



Volume 8 | Issue 11

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al-qalam

Termly Newsletter

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Head Teacher's Message - Mrs R.Adam

"In the Name of Allah ﷻ, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. All the praises and thanks be to Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists). The Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. The Only Owner of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help. Guide us to the Straight Way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger, nor of those who went astray. (The Qur'an-Surah Al-Fatihah)"

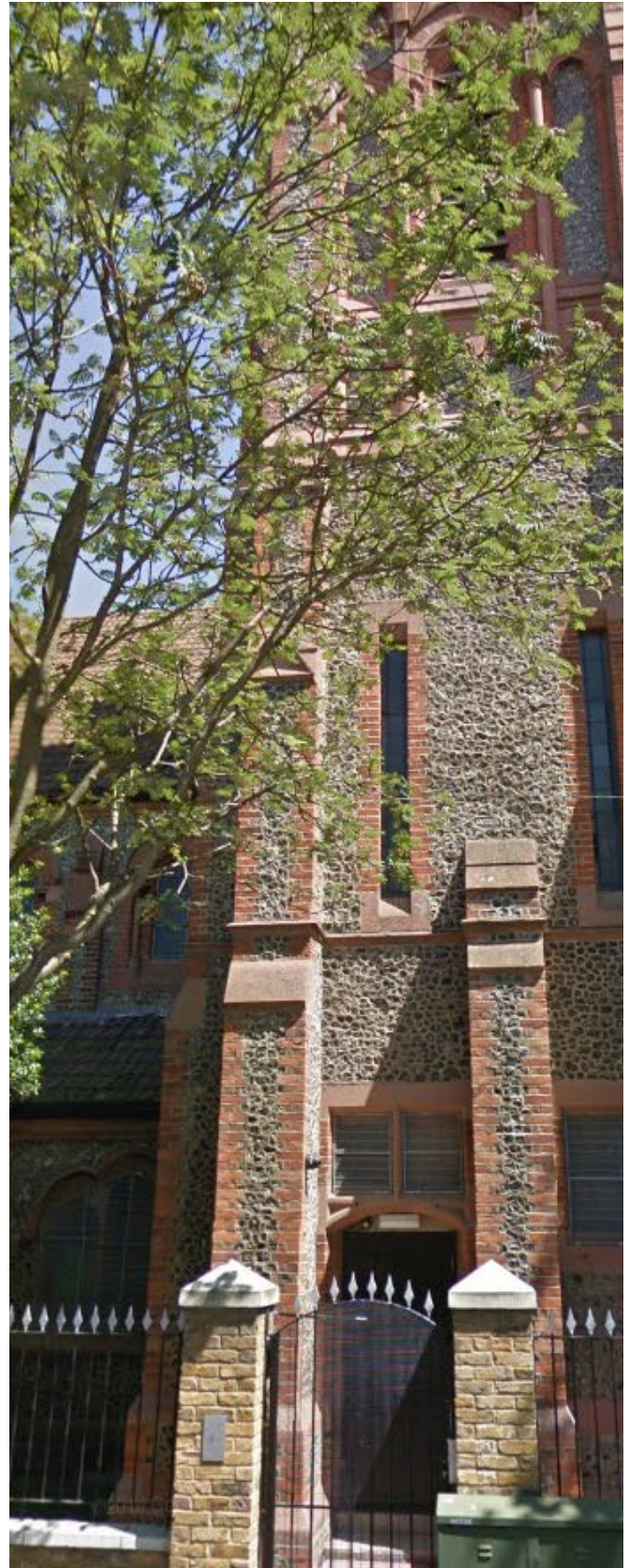
Alhamdulillah, I am pleased to share with you our school newsletter, Al Qalam for the Autumn Term 2016. You will have an opportunity to read about activities and events that students at Azhar Academy Girls School have been involved in.

This autumn term was quite interesting and certainly very busy; however, as always we created many opportunities for our students to make their learning even more exciting.

Staff at AAGS will continue to work tirelessly to ensure each student fulfils her potential and is equipped with the best of skills and qualifications. We want each girl's time at AAGS to lead her not only to great life chances and opportunities, but also to becoming an active, exemplary citizen who will make a positive contribution to the local, national and global community that she will serve.

I look forward to your ongoing support in ensuring that we help our students to achieve the best education to prepare them for the journey ahead!

Mrs Rookshana Adam
Headteacher



Message from Head Girl 2016/2017

My name is Mahak. I am the Head Girl and currently a Year 11 student at Azhar Academy. I have been given this amazing opportunity to tell you about Azhar life from a student's honest perspective.

Secondary school is like a roller coaster as I'm sure most parents know. It has its ups and downs and it's the same for every school. But what makes Azhar special is that while we're on this roller coaster ride, the school supports us at every point of our journey. This strong and consistent support is what makes me love my school and what I will miss when I move on to sixth form.

Azhar girls are one big family and this is my second home. I have made friends for life as I'm sure you will too. I know secondary school can be daunting and it is a big change from primary school. But I am positive you will adjust to this change with the help and support of Azhar students and teachers.

Back in 2011, my family encountered the same dilemma that you are facing now. In the end, even though I received offers from four other schools, we all agreed that Azhar would be the best for me.

Firstly what my family wanted for me is probably what all the parents here want for their daughters. They wanted the two main aspects of my life to be combined. They are of course my life in the dunya and my life in the Akhirah and Azhar combines them together so that we excel in both.

Azhar ensures that everything we learn is for the sake of Allah and that all of our intentions are honest and decent. They make sure our lessons, be it Fiqh or algebra, are filled with barakah by reading a du'a both at the start and at the end of the lesson. Every morning before lessons start, we recite surah Yaasin, so our minds and souls are refreshed and ready to start the new day in the worship of Allah.

Every Friday is a half day and school ends at 12:15 pm but just before then we gather together as a school and recite surah Al-Kahf following the Sunnah of our blessed prophet Muhammad (saw).

My family and I also had to decide between which Islamic course to choose. Hifz, Aalimah or Islamic Studies. Hifz is memorising the Qur'an everyday in the morning from 7:25 am till 10:00 am and then after school from 4:05 pm till 5:00 pm. Aalimah is the study of Fiqh, Qur'an and hadith mainly, including many other lessons. It is a seven year course which involves the option to continue throughout sixth form so it is a bit of a commitment but at the end you will graduate as an Aalimah. Lastly, Islamic Studies, the study of Seerah, Fiqh, hadith and more. Each is unique in what it gives to each student and their family but I cannot stress enough how important it is, that whichever option you choose, it is the student herself who has to make the final decision. This is because if she chooses herself, then she'll know she will be passionate and dedicated to her course. Personally, I chose Aalimah; I am currently in my 5th year and it has changed my life. When I came to this school, I knew only a handful of Arabic words and now on top of Arabic GCSE, I can open up an Arabic textbook to any sentence and I will most likely be able to understand (with a little difficulty) what it means.

On the academic part of Azhar, I cannot articulate how grateful I am to my hard-working teachers who persistently help me and my peers and encourage us to do well, believing in us when we sometimes lost faith in our abilities. They use their own time compiling past papers and making revision guides for us. Our teachers know us better than we do at times; they know our individual strengths and weaknesses and are always there, ready to help us, no matter how tired they may be or how much work they still have to do.

continued...

For your information, Azhar students usually get into their first or second choice of sixth form. Every Thursday is form time and since the start of this academic year, Thursdays have been the time that our form tutors teach us how to do personal statements and prepare for interviews. The support that I was talking about earlier extends all the way to preparing for sixth form. The education that we receive here along with the students' hard-work has warranted offers from prestigious universities in the past. For example, two students were awarded places in Oxford universities before. Azhar girls also get into universities such as Queen Mary, Kings and Imperial. Some of them have become doctors, neuro scientists and dentists, just to name a few. However, they're not just ordinary doctors, neuro scientists or dentists but professionals who also have Islamic knowledge, thanks to Azhar Academy.

Azhar offers clubs after school for those who need help or want to practise what they have learnt for nearly every subject, to ensure that every student is learning and performing to their potential. Azhar promotes independent learning which helps us become students with the skills that we can use anywhere we go.

Apart from that, Azhar also offers many leadership roles such as Tarbiyah mentors and prefects. A Tarbiyah mentor is someone who teaches students good manners and how to become good Muslims. Every week, each mentor supports a small group of girls and they talk about a new topic such as patience or being good to your parents and they all make it their goal to implement the new lesson in their lives for the next week. A prefect's duty ranges from many things, but my favourite role is to watch over salaah when the whole school prays Zuhr together; it is a very peaceful and beautiful thing to see- another wonderful opportunity students receive at this school. This strong sense of unity, which is vital to a healthy school environment, is felt every day when the students line up in rows to pray to Allah. We learn how to be good British citizen role models while still holding onto our faith and being good Muslimahs.

I feel that Azhar is a place of opportunity. I personally love maths and due to this I have been to three or four school wide maths challenges, Alhamdulillah. There are so many trips to broaden our learning as Azhar helps all types of learners. For instance, I am a kinaesthetic learner so I like hands on experiences (which is good because we do dozens of science experiments) whereas my friend learns by listening so we listen to lots of videos which enhance our learning.

There is a yearly trip to Oxford where student learn about university life and women in maths, which brings me to my last point. If I were to describe what Azhar does to every girl that studies here, I would say that the school transforms them into bright, aspired, independent young ladies, who are not afraid to pursue their goals. Azhar has done so much for me and I can safely say that it has made me into a better person. I am so grateful for that opportunity and I hope you will all see what Azhar Academy can do for your daughters' inshaAllaah.

Mahak Polani
AAGS Head Girl 2016/2017

Year 11 Form Time

Year 11 form time has a very relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. During these sessions, we talk about various topics. These topics include "Women in Islam" to "Life in College", as well as dilemmas we could or have encountered in everyday life out of school.

