



Parrs Wood Pigeon

Parrs Wood Personal Development and Enrichment Newsletter

Issue No. 6 Summer Term 2024



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Read about which longstanding school record was broken at Sports day

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Read about the spectacular Summer EPA Showcase

Dear Parents/Carers,

While the summer hasn't quite got the memo here in Manchester, Parrs Wood has certainly had its own bright spots this summer term! We've had so many incredible trips and visits, workshops, celebrations, guest speakers, events, and competitions I don't even know where to begin! I know our students absolutely loved Sports Day...as did the staff! It's one of the highlights of the year for us all; seeing your children, whether 'sporty' or not, competing for their form, pushing themselves to the limit, and digging deep, regardless of how tough the event is, is totally inspiring! A huge well-done to everyone who took part!

As we come to the end of the 2023/24 year, it's important for our students to reflect on their Parrs Wood experience. Have they taken part in a variety of extra-curricular opportunities? Have they represented the school as a leader, ambassador, or mentor? If not, please have a chat with them about getting involved in things like this from September. Not only does it look great on college applications when the time arises, but it's also a great way to meet new friends and develop new and existing skills. Keep an eye out for the new enrichment timetable which will be launching early in the new academic year. As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Have a great summer.

**Mrs. K. Catterall
Assistant Headteacher: Personal Development**

SNAPPING IN THE STREETS OF MANCHESTER

Art

Year 10 GCSE photography students spent the day learning about street photography. They each had their own researched themes, which they followed throughout the day. Many were looking to capture things like reflections, leading lines, urban decay, graffiti, and many more. This trip was an important step in students gathering images which will form part of their GCSE coursework submission. It was also incredibly rewarding and gave pupils the confidence to go out and explore the city on their own.



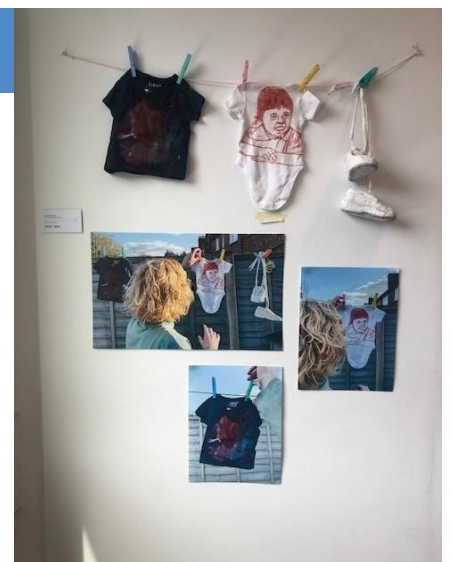
ART OUT OF THIS WORLD!



Year 8 and Year 7 students (in art club) have been creating mosaics linked to the Year 8 Urban Artist project. Students have used new media to explore how to create a mosaic Space Invader. This was inspired by the street artist Invader, whose creations have invaded cities all over the world, including Manchester. The aim is that our art invader mosaics can invade other areas around the school, publicising the creativity of Parrs Wood students and giving inspiration to others. This has proved a fun, interesting project for all students involved.

MMU DEGREE SHOW VISIT

Year 12 visited the MMU Art Degree Shows to see the amazing work of students on courses such as Fine Art, Art Foundation, Textiles, and Architecture. All students had a fun, inspiring day gaining ideas for their own work while building insight into creative careers in the arts. We also managed to see the work of former students Cameron Burke and Gaby Ankers, who had just completed the MMU Art Foundation.



LAW FIRM INSIGHTS

Law

Our aspiring lawyers in Year 12 took part in a workplace safari run by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and hosted by TLT Law Firm in Manchester. TLT is a national, commercial firm voted 'Law Firm of the Year' three years in a row. This was an eye-opening opportunity where students listened to a variety of talks about the different types of careers in law, how to make a successful application, how to stand out at interviews and assessment days, and the different routes into the career were explained: apprenticeship vs degree.

Students then completed a mock trial task, engaging in a debate about whether school uniforms should be compulsory for all students, coming up with fantastic arguments for and against.

We were then visited by some of the firm's legal apprentices and trainee solicitors for the students to network with and find out more about life as a lawyer.

