

PINNER HIGH SCHOOL

INSPIRING LEARNING

ISSUE 2 WINTER 2017



SCHOOL
EVENTS

IN THIS
ISSUE



Favourite
THINGS



E-SAFETY

FORWARD!

The title is not a typo. It is customary for a Headteacher to write the Foreword to a school magazine or school prospectus. But this is not an introduction that welcomes you to a magazine. It is a reminder of the direction which we face, and the excitement with which we greet each new opportunity and challenge. Creating a new school is a chance to have a school as it should be rather than as it has always been. This term has felt like a statement of intent; but what does this mean in practice?

A few highlights stand out: our Houses, brought gloriously to life by the community who proposed names for them, and the students who voted on their names during our induction day. From 'Inspiring Local People', Roger Bannister won narrowly over Heath Robinson. Malala Yousafzai won from our list of 'Inspiring Women', and from 'Inspiring Diversity', Mohammed Ali, by a landslide. Or should that be knockout? Inclusive names from our community, finalised by our students, who also chose the House colours. This says a great deal about our ethos.

It is an ethos in which every student finds their strengths, so that at open evening every member of Year 7 took part in a choral performance in front of over 1,000 visitors. Able musicians were stretched with solos, but everyone took part, similarly the whole year group attended the Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre in September for our first school trip. Students built rafts, and tested the buoyancy of their creations, as well as their own. Really, they were building our community. They emerged from the water firmer friends than when they fell in, those bonds still with them now and into the future.

Since then students have worked in Houses through our programme of House Events every week. Tug of War, Paper Craft, Bake Off, Football, International Food Celebration, to name a few, have ensured a diversity of activities that enables everyone to find an area of strength, from which their confidence can grow and they can contribute to school life. It also leads to a closely fought House Cup!

Through our term of 'firsts' the Trailblazing students started well, and have continued to shine. Boys and Girls teams have taken a full part in the borough sports events. They were on stage at the opening of the Heath Robinson Museum and at Pinner Panto. Students were involved in the local Remembrance commemorations, participated in art workshops run at the Heath Robinson Museum, met an Olympic athlete who spent the day with us, and all had African drumming workshops and golf lessons, though not at the same time. All the students visited the 'Wonder Lab' at the Science Museum. In short, the students have brought Pinner High School to life with glorious vibrancy. It has been a pleasure to witness.

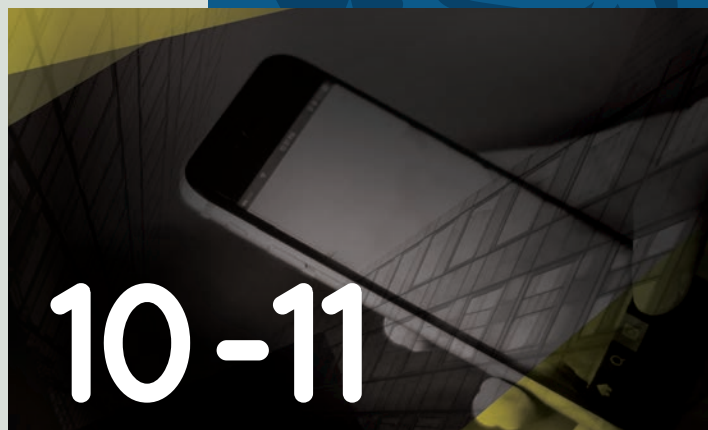
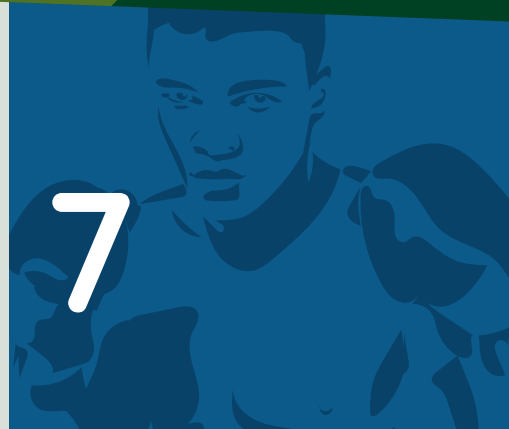
Looking Forwards I have so far ignored the benchmarks of success Trustees and Governors have set. Yes, student applications have increased by 20% for 2017-18. Yes, the Harrow Academies Trust conducted an extremely positive monitoring visit. Yes, the Department for Education spent a day observing lessons and analysing school performance, concluding we have had an excellent opening. To ignore these in an assessment of the future is not to dismiss their importance. They tell us we are on the right track. But the Trailblazing students provide the real assessment of this. When they say they enjoy school, and they enjoy lessons, I know that 'Inspiring Learning' is no longer a motto. It is an experience available to all students. Especially those who are looking forwards.

