



Ursuline Academy Ilford

Weekly News – 2023/2024 Issue 31
17th May 2024



Upcoming Events

Parent Coffee Morning 3
Wednesday 22 May 2024
9.00 – 10.00a.m.

Art, Music & Drama Exhibition
Wednesday 26 June 2024
4.00 – 6.00p.m.

Year 6/7 New Entrants' Meeting
Wednesday 26 June 2024
6.00 – 7.00p.m.

Year 11 Prom
Thursday 27 June 2024
7.00 – 11.00p.m.

Year 6 into Year 7 Transfer Day
Thursday 4 July 2024
8.40a.m. – 3.20p.m.

Music Showcase
Tuesday 9 July 2024
6.00 – 7.30p.m.

Sports Day
Friday 12 July 2024

Annual Prizegiving
Wednesday 17 July
6.00 – 7.30p.m.



Headteacher's Headlines

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Yesterday we hosted visitors from Israel and Palestine who are on a tour in the UK with the organisation Solutions Not Sides. Students in Year 9 participated in a 1 hr 40min workshop listening to the testimonials from Ameer & Mical about their lives and experiences living in conflict. I was very proud of our students for they asked some very mature and probing questions to help everyone get a better understanding of what is happening in Gaza currently from the speakers. We are all affected and deeply troubled by the ongoing conflict and the plight of innocent civilians. See Ms Eakin's article on page 9.

Earlier this week I sent out a link for an invitation to attend our third and final coffee morning of the year. This will be hosted by Mr McGhee & Ms Cooper and will focus on Catholic life of the school and our work on Diversity, equity & inclusion. The initial meeting will take place in the chapel followed by short tour of the school.
<https://forms.office.com/e/6aDsyKMPVJ>

Finally, our Year 12 students have now stepped up to being the oldest students in the school and with this comes increased expectations. Please read the letter on page 11 that I've sent to parents & carers today.

Fiona Stone headteacher@uai.org.uk



Newsletter Contents this week:

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Chaplaincy News

Pope Francis@Pontifex – 16th May 2024

We are called to be missionaries of #Peace. This choice will give us peace. It means making space in our hearts for all, and believing that differences are not obstacles, that other are our brothers and sisters, and that the peace Jesus brought into the world is meant for all.

Forward in Joy – 366 days with Angela Merici – Daily words of wisdom from our patron saint

May: Prudence

17th May: God has ordained from all eternity that those who are united in doing good enjoy every prosperity.

18th May: Strive with all your might to keep yourselves as you have been called by God.

19th May: Strive to be faithful and devoted.

20th May: Above all, be on your guard not to want to get anything done by force.

21st May: I do not say, however, that it will not be necessary occasionally to use reproaches and severity, at the right place and time.

22nd May: Every type of evil must be resisted.

23rd May: You must make a sound and firm resolution.



Eid Mubarak

EID Celebrations

We are delighted to share the joyous occasion of our Eid ul-Fitr celebrations, organised by the Islamic Society, which came at the end of the Muslim month of Ramadan/fasting.

The Eid festivities were a huge success, with several engaging workshops and activities that captured the spirit of the occasion. From lantern and Eid card making, word searches, Oragami, henna workshops run by students & Ms Chowdhury, and Islamic nasheeds, there was something for everyone to enjoy and participate in.

