

Autumn Term Newsletter

Eden Girls' School, Slough



Eden Girls

*Nurturing today's young people,
Inspiring tomorrow's leaders*

December 2018
Issue 10

The Autumn Term of 2018 has been full of exciting events and developments. Our pupils and staff have enjoyed success in a wide range of areas and have, once again, demonstrated their commitment to excellence in all aspects of their work.

We hope that you enjoy reading about the trips, activities and events that have taken place this term and the continuing growth and development of our school community.



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Principal's Message

All Praises to the Almighty, Lord of the Worlds and the Master of our fortunes: salutations to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the seal of the Prophets and the guide for all our actions.

A member of our staff team recently shared a link to a fascinating TED Talk by Dr Charisse Nixon which focuses on the importance of nurturing positive and healthy relationships. Dr Nixon observes how we are all hard-wired to make connections and how secure and meaningful relationships are an effective way to protect and support young people. She also comments, however, on the challenges posed to the development of positive relationships in modern times, particularly those related to the development of new technologies and social media. Dr Nixon identifies the four keys of empathy, gratitude, forgiveness and humility as essential components in helping young people to feel a genuine sense of acceptance and belonging.

Strong and positive relationships build trust which acts as a force binding a community together. As our school has grown to over 500 pupils and 60 members of staff this term, it is especially important that we continue to strengthen the relationships that hold the school together.

Once again, teachers, pupils and parents have worked together very effectively to strive for educational excellence. This is evident in our whole school attendance rate of 97.5% and in the mature and balanced approach that Year 11 and 10 pupils have taken to their mock examinations over the last few weeks. Teachers have worked very hard to ensure that pupils have had the best possible preparation and Year 11 learners have taken part in two revision workshops focused on creating revision timetables, developing exam techniques and managing stress. We have been similarly impressed by students in years 7, 8 and 9 who

consistently demonstrate a remarkable commitment to developing a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

The way that we treat others is at the heart of our STAR Values of Service, Teamwork, Ambition and Respect. Pupils and staff share a strong commitment to these principles which inform our day-to-day interactions. Throughout the term, learners have reflected on core concepts at the heart of the message of Islam including: sincerity, kindness, selflessness, and equality. Each of these ideas plays an important role in the way we learn to treat others. Pupils developed their understanding of the importance of relationships further through their work focusing on the key events in the life of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in *Seerah* week and through a range of workshops and sessions during our Spirituality Day. This learning has been enhanced and made memorable through visits to important local places of worship and as a result of meetings with faith leaders such as Reverend Mindy Bell and Rabbi Zvi Solomons.

Our young learners continue to develop as effective leaders who are able to build strong relationships. Our School Council has established its priorities for the year and have already started meaningful school improvement work. Student Sports Leaders have successfully facilitated a primary schools sports tournament and have attended Young Ambassadors Conferences aimed at honing their competences further. Meanwhile, pupils in Year 10 have been working in collaboration with Eton College and Heathfield School on the delivery of a fortnightly PHAB club,

supporting families with disabled young people. Leadership of this initiative is enabling our students to develop a range of skills as they work with their peers from our partner schools to achieve the aims of the project. We are also extremely proud of our Year 9 pupils who came runners up in the Young Artist Category of the Slough Youth Awards in November, fitting recognition for their powerful drama production on issues related to keeping young people safe. Our school partnership with O2 Telefonica continues to strengthen and provide additional opportunities for pupils in relation to careers information, advice and guidance and the development of leadership skills.

The collective commitment of pupils, parents and staff to serving others unites our school community. We are extremely grateful to our parents for their support for our charitable work. We can all be immensely proud of raising over £3500 for Children in Need, Macmillan Cancer Support and The British Legion this term. Similarly, we commend all who have got involved in the Year 7 First Give Project and our Festive Winter Gift Programme. Both initiatives are aimed at bringing support and joy to those most in need from our community.

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of our parents in providing effective routines at home to support learning and for reinforcing our expectations of high attendance and excellent behaviour. I would like to wish everyone celebrating a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing all members of our community in the new year after a well-deserved relaxing break.

"A vibrant and inspiring learning community"

"Pupils make rapid progress across the curriculum from their starting points."

Educational Excellence

O2 Telefonica

For the second year running, our neighbours and friends from O2 Telefonica have kindly given up their time to offer pupils in Year 10 a variety of different experiences in preparation for the world of work.

Each of the 100 pupils in Year 10 took part in a mock interview process where two volunteers from O2 scrutinised their CVs and asked them questions relating to their academic interests, personal strengths and experiences of working with others.