Chris Woolf Headteacher



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A WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF THE HARROW ACADEMIES TRUST

Dear Parents/Families, I have very much appreciated the time I have spent recently in Pinner High School. My initial experience of meeting leaders, teachers, support staff and most importantly the students was extremely positive. I was fortunate enough to see the students learning well in their subjects. They were all very engaged and positive about their learning experiences.

During the lunchtime I was able to speak with students about their learning at Pinner High School. The students were extremely positive about their learning experiences to date. They particularly conveyed how much they valued and enjoyed the last period of the day where they are in clubs. This is a great experience for all students in year 7 to learn different skills and is certainly very popular.

It is extremely pleasing that Jeff Hart from the Department for Education shared a very similar experience when he visited the school. Students, staff and Governors provided good evidence that Pinner High has started off very well. We can confidently say that the school is already part of the family of Harrow High Schools and has set the highest expectations for all.

Janice Howkins

Headteacher, Bentley Wood High School
Chair of the Harrow Academies Trust



A WELCOME FROM THE GOVERNORS

Pinner High School opened its doors to its first cohort of trailblazer Year 7 students in September 2016. As Governors we have to ensure the school's practice meets, and indeed exceeds, the required standards by a continued robust system of governance and lines of responsibility. We continue to meet formally monthly, at our Governing Body meetings during this vital opening term. The Governors are also involved behind the scenes offering strategic direction and support to Mr Woolf and his team in everything from inspections and learning, to supporting the choir at Pinner Panto evening!

I'd like to thank Nav Kullar, who was the Chair of Governors during the pre-opening of Pinner High School. During that time I was the Vice Chair, which is the role she now occupies very effectively. A hard act to follow indeed but I am reassured that she agreed to be my Vice Chair. We have also appointed two new parent governors and a school governor. The Governing Body will ensure we continually hold the Head accountable for delivering the vision and ethos of Pinner High School: an inclusive and excellent school for the community.

The students are happy and enjoy coming to school. They have fed this back to me when I speak to them and it has been reflected in our various external inspections and visits. The teachers are working hard to ensure that all children of all abilities achieve their potential by establishing a foundation of parent-pupil-school working together.

I look forward to the challenges as Chair of Pinner High School. As a GP in the NHS for over 20 years I have a passion for public service, and it is a pleasure bringing this to the world of education. I'd like to congratulate Mr. Woolf and his team for an excellent opening term. I know they are firmly focused on the future, and I am hugely excited by what that holds for Pinner High School. I absolutely recommend getting involved in the this first class school. We will be looking for more Governors as the school grows and I'd be delighted to tell you more about what this important role involves.

Dr Andleeb Ahmed

Chair of Governors, Pinner High School

MINDFULNESS



Part of the Headteacher's Challenge involves students taking part in different clubs two afternoons every week. In our first term of opening, students have chosen from graphic novels, Chinese Calligraphy, fashion, football, environmental, netball, guitar, creative writing, debating, gymnastics, amongst many many others. One activity that not many students have experienced before is Mindfulness. The step to secondary school can be a challenging one for some children, and with mental health provision increasingly stretched, pre-emptive strategies are all the more important. As exam stresses increase in the years ahead, a focus on positive mental health routines are great steps to success. Humanities teacher Hannah Lowder explains more about Mindfulness, and how it is used successfully at Pinner High School. Her club is heavily oversubscribed already!



During Mindfulness Club on a Monday afternoon we have been working on appreciating the work our brains do every day. We have been trying to be kind to ourselves and to allow ourselves to be in the moment by mindfully eating, taking time to take account of our bodies feelings in meditations, breathing exercises, mindful movement and finally by using a mindfulness app on the school iPads.

The students seem to find this practise helpful - particularly if they have ever had difficulty falling asleep!

"Before I go to bed I use the meditation we learnt in class to help me fall asleep. I also use this when I feel nervous, angry or stressed."

— Ava Callum 7MX

Some students also use the techniques we have learnt to help them to regain focus in lessons, or when they are feeling worried about the amount of work they have to do.

"I have an app that I use quite frequently. I use it in my spare time or between pieces of work or dance exercises. I normally use it in between pieces of work I have to complete."