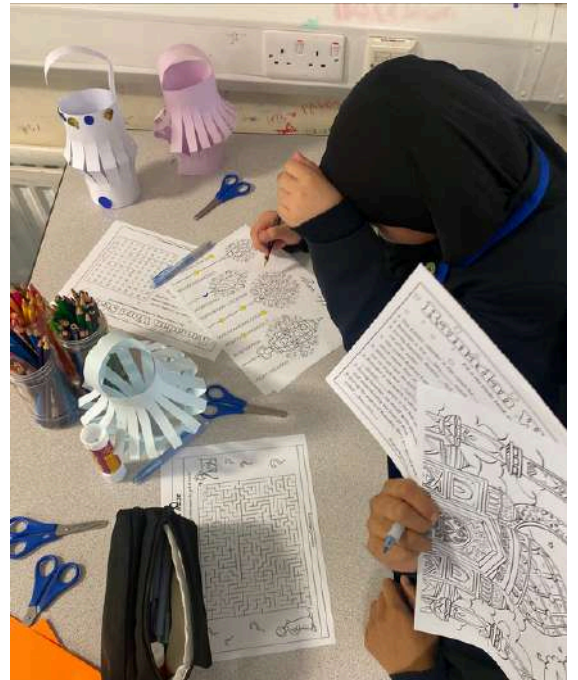
A special highlight of the event was the Eid bake sale, where our students demonstrated remarkable generosity and enthusiasm. Selling cakes and treats with smiles and sounds of laughter!

We are thrilled to announce that in one lunchtime we raised an impressive amount of £205.45, all of which will be donated to a charity chosen by the students - Doctors Without Borders.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to all the students, staff, and parents who supported and contributed to the success of this event.

The endless commitment exemplified the spirit of unity and compassion which at Ursuline Academy defines our Serviam school community





**Mrs Adam, Mrs Ahmed
& Islamic Society Team**





Library News



As this is mental health Awareness Week, it is a good time to report the findings of study published in the journal of Psychological Medicine on how Reading for pleasure was found to increase the size of children's brains, improve cognitive ability, support good mental health and also lead to better grades.

Those who started reading for pleasure at a young age were found to perform better on a variety of tests and also had better mental wellbeing, showing fewer signs of stress and depression, as well as improved attention and fewer behavioural problems such as aggression and rule-breaking. They also tended to use screens less and slept longer. "Reading isn't just a pleasurable experience – it's widely accepted that it inspires thinking and creativity, increases empathy and reduces stress," said Prof Sahakian.

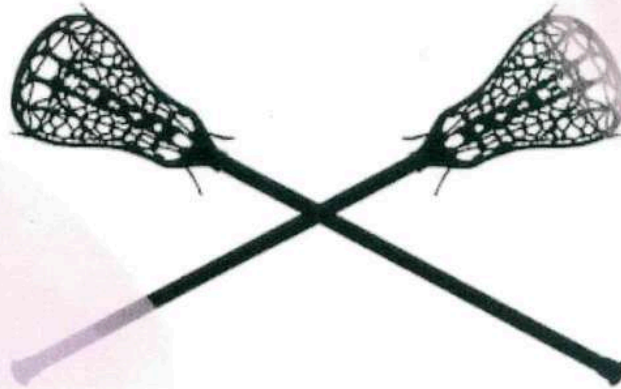
The following books are available in the School Library...



Ms Finlay, Librarian



PE News



LACROSSE TRAINING

YEARS: 7, 8 AND 9

**TUESDAY AFTER
SCHOOL**

DON'T FORGET PE KIT

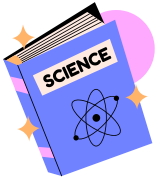
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

RE News

This week our Year 8s have been doing their own research on some well-known saints and missionaries.

They have created these beautiful presentations which are now displayed in F2. They have been learning about the life of Mother Teresa, her work and the legacy she has left behind and Alberto Hurtado who, like Jesus, showed great love and care to those who were often seen as outcasts in society. They have also been reading up on L'Arche which was established by Jean Vanier and continues to help create a more inclusive society for all, and St Padre Pio who is the patron saint of stress relief and adolescents. I am sure he is looking over all our students, especially those who are sitting their exams during this time!