To end this brilliant experience, we then decided to visit Manchester Crown Court to witness first-hand what the application of law looks like in reality. The students were very shocked to learn they could sit in on 'real-life cases'. To top it all off, we were very lucky to have a judge take some time, after his cases, to invite the students to sit in the barristers' benches and speak to the students about what happens in a courtroom, what it is like being a judge, and answer any of their questions.

The students really had an exciting, engaging, and inspiring experience.



SPORTS DAY 2024

PE

With the weather holding out and the pupils arriving ready for action, Sports Day 2024 was a resounding success! Our 3rd Sports Day on the school site was maybe the best one yet, with more pupils than ever before participating in the different events. The pupils competed in individual track and field events (and the relay) to earn points for their form groups. The pupils were buzzing as they competed, supported, and spectated throughout the day. The top 3 pupils in each event received gold, silver, and bronze medals for their efforts - we hope they have shown these off proudly at home.

For each year group, we had a winning girls' form group, a winning boys' form group, and a winning form group with all genders' scores combined. The results are below:

Year 7 Sports Day Winners

Boys - 7HHL (119 pts)
Girls - 7LJC (110 pts)
Overall - 7LJC (193 pts)

Year 8 Sports Day Winners

Boys - 8SHL (98 pts)
Girls - 8DJB (103 pts)
Overall - 8RJC (164 pts)

Year 9 Sports Day Winners

Boys - 9JPC (102 pts)
Girls - 9KZC (111 pts)
Overall - 9KZC (195 pts)



A special mention must also go to Rebecca Keatley in Year 7; Rebecca jumped 4.45m in the long jump! This earned her the gold medal but also broke a long-standing school record of 4.44m, dating back to 1982, when a C. Thompson jumped that distance. An incredible achievement and a record that may stand for even longer than the 42 years managed by the previous record!

Well done to all pupils and staff who contributed to making the day a success!

YEAR 8 CRICKETERS KNOCK IT OUT OF THE PARK

It was a successful year for the Year 8 cricket team, who reached the semi-finals of the Lancashire Plate before coming up against a very strong Audenshaw side. Great team spirit was shown throughout all the fixtures. Some performances of note include: Aarav Biala and James Gutteridge with the bat and Connor Sheehy, Jack Letven, James Gutteridge, and Aaron Gambhir with some excellent bowling throughout the fixtures.

STUDENTS ACE MOCK TRIAL DRAMA

Social Science

On June 5th, we took 26 pupils who study GCSE Citizenship to the Law School at Manchester Metropolitan University to take part in a mock trial. Abubaker Bhatti was on trial for the attempted murder of Humaira Begum!

Abbas Kazemi and Saheer Ali played the roles of the barristers brilliantly and proved to be very effective at questioning the witnesses. The whole trial was expertly managed by Judge Malaika Khan, complete with wig and gown.

The outcome of the trial was a bit of a shock, with the jury finding the cool and relaxed Abubaker innocent.

The whole event was a hugely enjoyable experience for all involved and a great way to see the concepts we have learned in school being put into practice in the real world.



CHESTER UNIVERSITY TASTER DAY

On Tuesday 25th June, the Psychology Department took a group of 14 psychology students to a taster day at Chester University. Students completed a tour of the campus as well as meeting some of the psychology lecturers at the university. They were also lucky enough to try some of the equipment used in current research to further understand human behaviour. For example, a water bath – this is used by clinical psychologists to help with the understanding of pain and the effectiveness of pain management strategies. Students also experienced substance goggles – these are used by forensic psychologists to show the inaccuracies of eyewitness testimonies when under the influence of certain substances.



SEASIDE SERENDIPITY

English

Zein Alfarhan (Y8) won the Portico Library KS3 short story competition with her fantastic story 'Seaside Serendipity' and was presented with her award during an event in June. A huge congratulations to her! I've copied the first paragraph below.

The train hissed to a sudden stop, releasing a puff of steam into the crisp coastal air. With a mixture of anticipation and anxiety, I gently stepped onto the platform, the worn stones cool beneath my feet. Whitby lay before me, its ancient streets winding like a labyrinth, the sea breeze carrying whispers of secrets yet to be discovered. The air smelt fresh. Unlike where I had come from. Breathing in the salty tang of the sea air, I felt relaxed. The wind calmed me. I felt alive as the breeze flowed against me.