— Lucy Walker 7AY

The students have done an amazing job so far and have been incredible at bringing this practise into their school lives. Hopefully we can take this forward to enable all of our students access to this fantastic tool.

Many of the students at Pinner High School who have attended the Mindfulness club have explained how 'happy, relaxed and calm' the practise has made them feel. Mindfulness is a type of meditation. The idea behind this type of meditation is to give our children the mechanisms they need to cope in times of stress and anxiety. Think about this - when we are sick we go to the doctor or rest to make ourselves well again, but what do we do for our minds when they are under stress? Do we care for our mental health as much as our physical well being?

By encouraging our students to care for their mental well being as much as their physical health, we as a school can help students deal positively with stress or anxiety so that they can cope with the challenges life throws at them. Mindfulness is a process of training your brain to break out of this automatic mode that all of us have a tendency to slip into, in order to appreciate the here and now. Mindfulness is a tool we are using to appreciate our feelings and thoughts in a compassionate and kind way, free of any judgement. By bringing our focus to how we are feeling both physically and mentally, we allow our minds to have a much needed break. We are no longer thinking about the events we have to complete in the future, we are no longer feeling burdened by the events from the past, we are taking time to appreciate moments in our life positively and thoughtfully.

Daniya's First day at Pinner High School

Let me take you on a journey, a journey filled with elation, a journey filled with inquisitiveness, a journey filled with anticipation and most of all, a journey filled with adventure...

The wind starts picking up in the forenoon, animals awake from their dreamless slumber and the sun decides to take a peek behind the barrier of clouds, Ring, ring, ring goes my alarm clock, I wake up with my eyes sealed shut; the first thought that comes into my head is the thought of a new school, new friends and new opportunities. Abruptly, I open my eyes, look outside and see houses shrouded in fog, clouds as white as the lines on a flag and trees swaying in the wind.

It's 8:00: I leave to go to school; along the journey of the car ride I think about all the new things I will have to do: new people, new studies, new buildings. To be honest with you, it was a new everything for me. As I stepped out of the car, positive and negative thoughts battled against each other in my head, every step felt like a year. I smiled from ear to ear (despite the shudder of my spine down my back). As I stepped into the school, I went to The Pinnacle. Rapidly, I sat down on the bench of my form class: 7AX. It was not long after we had to go to our form rooms.

In our assigned seats we got to know everyone, talked about what we were anxious about and what we were enthusiastic about. I genuinely felt like my bag filled with worries was now a bag filled with excitement. Everyone was new, but it felt like we were in this new school for ages.

Lessons flew by like a seagull in the beach; everyone was starting to make new friends and not long after it was break. Being the intrigued person I was, I decided to scout over the school. Eventually, break was over, lessons and lunch were over and it was time to go home.

The battle of negative and positive had come to an end and it was positive which had succeeded.

New people, new school, new building. It will be a new amazing 7 years. That was the final thought that came into my head.

Daniya Desai 7AX



LEADING THE WAY

When Headteacher Chris Woolf was planning Pinner High School, he was delighted to be inundated with excellent applications to be in the trailblazing group of staff that would open the school with him. 300 people applied for 10 teaching jobs. As a result, Chris was able to be highly selective. One of the reasons Harshini Selvendran stood out from this field and was successfully appointed Head of Maths was not only her First Class Degree in Mathematics, but also her Masters Dissertation on Student Leadership. Who better to lead our first generation of student leaders?

Ms Selvendran says: "Tell me I'll forget, teach me and I'll remember, involve me and I'll learn." This Chinese proverb encapsulates my approach to student leadership. It is appropriate not just because all our students study Chinese, but because the students of Pinner High School are at the heart of our community. We aim for high standards of teaching and learning, and seek to provide students with a wide range of opportunities through enrichment activities. We take great pride in our cross-curricular projects, giving our students a distinctive vision of how different subjects blend together in real situations. However, without our students having a voice it would not be possible to provide students the opportunity to stretch their skills still further.

To have a stake in the future of the school requires students to have a say in leading it. Supporting students to develop their leadership skills through different mediums: running house competitions, charity events, sports day and student feedback helps them to do this. Students have their own vision, how they want to see their school, what opportunities and activities they would like provided, and input into the development of their growing school. The leadership roles equip our students to develop their organisational skills, public speaking, managing a team and leading others. These are important life skills, as well as being desirable for employment and university applications.

