

Winter 2019 | Jumada Al-Ula 1441

al-qalam

Termly Newsletter

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Azhar Academy
Girls School

Headteacher'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, it has been a wonderful Autumn term and as always we at Azhar Academy Girls School have been really busy with learning, events and activities. Our newsletter is packed with interesting news about what we have been involved in over the Autumn term.

I would like to thank everyone who kindly sponsored our fundraising effort. On 13th October 2019 students and staff participated in a 5km fundraiser. Prior to the run, participants were involved in fundraising which helped us raise £20,455.15 between both Azhar Academy Primary and Azhar Academy Girls School. Monies raised will be used to install active panels (interactive whiteboards) at AAGS. I would like to personally thank all my kind sponsors who enabled me to raise £7,306.44 as part of my fundraising efforts. It is through the generosity of individuals like yourselves that we are able to make positive changes to the students' learning.



Mayor of Newham, Roksana Fiaz visited the school on Tuesday, 5th November. She had an opportunity to meet Senior Leaders and also attended whole school assembly to address students. She was delighted to see the building and the work we do at AAGS. The mayor has requested for another visit in March 2020 where she would like to have learning sessions with students on a topic that can be decided by the school.

We used this visit as an opportunity to present awards to our architect, Aun Qureshi for his services and contributions towards Azhar Academy projects and to Yusuf Jassat for his generous contributions towards Azhar Academy.

May Allaah continue to bless us with His infinite mercy and guide our students and staff to achieve the very best in both worlds, ameen.

Mrs Rookshana Adam, Headteacher



Azhar Academy Girls School's Attendance at Facebook Headquarters Conference

On 13th November 2019, Faith Associates in partnership with Facebook held the first of its kind 'Keeping Young Muslims Safe Online' conference at the Facebook HQ London.

With the attendance of over 100 pupils from 10 Muslim schools, this conference has been an interactive workshop for children to be aware of digital citizenship, safety, importance of positive feeds, reporting and much more. The conference has enhanced the understanding of internet safety along with Muslim's rights and behavioural responsibilities in the online world. It has also promoted the Facebook safety tools and resources available to keep young people safe online. This conference was the next phase on from the first Muslim safety guide developed by Faith Associates and Facebook in 2017.

The safety workshops that made up the conference at Facebook HQ can be delivered in formal or non-formal education settings. The conference included three interactive workshops. They covered key areas relating to digital citizenship, online safety and challenging young people to be aware of various form of hate speech and developing their critical thinking skills & knowledge. The training comes with a set of resources from faith associates and Facebook along with additional guidance.

As part of the conference, Faith Associates selected 15 pupils across the 10 schools to become 'Faith Associates and Facebook Digital Safety Ambassadors' for their schools being the point of contact for advice, support and guidance related to digital safety.

We are delighted that one of our pupils has been selected as Facebook Ambassador, mashaAllaah.

<http://faithassociates.co.uk/keeping-young-muslims-safe-online-conference-at-facebook-hq/>



On Wednesday, we visited Facebook headquarters to attend a prestigious conference about keeping young Muslims safe online. This was a very inspiring and eye-opening experience.

The morning subsisted of looking at the Islamic aspect of using the internet and social media. Each school had the opportunity to present a speech on fundamental Islamic values and how they tie in with online safety. Representatives with exceptional speeches were chosen to be Facebook Ambassadors.

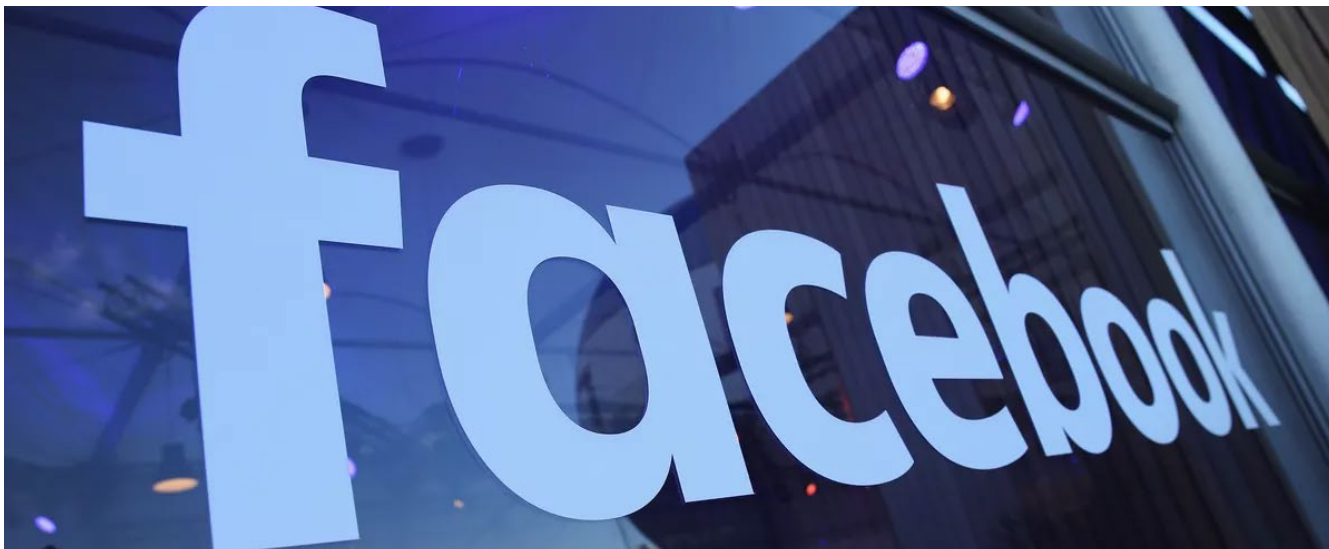
The afternoon consisted of recalling and building on our existing knowledge of e-safety. We were led through a series of hands-on workshops that taught us how to use privacy features on popular social media apps and we were given a chance to express our views and concerns. Furthermore, we gave constructive feedback on improvements we would like to see on social media platforms.

In conclusion, this trip was very educational and a very important and informative conference that was particularly beneficial for us as students.

Ms. Rubeena
Computer Science Teacher

Habiba Islam Choudhury
Year 10

Attendance at Facebook Headquarters Conference



Continued...

On November 13th, a group of Year 10 students had the amazing opportunity to be able to attend Facebook and Faith Associates Digital Safety Conference at Facebook Headquarters at Rathbone Square. The conference was based on Keeping Young Muslims Safe.

“If you’re a Muslim in this community, as the leader of Facebook I want you to know that you are always welcome here and that we will fight to protect your rights and create a peaceful and safe environment for you.” – Mark Zuckerberg.

In the fast-developing world of social media, the ‘Keeping Muslims Safe Online’ conference cover issues such as the risks of social media, the importance of e-safety and good online practice. This event has been developed by Faith Associates as a follow up to the ‘Keeping Muslims Safe Online’ guide in partnership with Facebook.

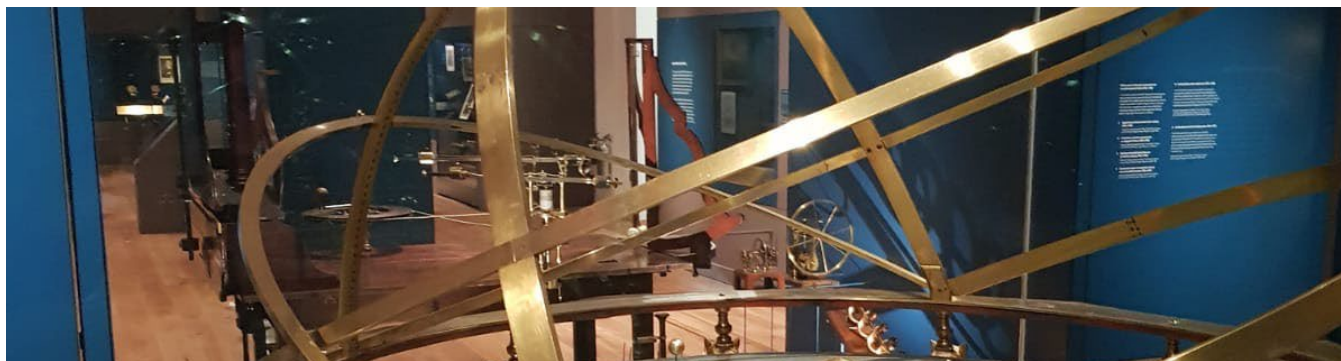
The conference was an interactive experience for visitors run by Facebook. The workshops covered key areas relating to digital citizenship, online safety and challenging young people’s awareness of various forms of hate speech designed to develop their critical thinking skills and knowledge.

As we all know Teachers have a critical role to play in ensuring the safety of pupils online. They are usually the first port of call for pupils when things are going wrong and have no one to turn to. The workshop focused on ensuring teachers are aware of the part they have to play within the Digital Safety landscape and provide them with strategies they can implement in their schools.

It helped build confidence and resilience in Muslim users on Facebook in the face of hate speech and extremism as well as sharing knowledge and tools to effectively deal with it. It empowers traditional faith leadership, who are not always experts in the online world, to both deal with threat themselves and disseminate this to their students. In addition, it dispels pervading negative perceptions that Muslim communities have about platforms such as Facebook that are deemed to be ambivalent to the hate and prejudice that they receive online. ‘Keeping Muslims Safe Online’ guide will reiterate that Facebook takes hate and extremism on its platform seriously and has developed effective tools to help mitigate the risks.

Suweybah Abdallah Ahmed
Year 10

Science Museum Trip



On 16th December 2019, we visited the Science Museum. We left school at 10 am and took the train from Stratford to South Kensington; it was a long ride!

Once we arrived at the museum, we split up into separate groups and made our way through the day. My group started off by exploring the history of James Watt. We then looked around the Space section featuring rockets, expeditions and stars.

After that, we made our way to a special VR room, where we were able to experience the trip back to earth from the ISS (International Space Station) from the safety of our own seats. This was an amazing experience- I could really feel the jolt as we seemingly landed onto the earth's surface.

Subsequently, we arrived at a room along with many other schools where a lady scientist carried out fascinating experiments displaying various types of explosions and their causes. One of the explosions was so big that I could feel the heat from my seat!

After that, we went to the café, then proceeded to the picnic area. There we had our lunch for a while, amidst the other schools, also eating there. Once we had finished our lunch, we went to the Wonderlab- a room filled with many fun and engrossing activities which were exciting as well as informative. For example, there was an activity where we sat on seats and hoisted ourselves up, racing against the person on the other side. This was especially enjoyable.

Unfortunately, time caught up with us and it was time for us to leave. We retrieved our coats and left to take the long journey back to school, arriving just in time.

Overall, the day was packed with activities and was definitely an experience worth remembering.

(SW, 9G)

During our Science Museum trip we had exciting activities; our first activity was Space Descent VR- we watched a 3D video where we landed from space to the Earth led by Tim Peake.

After this activity, we went to watch a science show which was about combustion and explosions. The demonstrator explained many different fire explosions using the fire combustion triangle. During the presentation, there were many colours, loud sounds, and chemical reactions.