READING MENTORS AT MANCHESTER LIBRARY

On Wednesday 10th July a group of our Year 9 students who have volunteered to be reading mentors for younger students travelled to Manchester Central Library to take part in an afternoon of training for the role. Working with staff and students from other schools in the Greater Manchester Education Trust, the Year 9s considered the qualities required to be a good mentor, and developed an understanding of the challenges some students face when reading. During the sessions they were able to work with peers from Levenshulme High School, Whalley Range and TEMA, allowing them to discuss ideas and develop skills with students from all four schools involved. The students engaged well throughout, and we're looking forward to seeing them put their skills into action next year with our younger pupils in school.



STUDENTS EXPLORE CANALS, CLOGS AND CULTURE

Humanities

At the beginning of July, we took 52 students from Year 10 and Year 9 on our Geography field visit to the Netherlands. The students had a fabulous time exploring Amsterdam on foot and on our canal cruise, learning about the history of the city and immersing themselves in the culture as we visited a clog and cheese farm.

While in Amsterdam, we studied urban regeneration and how the city is managing its growth by reclaiming land and creating new islands such as IJburg. We also visited Rotterdam and examined how the Port of Rotterdam has developed, from the Dutch East India Company to the destruction of the city during WWII, to the development of Europe's largest port stretching 42 km. We took a trip up Rotterdam's Euromast to get a bird's eye view of the city.

We enjoyed an evening stroll looking at the sand dunes and even managed to play on the beach. On the last day, we visited one of the Netherlands' many sea defenses, helping to keep the sea out. The students learned about the 1953 storm surge that affected many parts of the west coast of the Netherlands and southern parts of the UK. We explored how the storm surge barrier was built and how it works to help keep people in these low-lying areas safe during storm surges.

It was great to see the students enjoying themselves and discovering a new culture.



ELECTION FEVER

On Tuesday, 2nd July, the whole school took part in a mock general election, mirroring the actual national general election two days later. Democracy is one of our five key British Values, and the event was created to allow students to participate in democracy and get a feel for what it is like to vote. We had five brilliant student party leaders representing the five biggest political parties in England. The leaders, along with their campaigners, had created excellent campaign videos which were shown in assemblies prior to polling day. On the day itself, all students were given a ballot paper during form time and were informed where and when they could vote during the day. To mimic reality, the students had to visit a polling station themselves at break or lunch.



It was great to see so many students interested in politics and enjoying casting their vote on the day. I had many amazing conversations with extremely astute and politically minded students.

YEAR 9 LANGUAGE STARS SHINE AT ST BEDE'S

On 13th May, we took a small group of Year 9 students to St Bede's College, Manchester to take part in their "Languages Performance Morning".

Students had to perform a song, poem, sketch or a play. We had two teams and one solo performance:

Team 1 (Francesca, Clara & Erica) - Sang "Spanish or Vanish" by Duolingo, in Spanish.

Team 2 (Olivia, Katie B, Martha, Edie & Emily T) - Wrote and performed their own play in French and Spanish.

Team 3 (Amelie G) - Sang "Call Me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepsen in Spanish.

All groups were fantastic and it was an amazing experience to be a part of. Furthermore, Amelie won a prize for "Most Memorable Moment" as her performance really entertained the audience, who clapped and danced along!



Languages

BEYOND BABEL

A group of our Year 12 Spanish students went on a study morning to the Instituto Cervantes on Deansgate as part of the Beyond Babel Film Festival. We watched a movie called 'Chico and Rita' set in the beautiful country of Cuba and took part in a post-movie discussion led by Dr Carmen Herrero (Reader in Hispanic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University and co-director of the Film in Language Teaching Association). As always, our students were fabulosos and showed their best Spanish skills in front of all the other colleges. ¡Muy bien, chicos!



DISCOVER LANGUAGES DAY

Three of our Year 12 Spanish students went to the University of Manchester to take part in their "Discover Languages" day on Wednesday 19th June. This event gave Year 12 pupils an opportunity to experience life as a language student at the University of Manchester. Our students chose from taster sessions and lectures in Spanish, as well as in languages they have not yet studied, such as Russian, Arabic, and Catalan. Students also received useful information on careers involving languages and met current undergraduate language students. It was a very informative day, and our Year 12s were a fantastic example of Parrs Wood Sixth Form.

