

# ***PLATANOS COLLEGE***



Written by pupils, for pupils

# ***KS4 NEWSLETTER***



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# EDITOR'S WELCOME

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI

Hello and welcome to the 11th edition of the Platanos College KS4 Newsletter. The year 2022 has come to a close, the end to what has been a challenging year for many of us: the death of Queen Elizabeth II; the cost of living crisis; the war in Ukraine. Our team have come together to assemble a collection of articles regarding topics we believe should be discussed and that are of interest to our peers.

For the theme of this term's Special Edition, we felt that the theme of London is something that everyone could connect to - the city that we all call home.

As usual, we also offer a range of articles, including about people's heritage and articles on rights for women.

The KS4 Newsletter Team 2022-2023 has put their hearts and souls into these articles; we hope that you enjoy reading our pieces and that they bring you information and enjoyment over the Christmas period.

On behalf of the KS4 Newsletter Team, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2023.

*Crystal Joy Azzopardi [Editor-in-Chief]*





# learning lounge

## THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

WRITTEN BY KEIGHTLEY TRAN



In 1830, The Royal Geographical Society of London was formed under the patronage of King William IV; nearly 30 years later in 1859, the RGS received the Royal Charter from Queen Victoria. By the early 1900s, the RGS had relocated to a new home: Lowther Lodge in Kensington.

But how did the RGS start? Well, originally, what began as casual, afternoon empirical discussions, ended up with members sitting at dinner tables, sharing their views on the scientific problems of the time. The society has dedicated itself to the addition of Geography in the curriculum for institutions. In 1995, the RGS and Institute of British Geographers, merged to create the new Royal Geographical Society.

Recently, I had the chance to visit the RGS – and what an experience it was! During my time there, I learnt about the Expedition and Fieldwork festival, which took place between 31st October and 7th November. One of the main

topics covered was the expeditions of Sir Ernest Shackleton, an Anglo-Irish Antarctic explorer who made three visits to the Arctic. His most prominent adventure was in 1914, travelling on a ship named The Endurance.

Shackleton became a member of the RGS while still sailing on the sea, but his passion was really sparked when he managed to gain a place on Captain Robert Scott's very first Antarctic Expedition.



In August 1914 – just as WW1 was starting - Shackleton and his men set off to sea. Disaster struck on 19th January 1915: The Endurance became trapped in the ice of the Weddell Sea. Over a period of 9 months, the ship was slowly crushed, before eventually sinking on 27th October.

Shackleton decided to set up shelter on the ice and stayed afloat. When the platform began to break, the men launched their three boats and reached Elephant Island in dangerous conditions.

When they eventually reached shore, the smaller crew hiked non-stop for 36 hours until they ultimately arrived at the Stromness whaling station. Consequently, all of Shackleton's crew was rescued by the end of 30th August 1916; his men believed that they survived due to the incredible leadership of their captain.

The Royal Geographical Society is truly one of the most interesting places I've been to and has really ignited my interest in learning more about Geography. The Society has over two million items in its historical collections: maps, photographs, documents, paintings and artefacts.

Its endeavours to promote and support the discovery and understanding of global environments and people, is truly fascinating; if you ever get the chance, I would definitely recommend you visit the Royal Geographical Society – a truly inspirational place!





# THINK ABOUT IT!

WRITTEN BY BETUL KHARKIN

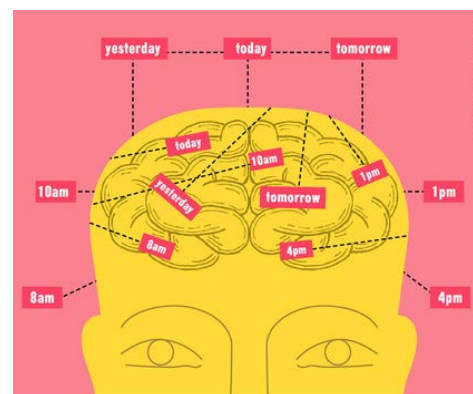
The mind and the body: do you see the mind and the body as the same thing, connected or two different things? The brain is the physical organ, whilst our mind is the thoughts we experience. Theories state that *"Human thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are rooted in the brain."* We live in a world where we do not always appreciate our body and mind and go on with our day not wondering how they function and process all of the information we expose them to. But what if we took a little time to think about what actually makes us think?

Did you know that the human brain can process 11 million bits of information every second? Fascinating, isn't it? But our conscious minds can only handle 40 to 50 bits of information a second. Human beings have both intellect and a body – known as Dualism. Descartes/ Cartesian dualism contends that there's a two-way interaction between the mental and physical: *"You and your body interact with each other in extremely sensitive ways, the body is the part that allows your mind to experience who you are as a human being on this planet and grow through this*

*adventure"*, whilst *"the mind is our consciousness an energy regulator interacting with the brain generating cognition."*

Here are some incredible facts about the human brain and mind...

- The human brain makes up about 2% of the body's total weight, but uses 20% of its total energy and oxygen intake.
- Our brains are 73% water.
- It's estimated that the brain contains 86 billion brain cells.
- Each neuron can transmit 1,000 nerve impulses per second!
- The human mind is unique in its ability to recall the past, plan for the future, work out abstract thoughts and navigate complex social relationships.
- It is likely that science may never come close to being able to explain the intricacies of the human mind.





# LIVING THE DREAM

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA

Have you ever woken up from a dream that you were utterly convinced was real? As we all know, this can be very unnerving!

But, what exactly are dreams?

Dreams are actually a series of images, thoughts and sensations that occur when we are asleep, during rapid eye movement (REM). There are 5 main types of dreams: normal dreams, daydreams, lucid dreams, false awakening dreams and nightmares.

Normal dreams are those that we all experience but then usually forget as soon as we wake up. Daydreams occur when our mind wanders during the day. Lucid dreams are when we are aware that we are dreaming and we are able to control our dreams. False awakening dreams are dreams that we think we woke up to, when in fact, we didn't really. And then last, but not least, are those awful nightmares!

Are you aware that there are people who fear dreams? This phobia is termed oneirophobia. For instance, some people with PTSD



(post-traumatic stress disorder), don't like to sleep because they can sometimes re-experience that trauma in a dream and this in turn leads to nightmares.

Some people believe that dreams have meanings and can be interpreted. Some believe that dreams can show what you are worried about or if you have suppressed emotions that you have not yet faced. Have you ever had a dream in which you are running away from someone or someone is chasing you? Dream interpreters believe that this can signify something in real life catching up to you.



**What do your dreams mean? We have the answers for you!**

**Have you ever dreamt of a teacher?**

This could mean that you are looking for guidance about something in your life.



**Have you ever dreamt that you are falling?**

This can suggest that you are anxious or insecure about a situation. However, if you are happily free falling, this could indicate that you are ready for a change!



**Have you ever dreamt about a snake?**

Snake dreams tend to suggest oppression and feeling constricted. However, a more positive interpretation is you are entering a transformative time in your life.



**Have you ever dreamt about a ghost?**

Ghost dreams can suggest you are feeling overwhelmed or are fearful of something from your past coming back to haunt you.



In order to dream, we must of course be asleep!

How much sleep do you get each night? Did you know that whilst we're asleep, our brains are doing a lot of work, even though we're unaware of it?

According to the Sleep Foundation, sleep is important for a variety of reasons:

- to ensure optimum cognitive and behavioural functions
- to help maintain a positive mood
- to help avoid health problems such as obesity, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and poor mental health.

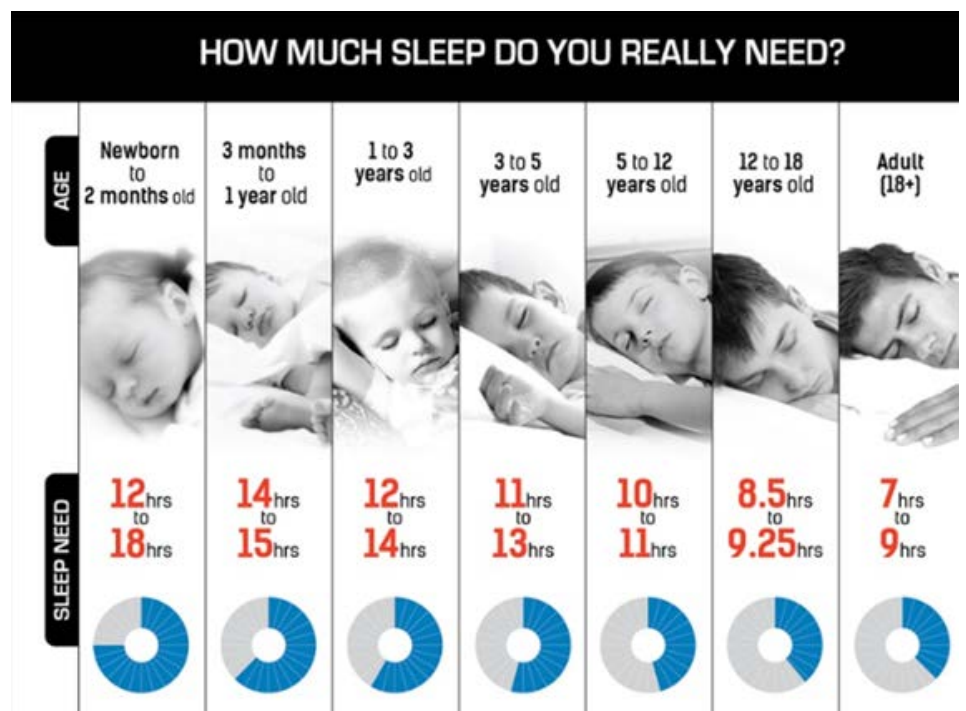
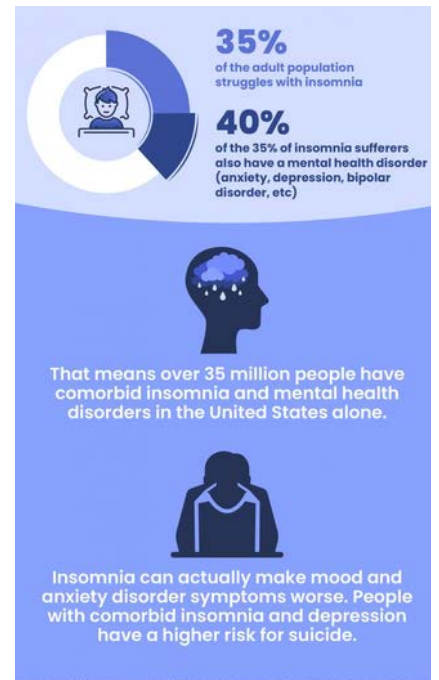
Whilst sleep is extremely important however, some people struggle to sleep. This is called insomnia. Did you know that insomnia affects 1 in every 3 people in the UK? Common causes of insomnia are drinking too much caffeine, your room being too hot or too cold, stress and much noise at night. Insomnia can also occur as a result of mental illnesses such as depression, schizophrenia and obsessive-compulsive disorders.



Symptoms of insomnia include:

- Finding it hard to sleep
- Waking up several times in the night
- Lying awake at night
- Feeling irritable during the day
- Inability to concentrate
- Feeling tired when during the day
- Waking up early and not being able to get back to sleep

If these things happen to you regularly then you might have insomnia and it's important to visit your doctor.





# THE HISTORY OF PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

WRITTEN BY UHONOMONA OBAYANGBONA



Technology had undoubtedly been at the forefront of our lives for recent decades, but have you ever thought about how all digital applications work? Well the answer is that many of them work by programming languages. But how exactly did all these programming languages come about in the first place?

Well, the basis of programming languages can be traced back to 1843. Ada Lovelace formed the first algorithm machine for an early computer invented by Charles Babbage. Interestingly, she wrote the algorithm by hand onto a paper; a truly impressive feat for someone to do - especially when there were no computers available at that time!

Fast forward to the early 1940s, and the first official programming language called Plakalül was developed by Konrad Zeus, who was a German computer scientist. Zeus's revolutionary breakthrough paved the way for the formation of

procedures that store codes that can be used many times to carry out routine operations.

Later in 1949, the Assembly programming language was created and used in an Electronic Delay Storage Automatic Calculator. The Assembly Language is a low-level programming language that helped pave the way for the hardware of the computer and high level programming languages such as Java and Python.

In 1957, John Backus created FORTRAN, which is regarded by many to be the oldest programming language of the modern age. It is used up to this very day in some of the most advanced supercomputers.

A couple of years later, in 1959, Dr Grace Murray Hopper led the development of the programming language COBOL. COBOL is the programming language that pulls the strings of ATMS, telephone calls, traffic signals, hospital signs and many more. It's mainly used in banking and gamification systems. Five years later in 1964, the programming language BASIC was developed by students attending Dartmouth College and was designed with the intention that it would be

used for students with a weak understanding of maths or computers. The language was further enhanced by Bill Gates and Paul Allen, who were the creators of Microsoft, and it became their first marketable product. In essence, BASIC is the basis of all Microsoft products.

Then, in 1972, C was founded by Dennis Ritchie. It's named 'C' as it was based on an earlier language called 'B'. Many of the most popular programming languages such as C#, Perl, Python all derive from C. Further modifications of the C programming languages by Danish computer scientist Bjarne Stroustrup, led to the development of C++ in 1983, which included classes, virtual function and templates. C++ is used in Microsoft office, Adobe Photoshop and game engines (just to name a few). In the same year, Objective-C was created and is the main programming language used to program macOS and iOS, Apple's operating systems. In 1987, the high-level programming language Perl was developed.







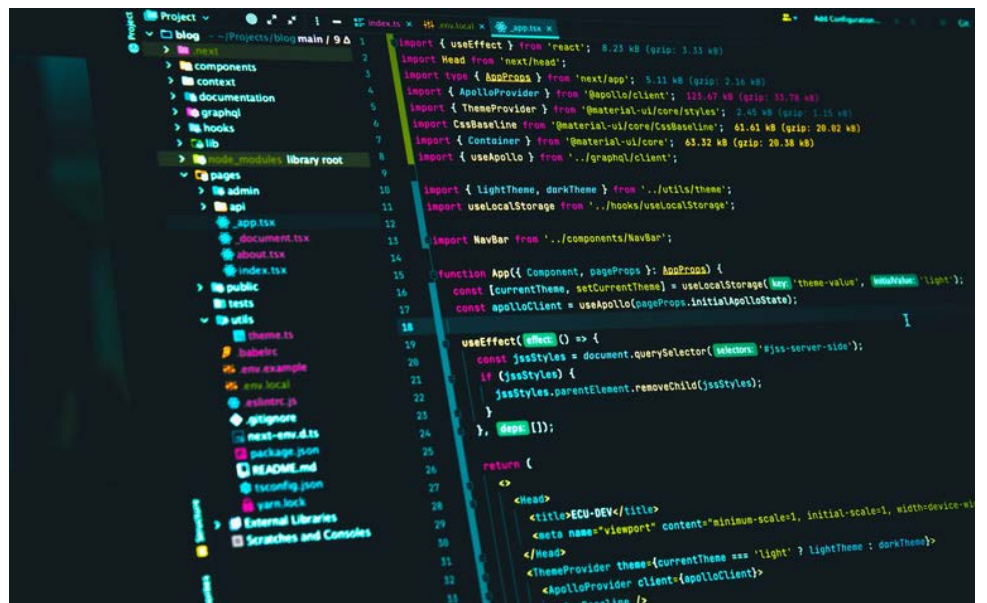
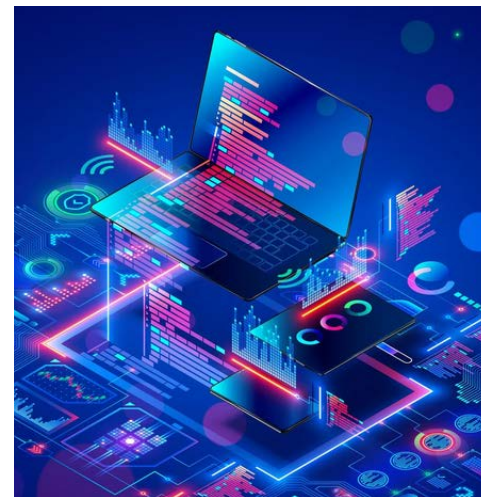
It was originally designed for editing text, but is now commonly used for CGI, database applications, network programming and graphic programming.