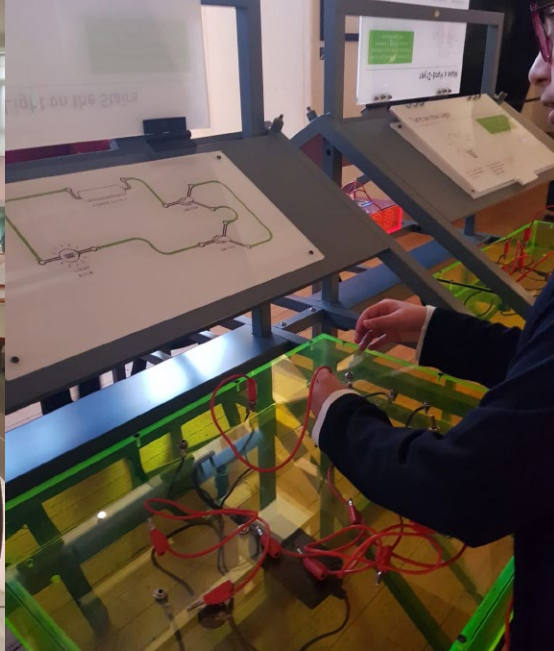
Our last activity was the Wonderlab; we had a lot of fun. In the Wonderlab we had several activities based on Force, Sound, Electricity, Light and Movement. An example of this is going down slides. The materials of the slides are wood, plastic and grass. We enjoyed our trip!

Saara Patel (9G) & Humaira Zainab (9A)

Year 9 classes of Azhar Academy went on a thrilling adventure to the Science Museum. During this trip, the children went on a spectacular Space Descent VR, wonderful Wonderlab and lastly the glorious gift shop.

In the VR the experience was unforgettable and it was as if we were actually in space. In the Wonderlab we experienced many things like diffusion and we saw things that we learned about and it made us understand the subject even more, so it was very educational. The gift shop was the best part because it gave us a chance to store our memories of this wonderful trip. We are very thankful for this experience, so thank you to all the teachers who worked hard to organise this trip.

Hizma (9G), Sakeena (9G) & Nadia (9G)



Science Museum Trip



Science Museum Trip continued...

Yesterday we visited the science museum to view their Wonderlab and much more!

We first left school at 10 o'clock and arrived at the museum at 11 o'clock. The staff provided us a space to leave our jackets and the first place we went to was the energy hall to view different types of machines that use energy to work.

Then we proceeded to the gift shop to buy different types of souvenirs such as geographical rocks, putties and customised stationeries.

After that, we proceeded to the VR experience. The VR experience was the journey back home from the moon with Tim Peake, one of the few people who visited the moon. The VR was amazing; it actually felt like we were moving.

After that, we proceeded to the lunch hall to eat food and relax for about 20 minutes. In between all of this we went to the multifaith room to pray. After lunch, we went to the Wonderlab for a demonstration of explosions. We learned about three different explosions. Then we went to the main part of the Wonderlab! There were slides made out of three different materials to test the friction, pulled up seats to see who could do the fastest, and much more then we proceeded home. We arrived back at school at about 4:55 pm and from there we all went home. The trip was very fun and I would rate it 10/10!

Safeeyah Rashid (9A) & Safaa Jamil (9G)



L'Oréal Young Scientist Centre Trip

This term, Year 10 students had the opportunity to attend a Forensics workshop at the L'Oréal Young Scientist Centre. This was a fascinating experience, where we utilised our knowledge of genetics to identify the suspect murderer in a fictional crime scene!

We used modern molecular biological techniques to evaluate suspect DNA samples including micropipette techniques, restriction digests and gel electrophoresis. We then compared the bands formed on the gels to identify the criminal.

I feel fortunate to have exposure to these advanced experimental techniques, which many students do not experience until attending university. Overall this was an exciting and highly informative visit.

By Asma Shaik, 10G





Careers Fair

Every year, students from Years 10 and 11 are very fortunate because they are able to take part in Azhar Academy's careers fair. The event is organised by AAGS teachers so that the students can benefit fully from the opportunity. This year's careers fair took place on 7th November 2019.

The careers fair provides an insight into a range of different professions, colleges and organisations. This allows students to gain a greater understanding of the variety of prospects that are available to them and also introduces them to something completely new.

In the careers fair, we were given an hour or so to talk to different people of different career paths which allowed us to ask any relevant questions for specific career paths or organisations. We were then taken to the main hall, where we were able to further explore and meet new people. MashaAllaah, we got the chance to speak to many professionals such as an accountant, a pharmacist, an architect, a lawyer, an optometrist and many more. Furthermore, we were able to talk to students who were currently studying certain subjects which would lead to a certain career path, for example, a student studying for careers related to English, Maths and engineering. This gave us a better insight as we were able to relate to them and gained a better understanding. In addition to that, organisations such as; PWC, EY, National Rail, Fix Up Team, The learning Hub, Cancer Research UK and many others were also present.

Not only did we have a range of professions to look into, we were also lucky enough to meet students and teachers from different colleges such as Valentines, Leyton Sixth Form, Central Foundation Girls School and many more. This experience has allowed us to gain confidence and build good communication skills with others from different religions and ethnicities. It has helped guide us and give us a better understanding of what we may want to do in the future and what is required from us; for example, what A-Levels we may want to consider in the next few months.

I personally believe this event has helped me greatly, especially as a student in Year 11 who hasn't yet chosen which A-Levels I want to do in the coming year, let alone chosen a career path. It has made me more aware of the wide range of opportunities that are available to me and has assisted me greatly. We are very privileged to have such a great experience as many schools do not provide their students with this opportunity.

Kulsum Vali Year 11



Careers Fair Pictures



Anti Bullying Week @ AAGS



Various activities were enjoyed by the students to show their commitment in keeping the school a No Bullying Zone. In the whole school assembly attended by all years Apa Anila delivered a powerpoint and video produced by the Bullying Alliance and encouraged students that change starts here in AAGS.

Blue Day was highly popular amongst the student's; most girls dressed in 'something blue' or purchased the blue wristbands



ODD SOCKS DAY FOR ANTI-BULLYING WEEK



This is a national event. Students were encouraged to wear odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique.

Random Acts of Kindness

Students are encouraged to be kind with words, offer gestures to one another and promote kindness to one another in and around school.

The whole school had random activities throughout November- some busy with charities and some getting healthy and enjoying sports!

On the week of November our school held a charity week run by Year 8s. We decided to donate the money to Islamic Relief in order to help emergency care in countries such as Syria, Sudan, Southern Africa and Asia.

As part of our charity week, the organisers aided us with t-shirts, buckets, and leaflets to make our charity as successful as it could be. Each Year 8 student was involved and took turns to contribute to the event.

Over the course of the week, we organised a range of events, encouraged other students and teachers to donate money towards such a great cause. One of the events that took place was the football tournament between all the year groups. Each class had the opportunity to compete with other year groups, and ultimately Year 11G won the tournament.

Other events which took place were food and bake sales and non uniform day. Each event was a great success and altogether, alhamdulillah, we managed to raise a total of £1,400.

We pray Allah accepts the hard work of our class and all our efforts in aiming to make this event successful. We pray He rewards us and all those who contributed towards this event in numerous ways with infinite recompense in this world and the hereafter, ameen.





AAGS Student Council Fundraising

This was the AAGs Student Council's first ever project of the year and its aim was to get the newly appointed form representatives to bond, work together and get to know each other.

The aim was to raise funds for a charity called Rahma Mercy, a charity that helps communities in the Balkans to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty and regain their Islamic identity after years of communism.

The student council organised a food sale and non-uniform day on Monday 18th November 2019. All the student council representatives contributed towards the food sale, it was a great success as there was a variety of savoury and sweet option including biryani and cakes! Alhamdulillah everything was sold out and students thoroughly enjoyed all the delights in sight.

As well as the food sale, the student council organised a non-uniform day, an opportunity for all students to dress in their best attire. This really boosted the feelings of sisterhood within the school as everyone complimented each other throughout the day.

The event was a great achievement and all students enjoyed themselves. The student council representatives managed to raise a whopping total of £273.20! 50% of this will go to Rahma Mercy and the other 50% towards future student council projects.

***By Hafsa Ali and Amathullah Siddiqah
Year 11 Student Council Representatives***



AAGS Student Council Representatives – 2019

The purpose of the Student Council is to ensure that the students are fully represented within the school. The Student Council is comprised of two representatives from each class within AAGS. The students who sit on the council are responsible for voicing the suggestions, aspirations and concerns of their peers specifically related to continued improvements.

Membership of the Student Council allows for the development of leadership, communication and cooperation skills. Each member will serve one year on the council. There will be new elections at the beginning of each academic year. The existence of the Student Council serves to teach the entire student body about the importance of democratic representation. The voting procedures undertaken to elect the members of the Student Council also teaches the wider student body about the democratic principles involved in the process.

Events that Student Council have organised in the past include school sleepovers, charity food sales, school non-uniform days, fashion shows, assemblies raising awareness about various issues including the work of organisations that help children with AIDS/HIV in Africa as well as campaigns for Anti-Bullying week.

Charities that Student Council have supported in the past include Crisis (charity for homeless people), Children in Need, Nelson Mandela Children’s Hospital and our own school Azhar Academy.

As well as the above the Student Council representatives’ role includes assisting at various school and community events such as Open Days, Bukhari Graduation, Conferences and Fun Days. Being a Student Council representative is an important and fulfilling role that helps students to develop their confidence and self-esteem. May Allah swt accept their efforts and hard work, ameen.

The AAGS student council are proud to announce these year’s student representatives who were voted into position by a majority from their form classes. Well done!

7A
Alisha M Hussain
Mariam Hussain

7G
Nafisa NHM Aswat
Aamilah M Zaman

8A
Halima Said
Nuha F Shukry

8G
Sara Cilmi
Nazifa Kamali

9A
Sumayyah Naeem
Aleeha Kamran

9G
Safa A Khaliq
Mariyah Khan

10A
Nanziba Choudhury
Aisha Bajwa

10G
Tanisha Choudhury
Maryam Suhail

11A
Amatullah Siddiqah
Hafsah Ali

11G
Tasnin Matin
Fatma Abasheikh





AAGS School General Election 2019

To embrace the UK's general election on Thursday 12th December 2019, our school involved the students to take part in our own parallel general election, where under aged teenagers were able to have their say.

It was excellently planned by the year 9 students with the support of a few year 10 students. They executed a real life experience of casting our votes at the 'polling station' which added to the enjoyment and will also prove to be beneficial for the future when coming to the age of voting in a real election. The week before the general election, some students from Year 10 displayed a presentation in assembly which addressed the importance of voting and what Islam states about it. It helped to introduce the concept to the younger years that are new to the subject and summarise the key points. One thing I've learnt is how democracy can improve with the range of voices in an election and how voting is part of our human rights.

Islamic law is the deterrence of evil and attainment of good so therefore it is obligatory on the Muslims to utilise all means to promote the candidate who will best ensure the welfare of the people in relation to Islam. Being born with the right to vote leaves no excuse to not partake.

