



Parrs Wood Pigeon

Parrs Wood Personal Development and Enrichment Newsletter

Issue No. 7 Autumn Term 2024



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Which team won the inaugural British PUBG Mobile Championships?

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Eco Club's mission to make Parrs Wood High School greener.

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to the first Personal Development newsletter of the 2024/25 academic year! It's been an incredibly busy but brilliant first term here at Parrs Wood. Condensing everything into this newsletter will be a huge task, but we'll try our best!

I'd like to start by saying a massive well done to our Year 7 students, who have made a fantastic start to high school. We hope you've enjoyed all the new and exciting opportunities that have come your way.

This newsletter is designed to showcase some of the wonderful things that have been happening both in and outside school. We offer over 60 free clubs to students each week, so please speak to your child about the clubs they're attending at lunchtimes and after school. You can find the enrichment timetable on the school website ([here](#)) . As always, if you have any feedback, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

We hope all our students and their families have a restful break, and we look forward to seeing you back in school in January.

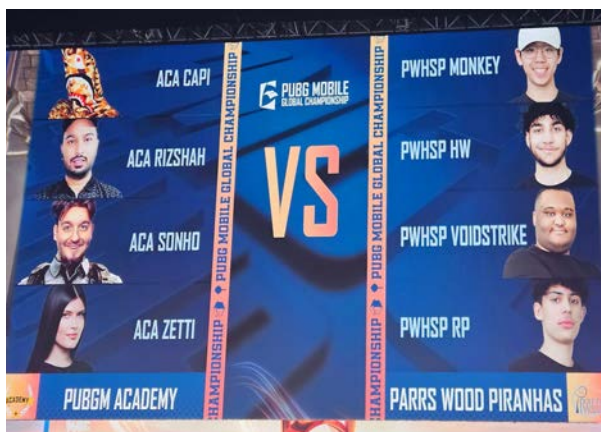
Mrs Catterall

Assistant Headteacher: Personal Development

PUBG MOBILE WINNERS

COMPUTING

This year, the Parris Wood Piranhas Esports team competed in the first-ever British Student Champs PUBG Mobile tournament. Over four weeks, we faced off against 12 other colleges from across the country. Our campaign was hugely successful, and we ultimately emerged victorious!



The four students who make up the team earned the once-in-a-lifetime prize of attending the PUBG Mobile Global Championship 2024 in London, where they competed live on stage in front of an audience of 12,000 viewers on YouTube.

In a thrilling match, we faced a team of four professional YouTube content creators. It was a very close contest, but the Parris Wood Piranhas once again triumphed, resoundingly winning the match.

The team had an unforgettable experience at the tournament, describing it as something they never thought they'd have the opportunity to do. We are all incredibly proud of their achievements and can't wait to see them go on to even greater success in the world of Esports!



English



FRIGHT NIGHT

Dr Dore read his own ghost story about the 'Legends of Parrs Wood House' on 17th October. A terrified 40 staff and students attended and £96 was raised for The Christie.

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT

As part of our National Poetry Day celebrations, 28 of our year 7 students took part in a Guinness World Record attempt for the Largest Poetry Lesson. We joined poet, Laura Mucha, in an online lesson, and students voted on various editing decisions to create a collaborative poem with many other schools in the U.K. and across the world. You can read the final poem [here](#). We are now waiting on the results of whether we broke the record!



Mrs Crispin

WRITING WORKSHOP WITH DIANA ANYAKWO



On 7th November, a group of KS4 students, including the top 20 school library borrowers in the key stage, attended a creative writing workshop on the themes of identity and home at Didsbury Library. The workshop was led by Diana Anyakwo, a local author whose novel for teenagers, *My Life as a Chameleon*, was longlisted for the Jhalak Children's and YA Prize 2024.

During the session, students experimented with poetry inspired by their own identities, created fictional characters, and began writing their own stories. Diana was highly impressed with the students' work, describing them as one of the most talented groups she had ever worked with.

Mr McKrell

GREENING THE GROUNDS PROJECT

At the start of this term, we wondered what we could do to help improve our environment. After careful consideration, we decided to plant some bulbs in our local area. However, we needed funding first – without enough money, we couldn't purchase the necessary materials. Luckily, the teacher in charge of Eco Club, Mrs Mahapatra, found a competition offering £1,000 in funding!

