

Olympus Newsletter

February 2024



Welcome to our first Olympus Newsletter

In our new newsletters we aim to provide you with updates on what has been going on, what is coming up and any updates to staffing and events.

This half term has been short and sweet, but we seem to have packed so much in. Students have been welcoming in the New Year and in some cases, sticking to their resolutions.

Year 11 students have been getting ready for the summer with the practice papers sat in examination conditions. They continue to amaze us with how well they cope with the nerves and pressure, and this was great preparation for the real exams.

Careers interviews take place throughout the year for our students and Chloe Parrett who was our Pastoral Lead until July 2023, has now qualified and taken up the role of Head of Careers for the South Schools. Last week she successfully led a Careers fair for the Croydon schools. It was lovely to see our students' asking questions and being encouraged by the exhibitors from the various industries.

Christina Russell - Headteacher

Contact: christina.russell@horizoncare.co.uk



New Look Olympus

Lots of students are looking great in their new Olympus sweatshirts and polos. If you wish to order more, please look through your emails and see the School Uniform email with form attached.

Over the Christmas holidays we received a paint job! The building is looking nice and bright with calm colours used to encourage learning and keep students regulated.



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National Apprenticeship Week 2024 at Olympus

Apprenticeships have an important role in our young peoples' lives and can provide them with so many opportunities. This week at Olympus we have been celebrating National Apprenticeship Week.

Students have learnt that Apprenticeships are a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences. Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 20% of their working hours completing classroom-based learning with a training provider which leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

On Monday of National Apprenticeship Week all the students participated in a live Webinar from Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK). During the session they learnt about the types of apprenticeships available and what they are like for students who are completing them. Some students asked questions on the live chat, and these were responded to via the presenter.



In PSHE and Work Skills lessons throughout the week the students developed their understanding further and completed activities, games and quizzes and have viewed apprentices sharing their experiences.

Students in Year 11 were given the opportunity to watch the 'The Big Assembly on Tuesday where they heard how apprenticeships can be a fantastic career choice from a panel of experts including some of the world's largest employers. Each day all classes battled it out to be Anna's Apprentice with a daily quiz.



Who will be Anna's Apprentice?

An assembly at the end of the week revealed the winning apprentices. The quizzes included working out the types of uniforms and equipment used in differing job roles, recognising workplace icons, and answering questions from their learning in PSHE and Work skills throughout the week.

Anna North - Assistant Headteacher

Links to apprenticeships

- [National Apprenticeship Week | National Careers Service](#)
- [Home - National Apprenticeship Week 2024, 5th - 11th February 2024 \(appawards.co.uk\)](#)
- [Apprenticeship resources for schools, teachers, parents \(amazingapprenticeships.com\)](#)



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Olympus joins Eco-Schools



This term has seen Olympus join Eco-Schools the International programme for environmental education. It helps empower students to be the change our sustainable world needs by engaging them in fun, action-orientated, socially responsible learning.

Students from our school and pathways have signed up to the challenge and we have had our first meetings discussing our action plan to make our school more sustainable. The two areas we will develop are Waste and the School Grounds. We hope to become more efficient at recycling and using more eco-friendly resources. Over the coming weeks we will be planting a range of fruits and vegetables and litter picking in our grounds and the local area.

Anna North - Assistant Headteacher

For more information visit

[Home - Eco Schools \(eco-schools.org.uk\)](https://eco-schools.org.uk)

Last Years Produce



Growing Potatoes



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Pathways Work Experience

We are thrilled to announce that two of our Pathways (Sixth Form) students recently had the opportunity to participate in a valuable work experience program at Godstone Farm. The hands-on learning experience allowed them to gain practical skills, deepen their understanding of agriculture and animal care, and foster a sense of responsibility and teamwork. The students were able to engage with a variety of farm activities, including feeding and grooming animals, planting crops, and assisting with farm maintenance. This unique opportunity not only enriched their educational experience but also provided them with a memorable and fulfilling experience that they will carry with them for a lifetime. We are proud of our students for their hard work and dedication during this enriching work experience at Godstone Farm and we look forward to seeing our students thrive and grow during their time at Godstone Farm.

Laura Williams - Teaching Assistant, Pathways



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Students use Skills Builder

Students at Olympus School and Pathways are using Skills Builder within their curriculum. This tells you a little bit about what it is.

What is Skills Builder?

The Skills Builder programme was founded on the belief that essential skills should be a normal part of a good education and workplace training and that everyone has the capacity to build those skills. The programme aims to build essential skills for everyone, at every stage of their lives.

The essential skills include: Speaking, Listening, Aiming High, Staying Positive, Creativity, Teamwork, Leadership and Problem Solving.



Why are we using it?

Essential skills are highly transferrable, they support us to do any job, anywhere.

Those with stronger essential skills have been shown to enjoy greater life satisfaction and can earn up to 12% more than their peers.

The Skills Builder Universal Framework can be used by, and for, anyone.

It's used by educators to build employability skills in their students, by companies to support career progression in their staff, by Impact Organisations and Community Schemes, and by individuals to develop their skills throughout life.

