

Autumn Term 2024

Newsletter



Headteacher's Welcome

Welcome to our Autumn Term 2024 Newsletter. This has been an amazing term with students growing and developing. It has been lovely to see the Year 7 pupils settle in over the past term. They are really growing in confidence and are successfully navigating their way around the school. Well done Year 7. Our Year 11 pupils have been working very hard, sitting a series of mock examinations and some real ones too across a number of subjects. I am incredibly proud of the hard work and commitment which they have shown. Sitting examinations now help them to prepare for the busy exam season in the Summer term. At the beginning of term some Year 11 pupils attended a residential at The Old Pheasantry and had an amazing time. The feedback from Year 11 students was really positive.



Our Post 16 students continue to support the whole school through a number of initiatives. They support with The Felix Project, bagging up food items for families on a weekly basis. They continue to provide breakfast bagels each morning to pupils and operate the Drinks Hub in the front playground. Feedback from Post 16 families shows us that students are applying these skills at home too which is truly wonderful. A huge well done to them! We have celebrated a number of festivals including Harvest and Diwali and pupils took part in Remembrance Day events. We have done lots of fundraising for various charities too.

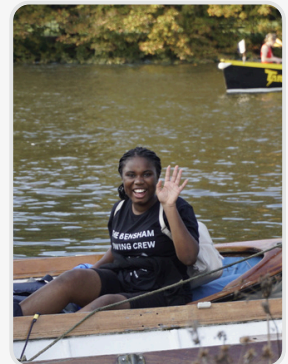
The PE Department has organised a number of sporting events. Pupils from across all Year groups have taken part and there were lots of medals and trophies won. The highlight of the term is our girls rowing crew who took part in the Great River Race. Congratulations to all involved. The Drama Department, in collaboration with Coram Shakespeare Schools Festival have produced another successful play, King Lear. Performing in a play takes lots of commitment, dedication and hard work. Well done to all the pupils and staff involved. Reading continues to be a high priority and the English Department organised some wonderful events including The Poetry Jam where pupils were able to be creative.

What makes Bensham such a successful school is the hard work and determination shown by staff, pupils, the Governing Board and the excellent relationships with families. Thanks for your continued support. I want to wish you all a very happy Christmas. Have a really restful break. Pupils return on Monday January 6th.

Fiona Robinson, Headteacher

PE - Great River Race

On the 21st of September, our Year 11 crew of Aishya, Amy, Habiba, Lucy, Natalie and Nayana rowed 22 miles along the River Thames. They finished in great time and overcame some really tough conditions, really doing Bensham proud. They rowed under a whopping 28 bridges and saw all the landmarks!



The crew raised money for Bensham Manor to support other students on their trips and visits. A successful Just Giving campaign saw them raise £400! Well done girls, what an effort!

The girl's participation was made possible by the generous support of the Palace for Life Foundation. The project has also been supported by the City Bridge Foundation who covered Bensham's entry fee, training sessions, life jackets, boat hire and wonderful rowing outfits. Marine logistics and assistance was provided by the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers. Thank you to all!



Alumni visit from Ensie

KS4 had the pleasure of listening to Ensie in October. He gave them an insight into how the college experience has been for him. He reassured students that they'll get support in their future learning and discussed the wide range of opportunities they'll have. Thanks for coming Ensie!



PE - Annual Fun Run

We were relieved to hold our Bensham Fun Run on the second time of trying, as the weather meant we had to cancel our initial date! It ended up being a fantastic event. Staff and students joined in to sprint, jog, or walk their way around the local Streatham-Croydon Rugby Club. Year 11 sport leaders took on the important role of marshalling the course and helped younger students get their way around. A big well done to everyone who took part!



English - Poetry Jam

In October, Adisa the Verbalizer came to meet our students, listen to our very own poets in the making and perform at our fourth annual Poetry Jam. Over 50 students wrote poems with over 35 of our students taking part! They wrote poems based on the theme of 'Reclaiming Narratives' for BHM and performed them in front of a live audience - amazing! Well done to everyone who took part.

*This is the diversity show
Makes you feel love like cupid's bow*

*Different cultures, beliefs and race
We find strength in each others
embrace*

*Celebrating difference, that's the key
Creating a world where everyone's
free*

*This world's a tapestry woven at
length
Coz it's in our difference, we find
strength*

*So together let our voices all unite
Together as one human race reach
new heights*

*Break down the walls of adversity
And celebrate our diversity.*



Cameron in Year 10, author of the fantastic poem featured on the left



Drama - King Lear

In Drama, a talented cast of Bensham students performed a unique spin on Shakespeare's classic, titled *King Lear: The Documentary*. As part of our Gold Shakespeare School's status, students not only express themselves creatively but also take the lead in directing, setting up camera shots, and crafting the screenplay.