It was an eye-opening experience for the pupils and an opportunity for them to reflect on their future career aspirations. In addition to this three-week process that involved over 10 volunteers from O2, the company kindly invited a group of pupils to tour their Head Office on Bath Road. This exercise showed pupils the diverse opportunities that exist in working for a technology giant and the variety of routes into those areas of employment. O2 volunteers also delivered workshops at the school about careers in technology and a challenge that focused on creativity and enterprise. We have been extremely blessed to receive the support of the specialists from O2 Telefonica and look forward to continuing our work with them in the future.

London Architecture Trip

On Friday 28th September, Year 10 GCSE Art students initiated their theme for this year on structures by exploring the streets of London.

Pupils and staff travelled by train and tube which helped members of the group capture the true London experience and enabled them to take in the bustling atmosphere.

The aim of the day was to develop ideas inspired by the different

aspects of architecture and culture around London. The searches included Tower Bridge, South Kensington, Chinatown and Westminster amongst many other iconic landmarks.

The trip gave pupils inspiration for their exam portfolios. Learners collected data by taking photographs which will be used in lessons to develop photography skills. The images will also enable students to demonstrate the ability to experiment with a range of different media and refine their ideas.



Attendance

Excellent attendance is the foundation for outstanding achievement at school. I am delighted to say that our attendance of 97% last year placed the school in the top 5% of schools nationally.

Well done to all parents, pupils and staff for helping us achieve this high standard of attendance and for consistently demonstrating an impressive commitment to Educational Excellence.

Our attendance this term is 97.5%. This is an outstanding achievement for the school and raises the already exceptional standards set last year.

Congratulations to all pupils and Form Groups that have achieved our target of 97% attendance! A special well done to our 299 who have sustained 100% attendance this term.

School Library

The library is always looking for books. If parents would like to donate any books that they feel would be of benefit to the school please ask pupils to visit the library for more information.

Literacy Update

We are continuing our efforts to build student vocabulary through our weekly Word-of-the-Week sessions.

This year pupils focus on two words per week: tier two vocabulary (common but tricky words) and tier three vocabulary (more ambitious vocabulary) to help stretch and challenge students. Students have termly mini Spelling Bee tests to consolidate the words that they are learning each week.

Year Group Attendance

Year 11	98.3%
Year 7	98.1%
Year 9	97.8%
Year 10	97.4%
Year 8	96.9%

Form Group Attendance

7M	98.9%
9N	98.5%
11IM	98.4%
7A	98.4%
9I	98%
11AN	97.9%
9A	97.9%
8A	97.6%
7I	97.5%
10A	97.4%
10N	97.4%
10I	97.3%
10M	97%
7N	97%
8N	96.9%
9M	96.8%
8I	96.2%
8M	95.3%

We also encourage and motivate students to read with our Accelerated Reading Scheme. Students are rewarded with certificates and vouchers for reading a range of books from the scheme. Accelerated Reading 'Millionaires' are celebrated with a notice board in the library.

Students in Years 7 and 8 read during our weekly library sessions with librarians and teachers helping students to select books and take quizzes. Pupils are also supported through our Reading Buddy scheme which we have launched this term.

River Pang

Our Year 10 GCSE Geographers carried out a physical geography fieldwork enquiry this term, focused on the changes in velocity and depth along the River Pang in Berkshire. This is an essential part of their GCSE programme whereby pupils need to collect fieldwork data based around a natural physical process. This is a focus of the assessment in exam paper Unit 3: Geographical Applications.

The pupils were led by The John Simonds Trust organisation near Rushall Farm, Reading. Professional instructors guided pupils with equipment and locations. The pupils visited four different sites along the river covering a stretch of eight kilometres. They worked in teams and used specialist equipment to carry out data collection and recordings themselves. It proved to be a successful day as pupils found

themselves outside of their comfort zone and working in teams to achieve their aims.

Eden Girls' School, Slough has formed a long-term partnership with staff at Rushall Farm and John Simonds Trust who welcome pupils in Year 7 and Year 10 each year to support their learning around the Geography curriculum.



Living Rainforest

On Wednesday 5th December Year 8 pupils travelled to the 'Living Rainforest' in Thatcham for a Geography trip led by Mr Sandhu.

During the second half of this autumn term the students have been learning about different types of global ecosystems with a focus on tropical rainforests. The purpose of this visit was to provide pupils with first-hand experience, and a deeper understanding, of the rainforest environment as well as their plant and animal adaptations.



The Living Rainforest facility is home to a variety of animal species with professional guides to lead visitors. Pupils benefitted from an in-depth educational tour and collected research to enrich their Geographical and Scientific learning.

The visit proved to be a huge success for both staff and pupils who came away with a great deal of inspiration and knowledge. Members of staff at the Living Rainforest organisation also praised the behaviour and learning attitudes of the Eden Girls, a great testament to all involved on the day.



Character Development

Church Visits

As part of the Religious Education curriculum all pupils in Year 7 visited the Slough Baptist Church this term to learn about what is at the heart of Christmas.

