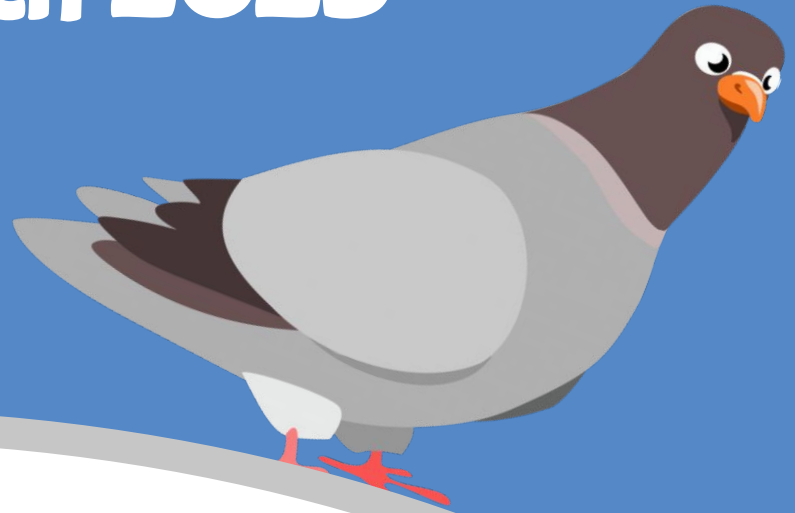


Parrs Wood Pigeon

March 2023



Welcome!

I am delighted to be able to share with you the second edition of our Personal Development newsletter, the 'Parrs Wood Pigeon'. This wouldn't have been possible without our dedicated staff planning, leading, supervising, risk-assessing and facilitating the trips, visits and clubs which allow our students to shine outside the classroom. I would also like to say a massive thank you to Ms Crispin and Mr Lau, our two incredible Enrichment coordinators, as without them, the 60 clubs we are able to run each week, as well as this wonderful newsletter, would not be possible! Personal Development is an integral part of what we do here at Parrs Wood. It allows students to develop their character, confidence and resilience, supports them in maintaining their mental and physical health and prepares them for future success, whether that's here in school or later on in life.

Enjoy the newsletter and have a wonderful half term.

Mrs Catterall
Assistant Headteacher: Personal Development

Parrs on Tour

Andorra Ski Trip

40 Students from years 8, 9 and 10 went on a ski trip to Andorra for 6 nights. With concerns over the lack of snow in Europe we were fortunate to have a downpour of snow on Monday and Tuesday which was amazing for the students as well as the slopes. Each day started with a 7am wake up call for breakfast before the dreaded 1km walk uphill to the ski gondolas. After a crazy hour of finding the correct ski boots, skis and poles 4 hours of skiing commenced in 2 hour blocks. The instructors were fantastic and quickly began to develop every student's skill set from the advanced group to the beginners. The joy, smiles and laughter from each student was amazing to see whether it was from the beautiful mountain views, students falling over practising skills or mastering a skill/techniques that was shown by the instructor. The dreaded 1km walk back to the hotel was not so painful after a quick pit stop in the local supermarket for a sugar intake as well as loud laughter talking about their day on the slopes. The evenings were filled with different activities such as pool, cards/Uno, quiz night, bowling and an awards evening celebrating the success of each student. The trip was a great success with memories that will last a lifetime. I am already planning the next ski trip for 2024.



Mr Dunne

Computing Live! Disneyland Paris

In February, a group of Year 10 and Year 11 Computing students made the trip all the way across the British Channel to Disneyland Paris! They were there to attend the annual Computing Live! event and hear from a selection of amazing speakers all about their careers and how they have used computing to change (or protect) the world.

First, students heard from Planetary Scientist Dr. Suzie Imber who spoke about her experiments with NASA and then described how she has used computing to discover mountains in the Andes that have never been climbed and then set out to climb them! Next Rik Ferguson spoke to the students about the world of cybercrime and the work he does to protect society from dangerous cyber criminals. Finally, Lady Marième Jamme was on hand to the talk to the students about her journey from teaching herself to code in Guildford Library to leading an international revolution in teaching young people across the world to code themselves! Don't worry though, there was also plenty of time to go and meet Mickey and ride on Big Thunder Mountain!



Day Trips

London Art Trip

Year 12 and 13 students visited London on Wednesday 11th January. Students saw a fashion photography exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery, the work of chewing gum man on Millenium Bridge and visited Tate Modern. While at the Tate they saw the retrospective of the famous french painter Paul Cezanne. All students had an inspiring day and managed to research lots of artists towards their coursework and exam projects.