Abigail Harper - Pastoral Lead Pathways



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Home Office Workshop

The Year 10 and 11s and the Pathways students had a wonderful opportunity to participate in a workshop presented by the Home Office Outreach and Engagement Team.

While the presenter shared the different jobs that the Home Office provides the students asked many insightful questions and discussed the variety careers opportunities. As well as Home Office staff the students were able to talk to Border Control Agents who shared equipment they use including finger printing with ink and computer readers.

All the students were able to use the equipment and had their fingerprints taken. The students thoroughly enjoyed the session, and many discussed the job options that the Home Office provides.

Anna North - Assistant Headteacher



Dates for your Diary

28th February - Author Visit - Richy K. Chandler

1st March - St David's Day

7th March - World Book Day

8th March - Year 8 Visit to Careers in the Screen Industry

27th March - Last day for students ending at 12:30

28th March - Inset Day

15th April - Inset Day

16th April - Students return to school.



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National Storytelling Week

Olympus celebrated National Storytelling week and developed an understanding of careers in gaming with a live webinar from the National Literacy Trust.

During the event the students joined a panel of gaming experts, players and designers to hear about how storytelling and worldbuilding are crucial to the wide world of games. The panel consisted of BAFTA Young Designers award winner Aysheq Hussain, Hussain, Gamer and streamer Jay Justice from Black Girl Gamers, Rich Harper, Principal Technical Artist at Rare and Xbox Studio, and the Author and former game designer Gabrielle Kent, who hosted the event. They shared ways they promote a story, use certain techniques and craft worlds and how it is important in their careers. The students also had the opportunity to ask questions to the panel using the online chat-box. Many students at Olympus have an interest in Game designing for their future careers and enjoyed the webinar learning lots about this profession.



Pathways Student Council

The Pathways School Council has been formed with Mikey, Daniel, Courtney, George, Leon and Mason all taking up roles.

Top of the agenda for our January meeting was Eco-School. "Our plan is to arrange for recycling bins to be requested, for staff and students to have their own refillable water bottles, for a water cooler to be sourced and for students to identify an allotment for the growing of our own vegetables.

We are planning for a memorial bench for Emmanuel to be created in DT and located outside the Pathways kitchen in memory of our lost friend."



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Celebrating Success

As part of our assemblies each week we celebrate our students' successes through certificates and awards.

At school we have KS3 and KS4 students of the week, ½ term and term.

The certificates this ½ term went to

12/1/24 KS3 George

KS4 Kyrel

19/1/24 KS3 Cameron

KS4 Amelie

26/1/24 KS3 Alfie

KS4 Leah, Steven and Ronnie

2/2/24 KS3 Connie

KS4 Bailey

9/2/24 KS3 Remi

KS4 Ronnie

½ term award KS3 Alex and George

KS4 Ronnie

At Pathways the weekly awards are given for Student of the Week and Work of the Week.

19/1/24 Kain and Simeon

26/1/24 Mason and Courtney

2/2/24 Daniel and Mason

Congratulations to all the students!

Staff Training

School staff have focused this ½ term on teaching and learning and how we can incorporate different activities in the classroom to meet the needs of our learners. Warren took us through how to use Google Classroom properly with our students on their Chromebooks and Anna trained us on Effective Pedagogy and Assessment for Learning.

Pathways staff have focused on communication style starting with a look at working with young people who have a diagnosis of PDA or ODD. Staff attended training sessions on how PDA presents in school, and how we can adapt our teaching style and communication to support our learners who have (or present with) this diagnosis. Next term we will be moving on to look at adapting learning to support students with ADHD and dyslexia.



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Online Safety and Cyber Bullying

There has been a lot in the news recently about online safety of young people and we deal with many situations in school which involve chat apps on mobile phones such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat.

We do what we can at Olympus to sort issues between student, however, persistent harassment or bullying online, is a crime and should be reported to the Police.

There are a number of parent advice websites and a number of apps now available which can help parents/carers protect their children and/or allow them to monitor their child's usage of tablets and phones. We recommend [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#) to find out more about

 <p>Talking to your child about online safety Advice on how to start the conversation and get support if you're worried.</p>	 <p>Online wellbeing Get advice on helping children to manage their mental wellbeing when they're online.</p>	 <p>Parental controls Get advice on setting up parental controls to help keep your child safe online.</p>
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This website has some good advice on how to keep you child safe on chat apps [Chat apps | NSPCC](#).

We continue to educate our students about online safety and appropriateness of conversations in Computing lessons, PSHE/RSE lessons and Assemblies but realise that it is important for us to work in partnership with you. Our Safer Schools Police Officers Keith, Dawn and Lorna are working alongside us to talk to students and will be in again soon to do assemblies on this topic.

Please get in touch if you need any more information on this topic.

Christina Russell - Headteacher

Working Collaboratively

We have 4 Horizon values.

We are sharing our Collaborative value in this Newsletter.



Collaborative

We value our partnerships and work together to create innovative and sustainable solutions for young people

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We want to improve our collaboration with you and will be sending out further parental questionnaires to get you involved in our decision making and the future improvements to Olympus.

We thank you in advance for your responses and support.



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