



Options, Options, Options!



Spring Term is where our Year 9s start to firm up their decisions on their KS4 Options and consider individual pathways moving forwards. We have provided variety of touch-points to aid students in making these choices for their next steps.

On *Tuesday 27th January*, Year 9 received an inspirational careers talk from *Sarah Pitman* and *Richard Fisher* discussing Colleges, T- Levels and Apprenticeships which was designed to provide insight on potential career options and the various subject routes.

On *Wednesday 4th February*, Year 9 took part in their **Careers Taster Day**. This was a key event with talks from speakers - who provided insight into job sectors across a broad array of areas. Thank you to; Sumayya Zaman - Biomedical sciences and Medicine, Alex Fernandes and Megan Attrill- Graduate Cost Consultancy, Cushman & Wakefield, Bernadette Butler Leyland- Banking Lawyer, Liam Gabriel, Maria Potter, and Melissa Onoghaife- Murphy, infrastructure company, and David Cruickshank Jupiter Fund Management PPlc, Non-Executive Director for sharing your career journeys with our students.

Then on *Friday 6th February*, students explored their **Options Taster Day** lessons - where students were provided with the opportunity to experience a snapshot of KS4 lessons ahead of making their

GCSE choices for Year 10. Students were able to get a sense of what these subjects would be like to study at GCSE, and what the courses would cover in order to find the best pathway for them. During the day, students got a chance to experience familiar subjects such as History, Art, Geography, alongside those they haven't studied yet at KS3 - such as Sociology!

From a lesson on making honeycomb in Food Technology to looking at form by painting an arrangement of objects in Art, style and composition in Music, and the excitement or the joys of computer science all to provide students with a real world understanding of how businesses work, students had an eye-opening day into what the world of GCSEs entails.

The Taster Day was off the back of the **Year 9 Learning Conference** in January where different pathways and options were introduced to students in preparation. Additionally, **Year 9 Options Evening** was held on *13th January*, where parents were introduced to the various option pathways open to their child to study at GCSE, as well as future options at Sixth Form and beyond, in order for them to be able to fully support this process with the bigger picture in mind.

The deadline for Year 9 Option choices is **6th March** and we look forward to accommodating as many student choices as possible.



headlines



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Dear Parents, Carers and Friends,

Thank you and well done to all the students across the school for their hard work and commitment this half-term. As we are now at the halfway point in the year, it is a crucial time to reflect on the attainment and progress of all our students. The Academic Review Days will enable discussions on this progress. We know that continued and sustained progress and hard work is what underlines the remarkable outcomes of our students every year at Ursuline High School.

The official release of government data last week (IDSR) based on GCSE outcomes in 2025 once again reflected the schools ranking as one of the highest achieving schools in the country, well done to our whole community for this effort.

This was further confirmed this term - when we received a letter of commendation from Bridget Phillipson (Secretary of state for Education). *"This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together. Thank you for everything you do to give children the best possible opportunities to succeed."*

This point in the year is most significant for our Year 13 and Year 11 students, as they move towards the public examinations in May, but it is also very important for all students to reflect on their own progress and make adjustments in the second part of the academic year.

On Wednesday this week, our Sixth Form students set off on the trip to Barcelona, we wish them a safe and successful trip and look forward to hearing about their experiences on their return.

Next week, we also run our HAF (half-term Activities Club) and have a very exciting programme of events, I'm sure they will have a fantastic and enriching experience.

Details of the upcoming Lenten programme can be found on the forwarding email. Thank you for all your support and encouragement this term, wishing you and your families an enjoyable and restful half-term.

Best Wishes

Eoin Kelly
Headteacher



Worry Monster



In **Art Textiles** students are currently are working on designing a sustainable worry monster to help children express and manage their emotions. The project supports mental health and human dignity by encouraging children to share their worries in a safe way. The project reflects the Catholic values of stewardship through sustainability and solidarity through kindness and care for others.