HEARING FROM THE HOUSE CAPTAINS

"Student leadership is one of the things I was looking forward to the most in school. I loved the idea of responsibility that House Captains would have and I am very excited to be working with Captains and Deputies from other houses. I want to try my best to set a great example for future House Captains and Deputies. Just by saying hello, opening doors for someone, or by speaking to someone I've never spoken to in school. I can make a big difference and influence others to do the same at Pinner High School."

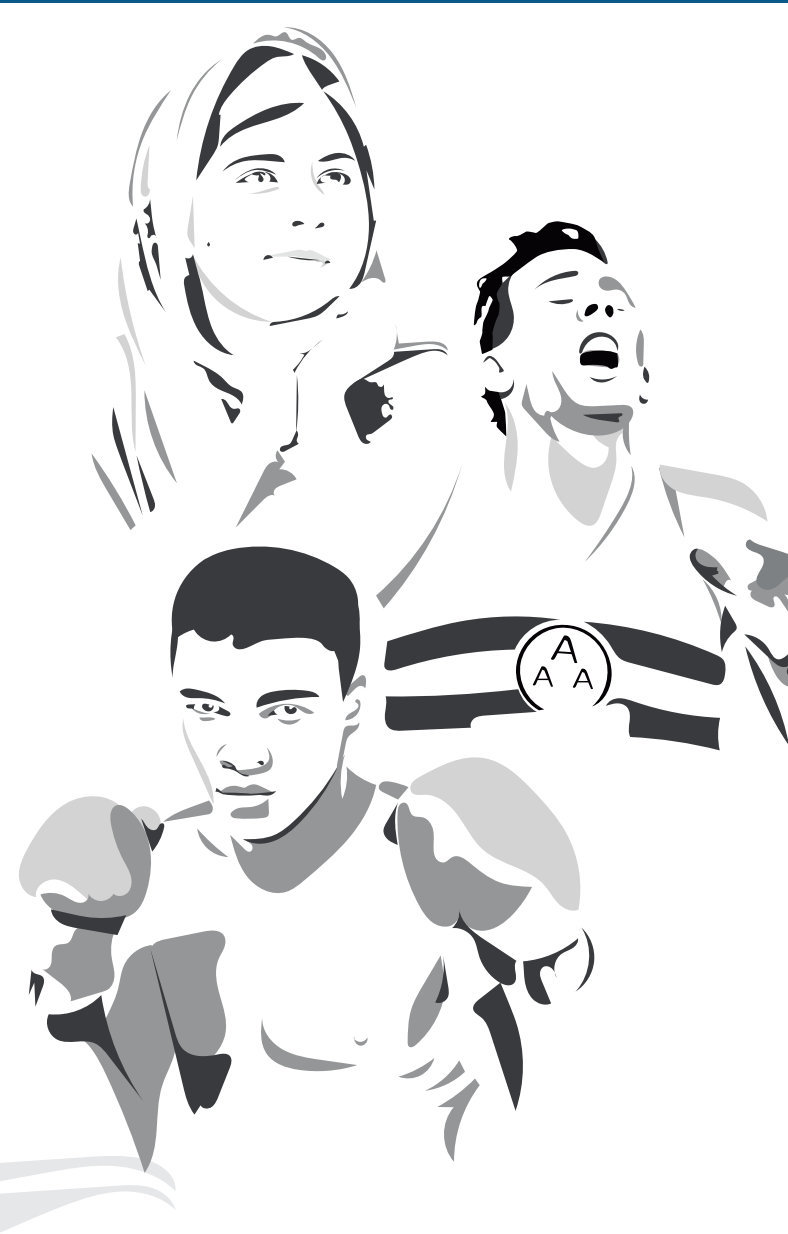
Remell Mason-Bell 7BX
(House Captain of Bannister)

"I am very excited to become House Captain, I am looking forward to being a role model for my peers as I am a trustworthy person. I play in the sports teams and enjoy working with other people. The chance to lead them and get the most out of school life is a really exciting one. Plus Ali House are brilliant and I am sure we are going to win the House competition this year, and go down in history as the first House Champions!"

Berna Magedonci 7AY
(House Captain of Ali)

"Congratulations to the House captain of Malala...Abu! Clapping of hands are still echoing in my ears. The excitement was overwhelming. Finally, my hard work and dedication paid off and now I am the first elected House Captain of Malala at Pinner High School. The support from the students and teachers has motivated me and given me the confidence to lead and help others. 'One child, One teacher, One book, One pen can change the world' said Malala. At Pinner High school, we have the opportunity as trailblazers to make the change through 'Inspiring Learning'. Right from the start, Mr Woolf and the teachers have been exceptional; encouraging, understanding and make learning fun. With their knowledge, skills and 'Pinner High Values', I believe together we can make Pinner High School the pride of our community."