Pupils watched a presentation titled "Christmas Unpacked" and



took part in a range of activities that will enhance and support their learning in the classroom. It was an enjoyable experience for all involved.

Earlier in the term, pupils in Year 9 benefited from our local inter-faith links, visiting three different churches in Slough.

Pupils explored different traditions within the denominations relating to the sacraments and brought to life the learning that they had acquired within the classroom. Pupils were able to witness an adult baptism at Slough Baptist Church and explore the outstanding architecture at St



Mary's Church, reflecting on the significance of the stories depicted within the stained glass windows. Pupils also had the opportunity to meet Reverend Mindy Bell in St Andrew's Methodist Church who spoke to them about her experience of leadership in the Thames Valley Methodist Circuit.

Sports Leaders

The PE department have had a successful start to the year with the application and appointment of this year's Sports Council and Young Ambassadors.

Students went through a rigorous application and interview process for their new roles overwhelming the members of staff involved with their insight in to leadership and how they presented themselves as individuals.



The newly appointed Young Ambassadors have had the opportunity to attend the Slough and Berkshire YA Conferences this term where they benefited from a range of activities such as public speaking workshops and sessions focused on how to build confidence. Our leaders worked with like-minded pupils from neighbouring schools and attended motivational presentations from inspirational speakers.

We look forward to seeing how the girls develop PE and sport within the school and wish them great success this year.

Our school football and netball teams have also enjoyed success this term in competitive matches and tournaments. The Year 7-8 football team performed particularly well

coming runners-up in the Slough Schools Football Tournament.

We are delighted to have been nominated for the Active Secondary School Awards. This achievement recognises our school's commitment to wide and inclusive participation in sports. Parents are able to vote for the school by following the link: gba.sportsuite.co.uk/forms/view/2370. Voting is open until 5pm on Friday 18th January.



Pupils explored misconceptions and how we can work together to build a safer and more tolerant world.

Tackling Hate Crime and Anti-Semitism

In November, pupils in Year 9 took part in a thought-provoking workshop about the importance of tackling hate crime.

The workshop focused on the tragic events that unfolded at The Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in October. Learners worked with Julie Siddiqui from inter-faith organisation, *Nisa-Nashim*, to develop a better understanding of the events that led up to this fateful incident where worshippers were targeted because of their faith and senselessly fell

victim to a hate crime while taking part in routine spiritual activities.

Pupils were given profiles of each of the victims and considered the impact the deaths of these victims had on the families, the community and society as a whole. Pupils explored common misconceptions in relation to hate crime and discussed ways in which we can extend our support and pay our respects to these victims. Learners discussed the devastating impact of hate and reflected on ways that people can support each other and stand together to build a safer and more tolerant world.

Following this session, our Digital Citizenship Leaders have worked with community organisation, Faith Associates, to



build on this learning and work undertaken last year in relation to tackling online hate crimes. They will be helping Faith Associates to develop a toolkit aimed at helping people understand their rights and responsibilities in the online world.

Armistice Day/ History Mystery

Eden Girls' School, Slough commemorated Armistice Day with a range of activities to promote awareness of this special occasion.

The Royal British Legion Charity was introduced to all the pupils during assemblies to promote their hard work in assisting families that have suffered from conflict from the First World War until today. As a result, the Eden Poppy Competition was launched. Each form was asked to submit their own poppy design. The winners were Maryam Imran, Hajerah Abbas, Aina Iqbal and Fatima Ali. This successful poppy design was then manufactured by the History Mystery Club members. Key Stage 3

tutor groups raised £150 for the Royal British Legion with 71 raising the most money. Well done!

Additionally, Year 8 pupils were assigned independent research over the half term to produce an artefact or research piece to commemorate the World Wars. Many submitted brilliant pieces of work such as trench and tank models, the contribution of Commonwealth soldiers, diaries, postcards, essays and information booklets. Teachers also shared their personal family history



connections and experiences war and conflict in a fascinating, informative and creative display. Throughout the week, classes were brought to view and read some of the teachers' personal testimonies.

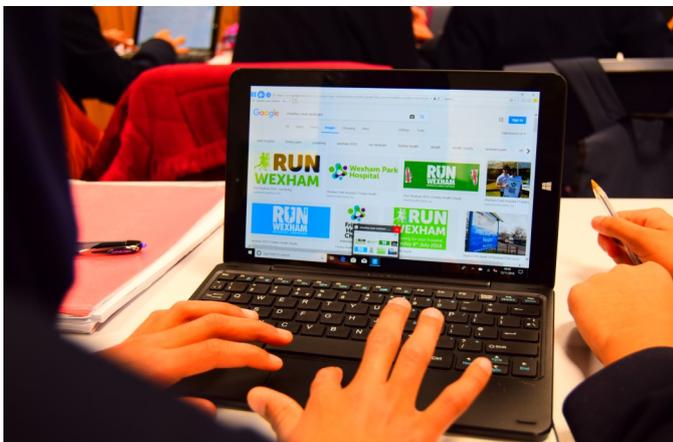
The History Mystery Club has been on going at 3.00pm—3.45pm every Wednesday after school. The club is based on pupil voice and the girls collectively decided to study the Ancient Egypt civilisation. During these sessions we have created a 3D pyramid for our club display. We have also studied the afterlife, deities and mummification process. We will soon turn our attention to the two mummies which have been recently discovered in an ancient tomb in Luxor. Although they are thought to be around 3,500 years old, it is remarkable how well they have been preserved.