Thereafter the Year 9 students were separated into the four parties: Liberal Democrats, Brexit, Labour and Conservatives. Each group came up one by one informing the students of their strategies and plans in the UK, using the real manifestos. Each party focussed on three key topics; environment, healthcare and migration. Their hard efforts were demonstrated very well with confidence and they vocalized their ideas extremely well.

On the day of the election, we were given the opportunity to talk to each party where they would try to persuade us with their aims. We then received a ballot paper and discreetly placed our votes.

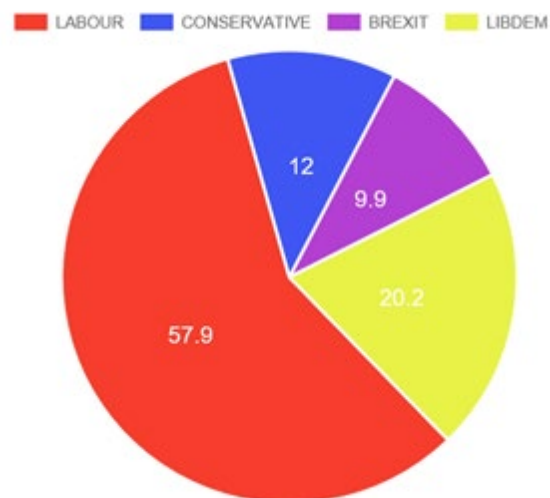
The day ended in a success and the results came the following Friday. Though 81.5% voted and 18.5% didn't due to absences or school trips the outcome of the election was very promising.

The majority voted LABOUR! With 57.9% voting Labour compared to the other partys votes, they won the opinions of the pupils.

The pie chart records the percentage of votes won by each party.

Overall I think this was a great idea, which required a lot of hard work and effort. It was planned and organised for everyone to enjoy and learn in an interactive way instead of sitting down with a pen in hand copying notes down. This firsthand experience helps to expand our knowledge and hopefully there will be more events like these taking place in the school year.

Aaisha Bajwa
Year 10



Our Meeting with Mr Stephen Timms



On Friday, 6th December 2019 my peers and I met with Mr Timms, who had been a Member of Parliament for 12 years, and we discussed about the sad topic of homelessness.

We had made questions prior to the meeting as we thought it would make the interview better. We had discussed many aspects of homelessness with Mr Timms and he answered our questions which allowed us to have more understanding of our campaign.

We discussed the fact that there was not that much effort done by the current government to support the vulnerable and how labour would be able to help them if they were to win the election on Friday 12th December 2019.

We also discussed the cause of homelessness and the impacts that Brexit would have on the homeless.

I am pleased to say that the interview with Mr Timms was successful and it was extremely helpful.

I would like to thank Mr Timms for the time he gave us despite being busy preparing for the election the following week. I would also like to thank Mr Timms for doing an amazing job for his constituency.

Aaisha Bajwa
Year 10





Great Expectations Experience

This year, in November, we went to the theatre to watch Great Expectation by Charles Dickens. It was a life changing and phenomenal experience for me. The play was based on a boy named Pip. His character shows hope and determination in many ways as he has a deep desire to improve himself and attain any possible advancement, whether educational, moral, or social. This experience was very prodigious as it taught me to always achieve your dreams no matter how much hardship you are troubled with and that the negative choices you make are actually better for you. Charles Dickens succeeded in bringing a message that would benefit the people later on.

The play has the audience feeling mixed emotions, a combination of guilt, grief and happiness. The guilt and the grief continue to linger with you throughout the play, however, when the tension increases it would all be forgotten with something relieving happening.

The theme of happiness was portrayed as the best of them all; it overpowered and felt so infectious. All these emotions combined was the main key message to engage the audience. In my opinion, the range of feelings made everything so real and made you feel a part of the whole play.

The moral of Great Expectation was very meaningful. Dickens' message was that affection, loyalty, and conscience are more important than social advancement, wealth, and class. This is a great reminder that to get what you want to achieve, you don't need money or need to be from a high class. This moral was conveyed excellently by the actors on stage.

Overall, I believe it was a once in a lifetime experience and I'd absolutely watch the play again. It's amazing how a play can make you change your views and make you feel determined and confident.

By Balqisa Abdi, 10A

Our Trip To The Telegraph

On Monday, 2nd December, we attended a workshop at the Daily Telegraph. We had a very exciting and enjoyable time and we learnt a lot through this exhilarating but informative experience.

As we entered the building of the Telegraph, we were in awe of how striking the reception area was with its massive fluorescent lamps and the comfy sofas laid out for moments of inspiration as, when seated, a recent issue of the Telegraph was casually laid out ready to enrapture us all over again. We were already impressed.

To add to our excitement, we were met by Asif Sadiq MBE, who enlightened us about the Telegraph's past achievements, present projects and aims for the future. We were soon introduced to a vital journalist in the field of Women's Sports, Molly Mcelwee. She described her incredible journey from an ordinary towns girl to an ambitiously independent woman who strived throughout her life to pursue her dreams. Her story really gave us an insight about the daily life of a journalist, and inspired us to follow our dreams and persevere no matter what. We also had the opportunity to ask her questions about her journey, the troubles she faced and her job at The Telegraph.

Thereafter, we were given a tour of the newsroom where we looked at the various different rooms such as the interview room, the media room etc and where the editors and multiple departments worked. We also came across a wall that showed the traits of a true journalist; fearlessness, integrity, diligence and honesty.

This creates an innate sense of diversity within the Telegraph because it shows us that despite cultural and ethical differences, people who share a passionate love for storytelling can overcome all of this.

Overall, our visit to the Telegraph was an incredible and unique experience; we would definitely consider pursuing a career in this field.

*Amaani K Patel, Aatikah Chohan and
Nanziba Choudhury*

The Daily Telegraph

Young Muslim Writer's Awards

At the end of the last academic year, a few of our Year 8 students (current year 9's) submitted a creative writing piece which I entered for the Young Muslim Writer's awards. MashaAllah, one of our students' piece, Maesha Ahmed in 9G, was shortlisted – her and her family were invited to attend the award ceremony in central London. This is what she had to say ...

On Saturday, November 30th, I went to an awards ceremony for the Young Muslim Writers' Awards competition that my English teacher had told me to enter and write a short story for. Luckily, my story had been shortlisted and I was invited to go to the awards ceremony. There had been many people around my age, who produced amazing poems, stories and articles; some had even been in younger years like KS1! I had a lot of fun and it helped me see that I should let my imagination go wild. Nothing should stop anyone from creating imaginative pieces of literature.

Overleaf is Maesha's story!

The House of the Lost *By Maesha Ahmed 9G*

Dark. It amazes me how black the night sky was, darker than any coffee. Not a light in sight; clear, with no twinkling stars of hope to guide me through this hell. A profusion of dead, leafless branches were the only things stopping the sky from swallowing me whole; but how I wish it did! I would have been saved from the biting frost. Oh, how cold it was! So cold that the sun swore to never shine again! So bitter that the moon refused to reveal its illuminating light, hiding itself where no one could find it! Goodness, to this day, that place still haunts me; teeth chattering ferociously, arms wrapped around myself tightly, legs trembling, threatening to give way at any second. My lips numb, my skin pale, my hair sticking up in every direction, icicles drooping down from the frozen strands.

I must've looked like a train wreck.

Forcing my legs to shuffle through the knee-deep snow was no easy feat. As I tried, I noticed the lack of night life. Or any life. Nothing but me and the howling wind whooshing past every now and then. It made me shudder; I felt goose bumps all over when it came. Spindly tree branches poked me from the sides, as if they were making fun of me, the rustling leaves on the floor cackling wickedly. After what seemed like an hour, I stopped, astonished at what I was seeing.

It was an old, seemingly abandoned house, with dirt-encrusted windowsills and dry, peeling paint on the walls. The windows were too frosted with ice to look inside, so I edged towards the dilapidated steps leading to the broken door. A creak came with every step I took up those stairs, until I had reached it. On the right of the door, was a sign; engraved messily, as if with a knife, were the words: 'The House of the Lost.'

Upon further inspection – I walked around the house, peering into the windows hopefully – there was nothing ominous about the place, except the fact that there was a shattered window at the back, leading into an old kitchen. In that kitchen, was a table. On that table, was a rabbit. It had white fur, with black ears and black eyes that were staring at me with a piercing glare, as if it didn't want me there. There's no way. I turned around and shuffled away meekly, back to the front door. "Um...Hello? Is anyone there?" I called out timidly, through the tiny

space where the door had been opened. A slither of light slid through it, flickering from time to time. I pushed the door open a bit more, to see a hallway lit up by some sort of light source in a room to the left. There didn't seem to be anyone living here. All the doors were closed, except for one at the end. I tip-toed into the room to see a yellow sofa and a small fireplace, its light blue flames flickering sleepily. As I sat down on the soft pillows, I realised how tired I was from wandering around for all that time. I stretched my legs across the sofa, gazing at the fire, my eyes closing slowly. I suppose I could spend the night here...

"Look! There's a person in the living room!" The light blinded me as I opened my eyes blearily. As my vision cleared up, I could see a face, staring at me curiously as I stared back. Abruptly, I sat up and tried to scramble away, looking around like a lost puppy. There were people coming into the room, all their eyes following me. I clambered away further until – THUD.

"Oww..." I had ended up on the floor, my head throbbing with pain. I heard a few giggles as I looked up, my cheeks flushed with embarrassment. One of them walked forwards, bent down and put out a hand. "W-Would you like some help?" I could tell he was trying to hold in his laughter. Irritated, I pulled myself up. "No thank you." The man in front of me smiled and held out his hand, putting the other in his pocket. "Well, my name is Tom. What's yours?" I took a step back and ignored his hand. "Wh-Why? What is this place?" I looked over Tom's shoulder; all the people from before had left: I could hear them in the next room. "No need to be so afraid. I won't bite, you know." Tom gestured to the rest of the house. "This is the House of the Lost. People from all types of places, with all types of tales come here when they have nowhere else to go. You can stay here for as long as you like!" He glanced back at the door. "Well, if you would follow me. You can meet the others." Tom turned around and strolled away, as I stumbled after him. He led me to a room that felt quite familiar.

continued...

It was the kitchen I had seen last night, old and fragmented. There were cupboard doors dangling open, a fridge on the side with its door half open, the dim light inside glowing faintly, a greasy cooker that had somehow kindled a fire; it had a frying pan on the flickers of yellow and orange.

Except something about the place felt different to me. Maybe it was the light of the day. Maybe it was the warmth of the sun.

Or maybe it was the people.

About 6 people were in there, talking and laughing, as they prepared their breakfast together. There was a young girl at the stove, flipping pancakes and humming to herself. A group of people at the table, eating on chipped plates, using slightly bent forks and knives. A few people at the black counter, cracking eggs and stirring a mixture. They all looked cheerful, like nothing was wrong; no worries, not a care in the world.

But they all stood, motionless, when I entered the room. "Guys, we have a new person," Tom announced. He turned to face me. "Why don't you introduce yourself?" I glanced at everyone, unnerved by the number of eyes on me. "I-I'm...Theo. Theodore Hooks." I stared at my feet. For a few seconds, nothing happened. Well, that's what I thought. If I had cared to look up, I would have seen most of them grin as they stepped forwards to greet me. All at once, everyone had started to talk.