More recently, in the early 1990s, the high-level programming language Python was developed by Guido Van Rossum. Python was created to support a number of different programming languages. Python is still one of the most popular programming languages to date, used by notable companies such as Google, Facebook, Yahoo, Spotify, YouTube and many other platforms.

Later, in 1995, James Gosling developed Java: a high-level programming language with cross platform functionality. Java is an almost universal language, used in a variety of different software applications and a variety of different devices from phones to computers and even parking meters. Also in 1995, American computer programmer Brendan Eich developed JavaScript. The language is used for dynamic web development, desktop widgets, PDF documents and many other things. Javascript is one of the languages behind many major websites such as Gmail, Firefox and Adobe Photoshop. Five years after the development of JavaScript, a new programming language called

C# was developed at Microsoft. By combining C++ computing ability and the simplistic nature of another programming language called Visual Basics, (which was developed in 1991), C# was created and is very similar to Java.

The programming languages discussed in this article are just some of a range of programming languages. With more technological advancements yet to come, who knows what new innovative apps will be created in the near future? And these incredible innovations are all down to the help of programming languages working behind the scenes to process information needed for our everyday lives.





# THE RECOGNITION OF KOSOVO

WRITTEN BY ALDA NEZIRI

Have you ever heard about a missing country on a map?

Well, despite Kosovo becoming a sovereign state on 17th February 2008, many maps fail to outline its borders and instead show Kosovo as part of the Republic of Serbia.

The Kosovo War took place from 1998 to 1999 in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The opposing sides were The Kosovo Liberation Army and the Yugoslavian army. On 11th June 1999, Yugoslavia was bombed by NATO in order to prevent genocide in Kosovo.

The recognition of Kosovo is an ongoing dispute and the BBC News even calls it *"The conflict that won't go away."*

Serbia refuses to acknowledge Kosovo's Sovereignty and still considers Kosovo as part of its Republic, in spite of Serbia having no jurisdiction there. This led to many Serbia-supporting countries refusing to recognise the independence of Kosovo. Today, only 119 countries out of 195 in the whole world recognise Kosovo as an independent State.

Did you know that the population of Kosovo became increasingly ethnically Albanian during the Ottoman rule? It was the consequent complications and conflict between Serbs, Albanians and Turks, that led to the disputes that later

occurred.

During the war, Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic was accused of ethnically cleansing Kosovar Albanians. A Serbian tank Commander reported in an interview: *"for the entire time I was in Kosovo, I never saw an enemy soldier and my unit was never once involved in firing at enemy targets. The tanks which cost \$2.5 million each were used to slaughter Albanian children... I am ashamed"*

Another example of the brutalities of the war is the Panda Bar massacre. Near Christmas time, 3 Serbs dressed as Albanian soldiers and proceeded to kill 6 young Serbs and wounded 15. This shifted the blame of the war to Albanians, leading to 6 Albanians being arrested and then tortured.

*"They forced him to eat soap, put salt in the wounds, held him without eating for days and keep him in a room with corpses of people who died due to torture," - **The statement of Kimete Bajri after her son Behar Bajri got released from Leskovac prison in Serbia.***

Recently, the conflict has been evidenced in the seemingly simple issue of car number plates; in August 2022, the Kosovar Government requested

that all cars in Kosovo with Serbian car number plates, be replaced with Kosovo ones. This caused a backlash as many Serbian car owners refused to have the Kosovo flag on their number plates, as they refuse to recognise it as an independent State.

Clearly, tensions are still simmering, despite the war officially coming to an end nearly a quarter of a century ago.

So, can further violence be prevented? Well, this will depend partly on Russia – a long-standing ally of Serbia. Aleksander Vucic, the Serbian President, has refused to comply with Western sanctions against Russia following the invasion of Ukraine; in fact, he signed a gas deal with Russia back in May. Earlier this year, an MP representing the President's Party tweeted that Serbia may have to commence the *"denazification of the Balkans"*. You may recall this is the same language used by President Putin to justify the Ukraine invasion. The MP was forced to issue an apology for his provocative words.

So, what does the future hold for the region? According to the Spectator, *"long-held resentments threatening to break out into the open"* means that the situation *"looks less like a question and more like a riddle with no right answer"*.



# community corner

## INTERVIEW WITH MS HASSAN

WRITTEN BY MADINAH MAKSENE



**We interviewed Ms Hassan about her role at Platanos College.**

**Q: What did you study when you were at University?**

**Ms Hassan:** I studied Peace and Conflict Studies and Politics at University as that was an area that I was and still am very passionate about. I studied this field because I wanted to have a positive impact in the world and do something meaningful to me. I love learning about different cultures and working with inspiring non-governmental organisations, which was a great achievement and very rewarding.

**Q: Why did you choose to pursue a career in Education?**

**Ms Hassan:** I used to work for a humanitarian organisation that provided English courses for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and I believe from that experience, education and support of children became my passion. I think it suits my personality too.

**Q: Why do you like working at Platanos College?**

**Ms Hassan:** I like the close community bond here and the incredible cultures, languages and diversity we have.

**Q: What do you enjoy most about working at Platanos College?**

**Ms Hassan:** I enjoy that every day is very different, therefore my work never gets boring. I have learnt so much and over the years I have grown both on a personal and professional level. It is also delightful to experience pupils' development intellectually and see their maturity throughout the years.

**Q: What are your goals for the future?**

**Ms Hassan:** I will definitely continue to work with young adults. In terms of a Career, I would like to pursue Counselling as I am extremely passionate about helping and supporting people.

**Q: What advice would you give to pupils about how to make the most of their school life?**

**Ms Hassan:** I think number one is to enjoy school while you're here. Be part of the community and make studying as fun as possible; you could have a study buddy or maybe complete your homework at school so that you get support. Make sure you appreciate your time as a young person. Try not to be distracted by other things around you such as social media; you only have five years at secondary school and you need to make the most of Platanos College while you're here! Time will fly by!





# THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY: JUST SKIN DEEP?

WRITTEN BY INAYA ROSE



*Tanesha Coley*

**We love to interview people from different career paths for the KS4 Newsletter. Here, we speak to Tanesha Coley, a make-up artist who has been in the beauty industry for over 10 years.**

## ***How exactly did you get into the beauty industry?***

**Tanesha Coley:** “Well, I have known about beauty from a young age because my mum was always into it and my grandmother was one of those people who always took care of herself.

After university I had my first daughter and then I did not want to go back to work. I wanted to find something that would work around me being able to look after my first daughter at the time. My aunt, who was a part of Mary Kay cosmetics, introduced me to Mary Kay - so I started selling cosmetics and skincare to clients and doing their make-up, because I grew up doing people’s make-up.

When I was younger, I would do my friends’ make-up for prom and I just had an artistic flair for it, so I just continued from there. Then I decided to do a beauty course and got a few certificates and I’ve been doing it ever since. I have also had clients recommend me to other people.”

## ***What are the things you like and dislike about the beauty industry?***

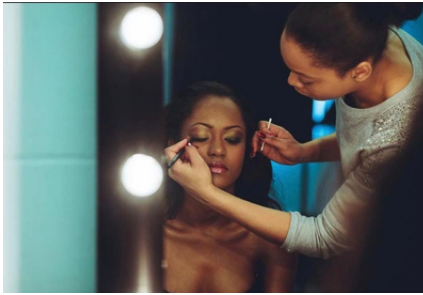
**Tanesha Coley:** “I think the beauty industry has good and bad parts. For example, I am certified in make-up; there are some things that you don’t need certification for, but I believe that it is highly recommended, because what happens a lot of the time is social media. People end up following trends on social media and they don’t have a clue as to what they’re doing, yet they teach other people certain things, like using milk of magnesia for example. However, they don’t understand what certain products can do to your skin. So, I think a lot of time it’s the social media aspect of it - where you have a lot of influencers who are not educated, but, because they just want to get ‘likes’, they end up putting up false information online, then they have people following them and thinking that they are coming up with new things.

Another thing I dislike about it is the whole cultural appropriation of the beauty industry, for example, recently Hailey Baldwin adopted the black and Latina culture by using brown lip liner and putting gloss on it and calling it ‘Brownie lips.’ I myself am black, and many Latina women have always been doing that, yet it was classed as ‘ghetto’, but because a celebrity like Kim Kardashian or Hailey Baldwin does it, all of a sudden it’s a new trend!

However, I like the industry because if you are good at what you do, you can become successful and excel in it, and if you are passionate about it - which I am - then you will always have clients whom you can educate. It’s also very rewarding, so I think that is what I love about being in the beauty industry.”



*Tanesha Coley's work on a magazine cover*



Tanesha Coley doing a client's make-up

**What advice would you give to Platanos College pupils if they want to have a career in the beauty industry?**

**Tanesha Coley:** "I would say if you're going to start, get certified and get insurance; get all of those things because when you know the ins and outs of the beauty industry, knowing safety precautions, cleanliness and hygiene are very important.

Practise, practise, practise in order to become good because sometimes it is a natural thing, but you should still practise the craft and be passionate about it. It is something that you have to love.

You have to love people as well, so it's not just something that you just say "oh well, I just want to make some money," because if you are always thinking about the money, then it's not going to be something you really want to pursue. Maybe you want to do it for a short period of time, which is fair enough, but I would say - have it as a skill and if you start off having it as a skill and then you wanted to go further...

get certified."

**Do you think the beauty industry represents people from different ethnic backgrounds and disabilities?**

**Tanesha Coley:** "I do not think the beauty industry represents people of different backgrounds as it is very white-centric, however, the beauty industry has come a long way when it comes to representation. But, it is still a business that is dominated by white people, for example, a lot of the beauty products, such as make-up, are made specifically for white customers. But, you do have a lot of companies, such as Fenty Beauty, that are representing people of colour with different foundation shades. So I would say the beauty industry has come a long way but there is still room for improvement. I do not think it is very representative because in the industry it is hard for a person of colour and someone with a disability to break into the industry; for some reason, people of colour and people with disabilities rarely get the chance to be in the industry. So I would say that the beauty industry is not representative enough when it comes to people of colour or people with disabilities."





# INTERVIEW WITH COREY SAMUEL

WRITTEN BY KEIGHTLEY TRAN



*Corey and his team at Downing Street*

**The KS4 Newsletter Team loves to find out about different career stories to help inspire Year 10 pupils as we all look to potential future pathways. We interviewed Corey Samuel, Programme Manager at Renaissance Foundation for this term's Edition of the KS4 Newsletter.**

***"What inspired you to pursue your chosen career?"***

**Corey Samuel:** I found this career by accident as I was unsure what I wanted to do when I was younger. I knew I wanted to work in a creative role, ideally film or photography but wasn't sure how to get there, so I thought volunteering in a charity shop would help me get experience for my CV before I planned to apply to University the following year.

After working in a charity shop, I met the Founder and CEO of Renaissance Foundation and they invited me to volunteer editing their videos.

***"What were your steps into the industry?"***

**Corey Samuel:** I joined Renaissance Foundation as a volunteer in January 2011 when I was 18 years old. At the time, I was studying BTEC Level 3 Media Production at College and wanted more experience to add to my personal statement/UCAS application to help me get to university to study Film.

I joined as a volunteer, editing interviews that our CEO filmed with positive role models to show to Young Carers and Young Patients to help inspire them to reach their full potential. I enjoyed the opportunity to learn and develop my editing skills by creating content to show at workshops and sessions.

I continued to volunteer whilst studying at University and then I joined as a staff member in 2014. I created the YouTube channel and developed an educational project called MLK50 – celebrating 50 years since Dr Martin Luther King's Nobel Peace Prize award and his message of peace and non-violence. Through leading this educational project, I become more involved with organising, planning and delivering workshops and visits for young people.

Over the years I have taken groups of young people to attend the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo Norway and have reported at major events and festivals such as Silverstone Formula One Grand Prix, Wimbledon Tennis Championships and London Film Festival. I started working full time at Renaissance Foundation in October 2020 and have led our programme as it has developed through lockdowns. I have continued to create content involving young people, including our Renaissance Foundation Podcast.

Outside of Renaissance Foundation, I have worked in Film, Fashion, Retail, Art Galleries and Freelance. I have enjoyed many of the careers I have worked in, but what I enjoy most is seeing the impact charity work has on young people and seeing them grow, develop and achieve their dreams.

***"Was this career path different to what you wanted to do before?"***

**Corey Samuel:** Yes, this is different. I do get to make creative content, however my focus is giving young people an opportunity to learn and be inspired, which is different to working to a brief or creating content for profit. I feel very



lucky that I get to create content that has a purpose, as well as organising a range of activities that are led by young people. It gives me the opportunity to constantly learn and improve to make our sessions and visits better!

***"What does a normal workday look like for you?"***

**Corey Samuel:** It can vary depending on the day. I may have a day that is entirely working from home that involves lots of Emails, Phone calls and Microsoft Teams/Zoom meetings. Some days may involve travelling across London to meet Referral Partners (hospitals and schools), Funders/Donors, Partner Organisations and also Board Meetings. I also sometimes have to visit venues ahead of our sessions to do Risk Assessments and plan visits.

If we have a session or visit planned, I may spend half my day working from home or co-working space, preparing materials, and then I'll travel to the location of our visit (if in person, or log in to Zoom to host our online sessions). I also spend time editing video and audio content for our YouTube channel and podcast.

During term time, I focus more on planning sessions and creating content; during the school holidays, I am focused on delivering our

sessions.

***"What qualifications do you need for this type of work?"***

**Corey Samuel:** Experience in youth work is ideal. I was fortunate enough to gain this experience whilst volunteering over many years. I am Mental Health First Aid trained for young people, I have Safeguarding Level 3 qualification and am currently planning to study a BTEC Level 3 in Youth Work. I have an enhanced DBS check as well as a BA (Hons) Degree in Film & Broadcast Production, which is not required but very helpful to be able to create the content we need with limited budget and equipment.

***"What are your opinions about your job at the moment?"***

**Corey Samuel:** I enjoy it very much and I feel very lucky to be able to support young people to achieve their goals. It's a very challenging job because of the issues regarding funding in the charity sector (all government funding was taken away in 2011 when I was a volunteer), so I do feel like I would be able to do more if I had more funding, more staff and more resources, but I feel very lucky to support the young people we do now. I am constantly learning whilst working at Renaissance Foundation, especially from our young people when they suggest ideas for sessions and projects!

***"Do you plan to move away from your job/current industry?"***

**Corey Samuel:** I am open to working in different industries because I have worked in many roles whilst volunteering and being part time at RF (2011-2020). Most recently working in the Art industry, I would like to create educational projects that give young people access to creative opportunities, for example, Access to Art or developing skills to create art.

***"Did you receive any kind of training when preparing for your job?"***

**Corey Samuel:** I had general volunteering and customer service training from my time in the charity shop. I also had experience and training using editing programs for video from college. Everything else I have either learned whilst working at Renaissance Foundation voluntarily/part time or through other employers, for instance, Food Health and Safety training when working in a pub and a Chocolate shop, or Point of Sale/tills training working in Retail (clothing shops, eyewear and bookshops).



Corey Samuel



# LIVING THE LATIN AMERICAN LIFE

WRITTEN BY SOPHIA MARTINS



Latin America covers a range of countries spanning across South America, Central America and some of the Caribbean and North America. It is a region rich in culture from the rhythmic beats of Brazilian funk, to the cafecito con leche and pabellon criollo.