As a year group, we find these tips and advice really helpful and it reassures us that we'll be fine outside of Azhar Academy Girls School. Thanks to our form tutors, Ms Mahmud, Apa Shabana, Ms Borg and Apa Yasmin, we really enjoy form time and we appreciate our form tutors' help in understanding how to deal with real life situations.

Malak Mohammed, Year 11G

Bukhari Graduation 2016

Alhamdulillah, Azhar Academy Girls School held their fourth Bukhari Graduation and second Hifz completion ceremony on Saturday, 3rd December 2016. Fifteen students graduated as Aalimahs and two students completed their Hifz, MashaAllaah.

It was an honour to partake in such an auspicious gathering where we see Aalimiyyah students reaching the final stage of such an immense journey through the ocean of knowledge. It was also a proud moment to hear the Hifz students complete the final parts of the Quran that they have so painstakingly learnt.

The programme was an inspirational event where we learnt about the beautiful characteristics of our beloved Prophet, Muhammed (S.A.W), which served as a reminder of the mercy of Allah for sending us such a perfect example to guide us on the true path. We were also reminded of the status Allah has bestowed upon us as Muslim women, that we are precious diamonds that are to be honoured and respected. We were spellbound by the soulful anasheed that captured our hearts as we listened intently to the praises of Allah. The graduates also led the audience through a reminiscence and appreciation of their time as students at Azhar Academy, inspiring the attendees to also take these steps to learning the knowledge of deen. They also spoke about the importance of gaining knowledge so that we may be beacons of light for those around us.

Finally, we were blessed to listen to the wise words of our esteemed guest, Hadhrat Maulana Yusuf Motala, the founder of this institute, and a teacher of Bukhari at Darul Uloom, Bury. Hadhrat reminded us to be in constant remembrance of Allah and to always turn to Allah for help through salutations. This speech was a fitting pinnacle of the event where the final hadeeth of Bukhari was recited.

The event served as a reminder that anyone can begin the journey through understanding the Qur'an and hadeeth. Each graduate and Haafizah had school, college or work commitments alongside their Hifz or Aalimiyyah Studies. Their dedication, effort and hard work proved that it is possible to study Qur'an and hadeeth, regardless of other responsibilities and that Allah opens the door and makes the journey possible for you.

May Allah preserve the Quran in the hearts of the Haafizahs; may He give the graduates the ability to act upon what they have learnt, and may He accept their efforts and the efforts of those who supported them, ameen

Apa Safiya Nadat
K3 & K4 English Teacher

Imam Bukhari Day

The 5th Year Aalimah class scheduled and prepared a special day to showcase the significance the interests of Imam Bukhari ra. We also wished to represent the knowledge and methods Imam Bukhari ra utilised in order to seek knowledge.

We decided to carry this out due to the fact that our class have been gifted to learn Tajreed, a concise version of Bukhari ra and came to the conclusion that we would have more contextual information of the contents of Tajreed as well as possess the ability to benefit other students. The students as well as our class were taught about the struggles of Imam Bukhari ra through that era, through various activities, such as narrative exercises and formations of the chains of narrations in Hadith, known as sanads. We also acquired an advanced understanding as to why Imam Bukhari ra was and still serves as an inspiring role model for numerous Muslims today.

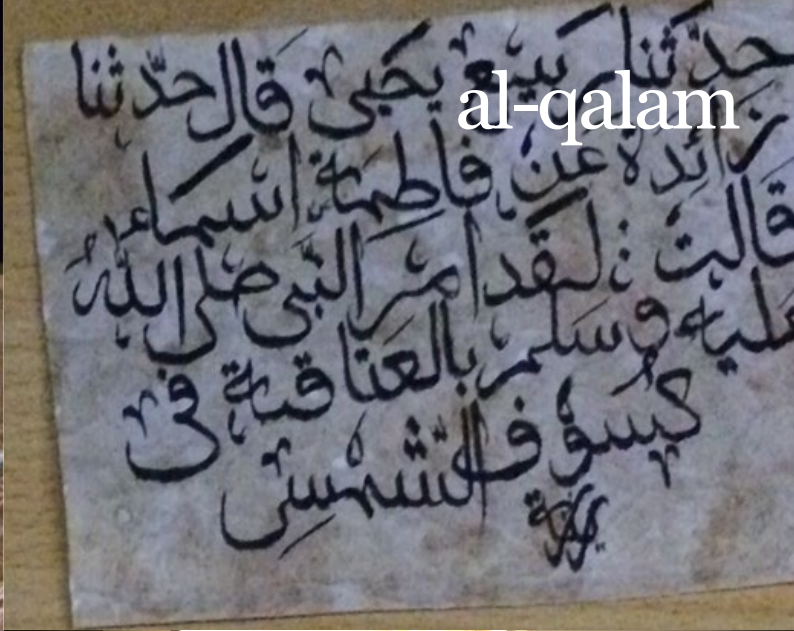
In order to emphasise the atmosphere and give a true understanding of the hardships of Imam Bukhari ra's era, we set out an area of sand and imitated the construction of a well and distributed zam-zam water amongst the students. It was also portrayed through the formation of tents and through the placing of ancient materials. This was particularly effective due to the fact that the experience became beneficial and many duaas were acquired through this and accepted (InshaAllaah).

The layout of the events consisted of four stations, enabling the students to rotate regularly. They were: Hadith and Quran, Imam Bukhari's youth, his travels and miraculous events that took place in his life, as well as the collection of chains of narrations and the difficulty endured to construct a single Hadith. A Sunnah food section was also arranged in order to highlight the significance of Hadith and actions of the Prophet SAW that ought to be carried out by every Muslim.

Overall, this experience was gratifying and reminded us of the struggles that were encountered in order to gain the information within our kitaab that we hold and study from today. Various activities were organised throughout this day and many students benefitted from this inshaAllaah.

May Allah grant us all barakat in our knowledge and allow us all to apply the knowledge of Quran and Sunnat into our daily lives, ameen

***Razeenah Ramtally, Kaanitha Chowdhury
and Sami Nawaz- 5th Year Aalimah***



Imam Bukhari Day



Remembrance Day Art

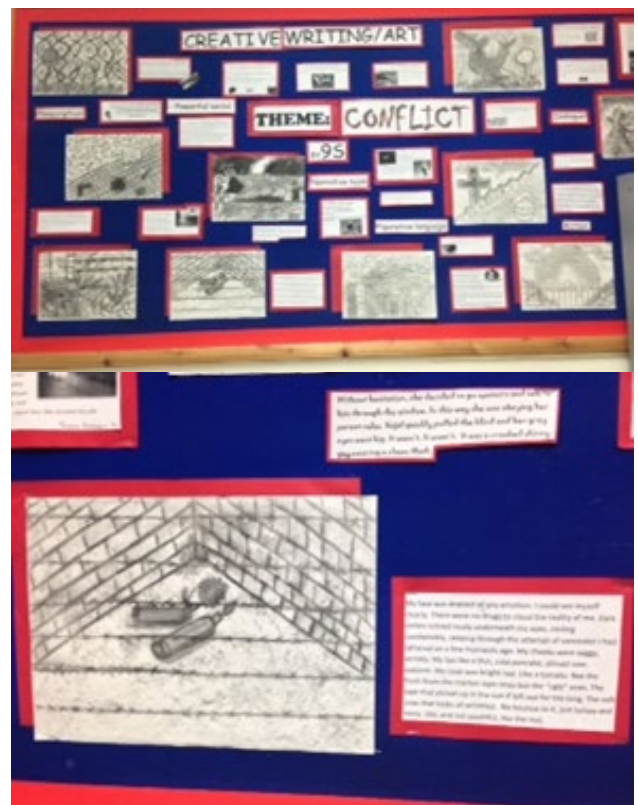
This term, we have been studying Remembrance Day in our art lessons.

It is a very important day for people around the world, including Muslims. On the 11th November, people take some time out to remember all those people who fought in war to restore peace to our country. During World War I and World War II, many people, who were parents and had families, died. We should appreciate their sacrifice and how they gave their lives for our safety.

In the art lessons we constructed a mixed-media piece of art to express our thoughts and feelings on this day. Mixed-media is when you use different types of art techniques (e.g. collage, drawing, painting, spraying, etc.) to put together one final piece of artwork. To make it easier for us, we drew three ideas, and then developed them into a final idea. In our final pieces we tried to display the theme of war and conflict alongside that of peace and hope.

We tried our best to form thoughtful pieces of artwork for people to look at, think about and remember.

Resham Zaheer, Year 9G



Art & Design Textiles GCSE

I am currently doing Art GCSE and it has been an exceptionally challenging experience but it has brought out the beauty of creativity within my hidden talent. I have enjoyed learning about the different textile techniques such as fabric dyeing, patchwork and marbling as well as using multi-colour dyes and shaving foam and lots more! It has been a fun and messy experience and I have enjoyed learning, experimenting and developing new ideas.

So far, I feel confident that I have acquired new skills and am using them in all aspects of learning. Additionally, I would not have been able to get as far as this if I didn't have the support of my dedicated Art teacher who motivates the whole Art class and encourages us to bring out our potential.

Fatima Khan, Year 11G





Year 8 - Environmental Art Project

Currently Year 8s are studying the concept of contemporary environmental art and landscape crafts. We have looked at several examples of contemporary art, primarily focusing on the works of Andy Goldsworthy, analysing his techniques and methods as well as thinking about the purpose of his art work and the messages they depict.

Feeling greatly inspired by Goldsworthy's creations, we decided to take a trip down to a local park and were given the opportunity to create our own pieces of contemporary environmental art.

In groups, using only the natural resources around us such as orange, yellow, green and brown leaves of all different shapes and sizes; twigs; branches; grass and rocks and with a very restricted time limit, we managed to produce satisfactory results.

As it would defeat the objective of our project, we did not use any man-made materials and had to find alternative, environmentally friendly means to attach things together and hold them down.