"Welcome to the House!"

"Where did you come from?"

"How old are you?"

"Why's your hair such a weird colour?"

I flinched, backing away into the hallway. Tom grabbed my dark red jumper sleeve and pulled me back in again. "No, not again. You might trip, or fall, like before!" He roared with laughter.

Seriously. I've not even been here for an hour.

"Alright." Tom let go of me and clapped his hands twice. Everyone went silent. "We'll have breakfast first. Theo, do you wanna join us?" All of them stared at me, waiting for an answer eagerly.

They don't seem bad...

"...Fine." I heard a whoop as two hands pushed me into a chair. Tom sat next to me as pancakes were put onto his plate, as well as mine. They all carried on with their breakfast, drizzling syrup and scoffing them down. The girl that was at the cooker sat down on the chair opposite to me. "My name's Ella. I've been here for about a year. Nice to meetcha." I tried to give her a small smile, not looking at her sapphire eyes as I felt her unwavering gaze pierce through me. She watched me for a few seconds wordlessly. "But seriously, why is your hair white?" She reached forwards and touched it, rubbing it lightly. I felt my ears redden as I shrank away from her hand. "I...don't know..." I rubbed the back of my neck uneasily, then started eating my breakfast, avoiding her gaze. She shrugged and stood up to grab a plate for herself, her long, blonde hair flying behind her.

Before I knew it, my plate was empty. I washed my plate in the leaking sink and as I walked away, I could hear the droplets falling onto the metal. Plink! Plink! Plink! Soon enough, I could feel my heart beating in the same rhythm. Huh.

A boy followed me into the living room. He looked about the same age as me, or maybe a bit older. As I sat down, he grinned and sat next to me. "Theo, was it? I'm Daniel Evans. Wow, it's been ages since someone came to the House! We were before you. We came about...2 months ago?" I watched Daniel curiously. "We'? You came with someone else?"

"Oh, my sister. She's the same age as me. You haven't seen her yet, have you? She's probably still sleeping." He made a face. "Wait, how old are you?" Daniel looked at me enquiringly. He sure does talk a lot. "I'm 16." I replied, while silently chuckling at the face he was making. He grinned at me and put his hand up. "High-five! Me too!" I high-fived him cheerfully.

"Wow, you can smile!" Tom strolled into the room with another girl I hadn't seen before. She was yawning as she wandered in, her light brown hair messily tied up in pigtails. As soon as she Daniel, however, she glared at him and he glared back, then looked back at me. "See, that's her. Charlie." When Charlie realised that I was here, she zoomed over faster than lightning, her light green eyes glistening. "Ooh! A new person! What's your name?" I drew back into the sofa, grabbing a

continued...

cushion and hugging it, so there was something between her and me. "M-My name is Theodore." She leaned in closer. "Why're you so formal, Theo? Or can I call you Ted?" She gasped. "Oh! What about Teddy?" I shrank away further into the cushions, resisting every urge to push her away. "Theo is fine." I replied. Daniel smirked at me. I could see the mischief in his amber eyes. "Hmm? Are you shy around girls, Theo?" Charlie smirked too, resembling Daniel so much I had to rub my eyes to see if I was seeing things. "M-Maybe..." Daniel's smirk widened, and so did Charlie's as I hesitantly answered.

Abruptly, she flung her arms around me. "Wow, this teddy-bear is so cute!" I could feel my face rapidly heating up as I struggled to evaporate into thin air. "P-Please...get off me..." The smirk on Daniel's face disappeared as he slapped the back of Charlie's head. "He's going to faint. Stop it." Charlie drew back slowly, a look of concern on her face as she stared at mine. "You okay there? You're as red as a tomato!" The whole room spun for a few seconds as I tried to process what had just happened. I rubbed my neck. "I-I'm fine."

"He's lying." A lady walked into the room, her arms folded. She pushed up her glasses as she strode towards us. "He rubs his neck when he lies." The golden bracelet on her wrist glinted in the light and Daniel gestured to the lady as I looked at her in disbelief. "This is Heather Justice. She's good at identifying body language. She's been at the House for a really long time." Heather moved her gaze to Daniel, her eyebrows furrowed. "It wasn't that long, only a few years." She looked back at me and nodded. "N-Nice to meet you," I said as she stared at my greyish-blue eyes for a few seconds, her face emotionless. "Pleasure."

And with that, she walked away, not a glance back at us. I looked back at the siblings in front of me; Charlie was sitting cross-legged on a white, fluffy cloud and Daniel was frowning at his sister. "Don't do that inside, Charlie," Daniel snapped at her. Charlie pouted and held onto the cloud she was sitting on. "It's so comfortable, though!" I stared at the cloud in astonishment.

"Let me sit on it, then."

"You can't! Only the pure-hearted may!"

"What kind of dumb rule is that? And stop singing, it's annoying!"

"What? My singing is beautiful, isn't it, Theo?" Charlie looked over at me. "What's wrong?" I stared at her. "H-How is there a...cloud?" Daniel turned around, peering at me while Charlie stepped off the cloud. "Oh, did I not tell you? Everyone here at the House has a sort of special power: Charlie can control weather, I can clone myself, Ella has telekinesis, Tom has super strength, Heather can detect emotions, and Natalie can turn into a rabbit! What about you, Theo? Do you have a power?"

...Natalie?

"Who's...Natalie?" I stared up at Daniel. He waved his hands dismissively as he answered my question. "Another person at the House. He doesn't talk much. Anyway, as I was saying. Do you have a power?" "Me? I-"

But I never got to tell them about it, because at that exact time, the loud noise of bullets tearing through wood filled our ears as we looked around in fear. Oh no. "They've found me," I muttered to myself as I ran out of the room and into the kitchen. I looked towards the hallway: a group of men, clad in heavy, black armour, stormed into the House, holding their guns up, ready to shoot anyone who came their way. I saw them charge into the living room. No. The sound of chaos rang in my ears; bullets zooming through the air viciously; claps of thunder and zaps of lightning; objects being thrown mercilessly; screams of pain and cries of sorrow.

I turned around, only to see men charging into the room through the broken window. The same shattered window that I had looked through to see my brother, just the night before.

Everything

became

slow.

It's just one disappointment after another with you. I grabbed a chair and flung it at them desperately. They dodged it without difficulty.

Why do you still try? A man shouted at the others. They all swarmed in the kitchen, their guns held up to shoot me.

You're nothing but a mistake. Bullets pierced through the frail walls as I tried to evade them. It didn't work.

continued...

Give up. Blood splattered against the table, the chairs, the walls.

Give up already.

The soldier stared at his bleeding target as he opened his mouth and said something. He couldn't hear what his victim had said over the roaring of the guns. But what the soldier did see was the victim smirking.

Then the boy disappeared.

The cat whimpered as it limped through the snow. Its white fur was stained with blood and its greyish-blue eyes were filled with anguish. The trail of blood behind it was getting longer and longer with each agonising step it took, until the trail stopped. When the trail stopped, Theodore Hooks' heart stopped too.

'Oh? But I gave up a long time ago.'

By Maesha Ahmed 9G

The Norman Conquest



This term we have been learning about the Norman Conquest which has proven to be a very interesting and engaging topic for us in History lessons. The Norman Conquest consisted of many battles which resulted in a lot of bloodshed. The Battle of Hastings and the Battle of Stamford Bridge were both events which took place in 1066.

After the death of King Edward, there were three challengers to the throne: the Witan (assembly of wise men) decided that Harold Godwinson- the most powerful noble in England would be the best person to be crowned King of England.

However, two other noblemen believed that they should be King, which caused many problems. These two contenders were Harold Hadrada and William of Normandy. They decided that they would stop at nothing to take the throne.

Harold Godwinson was a brave and respected leader who was loved by the people. On the other hand, William of Normandy was experienced. He had been in command since he was a boy. Harold Hadrada however, was the most feared warrior in Europe.

The Battle of Hastings was a major battle when the Norman conquest had reached its peak. William pulled a cunning tactic, one that was fatal to the Anglo-Saxon army. In addition, William and the Normans killed Harold which ended the battle with victory to the Normans.

The reason why this topic was so enjoyable was because of the intriguing story details, the action and the drama surrounding the events. It was almost like reading a fictional novel full of suspense. For homework, we were asked to choose who we thought would be the best person to take the throne. This was a fun experience as we had to justify our arguments. It was interesting to see how everyone had different opinions.

This topic helped us understand the early history of England and how one dynasty was replaced with another. This also links to what the conquerors did to subjugate the Anglo-Saxons through future laws. We hope to continue studying about topics which have played a wider role in shaping England as we know it today.

By Saba Khadijah Amin and Iffat Ahmed 7A

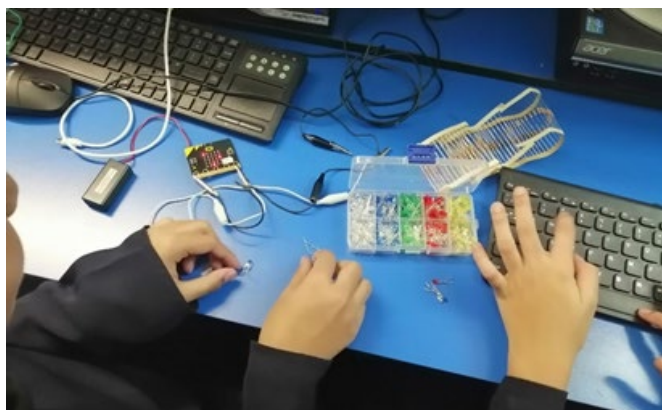
Science and Coding Club

This year we started a new STEM club called 'Science and Coding Club'. We attempted to bridge the gap between Science and computing. Students learnt how to use Microsoft Microbit and then created their own STEM projects in pairs.

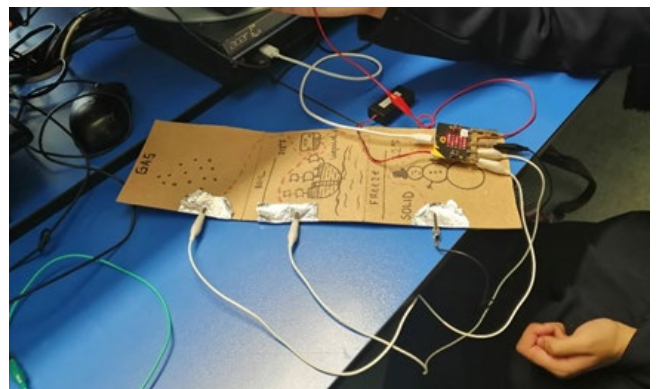
Ms Iqbal

'In coding club, I learnt all about a micro bit. I learnt what it is, what it's used for, how to put codes in it etc. At first, I had no clue of what a microbit is but I had fun playing the games and activities to do with the microbit. I really enjoyed working with my partner in the final project and I'm glad that I was able to try something new and achieve something.'