We didn't hesitate and sent a group to the competition, which was organised by our local councillors. Of course, we hoped to secure a good place to receive some money from the Neighbourhood Investment Fund, but none of us expected to win 1st place! Our group returned the following Monday feeling extremely proud, knowing we could finally start our bulb-planting project. The school was equally delighted, and our headteacher, Mr McElwee, personally came to congratulate us. Winning this competition was a huge step forward, and we were excited to get to work!

After receiving the £1,000 prize, we began planting a few days later during lunchtime. The whole of Eco Club gathered at the Environmental Studies Centre on our school grounds to plant bulbs in "bulb lasagnas" – a method of layering bulbs in planters so that some bloom earlier than others. We worked tirelessly throughout lunchtime and even 10 minutes into lesson 5. Although we're not certain all the bulbs will grow, we're hopeful they'll blossom into a vibrant array of flowers in the spring.

Watch this space to see what we'll be planting next!

Ollie Scowcroft Y9



BIOLOGY BAKE OFF

Students from all year groups, Year 7 to Year 13, took part in the Biology Bake Off to celebrate National Biology Week. A huge well done to all the students who showcased their creativity, inventiveness, and culinary skills to produce an incredible variety of biology-themed bakes. From eyeballs, brains, kidneys, and skulls to flowerpots and plant cells, the range of creations was impressive.

We'd also like to thank all the parents and carers who kindly allowed their kitchens to be taken over. In total, there were an astounding 43 entries, and every single one was fantastic. The Science department and pupils thoroughly enjoyed sampling the creations at lunchtime.

Mrs Kattou



FUTURE BARRISTERS IN ACTION

In November, 15 law students, or those aspiring to pursue a career in law, visited Manchester Crown Court to take part in the Bar Mock Trial Competition 2024! Students had spent weeks preparing for the competition. After being given two case studies, they independently researched the law, learned how to advocate, and familiarised themselves with court procedures.

Law



The day began with an introduction from some of the current sitting judges who were there to oversee the mock trials and offer guidance. This provided the students with a brief but valuable insight into the role of the judiciary.

The rounds then commenced, with each role in the trials being played by our students. These included barristers, who had to prosecute or defend; witnesses, who were cross-examined by students from opposing schools; and our clerk and usher, who ensured the proceedings ran smoothly. Additionally, we brought jury members who deliberated on the defendant's guilt.

As the trials unfolded, the student-barristers delivered opening statements and presented their arguments, witnesses were called to the stand, and the cross-examinations that followed were intense. Students showed impressive skill in pressing for details and challenging inconsistencies in testimony.

After each trial, the presiding judge provided feedback, commended the students on their performances, and answered their questions about the legal system. This experience offered students an invaluable opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the legal profession and develop their advocacy skills.

Drood Karim Y12



YEAR 10 COLOMBIAN CINEMA EXPERIENCE

Our Year 10 Spanish students had an enriching experience at HOME Cinema, where they watched *La Suprema*, a captivating Colombian film. Guided by the brilliant lecturer Carmen Herrero, the film provided a fascinating insight into Colombian culture and history.

Our pupils were a true credit to the school, demonstrating maturity, curiosity, and respect throughout the trip. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn from and engage with Spanish-language cinema!

Miss Lopez



SPANISH FILM STUDY DAY

Our A-Level Spanish students attended a film study day at HOME Cinema on Tuesday 26th, led by Carmen Guerrero, Principal Lecturer in Spanish Studies and Subject Lead for Languages at Manchester Metropolitan University. They watched a Spanish film called *La Maternal*. It was a fantastic day, with plenty of Spanish being spoken. Our students had a *día fantástico* and were a real credit to our college!

Miss Lopez



ENRICHMENT FAIR 2024

The Enrichment Fair took place on 18th September, showcasing a variety of exciting clubs and activities for students to explore. Clubs like *Dungeons and Dragons*, *DJ Production Club*, and SHOUT put up captivating interactive stalls that sparked students' imaginations and drew large crowds. Newly formed clubs in the enrichment programme such as Manga and Comics and Lego Club were also showcased at the event.



No Enrichment Fair is complete without the *Big Enrichment Quiz of the Year*, where form representatives battled to demonstrate their enrichment knowledge. The competition was fierce, but the atmosphere was filled with excitement and camaraderie.