One group used leaves of the same type and arranged them into the shape of a heart, to symbolise the love they have for nature. Other groups, like my own, simply decided to make mini versions of trees and flowers.

We used a big branch and many small twigs, placed carefully on the side for the trunk, positioned numerous large leaves of a diverse range of colours above them and scattered a handful of red berries over the leaves for the 'fruit' on our 'tree'.

It was not only very enjoyable to go out and create our own adaptations of contemporary environmental, but also very worthwhile, beneficial as it helped us to appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of this specific type of art.

It was an excellent challenge to have to make do with what was around us and yet the final product was a lot better than anticipated. If the chance ever arises again in the future, I would most definitely do this a second time.

Nureeya Anjum Jannah Khan, Year 8G

Year 9 V&A Trip

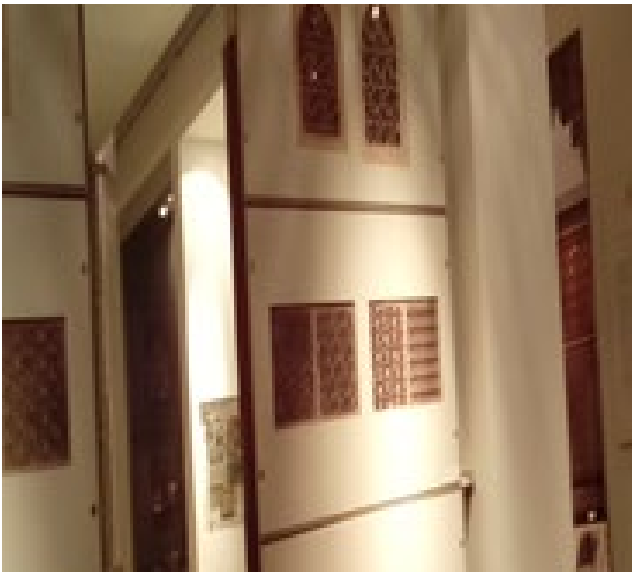
On 21st November, we visited the V&A museum. The museum displays different features of art; the most interesting area was the Islamic Art exhibition where we learnt about Arabic calligraphy and the different techniques. Calligraphy is a well-known aspect of Arabic art.

Another topic we learnt about was Maths.

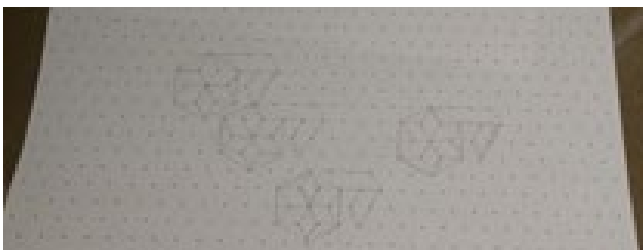
Resham Zaheer, 9G

In maths, we focused on tessellation and looking at the symmetry in patterns. We also attempted to draw them, although it was challenging because the patterns were very intricate and a precise hand was needed. We also looked around for regular and irregular tessellation and how it is used.

by Umara Kashif & Sabah Jamil, 9S



These marble and sandstone screens are from India. Students had to recreate the patterns from the screens using combinations of transformations with templates and isometric paper.



Year 9 Art - Conflict & Hope

In year 9 we are working on our final pieces; an A3 piece of work which expresses war and hope in unity. They show that even through bloodshed and the evils of war, there are still those who have hope and never surrender.

Remembrance Day is associated to our theme as it is a day for people to remember those who died and the hope that strived in their heart so that we would have a better life.

Furthermore, in our final piece we could include anything we believe related to war and hope such as doves, bombs, silhouettes of soldiers and flowers. However, the main objective was to use different textures, materials, techniques and most importantly to include our own drawings in order to achieve higher levels.

Overall, this art project has been intriguing and exciting as well as has allowed us to express ourselves through art whilst having fun. This project certainly made us think as a class about war, its consequences and hope in unity, which we had not considered before.

By Nusra Sajeel, Year 9S

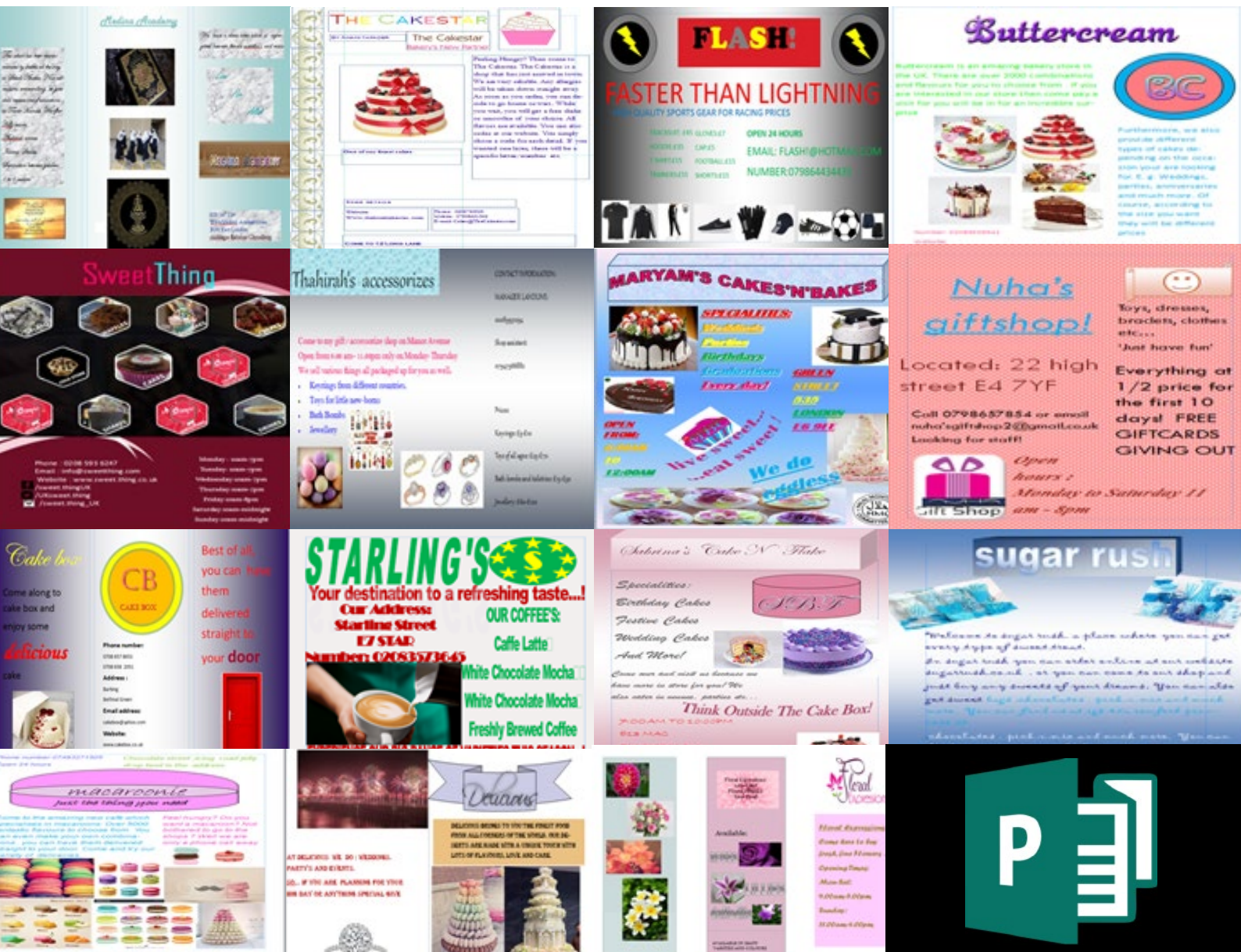


Designers of Year 7G

Year 7G was given a task was to design a leaflet to advertise any new business or shop they imagine to open.

They had to make a persuasive leaflet, design it and create special effects with respect to colour, font, background and images. They also had to design their own logo using Microsoft Publisher.

The students were creative and they loved the task. They were also able to use various tools of Microsoft to explore their imagination and came up with these lovely leaflets.





My Experience of French GCSE

Edexcel French

Edexcel has adopted a new French GCSE which has brought many changes to the specification.

One of which is speaking. We are required to do 3 tasks: role play, questions based on a picture and a conversation. Azhar Academy, along with our teacher, Ms Borg ensure that we are continuously looking back at the specification to familiarise ourselves with the marking, boundaries and what we are required to do.

Another major change is translation. A piece in French translated into English might not be exactly word to word, so a sentence has to be generalised into how an English speaker would interpret it. Each week, we usually practice a different skill or something that is required for the skill in the qualification. An example of this is speaking. Ms Borg is helping us with our pronunciation and speaking spontaneously.

If you do French as a modern foreign language (MFL), you can put this on your CV for colleges or six form. Learning MFL is also a way of understanding and enhancing knowledge about another culture.

Jamila Kasoma, 10G

As I am currently in Year 11, I've studied the French Language for approximately four and a half years and I have become experienced in this field. From learning the basics such as colours and numbers in Year 7, I am now able to construct coherent paragraphs in French.

Although a lot of practice and effort must be applied to this subject like any other, there is a heavy reliance on memorisation skills in this subject. This is because vocabulary is a crucial factor with regards to any language, in order to enhance your understanding and to broaden your ideas. Therefore, it is necessary for one studying this language to assign time to learning new words and phrases. I do not regard this language as difficult and unachievable; rather I view it to be at medium level, which can be achieved by everyone, inshaAllaah, due to the fact that numerous words are very much alike in comparison to English.

With French being the sixth most spoken language in the world, it is highly beneficial to know it. As well as this, French is the second most commonly learned language, conveying the ease in learning it. As a result, I have benefitted from this GCSE in numerous ways. Firstly, the study of this language will be considered an advantage in further education. Extra-curricular activities as well as other languages improve one's chances of being accepted into a college or university as it proves ones ability to adapt and portray diversity. It also reiterates one's ability to undertake challenges and to step out of one's comfort zone. Secondly, this GCSE has allowed me to acquire another GCSE in addition to the compulsory subjects like Maths, English and Science.

