed; please check your daughter's handwriting and remind them that, if you struggle to read it, an examiner will too.

GCSE Pod and Independent Learning

GCSE Pod is an excellent resource that supports the learning of all our pupils and especially valuable to support revision for our Year 11 pupils as one of a number of strategies available. During the last week 104 pupils from Years 7 to 11 have accessed GCSE Pod at various times. A total of 968 pods have been watched, with Year 8 watching 296 pods, the highest number by any year. English Literature, History and Biology have been the most accessed subjects. Our school's use of GCSEPod is currently being measured as part of the GCSEPod Games. When compared to schools of a similar size we are currently in third place out of 77 schools. Within our school, all pupils who watch 10 or more pods between Monday 11th February and Sunday 24th February will receive a merit, with the top 5 pupils in each year receiving a merit. Please continue to encourage your daughter to watch the short Pod to enhance her learning and to support revision. Further information for parents on GCSE Pod is available on [this link](#).

We continue to subscribe to 'The Week Junior' and 'First News' at school; these are popular resources which are available for all pupils to read in the school library. Mary Glasgow magazines are extremely useful for supporting the development of skills in Spanish and French. In addition, we have recently begun a subscription to 'Science and Nature' which will be of particular interest to those pupils considering studying Sciences after the end of Year 11. Pupils who demonstrate an active interest in learning beyond the classroom often perform much better in their external examinations.



Out of Hours Learning Reminders

We have a huge number of pupils taking part in out of hours' learning, with various clubs happening after school throughout the week. Should your daughter wish to join an after-school club she must return the consent form to the Admin Office.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-Up Maths • Homework Club • Science Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Catch-Up Maths • English • Health and Social Care • History Ambassadors • Homework Club • Mathematics • Science • Urdu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton • Catch-Up Maths • English • French • Homework Club • Mathematics Interventions • Mathematics • Science Trilogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art, Craft and Design • Catch-Up Maths • Fine Art • History • Homework Club • Mathematics • Netball Club and Fixtures • Science Trilogy • Urdu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • French • History • Mathematics

Please ensure that, if you are collecting your daughter from an after-school session, you come down the drive and into Reception; this enables us to supervise pupils.

Wider Learning Opportunities

Here, too, is a reminder of the 'Cultural Literacy' activities, which we recommended to our Year 7s before they started with us last September; you may like to try some of these activities over half-term:

- Visit the local library. Talk to your daughter about what she is reading, and whether she is enjoying it.
- Ask your daughter to help add up how much you are spending in the supermarket; can she work out the best offers?
- Walk around Edgbaston Reservoir. Look at the wildlife and the many activities taking place in the area.
- Ask your daughter to plan routes when you go out in the car or on public transport; this will help her to get used to maps for planning journeys.
- Visit Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Between February and May there is the fabulous opportunity to view drawings by the famous artist Leonardo da Vinci. The exhibition opens on 1st February celebrating the 500th anniversary since his death. More information is available on [this link](#).

- Encourage your daughter to help with cooking at home. Can she follow a recipe, and measure out all of the ingredients? Give her a set amount of money and see if she can plan a meal for the whole family within the budget.
- Encourage your daughter to watch the news at least three times a week on television; an interest and understanding of current affairs will help her to do well at school.
- Show your daughter how to read the gas and electricity meters. Can she work out how much gas and electricity you are using? Can she help to save money on the bills by thinking carefully about her usage?
- Visit a shopping centre, such as The Fort. What sort of shops are there? Why do people enjoy using shopping centres? Is shopping online different to shopping at a shopping centre?
- Grow some herbs or vegetables at home, either on the window sill or in the garden.
- The NHS recommends that children between 5 and 18 need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day; encourage your daughter to walk, run, cycle and take part in lots of different physical activities. There are lots of ideas about healthy lifestyles on [this link](#).

Keeping Healthy Mind and Body

4th to 10th February was Children's Mental Health Week. During this week our assemblies focused on the theme of 'Healthy – Inside and Out.

Through our reflections we acknowledged that generally, when we think about healthy living, we tend to focus on looking after our bodies and our physical wellbeing by trying to eat a healthy diet, exercise or being active and having enough rest and sleep. However, in order to be healthy overall, it is also important that we look after our minds and our mental wellbeing.

Our bodies and minds are very closely linked, so many of the activities we do to improve our physical wellbeing can help our mental wellbeing as well. This year's focus on Healthy – inside and our also highlights the importance of getting enough sleep and having sensible sleeping habits and routines.

The importance of sleep has been highlighted in recent research by children's charity, Place2Be. It identifies that 56% of children say they worry all the time about something. However, it is the children who get less than the recommended 9 hours of sleep who are less able to cope with the worries and are more likely to feel that their worries get in the way of school work. More information is available [here](#) and on the following links: [Tips for Parents and Carers](#) and [Tips for Pupils](#).

TOP REVISION TIPS



1 Start as early as you can

Cramming at the last minute is stressful and has limited success.



2 Make a plan

Work out how much time you have and how long you can spend on each subject.



3 Create a suitable space

Find a quiet spot away from distractions and keep your things all in one place.



4 Use methods best for you

Choose the most appropriate revision methods and try to use a mixture for best results.



5 Take regular breaks



It is possible to work too hard! Your brain needs a rest to help it process information.

6 Revise with a friend

Talking through what you've learned can help information stick.



7 Use past papers

These are a great way of getting used to the exam format and testing what you've learned.



8 Eat healthily

Certain foods boost your brainpower and will make you remember more.



See the pod at:

<http://www.gcsepod.tv/revision-tips>



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