YEAR 8 SPANISH ADVENTURES

Our annual trip to Spain was yet another success this year! Twenty Year 8 pupils, alongside Mrs Garry, Dr Dore, and Miss López, had the opportunity to visit Murcia (Miss López's hometown) and enjoy the beautiful sunshine in the south of Spain! The pupils met their pen pals and had un tiempo genial! One of the highlights of the trip was the flamenco lesson we took part in! Barcelona next year!



STEAM CLUB EXPLORES MANCHESTER SCIENCE INDUSTRY MUSEUM

Science

In Science, STEAM CLUB enjoyed a trip to visit the Manchester Science Industry Museum. The students had a chance to explore different areas of the museum, including the Power Up exhibition, which looked at five decades of gaming with over 150 consoles; the Experiment gallery, where the students had a chance to see science in action; and the Science City workshop, where students got to discover Manchester's discoveries and how they impacted the world. This included a group problem-solving challenge!

Students' feedback was positive, and they said the trip was 'amazing!' Below are some photos from this educational visit.



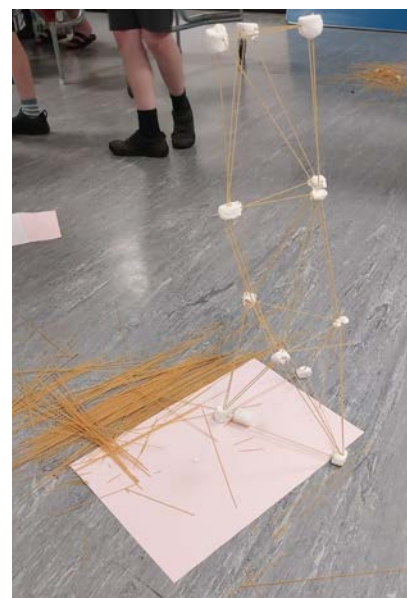
YEAR 5 PRIMARY MATHS CHALLENGE

Maths

This half term, our school hosted a Year 5 Primary Maths Challenge, welcoming students from feeder primary schools for a morning of exciting mathematical activities. Our event featured a Crossnumber Challenge, a Relay Race and a Spaghetti and Marshmallow Tower Building competition.

The Crossnumber Challenge tested students' problem-solving skills, while the Relay Race combined quick thinking with physical activity. The Spaghetti and Marshmallow Tower Challenge encouraged creativity and teamwork.

The event was a tremendous success, filled with fun and learning. Our student helpers ensured everyone had a great time. Congratulations to the winning team from St Catherines' RC Primary School, who excelled in all the challenges and demonstrated outstanding teamwork and mathematical skills. We look forward to more events that foster a love for maths and collaboration among young learners.



YEAR 7 GARDENING INTERVENTION

Inclusion

This week saw the completion of the Year 7 Gardening Group Intervention. Over the past year, several students participated in sowing seeds, taking cuttings, digging, raking, weeding, and finally harvesting the fruits of their labor. Last Thursday, four students came away with a bag of potatoes, carrots (some of which were yellow and purple), onions, and broad beans. This week, on our last day, we dug up some of last year's purple potatoes.

Sadly, our mentor, Kit Walker, will no longer be running this club. After a very long time working with the school and the Environment Centre, Kit has decided to take a well-earned rest. She will be greatly missed, although I think she may still be found pottering around. We wish her all the best and are really grateful for the many years of service she has voluntarily provided for our students. She has taught me loads about gardening as well.

As an addition to outdoor ventures, Miss Moore and I met with City of Trees this Wednesday. They are a local charity that specializes in planting trees and hedges in the urban environment. We assessed the entire school site for suitable areas that could benefit from more planting. The charity offers the trees, tool use, and expertise for free. It should be a great opportunity for staff and students to engage in creating an even greener space within our grounds. Hopefully, this will develop our responsibilities for a shared vision of ecology and teamwork. I'm very much looking forward to being part of it next year.

SEN TRANSITION DAY

We invited eight students per day to attend who had either EHCP or SEND needs. They were supported throughout the day by Inclusion and amazing Year 7 helpers. They completed fun, informative, and reassuring activities throughout the day and took a tour of the school. They even had their lunch in the busy main hall, then went outside to have some fun with Year 7 students. Some joined in with the football on the Astro.

