



# Vanguard School

## End of Term Newsletter

Tuesday 22nd July, 2025



### Principal note

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of term, and what a busy one it has been. Following our inspection, which the report we will share with you once received, it has been good to see so many students and families attending our recent events. One of the highlights of the Summer Term was our annual Arts Festival, which was attended by some local schools and prospective pupils. We were also very privileged to have our CEO, Dr Nic Crossley; alongside Margeret Mulholland, one of our Trust members and a specialist in inclusivity and SEN, visiting for the day.

The event was an opportunity to celebrate a wide range of subjects and enrichment activities provided at Vanguard, such as student demonstrations from the Clem Burke Drumming Project, led by our OT, Desmaree Grant. All subjects were represented, including a stall for Hair and Beauty and our very own Vangcast by Steve Carroll. Thank you to all our teachers, learning mentors, and support staff for working so hard to ensure a successful showcasing of students' work and experiences. Thank you to those that came to our recent Parents' Evenings and to those who provided feedback on the day. It was good to meet you face to face and I am keen that we have many more opportunities to invite you into our school to share the educational journey of your children and help network with other families.

GCSE Results day is on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August. We are very proud of all of our students who undertook examinations and wish you the best of luck - Well done for all of your hard work!

We will shortly release a timetable of coffee mornings with a programme of training and talks for families across the year. Additionally, the LAT Transforming Lives Conference has free workshops available to families. Please scan the barcode below to book your slot.

In the Autumn term, we will be holding a pastoral meeting with tutors, an Options meeting in the Spring and Parents Evenings early in the first half of the summer term. Dates will be shared with you early in September.

Sadly, we say goodbye to a few members of staff and wish them well in their future endeavours

- Jess Reid who will be working remotely in a new safeguarding role;
- Fatima Mohammed who moves on to lead a specialist autism unit;
- Desmaree Grant, who has secured a more clinical role in OT;
- Tau Nell who will be furthering his studies to work towards a doctorate;
- Georgia Twigg, who is prioritising her studies
- Alan Johnson, our Finance Lead, who moves on to another opportunity;
- Junior Hamil, who will take on the role of Behaviour Mentor in a large academy.

We thank them all for their contributions to the pupils, parents and staff at Vanguard and will miss them greatly. Thank you also to Thandiwe Eshe, Liam Sweeney and David Jackson who have been working with us as agency staff; they have been so valuable in supporting the pupils but sadly they will also be leaving us at the end of this term.

Congratulations to Joel North who moves into the post of Deputy Head in September after a successful interview process. We also welcome David Ritchie, our new Designated Safeguarding Lead and Gregory Morgan-Jones, our new Assistant Psychologist.



Scan this QR code to sign up for your slot for the **LAT Transforming Lives conference**

### Important Dates

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August** GCSE Results Day  
**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September** Staff inset  
**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** LAT Transforming Lives online Conference  
**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**  
Return to school 8:45am  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October** End of half-term  
**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** Return to School 8:45am



## Year 11 Leavers

We ended the academic year with a truly special day of celebration and reflection. The morning began with a heartfelt Leavers' Celebration, where we honoured the achievements and journeys of our incredible students as they prepare for their next steps. It was a meaningful moment to share memories, offer thanks, and acknowledge the progress each student has made during their time with us.

In the afternoon, we hosted our annual Cultural Heritage Festival, welcoming parents, carers, and visitors to explore the fantastic work produced by students and staff throughout the year. From core subjects like Maths, English, and Science to extra-curricular highlights such as drumming, horse riding, and Vangcast, the event proudly showcased the commitment, creativity, and talent across our school community.

A massive thank you to all staff and students who helped put it together; it was our best one yet.

**Fatima Mohamed, Head of English & Literacy Lead**



## Pride Month

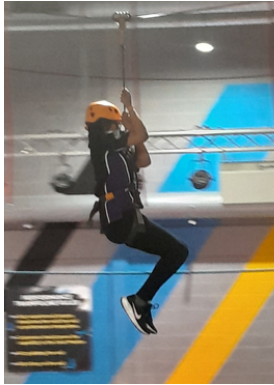
This year for Pride Month, Vanguard School got involved in some fundraising. The students selected AKT (Albert Kennedy Trust) as their charity. AKT was founded in 1989. This was at a time when LGBTQ+ people faced persistent and high levels of oppression, physical and verbal abuse, and were denied the basic human rights and equity afforded to others. AKT was created to help LGBTQ+ young people who were at risk of homelessness.

To this day, 24% of young homeless people aged 16-25 identify as being LGBTQ+, emphasising the crucial need for services. With LGBTQ+ hate crimes currently on the rise in the UK, LGBTQ+ young people are at risk of experiencing homophobic and transphobic abuse in their homes. This leaves them with an increased chance of facing homelessness.