Mr Davison



Computing Trip to Museum of Science and Industry

In February, 20 Y9 students visited the Power Up exhibition at the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. Students spent an hour exploring a wide range of video games from the last 50 years of video game history and were even able to learn about a range of video games that started life right here in Manchester. The students also had time to explore the experiment area in the museum and learn a little science along the way!

Mrs Moloney

Solutions Not Sides

This term Year 10 GCSE citizenship students attended a Solution not Sides conference at FC United's ground Broadhurst Park, for a celebration of what they have learnt from taking part in this conflict resolution enrichment activity. Earlier this term they took time to examine the history of the conflict, and recognise these conflicting views. They then had a chance to learn what life is like for a young Palestinian called Saeed and an Israeli called Mickal. We joined a video link live to Palestine and Israel where our students had a chance to ask their questions. Our students asked some thoughtful and insightful questions to Mickal and Saeed, this culminated in a consideration of how we can find peaceful resolution and a strong message from Saeed that this conflict is not a football game to be resolved with a win-lose solution but instead peace should win.

Ms Woodward

Greater Manchester Education Trust's Student Leadership Conference

On Friday 24th March, 10 of our Y10 student leaders were invited to attend the Greater Manchester Education Trust's inaugural Student Leadership Conference at the home of Manchester United, Old Trafford. The conference took place in partnership with the other three schools in our Trust (Levenshulme High School, Whalley Range High School and The East Manchester Academy).

Throughout the day, students worked collaboratively with other pupils in the Trust and explored a number of key areas. These included: the curriculum, including careers education, information, advice and guidance, personal development, behaviour, attitudes and safeguarding and finally challenges and solutions. At the end of the conference, our incredible student leaders presented their thoughts, views and ideas back to the Trust and school leaders and it's fair to say, they blew us all away with their confidence, creativity and character! There are already plans in place to allow the students to revisit this in the summer term in preparation to present the Student Charter back to thousands of pupils across the Trust's four schools in the new academic year. Well done to you all!

Mrs Catterall

"I found this trip incredibly inspirational and interesting. It was a brilliant opportunity to bond with students from the other schools in the Trust. Since attending the Student Leadership conference, I feel as though my confidence has increased; I don't find it as difficult when I'm asked to speak in front of others.

The conference gave us the opportunity to communicate with other students about how, as a group, we could work collaboratively to improve our school trust community for both current and future students.

One of my favourite parts of the day was getting the opportunity to listen to a former Parrs Wood member of staff and former professional boxer, Stacey Copeland. Stacey inspired everyone in the room and this encouraged us all to step out of our comfort zones.

Overall, I really enjoyed the experience and am so excited to come back together as a community to discuss the changes we have been able to make. If you're thinking about applying for a leadership role next year I would 100% recommend it; the opportunities presented to you are incredible - it's an amazing part of our Personal Development programme at Parrs Wood!"

Taiyla - Year 10

Music @ Parrs Wood

This term has been another busy one in Music, and we've thoroughly enjoyed working with all our students on a large number of projects. We began the term with the first rehearsals of our school production for this year, High School Musical. Students have been singing, acting and dancing their way through the scripts, and we're incredibly excited to be able to share their hard work with you in the summer term.

We have been to two concerts at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester by the Halle Orchestra. The first in January was a selection of the GCSE and A Level Music set works, and the second was the Halle Green Planet concert, celebrating music from around the world and outer space. Both were fabulous opportunities for our Parrs Wood students to experience a very wide range of orchestral music, performed by a world-class ensemble we are lucky to have on our doorsteps.

Two groups of year 9 students went to the British Music Experience in Liverpool to look at the development of British music since WWII. They took part in a seminar and a brilliant, interactive exhibition, and got to take part in the Gibson guitar exhibit at the end.

45 of our students went to see the Lion King at the Palace Theatre on Oxford Road. It really is like nothing else as a show, and we were spell-bound throughout! The intricacy of the costumes and staging were matched only by the incredible performances from the actors, musicians, singers and dancers.

Some of our boys took part in the BOYS SING! Workshop run by the Halle choir. This really helped the boys experience singing with their peers in the stunning Halle St Peters venue, and we can't wait to hear them bring their skills back to school.