Did you know that music is a predominant part of Latino culture, with many influences deriving from the Caribbean and Africa? Genres include samba, funk, salsa, dembow, bachata and reggaeton.

Reggaetón – which originated in Puerto Rico - was influenced by Jamaicans in Panama before making its way into mainstream Western music.



In 2004, reggaetón became popular in the United States

and Europe.

Examples of “Old School Reggaeton” musicians are Ivy Queen, Tito El Bambino and Angel Y Khriz.



A celebrity who left one of the greatest legacies in Latin America, is Celia Cruz. Born in Havana, Cuba, in 1925, Celia Cruz was the first person of Afro-Caribbean descent to become an international salsa musician. She helped to popularise salsa in the United States, in particular, in New York. Additionally she was a huge influence to Afro-Latino Americans, as she embraced her African roots on stage. Cruz became one of the few women to succeed in the world of salsa dancing, which at the time was heavily male-dominated. Many consider Cruz a role model for breaking down stigmas faced by the Latin community and encouraging them to embrace their heritage and culture.

Many people mistakenly think that Latinos only make up one ethnic group/race. However, there are actually multiple



Latino groups: White, Amerindian (indigenous), Mixed and African. Brazil is the second largest black populated country outside the continent of Africa. Latin America is home to over 800 different indigenous groups and tribes, with a total population of 45 million people.

Did you know that the original inhabitants of South America and the Caribbean were the Arawaks and Taínos? Sadly, today, many politicians within South America threaten indigenous people and their territories by exploiting natural resources and permitting exploitative laws.

We're very lucky at Platanos College to be a diverse community. Many of us have a Latin American heritage that we are truly very proud of.

**We decided to interview Spanish teacher, Ms Lopez, about her Colombian heritage and what Latin America means to her.**





***"What does Latin America mean to you?"***

**Ms Lopez:** "Latin America, to me, is about the culture and ethnicity – including indigenous, African and European, There's so much history behind it, which is one of the reasons why Latin America is so interesting."

***"What are the first 3 words that come to mind when thinking about your heritage?"***

**Ms Lopez:** Music, food and family. I think music plays an important part – it has always been a big part of my family life. I think that countries in Latin America, like Chile and Mexico, are very family oriented; family is very important to us.

***"What is it like being Latina in London?"***

**Ms Lopez:** I was born and raised here in London by Colombian parents. Unfortunately, I've never really been around that many Latinos in London, however I do know there is a big community here, just like there is for other cultures and religions.

Do I feel a part of it? I don't actually: I feel more British than I do Latina due to the way I was brought up, as we didn't tend to socialise within the Latin American community much.

However, I am very proud to say that I am fortunate



*Ms Lopez*

enough to be bilingual, which I believe helps you to also understand and appreciate other cultures.

***"Do you feel as though there is a lot of Latino/a representation in London?"***

**Ms Lopez:** There is now. Just like we have the Notting Hill Carnival, there's El Carnaval del Pueblo in Burgess Park every year in the summer. There are shopping centres in Elephant and Castle and in North London. You can now find quite a few restaurants that are Latino or provide Latin cuisine, so I do feel like representation has become more visible within the community.

***"What was it like growing up Latina and did you face any challenges/discrimination?"***

**Ms Lopez:** No, I didn't. However, my mum did. I think it is a thing here in this country where people think that because you cannot communicate in English, you are not 'competent'. My mum doesn't speak much English; therefore she has always had that challenge. I still notice this happening with both young and elderly people.

***"How different is it being in Colombia compared to being in London?"***

**Ms Lopez:** Very different. Colombia is first of all not a developed country like England is. Everyone there is relaxed. What you also find is that even though they have to work 7 days a week to have earned the minimum, they are happy. The culture, the music, the food, and the weather - it is all so different. Here you live to work, whereas in Colombia you work to live.

***"What does being Latina mean to you?"***

**Ms Lopez:** It's who I am, having Colombian parents, being brought up with their values and their morals. We still do things that they would do in Colombia such as celebrating festivities, like Christmas, Independence Day and Holy Week. It is a big part of my life and it is something I continue to embrace and celebrate with my nephews, as I believe it is important for them to also embrace it as it encourages them to also be open minded and understand and appreciate other cultures.

***"Is there anything you do to embrace your culture?"***

**Ms Lopez:** As previously mentioned, at home we try to celebrate certain festivities as we would in Colombia. Christmas and Easter are the main festivities. We always come together as a family and try to celebrate as we would in Colombia.



# ENCHANTING ETHIOPIA

WRITTEN BY BETHEL DAVID



At Platanos College we are blessed with a diverse community, with pupils and staff coming from different corners of the world. Many pupils and their families come from Ethiopia, which is located in the East of Africa, in what is known as the horn of Africa. Did you know Ethiopia has 86 different languages and up to to 200 different dialects?

Religion is a core part of life in Ethiopia, with Christianity having been introduced back in the 4th century. Tewahdo is the name for the Orthodox Church in Ethiopia – it is one of the oldest organised Christian bodies in the world. The Church has had a dominant role in the culture and politics of Ethiopia and was the official religion of the ruling elite until the end of the monarchy in 1974.

The second largest religion in Ethiopia is Islam, which was first practiced in the 7th century. It was introduced when a group of Muslims came to Ethiopia from Mecca, having been instructed by Mohammed to escape persecution.

Ethiopia has a rich and vibrant culture, the most common one being the coffee ceremony, where coffee is served within a social gathering. Did you know that Ethiopia is known for some of the most beautiful, intricate textiles in the world? The habesha kemis is a dress worn by women at traditional events, whilst men wear tops that contain patterns such as the cross and tibeb patterns.

Unfortunately, however, Ethiopia has been affected by terrible famine and conflict. The Tigray war, which began on 3rd November 2020, is a conflict between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's federal Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) and The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

Ethiopia has long faced regional tensions. In the northern region of the country, tensions amplified when the TPLF held their own regional election in September 2020, in defiance of the federal government's postponement of the 2020 general election due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

A state of emergency in Tigray was declared by Abiy Ahmed on 4th November 2020, following an attack on a federal military base by Tigray forces. Whilst the Tigray

forces claimed it was an act of self-defence, Ethiopian federal forces insisted it was an unprovoked attack.

Many civilians have suffered as a result of the war. 400,000 are facing famine-like conditions in the North of the country. Furthermore, 80% of essential medication is not available and more than two million people have been forced from their homes.

In addition, the Eritrean forces that joined the conflict have been accused of many things along with the Ethiopian army: burning crops, destroying healthcare facilities, preventing farmers from ploughing land. There have even been reports that Aid is being stolen by troops. In fact, independent reports estimate that a mere 13% of the 5.2 million people in need are receiving assistance and aid.

Another horrifying aspect of the war is the increase in sexual violence. According to Global Citizen, 4.6 million people are in need of urgent food aid, with





900,000 people living in famine-like conditions. Schools have been looted and destroyed and 1 in 3 children under 5 suffers from malnutrition.

Last month, the African Union announced an agreement between Ethiopia's government and the Tigran forces. This will in theory lead to both sides ending all hostilities. Will this peace deal be a success?

Clearly something needs to be done urgently, to ensure the survival and wellbeing of the Ethiopian people affected by the war. Hopefully, the deal signed on 2nd November 2022, will provide just that.



Mr Sintayehu in his traditional clothes.

We interviewed Mr Sintayehu about his Ethiopian culture and heritage.

**What does Ethiopia mean to you?**

**Mr Sintayehu:** "Ethiopia means family to me. When I

think of Ethiopia, I think of religion, togetherness and traditional food."

**What is one thing you like celebrating in your culture and why?**

**Mr Sintayehu:** "Well, I recently celebrated the Ethiopian new year, which was great. I went to the Ethiopian Embassy with a few friends, we had great food and again there was togetherness there and it was nice seeing people I hadn't seen in a long time. There was also a fundraiser that took place during the celebration to help rebuild schools that had been destroyed in certain areas of Ethiopia due to the conflict"

**How have you contributed to Ethiopia in your life?**

**Mr Sintayehu:** "I have contributed books for a library - the Abrehiwot library that just recently opened in Addis Ababa. I have also helped family members out financially & with material goods."

**Describe Ethiopia in one word.**

**Mr Sintayehu:** "I would say 'togetherness' and I would say this because years ago when I went to Ethiopia, on my journey from Addis Abiba to Adwa on a coach, an incident took place. A van toppled over and the whole community in the area was trying to help the person who was trapped in the van to escape as smoke began to rise from the engine; there were around 100 people helping - some were even

tears. This shows the togetherness of the country and the love that people have for one another"

**What do you think about the war in Ethiopia?**

**Mr Sintayehu:** "I would say the current situation with the war is very sad. I have family members who live in the Tigray region and have been displaced due to the conflict. Because of this, it has been extremely difficult to contact them and provide support. I personally believe the reason this is happening is because the current government who came into power in 2019, had a noble vision to bring positive change to the country. However, there were deep rooted problems from previous governments that have been hidden for many years and that are only beginning to surface now that they are no longer in power. I pray and remain hopeful that Ethiopia will become united again soon"





# LGBTQ+ LIVING

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA

You may have seen signs around Platanos College outlining the Equality Act 2010, under which different groups of people are protected against discrimination: this is UK Law. All organisations and settings must abide by it. It is illegal to discriminate against a person based on features such as their religious beliefs, disability or race. In theory, The Equality Act exists to protect us all; however, did you know that whilst sexual orientation is also a protected characteristic, there are some terrifying statistics and attitudes that still exist when it comes to prejudice against people who are in the LGBTQ+ community.

According to SchoolsWeek, just 7 years ago, the UK was rated the most friendly LGBTQ+ country in all of Europe; contrast this with the ratings earlier this year, when the UK was rated 14th! Did you know that the number of hate crimes committed against victims based on their sexual orientation or gender identity has doubled in England and Wales? And schools are not exempt from this.



According to the government report ‘Working for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality: Moving Forward’, 65% of LGB secondary school pupils experience homophobic bullying within their school setting. Furthermore, 97% of these pupils frequently hear homophobic language in school. And it’s not just at secondary school that we’re seeing this disturbing behaviour; according to Cardiff University, there has been an increased in primary-aged pupils using homophobic and trans-phobic language.

In 2021, an Estyn report revealed that homophobic bullying was the most common type of abuse in secondary schools and happened *"all the time"*.

The report went on to state that many LGBTQ+ pupils at secondary schools had *"substantial personal experiences"* of homophobia, that included body shaming, name calling and even calls to kill themselves!

We were shocked to find out

these statistics, so we decided to conduct our own research into attitudes amongst Year 10 pupils and staff at Platanos College. Here’s what we found...

***How would you feel if your future son or daughter told you that they were a member of the LGBTQ+ community?***

“I would accept them as they are because if they identify as LGBTQ+, it does not affect me in any way.”  
—Ashlee

“Of course, they are my children at the end of the day. Whatever they choose to be, I will support them.”  
— Benice

“I would support them because if my child decided to be a part of the LGBTQ+ community, that’s fine since that’s none of my business.”  
—Tamera

“This would come into conflict with my religious beliefs but as a future dad, it is my duty to be there for my children.”  
—Nyron

“I would support them.”  
—Richella

“To be honest, I don't really care just as long as my children are safe and happy.”  
—Seth





***How do you feel about people being targeted by bullies because of their sexuality?***

“I think it’s really disrespectful; one person’s sexuality does not affect other people.”

–Maya

“It shouldn’t be happening in today’s society; everyone is equal and different in their own way.”

–Mariama

“They should not get bullied. No one should.”

–Theodore 10A4

“No. No one should be bullied, period.”

–Mr Persaud

“Absolutely not, no one should get bullied for any reason, ever. Your sexuality is your own business, no one else’s.”

–Ms O’Connell

“It’s unacceptable. People should be able to be free to express themselves, no matter what their sexual orientation is.”

– Mr Olaniran

You may be aware of recent controversy regarding Lea Thomas, a trans swimmer who became a world-class swimmer when competing in women’s races. In June 2022, the International Swimming Federation (FINA), voted to ban all transgender athletes

from competing in women's swimming at a professional level.

***As more international sporting bodies may follow in FINA’s steps in the future, we decided to interview Head of PE, Mr Olaniran on his views on the matter and on wider LGBTQ+ issues.***

***What would be your advice to pupils who feel anxious or afraid of opening up about their sexuality?***

**Mr Olaniran:** “Young people shouldn’t be afraid to come out about their sexuality. My advice would be that they should talk to an adult they are comfortable with.”

***What could schools do to ensure they are safe environments for members of the LGBTQ+ community?***

**Mr Olaniran:** “School should be a safe space for everyone, where everyone can be themselves without the fear of judgement. What I also think is vitally important, is to educate pupil on accepting difference, whether it be gender, sexuality or religion.

***What are your thoughts on non binary pronouns?***

**Mr Olaniran:** “People should feel free to be called whatever they want because when we strip away titles, we are all human beings who deserve respect.

***What are your thoughts on the recent controversy***

***surrounding Lea Thomas and FINA’s decision?***

**Mr Olaniran:** “I feel the transgender community should have their own category so that it is fair and in line with the Olympic values: excellence, respect, friendship, equality, determination, inspiration and courage.”

***Do you see other sporting bodies reviewing their policies when it comes to trans athletes and if so, how?***

**Mr Olaniran:** I feel more research is needed on the advantages or disadvantages when it comes to transgender athletes competing alongside non transgender athletes, before any definitive decision can be made across sporting bodies.

***Historically, many gay players in sports such as rugby and football have felt intimidated about coming out. What needs to change in the world of Championship Sports to enable players to feel comfortable being their true selves?***

**Mr Olaniran:** More initiatives within sporting bodies need to be introduced; this will empower gay or lesbian athletes and encourage them to come out. For example, there was an initiative within professional football where player wore rainbow laces and rainbowed coloured armbands supporting the LGBTQ+ community. These initiatives dispel the notion that sports like football and rugby are only for heterosexual males.

# London life

## 100 YEARS OF LONDON

WRITTEN BY RUSHDA AHMAD



**1901-**

The death and Funeral procession of Queen Victoria takes place in London.

**1915-**

The Zeppelin attacks: German troops dropped 90 incendiary bombs and 30 grenades. As a result, 7 people died and 35 were injured.



**1926-**

The iconic red telephone boxes were introduced to the streets of London.

**1936-**

A fire spread through Crystal Palace after an explosion in a women's cloak room.



**1953-**

On 2nd June 1953, Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was held in the city of London. It was the first ever Coronation to be broadcast on television.



**1907-**

The Central Criminal Court (also known as the Old Bailey) was opened by King Edward the third.

**1918-**

The Spanish Flu spread through the city of London, killing over 2,000 people in just one week.

**1928-**

Heavy rain and snowfall led to the flooding of the Thames on January 1928. 14 individuals died and 4000 were left homeless.

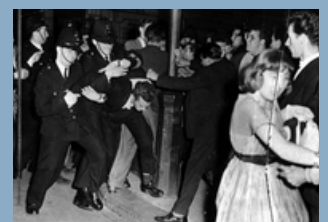


**1940-**

The Blitz: a traumatic moment in London's history that went on for 8 continuous months only for the damage to affect the city for years onwards.

**1958-**

The Notting Hill riots started on 30th August and continued until 5th September.



**1966-**

The start of the Notting Hill Carnival based on the original indoor carnival that was a response to the Notting Hill Riots.

**1972-**

London's first ever official Gay Pride march took place, with 2,000 people partaking.

**1982-**

1982 saw the opening of the famous Barbican. The Barbican is a central performing arts venue.