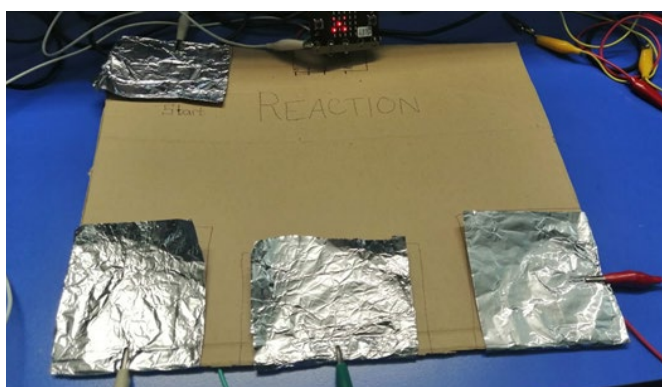
By Nafeesa Begum 8G



This group created a night light using their microbit.



This group of students coded their microbit to be able to detect solid, liquid and gas indicators



This group created a microbit game which detects your reaction time. According to the position of the light you have to touch the correct foil square.



This group created a moisture sensor to tell you the amount of moisture in your plants to help you work out if they need to be watered or not.

Year 11

Monster Confidence Trip

As part of our Year 11 learning experience, we were lucky enough to be given the opportunity to attend the Monster Confidence workshop hosted by a group of women called the Stemettes, as they promote women in the STEM field.

First, when we arrived at the G-Research venue, where we were given free refreshments, there were stalls available for us to look at before the event. These stalls mainly consisted of different types of jobs and career paths in technology. The stalls were from GCHQ, Tech at Westfield, Institute of Coding and G-Research.

We were then ushered into the conference hall where a seminar was held. They introduced a panel of experts which consisted of women who were high ranking individuals in the technology industry, such as a research scientist, architect, mathematician, coder and even a tech spy from GCHQ!

The whole day was tailored around empowering women and encouraging girls to go into STEM and sciences and to showcase that women can also dominate these fields. Personally I do not wish to go into science in the future, but nonetheless I found this an extremely informative workshop due to the advice that was given around confidence. I learnt the most from the mock interview workshop, where we were interviewed by a person and given tips on how to answer questions.

One important thing I took away was that confidence is like a muscle. It needs to be exercised in order for it to become stronger and better. So to gain more confidence we need to practise it more often. We all left this event with way more confidence and motivation than we had started with and most importantly a free purple monster teddy.

This was just the workshop we needed before our mock exams. We now have an opportunity to apply those confidence skills!

By Aziza Miah
11A



Sisterhood Day 2019



Sisterhood Day- an annual event held by the Tarbiyyah Mentors of Azhar Academy every December to encourage unity and strength between every individual within the school. It is a day designed to rebuild old relationships that have fallen apart, or rekindling new friendships between people that might not have spoken under different circumstances. But what made this years' Sisterhood Day so special? And how did it benefit anyone?

Typically, every Sisterhood Day has four activities that enable you to work with other people, usually focusing on an important value. Some of the friendships I have today are as a result of the activities that I did last year with people that I had barely spoken to before. Other Tarbiyyah Mentors had found new friends this way too, so we wanted our Sisterhood Day to be as good as it could be.

There were so many things that we wanted to do, but after a long meeting, we finally settled on complement cards, a friendship test, an escape room and a den for resolving problems, all of which we believed to be effective and original. My group was in charge of the escape room, where students had to solve riddles in order to unlock a treasure chest to win the sweets inside of it. There were a total of six locks, and each pair within a group of twelve people would unlock a single lock only, which ensured that everyone worked together. Although the lock took at least half an hour to be unlocked, the rest of the sessions went smoothly and were quite enjoyable.

The complement cards group had cards for every student within the school. People would have to write one thing they admired about another person anonymously. This was to make everyone realise the impact they had on others, and the qualities of themselves that they might not have noticed before.

The den involved students expressing their problems in a closed and intimate environment, resolving their problems with each other in a safe space. It finished with a speech about the importance of maintaining good relationships with others, and how to solve problems in a relationship effectively. The activities came with complementary hot chocolate topped with whipped cream and marshmallows for all! Yummy!

The friendship group allowed students to find the similarities between them and the person sitting next to them. They would be shown two sheets of paper with a single word on each, and they would have to call out the word that they liked the most at the same time as their partner. They ended with a note about the differences in obligation over a friend and a sister, with one Tarbiyyah Mentor stating 'you can choose your friends, but you can't choose your sister. All of you here are sisters, and whether you like each other or not, you have an obligation to support and encourage each other in good.'

Did these activities benefit the students in any way? Well, some students gave feedback to us afterwards. One student said that she had a lot of fun, and that she learnt a lot from the day. Another student told us that she realised that she has more in common with her friends than she thought she did.

Sisterhood Day benefited the Tarbiyyah Mentors too, with many claiming that they had learnt a lot from the students themselves.

All the Tarbiyyah Mentors would like to thank the students who participated. We hope that you took something good away from that day, and that next years' session is even better than this year's.

May Allah make it easy for all of us to maintain healthy relationships with our brothers and sisters, ameen.

An article by Emma Siraz

KS4 Revision conference 2019



Year 11- the most daunting year of adolescence! The year in which we sit the most important exams of our life; laying the gravel and cement for the path of life. The year all of us will be pleased to see the end of... until the cycle ominously starts all over again in Year 13.

The Year 10s and 11s had the opportunity to attend a revision conference led by the best of the best, also known as Azhar's teaching staff. It included a morning filled with sessions on: note-taking, time management, how to cope with stress and the Islamic perception on studying.

After lunch we had an assembly led by the Fix Up team, followed up by two workshops led by the individuals from the Fix Up team.

The day was extremely beneficial, especially for the masses of anxiety stricken teens apprehensively awaiting the arrival of their exams. It started with how to efficiently take notes with Ms. Begum, one of our English teachers. In this we were given sheets where we had to highlight the most important pieces of information. We were also given many sheets to boost our English skills.

Next was the time management workshop where we received an empty timetable, which we filled in with what subject we were going to revise and when. But personally, I learnt that timetables aren't my thing. I found it way more comfortable and useful if I had a rough idea of what subjects I wanted to do and how much of it. And that's ok. Ms Asma taught us that timetables aren't always necessary. There are other ways you can efficiently and productively plan, not just with a good old fashioned timetable.

Thereafter we had 'How not to Stress' with Ms Aslam. She first made us realise what it was that was actually causing us stress. As if we don't recognise the root of the problem, we'll never be able to tackle it. Then we thought of ways we could solve the issue. One of the more prominent things that came up amongst most of us was that sometimes things happen that are way out of our reach. We learnt that if stuff that we have no control over happens we should try and stay calm at all times. Never EVER panic. Panicking makes things 10 times worse.

Last but not least we learnt the Islamic side of education and having a career. This workshop was held by Ms Iqbal. In this workshop we learnt how to renew our intentions for the career paths we wanted to pursue. And also how to always include Allaah into whatever we do. For example, if we're planning on becoming a doctor, our intention could be to help Allaah's creation and nurse them back to good health for the sake of Allaah. If we're planning on becoming an engineer, we can help create a more sustainable future for our upcoming generations, creating a safe environment for them, for the sake of Allaah. No matter what job/ career we decide upon, we can always make an intention of trying to please Allaah. And in doing so we gain many rewards from Allaah the Almighty.

After a quick lunch break we were called back to the prayer hall to find two enthusiastic members of the Fix up team welcoming us. They had a very engaging and motivational talk with us. One of the many things I took away from them is that no matter where you came from, no matter what your background is you can always achieve success. Success is about hard work and putting the effort in.

And anyone can do that with the right mindset. It never is and never will be exclusive to one race or one gender or one class. So you should never stop trying. Even if it's one small piece of success a day, that's ok.

To conclude, our revision conference this year was very successful. The workshops were delivered beautifully and we're full of blessings. May Allaah reward all those who spent a lot of time and effort planning and organising this event, ameen.

Aziza Miah
11A

The News

*I turn on the television, I watch the news
I look around me
I see humans and I don't see humanity.
I see broken, innocent, families desperately trying to flee
From their motherland, their home
Now- a war torn, skeleton of a country.
Corrupted by political unrest, injustice and poverty.
Politicians with poisoned honey dripping from their lips
Words devoid of sincerity and honesty.
Superpower conflicts at the cost
of human heartbeats, human souls, human lives.
Mothers torn from their children,
husbands torn from their wives
puppet-masters in the comfort
of their luxury conference rooms,
recklessly planning the fate of nations.
Crimes against mankind
That go unchecked
Complete abominations
Millions of lives wrecked by grief, death
And devastation
Silent cries from the oppressed,
Begging for justice
And liberation
I turn on the television, I watch the news and look around me
I see humans, but I don't see humanity*

*By Nureeya 11G
(as part of poetry GCSE analysis completed in term 1)*

My First Day at Azhar Academy

Wednesday 4th September 2019- the first day of school in Azhar Academy.

My mum woke me up from a deep sleep. Before I knew it, I was in the car, making my way to school. A dozen thoughts ran through my mind. I began searching for answers.

I was lucky, as I knew two of my friends from primary school were joining me. My mum parked at the side of a road and I stepped out. Reading my prayers and my du'as as I nervously walked towards the door, I froze.

In front of me was a crimson building, like a magnificent castle belonging to a rich king.

This was my new school, Azhar.

As I pushed open the heavy jet-black doors, it appeared to me that Azhar wasn't what I had expected. Modern glass doors and smiley teachers surrounded me.

The rest of the day was spent in various activities. I met other girls and soon, the whole class had become friends.

Now, I am confident to say that I love coming to Azhar. I have many friends and I am gaining a lot of knowledge. I don't mind waking up early anymore because I know that Islamic Studies will benefit me. I am very grateful to Shaykh Yusuf Motala for founding this school. I pray it will benefit him in the Akhirah, ameen.

Tahani Muhaimin
7A

I strolled down the street, my father beside me. It was a quiet day and I could hear the tree leaves brushing against each other as I walked past. The car in the distance honking in frustration. Out of the blue, at least a hundred girls all in navy rushed in to a tall and impressive building. Joy written all over their faces.

"They're from my new school, I expect," I pondered out loud.

The next thing I knew, I was outside the school gates.

"Hurry up!" a tall girl yelled impatiently.

I hesitated. Eventually, I took one step, two steps and then three. I found myself confidently walking in to the magnificent door. A grin spread across my face. I felt a burst of excitement but then a punch of nerves pounded my stomach.

Would I make any friends? Will I learn anything here? Will I be a good student?

As these repetitive questions raced through my mind, I found myself racing towards my first lesson. Finally, I spotted a few familiar faces. I waved at my friends in delight.

That evening, when I came home, my mother asked me how school was.

"It was brilliant," I said. And it was.

Zainab Bint Rayhan
7A



Hadhrat Sheikh Yusuf Motala RA

Those who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return" (2:156)

On 10th December, Azhar Academy held an amazing event on a very pious person who had a very close relation to our school. He sadly passed away on the 9th of September this year. In the remembrance of his death the Year 11 students organised an outstanding programme for the students, teachers as well as parents.