Overall, I believe it is necessary for one to challenge themselves in order to develop an in-depth understanding and to adapt to real-life problems. The accumulation of languages is particularly important in society today, due to the fact that communication is crucial in a society of technology and professionalism. In addition to this, languages such as French and Arabic are in high demand in certain countries, jobs and institutions. Hence, I highly recommend learning the French language for the benefits it provides for its learners.

Razeenah Ramtally, Year 11A

The New GCSE (1-9) Arabic

First Teaching: 2017
First assessment: 2019

Qualification at a glance

Content and assessment overview: The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Arabic consists of four externally examined papers based on the following skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students must complete their speaking assessment in April/-May and all other assessments in May/June in any single year. Each paper is available at foundation tier or higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers. The use of dictionaries is not permitted. For Paper 2 this includes during the preparation time.

Vocalisation: Vocalisation has been used in the questions and rubrics of the reading, listening, speaking and writing papers only, where it is necessary for ease of reading and to clarify meaning. Students are not expected to use vocalisation in their writing.

Paper 1: Listening and understanding in Arabic (*Paper code: 1AA0/1F and 1H) **Written examination**

Foundation tier: 35 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time; 50 marks
Higher tier: 45 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time; 50 marks, 25% of the total qualification

Paper 2: Speaking in Arabic (*Paper code: 1AA0/2F and 2H)

Internally conducted and externally assessed
Foundation tier: 7-9 minutes plus 12 minutes preparation time; 70 marks
Higher tier: 10-12 minutes plus 12 minutes preparation time; 70 marks, 25% of the total qualification

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Arabic (*Paper code: 1AA0/3F and 3H) **Written**

Written examination
Foundation tier: 50 minutes; 50 marks.
Higher tier: 1 hour 5 minutes; 50 marks, 25% of the total qualification

Paper 4: Writing in Arabic (*Paper code: 1AA0/4F and 4H)

Written examination
Foundation tier: 1 hour 15 minutes; 60 marks
Higher tier: 1 hour 25 minutes; 60 marks, 25% of the total qualification

*Arabic Language Department
Mrs Muna Alsaadi*





Learning Arabic is Fun!

My name is Maryam and I started at Azhar Academy Girls School in September 2016. I'd never studied the language of Arabic in my primary school, so I found it quite difficult at first but the more lessons I learnt, the more I understood and enjoyed it.

This half term we learnt about pets, pronouns, family and descriptions. I especially enjoyed combining these topics and writing a paragraph about family and pets. I made a few mistakes at first and my writing was a bit wonky and ridged but with help I appreciated and even enjoyed writing Arabic!

Maryam Suhail
Year 7G



New Changes to GCSE Mathematics

In line with the changes to the national curriculum, the GCSE in Mathematics specification is required to enable students to:

- Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

In order for the GCSE specification in Mathematics to reflect the aims and objectives outlined above, the GCSE Mathematics is getting more demanding for everyone:

The volume of the subject content has increased. Therefore, more teaching time is needed.

The demand of that content is increasing too, with harder topics being introduced for both foundation and higher tier, as a result: The total assessment time has increased by one hour. There will be three exam papers (with fewer formulae available in examinations); one non-calculator (worth 33.3%) and two calculator papers, 80 marks and 1½ hours each.

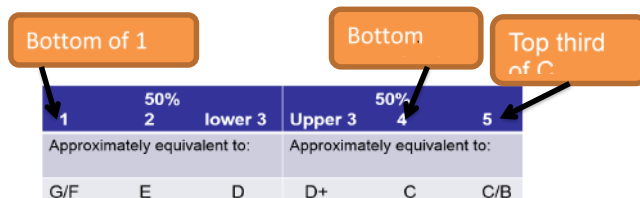
New assessment objectives

- AO1: Use and apply standard techniques (50% Foundation, 40% Higher)
- AO2: Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically (25% Foundation, 30% Higher)
- AO3: Solve problems within mathematics and other context (25% Foundation, 30% Higher)
- More emphasis on problem-solving, communication, proof, interpretation
- QWC and Functional Maths no longer explicitly required.

New grading scale (9-1)

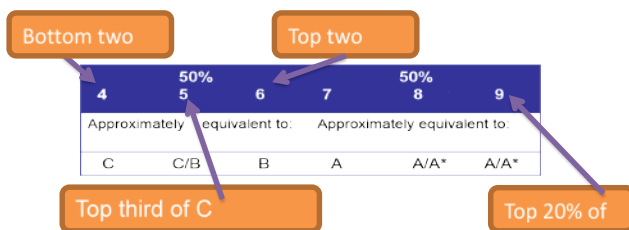
- 9 is the highest, for the top 3% or so
- 1 is the lowest, anchored to grade G
- 7 will be anchored to grade A
- 4 will be anchored to grade C
- 5 will be set between C and B

Foundation Tier: Foundation papers now start at, and reach, a higher level.



Higher Tier: Higher papers now start at a higher level than the current GCSE, which starts at a grade D. The new higher tier will cover 6 grades instead of 5, allowing for more differentiation at the top end of the grades. Previously 25% of questions were targeted at A/A*, but now 50% of questions in each paper are targeted at the equivalent grades 7-9.

In the new Higher papers marks will be allocated like this:



Students will not lose out as a result of the changes. A statistical method (known as comparable outcomes) will be used in 2017 so that:

- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above
- Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as currently achieve a grade A and above
- The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G
- Grade 5 will be awarded to around the top third of students gaining the equivalent of a grade C and bottom third of a grade B. This has been defined as a good pass by the Department for Education.

Maths Department

The Bar modelling - a powerful approach to solve mathematics problems

Some of the teachers in the Mathematics Department have been introduced to this approach during GCSE training as an important approach to solving complex problems. Following this, some had a chance to attend Maths Hub training which allowed them to become more aware of how to use the Singapore bar modelling approach in the classroom. Having realised of how this method could help students to understand the mathematics topics, most have decided to embed this approach in lessons and help the students realise how powerful this method is in solving complicated maths problems. We are completely convinced that this method could enhance teaching practice by providing students with a powerful tool to help them visualise the problems and solve them easily.

Since then, teachers have been experimenting with this method in lessons and have realised the positive impact of this approach on the students' understanding of the topics and how they become more confident to tackle, for example, percentage and fractions problems.

What is the Bar Model Approach?

The bar model approach is a teaching innovation which was developed in Singapore in the 80s. It has been developed to help the students make sense of, and solve word problems in primary schools. This approach helps the students visualise the relationships between the numbers given and amount they are looking for in a word problem. It is incredibly interesting how this method starts in primary school with addition and subtraction problems and then easily expanded to work with division, multiplication, ratios, fraction, percentage and even algebra.

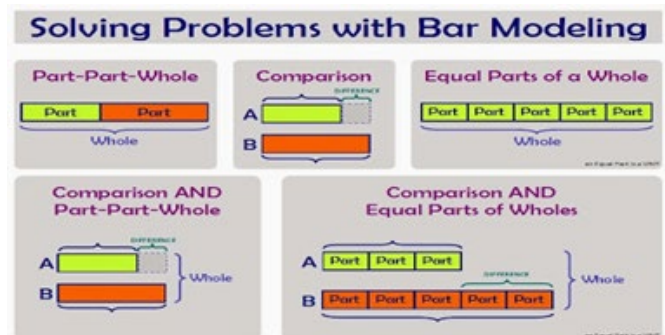
Throughout the decades, this approach has been proven to be incredibly useful to help the

students make sense of the given information and how to solve complex problems. As soon as the students know of how to use this method efficiently, all they need is a pen and paper.

In this method, bars (rectangles) are used to represent quantities in a problem. The length of the bars helps the students visualize the size of the quantities in the problem. The location of the bars relative to each other helps them visualize how the quantities in the problem are related to each other. Realising this relationship helps the students decide which operation(s) to use (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) to solve the problem.

The known quantities in the problem are used to label the length of the bars and the unknown quantity is represented by a question mark.

There are three basic structures: Part-Part-Whole, Comparison, and Equal Parts.



The first two, Part-Part-Whole and Comparison, are used when solving simple addition and subtraction situations. The third, Equal Parts, is used when solving simple multiplication and division. For more complex problems, combinations of these simple structures may be used together.

To sum up, we hope that using the bar modelling approach in lessons will enhance students' conceptual understanding which in turn will improve their procedural understanding. If the students are able to represent a problem by drawing bars, this could strongly indicate a better understanding of what the problem wants them to do.



Safe4Faith

On Thursday 3rd November, the year 10s attended a specially commissioned police event in Westminster. The purpose of the event was to empower women and create awareness of the problems in London. Those hosting the event intrigued us by using the hash-tag #girlsallowed and #safe4faith. This gave the year 10s the opportunity to enhance their understanding that both men and women have the same rights in their occupation.

The talk started off with Jeff Arnold, who talked about intolerance of other faiths- Islam in particular- as well as about the 'MAMA' campaign which stands for 'Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks'. They informed the audience about the effects of many common crimes such as youth crime which involved gang violence.

It was an eye opener for many of us as we watched victims' parents speak about their

experiences as well as young offenders who gave us advice about avoiding gangs and any sort of youth crime. He warned us about the downside of spending time with people who are a bad influence and the disadvantages of being involved in anti-social behaviours. He explained how this would get in the way of achieving one's future ambitions.

The event was organised by an extremely influential woman, DCI Shabnam Chaudhri, who shared her extraordinary journey of becoming a police officer with us. She explained how she hid her training from her parents, as she was sure they would not approve because of her Indian culture and their traditional mind-set. However, her parents were extremely proud of her work and she is now seen as an inspiration for young women of different ethnic backgrounds.