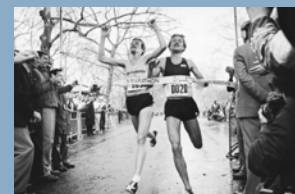


**1969-**

The Beatles performed one of their most iconic concerts on top of the Apple Corps roof.

**1981-**

The first London Marathon was held-over 20,000 applicants and 7,000 participants were recorded.



**1993-**

The 1993 bombings were carried out by the IRA, in an attempt to destroy the UK's economy.

**1997-**

The city mourns the untimely passing of Diana, Princess of Wales.

**2006-**

Surprisingly, London saw a Tornado! It all happened 7th December when a thunderstorm started in Cornwall and slowly moved east.

**2005-**

London bombings: a devastating terrorist attack that killed and injured many civilians.

**2009-**

In 2009, there was a massive snowstorm in London as well as much of the UK. In London, all transportation and schools were shut off for 36 hours due to the amount of snow.



**2012-**

London hosted the Olympics.



**2020-**

London goes into Lockdown.



**2022-**

The city mourns the death of Queen Elizabeth II.



# NEXT STOP: LONDON

WRITTEN BY CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN



London: vibrant, crowded, unexpected. Every year, people from around the world come and visit London. But what compels them to visit our Capital?

London has become one of the top destinations for people around the globe. Every year, on average, around 30 million visitors from around the world come to London. The number of tourists visiting London increased from 11 million in 2002 to more than 19 million in 2016. According to the latest Travellers Insights Report from Expedia Group Media Solutions, London was 3rd most booked place globally and the



most booked international place by North Americans. The City of London website states that the Capital had 21 million visitors in 2019, which – due to Covid – drastically reduced to just 4.6 million in 2020.

But in the post-Covid months, London’s tourism levels are once again on the up. According to Visit London, the top attractions include the London Eye and Buckingham Palace. In addition, the range of world-class theatre productions draw in huge audiences to the West End. And let’s not forget the stunning scenery of Hyde Park and Green Park.

As we approach Christmas, spectacular lights have been put up in the West End, adding to the beauty and atmosphere of the city, with the New Year’s Eve countdown seeing hundreds of thousands of Londoners and tourists braving the freezing conditions to catch a glimpse of the magnificent fireworks displays.

Let’s not forget that London is also a globally renowned tourist attraction because of the Royal Family. Did you know that 4.1 billion people worldwide watched the Queen’s funeral? That’s over half the global population! It will be interesting to see how the death of the Queen – who was the longest serving Royal in

the history of the British Monarchy – will affect perceptions of the Royal family and tourism levels in London in the future.

There is little doubt that the vast and fascinating history of our Capital (whose history goes back to AD43 under the Romans), enchants tourists; they flock to historic gems like the Tower of London and the Houses of Parliament. The London skyline, with its mix of modern and historic buildings, offers a magical setting in which to immerse yourself and enjoy a journey from the bustling past to the exciting present.

London: vibrant, crowded, unexpected. Could *you* explore it more? How about taking a day in the Christmas holidays to be a tourist in your own city? Who knows what magical journey London will take you on?





# OUR CITY'S SKYLINE

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA

Since this term's Special Edition focuses on London, we thought you'd like to know a bit more about the attractions around London that we all recognise as part of the city's stunning skyline.

## The London Eye



The London Eye is the very famous millennial wheel in London. It attracts over 3 million visitors annually and is Europe's tallest cantilevered observation wheel. Did you know that it is also the most popular paid tourist attraction in the UK? The London Eye is located on the South Bank of the River Thames, with each of the 32 capsules having the capacity to carry 25 individuals.

## Big Ben



Big Ben is the name for the bell that hangs in the famous clock tower in the Houses of Parliament. Officially, the tower is actually called the Elizabeth Tower. Big Ben was the work of Edmund Beckett Denison and took 13 years to make back in 1859. It is 315 ft high and the clock on Big Ben has 4 faces that are 9 ft in diameter - so it is officially one of the largest clock faces in the world!

## Tower Bridge



Tower Bridge is a drawbridge that allows boats to pass under it. In 1884, Horace Jones and John Wolfe Barry designed the bridge and in 1886 work commenced on it. The bridge was finally opened on 30th June 1894. Did you know that during WW2, Tower Bridge was one of the few landmarks not targeted by the Nazis. Why? Because it was so distinctive that it could be used to get a sense of location by the enemy above!

## The Tower of London



The Tower of London is an ancient fortress that lies on the banks of the River Thames. The oldest part of the Tower of London is the White Tower. It was built in 1066 by King William I.

The Tower of London has a grisly history, known for being a place for execution and imprisonment. Some of the most famous people to lose their lives at the Tower were 2 of Henry VIII's wives, Anne Boleyn (1536) and Catherine Howards (1542).

It's all too easy for us Londoners to take our city's rich history and magnificent landmarks for granted, but it's all there on our doorstep! So what's stopping us from exploring London a little more this Christmas holiday?



# THE GLORIOUS NATIONAL GALLERY

WRITTEN BY CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN



Have you ever been to the National Gallery? Standing proudly in the middle of Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery is a prominent London tourist attraction. In fact, it homes the most elegant collection of art pieces in the world and is the second most popular tourist attraction in the UK. It first opened in 1824, (making it 195 years old), and holds over 2,300 art pieces! These paintings were produced from the early 13th Century, with the latest being made in the 20th Century.

The National Gallery houses many paintings and sculptures by many artists across diverse time periods. During the 13th century, there were many religious paintings that were intended for the altars in churches and they often had alluringly decorated gold-leaf backgrounds. Later, in the 15th



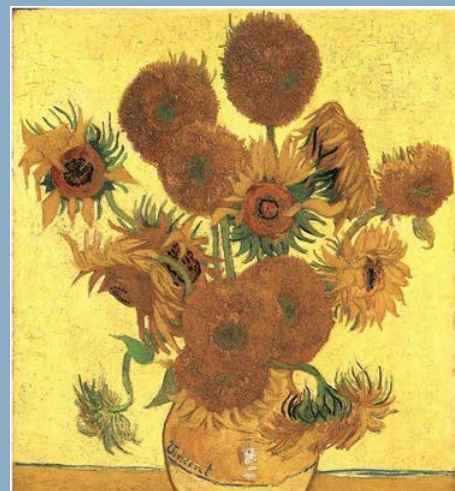
century, many artists started to paint more scenes from mythology and ancient history, as they increased in importance. Realism was also a popular painting style during the period. There were many technical advances, too. Some media, such as oil paint, allowed a wider understanding in the illustration of facial expressions and surface textures.

Later, in the 16th Century, Renaissance painters - especially in Italy - wanted to surpass the artists of ancient Greece and Rome. In fact, ancient history and mythology art pieces became almost as important as the Christian paintings. During the 17th Century, many artists like Van Dyck and Rembrandt, made art their own work. Some even looked back at past paintings for inspiration.

Finally, throughout the 18th to 20th centuries, paintings for grand churches and palaces continued. It did soon become more common for artists to illustrate smaller pieces that were later sold and exhibited through art dealers and public exhibitions, like the ones at the National Gallery. The paintings were looked after with great care throughout the years with the Gallery.

Recently, however, one of Van Gogh's most famous paintings was defaced. On the 14th October, 2 activists from Just Stop Oil splashed Heinz tomato soup onto the painting. This was not the first time that priceless art has been their target; back in July, Just Stop Oil activists glued themselves to the frame of *The Last Supper*, by Leonardo da Vinci at London's Royal Academy of Arts. They also did this to *The Hay Wain*, by John Constable in the National Gallery.

The National Gallery has over 5,000,000 visitors every year and it is totally free! So, what's stopping you from heading there this Christmas?



# BLUE PLAQUES OF LONDON

WRITTEN BY SOPHIA MARTIN



Around London, you may well have come across the famous blue plaques on different buildings. But what exactly are they?

Blue plaques "*link the people of the past with the buildings of the present.*" The scheme, run by English Heritage, started in 1866 and commemorates men and women who have lived or worked in those buildings and have made a distinct contribution to society: famous writers, artists, actors and politicians all feature.

Did you know that there are over 950 plaques across London? Have a look at this map we have created – which famous figures with blue plaques around London do you recognise?

**Did you know that across the road from Platanos College, there is a blue plaque?**



Lilian Baylis

# FAMOUS PEOPLE FROM LONDON

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI

London has a rich history of famous residents: from actors to comedians, to writers to royalty, the city has housed many well-known Londoners. In this article we consider 2 famous Londoners and look at their impact on the world.

Emma Thompson was born on 15th April 1959. You may not recognise her name, but you would definitely recognise her face! She has played roles like Sybil Trelawney in Harry Potter, Nanny MacPhee in Nanny MacPhee, The Baroness in Cruella, Miss Potts in Beauty and the Beast...the list goes on and on.

Described as one of the best actors of her generation, Thompson has achieved multiple awards across four decades.

Emma and her family lived in West Hampstead (North London), and she was educated at Camden School for Girls, then the University of Cambridge.



In 1995, Thompson wrote and starred in *Sense and Sensibility*, which is based on Jane Austen's novel, winning Academy Awards for both her acting and writing.

But her influence does not stop with the world of acting; Emma is also an activist, being a long time supporter of Greenpeace UK and the Food Foundation. She is also President of the Helen Bamber Foundation and has campaigned for many years for immigrants' rights.

Next, we look at the one and only David Bowie. Born in Brixton on 8th January 1947, Bowie was a leading icon in the music industry, even regarded as one the most influential musicians of the 20th century for his innovative style and work during the 1970s.

Bowie's career was characterised by reinvention

and unique visual presentation and had a significant impact on popular music. Did you know that Bowie attended Stockwell Infant School, which is now known as Stockwell Primary School? Not only was his music influential, the fact that he was openly bisexual created a beacon of hope and change, as he became a role model for others. His albums, musical styles, personae, outrageous costumes and onstage antics drew the audience to him, and he remains a local icon



# THE UNSETTLING HISTORY OF THE LONDON TOMBS

WRITTEN BY MELANIA SKOTARENKO-SPICER

If you live in London, you've probably used the Underground at least once in your life - it's an easy and efficient way of travel for most Londoners. But did you know that it holds a disturbing past?

The Bubonic Plague (also known as the Black Death) was the pandemic that took the lives of an estimated 75 to 200 million people across Europe, Asia and North Africa in 1665. You may already be aware that it was spread by fleas on rats and was transmitted rapidly throughout cities and towns. At the time, many people believed that the plague was a punishment from God or was caused by bad air.

Unfortunately, what people didn't realise, was that the reason big cities were affected greatly by the disease was largely due to overcrowding and proximity between houses. In addition, unhygienic living conditions - especially in poorer areas - enabled the disease to spread even more rapidly.



The effects were disastrous: by 1666, around a quarter of London's population had succumbed to the Plague. Many doctors, lawyers and merchants escaped the doomed Capital. The King at the time, Charles II, left London for Hampton Court and then later, Oxford. Parliament and court cases were moved from London to Oxford.

Remaining in London were the Lord Mayor and aldermen (town councillors); they had a duty to enforce the King's orders to try and stop the spread of the Plague. And of course, the poorest Londoners had little choice but to remain in the city. At night, searchers looked for dead bodies and transported them to plague pits for burial.

The Plague only came to an end when mandatory quarantining was enforced and of course, when the Great Fire of London took place in 1666; whilst it destroyed much of the medieval City of London inside the old Roman city wall, it also helped to kill off the rats that carried the Plague.

Once the plague had ended, the remains of those who had perished were either burnt or buried in mass graves to remove the foul stench. But



did you know that many of these tombs are hidden throughout London? Nowadays, London has a popular tourist attraction called the London Tombs which is like London Dungeons. The most interesting thing about these tombs is that they could be anywhere - even on the underground system.

A few years ago, in 2016, expansion work was taking place by Liverpool Street Station. Astonishingly, the remains of around 3000 people were found in a mass grave! Following an investigation, archaeologists determined that the cause of death had been the bubonic plague.

Due to this, many conspiracy theorists say that the route taken by the tubes is deliberately mapped out because of the mass graves scattered in between each station.

So, when you take your next tube ride, think about the tragic history of London that you may be only metres away from....

# LONDON: A CITY OF CONTRASTS

WRITTEN BY VIRTUOUS DANZARIA

Some may think life in London is luxurious; a place for the carefree, where tourists can sit back and relax, enjoying all that this beautiful city has to offer: day trips to the British Museum and Buckingham Palace, moonlit rides on the London Eye and don't forget the hundreds of lush parks scattered around the city. In short, London is bustling, vibrant and multicultural: a truly unique city.

But, rooted between those grey pavements are social inequalities that include the income gap, homelessness, racial discrimination, child poverty, racial segregation, gender inequality and disability discrimination.

Here are just some of the inequalities that plague London today...

## Household Incomes

Back in October the then Chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng pulled back on plans to offer a tax cut to the wealthiest 1% of society – his original decision horrified many Londoners. The income (after basic housing costs) of the bottom 10% of London households is less than 2/3 of the rest of the UK.

## Racial Discrimination

After Brexit, 71% of people from ethnic minorities faced discrimination. Whilst London is the most multicultural city in the world, sadly, racism still exists.

## Violence Against Women

The killing of Sarah Everard last year, highlighted the issue of gender-based violence that exists on the streets of London and raised concerns about the ways in which young men and boys view and treat women.

## Work-related Discrimination

According to Drive Forward Foundation, 46% of adults in London have experienced some form of work-related discrimination.



**We interviewed Ms Cooke about her views about prejudice that Londoners face.**

***Do you think that prejudice still exists in London and if so, how prevalent is it?***

**Ms Cooke:** I think it's subtler compared to examples of prejudice and discrimination we've seen throughout history. There may not be legal segregation, or signs saying 'no dogs, no blacks, no Irish' anymore, and women may have the right to vote now, but there are still elements of prejudice within London. Young black boys are more likely to be stopped and searched, girls are more likely to face sexual harassment or even assault on the streets or on public transport, plus the soaring costs in London alienate anyone on lower incomes. This city has so much to offer, but at times it feels like it's offering the best to certain groups of people.

***Have you ever experienced prejudice before?***

**Ms Cooke:** Not directly, but I was in the presence of my mum when she was racially abused on the street.

***Where is your mother from?***

**Ms Cooke:** My mum is from the Midlands, but her family is from India.

**How did you feel when your mum was racially abused?**

**Ms Cooke:** I felt really powerless and helpless. I felt I could do nothing, but I was obviously really sorry for my mum. It was awful as we both felt really unsafe, especially as it was in our local area.

**Do you think you would've reacted differently now that you are older?**

**Ms Cooke:** Probably not as I don't know what else I could've done, as it was a man driving past in his van. The only thing I might've done, was taken down his registration plate and reported him.

**What do you think are the top 3 problems Londoners are facing today?**

**Ms Cooke:** Rising costs – London has always been more expensive than the rest of the country (generally, a house in the UK costs on average £295,000, however, in London alone, houses average at £629,000 - over double the amount). Pollution and climate change will affect us more due to air quality – I know rates of asthma or respiratory problems are higher in the capital. Plus, we are at risk of floods from any rises in water levels from the Thames. Thirdly, transport strikes will cause disruption to all Londoners, no matter what form of travel they take.

**Do you think the cost-of-living crisis and cost of living in London has affected you?**

**Ms Cooke:** Yes, definitely. There are many things I am conscious about buying so I think twice about my spending habits. I also don't think I'll be able to buy a house in the next two years - which was my plan - because interest rates have now soared, which means I don't know if I will be able to afford a mortgage.

**What do you think about London Mayor Sadiq Khan and his policies for London?**

**Ms Cooke:** I know Sadiq Khan is introducing policies to make London a greener city, for example extending the ULEZ charges, increasing more environmentally friendly buses on the road and allowing more public bikes/scooter services. He is also trying to raise awareness of crimes against women and girls through advertising on public transport and increasing the amount of female officers that are on duty so women feel safe.