50% of the young people AKT supported between 2023-24 had attempted to contact their local authority for support before reaching out to the charity. Many had negative experiences when doing so, often facing long waiting lists and expressing feelings of being devalued and dismissed.

At Vanguard the students have spent Pride Month fundraising. The Year 10 classes have done exceptionally well, with one having a collection jar and the other offering a delicious bake sale for the whole school community. We are extremely proud of our students' efforts to raise much needed funds supporting vulnerable young people. It helps foster an inclusive environment for everyone. So far the students have raised £336 for this amazing cause.

**Dan Bunker, Pastoral & Behaviour Lead**



**9B** decided on **Oxygen-trampolining at the O2** for their end of year trip. We had days of gleeful anticipation and very excited pupils on the day.

I have never seen so much energetic bouncing! They had to be reminded to eat.

Well done Ibrahime and Alexis for trying the climbing too.

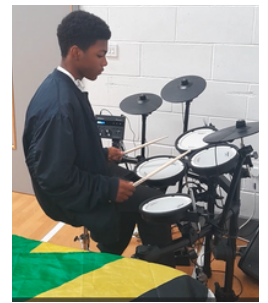
Confident users of public transport too.

**Mr Renton, Ms Fordjour, Mr Jackson**

Last term we informed you of students taking part in the Clem Burke drumming project. After 6 weeks the project has now come to an end. Students fed back that they enjoyed making music with their peers, they enjoyed learning how to play new songs, they enjoyed found it difficult at first leaning how to play with their hands and feet at the same time, but with practice were able to make progress in this area. Students and staff feedback that it was great to hear music in the school!

We expect the Clem Burke project to be back next year!

**Desmaree Grant, Occupational Therapist**



It has been great fun coming to the stables together each week, learning new skills, and getting to know and care for the horses. While all of our horse-riding students have shown huge progress since we started the activity last October, a few deserve special mentions.

Nyx showed fantastic natural talent from the very beginning, even though she hadn't ridden before, and is now a dedicated member of Ebony Horse Club even outside of school.

Noah came to every session with brilliant enthusiasm and a positive attitude, even when he had to get his hands dirty!

Tameem came ready to give it a go every week since October, even when he was feeling worried, and earned a rosette for leading the horses excellently during our hacks.

We hope that the students have enjoyed horse-riding as much as we have!

**Tau Nell, Assistant Psychologist**





We're delighted to share some fantastic news about our Year **10A** students, who recently took part in the **Social Enterprise Schools programme** which is a national initiative designed to inspire the next generation of changemakers through real-world enterprise and community action.

As part of the programme, our students developed their own social enterprise and had the opportunity to pitch their ideas at a Dragon's Den-style event, competing against nine other schools, most of which were mainstream. We're incredibly proud to announce that our students did exceptionally well and won an award for their innovative and impactful project!

This is a huge achievement and a testament to their creativity, teamwork, and commitment to making a difference in their community. The programme not only helped them develop employability and enterprise skills, but also gave them a platform to express their passion for social change.

A huge thank you goes out to all the staff members who supported the group throughout the programme, your guidance, encouragement, and dedication played a vital role in their success. You know who you are, and we are incredibly grateful for your efforts!

**Zarko Zahariev, 6<sup>th</sup> Form and Careers Lead**



This term, five students from **10B** took part in a fantastic **three-day work experience organised** by Mr Zahariev in partnership with **Spiral Skills**, a charity that helps empower young people through practical, hands-on learning.

This time, the focus was on life skills—specifically cooking! Hosted in an old school building in Tulse Hill with a lovely outdoor space, the students had the opportunity to learn how to prepare meals from scratch, explore new ingredients, and enjoy their creations together.

Day 1 kicked off with homemade pizzas in the morning, followed by baking (and quickly eating!) chocolate cookies in the afternoon.

Day 2 brought a cultural twist, with students cooking chicken curry and naan bread for lunch. Later, they made scones—plus jam from scratch to go with them!

Day 3 was a shorter session, so students voted on one final recipe. Apple crumble won the vote, and they baked enough to bring back to school in jars.

But the learning didn't stop in the kitchen. The students navigated public transport independently, remembered the route by the second day, and even helped guide staff to the venue! They practiced social skills, interacted with chefs and Spiral Skills team members, and showed great confidence, curiosity, and teamwork throughout. One student, B, even gave an interview to the Spiral Skills team at the end of the programme. It was a wonderful experience that built confidence, independence, and real-life skills—plus a few tasty treats to share back at school.

If you get a chance, ask 10B about the trip—they've got some great stories to tell!

**Ms Shamyrbekova**