In February, 20 of our musicians had the once in a lifetime opportunity to perform with the band and MD of the Lion King musical on stage at the Palace Theatre. They workshopped four songs from the musical in instrumental sectional rehearsals, had a Q&A session with the musicians, and then performed for families at the end of the day. This was definitely one for the memory banks; seeing our students on stage at the Palace was completely unforgettable!

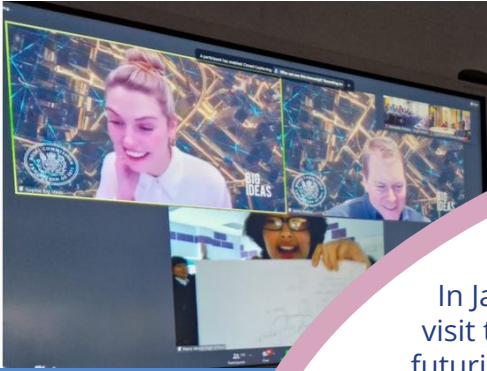
Our year 11 Music Technology students spent the day at the University of Salford experiencing university life and careers, as well as using their professional studio facilities to practice recording radio plays for their coursework portfolios. Great work guys!

Rehearsals have been continuing throughout the term for our ukulele group, choir, jazz bands, orchestra, steel pan groups etc. for our concert tour to Paris over the Easter holidays. Stay tuned for the next newsletter to find out about this and what the rest of our summer term entails; we can't wait to share the amazing work our students will be doing with you!

Miss Gocher



Events



Applied Futurist Guest Speaker

In January students undertaking GCSE Computer Science received a guest speaker visit to support them in setting future career goals. Tom Cheeswright is an applied futurist who tells compelling stories of tomorrow. He has worked with global brands across various industries to help them see what's next and prepare for the future.

He spoke to the students for half an hour about some of the work he has done and discussed how careers and jobs in the future are likely to change: he even designed his own job to match his strengths!

The students listened and engaged attentively and after the talk they asked many insightful and challenging questions that took the class from debating the merits of AI created content through to how to build an electric car. It was really interesting to hear about Tom's journey and think about how quickly the world around us is changing.

Mr Leak

AI Engineer Virtual Speaker

On 25th January we had a zoom meeting with a group of Year 7s and the world-renowned engineer Jamie Shotton. He is a Chief Engineer at the forefront of self-driving technology, which fitted perfectly with our recent lesson on Artificial Intelligence. 5000 schools took part in this event which included an inspirational discussion on the field of engineering, how to be an engineer and the exciting career prospects this could lead to. The students then had to design their own self-driving car on paper. The group were so excited when we were chosen to present one of their ideas to the rest of the UK! The students involved thoroughly enjoyed it and hopefully has inspired them to become future engineers that could change the world!

Mrs Moloney



Cyber Security Guest Speaker

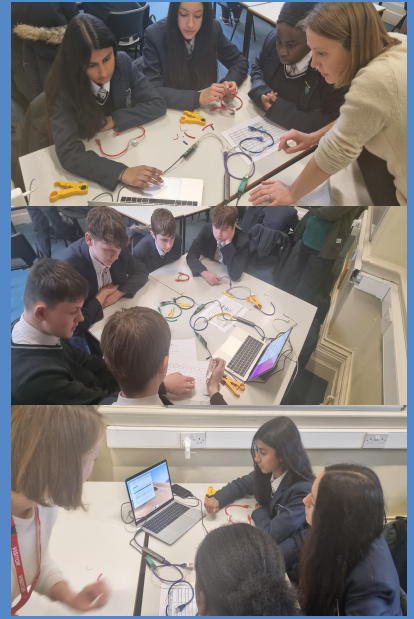
On 27th January, an expert in cyber security from the company callsign made a visit from London to tell the Year 7s all about cyber security. The pupils were fully engaged and they were given an insight into the many different careers they could have within this industry. They were also reminded of how important it is to keep their digital information safe!

Mrs Moloney

A Visit from BAE Systems

On February 10th a group of Y10 Computer Science students welcomed guests from BAE Systems who spoke to them about their jobs as Software Engineers working in cyber security. The students were then set a challenge to defeat a ransomware attack that had locked their computers down. Students needed to use all of their computer science knowledge to hack into a pair of computers and find the encrypted password. The winning students completed the task in under half an hour!