***Sadia Sheikhuna and Jamila Kasoma,
Year 10G***

Love for the School

Assalamualaykum

Allhamdulillah I feel very happy that I have a place in a school surrounded by Muslims. Everyone who has been accepted to attend this school is very lucky as many Muslim students do not have the opportunity to pray salah at the correct time; to be able to read surah kahf every Friday; to be in Aalimah, Islamic Studies or Hifz lessons, including many other blessing we have here.

Before I came to this school, I was thinking to go to another school but I am happy to say that I have been put back on to the safe path. If you think about it, in a state school you would have to pray salah at different times.

My point is, you need to be thankful for everything you have.

How Do I Feel About Year 7 So Far?

At the start of Year 7, I was nervous because I didn't know many people but I still had the confidence to come to school and make new friends. Making new friends is hard because you don't know what the person might think of you and you might like them but they might not like you as their friend.

After a week or so, I already made good friends with the following people: Sabiha Siddiqa Rahman, Madiha Choudhury, Suraya Islam and Zahra Bint Asghar.

After a month, I made my way around the school easily and familiarised myself with the teachers.

In Aalimah, I found it different than any Arabic I'd done before but then I got used to it.

It has been a hard few months but now I feel like I've been here a year already.

Thahirah Chowdhury, Year 7G

Year 7 at Azhar Academy School

Your first year at secondary school might seem daunting and be like your nightmare, but don't worry that's what I thought too at first. Now it's the complete opposite!

Azhar Academy is like my second home; all the students there are like my sisters. All teachers and students share a really good bond. Azhar Academy Girls School gives you one in a lifetime chance.

In the beginning, I was a scared new student, but now I have overcome all my fears, alhamdulillah. I am so happy to come here.

The school teaches you things that you should learn to become a good Muslim. All the Aalimah, Hifz and Islamic Studies teachers are very helpful as they help you strive on the path towards Allah Subhanna wa ta'ala.

This year at Azhar has been life changing for me, but if you truly want to experience it yourself, come and join the school!

Suwaybah Ahmed, Year 7G

Life in Year 7 at Azhar Academy Girls School

It all started on the 5th of September...

Year 7 was nerve racking at first but then I got used to it. I thought I was going to be a loner all of year 7 because I saw groups of people in my class who were laughing together and I felt jealous and sad. I had so many gloomy thoughts that there was no space for happy thoughts.

Then I made a friend, Sabrina. She was very kind and considerate to me when she saw me alone. A few weeks later in computing science I made friends with Nushrat (my close friend now). She introduced me to Habiba and Hana and since then we've become really close friends.

My friends told me that I used to ignore them and that I was very quiet. When October came I realised that I have become friendlier; I used to feel so grumpy and I remember that I was scared of a few girls in our class. In November I was happy as ever because I made more friends and Azhar felt more like home.

Now I'm like the opposite to the start of Year 7- loud, friendly, funny (as my friends say) calm, jokey... I can only thank the teachers for helping me communicate with others confidently. My close friends are Nushrat and Thahirah. When we first met we didn't have an awkward 'hi'; we had a chat as if we knew each other forever and they have been kind to me ever since..

I really enjoy the subjects like science because we get to go to the lab and the mood is never boring or serious; it's always a bright and happy lesson.

I look forward to the coming years and hope my time in Azhar will be the best InshaAllaah!!

Nuha Kamali, Year 7G

At first, when I first came through those big black double doors, I was anxious and nervous about how I would be treated or how I would organise everything. My main concern was, how would I make friends?

The only reason any of us are here today is because of our hard-working, loving parents. They guided us and taught us right from wrong. You may not realise this now, but your parents go through blood, sweat and tears to send you here-to make you good Muslimahs. They work through day and night and worry about you if you come late from school.

Friends might mean everything to you but who is going to be there when your friends let you down; when they abandon you for a new friend? Your mother and father are ALWAYS going to be there no matter what. Even if you hurt your parents, they will never let you down; they will never not talk to you.

Have respect for your parents and teachers and anyone older than you because at the end of the day it is you who they will remember before they go to sleep or after they pray there Esha Salah.

During my first week here, I only knew a few people but even then only one of them was my close friend from before we both came to Azhar Academy Girls School. A few weeks later, I met a kind girl called Madiha and realised that she was my primary school friend's cousin. After a week or so we became close friends and got to know each other a lot more through her cousin. Only just a few weeks ago, did I become friends with Nuha Kamali Rahman and Nushrat Zahra Khan. Although I don't really know Nuha a lot, I hang out with her all the time as she has the best stories about things in life and her past.

Lastly, I would like to say that there is no point messing about in lessons and getting a bad name because at the end of the day, it's your parents that are disgraced. Also don't change yourself because the most popular girl in the class said something about you that made everyone laugh at you.

Thahirah Chowdhury, Year 7G

My Poem about Year 7

Being in year 7 is a rollercoaster ride
No one on your side
So what's it like being new?

It's a little bit scary but rather exciting too,
Everyone feels nervous and a little bit of fear;
As you have to start another year.

It's something different and can be lots of fun
But no matter how busy you are, you still miss your mum
Because making friends is hard.
Playing in the big schoolyard,
Going to new places and making a fresh start and learning new skills.

Everything looks so different
From the tiny school we went to before.
Being at secondary school,
It is really cool!

We now have new things to see and do,
New people everywhere too.
And realise only a few weeks it took
To forget that we were new.

Aisha Nadeem, Year 7G

English, English Something to Enjoy

English, English something to enjoy.

You can be creative, like pirates saying "Ahoy!"

It's a relaxing way to spend the day.

It's better than sitting on a bay

Full of imaginative thoughts.

But any dream can come true

In English, which helps people express their feelings.

I love reading, writing and telling stories.

Suraiya Islam, 7G



Memorisation of the Qur'an

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah (swt), I have completed the memorisation of the Qur'an. My passion for Hifz only grew as Allah (swt) continuously opened His doors and made my Hifz journey achievable and successful. Undoubtedly Allah (swt) is Ar-Raheem, the merciful and As-Sam'ee, the All-Hearing.

I started Hifz at the age of 9. After memorising a couple of juzz at home, I was blessed to continue my Hifz in Al-Noor primary school. Then as I came to Azhar Academy I was able to continue my Hifz for the next 3 years, and altogether it took me 5 years to complete the Qur'an, alhamdulillah.

When I was doing Hifz I made sure that Qur'an was my priority and was above everything else. My Qur'an was with me wherever I went; whether that was sleepovers, in the park, and I even did memorisation in the leisure centre, waiting for my swimming lessons. I always found moments to continue my Hifz wherever I was, whatever I was doing, alhamdulillah.

There were obstacles in the way and difficulties I had to face, and one of the biggest difficulties I had to face was that I couldn't always be around my family. I thought to myself that with achieving everything great comes great sacrifice. I knew Allah (swt) would help me, and that all reward is in His hands and I kept focused, alhamdulillah.

Allah (swt) says in the Quran in the surah Qamar Ayah 17:

'And Surely We have made the Quran easy for remembrance, so who is there to remember it?'

Therefore, everyone has the capability to memorise the Quran, as long as you believe in Allah (swt) and then believe in yourself.

My Hifz journey has been incredible. It was like a huge roller-coaster with many ups and downs, a few loops on the way but I had a lot of support from friends and teachers who stayed even after school to help me, which I really appreciate. And of course, the Hifz class motivated me. However, I couldn't do it without my family. My parents sacrificed their time for me in every way, kept pushing me forward to reach to this moment today, alhamdulillah.

May Allah (swt) reward everyone for their sincere support and grant them the highest abode in Jannah, ameen

Aaiza Mariam Butt

Memorisation of the Qur'an

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah (SWT), I have finished the memorisation of the glorious Quran. I started learning the Quran when I was in Year 3 and I am now in Year 9. It took me around 7 years to memorise the entire Quran. My Hifz journey has had many ups and downs and many challenges that I had to face every day. There were days were I felt like giving up but I carried on trying and working hard , and with a lot of effort I succeeded, Alhamdulillah. Without a doubt this is all thanks to Allah, the Almighty.

I would also like to thank my Apas, Apa Rubi , Apa Sanah , Apa Khadija, Apa Sumayyah Molvi and Apa Mahnoor and of course not forgetting my Hifz class who helped me throughout my Hifz journey. I finished the Quran on Friday, 2nd December 2016. The graduation was the very next day.

I was told to come to the graduation at 2 o'clock so I could prepare for the ceremony and what I was going to read. The graduation started around 4 o'clock and there were speeches from teachers. The Aalimah students graduated at 7:15 pm. Apa Safiya then said they were going to call the Hifz students onto the stage to recite. First Aaiza, who was also graduating Hifz, read out her speech. She also read some Quran. It was my turn after her so I read Surah Ikhlaas, Surah Falaq, Surah Naas, Surah Fatihah and some of Surah Baqarah. The Hifz teachers made a du'aa and we were awarded with a certificate, a Quran and some Islamic books.

After the commencement, the Aalimah students were given their awards and then taken to another hall to eat dinner.

The next mission is keeping the Quran in my heart by revising it over and over again to make sure I don't forget it. I hope that Allah makes it easy for all my Hifz class and everyone who is trying to memorise the Quran and eases it for them to learn and keep it in their heart, Ameen.

Amatullah Bint Zishaan

Qur'an Competition

A Qur'an competition was hosted for students by the Tarbiyah mentors. They had to design a poster explaining their favourite verse. MashaAllaah, they received many entries and decided the following students as their finalists and runner ups.

