



Vanguard School

End of Term Newsletter

Friday 24th October, 2025



Principal note

It has been wonderful to welcome our students back to the new academic year. This includes several new pupils and our current Year 7 making the transition from Primary. Despite some difficulties with tube strikes and transport, the students have shown great resilience and are settling into the school routines, engaging in the curriculum and forging new friendships. It has also been encouraging to see a larger number of our pupils developing greater confidence through independent travel to and from school.

Our Student Executive Team and our Junior Leadership Team representatives have now been elected and have had their first meeting as well as hosting a meeting with the CEO for questions. The Senior Leadership Team will visit every half term to hear their ideas and the Student Executive will also be invited to a termly Senior Leadership meeting moving forward, improving pupil voice.

On Thursday, 25th September, we welcomed our Year 11 and Year 13 parents to a Post-16 Transition Workshop led by Zarko Zahariev, Head of 6th Form, Melanie Tye, External Careers Adviser and Lucie Polya, SENDCO. It was an informative event to discuss the application process for a place at Vanguard 6th Form, other autism friendly college offers and alternative post-16 opportunities. The Therapy Team also helped parents consider how they could support their child in managing the anxiety and feelings during transitions.

We are excited to welcome Kat Moulton, our new School Business Manager who will join us in November. We also wish to congratulate Liam Daly for his internal promotion as our new HLTA for PE.

We will shortly be actioning our Parent Partnership Award where we aim to strengthen our ties and collaboration with families, professionals and communities. This will be led by David Ritchie, our DSL and we will be providing updates on our plans next half term.

Black History Month UK

This term, we celebrated Black History Month with the theme of: 'Legacies with Action: Understanding 60 Years of Change and Challenge.'

Each day our teachers incorporated a fact, quote, achievement or historical moment that highlighted the contribution and experiences or culture of black individual communities. Classroom doors were decorated with historical figures, celebrating culture and promoting empowerment.

Students of 9A presented for Black History Month with representation in the gaming industry.



Important Dates

Monday, 3rd November Return to school 8:45 am (normal time)
Wednesday 3rd December Pastoral Parents' Evening – Online
Friday 19th December End of term 1pm
Monday 5th January, 2026 Staff Inset Day
Tuesday 6th January Students return to school at 8:45am



Representation of Black people in the video games industry

Representation of Black people in the video games industry

Black people, and especially black women, are still underrepresented in the video games industry. The Independent Game Developers' Association records that only 2% of US game developers identify as black; in the UK, meanwhile, according to UKIE's 2020 census of the entire industry, 10% of its workers are black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME). But black innovators such as Jerry Lawson have been present and influential since the earliest days of the video games industry – and there is not enough recognition for their achievements.



In the 1970s, in the fledgling days of the video games industry, an engineer named **Gerald "Jerry" Lawson** designed one of the earliest game consoles, the Channel F, and also led the team that invented the game cartridge, a defining innovation in how games were made and sold.



Ed Smith is recognized as a pioneer in the video game and personal computer industry. He was one of the first African American engineers in the field and played a significant role in the design and development of the APF MP1000 video game console and its hybrid personal computer, The Imagination Machine, in the late 1970s. His work at APF Electronics included building and testing prototypes and ensuring the games were ready for market. He also notably distributed free game consoles to youth in his neighborhood to introduce them to technology.



Muriel Tramis is a pioneering French video game designer and engineer who is widely recognized as the first Black woman to professionally design video games. Her work, which began in the late 1980s, broke barriers in an industry that lacked representation and often centered on different perspectives.



On 21st November, we were delighted to host Ted Hill, a scientist from the world-renowned Royal Institution, for an exhilarating science day that Mr Saleem organised for our Year 7, 8 and 9 students. The show, 'Energy LIVE!', used spectacular, fire-based demonstrations to demystify complex concepts, transforming the topic of energy into an accessible and thrilling experience. The students were utterly captivated, leaving the performances not only with a clearer understanding but also with a renewed and palpable excitement for science.

Mr Saleem, Science Teacher

Each Wednesday, Vanguard students participate in Enrichment activities from go-karting to photography and 3-d art. Three of our students attended the Ebony Horse Club in the heart of Brixton. These sessions offer students physical, educational and emotional benefits. The programs use equine-facilitated learning to build skills like communication, confidence and teamwork in a way that can be effective to our students.

Our students have been attending Ebony Horse Club for the last 2 weeks. Initially, pupils were shy and slightly nervous in approaching or riding a horse, but by week 2 our students were excited to take the horse for a walk or have a ride. This was absolutely brilliant to watch.



Diana Edgar, Senior Learning Mentor



I am excited to announce that Vanguard School has achieved the Bronze award for the **Rights Respecting Schools Award**. Dan Bunker, our Behavior and Pastoral Lead continues to lead this with the inclusion and pastoral team and has recently completed the action plan to achieving the Silver award.

Sixth Form students took part in the exciting launch of Take the Lead, a dynamic employability programme hosted by The Old Vic Theatre in London. As part of the onboarding induction session, students from Years 11 to 13 joined peers from across London for the first step in a transformative journey designed to build five core skills: communication, teamwork, problem-solving, self-belief, and self-management.

The induction was a resounding success, offering students a chance to connect with industry professionals, explore the power of theatre as a tool for personal growth, and begin developing the confidence and skills needed for their future careers. The Old Vic's inspiring setting and inclusive ethos made for a memorable start to the programme.

We're proud to be part of this initiative and look forward to seeing our students grow through the upcoming workshops and experiences, including in-school sessions, a visit to the Royal Bank of Canada, and a live theatre performance.

Mr Zahariev, Sixth Form and Careers Lead



As we've all settled into our routines this term, we wanted to take a moment to highlight an important but often overlooked routine: sleep.

Good sleep is essential to how we function, focus, and feel throughout the day. Yet it's easy to let it slip down the priority list.

zz Top Tips for Better Sleep Hygiene

During the Day

- Include some form of physical activity - even a short walk can help.

Two Hours Before Bed

- Avoid large meals.
- Switch off screens (phones, tablets, TVs).
- Wind down with a calming activity like reading, drawing, or a board game.
- Dim the lights to help signal to your body that it's time to rest.

At Bedtime

- Try deep breathing or mindfulness exercises to help your body relax.
- If you're unable to fall asleep, don't force it. Try a quiet, relaxing activity until you feel ready to try again.

Try to stick to regular sleep and wake times, consistency helps train your body's internal clock.

Scan the QR code below to visit sleep tips from the NHS



We look forward to seeing you return for the new half-term on
Monday 3rd November, 2025 at 8:45am