It was truly inspiring to see the enthusiasm and school spirit as students eagerly explored new ways to enrich their school experience.

EXPLORING CYBER SECURITY CAREERS WITH GCHQ

Maths

Fourteen female students from Years 7 and 8 attended a virtual assembly hosted by GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters, the online division of MI6). The session focused on careers in cyber security and highlighted how mathematics plays a crucial role in many of these roles. Current employees shared insights about working at GCHQ, how mathematics has shaped their careers, what inspired their love for maths during school, and the benefits of the job, such as opportunities to travel. They also discussed how GCHQ fosters an inclusive environment, particularly for neurodiverse individuals. The students found the assembly both informative and engaging, with some already considering cyber security as a potential career path!

Mr Seymour



NUMERACY WEEK

From 25th to 29th November, the school celebrated Numeracy Week, focusing on building confidence in using numeracy skills.

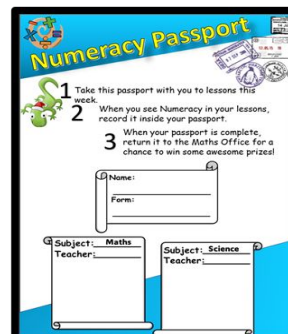
Students took part in a range of activities, including completing a Numeracy Passport, where they identified examples of numeracy in use around the school. The week also featured several competitions for students to enjoy.

Congratulations to the winners:

- **Hasib Nadeem** – Numeracy Passport Competition
- **Enoch Wong** – Guess the Number of Sweets in the Jar
- **Adam Salkini** – Advent Calendar Competition
- **8KJF** – Form-Time Guesstimation Competition

Numeracy Week was a fantastic opportunity to showcase how numeracy connects to everyday life. Well done to everyone who took part!

Ms Harrison



ART

STUDENTS VISIT LONDON'S TOP GALLERIES



On 30th November, our Year 11, 12, and 13 students visited London to see the Francis Bacon and Taylor Wessing Photography Prize at the National Portrait Gallery. Students then visited Tate Modern to explore their collection of modern art from around the world. It was a fun and inspiring day in the capital, with students gaining plenty of ideas for their coursework and exam work.

FACTORY INTERNATIONAL

On 13th December, Year 10 students visited the new digital exhibition by David Hockney. They gained insight into the artist's career through an immersive exhibition exploring his work, with commentary by Hockney himself. Students had an enjoyable time in the exhibition before creating their own photographic joiners inspired by the artist.

In addition, students listened to music by a finalist from the television show *The Piano*, who performed outside while the students had lunch. It was a fun and culturally enriching day for all involved.



MMU ART TALK

On 17th December, former student Hafsa Hamid visited to speak to Year 11, 12, and 13 students about progressing from A-Level Art at Parrs Wood to an Art Foundation course at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). She explained what an Art Foundation course entails, how to apply, and what life is like at MMU. Hafsa also showcased how her work has developed during the course and shared details of her new art exhibition in central Manchester.

CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION



Well done to all KS3 art club students for taking part in the annual Christmas card competition. We had some really excellent designs this year with Arjun Hingmire in year 8 winning the competition and having his card sent out as the official school Christmas card.

MUSICAL REVEAL

We launched the teaser campaign for our 2025 school production, and many of our students correctly guessed that it's going to be *Beauty and the Beast*! Over 150 students have joined the cast and crew, and we will be releasing the final cast list just before the Christmas holidays. We are so excited to work on a project of this scale again, celebrating all things 'performing arts'. Stay tuned for more information and ticket sales later in the year!

OPEN EVENING

The Jazz Band and Brass Group performed as part of Open Evening in September, spreading our love of music across the school. We always look for opportunities to showcase our students' musical talents, and we were once again so proud of the way they represented the department to visitors.

GUITAR AND WOODWIND ENSEMBLE

This term in Music, we kicked off with our newly formed Guitar Ensemble and Woodwind Ensemble, who began their rehearsals working on pieces by John Williams and Scott Joplin, as well as the Mario Bros theme tune! These ensembles are open to anyone who plays guitar or woodwind instruments, and you don't have to be having instrumental lessons in school. Please come and see your Music teacher if you're interested in joining.