KS3 - 1st place - Amina Naveed - 7A

KS3 - 2nd place - Amina Haskic - 8G

KS4 - 1st place - Maryam Raza - 10G

KS4 - 2nd place - Sadia Sheikhuna - 10G

Sisterhood Day



Sisterhood Day

The Tarbiyyah mentors planned and organised sisterhood day for all the students to take part in and we chose 22nd December for this event to take place. We did this because we felt that for majority of us, we easily forget the reality and our ultimate purpose in life and forget the importance of being united and being the building block for each other as sisters and Muslimahs. Also, as humans we have been created in a way that it's often part of our nature to feel anger, jealousy and spite; however, we wanted to show everyone that it's our response and the way we choose to deal with these emotions that help us develop as individuals and those around us. We wanted to present this to the school to show them how easily we can look past these feelings when we look for the better in people and the bigger picture as the Prophet Mohammad (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) has taught us.

We tried to achieve this by setting up five different activities where the students would rotate in their year groups. One of the activities was cupcake decorating. Each student picked a name at random and decorated it the way she thought the person would like it. However, the sole purpose of this station was not just eating, but it was a chance for students to acknowledge how well they knew their own classmates and to appreciate of the fact that every individual is unique therefore everyone has different strengths and characteristics which we can learn from.

The second activity was Chinese whispers. Why Chinese whispers? Unfortunately, gossip and back chat are very common in all our day to day lives that we often forget that it's a great sin. Whenever Islam condemns something, it is because it's harmful for us and we're better off without it. We realised that the best way to show how baseless and damaging gossips could be was with a real example and by making the students themselves take part in it.

Through this we were able to show how the only way to obtain the correct information was

by going to the very first person who made the statement. Also, everyone was able to see for themselves, how the message altered and other information has been added, totally different from the original one. Furthermore, when you take part in this it could also come back to you. The solution that we presented was firstly to always think good as the Prophet Mohammad (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) has taught us to think of seventy different excuses before thinking bad and secondly, to leave what does not concern us.

Our last two activities were the human knot and trust exercises. The purpose of the human knot was to show the importance of helping each other out and standing firmly behind one another. A key characteristic of a good friend and Muslim is to be trustworthy and reliable; to be able to selflessly help another person excel and not to think low of anyone either. These exercises showed the students that when they helped each other it made them stronger and able to depend on another person to help them out. It also showed the importance of correcting each other by displaying and experimenting different techniques and be able to do the task successfully.

We really enjoyed planning the day and the activities and hope that everyone benefited from it. We wanted to show the importance of all of us coming together as a school first for us to then unite us a community. It is narrated from Numan bin Bashir (R.A) that the Prophet Mohammad (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said, "The example of the person abiding by Allah's order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them is like the example of those persons who drew lots for their seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part, and the others in the lower. When the latter needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, 'Let us make a hole in our share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from troubling them. So, if the people in the upper part left the others do what they had suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe."

***Kaanitha Chowdhury, Year 11A
(Head of Tarbiyah Mentor)***

Dignity of Women

In almost every corner of the world, the status of a woman was regarded inferior to that of man; her status delved so low that in some nations she was regarded as “the lowest of creation” and was subjected to unbearable tortures. In Athens, a woman’s status had degenerated to that of slaves. In ancient Rome, a woman’s legal position was one of complete subordination. In France in 587 C.E a meeting was held to study the status of women and to establish whether or not she could truly be considered as a human being. In the pagan Arabs, women were purchased and sold like cattle; her main function to bear children and serve man. Feelings of disgrace were attached to the birth of daughters, which led to merciless killings of daughters, even burying them alive.

The advent of Islam unbound us women from such barbaric practices and provided us freedom, liberty and status in society, such dignity and honour that no other religions or nations ever gave to their women.

In pre-war Britain, women were mainly viewed as domestical figures. Girls and boys were not permitted to study the same subjects at schools, and women hardly had any rights. It was only in the early 20th century through the suffragette movement that women accomplished their goals having to turn to such militant measures in order to campaign for their rights. Women could now vote, serve at town councils and even become factory inspectors. By the end of the war in 1918, women proved that they were just as able in the war efforts as men.

However, it was 1400 years ago that women in Islam were given the equal rights to that of men. They are able to acquire property, earn money, the right to inheritance and the right to education. The prophet Muhammad (saw) said, “Seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim male and female.” Some of the greatest scholars in Islam have actually been educated by women. Yet, the misconception

remains within today’s society about Islam and the way Islam degrades its women, that men are regarded superior over their women. This is not the case. In numerous places in the Qur’an, the Almighty mentions both men and women together, (e.g.) “Say to believing men and women,” “Men and women who guard their chastity.” This emphasises their equality. Yet, it is nature, which made it so that men and women play different roles in serving society.

The women’s high status can be demonstrated in the rite of sa’ee performed in the pilgrimage of Hajj. Sa’ee is running between two hillocks called Safa and Marwa. It was Hagar the wife of Abraham who ran between these two hillocks. This is the equality and respect which Islam teaches between men and women. Islam has elevated a woman so high, that the projection of a woman as the most honourable human being is in the form of a mother creating a society in which a woman is accorded the maximum honour and respect.

The dress code of Muslim women, especially the women that cover themselves completely including covering the face is deemed as oppressed! Where must this misconception derive from? Islam does not want to suppress its women nor does it want them to be ashamed of their femininity, but rather the dress code signifies their self-respect and social status. Covering the face was also practised in Judaism, where Jewish women covered the veil until the 19th century, but due to external pressure of European life, it slowly diminished. In Christianity, St Paul mentions about the veil in the New Testament (Corinthians 11.3-10); his rationale being that the veil represents a sign of authority of the man who is the image and glory of god!

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From this it is clearly known that Islam did not invent it but endorsed it. Dressing in such a manner protects the modesty and chastity of a woman. Modesty and chastity are precious gems of a Muslim woman. She is precious and valuable. Just like a gem would not be exposed, she is covered from the gazes of men.

Islam offers a woman dignity, respect and protection in all stages of her life from birth to her death. Maybe it is due to the fact that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, that many of its converts are women. In the U.S women converts outnumber male converts by 4 to 1.85. Islam is indeed a religion that has immensely improved the status of a woman. By her maintaining her chastity, she is successful in her roles as a daughter, mother as well as wife, and her children will be followed as examples of society.

Apa A. Patel
Citizenship Teacher

Citizenship

On Thursday, 24th November, along with two other friends, I was given the great opportunity to attend a local event at 'The Gate' library, based on the important topic of recycling in Newham. The event was a successful form of raising awareness on the importance of recycling to the public of Newham.

This event also allowed my friends and I, as a citizenship group to use this opportunity to speak to different people and to also use this as evidence for our controlled assessment. We took this to great advantage and managed to discuss how recycling linked with our topic of food waste with many different authorities of different roles.

This factor about the event actually engaged with us the most. Every person we spoke to had different opinions and ideas and spoke about how their specific role may deal with food waste. This was very interesting to listen to and benefited the group in many ways as we

left the event with a larger understanding of the topic and how it plays in the lives of different roles.

In addition to this, the event also gave us the lucky opportunity to interview many important and influential authorities such as Rachel Tripp, the local councillor. We were extremely thankful for this opportunity and used it to discuss different ideas on how to reduce food waste as a community and even globally. As a mother, she discussed the different methods in which she implements and aims to reduce food wastage in her own home and how they can be used to reduce food wastage in a bigger community. This was very beneficial as it gave a brainstorm of ideas on actions to take, which effectively make a difference on the great statistics of food being wasted.

The event was clearly successful in many different ways and no student left without benefiting in some sort of way, be it a change of attitude and understanding towards the topic or an idea of how to use the event as a motivation and foundation for the rest of the campaign's journey.

We give many thanks to Apa Atiya and Mrs Adam for bringing this event to our attention and giving us this great chance.

Aminah Omar, Year 10A



Citizenship

We were given the opportunity to attend a conference in Euston, Central London about Fairtrade and its benefits. It was interesting and engaging as it consisted of workshops and fun activities.

Three people from Ghana came to speak about their experience travelling through the UK and how different it was to Africa. This included even the simplest factors, such as having unlimited water and electricity at the flick of a switch.

After that, we went into groups where we interacted with different schools and did activities and workshops, which educated me a lot more on Fairtrade, like how they ensure deprived international workers live in better conditions.

My favourite part of the trip was making smoothies using smoothie bikes and tasting the chocolate from Divine Chocolate. They are a 100% Fairtrade company, owned by cocoa farmers in Ghana. We were fortunate enough to interview the CEO, Sophi Tranchell, for our citizenship project.

Overall, the conference was an eye opener to how vast the world is and how easily we get the products we have; whereas a lot more effort is exhausted in poorer countries for us to live in ease. I realised that we can play a part in supporting the lifestyles of farmers providing for us. I surely took a lot of information back with me and hope to spread the word.

Zainab Abdulalim, 10G

Duke of Edinburgh Award



Azhar Academy Girls School is very excited to announce that, in partnership with Newham Council, we are offering the Duke of Edinburgh Award to our Year 9, 10 and 11 students.

What is the Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE)?

A Duke of Edinburgh's Award is so much more than a 'pat on the back' for completing a programme of activities. It is recognition of a young person's successful journey of self-discovery and development, renowned by employers and universities alike for the qualities young people have who've achieved a DofE Award. Its balanced programme develops the whole person - mind, body and soul, in an environment of social interaction and team working.

- There are three progressive levels of DofE programmes which, when successfully completed, lead to a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. With the help of DofE Leaders, participants select their own programme of activities and set themselves objectives.

- It's not a competition or about being first. It's all about self-development.

- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award was founded in 1956 by its Patron HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. HRH The Earl of Wessex is a Trustee.

- Over 300,000 young people are currently taking part in DofE programmes in the UK, at 12,735 DofE centres, supported by 902 partner organisations and around 50,000 adult volunteers from all walks of life.

- Last year, 240,796 young people started a DofE programme.

- 108,288 achieved a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

- In total, over 5.1 million people have participated in DofE programmes in the UK and achieved over 2.2 million Awards since 1956.

- A survey of major employers, commissioned by the United Learning Trust, found that a Duke of Edinburgh's Award is the most highly valued experience when selecting employees.