Designs will use the formal elements of line, shape, tone, pattern, texture, and colour to create a friendly, expressive toy.

Brown Envelope Day

On **Thursday 15th January**, nerves were at an all-time high as our Year 11 students received their **Year 11 Mock GCSE results** at our **Brown Envelope Day**. Armed with the knowledge of what they need to do next - we wish them the best of luck as they now prepare for those GCSEs in the summer.

We are so proud of the perseverance and tenacity they have shown so far this year. Well done Year 11!



Arbor

Communications

We are committed to effectively communicating with our parents/carers. To read more about our Communications Strategy visit the [Parent Communications](#) page of our website.

Are your details correct? To ensure you are receiving relevant communications from us, please ensure you notify us of any changes to contact details;

bernadette.young@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk

IMPORTANT - Payments moving from ParentPay to Arbor

As part of our Portals Consolidation Project, the school is migrating Payments from ParentPay to Arbor. From Monday 23rd February, parents/carers will use Arbor to manage all school-related payments including catering, equipment and trips. For further information please refer to the email from Mr Glavina sent on Wednesday 4th February. I trust this is good news for our parent/carer community, who want to access important information relating to their daughter's learning journey, in one place.

Feast of St Angela



Tuesday 27th January marked a special day in the school calendar as we celebrated the **Feast of St Angela Merici**. St Angela first formed the Company of St Ursula in Dezenzano, Italy, in 1553. St Angela inspired a movement and a community which is alive and flourishing today across the world and especially for us in this part of South West London. All students celebrated Mass during the school week in our Local Parish Church of Sacred Heart. Thank you to all the staff and students who made this a special celebration.

Battle of the Bands



Some of our students took part in the **Battle of the Bands** at **Wimbledon College** this half-term! Congratulations to our **Ursuline Sixth Form** Y12 band, The Cherry Salmons who came 3rd place! Well done to our bands below, you were all awesome! Better luck next time. **Year 8: (The Purge)** - Savanna B, Heidi B, Nola D-P, Sasha T, & Ariadne V, **Year 10 (Rouge)** - Freya M, Evie T, Diana B, Gilia F, & Nyah K, and **Year 11 (Misteeq)** - Hania K, Sophia C, Bella P, & Darcey B.

Chatterstocks Workshop



We were absolutely thrilled to welcome **Chatterstocks** - the all-female acappella group from Brown University - into Ursuline this half-term as part of their London tour.

The Group delivered a truly inspiring workshop with our Y8-Y12 choirs, starting with a stunning performance of their own arrangements that completely captivated our students. After performing, Chatterstocks worked closely with our singers in sectionals, teaching them a song arranged in beautiful 5-part harmony. Our students thoroughly enjoyed the experience!

Jack Petchey "Speak Out"



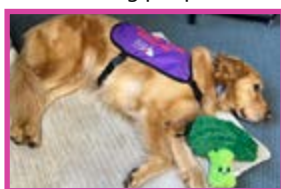
The Year 10 Drama and Music students learnt how to become better public speakers on Tuesday 20th January as they took part in the **Jack Petchey "Speak Out" Challenge**. The day was facilitated by Gloria and AC from the **Speakers' Trust**. Six students were selected to go forward to the Assembly Final; *Sinit* - "Discrimination and expectations of black students", *Emily* - "Private schools vs public schools", *Roisin* - "Private schools and do they separate rich and poor?", *Elisa* - "Overconsumption", *Clementine* - "Modern slavery in the UAE", and *Stephanie* - "Does originality exist anymore?". Well done to all of the Year 10s involved and special mention to the highly commended students- *Amira*, *Olivia*, *Francesca*, and *Saffiyah*.

On Tuesday 3rd February we then held our next round where *Sinit*, *Emily*, *Stephanie* and *Elisa* made it through to the assembly final due to be held after half-term. This will determine the two winners selected to progress to the Regional final in April. Well done everyone!

Introducing Milo..

We have a new member of the Ursuline Community we would like to introduce to you. Welcoming **Milo** our **therapy dog**!