Parents were then invited in at 2:30 to meet the Inclusion team and ask any questions. The students were relaxed and happy as they left at the end of the day, saying they had made friends and were looking forward to starting at PW. The parents gave very positive feedback and enjoyed having a cup of tea together.

EPA

We started our summer term with a concert tour to Bath! Forty of our Parrs Wood musicians, including orchestra, choir, jazz band, steel pans, and soloists, performed in the beautiful Royal Victoria Park bandstand and for local residents in a care home. We also visited the Roman Baths, the National Trust's 'Bath Skyline', the famous Pulteney Bridge, and the Circus to explore the city further. A great time was had by all, and we're really proud of all that our students achieved.

PARRS WOOD ON TOUR



KEYBOARD CLUB

Keyboard Club went on a trip to the Bechstein piano showroom in Manchester to use their practice rooms for rehearsal and put on a recital of the pieces they have been working on this year. It was fantastic to see their hard work pay off in a fabulous range of performances, and for them to play these world-class instruments.

ONE EDUCATION CONCERT

Our choir took part in the One Education Vocal Showcase concert at Victoria Baths in June, singing classics from the Beatles and Take That, as well as 'Seasons of Love' from Rent, and Adele's 'Make You Feel My Love'. It was a thrilling experience for our students to sing in such an iconic Manchester building and collaborate with other local schools. They truly raised the roof!

GUITAR ENSEMBLE

We have also launched a new guitar ensemble on Monday lunchtimes, offering further opportunities for our students who have instrumental lessons. We are looking forward to hearing their first performance in our Christmas Concert next term.



DESIGNING @ AVIVA STUDIOS

Flossie in Year 9 and Cuba in Year 8 helped design the new education space at the Aviva Studios for Factory International. We were incredibly proud to have their voices representing students, and impressed by not only their suggestions but also how confidently they explained their ideas to a room full of strangers, all of whom were adults they didn't know. They were fantastic ambassadors for Parrs Wood!



COLLEGE WORKSHOP

Some of our Year 9 and 10 Music students went to Loreto 6th Form College to explore the GCSE Music set works in a practical workshop. The students got to explore the Instrumental Music and Vocal Music set works from Areas of Study 1, 2, and 3, and see live performances of several of these pieces by Loreto students. They also had the valuable opportunity to see and play the harpsichord in person, which supported their understanding of how the instrument works. We look forward to seeing them apply this knowledge in their exam work next year!

BRASS GROUP

Our Parrs Wood Brass Group visited the Royal Northern College of Music to see their Brass Ensemble perform in a lunchtime concert. It was inspiring for our students to experience where hard work and practice on their instruments can take them, and to seize another wonderful musical opportunity on our doorstep.



SUMMER PIANO RECITAL

Our piano students wowed their audience with their summer recital featuring a fantastic range of pieces. We are proud of the hard work these students have put in over the year and how supportive they were of each other; a true demonstration of the 'Parrs Wood Music Family' attitude that we foster and encourage throughout the department. You can view the recital performances on YouTube using the link below. One of our Year 9 pianists also entered a competition with Manchester Jazz Festival to win a Yamaha piano from Forsyth's Music Shop in Manchester; we hope she wins!



Watch the Summer 2024 Piano Recital:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYDpZcb3mGs>

EPA SUMMER SHOWCASE

We finished the year with an INCREDIBLE set of performances in our EPA Summer Showcase concert, to a packed-out audience. The range of talent on show was amazing, and we are proud and honoured to have supported our students to perform at this level. For some students, it was their first live performance at Parrs Wood, while for others in Year 11 and 13, it was their last. We are eager to continue fostering a love of performance with all our students and wish our leavers the best for their futures! We also extend our thanks to all the instrumental teachers for their hard work in supporting and pushing our students; we could not be the department we are without them. The event also marked the launch of our Parrs Wood Piano fundraiser to purchase new pianos for the department and main hall. Fundraising will continue throughout next year, and we appreciate any donations via ParentPay or at our future performances.

We cannot wait to launch our school musical project for next year in the summer term of 2025. Stay tuned in autumn 2024 for the announcement of which musical it will be and when auditions will take place!

Follow us on:

Twitter: @PWHS_Music

Instagram: @Parrs_Wood_Music