Service to Communities

First Give

Year 7 learners have taken part in the First Give programme this term, an initiative which provides them with opportunities to develop their thinking as young people who use their skills to support local charities and make the lives of others in and around their communities better.

First Give helps learners build the leadership skills of



teamwork, effective research, and public speaking. Pupils have been using their First Give Coursework books to identify and investigate social issues in their local area such as poverty, mental health, disabilities, and domestic violence. Groups have then undertaken the planning and presentation of class pitches on their chosen charities. The students will now have the opportunity to compete for £1,000 of grant money for their chosen charity by advocating their worthy cause in the whole-school First Give Final in April where students will present their findings to parents, peers and judges. Good luck to everyone involved!

PHAB

PHAB is an organisation that brings together **PH**ysically disabled children and young people with others who are **AB**le-bodied in clubs held at venues all over the UK.

The latest club to be formed has involved the training and organisation of pupils from three schools: Eden Girls' School, Slough, Eton College and Heathfield School in Ascot. The club began life with fortnightly afterschool meetings in September where pupils from the three schools met to start the teambuilding process. Their hard work and collaboration has led to the successful launch of the club in November.

Children and young people with a variety of disabilities are now supported to take part in social activities and games in a warm, friendly environment.

The nine pupils from Year 10 of Eden Girls' School went through an application and interview process to benefit from this opportunity and, in return for giving up a few hours each Friday evening, are developing essential skills for life. They are also learning from the experience of interacting with people from a wide range of backgrounds with their wide range of strengths and needs.



Children In Need

Fundraising Week for Children in Need was a busy time at the school. Pupils clutching sponsorship forms in one hand and pens in the other, toured the school seeking funding for various challenges that they had set themselves. These ranged from being silent for a day to saving numerous penalties in a shootout.

The week ended with the selling of all manner of treats: cakes, biscuits, sweets and the most delicious milkshake drinks. This took place in the dining hall whilst the adjoining meeting room was transformed into a salon for makeovers, henna and face painting. All this kept coins jingling and notes exchanging hands so that the day, and week, ended with a remarkable **£3069** raised to support Children in Need.

In the run up to the fundraising and in the week that followed, pupils and staff members reminded each other of the transformative effects that charity work has: this particular charity has been instrumental in changing the lives of over half a million disadvantaged children and young people in the UK during the last year alone.



Parent Information Evening

This Term's Parent Information Evening focused on the following three topics:

1) Slough Public Health Nursing Service: Our school nurse, Mary Pugsley, took the opportunity to describe her role and the services that she provides to our school. She also outlined key features of the national Healthy Child Programme, which provides a robust evidence-based framework for the promotion of good health in children and young people. These services include monthly optional drop-ins for pupils to raise queries

regarding their physical and mental health and the provision of mandatory training for staff in medical conditions such as asthma, anaphylaxis and epilepsy.

2) Mental Health and Emotional Literacy Support:

Members of the school Pastoral Team delivered a session that started by defining mental health and exploring the stigma surrounding this serious issue. They then proceeded to run through the various ways in which the topic is addressed at school and introducing the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme, which they have all received thorough training in. Finally, they were able to make

recommendations for parents to support their children in maintaining good mental health through the implementation of strategies at home and in the community.

3) Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures:

Mr Chehab, Assistant Principal responsible for Pastoral Support, used the last session of the evening to run through the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, clarifying key definitions relating to this and explaining the processes in place at school used to ensure that incidents of bullying are always disclosed and dealt with in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.

Key Term Dates: Spring Term 2019

Start of Spring Term:	Thursday 3rd January 2019
Year 11 Parents' Evening:	Thursday 24th January 2019
Parents' Tea & Coffee Morning:	Wednesday 30th January 2019
Year 7 Warwick Castle Trip:	Thursday 31st January 2019
Mid-Term Closure:	Monday 18th February - Friday 22nd February 2019
Year 8 Parents' Evening:	Thursday 14th March 2019
Year 7 Parents' Evening:	Thursday 4th April 2019
Last Day of Spring Term:	Friday 5th April 2019