Mrs Moloney



Charity Update

It's fair to say that 2023 has, at times, reduced us all to tears: the earthquakes that devastated Turkey and Syria, the unprecedented floods that ravaged Pakistan and the heart-breaking war in Ukraine.

Yet, our pupils have been determined to show their solidarity to those suffering with some fantastic fundraising. From cooking some tantalising Turkish treats to baking buns and biscuits. Our whole school environment has come together to show you really can make a global difference in your local community.

Our students continue to inspire us every single day and have more fundraising plans over the coming weeks and months. We can't wait to get involved!

Mrs Catterall



Channel 4 Roadshow

In January, 100 of our Year 9 students were asked to take part in a practical workshop with British broadcaster, Channel 4. Pupils were asked to come up with ideas for TV shows and had to research, plan and pitch their idea to their peers. Staff at Channel 4 were incredibly impressed with their creativity! Watch this space, it seems we have some future stars here at Parris Wood!

Mrs Catterall



National Storytelling Week

Across school we celebrated National Storytelling Week, exploring stories in different languages through MFL, the stories within a painting in Art, and the development of stories from cave paintings to the graphic novel in English lessons. Students in Years 7-10 were also invited to write their own stories, developing their flair and creativity. Well done to all the students who participated- so many students took the opportunity to take part - we're still reading through all the amazing stories! From mini-novels, to comic strips, there's something in there for everyone. It's been great to see our students' passion for writing, and our core value of creativity at the fore.

Mr Smith

Intermediate UKMT Challenge

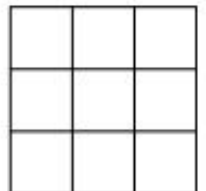
Students from set 1 maths in year 9, 10 and 11 entered the prestigious Intermediate UKMT competition. It was a fantastic opportunity to practise solving unconventional maths problems, a trait that would prove useful GCSE Maths and beyond.

The results were impressive: 35 Bronze, 16 Silver and 8 Gold. Six students qualified for the following round. A special mention goes to Sedric (year 10) for his exceptional performance in progressing to the Olympiad Stage.

Mr Lau

Have a go at this question from this year's paper!

To draw a 3 by 3 square grid you need 8 straight lines, as shown.



How many straight lines do you need to draw a n by n square grid?

A $n + 5$

B $3n - 1$

C $n^2 - 1$

D $4(n - 1)$

E $2(n + 1)$

Enrichment

Eco Warriors Club

A group of incredibly passionate year 7 students have created an Eco Warriors club this half term. Aiming to improve the school surroundings and school life for students, they have started to look at eliminating plastics from the canteen. Their efforts were interrupted when they discovered that this work is already under way – but this did not put them off. Instead, as the school is aiming to supplement the school complex with more bins to improve the students' ability of disposing of waste, the students will be running a 'Design your environmental poster' competition beginning after Easter. Winners of this competition will have their posters printed on the new bins all around the school. However, the students' efforts do not stop there. Focussing on other environmental causes close to their hearts include: encouraging students to reduce fast fashion by organising a clothes swap; reducing plastic waste usage in school; revitalising the school grounds to be more welcoming to wild life.

Ms Svobodova and Ms Mahapatra

Humanities Debating Club (every Tuesday lunchtime)

Humanities debating club goes from strength to strength with regularly over 35 students attending the lunchtime club in G35. This term we have been working on improving our oracy skills and in particular the skill of persuasion and eye contact. We have had some brilliant debates on topics such as: is space travel a waste of money? Should we bring back the death penalty? Can war ever be necessary? Students from year 7 up to Year 12 have been battling away in fierce debates culminating in a winning team chosen after each debate. Well done in particular to our new Year 7 cohort who have stepped up to the plate to make brilliant speeches in front of their elder peers.

Mr Carr and Miss O'Sullivan



'Start Your Own Club' Initiative

The enrichment programme here is thriving thanks to the efforts of all teachers and students involved. This term we launched a 'Start Your Own Club' initiative, providing students the opportunity to start their own clubs under the guidance of a teacher.

It's great to see students being very proactive: thinking of a club idea, finding students who would be interested in attending, persuading a teacher to supervise, promoting their club and checking room availability.

These skills will put students in good stead for when they leave Parrs Wood and engage in the wider community.

Clubs launched this term:

Table Tennis Club
Chess Club
Monday Blooket Club
Friday Blooket Club
Islam Club
Eco Warriors Club

Mr Lau and Ms Crispin

**View our current enrichment
timetable here:
(regularly updated)**



SCAN ME