Ms Eakins, Teacher of RE



Science News

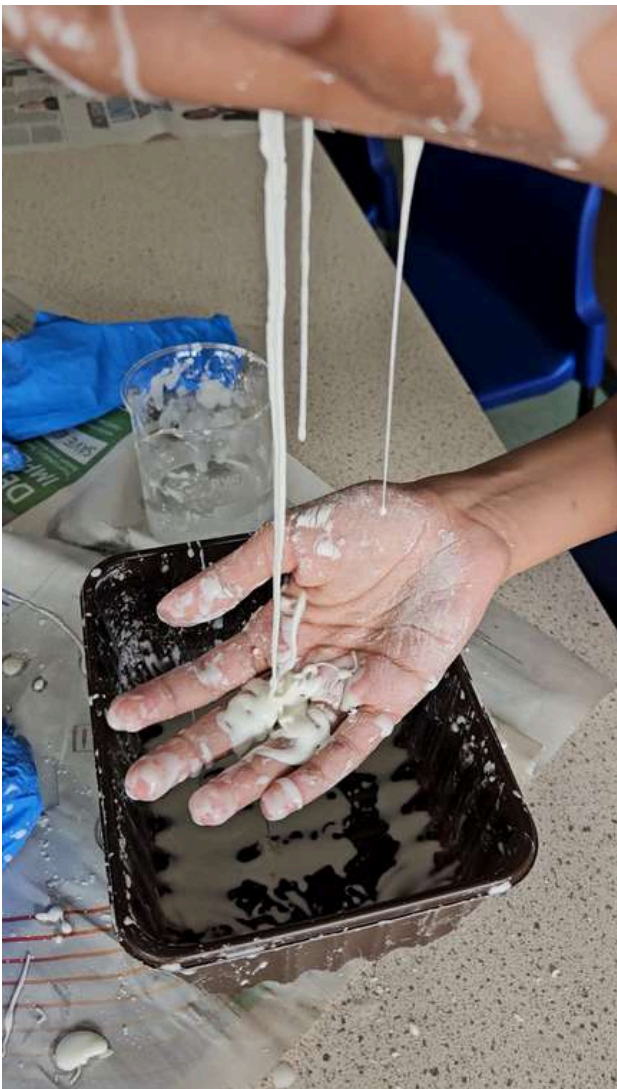
Making non-Newtonian fluid!

This week for science club our little scientists made some non-Newtonian fluid using this recipe:

- 1) Add 60g corn starch to a bowl
- 2) Add water slowly until all the powder is wet
- 3) Continue until the corn starch acts like a liquid when slowly stirred, but becomes hard when tapped
- 4) Scoop the mixture into your hand and work into a ball and then apply pressure to become a liquid again

Newtonian fluids, such as water, maintain a constant viscosity (the measure of a fluid's resistance to flow) unless the temperature or pressure changes. Non-Newtonian fluids are affected by other forces. So when left alone it acts like a liquid and flows but when moved around and impacted it acts like a solid.

It was very messy but such a lot of fun!



Mr Uddin and Ms Agudelo

On Thursday, our year 9s attended workshops throughout the day hosted by Solutions Not Sides. Our speakers gave our students an understanding of diverse perspectives as they had an opportunity to learn about the long and difficult history between Israel and Palestine. They also had the opportunity to speak to young people from both Israel and Palestine who have experienced both sides of an on-going conflict.

What we see on mainstream media can cause us to naturally feel very upset, angry and hurt but our speakers helped to answer any questions that our students had and also reminded us all that violence will likely lead to continued conflict and suffering, not conflict resolution which is what is desperately needed. Our students gave some feedback on how they felt and what they had learned over the course of the day:

"I found the workshop very informative and beneficial in my understanding of what is happening in Israel and Palestine. It also helped me to open my mind to the possibilities and solutions to the problem" **Mariam** Year 9

"It was really good and it helped us understand both sides and that no one is right in the situation. It was kind of refreshing to see no one picking sides" **Shyheima** Year 9

Ms Eakins, Head of Year 9





THE URSULINE ACADEMY ILFORD

A Catholic Academy for Girls aged 11 – 19 in the Diocese of Brentwood

Headteacher: Ms Fiona A Stone BSc (Hons) MA NPQH



17th May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 12 Students,

I am writing to share the key points from an assembly I led for the Year 12 students this morning. Firstly, I congratulated our Year 12 students on reaching a significant milestone: they are now the oldest students in the school, taking on the role of 'big sisters' within our community. This comes with raised expectations for them to serve as positive role models for the younger students.