Abu-Hurairah Sohail 7MX
(House Captain of Malala)



In our first term we appointed our first house captains each of whom have two deputies. Almost half the year group asked for application forms to be considered for these roles. As it turned out, we had a very high proportion of students with leadership experience: former Primary School Head Students, Sports Captains, Prefects, Class Representatives, Form Captains. The quality of applications was extraordinary. They went through a rigorous selection process: a 500 word written application, followed by an interview and finally a speech in front of their peers. Students and staff also voted through a ballot system. After all that, our first ever Captains were appointed. Their first task was to organise a House Event, which they did very effectively.

After the success of appointing our first House Captains we will now be providing even more opportunities for even more young leaders in more meaningful roles: Charity representative, Student Government, Travel representative, Community representatives and Sports leaders. All of the students involved exhibit the Pinner High School Values to the highest level, and it is a pleasure to be involved in the process.'

Favourite THINGS

Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre



Months before I became a student at Pinner High School, I had been on a HOAC summer camp, so this trip brought back lots of memories: the high ropes towering over the land and the storage crate full of the equipment we would later use to build our own rafts. On the day itself, my team, The Mozzarella Sticks, began with the tyre hole. Each of us had to force ourselves through a tyre, falling into the mud pit behind it as many times as possible in the time we had. We were cheering and singing our team song to motivate each other. Later, we had charades, word games and, eventually, raft building. Our instructors forced open the industrial silver crate and revealed all the contents that lay inside waiting to be used. We hurled the logs into the middle of the courtyard and set up our raft. We strapped on our big buoyancy aids and took our positions on the raft, each of us holding the oars firmly. Three, two, one ... go! Once we managed to stop spinning in circles, we steadied ourselves. Before we even finished our first lap I was overwhelmed with the urge to jump in; we were soaked when we came out. We did come in last place, but we had more fun than the others! Overall I really enjoyed going to HOAC and I can't wait for our next thrilling Pinner Adventure.

Finley Chamberlain 7MY

Chinese Calligraphy Club



When I first started Chinese Calligraphy Club, I realised that I was actually learning about a completely different type of culture. I got a feeling of freedom as we are not limited to anything while writing these Chinese characters. Mr Fang gives us advice to let our arms go free to draw the characters and even make up our own. We use equipment from China, giving us the best experience possible. We even get to write on the proper bamboo paper. If you like art and are very creative you will love this club and will never get tired of it. It is something completely original and we feel really lucky as this isn't something that many people get to do.

Thomas L'Homme Dorado

7MY

Reading



Seeing Pinner High School students reading in so many different contexts has been a real highlight of this first term. Students and staff alike arrived on our first day having read 'Wonder' over the summer holidays, giving us a shared reading experience to discuss with each other. Since then, students have participated in a whole school BookBuzz scheme, two reading groups and a book swap house event, not to mention the texts they have been reading in class. As reading posters are being displayed in every classroom and the library is stocked with an ever greater selection of books, my favourite thing at Pinner High School is the culture of reading.

Mr. James Allaway, Head of English

Pinner High School Values



My favourite thing about Pinner High is the friendly atmosphere I experience as I walk through the foliage-coloured doors in reception every day. It is evident that whatever these upbeat people do, whether with ease or with difficulty, the Pinner Value of Kindness is always within their grasp. One example of this was when I was playing table tennis. Abruptly I twisted my foot and I felt the rigid stones through my trouser and graze my skin. I vividly remember Mr Woolf making a joke about 'too much dedication'. Instantly I let out a fruity laugh and the sensation in my thigh momentarily subsided. This is my favourite thing about Pinner High School.

Mandeep Bharji 7BY

Pinner Students



I love how our students are dedicated to representing their school. We often have 5 times the students at training than can be selected for squads, which means I have some very difficult decisions! Students are so polite, and show that they appreciate the effort from staff and meet this by working hard, taking on board feedback and constantly showing improvement. Students involved in squads and training have become a band of brothers and sisters, showing selflessness for the good of their teams. This is inspiring; long may it continue.

I am also inspired by House Events; unique competitions where Pinner High School students are at their passionate and hardworking best. Each week every House competes in a variety of very different competitions. Each competition allows different students individual areas of expertise and talents to become prominent. Be it baking, decorating or a sporting competition the students always pull together with the common goal of achieving success for their House. The levels of support, and noise, is immense!