**If you were Mayor for a year, what changes would you make to London and why?**

**Ms Cooke:** I'd increase the percentage of affordable housing that's being built in the capital – why do the luxury tower blocks get reserved for the billionaires due to the high prices? Why are they not serving the everyday people who live and work in London?

It would also be good to raise the London Living Wage and make it compulsory for all London employers, so Londoners get a decent wage. I'd also ensure all cyclists had to have registration plates as some cyclists pose threats to pedestrians and even drivers for cycling dangerously and ignoring traffic lights.



**MAYOR OF LONDON**



# LONDON: A CITY PLUNGED INTO POVERTY

WRITTEN BY DAVID MELAKU

According to a Henley and Partners' Report, London is the 4th richest city in the world, after only New York, Tokyo and the San Francisco Bay area. In fact, there are 272,400 wealthy people living in London, with Chelsea being named the wealthiest area in the Capital.

Despite this, London has a shockingly high poverty rate – an estimated 2.5 million people. This means that of its population of over 8 million people, around 1 in 4 Londoners lives in poverty; consequently, London is the second most poverty-stricken city in the world after New Delhi. This high rate of poverty is largely due to the high cost of housing and the low wages that Londoners earn. The effects of poverty can be horrendously devastating: child malnutrition, crime, being trapped in a cycle of deprivation...the list goes on.

So, what can be done to help reduce poverty in London? There are many ways that the government can help and it is important that we take action now. For example, more can be done

to provide low-income families with affordable housing. Changes to taxes and an increase in the wages of low-income workers can also be beneficial. A huge issue that can affect household incomes is the lack of affordable childcare. So, it would be useful for the government to provide child care and education subsidies. Whilst we have an existing transport infrastructure in London, the Government could expand it further so that low-income families or those who cannot afford the astronomical rents in the city, can easily get to work.

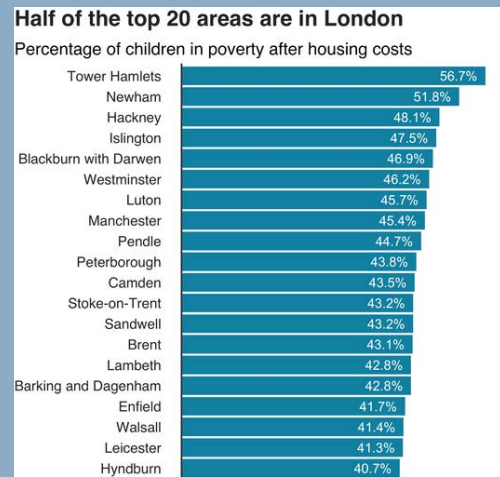
There are many charitable organisations that work to reduce poverty in London. Such charities provide food, clothing and shelter to low-income families, as well as job training and educational opportunities. Some examples of such groups are London Poverty Action Group and the London Poverty Consortium.



**According to Trust for London, 58% of Londoners living in poverty come from a working family.**

**18% of jobs in London pay below the London Living Wage.**

**50% of London's wealth is owned by the top 10%. The bottom 50% own a mere 5% of London's wealth.**

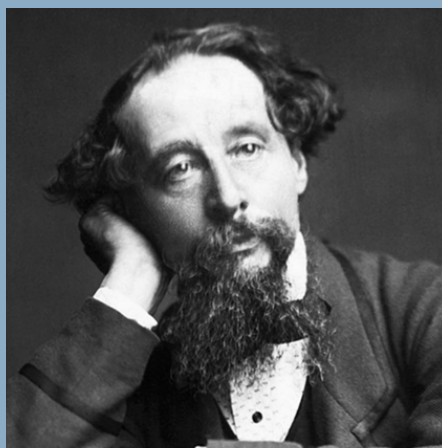


Source: Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University



# LONDON THROUGH THE EYES OF CHARLES DICKENS

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA



During your time as a pupil at Platanos College, you will most definitely have read at least a little of Charles Dickens's work. And as we approach Christmas, there will be a veritable feast of film adaptations of his novels – a classic, of course, being *A Christmas Carol*. But who was Dickens and what was his view of London?

Charles Dickens is considered to be one of the best English novelists of the Victorian era. During Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), England was a country divided by class, which then went on to confirm your status and role in life. People from different classes wouldn't talk to each other and there was a lack of communication between the classes due to this class divide.

Dickens's mother was called Elizabeth Barrow and she married John Dickens in 1809. The couple ended up

*Accordingly, with a clean white apron tied over her gown, and her curl-papers tucked under a straw bonnet. Miss Nancy prepared to issue forth on her errand."*

– From *Oliver Twist*, by Charles Dickens. This reflects the clothing of some women in Victorian times.

*"I thought how Joe and my sister were then sitting in a kitchen, and how Miss Havisham and Estella never sat in a kitchen, but were far above the level of such common doings."*

–From *Great Expectations*. This reflects that even something as normal as sitting in a kitchen, is classified as a working class habit.

having 8 children, with Charles being the second one out of all of them.

Charles was born on 7th February 1812 in Portsmouth. When he was 4 months old, his family was forced to move to a smaller house for financial reasons. As a child, Charles dreamt of being a gentleman and he wanted to have an education. As a result of his

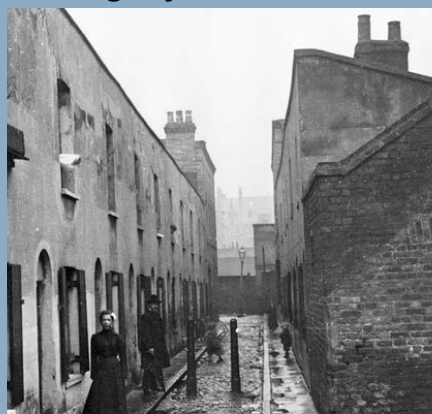
father's job, Charles was able to have a private education at Chatham's William Giles's School for a period of time.

However, in 1822, the family was plunged into poverty, resulting in them moving back to London. The family could only afford for one child to go to university, and this ended up being Charles's sister Fanny, who had a talent for music.

When he was 12, Charles's saw his father arrested and sent to Marshalsea prison because he couldn't pay off his debts. During this time, the family sent Charles to work at the Warren's Blacking Warehouse, where he earned 6 shillings a week. This warehouse was a shoe polish factory where he would put labels on pots of blacking for 10 hours a day! Remember, the Victorian period was a time when children could work and did not have the right to an education. During this time, Charles began to walk around London for several hours both day and night; consequently, he knew London very well: *"I suppose myself to know this large city as well as anybody in it"*.

After inheriting money from a grandmother, the Dickens family was able to clear their debts and they were finally able to leave Marshalsea. Charles was permitted to attend school at Wellington House Academy in North London. His mother however, wanted him to continue working in the blacking factory. The experiences Charles had in the workhouse never left him; he saw first hand how brutal a place London could be for the working classes and how families could be torn apart due to poverty, leading to children being robbed of a future.

According to biographer Andrew Sanders, London is the main character in Dickens's works: "He looked at London in a very original way," and the city's growth from 1 million residents in 1811 to 1.65 million in 1837, meant it became unrecognisable to many Londoners, with Dickens's writings at the time fuelling their curiosity about how their city was changing. It was an overcrowded, smelly and bustling city.



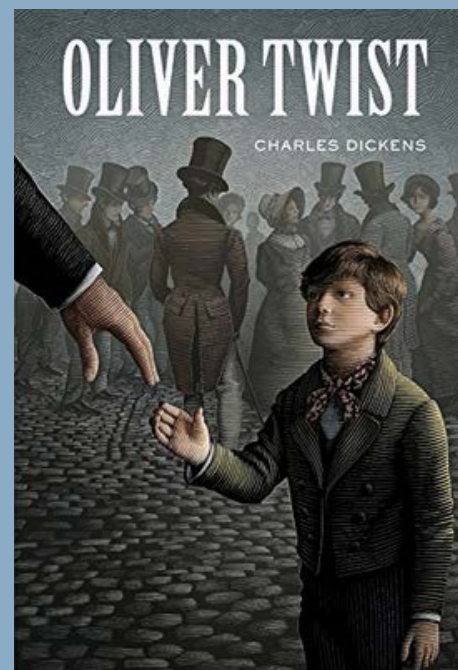
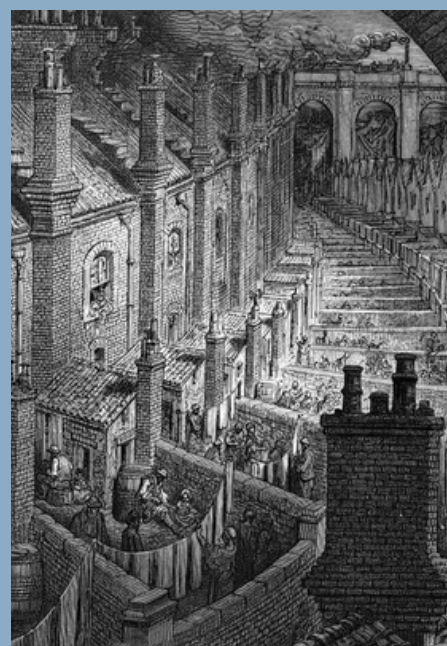
Dickens's description of A Storm Cloud over London from Little Dorrit:

*In the country, the rain would have developed a thousand fresh scents, and every drop would have had its bright association with some beautiful form of growth or life. In the city, it developed only foul stale smells, and was a sickly, lukewarm, dirt-stained, wretched addition to the gutters"*

Dickens's description of Smithfield cattle market in London from Oliver Twist:

*"It was market-morning. The ground was covered, nearly ankle-deep, with filth and mire; a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above. All the pens in the centre of the large area, and as many temporary pens as could be crowded into the vacant space, were filled with sheep; tied up to posts by the gutter side were long lines of beasts and oxen, three or four deep."*

Having lived in poverty himself, Dickens's works often champion those Londoners whose voices remain unheard: the single, unwed mothers; the orphan children; the impoverished. And therefore through his works, he was able to expose the unfairness of Victorian London and helped to inspire and give a voice to those residents who walked its streets.



# COULD YOU BE MAYOR OF LONDON FOR A YEAR?

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA

We all have views about how life in London could be improved. But if *you* were Mayor of London for a year, what would be your priorities? We asked a range of KS4 pupils and staff about what they would do as Mayor of London.

"I would make sure that people who are racist are punished. I would also shorten the amount of school days in the year."

-Yasmin

"I would make better football pitches throughout London. Also, I would increase wages and make McDonalds free every Friday."

-Samuel

"I would make sports a more common activity in London."

-Andy

"I would reduce the prices for entertainment events such as shows and theatres. I would also reduce the cost of public transport."

-Mr Scott

"I would create better football pitches and I would also increase London wages."

-Lucas

"I would decrease the tax rate and increase wages for people with disabilities."

-Theodore

"I would reduce knife crime and also try to end racism."

-Benice

"I would put Big Ben in an actual gold coating."

-Yacine

"I would reduce transport costs. I would also build more free gyms and create more opportunities for physical activities."

-Mr Schardsmith

"School systems should change and we should have reduced taxes."

-Nyron

"I would ensure that pupils can wear their own clothes to school."

-Mya

"I would make school 3 days long."

-Michael

"I would like to end racism."

-Ashlee

“Schools should end on Thursday. The amount of pay should increase and taxes should decrease.”

-Tyler

“I would make areas in London cleaner and make sure that buses are cleaner. I would swap the time pupils start and finish school for a more suitable time, for example, to a time when they are more energised and can be focused on learning more to avoid them sleeping in class. Also, I would improve the school food so kids can enjoy their lunch more. Finally, I would introduce better clubs for everyone like sports clubs for swimming and football.”

-Halimah

“I would make the legal age to learn to drive 15. I would make smoking and drinking illegal for under 18s. I would make the legal age to buy a house 17. I would make smoking and drinking while pregnant, illegal.”

-Seth

“I would make feminine products like pads and tampons free and I would provide more homeless shelters for people in need. Also, the cost of living must come down.”

-Yasmin

**What do you think of these priorities? What would *you* choose to do as London Mayor?**





# crime & conspiracy

## THE MONSTER WITH 21 FACES

WRITTEN BY MADINAH MAKSENE

The crime you're about to read about deals with 2 Japanese companies, Ezaki Glico, (best known for its Pocky Snacks) and Morinaga (a Japanese food company).

Back in 1984, two masked and armed men broke into the home of the mother of Katsuhisa Ezaki. They then stole the keys to Ezaki's house. But why? Well, Ezaki - who is now 81 years old - is the President of Ezaki Glico, a Japanese company whose current worth is over \$6 million.

When they entered his house, they tied up both Ezaki's wife and his eldest daughter Mariko, who was only 7 years old at the time. Mrs Ezaki attempted to make a deal with the men regarding money, but they were seeking something else. The men cut off the telephone cords and invaded the bathroom, which was where Mr Ezaki was hiding, along with his other two children, Yukiko, who was 4 years old and Etsuro, who was 11 at the time.

The men managed to seize Esaki and then forced him to a warehouse, where they held him hostage. They negotiated with him and decided to impose a ransom of 1 billion yen and 100kg of gold bars.

However, their plans were ruined when Ezaki managed to escape the warehouse 3 days later. Nonetheless, he was unable to identify the masked men to the police.

A few weeks after the incident, the group set fire to several vehicles at Esaki's Company Headquarters. Later, on 16th April 1984, a container containing hydrochloric acid was discovered in a Glico company building. This triggered a chain of letters from a group or individual known as The Monster with 21 Faces. They claimed to have contaminated foods sold by the company with potassium cyanide soda. As a consequence of having to remove all these items from shelves, Ezaki Glico lost \$21 million and 450 part-time workers lost their jobs.

Months later however, the Monster with 21 Faces sent a final letter stating, "*We forgive you Glico!*" But their campaign was not over; they then transferred their attention to Marudai Ham, House Foods Corporation and Fujiya.

To put an end to the torment at Marudai, one of the employees was instructed to hand over a substantial ransom on a train. The primary suspect was then spotted by an investigator who

had posed as an employee; however, he was never apprehended.

Police Superintendent Yamamoto committed suicide a year later as a result of The Monster with 21 Faces' continued harassment of the police. He set himself on fire out of shame for his inability to apprehend the offenders. The Monster with 21 Faces wrote its last letter to the media five days after the death, stating, "*Yamamoto of Shiga Prefecture Police died. How stupid of him! Don't let bad guys like us get away with it. There are many more fools who want to copy us. No-career Yamamoto died like a man. So we decided to give our condolence. We decided to forget about torturing food-making companies. We are bad guys. It's fun to lead a bad man's life. Monster with 21 Faces.*"

The Monster with 21 Faces then slipped away, never to be seen or heard of again.



*Suspected culprit of the crime*



# THE TWISTED TWIN KILLERS

WRITTEN BY MARIAMA DIALLO

This is the horrific case about the Whitehead killer twins...

Let's start at the beginning. On 18th April 1975, Nikki Whitehead was born in prison, where her mother, Lynda Whitehead was serving time for robbery and drug possession. This was just the start of a difficult life and she was handed to her grandmother Della, who raised her.

At the age of 17, Nikki found herself pregnant with twin girls and in 1993, she gave birth to Jasmiyah and Tasmiyah. However, she gave up care of the girls to her grandmother, just as her mother had done with her.

Like many twins, the girls did everything together and seemed to be telepathically connected. Sadly, both twins suffered from abandonment issues. Della described their great



granddaughters as respectful, clever girls. They achieved straight As in school and had high hopes of going to Harvard University.

But this wasn't the case; in fact, things took a dark turn when they started to live with their mother.

In 2007, Nikki went to Court to request custody of her twins - which she was granted. The real trouble began when the twins went to High school; they would party all night and hang around with their boyfriends. When their mother sanctioned them, the girls grew resentful.