Muhammad Yusuf ibn Suleman ibn Qasim Motala was best known as the founder of the Dar al-Ulum al-Arabiyya al-Islamiyya in Holcombe near Bury in Lancashire in 1973. Popularly known as "Dar al-Ulum Bury" or simply "Bury" (not to be confused with the Lancashire mill town), this institution has produced hundreds of graduates who have gone on to serve communities here, in Europe, North America, Africa and elsewhere. "Bury" has been the mother madrasa for many of the Deobandi seminaries in the West; just within the UK, several seminaries were established by Sheikh Yusuf's own students.

Hadhrat was included in the 2019 list of the "500 Most Influential Muslims," published annually by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre.

It was an outstanding event with role plays and spoken words, all to interest and involve everyone. There were many interesting activities that were educational, and taught us about the history of our school and the wonderful institutes which Hadhrat created to benefit future Muslims globally.

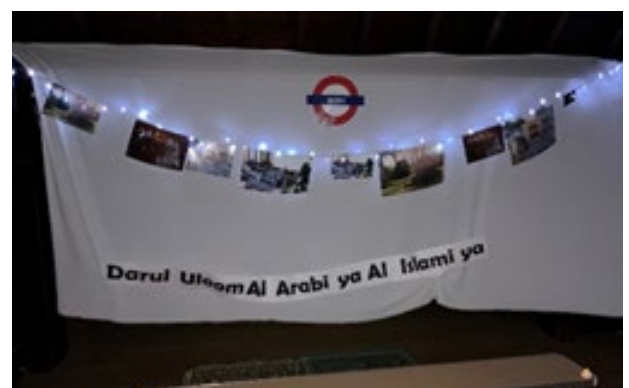
Some things we learnt were:

- His early life
- His upbringing
- His migration to the UK
- The origins of Azhar Academy
- The other institutes Hadhrat created

This event made us appreciate our school now more than ever. It opened our eyes towards the many struggles Hadhrat faced when bringing our school and other schools to life.

Hadhrat educated, inspired and nourished the minds and hearts of countless across the UK and beyond. May Allah Almighty bless him with the loftiest of abodes in the Gardens of Firdaws in the company of Allaah's beloved Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace) and grant all his family, students, and cherishers around the world beautiful patience.

Tanisha Choudhury 10G
Amina Naveed 10G



Extraordinary Muslim Women From Around The World

When we think of inspiring Muslim women, what comes to mind may be Khadijah RA, the Prophet Muhammad's beloved first wife and first convert to Islam, who was a successful business woman in her own right or of Fatima al-Fihri, who founded the oldest university in the world in Fez, Morocco. In celebration of these and other Muslim beacons, we pay tribute to some modern-day extraordinary women and highlight their achievements, hoping that a new generation of young Muslim girls will follow in their footsteps. Nadiya Jamir Hussain was born on 25 December 1984. She is a British TV chef, author, and television presenter. She rose to fame after winning the six series of BBC's Great British Bake off in 2015. Since winning, she signed contracts with the BBC to host the documentary The Chronicles of Nadiya, TV cookery series, Nadiya's British food Adventures and Nadiyas Family Favourites .

Nadiya is a columnist for The Times Magazine and has signed publishing deals with Penguin Random House, Hodder Children's Books, and Harlequin.

In 2017, Nadiya was named by Debretts as one of the 500 most influential people in the UK and was on BBC News' 100 Women list. She was also shortlisted for Children's Book of the Year prize at the British Book Awards for Bake Me a Story, and was nominated for Breakthrough star at the Royal Television Society Awards .Ted Cantle the author of a government report on community cohesion said Hussain had done "more for British-Muslim relations than 10 years of government policy".

Women like Nadiya inspire young girls like me to have hope of becoming successful in the future and for me to not worry about my race , ethnicity or religion. Most importantly Nadiya is showcasing her strong ambitions despite all of the negativity she gets for the Hijab on her head , which is truly inspiring for all of us today subhanallah.

Suweybah Ahmed 10A

Ilhan Omar



The American politician serving as the U.S. Representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district.

Ilhan Omar is a very inspirational figure in The Female Modern Muslim world to younger people. She is an American politician serving as the U.S Representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district. In 2018, she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, marking a number of historic electoral firsts: she is the first Somali-American, as well as being the first naturalised citizen from Africa, and the first non-white woman elected from Minnesota, and one of the first two Muslim women (along with Rashida Tlaib of Michigan) to serve in Congress.

She has hugely advocated for: a living wage, affordable housing and universal healthcare, student loan debt forgiveness, the protection of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and abolishing the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Her work was greatly honoured in 2017, when Time magazine named Ilhan Omar among its "Firsts: Women who are changing the world," a special report on women who broke barriers in their respective disciplines, and featured her on the cover of its September 18 issue.

Ilhan's story and her many accomplishments is truly inspiring to many people around the world, especially young Muslim girls. She has also helped to break multiple stereotypes regarding Muslims and showing the world how truly powerful and dedicated Muslims are and can be, as well as how they can make a change in the world and for their voices to be heard. Her amazing works and experience also shows us how hard work truly pays off.

These educated, interesting women are pushing at the barriers – and reminding us to be proud of our identity.

Amina Naveed Year 10

je tu il elle on
nous vous ils elles

Subject Pronouns

Lawless French

English Subject Pronouns

I	we
you	you (all)
he, she, it	they

French Subject Pronouns

je	nous
tu	vous
il, elle, on	

je tu il elle on
nous vous ils elles

Subject Pronouns

Lawless French

je / j'	nous
tu	vous
il / elle	ils / elles

je / j'	nous
tu	vous
il / elle	ils / elles



My Journey to French

I'm a new student at Azhar Academy Girls School. When I first started, I was a little worried knowing that the school offered French classes, however it was not at all how I expected it to be. My French teacher, Ms Borg, teaches her lessons very well- the lessons are enjoyable and well explained. Since I've started I've improved so well in my French.

I think that learning French will be an extremely valuable skill and it can lead to great experiences in future jobs and travelling.

By Aasiyah Alvarez-Ali

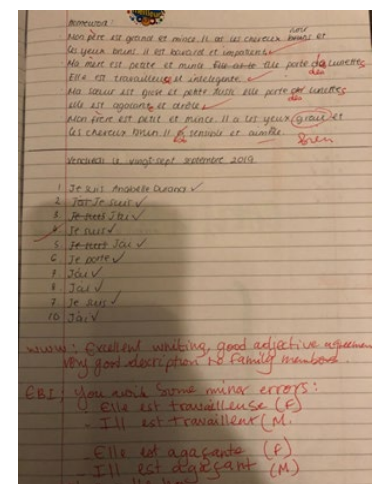
French at Azhar Academy

Coming to Azhar and studying French has been a great experience for me as it helps me understand that French is one of the major languages of international communication.

Learning French can help you with your careers. Studying a modern foreign language can vary your occupations in the future. French itself is a common language spoken across all 5 continents which can help with communications.

I personally enjoy learning French at Azhar Academy as we are able to listen to a variety of fun ways to not only make it easier to learn, but also to begin to grow a passion for French. We are also given feedback on how we can improve our work so that our mistakes can be corrected.

By: Auni Wan Armizi 9A



How to Study Maths: 7 Tips for Solving Maths Problems

Mathematics is a subject that you cannot avoid. Some love it but, if we're being honest, most people hate studying maths. The importance of maths for students has never been greater. STEM subjects are the basis for technologies of tomorrow. Most university courses include some level of maths while almost every profession uses maths in some form on a daily basis. The problem many students have is that they don't know how to study maths to get good results.

Maths is one of those subjects which you can easily spend hours studying but end up none the wiser. However much you have studied, if you cannot solve the problem on day of the test, you are lost. Thankfully, there are some techniques for studying maths that you can do regardless of your level. You may even end up loving mathematics by the end of the blog post!

1. Practice, Practice & More Practice

It is impossible to study maths properly by just reading and listening. To study maths, you have to roll up your sleeves and actually solve some problems. The more you practice answering maths problems, the better. Each problem has its own characteristics and it's important to have solved it in numerous ways before tackling the exam. There is no escaping this reality, to do well in a Maths exam you need to have solved a LOT of mathematical problems beforehand.

2. Review Errors

When you're practising with these problems, it's important to work through the process for each solution. If you have made any mistakes, you should review them and understand where your problem-solving skills let you down. Understanding how you approached the problem and where you went wrong is a great way of becoming stronger and avoiding the same mistakes in the future.

3. Master the Key Concepts

Do not try to memorise the processes. This is counterproductive. It is much better and rewarding in the long run to focus on understanding the process and logic that is involved. This will help you understand how you should approach such problems in the future.

Remember that Maths is a sequential subject so it's important to have a firm understanding of the key concepts that underpin a mathematical topic before moving on to work on other, more complex solutions which are based on understanding the basics.

4. Understand your Doubts

Sometimes you can get stuck trying to solve part of a maths problem and find it difficult to move on to the next stage. It's common for many students to skip this question and continue on to the next. You should avoid doing this and instead spend time trying to understand the process of solving the problem. Once you have grasped an understanding of the initial problem, you can use this as a steppingstone to progress to the remainder of the question.

Remember: Maths requires time and patience to master.

It is a good idea to study with a friend who you can consult with and bounce ideas off when trying to solve complex problems.

5. Create a Distraction Free Study Environment

Mathematics is a subject that requires more concentration than any other. A proper study environment and a distraction free area could be the determining factor when solving complex equations or problems in geometry, algebra or trigonometry!

6. Create a Mathematical Dictionary

Mathematics has specific terminology with a lot of vocabulary. We suggest you create Notes or Flashcards with all the concepts, terminology and definitions you need to know. You should include their meanings, some key points and even some sample answers so you can consult them at any time and recap.