Mr. Ryan Surridge, Teacher of PE

Inspiring Learning



Pinner High school has a great learning environment. The transition between primary and secondary school is a time where students go through a lot of emotions, however at this school it has always been positive ones. There is something fun to do everyday such as house events or clubs and these teach us skills and boost our confidence to expand our growing minds. It is important for a school to have a great method of teaching whilst maintaining the positive atmosphere; Pinner High School has this.

At Pinner High, the method of teaching not just helps us learn more but teaches us to value the learning. The atmosphere of this school is completely different. It feels as if elation has conquered the school and a burst of joy is pouring down like rain. Furthermore, the lessons here are unique and challenging. For instance English; so far this has taught me how to explore and structure ideas. Intelligence without ambition is like a bird without wings. Knowledge is having the right answer. Intelligence is asking the right question. Here at Pinner High, we do exactly this.

Daniya Desai 7AX

E-SAFETY

Technology is everywhere: in every school, every classroom, every pocket. Pinner High School values the incredible opportunities that learning technologies and the internet provide, but sees it as a responsibility to empower students to make positive choices to keep safe online. With three-quarters of UK children aged 10 and above now owning their own mobile phone and just over a third of 5 to 15 year olds owning their own tablet or computer, it is important to afford e-safety the priority it deserves.

In November our first Deep Learning Day was devoted to this topic, where the students had a dedicated day of workshops on E-Safety. The workshops, in conjunction with social media experts Digital Awareness UK, focused on five key areas of E-Safety:

- Protecting your Digital Footprint
- Cyberbullying
- Online Grooming
- Sexting
- Privacy and Security Online

The sessions focused on educating and empowering students about the e-safety issues using drama, role play, debate and even rap lyrics, as you will see below! The creative approach taken allowed the students to understand the dangers online whilst also seeing the positives of the internet.

The students really engaged in the day and have been talking about how they will change their online behaviour, think before they post a picture or make a comment online and make sure they report anything that makes them uncomfortable. This was followed up by an information evening for parents about how to support children's safety online. Pinner Community Support Officers were also on hand to provide their expertise about this important topic.

Jennie Smyth,
Assistant Headteacher

"The E-Safety day was a great day for me to learn about the internet about what actually happens and what people say online. It was a good experience for Pinner High students to explore the bigger world of the internet. I learnt the most from the cyberbullying workshop as I got to discuss my ideas with the class. Cyberbullying can happen on social media, through text or WhatsApp or by making online groups. In the cyberbullying workshop I learnt that people may act nice and act like they are your friends, when they are actually much older than you or pretending to be your friend. Being bullied online could cause a lot of stress and anger for the person who is getting bullied. I also learnt that if you are getting bullied online to always tell a trusted adult, that is parents, grandparents, aunties/uncles or my teachers and save the messages or comments to use as proof of what is happening."

Kade Smith: 7MY

"When hearing about an E-Safety day taking place, many people were excited to find out more about it. I was enthusiastic to learn something new from the workshops. In my opinion, the most useful one of all was sexting. This was run by a workshop leader from Digital Awareness UK who was really good. Sexting is sending inappropriate pictures of yourself through social media. The sexting workshop was to educate the students about the consequences of it and to never try and end up in that situation. This particular workshop made you wonder why people get involved in sexting and the consequences if you did decide to share images. I really enjoyed participation and expressing my thoughts and opinions, and hearing others thoughts. I think this workshop was really successful with the message they tried to spread out to every student in the classroom, including myself."

Kamni Jethani-Marquis: 7AX

Here is one of the creative outcomes of the day to help students remember to stay safe online:

Stay Safe Online

*Downloading apps that are safe,
Could get you in a real bad state.
Passwords and people do not mix,
Confidential passwords are the ones that click.
Logging out – that is key,
Unless you want to end up in something nasty.
When adding strangers,
Looking out for the dangers.
Contact details and logging out too,
We're only trying to look out for you.
Stay safe online,
And remember this rhyme!*

Sienna Botha: 7BY and Sophia Bland: 7MY

**Be smart
on the
internet**



The students really engaged in the day and have been talking about how they will change their online behaviour