On 14th January 2010, the twins approached the police, saying that they had found their mother murdered. When officers arrived at the scene, they found Nikki had been stabbed over 80 times! Police already knew the troubled history between Nikki and the twins, but would not believe that the two innocent looking girls would be able to commit such a brutal crime.

Investigating the girls' room, officers found a pair of boots that was covered in blood and also found hair that had been ripped out of someone's head.

For four months, Tasmiyah and Jasmiyah went on with their lives as if nothing had happened, while the police gathered more evidence to make a case against them.

Eventually, the twins were arrested and charged with felony homicide and aggravated assault; they denied all charges. However, 4 years later, they decided to confess.

The twins recounted that on that fateful day, they had been up until 2am. Allegedly, their mother had come to their room holding a pot, which Jasmiyah tried to wrestle from her. When their mother grabbed a knife, she was hit with the pot and attacked and repeatedly stabbed. After their mother had passed away, the girls tried to clean up the crime scene, changed clothes and went to school.

Both twins were found guilty of manslaughter and were sentenced to 30 years in prison.





# MOLLY RUSSELL CASE - A TURNING POINT IN SOCIAL MEDIA LAW?

WRITTEN BY KEISHA OPKU-AGYEMAN

In 2017 the nation was shocked when Molly Russell, a 14 year old pupil from London, committed suicide, after viewing thousands of pages of harmful content on social media. As the case went to court in the Autumn of this year, new information emerged about what exactly had led to Molly deciding to take her own life.

It has since come to light that Molly had viewed and shared various pages on self-harm, depression and suicide on the hugely popular social media platforms Instagram and Pinterest. But just how far are these social media giants to blame when it comes to the series of events that led to Molly's untimely death?

Well, you may know that the last Edition of the KS4 Newsletter was entitled *Beyond The Screen* and was a social media Special Edition. In it, former Year 10 pupils wrote a range of articles about the negative impact that social media can have on the lives of young people and informed readers of the Online Safety Bill that the UK Government had proposed in order to make us the safest nation in the world when it comes to social media usage.

Sadly, it seems that the darker side of social media could well have had a part to play in Molly's death. In fact, in the last 6 months leading up to the 14 year old's death, Molly was able to view and engage with 2,100 images and 138 videos all related to depression, self harm and suicide.

In the wake of Molly's death, her parents have worked tirelessly to improve internet safety for young teens on social media platforms. Her father stated: *"Five years ago, Molly's feelings of worthlessness grew and her sense of helplessness deepened, and ending her life seemed to her like a solution - while to us her life seemed very normal...It's all too easy to forget the person she really was: someone full of love and hope and happiness, a young person full of promise and opportunity and potential."*

Even the Prince of Wales has



got involved in the matter, saying *"No parent should ever have to endure what Ian Russell and his family have been through."*

Furthermore, the Coroner asserted that the content Molly had been exposed to *"shouldn't have been available for a child to see"*.

So, to what degree do you believe Molly's death was influenced by social media?

Here's what some KS4 pupils had to say about how they use social media...

*'To be honest, I just use it connect with friends so I don't see negative content often.'*

*"I only use it to keep up with football.'*

*'I sometimes feel as though I completely lose track of time when I'm on it.'*

*'There have honestly been times when it's really ruined my confidence and made me insecure.'*

These differing responses portray the true duality of social media and young people's diverse experiences with it. On the one hand social media can be a brilliant tool for connecting with the world, but



on the other hand, it can be a dark rabbit hole that is extremely difficult to escape from.

Don't forget that you can always speak with a member of staff at Platanos College if you feel you need support or help at any time.

**Organisations that you can contact if you feel you need help.**

Did you know that the UK's Online Safety Bill will now enable parents to access their child's social media accounts, if they have died? This comes after it took Molly's parents 5 years to access her accounts. If they fail to comply, social media firms will face multi-million-pound fines and up to a year in jail.



**MENTAL HEALTH INNOVATIONS**







# THE SNAPCHAT TRAP

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA



You are probably aware that Snapchat is an app that you can use in order to communicate with your friends, family and other people around the world by calling, texting and sending pictures/videos. Users like the immediacy of the messages and it is highly popular amongst young people.

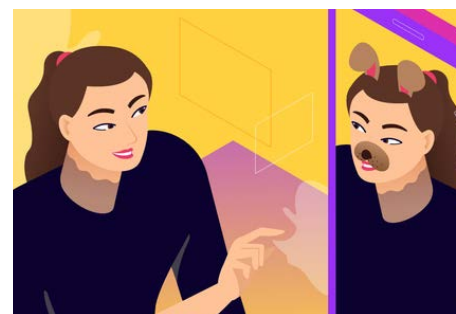
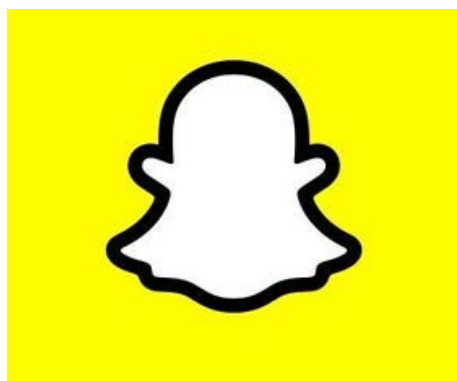
But, there is a darker side associated with Snapchat.

Did you know that it was recently discovered that the app is being used by criminal gangs to arrange violent attacks in and around London? Perpetrators are said to prefer the temporary nature of the messages, because then there is no immediate evidence of a crime being committed. In fact, studies actually show that some social media platforms are a "preferred

*communication channel for gang-affiliated individuals".*

Last month, City Hall warned in a study that Snapchat is the "favoured" social media site for luring unsuspecting victims into traps. The findings are part of a study of murders in London, that was set up by City Hall's Violence Reduction Unit. This was done in response to an increase in knife attacks and domestic murders. The study warns that the role that social media plays in such crimes is "more sophisticated than sharing threats or aggressive language online."

The study also confirmed that WhatsApp and Telegram are being used by violent gangs to arrange crimes. Consequently, Mayor Sadiq Khan has concluded that, "if we are to continue reducing violence in London, it's crucial that we identify more opportunities to intervene early."





# office of opinion

## CLIMATE CRISIS: BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY?

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA

You may have heard of the group Extinction Rebellion (XR) but who exactly are they? They claim to be a Climate Change organisation with the intent to push for a better future through peaceful protests. No problem with that ... or is there? Whilst their motives and intentions are admirable, the Group's approach is causing raised eyebrows and anger amongst some members of the public.

Extinction Rebellion was founded by Julian Roger Hallam, Gail Marie Bradbook, Simon Bramwell and other activists from the group Rising Up! There are 3 principle aims of Extinction Rebellion: the government must declare a climate emergency; the UK must act to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025; a citizen's assembly must be established to act as "overseers". In essence, the group aims to push the government to act rapidly on the climate emergency.

It's of course very reasonable to demand such changes; after all, it is estimated that sea levels will rise by approximately 10 inches and island like the Maldives will be engulfed in water. It is



clear that if we don't act now, things will go downhill quite quickly and XR are simply there to catalyse the change. But are their methods wholly justified?

The way XR work is by using a string of arrests to attract attention to them and their single goal of acting to save the planet. According to XR themselves, more than 3,400 people have been arrested with 1,700 of those being charged, all in the name of pushing for action to combat climate change. On 2nd September this year, 4 XR activist glued themselves in a chain around the Speaker's Chair in Parliament, attempting to draw attention to the need of a 'citizens' assembly'.

Perhaps the main question to be asked about XR is when is the line drawn between non-violent protest and acts of barbarity? Furthermore, other groups such as Just Stop Oil have also been criticised recently. Back in October, two Just stop Oil protesters threw tomato soup all over Van

Gogh's Sunflowers painting in the National Gallery. They argued "*What is worth more, art or life?*" However, it is perhaps ironic that their actions can cause harm to life, for instance, on the occasion when they lay in the roads, bringing traffic to a standstill and causing one father delays in taking his baby to hospital.

Recently, a police officer was hospitalised when trying to stop a protest. In addition, when blocking busy roads such as around the Dartford Crossing, protestors cause traffic - and therefore pollution - to build up.

With an approval rating of just 19%, the actions of the Extinction Rebellion are clearly not liked by the majority. Whilst they act for an undeniably important cause troubling the world today, their rebellious actions are perhaps a bit too, well, rebellious.

So what do you think? Are the actions of XR justifiable and reasonable or are their actions and the bad press that follows, just a setback to their ultimate goal of catalysing action against climate change?



# WOMEN'S RIGHTS = HUMAN RIGHTS?

WRITTEN BY BETHEL DAVID



We all know that every person is entitled to basic human rights: to be free from discrimination and violence; to have an education; to be paid a fair wage; to make decisions about their own body; to have a safe place to live; to have the right to vote.

However, sadly, many women around the world are still being discriminated against for their gender and still do not receive the same rights as men. It is very antagonising to see women still fighting for the same rights as men in the 21st century. Women's rights charities have worked hard to push for equality, but this is not reflected in many aspects of society. Here we look at some of the areas in which women still do not have equal rights.

## Workplace Discrimination

Often, women are the subject of gender-based discrimination in the workplace. One way in which this is evident is in the gender pay gap. In fact, globally, women earn only 84% that men are paid, for doing the

same job! Furthermore, women tend to be further disadvantaged when they choose to start a family, since mothers continue to play the role of primary carer. Many give up on forging forward with their careers because of the difficulty in balancing home and work life. Did you know that following the birth of a child, 17% of women leave employment completely within 5 years? This is compared with just 4% of men.

## Secondary School Life

School should be a safe space for girls to be, but did you know that 37% of girls who attend mixed-sex schools, have been harassed in their educational setting? Furthermore, over a third of primary teachers have witnessed gender-based stereotyping on a weekly basis. Sometimes, girls don't feel comfortable reporting harassment because they feel they might be blamed, rather than the perpetrator being held accountable. The aftermath of being assaulted or harassed can be devastating, as it can lead to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. Sometimes, it can be scary for girls to pass areas where there are large group of boys; indeed, following the murder of Sarah Everard last

year, there were calls to educate and raise awareness amongst boys so that they learn to treat girls and women with respect from a young age.



## Abortion Rights

Abortion remains a contentious issue, with many people believing that only God has the right to terminate life. Others maintain that a woman should have the right to make choices about her own body and whether she proceeds with a pregnancy, and make the point that an unborn baby's life depends entirely on the health of the mother. In 1973, the US Supreme Court passed The Row vs Wade Law, permitting abortions. However, earlier this year, this Law was overturned, meaning that individual States now have the right to change their abortion laws. In fact, half of all US States are expected to introduce bans or restrictions on abortions. Many women have argued that this now effectively prevents them from having control over their own bodies.

Whilst some issues are contentious, there's little doubt that women worldwide still face unacceptable levels of discrimination.



# TRANS PEOPLE AND THEIR RIGHTS

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI



The Equality Act 2010 was established to protect groups of people who have, for a long time, suffered from discrimination. Did you know that Trans people are protected under the Equality Act because they are recognised as having a "protected characteristic?" A protected characteristic is the part of someone's identity or experience that is used as a reason to treat them unfairly and unequally in society. The protected characteristic that applies to trans people is called "*gender reassignment*".

But what does it mean to be Trans? Well, Trans is a general term for people whose gender is different from the one that was assigned to them at birth. For instance, a trans man is someone who has transitioned from being a woman to a man.

Did you know that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is reportedly planning to review

transgender rights in the Equality Act 2010? According to The Telegraph, this plan is being considered to "*make it clear that sex means biological sex rather than gender.*" Is this a step backwards in transgender rights?



One of the earliest British people known to have had sex reassignment surgery was April Ashley in 1961. She campaigned for years for a change in the way society treats transgender people. But it was back at the start of the 20th century, in 1906, that Karl M. Baer became the first ever transgender person to undergo sex reassignment surgery.

In 1959, The Cooper Do-nuts Riots occurred and historians believe it was the first modern LGBT uprising in the United States. A decade later, in 1969, The Stonewall riots occurred in New York City. A few years later, Sweden became the first country in

the world to allow transgender people to legally change their sex; in 1972, Sweden started to provide hormone therapy as well. More recently, in the 2000s, the Transgender Pride flag was first shown at a pride parade in Arizona.

Over the last 2 decades, the world has witnessed more anti-discrimination laws when it comes to gender identity. In 2014, Malta became the first European state to add the recognition of gender identity to its constitution - effectively making it a protected category. In May 2015, President Obama declared May to be National Foster Care Month, stating that gender identity cannot prevent anyone becoming a foster parent. Then, in December 2017, America's first all-LGBT city council was elected in the State of California. Most recently, in March of last year, Joe Biden became the first American President to issue a formal Presidential proclamation that recognised the Transgender Day of Visibility.

Despite these developments in the journey of Trans rights, a 2018 UK Government Equalities Office report stated that 41% of trans men and trans women said they had experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in just one year. Furthermore, 25% of trans people had experienced homelessness at some point in



their lives. Moreover, a national LGBT survey found that 67% of trans respondents purposely avoided being open about their gender identity, because of fears about how others would react.

What does the future hold for trans rights in the UK? Will the Prime Minister make any further decisions on this matter and what impact will it have? Councillor Robyn Norfolk told the Worcester News, *"If the government feels able to remove rights from trans people, what's to stop it from removing rights from other protected characteristics in order to serve their needs? How will we defend those who do not conform to patriarchal standards of beauty from discrimination? Weakening the rights of trans people will reinforce existing bigotry towards the trans community."*



**Minneapolis became the first State in the United States to pass trans-inclusive civil rights protection legislation.**

**Angela Morley was the first openly transgender person to be nominated for an Academy Award.**

**51% of trans people have hidden their identity at work for fear of discrimination.**

**Nearly 7 in 10 trans young people have been subjected to death threats at school.**



# Trans Rights are Human Rights

Dismantling misconceptions about gender, gender identity, and the human rights of trans people



# KANYE – KING OF CONTROVERSY?

WRITTEN BY YASMIN ELHAG-SALIH



You've most likely heard of Kanye West, the American rapper, songwriter, record producer and fashion designer. He gained recognition in the early 2000s and is regarded as one of the most influential hip hop artists and producers of his time.

However, despite having the admiration of many fans, recently Kanye has been attracting attention for all the wrong reasons. In the past, he has been criticised for making unsavoury comments on social media platforms, but many would argue that his most recent statements have gone too far.

Back in October, Kanye was banned from Twitter and Instagram after posting a series of anti-Semitic messages. He said that he didn't believe in the term 'anti-Semitism' and that he's "jealous" of Jewish culture. In defence of himself, Kanye stated that Black people

cannot be anti-Semitic as *"we are Semite, we Jew, so I can't be anti-Semite."* Speaking on US podcast Drink Champs, Kanye defended himself, saying that *"Jewish people have owned the black voice... whether it's through all of us being signed to a record label, or having a Jewish manager"*. Following his comments, the busy 405 highway in Los Angeles hit the international news when an anti-Semitic hate group hung a banner over it, stating *"Kanye is right about the Jews."* Those responsible were seen to make the Nazi salute, encouraging drivers to *"honk if you know."* This led to concerns about a rise in hate crime and discrimination.

Condemnation for Kanye's divisive comments led to Adidas cutting ties with him, stating that the company does *"not tolerate antisemitism and any other sort of hate speech."* The clothing giant released a statement saying, *"Ye's recent comments and actions have been unacceptable, hateful and dangerous, and they violate the company's values of diversity and inclusion, mutual respect and fairness."*

However, some have come to the rapper's defence. For example, fellow rapper Badass claimed that *"censoring his right to freedom of speech is WACK"*. Furthermore, former welterweight champion and UFC star, Jake Shields also defended Kanye, posting on social media *"why some whites you can criticize and other ones you can't"*.