Milo will be working in Ms Jefferies office over in the Learning Support Department 1 day a week. Milo has been allocated various responsibilities and will no doubt have a very busy schedule - he will be seeing people on a first come, first served basis.



Brexit Britain - 10 Years On



On Thursday 15th January, we welcomed schools to join our Sixth Form students for our politics conference '**Brexit 10 Years On**' with talks from MP's and various specialist speakers- reflecting on the face of Politics of today.



The conference was chaired by Mr John Carroll, an international security and investigations consultant and sponsored by Team Global and IEA UK. Reflections were shared by speakers incl; *Siobhain McDonagh* MP (Mitcham and Morden), *Quentin Peel*, journalist, formerly with the Financial Times, *Alfred Quantrill* from the Young European Movement, *Darius Nasimi* from the Afghanistan and Central Asian Association and *Alka Seghal Cuthbert* who stood for the Brexit Party. Finally, *Jonathan Gifford*, a media, crisis and strategic communications expert in the UK Government lead the students in an activity of crisis management.



We thank our speakers and attending schools; **Mulberry, Raynes Park, Ricards Lodge, St Philomenas, Wimbledon College**, and our sister school - **Ursuline Academy Ilford**.

GCSE Re-Sit Success



Well done to the **Year 12s and 13s** who re-sat **GCSEs** in English and Maths last November. We received really outstanding results back this half-term - well above national averages.

The Heritage Alliance



We were delighted to welcome Guest Speaker- *Lizzie Glithero* - Chief Executive of **The Heritage Alliance** to our Year 13 Economics lesson on Thursday. Where students received talk on the importance and impact of maintaining our heritage sites in the UK.

Oxford Success



Congratulations to *Emilia* and *Eleanor* who were successful in securing offers at **Oxford University** to study Medicine at **St John's College** and Chemistry at **Brasenose College** respectively.

Inter-Faith Meeting

Bolu, *Nisha*, *Naomi*, and *Miechrist* attended the **Merton Sixth-Form Inter-Faith** meeting at **Dons Local Action** this half-term, which included a tour of the AFC stadium.





netball tennis football athletics
rock climbing cross country
trampolining basketball hockey
dance duke of edinburgh award
wimbledon ball girls cycling



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Basketball



A great effort from all students involved in basketball this half-term.
7/8 team came 3rd
9/10 team came 2nd
Loads of smiles and excitement from them all!
Well done!

Trampolining



Students were at the **London Youth Games Trampolining** this half-term. 4 Ursuline students represented Merton this weekend all demonstrating excellent routines!

Spring Enrichments



Students have really been enjoying the **PE Spring Enrichment** offer this half-term. Cricket, cross country, Dancebites and Year 7 Trampolining clubs all featured - on top of borough events.

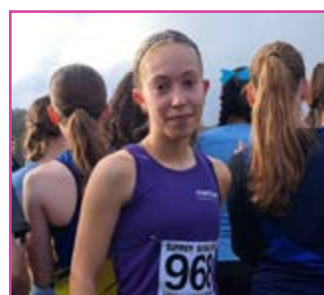
Wimbledon Ball Girls



We are delighted to announce that all nine of our nominated **Wimbledon Ball Girls** who attended trials at **AELTC** on **Sunday 18th January** have been successful in selection. This is the first time that we have 100% conversion rate from our own trials through to AELTC selection. The girls now begin their full training with AELTC from 10th February onwards and we wish them the best of luck with the training for the Championships this summer.

Congratulations to our Wimbledon Ball Girls; *Sophia A, Sara C, Eva C, Florence D, Tallulah D, Alicia M, Florence P, Alejandra S-M, and Sophii S.*
Make sure to keep an eye out for them during the Championships.

Merton Cross Country



Some of our students who made it to the **Surrey Schools Cross Country** running for **Merton**. Resulting in an impressive 3 of the qualifying for **English Schools Cross Country**.