SCHOOL EVENTS



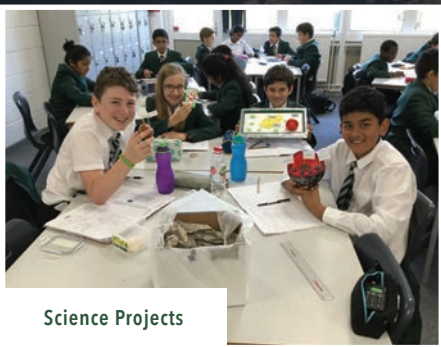
Papercraft House Event



Open Evening Choir rehearsals



Science Museum Trip



Science Projects



Girls Football Team



African Drumming Workshop



Remembrance Day



First Boys Football Fixture



Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre



Heath Robinson Museum Trip

GET SOCIAL



@pinnerhighsc

@pinnerhighsc went to the open evening and was blown away by the #passion in the headteacher #inspiring @MsBrownaboutown

Thank you @pinnerhighsc Trailblazers choir for providing the finale to opening @hrobinsonmuseum #heathrobinson @PinnerLocal

The children were captivated by Mr Woolf, head of @pinnerhighsc. A great insight into life after primary school! @WestLodgeSchool

@pinnerhighsc great to see our newest local school giving us more choral music on a magical night @PinnerAssociat @PinnerPanto

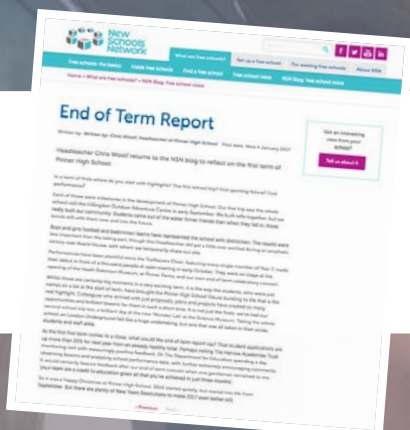


IN THE NEWS

"We are a new school and one of the things that makes us different is that we are not adapting to a wireless future. Sometimes people get hung up on the hardware, but it's more about the communication and collaboration that it allows," he says.

"We have books on a reading cloud, use an online homework app and encourage pupils to work hard together to edit material online and communicate with students from schools in other countries."

Chris Woolf, Headteacher of Pinner High School.
Learning to keep pace with digital natives. The Times, 12th December



Headteacher Chris Woolf returns to the NSN blog to reflect on the first term of Pinner High School

Chris Woolf, Headteacher of Pinner High School.
End of Term Report. New Schools Network, Wed 4 January 2017

JACK'S FIRST DAY AT PINNER HIGH SCHOOL



Was I nervous? No. Not at all. I was on the Induction Day, but now, I had nothing to be nervous about. And I'm no emotional rock; I get nervous A LOT! This time I was confident.

I woke up - kind of, because I was pretty much asleep and getting dragged out of bed by my mum - to a busy, rushed, exciting morning. I put my smart but roasting hot uniform on and sat down on the couch. My parents couldn't stop raving about how awesome I looked. It took me a moment to realise they were talking about the uniform. I sat there waiting for my best friend Akshay to pick me up as we were supposed to walk to school by ourselves. However, when I heard the doorbell and opened the door I was surprised to see that his dad was with him.

'I thought me and Akshay were walking to school by ourselves?' I said. Then out of nowhere my dad appears.

'We're going to take a photo of you and Akshay near the school gates in your smart uniform' Dad said.

'Wait, what?!' I said looking from my dad to Akshay's dad 'I wasn't told about this! Can't you just take the photo here?'

'OK, then.' Our dads said simultaneously. So they took the photo. Once they took it I said, 'OK, thanks, dad!'

'You're welcome - now let's go!' Akshay's dad said.

So it turned out they wanted to take ANOTHER picture when we got to the school.

As I walked down Beaulieu Drive, I saw loads of kids - the exact same as me - and I wondered 'Could any of these kids be my friends?' We all took our seats in the hall as Mr Woolf started to begin the assembly. I found myself thinking how much the school had developed from that abandoned lame corridor back in July...

We went back to class and did some ice-breaker activities and whoa! Was there a range of humans? There were people from England, Spain, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Palestine, Somalia...

I played football at break and lunch, where I got nutmegged TWICE (I know, severe and utter humiliation). Lunch was ok, but not as good as the lasagne on Induction Day.

Our first actual lesson of the day was English with Mr Woolf where we learnt about trailblazing. Then we did Science with Mr Surrudge, who hates being called Mr Sturrudge, because he is not a Liverpool fan. I instantly liked him. Akshay didn't because he supports Liverpool. When he said he supported Man United, I was put off learning Science. It turned out to be a pretty cool lesson though.