ORCHESTRA BAKE OFF

The Orchestra started their own weekly bake-off challenge, and so far we had lemon drizzle, sponge cake, white chocolate blondies, marble cake, ginger cake, shortbread, and chocolate chip cookies. Judging in the final week of term was very difficult, but when the products were this good, did it really matter?!



MUSIC MARK AWARD

We are thrilled to announce that we have been awarded Music Mark status again this year. This recognition highlights the high-quality music education that students receive at Parrs Wood and the value placed on music within our broad and balanced curriculum. We are very proud to accept the award and will use all the opportunities it brings to further enrich the musical experiences of our students.



BLACK HISTORY CELEBRATION

Several of our ensembles celebrated Black History Month, and KS3 year groups studied black artists and composers within their curriculum lessons. All KS3 students completed a Black History Month listening calendar homework, where they explored music of black origin, including artists like Jimi Hendrix, Billie Holiday, and Queen Latifah. The Choir recorded a fantastic version of Bruno Mars' 'Count On Me', which can be viewed [here](#).

BBC PHILHARMONIC CONCERT

A group of 50 Year 8 students attended a BBC Philharmonic Orchestra performance at Aviva Studios in Manchester. The concert, themed around time travel, featured music from as far back as the 1100s up to the present day. It was wonderful to support our students in experiencing world-class music-making in Manchester.

CHRISTIE'S CONCERT



Our piano students performed on the beautiful baby grand piano at the Christie Hospital in Withington as part of their Festive Showcase. They played a range of solo pieces and duets, celebrating the festive season! For some, it was their first-ever public performance, and we are very proud of the self-confidence they demonstrated. It was great to share the festive season with our local community and bring some joy to the staff, patients, and visitors at the Christie.

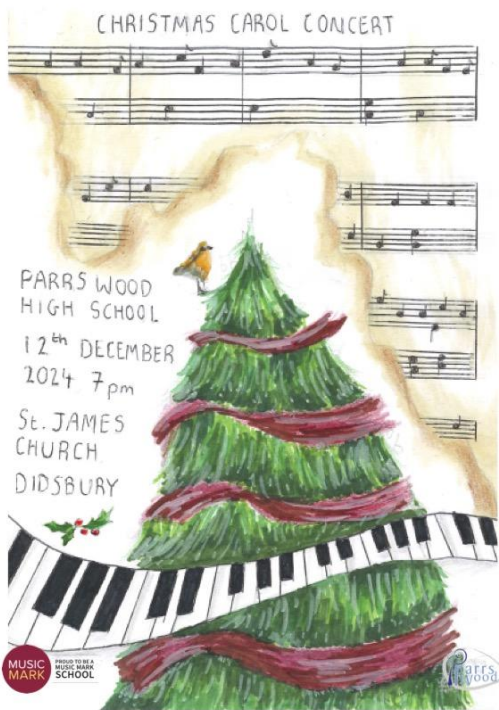
BRAINWAVE CHARITY FUNDRAISER

The Choir performed with the PopVox choir at Manchester Cathedral as part of the Brainwave charity's Christmas fundraising event. They sounded absolutely fantastic and sang *Rejoice Rejoice*, *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, and *Christmas Lullaby*. We are very proud of their incredibly high standard of performance and the professionalism they showed as ambassadors for the school in such a beautiful venue. Well done to all involved!



SENIOR CITIZEN'S PARTY

Jazz Band, Musical Theatre Club, and Choir performed at the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party, helping celebrate the festive season. The audience loved the variety of pieces performed, and it was wonderful to share the afternoon with members of our wider community.



DESIGNING THE PROGRAMME

Zara in Year 8 won the KS3 competition to design the front cover of the programme for our Christmas Concert. All of the entries were incredibly creative, making it difficult to choose a winner! All of our finalists were nominated for Star of the Week, as it was too hard to pick between them.

THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT

We finished the term with a sell-out Christmas Concert at St. James' Church, Didsbury. The standard of performance was the highest it's ever been, and we were blown away by the level of musicianship our students demonstrated on the night. We were also joined by the Year 4-6 choir from St. Andrew's CofE Primary School in Stockport, who we hope will be joining us as Parrs Wood students in the future. The concert featured music from *The Nutcracker* to Beyoncé, and everything in between. It was a true showcase of the diversity and inclusivity of music at Parrs Wood, and we loved highlighting our students' talents.