- There are over 850,000 young people currently participating globally in over 140 countries and territories.

- Since 1956, over eight million people have taken part across the world, highlighting how the DofE can truly transcend boundaries of race, language, ethnicity and culture.

Achieving a Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Young people will achieve a Duke of Edinburgh's Award if they show persistence, commitment and personal development over a period of time. Every activity must be successfully completed and assessed. The result is the world's leading achievement award for young people, recognised by employers and universities alike. Completing a DofE programme develops young people for life and work. It develops resilience, confidence and a 'can do' attitude as well as the social and communication skills that businesses are calling out for.

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The requirements for the Bronze Award are as follows:

Volunteering	Physical	Skills	Practice Expedition	Main Expedition
3 months	3 months	3 months	Plan, train for and complete a 2 day, 1 night expedition	Plan, train for and complete a 2 day, 1 night expedition
Participants must complete a further 3 months in the Volunteering, Physical or Skill section.				

Details about Silver/Gold levels on the DofE website:

<http://www.dofe.org/what-is-dofe>

To sign up for DofE at AAGS, email Ms Aslam, f.aslam@azharacademy.org

Naima B.Robert's and Zohra Sarwari's visit

On Thursday, 8th December, our school was fortunate enough to receive a visit by two inspiring and passionate women, Zohra Sarwari and Naima B.Robert, as part of a campaign by Charity Right.

Zohra Sarwari is a Muslim author, business coach, entrepreneur, and international speaker living in Sacramento, CA, United States. She travels to England and visits many schools, including ours to talk about 'Feed a School Campaign'.

Na'ima B Robert's is an author of multicultural literature and founding editor of the UK-based Muslim women's publication, SISTERS Magazine.

The amazing women seemed very compassionate whilst giving their speeches and the students were very engaged. Their words touched everyone's heart and they were able to stoop to our level of understanding.

Naima B Robert's were very moving and through her poems we saw she has a very strong character. She also revealed to us a little on about her personal life which served as a reminder for us all.

Zohra Sarwari was chosen to speak to our class specifically and did an amazing job. Her stories brought out an intense and eager spirit in the class; everyone's eyes and ears were focused on her while she read her heartfelt stories to us. Zohra Sarwari's story was also followed by a moral and reminder.

Sumayah Tajmin
Year 9A



GCSE in Action Science Workshop

On the 18th of November 2016, a group of girls including myself went to the Logan Hall of University College London for a GCSE in Action Science conference. We arrived by bus and found our seats in an auditorium along with other schools to listen to the different speakers who would tell us all about STEM – science, technology, engineering and of course, mathematics.

The first speaker was Simon Singh, a man who has written many popular books about Science and Maths. He explained the fascinating concept behind the big bang theory to us, as well as its history and development over the 20th century. We learned that the evidence for the big bang theory was found ACCIDENTALLY in 1964!

Our next teacher of the day was Dr Suze Kundo, a professor at the University of Surrey. We learnt about dating in the element world! Ms. Kundo explained the properties of elements, how they are bonded and the mysteries behind their attraction to us, simply and clearly. She also, humorously enough, told us about her own misdemeanors in love!

Then came what was, at least in my opinion, the best part of the trip: Operating theatre, LIVE! A surgeon showed us the insides of a pig, and called volunteers up to the stage to see those parts up close. My friend Aaliyah and I both got the opportunity to see the liver, pancreas and stomach of a pig very clearly. For those not on the stage, cameras and projectors were fitted which gave a larger view of the guts. God, did it smell, but the stench was worth it!

A man then came to give us exam advice. He told us about time management, and how making study groups helps prepare for the exam. He told us to time ourselves correctly when doing work, and to make sure we don't cram knowledge in at the last minute. I hope I can put all his advice into action before my GCSEs, and I'm sure my friends do too.

Towards the end, we were introduced to Bloodhound SCC. It is the car that will break the land speed record one day. A man from the team behind the making of the car told us how it's done. He told us that his team was getting old, and that new minds like us would be the new people to design faster, better cars. Bloodhound SCC will be faster than a fighter jet... How spectacular this supersonic land car will be!

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Lastly, a man from the Sheffield Hallam University Centre for sports engineering research talked to us about how sport needs technology just like any other current area of development. He talked about the development of goal technology, and his job working with FIFA to ensure goals are credited to the correct teams through different special systems. It was interesting to learn FIFA invested so much for the fairness of a game.

While I was watching these men, I thought that more women should be on stages like these. More women should go into STEM subjects. More women should have big aspirations. I thought, our generation, my generation, all of you should make sure that we strive to be the next surgeons, engineers, chemists and physicists. I want to be an astrophysicist. What do YOU want to be?

Some quotes from girls on this trip:

“So exciting!” – Sumayyah Imrit - Year 10G

“BEST TRIP EVER” – Aaliyah Natha – Year 10G

“ Recommended for everyone!” - Muhsina Siddiqa - Year 10G

My most memorable moment on the UCL trip was the operating theatre live event when a pig's insides were shown to the audience. The presenter showed us all of its inner organs such as the stomach, heart and lungs. He went through each organ in chronological order and even allowed us to go on stage and have a closer look. Unfortunately, I didn't get chosen although two of my other classmates did.

It wasn't long after, that the terrible stench of the intestines and the dead pig reached my

nose; and so, for the next ten minutes of the live show I had to keep myself from gagging while trying to pay attention. It was, however, quite fascinating.

Overall, the trip was extremely interesting and I am glad that I took this opportunity – it really was my dad's money's worth. I would love to go on this trip again should the opportunity rise once more.

Ayesha Muhsina Siddiqa - Year 10G
Esha Kamran, 10G

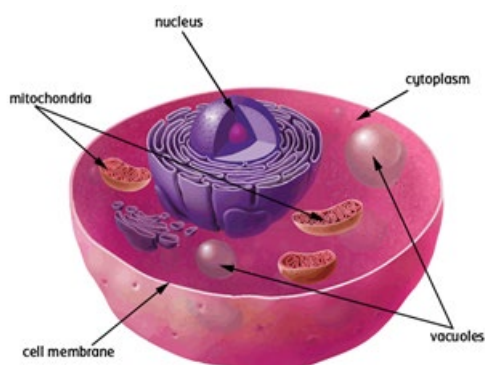


The Pod Cell

On Tuesday 13th December 2016, 7A and 7G went to Centre of the Cells in Whitechapel.

The Pod looks like a humongous, orange molecule, it is curvy and round. It hangs from the ceiling by steel pipes, which makes it stable. Inside The Pod there are various types of games and videos on how to keep your body healthy.

The Pod Show is about Human cells. I have learnt that there are 260 different cells in our body, in adults there are 50,000,000,000,000 (TRILLION) cells. Cells grow in 2s which expand up to 100 cells. The heart is shaped like a 16 cell embryo, although there are actually 17 cells in a pod.



Scientists study healthy and unhealthy cells at this research laboratory, e.g. brain cancer cells, lung cancer cells etc. We also learnt that smoking kills the air sacs in your lungs, which causes emphysema and pneumonia. Brain cancer is more dangerous than lung cancer because brain cancer affects the whole body and kills you quicker. Scientists are discovering how to help cells stay away from cancer. White cells defend you from viruses and bacteria.



DID YOU KNOW...

The longest bone in your body is the femur; it is joined by tendons. The outside is made of calcium and mineral, the inside is spongy and the gap through the middle is filled with yellow bone marrow.

Tasneem Sultana, Year 7A

Preparation for Mock Exams

When the year 11 mocks finally arrive around the beginning of December, it's normally a very stressful and hectic time. But as a year 11 student who has just overcome the treacherous period, it seems only kind to offer the next year group some advice.

How to handle the mocks:

- Don't panic: It's very easy for everyone to look at the mock timetable and panic, but that is the worst and last thing you want to be doing. If you feel that you might be on the verge of a breakdown, take deep breaths and focus on the week that you are in. If you just focus on the mocks you'll forget about the work that needs to be done before that, and this will worry you even more. Remember that as long as you revise for the subjects, you should be fine.
- Don't cram: It has become a recurring theme for girls to try and cram revision for ten subjects in one day! The day before your English mock exam, don't sit around with Arabic, French, Science and Maths notes. That's not going to help you analyse the context of a poem. Instead focus on the exam that's coming up the next day. By doing this, you will have more time to revise over each topic and it help you remember key facts easier, rather than walking in, trying to use trigonometry in your Arabic writing exam.



- Revision tactics: Everyone revises in different ways, whether it is reading the textbook or making flash cards- everyone is different. And if you haven't found a way that helps you revise best then that's a problem. If for every exam you're experimenting in different ways to help you retain information, you are wasting precious revision and relaxing time. Instead, at least a week before the exams starts, figure out the perfect revision method, which should help you from having to cram and panic.

- Relaxing: During an exam season whether it's your GCSEs or mocks, students believe that it's illegal to take time out to breathe. Taking half an hour or an hour out of your day after school, maybe straight after you come home or before you go to bed helps you lose pressure and also helps you to perform better in your exams. Focusing on exams 24/7 will only deter your confidence and damage your health. By having a small break here and there, you are allowing your brain to have time to go over everything you have revised and enable you to revise some more later on. Also, it helps reduce the amount of headaches students have.

- SLEEP: Don't stay up cramming through the night or leave revision until late because your brain as well as your body need the rest and it's more likely that the information you revised at midnight will be forgotten faster than the information revised at 5.00 pm. Also, there is a big chance you'll end up falling asleep in your exam.

- Drink water: I think this one is self-explanatory. Don't let yourself dehydrate because when you are in that exam hall, you don't want to be too distracted by a headache and unable to perform your best.