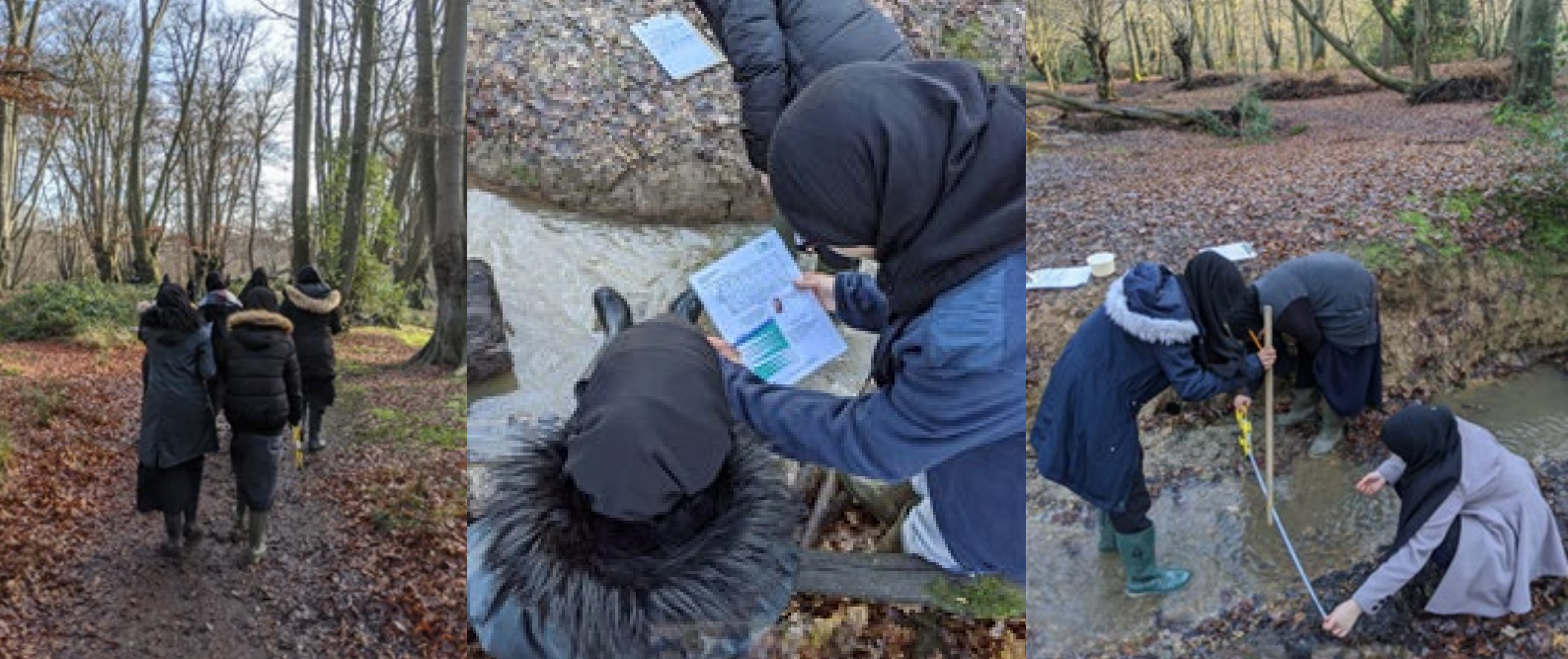
7. Apply Maths to Real World Problems

As much as possible, try to apply real-world problems when approaching maths. Maths can be very abstract sometimes so looking for a practical application can help change your perspective and assimilate ideas differently.

Probability, for example, can be used in everyday life to predict the outcome of something happening and determine whether you want to take a risk.

Oh, and don't forget that it's also important to have confidence in yourself and face the exam knowing that you have prepared properly!

Advice taken from: goconqr.com



Geography Fieldtrip - Loughton Brook

‘On Wednesday, 11th of December we embarked on a day-long trip to Epping forest in Loughton, to carry out an investigation on rivers, as part of our Geography GCSE. The main aim was to study rivers and how they are formed. We learnt how to measure the width, depth and velocity of our chosen river. We got to see real examples of geographical features we had learned about in class, such as meanders.’

Amina Abdi

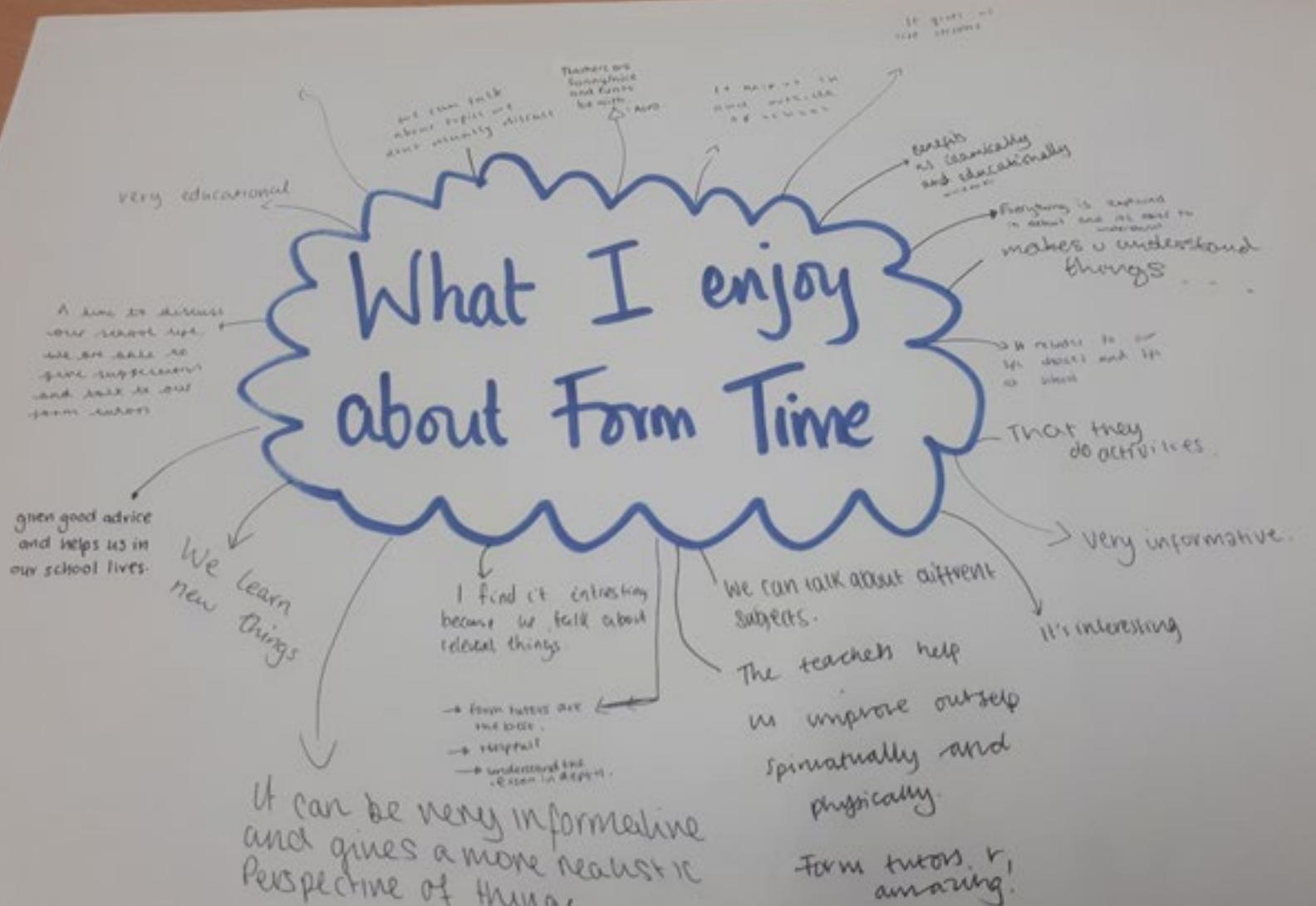
This was a great opportunity for our Year 10 and 11 students to experience meanders, tributaries and seeing the source of a river beyond the textbook, enabling the students to become more relatable to various theories of the river and giving them the confidence required to tackle their Geography examination.

The day started off by students understanding the health and safety factors and being able to identify themselves on how to control the various risks that may occur. We also covered the theory and possible outcomes to the investigation. The students were then able to put all the theories and learning into practice by measuring the river at two different sites and then comparing their findings. Moreover, they learned about the geology of Essex and how this may affect surface run off when it comes to heavy rainfall. The students were able to finish off their study by investigating the possible flood risk to residents.

The day trip was a great way in getting students out into the field and broadening their minds into understanding various implications of climate change on the environment and how it can affect humans in various ways.

‘It was a really interesting trip as we learnt about the risk of flooding and the velocity of the river; it was a different experience to studying in class. The best part was doing it all with my friends’

Aisha Nadeem



What is Form Time?

Form time is a safe place that allows us to express ourselves freely without worrying anyone judging us. We can also discuss any issue we have had throughout the week comfortably.

A form tutor is both caring towards students and keeps track of their progress both academically and socially, encouraging involvement, commitment and high standards of work and behaviour.

We normally use this time as a way to de-stress and forget about school and have fun. Playing games and having inspirational discussions are things I enjoy very much in form time as well as catching up with my friends and asking questions about our week's busy schedule. Sometimes school can be very overwhelming so having a form teacher to help us through it is extremely helpful!

By Zara Gardener 8G



KS4 Visit to the Zandra Rhodes Exhibition: 40 years of Fabulous!

On 2nd November 2019, the Year 10 and 11 Art GCSE students visited the Fashion and Textile Museum in Bermondsey to view the exhibition dedicated to the work of famous British fashion and textile designer Zandra Rhodes. The Fashion and Textile Museum is a contemporary fashion museum in London, founded by British designer Zandra Rhodes in 2003. Rhodes was one of the new wave of British designers who put London at the forefront of the international fashion scene in the 1970s.

Visiting the exhibition was very relevant to the students' development in their own work because they could be inspired by a particular piece or learn new techniques by looking and analysing the work in depth. We had to focus on techniques used, all the while thinking about how we could incorporate those techniques into our own designs and work. Her work consisted mainly of printed and stitch pieces but there was also some dye work and appliques too.

By looking deeper into her designs, we notice the effort and time taken in each and every piece of work in the exhibition. All of the pieces were unique compared to one another and no same design was seen twice. It was great to see so much creativity up close and be able to record useful information for our projects.

***Maariyah Ayman Year 11
Art student***





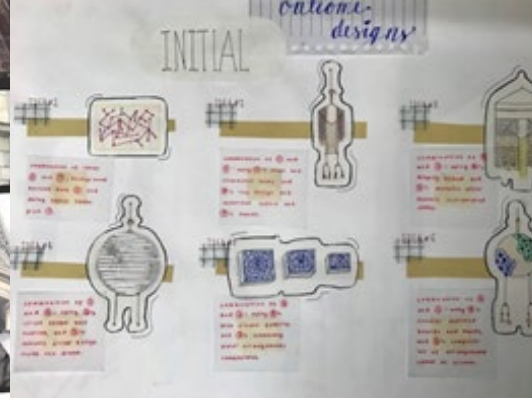
Art Department Food Sale

MashaAllaah, Art and Design students from Year 9, 10 and 11 held our annual food sale to raise money for our department. There were cakes including cupcakes and delicious doughnuts as well as homemade cookies! We also had a range of savoury delights including biryani, spicy chickpea chaat, samosas and pakoras! Our creative students also held a henna/mehndi stall which proved to be very popular. The students were able to enjoy lovingly prepared homemade food for the day and enjoyed themselves.

The students who were assisting for the day contributed the food, helped to layout and price everything and finally sell the goods. The involvement enabled our students to boost their confidence and develop their communication and mathematics skills too.

It was a super hit and alhamdulillah by the grace of the Almighty Allaah swt, we made over £115! What a fantastic effort from all the students who sponsored and helped. May Allah swt accept it and reward them abundantly, aameen.





Studying Art and Design in Year 11

This is my second year of the Art GCSE course, and I am now progressing to the end of my first of two main projects, the more intense of the two. Throughout all of the last academic year, and up until now, I have been working towards the end goal of my final piece.

The theme I chose at the beginning of the course was architecture, buildings, and modern structures. This theme has remained consistent throughout my work: from photographs to observational drawings, water-colour and pencil developing forward to fabric and textiles work, from small scale to large scale. The final product has begun to reach its real form, with a year and a half of planning, creating, researching, modelling, testing, and sometimes failing- I am nearly there!