Lydia Stevens, the Programme Coordinator at Shakespeare for Schools, gave the performance high praise. She particularly enjoyed the students' humor, with clever ad-libs that captivated the audience. She also commended their innovative use of varied shooting locations, including the school's adventure playground zip wire for one memorable scene!



Crystal Palace Party

We had the privilege of being invited by Crystal Palace to celebrate at their annual party once again. Our students had the privilege of meeting some players from both the mens and womens teams.



Art - Christmas Cards

KS3 students designed Christmas cards for the school Christmas Fayre as part of their Skills for Life lessons. The ideas were really impressive, and every single card sold out by the end of the event! Lina and Aliyah from Year 8 even had their designs chosen to be professionally printed - and they looked absolutely amazing!

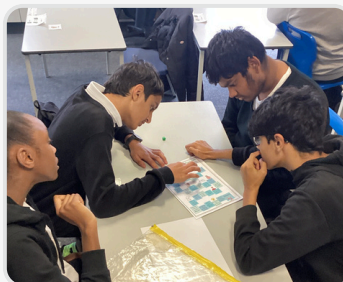


Peter in Post 16 was one happy customer at the fayre!



English - Communication Skills

In English 8EM, 10AA/CL and 11LBU have been working on their Communication, Speaking and Listening skills. They have become more confident when talking to others, taking turns and communicating clearly, working towards their independence skills for the future.



BHM - African Drumming

To mark Black History Month, Year 7 pupils had the fantastic opportunity to take part in an African drumming workshop this term. The event, filled with energy, rhythm, and smiles, introduced students to traditional African percussion instruments and rhythms.

Led by an expert drummer, the workshop provided a hands-on experience with djembe drums, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of African music. Pupils enthusiastically joined in, learning to create beats and rhythms that resonated through the school hall.

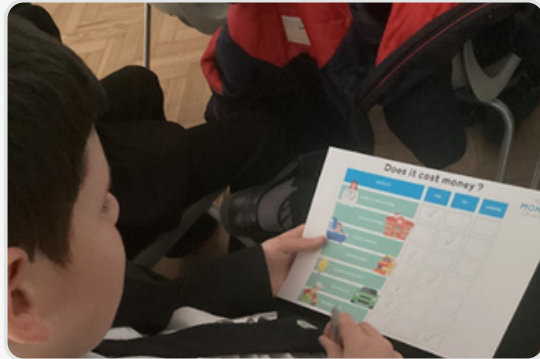
The workshop not only brought joy and teamwork but also deepened the pupils' understanding of the importance of Black History Month, celebrating the contributions and traditions of African culture.

Bensham is proud of its commitment to fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness. The Year 7 drumming workshop is just one of many events planned to celebrate diversity throughout the year.



PSHCE - Managing money

Pupils in PSHCE have been working very hard this term taking part in various workshops learning about how to manage money. The Money Charity kindly came in to support students understanding around money and savings. Pupils in 7PP were very keen and worked together identifying how to prioritise household expenses. There were lots of interesting debates about why eating out should be a top priority...



History - Dinosaurs and excavation!

This term, pupils in Year 7 and 8 (and some Year 9s) had the opportunity to take part in a dinosaur and fossil workshop, learning all about dinosaurs, fossils, primary and secondary sources and how to excavate. Pupils absolutely loved it – especially when they had the chance to meet a baby dinosaur and excavate fossils!



Mrs Robinson also loved meeting the baby dinosaur!

Old Pheasantry Residential

Our Year 11's get a chance to boost their independent living skills on the Old Pheasantry residential trip each year. Pupils get used to a daily routine, for example setting the tables and taking care of the washing up, ensuring meal times go smoothly. They also enjoyed exploring the local area and bonded through a variety of group activities on-site.



Bensham Band Performance

Bensham's Band made a fantastic return in December, performing their energetic song about the school rules, *Safe, Ready, Kind*, along with *Power in Me*. It was wonderful to see new Year 7 members showcasing their talent. Well done to everyone involved!



Deafness awareness assembly

In September, we had a visit from Chloe's and Sophie's Special Ears Fund (CSSEF) Charity to deliver a deaf awareness assembly to 7DD, 8VF, 8EM and 10KB. The assembly was delivered by Danielle and Brian, who is deaf, and accompanied by his hearing dog, Rebel. The students learnt about what it means to be deaf, how deaf people communicate and what tools they use to help them hear, including hearing aids and sign language. Both our hearing and deaf pupils were enthusiastic about asking and answering questions.