Others have picked up upon what they view as hypocrisy in the criticism of West. Ilya Davis, Director of Freshman and Seniors' Academic Success at Morehouse College in Atlanta, told CNN, *"I think it's a fair assessment to say Kanye's punishment is part and parcel of him making anti-Jewish remarks and people care little to nothing"*





about making anti-Black remarks." Similarly, journalist Ernest Owens posted to social media, "FACT: Before Kanye West was "the face of Anti-Semitism," he was one of the hip-hop faces of misogyny, anti-Blackness, Trumpism, and slavery-denial. And y'all still gave him contracts, documentaries, endorsements, clothing deals, and millions that became billions."

Despite some corners of support and the evident grey areas that others have commented on, it is evident that most people have been disgusted by Kanye's comments. Friends actor David Schwimmer stated, "If we don't call someone as influential as Kanye out for his divisive, ignorant and anti-semitic words then we are complicit. Silence is complicity."

In a story posted to her Instagram, Kanye's ex-wife Kim Kardashian wrote that "hate speech is never ok or excusable. I stand together with the Jewish community and call on the terrible violence and hateful rhetoric towards them to come to an immediate end."

It seems that wherever Kanye West is, controversy is never far behind. Is he truly today's King of Controversy?



The Controversial T-shirts worn at Paris Fashion Week



# THE RISE OF RISHI

WRITTEN BY UHONOMONA OBAYANGBONA



After a tumultuous year in politics, in which the UK saw 3 Prime Ministers in a matter of months, can we now look forward to a period of stability? And just who is the man at the helm?

Following the end of Liz Truss's short term in office, the current PM is Rishi Sunak, the first Asian UK Prime Minister to have ever served.

Rishi Sunak was born in Southampton, Hampshire, and graduated with a first class degree in Philosophy, Economics and Politics at Oxford University.

His political journey started when he was selected as the Conservative candidate for Richmond (York's) in 2014. Later that same year, he headed up the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Research unit and co - wrote a report on BME groups in the United Kingdom.

Fast forward to 2019, when, under the government of former PM Boris Johnson, he was appointed as the Chief Secretary to the Treasury – only second the Chancellor, Sajid Javid. In February 2020, Sunak was appointed the Chancellor, the second most senior role in the government. Sunak's journey has, indeed, been a rapid rise to the top.

During his time as Chancellor, Sunak launched a number of schemes such as the Eat Out to Help Out scheme, which helped boost hospitality businesses after Lockdown, whilst the furlough scheme proved highly popular. However, many criticised his initiatives, arguing that they would lead to the country acquiring even more debt.

Earlier this year, Sunak resigned as Chancellor, saying that he and the PM Boris Johnson were "*fundamentally too different.*" This helped to catalyse the eventual resignation of Boris Johnson as the leader of the Conservative Party and therefore the PM. Sunak then competed in the Conservative Party leadership race where he made it to the final two with Liz Truss. He went on to lose the race but this did not diminish his chances of becoming PM. Following the 45-day rule of Liz Truss and

Fast forward to 2019, when, under the government of former PM Boris Johnson, he was appointed as the Chief Secretary to the Treasury – only second the Chancellor, Sajid Javid. In February 2020, Sunak was appointed the Chancellor, the second most senior role in the government. Sunak's journey has, indeed, been a rapid rise to the top.

Will he prioritise the issues that are burdening the public at this point in time?

Well, despite his excellent credentials and experience as Chancellor, a report by *The Guardian* in November 2020 revealed that Sunak had not declared the ample amount of wealth he holds, including a £1.7 billion shareholding in the Indian company Infosys. This wouldn't be the last time that Sunak's wealth has come into public contention. Early this year, it was revealed that his wife had non-domiciled status. This means that she didn't need to







pay tax on income earned from abroad in UK. This non-domiciled status allowed her to divert from paying an estimated £20 million. Many would argue that the Prime Minister's incredible wealth only creates a large chasm between everyday Britons and himself; how can he possibly empathise with the struggles many face as they are plunged into poverty?

Well, with difficult times ahead for all of us and challenging decisions to be made, it will be interesting to watch Sunak's journey unfold. Rishi Sunak is a Prime Minister that this country has never had before: the first of Indian descent and the youngest in recent times, not to mention an individual with immense personal wealth. Just how will History look back on Rishi's time in Office? Only time will tell...





# IS THE MET POLICE FIT FOR PURPOSE?

WRITTEN BY AMEERAT DAUD



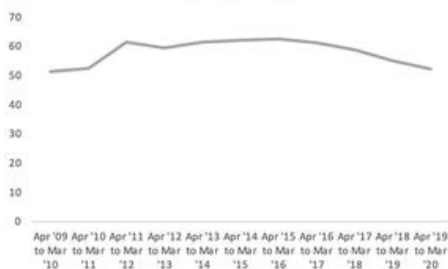
Being one of the largest and oldest police forces in the world, the Met Police is meant to come to our aid when needed and keep London safe for everyone.

But some recent events have severely damaged the reputation of and trust in the Met Police. In fact, statistics show a massive change in public confidence in the police.

In the year ending March 2020, 74% of people aged 16 and over in England and Wales said they had confidence in their local police.

Compared with recent results, the proportion of Britons saying they have 'a great deal'

Percentage of people who believe that the police understand and deal with local concerns, 2010-2020



or 'a fair amount' of confidence in the police's ability to tackle local crime now sits at 43%, and 47% now have 'not very much confidence' or 'no confidence at all' in the police.

According to a YouGov survey for the End Violence Against Women coalition, following the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Met Police officer, 47% of women and 40% of men said they had declining levels of trust in the police.



In addition to the fallout from the killing of Everard, the police has come under fire for damaging public trust in others ways too, including 2 officers taking photos of the bodies of murdered sisters Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman.

Sir Stephen House who took over as Met Police Commissioner following the departure of Cressida Dick, admitted that the issues within the Met Police were not just down to "a few bad apples." He stated that "there is a wider issue within the organisation which we acknowledge and we are dealing with."

We decided to interview members of the local community about their views in the aftermath of the killing of Sarah Everard and whether it affects their current view of the police.

***"It makes a massive impact on my life since I live in South London and I walk home from work."*** -Samantha, 32

***"Even though I did not know Sarah Everard, I express pity for the family and wish them all the best and luck."***

- Jacque, 27

***"As you can see, I am a man and I would not like to think that a police officer would want to harass me, but it makes me pity the women that have been harassed and I really hope and pray that none of it happens again"***

-Daniel, 63

***"Makes me feel I can fully trust the police."***

- Sam, 19

***"I really do not know what to say except say that we should pray for a better tomorrow"***

-Joyce, 54

So what do you think? What can the Met Police do to rebuild trust within the local community and make Londoners feel safe?



# THE FUTURE OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



The British Monarchy: a 1200 years old institution, comprising a total of 62 monarchs. On 8th September this year, the longest reigning British Monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, died at the age of 96. She left behind not only 4 children, 8 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren, but also a country and Commonwealth for whom some would argue the future is unclear.

Following her death, the illustrious royal baton was passed on to her son, King Charles III, whom it has been announced will have a 'streamlined' Coronation on the 8th May 2023, in keeping with the more sombre economic times that the UK finds itself in.

But what is the future of the British Monarchy? For many, Queen Elizabeth II represented stability, resilience and commitment and she was someone whom many looked up to during the challenge of the COVID

pandemic.

However, for others, the monarchy is a symbol of autocracy, an unelected and costly group of people whom we must all place on a pedestal.

A key question we should probably look at when debating the monarchy, is what exactly does it mean to be a Monarch? Well, a monarch can simply be described as the Head of State. But what does that mean? The official definition of the Head of State is the "*Chief Public representative of a country, such as a president or monarch, who may also be the Head of Government.*" This means that Head of State represents the whole State they rule over. However, the modern day British Royal family assumes this role in a ceremonial manner, rather than one of power.

According to a recent poll carried out in June 2022, the younger generation (more specifically 18-24 year olds), are not in favour of the Monarchy. In contrast, 77% of people aged 65+ are Royalists.

A number of controversial issues have adversely affected the popularity of the Monarchy, including the initial response of Senior Royals to

the death of Princess Diana in 1997, and, more recently, the scandal surrounding Prince Andrew and the allegations of racist views regarding the children of Prince William and Meghan Markle. A hugely contentious issue is the cost maintaining and protecting the Monarchy in the UK. It is estimated that the Royal Family is worth \$88 billion. Some argue that British Taxpayer money should not be used to fund the Royal Family and should instead be used to benefit the wider population. Further, a number of Commonwealth nations such as Barbados and Jamaica, have expressed their intention to break away from the Monarchy and establish themselves as Republics.

However, those in support of the British Monarchy argue that global fascination about its history and legacy, attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists to the UK every year. Furthermore, initiatives such as The Prince's Trust have helped thousands to forge careers for themselves and has raised millions for the UK economy. There is also no denying that in difficult times such as the WW1 and WW2 and, more recently, the Covid pandemic, the Queen was seen as a unifying figure and one of stability and



reassurance. Moreover, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 welcomed 16,000 street parties and was an opportunity for communities to come together. Indeed, many would argue that the British Royal Family, with its long-lasting legacy and history, provides stability in a never ending world of change, and the Monarch is an unwavering figure of hope. There's no doubt that the Royal Family has always been a subject of discussion – perhaps never more so than now, in the weeks and months after the Queen's death. So what does the future hold?

According to Professor Bogdanor, who is a leading constitutional expert, King Charles III is aware that he will reign over a Kingdom *"more diverse than that inherited by his mother"* and so he is likely to try to *"act as a unifying force, making more visible efforts to connect with ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups."* Hitan Mehta, who worked with the then Prince Charles to set up the British Asian Trust in 2007, says *"He is a humanitarian at heart. I think people underestimate how much he does care. He often talks about the world he's going to leave for his grandchildren. He does worry about it."*

Chris Pope states on the Prince's Teaching Institute

that the new King is *"genuinely passionate about the well-being of the next generation... He is always concerned that traditions are not lost, but that's not the same thing as saying we have to turn the clock back."*

Interestingly, the King himself has said that *"Something as curious as the monarchy won't survive unless you take account of people's attitudes. After all, if people don't want it, they won't have it."*

It will be interesting to see just how much the Monarchy changes or stays the same under the rule of King Charles III, as the nation transitions from the 70 year reign of Queen Elizabeth II and Commonwealth nations decide whether they will stay or go. Indeed, only time will tell whether the Monarchy will remain for the future of our country or if it's just a golden relic of the past.





# HOW CAN YOU HELP UKRAINE?

WRITTEN BY MELANIA SKOTARENKO-SPICER



At the start of 2022 on 24th February, a full scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia took place. Many Ukrainians were forced to flee their country and thankfully, many countries took them in - including the UK, France, Poland and Australia. It is estimated that around 130,000 Ukrainian refugees were allowed to come to the UK. The majority of refugees tend to be women and children, many of whom evacuate the country by car; this is largely because most men have volunteered or are expected to remain behind to defend their country.

Unfortunately, crossing the border can take many days to pass and the journeys can be incredibly dangerous. Families have had to leave their homes in order to protect and provide their children with a safe environment.

So, how have Ukrainians adjusted to their new way of living in the UK? Many refugees have found temporary jobs and have

found housing. Most notably, a system was set up through which UK Citizens could become temporary hosts for the refugees - this has proved an innovative way to combat lack of housing and to enable UK citizens to assist.

Many charities (such as the British Ukrainian Aid and Ukraine Medical Association), have been set up to help supply First Aid and provide military equipment for Ukraine, whilst many people have volunteered to send food and medicine to help those who are unable to access certain items.

## *How can you support Ukraine?*

The UK Government has provided the following suggestions for how you can support Ukraine at this time:

- Make a donation to the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Appeal
- If you choose to donate to a charity, check it is legitimate on the Charity Register Tool.
- Donate useful items such as sanitary products.
- Apply to be a sponsor through the Homes for Ukraine programme.
- Use the #StandForUkraine hashtag on social media platforms, but be careful not to share or engage in fake news.





# IRATE IN IRAN

WRITTEN BY BETHEL DAVID



You may be aware that there is currently much conflict in Iran regarding women's rights. But what exactly is going on and why?

On 16th September 2022, Mahsa Amini, an Iranian woman, was brutally beaten by the 'morality police' in Iran for 'improperly' wearing her hijab. The morality police operate by enforcing laws on Islamic dress in public. Consequently, Amini fell into a coma and was declared brain dead. Many witnesses reported that she was beaten in the police van, which the police force denied. The police claimed that Amini had suffered a heart attack, but her family said that she had never had any health complications in her life.

Mahsa Amini's tragic death sparked many Iranians - men and women - to protest and speak out against oppression of women. Her death influenced many to stand up against the brutality of the police and to challenge authority in the control of women over their bodies and what they wear. Amini's death has become a symbol for the

struggle of women's liberty in Iran.

Women have been protesting by removing and burning their headscarves - despite risking their lives in doing so. So, how has the current Iranian regime come to be?

The Iranian/Islamic Revolution was a series of events that resulted in the overthrow of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and the replacement of his government with an Islamic Republic led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Before 1979, the Shah wanted Iran to become like Western nations: women would have an education, a right to vote, would dress freely and could do any job they liked. However, the Shah also banned the hijab from being worn in public, with many members of society unable to understand this decision.

The Shah's laws were eradicated as a result of the revolution. The overthrow of the Shah and Khomeini's rise to power as the new leader of Iran, ended up having immediate consequences for women. New laws included girls getting married at the age of 13, women being forced to wear the hijab, segregation of sexes and women sitting at the back on transport systems. So, what does the future hold for Iran and its

women? The world has looked on with condemnation at the government's response to the protests. The European Union Foreign Ministers gathered in Brussels last month to impose more sanctions on Iran, because of what is regarded as Tehran's widespread use of force against those who are protesting peacefully.

The Guardian journalist Setareh Vaziri, who is herself Iranian, stated *"There should be no mistake about what this fight is for. It is not a fight against religion but rather a system of government, and a fight for liberty that has transcended gender, class and religious divides. Women, veiled and unveiled; men, young and old; and religious and secular Iranians stand shoulder to shoulder to call for regime change. In a country where a woman can be persecuted for revealing an inch too much of her hair, young women are out on the streets of Tehran and every major city in Iran, chanting "zan, zendegi, azadi" (woman, life, freedom)."*

Only time will tell if this volatile situation in Iran will settle and whether women will have to continue to adhere to such strict laws or risk being brutally punished for failing to comply with them.



# DOES IT MATTER WHICH COUNTRIES HOST WORLD SPORTING EVENTS?

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA

Many of us love the sense of camaraderie, energy and vibrancy that major sporting events like the Olympics and the Euros can bring to a nation. Such events help to unite us in our sense of community and patriotism. However, what happens when the selected host nation is one that can be seen to create division rather than unity?

By the time you read this article, the 2022 World Cup will have just finished. Qatar, the host nation, is the first Arab country to have hosted what's considered to be the most coveted cup in the football world. However, with many criticising Qatar's human rights' laws and anti-LGBTQ+ laws, is such a country deserving of having the honour to host one of sport's most prestigious tournaments?

One of the many waves in the sea of controversy surrounding the 2022 World Cup, is the lack of basic human rights. A 2013 investigation by The Guardian found that many workers building the infrastructure for the World Cup, were denied basic human necessities such as food and water and worked laboriously for highly strenuous work, whilst having their identity papers being taken away. Additionally, some of the workers were not paid,

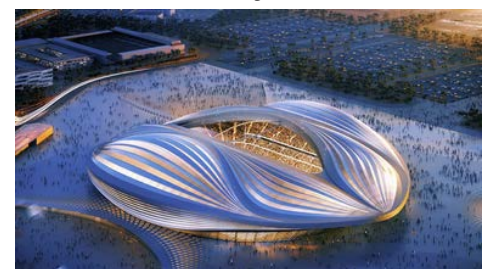
effectively branding them modern day slaves. According to The Guardian, 6,500 workers from India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have died since Qatar won its World Cup bid.