The sweetness of success only comes with the toil of hard work. This is one factor of motivation for me throughout the whole of this project. Another is the sheer fact that all the work done for this project is purely mine, and no one else's. Through this course, I have gained a skill in independence which I otherwise might never have known, and this gives me confidence in my capacities and capabilities.

Nearing the end of my first project, I have completed around 75% of the coursework content with diligence and perseverance, and I am looking forward to seeing the end result and the fruits of my hard work inshaAllah.

Tafhima Khatun 11A



Learning about Wassily Kandinsky

In our Art lessons so far we have been learning about the formal elements, the colour wheel, primary and secondary colours as well as looking at mark-making. We have been studying the artist Wassily Kandinsky's work and how he was inspired by sounds and music. He was a composer and artist and decided to put the two together to produce different works of abstract art.

Kandinsky used shapes, colours and mark-making to represent the different sounds and instruments he could hear from classical music and painted them onto canvas.

I found this project really interesting and fun to learn about an unusual way of painting and producing art work.

By Nafisa Baker 7A



Student SACRE 'Ecology and the Future' Project



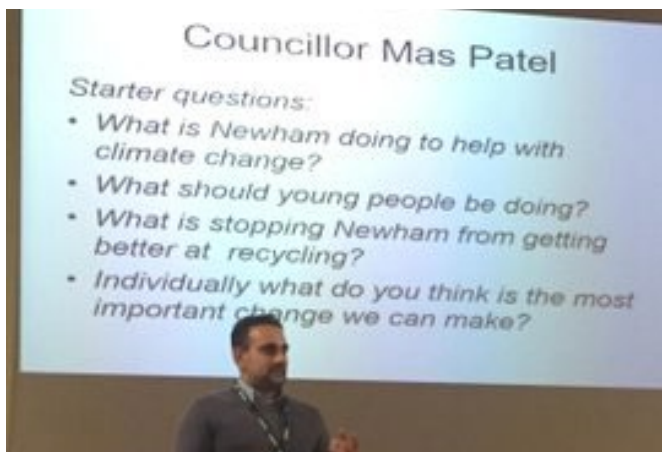
On Thursday, 14th November, seven Year 10 students of Azhar Academy attended a SACRE meeting held at St Angela's in Forest Gate.

This year's SACRE theme is based around the much talked about topic of ecology and what we can do to improve the air quality and the deteriorating state of the Earth.

Our day began with reflecting on the state of the world, by looking at pictures of various artists, pondering on society today, and our job was to decide how we would label them, either as 'Enlightenment'; 'Shalom'- Hebrew word for peace; and 'Harmony'. This task made us reflect deeply and wonder about the kind of world we wanted to live in, and the kind of world our children would one day be inheriting.

We followed the theme of the session by then watching a climate change film produced by Sir David Attenborough; the film was incredibly moving and made us realise that our actions have been affecting innocent animals' habitats and that if we do not make changes now, the effects will soon be irreversible. The impact of global warming is such that it has caused the average global temperature on earth to have risen by about 0.8° Celsius!

To make us think about what we could perhaps do to remedy and prevent further damage that was being done to the planet, we held a debate. The issue we were debating was: "Global companies are the reason for climate change and only they hold the remedy." 'A' argued for this idea and 'B' argued against it. The outcome of the debate showed us that there was no easy answer to the issue- that it's up to all of us to save the planet.



Finally, we had a question and answer session with Councillor Mas Patel who spoke about his role in helping improve the air quality and their action plan to launch in 2020 for Newham, which we as citizens of Newham can help to improve.

Our duty as citizens of Newham and of Planet Earth is to protect, take care of and preserve our home for future generations to come, as Allah tells us in the Qur'an:

"Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption." (Qur'an, 2:60)

"It is Allah who made for you the earth a place of settlement and the sky a ceiling and formed you and perfected your forms and provided you with good things. That is Allah, your Lord; then blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Qur'an, 40:64)

By reading these verses it should at the very least make you aware of Islam's harmonious core. Living as socially responsible and exemplary human beings is one of the Islamic commands of God.

Tips on how to be an Eco Muslim

- Cut a tree, plant a tree; For every bouquet of flowers you give, plant flower seeds; at least once a year, sponsor a tree
- Build an eco-system by filling hanging baskets with luscious compost
- Fight existing organisations that pollute the most and get politically involved to shake up government awareness.
- Finally, take time out to appreciate the beauty of meadows and foliage around you. These moments of reflection count as worship for Muslims, they are moments of connection to the Creator. But you can take it however you want. Gratitude is the key.



Learning Arabic

So far in Arabic we have learnt about: describing our family; different types of jobs; describing ourselves; describing our best friend; turning irregular verbs into the past; talking about a famous person; what we can do in our free time; different foods; different shops; different measurements; different rooms of the house; furniture and also how to turn different types of verbs into the negative form.

Overall I enjoyed everything but I really liked learning about different types of foods and jobs as I found these lessons very amusing and we got to play different games related to food and jobs which helped in understanding the topic better. Also, I enjoyed learning about how to turn verbs into the past and negative form which I find useful as it would help me in the future and it was very informative and interesting.

I had so much fun learning Arabic this term as I learnt a lot of new topics and did activities which were very helpful.

Amna Murtaz / 8A

My Experience in Learning Arabic in Year 8

My confidence in speaking Arabic has grown a lot and I am now more eager to answer questions in class. The topic we focused on this year was mostly food and health. This included the meals we eat every day and how healthy they are. We were taught the results too. For instance, if you eat well it helps your body. On the other hand, unhealthy food is awfully bad for your health. Our new teacher is kind and is always motivating us to have positive attitude towards the language of the Qur'an.

We have done our assessments and I believe her tactical method of 2 elements of language in every assessment is very useful because it means we can focus on one subject at a time; this guarantees us good marks for our exams. In addition to this, we get an even spread of everything throughout the year.

In the future lessons I would like to cover more grammatical basics because this will not only be both useful for us in general but also beneficial in helping build on our confidence to speak Arabic.

In conclusion, I would say that Arabic has developed to become my favourite subject as it gains us reward and the vocabulary we learn in it helps us through our Aalimiyyah subject as well. This is so fun as we explore the differences between Arabic speaking and writing. Its variety of topics and themes keeps me absorbed in its essence that never fails to ignite a spark within me to keep me enthused.

Nuha Shukry / 8A

My experience in the Arabic Writing Mock Exam

I have taken my Arabic language mock exam recently where I did really well especially in my writing when I have to talk about the positive and negative impact of the technology in our life. I have addressed these points in detail giving some interesting opinions and justification as well as drawing my own personal experience in using one of the new gadgets (Iphone) and how important is the use of the internet in our life especially in doing our homework, research and getting in touch with others. I really enjoyed this topic and used what I studied in the class and the right level of language and phrases my teacher provided us in the class to address this question requirements.

Maryam Hussain/ 11A



What Inspires Me In Aalimiyyah?

My name is Aaisha Bajwa and I am in my fourth year of the comprehensive seven-year Aalimiyyah course. There are many subjects that have inspired me in Aalimah, from Qur'an Translation to Usool-ul-Hadeeth.

Aalimiyyah is a very spiritual and motivational course and it has so many benefits and helps me to become a better Muslim. I know so much more knowledge about my religion now than before I started Aalimiyyah. I would recommend it to anyone who wants to know more about Islam.

Let's begin with Qur'an Translation. Qur'an Translation is such an interesting aspect of the Aalimiyyah course. It allows you to learn about the noblest book of Islam, it is the direct words of Allaah talking to the believers. Qur'an Translation allows us to focus more deeply on the words of Allaah and it is such an informative lesson. In Qur'an Translation we understand why Allaah mentions what has been stated in the Qur'an and it gives me a firmer understanding on the most important book of Islam.

Secondly, Qasas is the most intriguing part of the Aalimiyyah course. I have been studying Qasas-un-Nabiyeen since my first year of Aalimah studies. Qasas is the stories of the prophets and it is very interesting because I learn about the trials and hardships that the Prophets went through. This year I am learning the seerah of the last Messenger of Islam, Muhammad (s.a.w). Learning these stories helps me to understand more about the Prophet (s.a.w) and the major events that took place in his life as well as the stories of the Sahaba (r.a).

Thirdly, Riyadh-us-Saliheen is a Hadith Kitaab that I have been studying since third year. Riyadh-us-Saliheen is a collection of ahadith compiled by the great sheikh, Imam Nawawi. This year I have studied the chapter of patience and it has resonated with me through hard times and made me think twice before I became angry. In Riyadh-us-Saliheen I have also learnt about the chapter of truthfulness and its importance and the consequences of a person who deceives others.

Furthermore, Mukhtasar-al-Qudoori is Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh) on topics such as buying/selling and interest. This is a very informative subject because now I know what is permissible and impermissible in Islam especially with the world we live in today. As a result of this, I know more in regards to interest which is extremely popular nowadays and it helps me to understand why it is forbidden to engage in interest as well as the different types of oaths and which are classed as valid or invalid including the consequences that come with them.

Finally, Usool-ul-Hadeeth is an introduction to the vast world of the science of hadith. There are many key terms and phrases used to authenticate the actions and the approval and the sayings of the Prophet (saw). Usool is an uncommon subject in the Aalimiyyah course but it is the most enrapturing of them. It teaches us the struggle that the scholars of hadith went through and how we do not acknowledge the blessings we have today.

Something that really inspired me this year was our Anjuman about the Qur'an. During my Anjuman I learnt so much about the story of Umar Ibn Khattab (r.a) converting to Islam; this really moved me as to how such a firm disbeliever who was feared by the Arabs was humbled by the words of the Qur'an. This was followed by a beautiful speech by Nanziba about Surah Yusuf, which helped me to appreciate the beauty of the Qur'an.

By: Aaisha Suhail Bajwa 10a

Edited By: Nanziba Chowdhury 10a, Sabiha Rahman 10g And Shabiha Begum 10a

A Man of Light *by Asra Ashraff*

*He was a light who stood bright
In a time when greed overcame what was right.
The children of whom accompanied him
Were taught from the beginning
That religion was a blaze that would never be dimmed.*

*Respected by some;
Banished by others;
His faith in Islam
Was a sign of his courage.
In Allah did he trust
With all matters that came
His righteous deeds were what earned him his noble name.*

*His understanding of others
The pure, genuine care
Filled one's heart with admiration;
And with the new generation
Came the looks of determination
To gift our Prophet with his well-deserved names.*

*With every fight he fought
In the name of the Most High
The battle was won
The enemies would cry
Some would sense their foolishness
When death was seen
Islam was the Truth.
Islam was the Deen.*

*Fatih, Shaahid
Mashud, Rashid
All names of the Noble Messenger
Al Amin*

*The names were shown through the hardships
Struggles and wars
He fought tough and hard
Never giving in to the shaytaan.*

*When his time was up
A day chosen by our Rabb,
The towns were filled with remorse
A time of pity
Where no happiness was endorsed
Tears were cried by each Muslim
Each grain of rice he'd ever touched
He was the most beloved
And his name was Muhammad
Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam*



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