Then it was time to go home so me and Akshay could (FINALLY!) walk home alone.

Jack Addison 7MX



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Chris Woolf chronicled the pre-opening of Pinner High School through several articles published in *The Harrow Times*. This is his reflection on the first day, first published in the *Harrow Times*, and subsequently by the *New Schools Network* and the *Worshipful Company of Educators*.

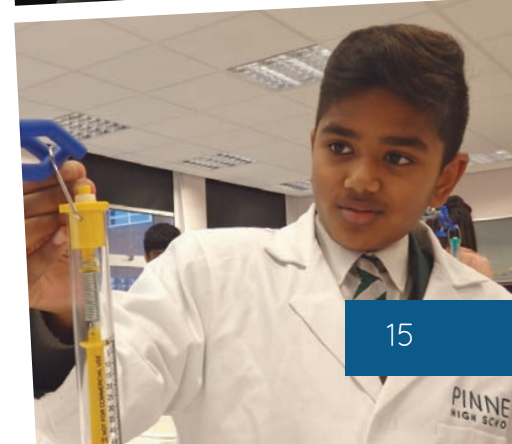
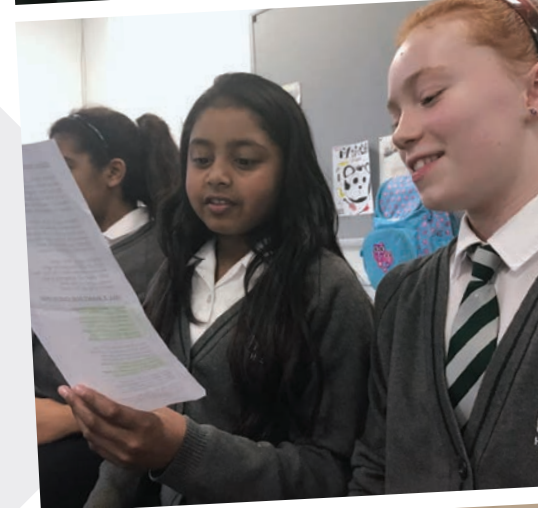
First days at school are often emotional, for both parents and children. And first days, it turns out, are also emotional for a very excited Headteacher.

From the corner of my eye as I was giving our hall, named 'The Pinnacle', the final once over, I glimpsed the first student coming down the corridor. It made me catch my breath. The uniform - previously pinned flat on my makeshift office walls, nine months ago an item on the agenda at a Governors' meeting - was suddenly alive in three dimensions, filled with a student walking purposefully towards me. At 8.25am on Tuesday 6th September, to Pinner and Eastcote, a new high school was born.

With balloons blowing in the breeze, streams of students pouring through the doors, and the smell of fresh paint still hanging in the air: our first day of term. The previous day I had received a handwritten letter from a lady named Margaret Stevenson. Echoing down the corridor were Margaret's recollections of her time at Pinner County Grammar, for she was a student at their first day, a trailblazer from September 1937, now aged 90, wishing the school every success on its opening. She enclosed her acceptance letter from Percy Raynor, the first Headteacher, reporting the news from the Middlesex Education Committee that she had been accepted into the school. Hot lunches, the letter said, would be available "for a shilling a day, or 4/6 for the week if booked in advance." The letter goes on: "to meet the laundry bill and the cost of kitchen help a charge of one penny a day, or three pennies a week, will be made on those children having packed lunches at school." Mr Raynor asked for a response to his letter by postcard. What would he make of my blog with a weekly readership of over a thousand, or a school Facebook page with more than 8,000 views for the last week?

So to this first day, where my laptop battery died during my first lesson and the first visitors to sit on the newly delivered reception sofa spilt coffee on it. But, far more importantly, a first day on which the children were keen to learn, quick to find their way around, and as thrilled as me to bring the Pinner High School Values to life.

In the letter inviting Mrs Stevenson to Mr. Raynor's own first day, he concludes: 'May I express the hope that your connection with the school will be a very pleasant one and that your child will have a happy and successful school career'. Even with the addition of Mandarin lessons, iPads, and online homework apps, the sentiment remains true today.





Andrew Pearce

P I N N E R

Andrew Pearce Property Consultants is an established Independent estate agents & Chartered surveyors specialising in Residential Sales, Lettings, Commercial, Property Management and Land & New Homes in Pinner and the surrounding areas of Hatch End, North Harrow, Eastcote, Ruislip, Harrow and Northwood.



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