Singer Dua Lipa denied claims that she would be performing at this year's World Cup, saying she will *"look forward to visiting Qatar when it has fulfilled its human right pledges made"*. Furthermore, the head of the Norwegian Football Federation, Lise Klaveness has criticised FIFA for deciding to award Qatar the world cup.

Another major controversy regarding Qatar is its homophobic laws. Penalties include fines and imprisonment that can last up to 7 years and people can even be punished with death! Although Qatar has claimed that all LGBTQ+ supporters are welcomed, some people are simply just too scared to visit due to the laws in place. Australian Footballer Josh Cavallo - who is the only openly gay footballer in his league - stated in November 2021 that he would be too afraid of representing his country in the World Cup. The height of homophobia is evidenced in the comments

of former Qatari footballer, Khalid Salman, who said that people who are gay are *"damaged in the mind"*. His homophobic statement demonstrates why Qatar was such a controversial host country for the FIFA 2022 World Cup. Philipp Lahm - who lifted the trophy in 2014 - criticised the choice of Qatar as the host country, addressing how *"homosexuals are still being criminalised"* and how *"there is practically no opportunity for girls to play"* football in Qatar.

The World Cup is supposed to be about football and the sense of community that it can bring, linking people across countries worldwide. Such a sentiment shouldn't be robbed by the host country itself. The appointment of Qatar as the host is truly progressive in some ways, however with the unacceptably high levels of workers' deaths, rife homophobia and poor human rights' records, the question needs to be asked: should such nations ever be selected to host global sporting events? What do *you* think?





# inspiration station

## HAMID IDRIS AWATE: ERITREA'S HERO

WRITTEN BY FERDOS HAGOS

The chances are you have not heard of him, but Hamid Idris Awate is a huge symbol for Eritrea's struggle for Independence and was the founder of the Eritrean Army.

Hamid Idris Awate was born in 1910 in Gerset, between Tessenei and Golluj in Southwestern Italian Eritrea. and was of Tigre and Nara descent. His father trained him as early as childhood in the use of guns. Amazingly, Hamid learned a total of 7 languages: Arabic, Tigre, Tigrinya, Nara, Hedareb, Kunama and Italian. Italian was useful for him as he was later sent to Rome for a course in Military Intelligence.

In 1935, Hamid was conscripted by the Italians to serve in the colonial army of the Eritrean Ascari. Hamid fought in the Battle of Keren during World War II and participated in the Italian guerrilla campaign in Eritrea against Allied forces.

After the Italians were completely pushed out of Eritrea, Hamid settled in Western Eritrea. However, eventually, he got into a dispute against the British



authorities and began an armed campaign against Britain's control over Eritrea from 1942 to 1948.

Eventually, Hamid and his supporters arrived at a truce with the British authorities; Eritrean Independence then slowly came into place.

In July 1960, the Eritrean Liberation Front was formed in the city of Cairo. However, back in Eritrea, the authorities were suspicious of Hamid and were watching his every move. They planned to arrest him in August 1961, but Hamid fled to Mount Adal with the help of an Eritrean Muslim within the police force.

But on 1st September 1961, 11 rebels led by Hamid, attacked the police force in Mount Adal, leading to a fierce battle between the opposing groups.

On 27th May 1962, Hamid told his unit that he wasn't feeling well. A day later, he sadly passed away.

On 16th October 2011, Eritrea's national hero, Hamid Idris Awate, was honoured by the town of Cologno Monzese near Milan. The town dedicated a tree in his name in the area within the Aldo Moro Park called Garden of the Just of the World. Eritrea's hero Hamid was one of just 9 individuals who were honoured for their dedication, services and sacrifices for justice.







# ART, ALIVE!

WRITTEN BY ALDA NEZIRI

Art has always been a way of communicating stories, emotions and opinions. We thought it would be interesting to share with you some of our favourite works of art and the stories behind them.



*Stańczyk -1862*

Stanczyk was an iconic and well known jester in Poland who is shown sitting alone. Jesters are usually symbolic of joy and laughter, but clearly Stanczyk looks melancholy here. In the background is a party hosted by Polish royals. The dark palette used by the artist reflects the sombre mood of the jester and reflects that he is deep in thought and reflection.

This was one of the earliest depictions of the “Sad Clown Paradox”, revealing the irony of a jester who cannot make himself laugh. Did you notice the letter beside him? Well, this is revealed as the cause of his sadness, as it brings news of the invasion of

Smolensk (a Polish province) by the Russians. Stanczyk was the only one who knew this at the party and he was preoccupied about his country’s future and trying to come to terms with its downfall, while the party continues behind him.



*Ivan the Terrible and his son Ivan - 1883-1885*

This painting portrays Ivan the Terrible trying to the wound that would lead to his son Ivan’s death.

It was in fact rumoured that it was Ivan the Terrible himself who injured his son out of sheer fury. However the painting is controversial as many believe it portrays Russian Royals as violently animalistic.

This painting has been seen as so controversial and historically inaccurate, that it’s even been vandalised! It was first censored in Russia by Alexander III. In 1913 it was stabbed 3 times. More recently in 2018, the painting was hit with a metal pole used

for supporting the protective rope around the artwork.



*Decadent Young Woman. After the ball - 1899*

This painting created during the Decadent Movement of the 19th century.

The Decadent Movement focused on the idea that excessive and luxurious lifestyles should be normalised.

The Decadent Young Woman pictured, is well-dressed and has just returned, exhausted, from a party. The book she is holding represents the norms and expectations of society that are a constant reminder to her.

We’re extremely lucky to live in a city that homes some of the best museums in the world; so why not take the opportunity this Christmas holiday, to check out some of the magnificent art works in museums like the National Gallery? What stories will you uncover?



# seasonal specials

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTMAS

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI

As the Christmas holidays approach, we all know that this is a period when families can take a break from work, school and the responsibilities of daily life. Christmas is a time to reunite with family and friends, bond and exchange gifts to show our love for one another. It is also a time of charity and to help others in need.

For Christians, the festive season is a time to remember when Jesus, the son of God, came to Earth and changed all of our lives, becoming the ultimate gift.

Mary and Joseph followed the North Star from Nazareth to Bethlehem, staying in a stable when they arrived. When Jesus was born, three wise men offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, representing kingship,

worship and mourning.

Did you know that the word 'Christmas' originated from the mass of Christ, when Christians remember that Jesus died for them and then came back to life? You may also be familiar with the earlier term for 'Christmas', which is Yule, referring to the feast of the winter solstice.

The holiday of Christmas inspires people to unite, forgive, renew friendships and remember Jesus Christ. What will *you* be doing for the festive season this year?

***"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future."***  
By Agnes M. Pahro.





# TAKING A FESTIVE TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

WRITTEN BY SOPHIA MARTIN

In this article, we'll be taking you on a trip around the world to learn about how Christmas is celebrated in 4 continents: Asia, Europe, South America and Africa.



Christmas is a key holiday in Christianity as it marks the birth of Jesus. All around the world, it is celebrated differently, with various traditions taking place to mark this beautiful, holy and memorable holiday.

Let's take a look. First stop: Asia.

Asian countries have a smaller number of Christians compared to other parts of the world. As a result, in many Asian countries, Christmas can have a more secular view than a religious one.

An example of a unique Christmas tradition within Asia is in the Philippines. In the Philippines, they hold a nine day mass. Every day from 16th December to the Eve of Christmas on the 24th, Filipino Catholics rise before sunrise for Simbang Gabi. This is a nine-day series of masses, each held almost as early as 4:00am.

What about the continent we call home? Christmas is celebrated across Europe, and, as we all know, Christmas in the UK is a very celebrated holiday. In London we see this with the Covent Garden and Oxford Circus lights illuminating the streets and Regent Street's famous angels. Walking around London during the Christmas holidays always feels very homely and has a very warm atmosphere.

Waking up in the morning to the presents under the tree is a common English way of celebrating Christmas day. However in many other countries in Europe, it's common to wake up before Christmas day to celebrate it. For example, in Portugal, it's a very common tradition to celebrate Christmas Eve with a huge party with family and friends and then stay up until midnight - when Christmas day arrives - to open presents.

What about further afield?

South America has the highest percentage of Catholics in the world and Christmas is a religious holiday that's taken very seriously.

Nativity scenes, also known as nacimientos, are the most popular tradition in Latin America. These are scenes

that depict the story of Jesus's birth, based on the accounts given in Gospels the Bible. These nativity scenes often take the form of handmade figurines that are seen in a lot of South American households.

In contrast, in Africa, Christmas is celebrated in very different, remarkable ways across different countries.

In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Christmas celebration is called Ganna/Genna. On Christmas day, most people go to church and participate in the Advent fast during the 43 days before Christmas: this advent fasting is known as the 'Fast of the Prophets'.

**We asked Bethel in Year 10 about how her family celebrates Christmas in Ethiopia and how is it different to here in the UK.**

**Bethel David:** "The atmosphere is quite uplifting and very religious and is based on prayer instead of food. Musical instruments are played in the church to give a welcoming presence for people, so they can start the day off well. It is different in the UK because in Ethiopia, Christmas is based on prayer and family, whereas in the UK it can be more commercialised, which in my opinion, detracts from the whole significance of Jesus' birth."



# cacophony of colours

## EDUCATION

WRITTEN BY AMEERAT DAUD



An endless cycle  
That gets you a title -  
Lawyer, engineer or doctor?  
Architect, fashion designer or an  
author?



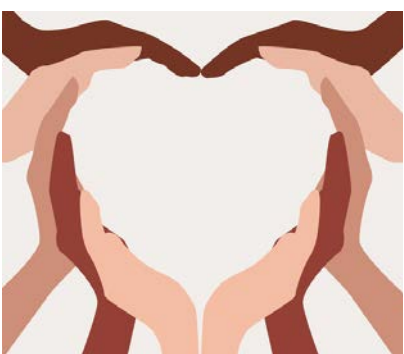
That key to success  
Helps you progress.  
It's a marathon, not a sprint,  
Something that will always exist.



The antidote to ignorance  
That gives people the conscience  
So they can act rationally  
And not unreasonably.



An unforeseeable ride  
That can't be described,  
Filled with anticipation,  
Twists, turns, crazy sensations.



A car that takes you to your  
destination,  
The journey that decides your  
reputation.  
Along the way some bumps and  
scrapes,  
Perhaps a few regrets and mistakes  
That we can learn from and embrace  
Together, to make the world a better  
place.





# A PLACE OF MY OWN

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



Boredom.

The horrid disease engulfed me. I stood around looking, paralysed from the sense of utter nothingness. Blotchy, blood-red mosaic patterns smeared the entire room, the profuse bleeding seeping through every crevice. It was slowly but surely creeping up to me.

What was happening to me? I felt like a marionette, the malevolent strings of ennui being ferociously manipulated, inserting false images into my mind. I looked around, trying to free myself from the



captive of the tormentous circumstance I found myself drowning in. I struggled against the cruel strings of an unseen malicious puppeteer.

Looming over the window, I stared at my garden.



Prominent and tall, colossal skyscrapers laced with mahogany bark waved their leaves, as if they were dancing to the soft tune of the wind whistling. Behind the abundance of bushes and hedges, stood a shed. Draped in a majestic emerald colour, it had a regal quality.



I opened the doorknob – it resembled the shape of an opalescent ornament. Instantaneously, I was captivated by the picturesque view outside the window of the shed. It was a view that couldn't be described by words alone. It was a pulchritudinous view. I could look at it for hours. Feeling like a bird set free from the cage of boredom, I decided from that moment on, this would be my sanctuary; a place of my own.





# meet the staff

Meet our staff for this term's edition of the KS4 Newsletter! Most of our staff team are Year 10 pupils, but we have also had some guest writers from Year 11 too! What exactly are our staff looking forward to at Christmas and what plans and resolutions do they have for 2023?

I'm looking forward to improving myself this year by reflecting on myself and my actions this past year

**-Rushda Ahmad**

I'm looking forward to being closer to finishing my GCSE's.

**-Ferdos Hagos**

I'm looking forward to attending a lot of winter events I've been invited to and spending Christmas with my family in Spain.

**-Keightley Tran**

I am looking forward to celebrating my birthday on Christmas Eve.

**-Alda Neziri**

I'm looking forward to having new experiences with loved ones.

**-Crystal Joy Azzopardi**

I'm looking forward to the Ethiopian New Year because I get to eat traditional dishes, which I love.

**-David Melaku**

"I'm looking forward to spending time with the people that mean the absolute most to me, doing typical seasonal things like ice-skating, secret Santa and of course the huge family parties for Christmas. This New Year I'm excited to begin another year off fresh with nothing but growth to come from it.

**-Sophia Martin**

I'm excited to indulge in some much needed R&R!

**-Chyna-Chae Quain-Brown**

I'm looking forward to having a break and enjoying Christmas.

**-Melania Skotarenko-Spicer**

I'm looking forward to Christmas as I get to spend time with my family and friends who mean the most to me. Also, I can't wait to go to Winter Wonderland and get into the festive season. For the New Year, I want Year 10 to start positively and to make the most of it.

**-Bethel David**

Trying to sleep for 8 hours!

**-Uhunoma Obayangbona**

I want to exercise more often and become a more understanding person.

**-Regina Fonseca**

To be a nicer person to people and not shout a lot

**-Inaya Rose**

I'm looking forward to going on a walk at night and drinking hot chocolate

**-Ashlee Kamagate**

For the upcoming winter season I'm looking forward to making special memories with my family and best friends. I'm also excited to hopefully make some progress in ice skating and I can't wait to start my 2023 bucket list in the new year!

**-Virtuous Danzaria**



I'm looking forward to my 15th birthday! I will turn 15 in January and I want to be able to tell people that I am older than them. I am also looking forward to improving my grades and being a better friend and person in general.

**-Ameerat Daud**

My New Year's resolution is to revise more and focus more in my lessons, so I can get better grades.

**-Mariama Diallo**

I'm looking forward to spending time with my family and eating jollof rice.

**-Keisha Opku-Agyman**

I'm looking forward to going to Winter Wonderland with my friends.

**-Yasmin Elhag-Salih**

I am really looking forward to going out with my family and friends over the Christmas holidays.

**-Betul Kharkin**



I'm looking forward to going abroad and spending more time with my family during the holidays.

**-Madinah Maksene**



# LONDON LIFE



London, London.  
The capital of the United Kingdom,  
Where people come to get jobs and gain  
wisdom.



Population made from different  
backgrounds,  
A range of cultures, an eclectic mix of  
sounds.



London, London.  
About 1,975 years old,  
With a rich history and secrets still  
untold.

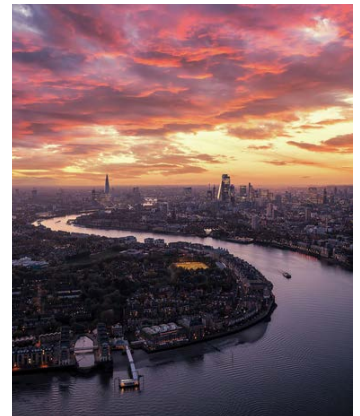


The Sovereign is the Head of State,  
Whilst Parliament meets to decide our  
fate.



London, London.

Beautiful, indescribable places  
Gazed upon by many star-struck faces.  
From Tower Bridge to The London Eye,  
The beauty of our city, you cannot deny.



Buckingham Palace, Big Ben,  
Irresistible - you just need to visit once  
again.



London, London.

Walking down the street,  
Different people I do meet.  
A range of skin tones and colours  
All from different, unique cultures:  
And we all make London complete.