Here is some feedback from the students:

"I like how Brian sign-language perfectly"

"Deaf people use sign language and we learn that deaf people can have hearing dogs"

"I'm partially deaf so it was good for me"

Life Skills Cooking - Cookie Sale

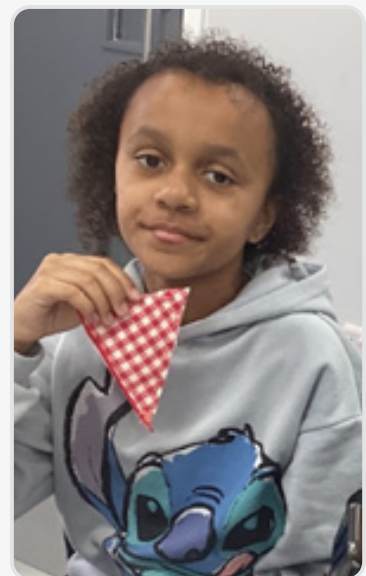


As part of their Post-16 Skills for Life cookery lesson, students baked over 150 cookies to sell in support of the Crisis at Christmas charity. Thanks to the incredible generosity of the Bensham community, they raised over £142! A huge thank you to everyone who contributed!



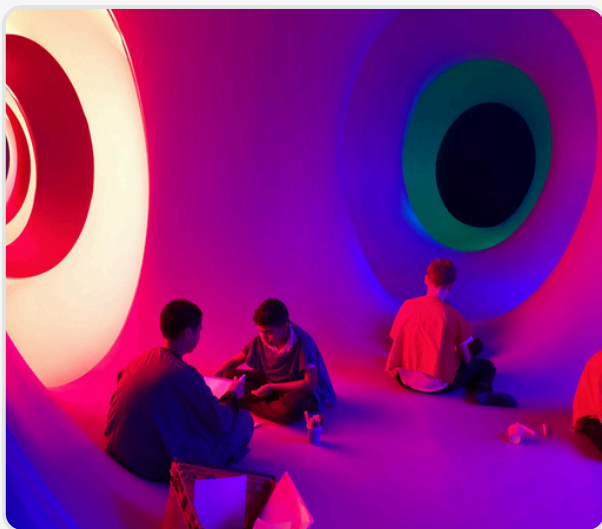
Lunchtime clubs - Sewing

This term in Bensham's sewing club, our members have been learning to work together on some projects for the school and staff! We have been busy making fabric bunting and fabric wreaths using scrap fabric material, to be environmentally sustainable. Our members have learnt how to do neat hand-stitching and tying secure knots!



Art - Colourscape

Colourscape is always a treat for Year 8s as they settle into to the Autumn term. It is a day of exploration and discovery as they get lost in the colourful maze! Well done to them for their behaviour and enthusiasm on the day.



Music - English National Opera

Classes in Year 8 and 9 took on the role of the composer in English National Opera's challenge "Finish This...". There was much creativity on display as students used a wide range of instruments in their pieces. Very impressive!



Outdoor Learning - KS3

The Year 7's have been busy learning about garden tools and how to be SAFE! Putting all their new skills and knowledge to the test working outside in the garden.



Year 8's and 9's have been super busy working on their enterprise projects creating some wonderful items to sell.



8MEJ have been building bird feeders out of old jenga blocks so repurpose them. They research our local wildlife to see what they need and where the feeders would be best utilised.



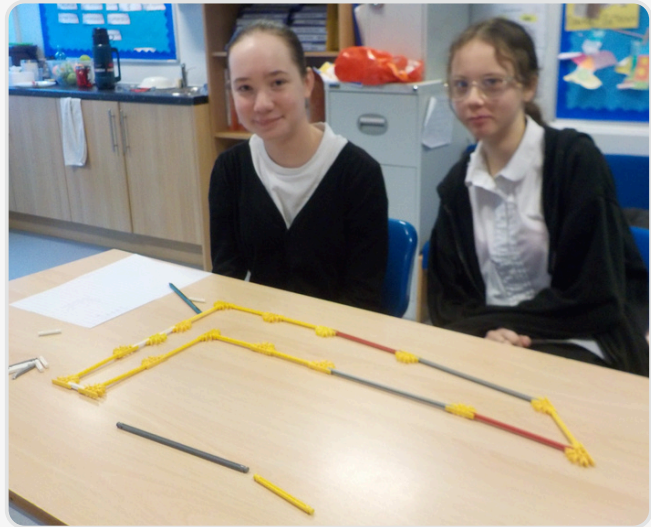
Post 16 Christmas Fayre

Post 16 held their Christmas Fayre for all students and staff on 5th December. After lots of hard work and preparation, the day was a great success! Post 16 pupils and team would like to say a big thank you to all staff and students who helped and supported their sale.