DON'T FORGET TO MAKE DUA AND PRAY TO ALLAH TO HELP AND ENABLE YOU TO GET THE GRADES YOU WOULD LIKE.

by Anisa Rashid, Year 11A

Morals from the Story of Nuh (AS)

In Year 10 Islamic Studies, we have been learning about the stories of our beloved prophets in Islam. A story that we particularly enjoyed and learnt many morals and lessons from was the story of Nuh (Alayhissalam). The Qur'an and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) teach us that Prophet Nuh (Alayhissalam) was a beacon of light in times of sin and darkness.

Nuh (AlayhiSalam) was a calm and patient man who called his people for 950 years to return to the worship of Allah. He preached about Tawhid (oneness of Allah) and warned his people about the punishments waiting in the hereafter.

“And indeed We sent Nuh (AlayhiSalam) to his people and he said O my people! Worship God! You have no other God but Him.” (Quran 23:23).

Despite Nuh (Alayhissalam's) continuous preaching, many denied his words and very few believed in his message.

He said: ‘O my Lord! Indeed, I have called my people night and day (secretly and openly to accept the doctrine of Islamic Monotheism), but all my calling added nothing but to their flight from the truth. Indeed! Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted (in their refusal), and magnified themselves in pride.’ (Quran 71:5-7)

Those who responded to Nuh (Alayhissalam's) call were the weakest and poorest of his people; the leaders and those with power responded arrogantly and rejected the call. Allah commanded Nuh (Alayhissalam) to build an ark in which all the believers and a pair of each animal would enter. Whilst Nuh (Alayhissalam) was building the ark, the people who disbelieved would pass by mocking him and some would even use the ark as a place to relieve themselves. Nuh (Alayhissalam) supplicated to Allah to help him deal with the disbelievers.

Nuh (Alayhissalam) then completed building the ark. Thereafter, Allah SWT sent a flood upon the disbelievers, destroying them. The ark protected the believing people.

From this we learn to be patient in everything we do and that Allah always has a plan for us. We learn that it is the most virtuous people who go through the hardest of trials. It is the Prophets of Allah who experienced the greatest hardships. Allah gives us trials and difficulties to test our faith in Him. For even in this worldly life, no one can become a doctor or an engineer or achieve anything without going through hardships and succeed in several tests and exams. Then what about attaining high stations in the eternal life? Allah says – “Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning”.

Aminah Omar (Year 10A) & Jamila Kasoma (Year 10G)

Three Faiths Forum

The trip to the 3FF centre was a very enjoyable experience. I learnt many things, made new friends and felt more confident talking to other people my age.

When we first arrived, I could tell I wasn't the only one feeling nervous and awkward. We were in a room full of strangers with whom we were expected to work with and befriend. Though I am happy to say that by the end of the session, we all felt much more comfortable with each other.

First, we introduced ourselves, and then played a couple of ice-breaker activities to get to know everyone a little better. This involved asking everybody what time they woke up that day so we could all stand in the order of the time we woke up at. Then, without any speaking, make a line in the order of our birthdays.

Next, we participated in an activity which involved us trying to move our bodies in sync with one another, mirroring each other without any other communication other than body movement. We found that hilarious as most of us failed (and ended up looking ridiculous).

At lunch, the conversation was strained and artificial, but after a while, everyone loosened up a little bit and began joking around. It was at that moment that we realised that the St Ursula's girls weren't so different to ourselves. I found this comforting as it made it much easier to talk to each other in a way that we could relate.

Lunch was followed by a couple of theatrical role plays where we acted out what we did at different times of the day. It wasn't a surprise that we all loved our sleep, food and phones.

Then, we wrote 'I poems', about how we perceived the world and ourselves as individuals. Lastly, we came together in groups to write 'We-poems', about all of us as young girls, part of one generation. These poems written in English and Arabic were witty, humorous, inspiring and relatable.

At the end of the day, when we had to depart and head back to school, we realised we didn't want to leave - we wanted to stay with our new friends and have some more fun. To keep in contact, we networked and promised to keep in touch until the next time we saw each other which would be sometime after January, InshaAllaah.

Saliha Sajjad, Year 9S



What is Programming?

Programming, in the simplest of terms, is telling a computer what you want it to do, which involves typing in step-by-step commands for the computer to follow.

Computers cannot think for themselves and are not clever things, however they are very obedient. They will do exactly what you want them to do, so long as you tell them how to do it correctly and in a language they understand.

Nothing is possible without programming in our current generation. From the everyday fan to your mobile phone, everything has built-in programming. Without it, satellites stop working, no TV, no mobile, no planes, no social media and the list goes on.

Programming powers the digital world we live in. Every website, smartphone app, computer game, calculator to household products such as microwaves and washing machines relies on programming in order to operate. This makes programmers the architects and builders of the digital age.

Newham Recorder

Azhar Academy Girls School in the Media...

Pupils organise assembly to discuss importance of diversity

Four pupils from Azhar Academy Girls School gave a lesson of their own when they held a special school assembly about diversity.

Year 10 pupils Esha Kamran, 14, Sanitha Ishrat, 15, Aaliyah Natha, 14 and Faheemah Ali, 14, talked about the importance of diversity in politics, education and society.

They organised three prominent community speakers and prepared their own speeches for Years 7, 8 and 11 pupils for the GCSE citizenship project on Thursday.

"Diversity is very important to our society," Esha explained. "Without diversity we wouldn't be economically stable."

Police Supt Raj Kohli, the first former Muslim Sherriff of Nottingham Dr Shaukat Khan and Cllr Rev Ann Easter all talked about their experiences.

"I liked how Ann outlined her rise to her current positions," said Esha, adding all three were "fabulous".

"Mr Kohli began with a series of questions asking us what we thought he liked to watch and where he came from," the Forest Gate pupil said.

"Our school made assumptions and they were not true."

“ Mr Kohli began with a series of questions asking us what we thought he liked to watch and where he came from

Esha Kamran

She added an important life lesson was for pupils to learn how to take control of their destinies.

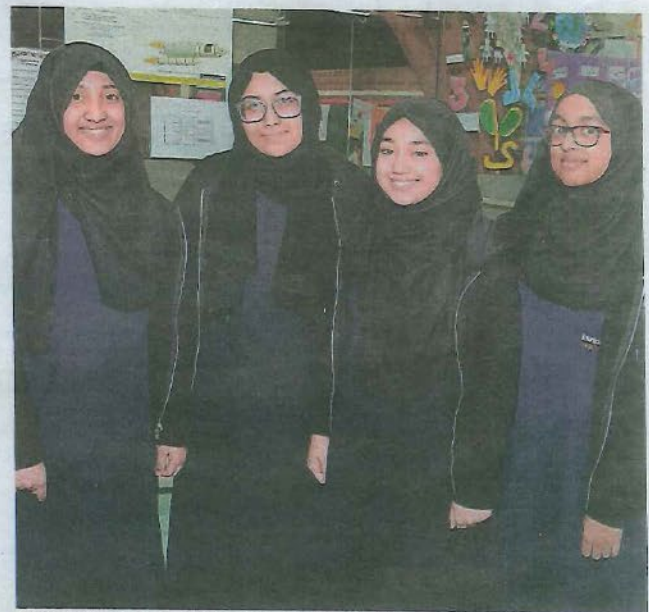
"If you're from a different race or culture, people can make assumptions about you," she said.

"You have to show through your actions that you are different."

Although Esha admitted the event organisation had been hard at times the group "hope to do it again" soon.

"A lot of students said this is what we should be doing," she said.

For now, the group has named itself Diversity Panda because "pandas are recognised as being diverse animals being black, white and Asian".



■ Esha Kamran, second from left, with Sanitha Ishrat, Aaliyah Natha and Faheemah Ali

Autumn End of Term Awards 2016

Maths

Noshin Syeda Hussain 7A
Saima Rahman 8A
Salihah Sajjad
Maryam Raza 10G
Razeenah Ramtally 11A

English

Duaa Afzaal 7G
Nafeesah Rahman 8A
Aisha Shahab 9A
Esha Kamran 10G
Tamanna Kalam 11G

Science

Maryam Suhail 7G
Raeesah Patel 8A
Maryam Rehan 9A
Zamila Rahima Ullah 10A
Zainab Gani 11G

Arabic

Shakera Ahad 7A
Aamina Abdur Rahman 8A
Kahdeejah Mahdiyyah 9S
Maimoona Wadiwala/ 10A
Maryam Rashid 11A

French

Shamima Ahmed 7A
Naima Ahmed 8A
Anjuma Begum 9A
Faheemah Ali 10G
Sameeah Sandford 11A

R.E.

Suweybah Abdallah Ahmed 7G
Aisha Jasat 8G
Amal Mustafa 9A
Mariya Ahmed 10A
Fabiha Begum 11G

Citizenship

Zahra Asghar 7G
Aziza Miah 8A
Hafsah Raza 9G
Nazla Nasar 10 A

Computing

Fariha Hoque 7G
Syeda Jannah Ahmad 8G
Resham Zaheer 9G
Haafizah Sharfaa Choudhury 10A
Maryam Choudhury 11A

Art

Sabiha Rahman 7G
Mariya Rasool 8G
Hanaan Madiha Al-Faradhi 9A

P.E.

Nushrat Zahra Khan 7G
Khadijah Nusrat Hussain 8A
Iqra Khan 9A
Dhiyaa Hayaat Ahmed 10A

L2L

Mahela Ishat Farazy 7A
Taybah Altaf 8A

Alimah Studies

Tasnia Chowdhury 7A
Fatima Abashaikh 8G
Shawdha Hussin 9S
Sumayyah Imrit 10G
Shair Bano 11A

Islamic Studies

Amina Naveed 7A
Sara Catijah Kayum 8G
Asiya Jannat Islam 9S
Sadiah Sheikhuna 10G
Nahda Tahsin 11 G

Hifz Studies

Hamda Saad Mohammed 7A
Amathullah Siddiqah 8A
Amatullah Bint Zishan 9A
Samirah Rahman 10A
Zaynab Mufti 11A



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