Maths - Learning to budget

Year 9 have been learning about money with a focus on budgeting. They have learnt how to keep to a budget and changes they can make if they overspend, something that is important with the cost of living currently. The class were split into groups with a £5.00 budget and had to create a track within this budget, they worked well in their team to stay under £5 when buying their track.

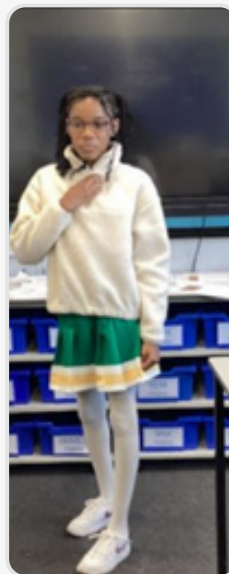


PSHCE - Careers dress up day

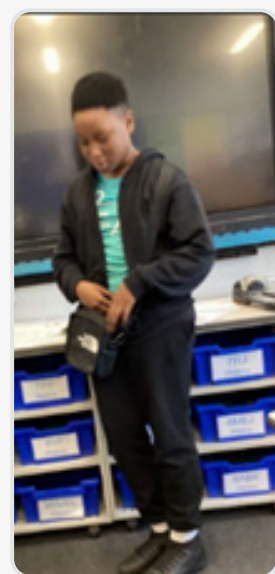
Students in Year 7 and 8 had the opportunity to learn about different jobs this half term, identifying key skills and qualification's needed for different roles. We also had a careers dress up day where pupils participated in dressing up as their chosen job. Below are photos of some Year 7 pupils explaining to the class the job they would like to do in the future.



Artist



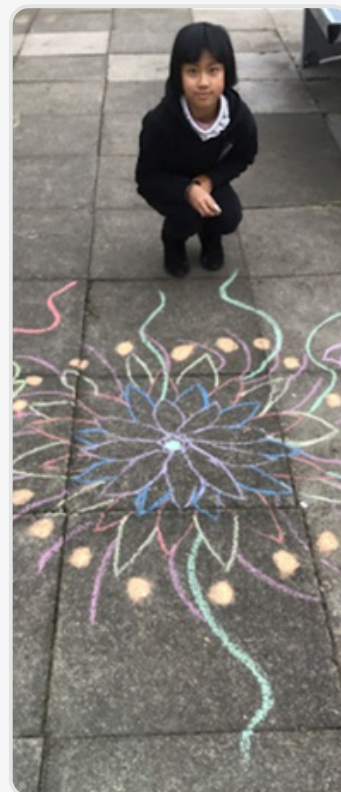
Cheerleader



Footballer

RE - Rangoli Patterns

As part of their RE lessons, the Year 7s, 8s and 9s spent some time creating their own Rangoli patterns on the front playground for Diwali using different coloured chalk. These colourful patterns originated in India, and are used during Hindu celebrations. They are associated with prosperity, growth and luck. The students worked very hard and thoroughly enjoyed creating these wonderful designs.



PE - Paralympic Games Fanzone



At the start of the term, Year 8s visited the Paralympic Games Fanzone at Battersea Power Station. The day included a programme of special events, activities, competitions and guest athlete appearances. Students tried out the range of Paralympic bikes and had a former paralympic athlete give them Boccia lessons.

Skills for Life

11JM run an enterprise during November called 'Sandwiches to Go' as part of their SfL accreditation. They visited Costco & Booker to compare food prices with supermarkets on the high street. Pupils learnt skills, such as costing, marketing, communication and lots of other vital skills used in the workplace.



Skills for Life, Post 16 & Outdoor Learning held a Christmas Fayre selling their Christmas produce. They all worked extremely hard, crafting, marketing & selling their produce. Well done!

During October, Year 7 had a visit from Croydon Salvation Army. Pupils learnt how their Harvest Festival donations are transported and distributed to Croydon families in need. Pupils also listened through song & play about the vital work the Salvation Army does. Did you know that the Salvation Army support Croydon fire services by making sandwiches and hot drinks when six or more fire crews are tackling fires?



Year 10 made an exciting journey from Thornton Heath to West Croydon to consolidate skills learnt in how to plan a journey. They travelled by train to West Croydon then caught a 450 bus back to school. This helped to boost their confidence in planning and using public transport independently.

Merry Christmas from Bensham!

Families, we wish you all a joyous Christmas and a wonderful New Year! Pupils have been celebrating Christmas throughout the month of December at Bensham and thanks to Jayne, TA, for her wonderful Reception display. Big thanks also to teacher Becky, for her organisation of the Christmas raffle and it's prizes!



The Bensham Choir brought the Christmas spirit to life during our annual Christmas Dinner. It was the first time students had the pleasure of this performance, and we are excited to make it a tradition for years to come!