I also introduced the upcoming Head Girl recruitment process, which will be led by Mr. McGhee and Ms. Cooper. Students should keep an eye out for information about this exciting leadership opportunity. During the assembly, I discussed the upcoming Qualification for Entry examinations (QFEs). I reminded students that passing all their subjects is essential for progression to Year 13, and that consistent attendance is crucial. We talked about effective revision strategies and the importance of starting their preparation now. The QFEs will take place in the week beginning 24th June, and we will share the timetable as soon as it is ready.

For students who have concerns about attendance, health, or other factors, I encouraged them to speak with their form tutor or Head of Year. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments where necessary.

Additionally, the UCAS process has begun during PSHE lessons, and we are here to support and guide students every step of the way.

For security and safety reasons, we are changing the access to the site for 6th form students. Starting 3rd June, they will no longer use a separate entrance. Instead, they must enter and exit via the large student entrance school gate. Students are permitted to leave the school site only during lunchtime and must do so through the school's reception, ensuring they sign out and in using the Inventory system.

Finally, I encouraged students to provide feedback on any of these matters and reminded them that my door is always open for discussions.

Thank you for your continued support, working together we can support your daughters to make great progress and maximise their potential.

Yours sincerely

Ms Fiona Stone
Headteacher



success in learning for all

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Did you know...just registering your daughter for Free School Meals means that our school gets extra money!!

You can register your daughter for Free School Meals if you receive any of these benefits:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

If you want your daughter to have a free, healthy meal at lunchtime that's great – she will get a free meal (saving you more than £400 per year!). There is NO stigma attached and no one will know because we operate a cashless payment system in our Dining Hall.

If you qualify but don't want your daughter to have Free School Meals, please still register as the school will get additional funding. Your daughter can still continue to have her packed lunch as normal!

To apply please complete the on-line Free School Meals application on the Redbridge.gov.uk website. You can apply regardless of which borough you live in because your daughter attends a school in Redbridge. It is a simple 1-page form, so don't delay, apply today!!

It is important to note that:

- Taking the meal is recommended but not compulsory
- Your daughter may receive additional help as a result of being registered, for example, help with the cost of music lessons or school trips
- No one will know and it will not affect any other benefits you are claiming
- Registering your daughter for Free School Meals will bring in more money to our school.

Thank you for your co-operation.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Day	Activity	Time	Room	Year
EVERYDAY	Library Club: CFI	Lunchtime & After School	Library	Years 7 - 13
EVERYDAY	IT Club: RGO/HGU	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	F6/F7	Years 7 - 13
MONDAY				
BREAKTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	10.40 – 11.00am	S5	Years 7-11
	Vocal Group: SDE	10.40 – 10.55a.m.	S5	Years 9 - 13
LUNCHTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	12.40 – 1.10pm	S5	Years 7-11
	Guitar Ensemble: SDE	1.10 – 1.40pm	S5	Years 7-11
	Indoor Rowing: JMA	12.40 – 1.15p.m.	Gym	All Years
	Movie Club: GAD	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	Chapel	All Years
AFTER SCHOOL	Athletics Club: JMA	3.30 – 4.30p.m.	Playground/Gym	All Years
	English 5 O'Clock Club	3.30 - 5.00p.m.	F8	Year 11
TUESDAY				
BREAKTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	10.40 – 11.00am	S5	Years 7-11
LUNCHTIME	Music Composition Club: SDE	12.40 – 1.10pm	S5	Years 9 - 10
	Violin Ensemble: SDE	1.10 – 1.40pm	S5	Years 7-11
	STEM Club: AKO	1.00 – 1.30pm	G12	Years 7-11
Fortnightly	Debating Team: EDO	12.40 – 1.10pm	F19	Years 12-13
	Maths Club: TKA	12.40 – 1.40pm	S6	Years 7-11
	Chemistry Club: JOS	12.40 – 1.10pm	G8	Years 10-13
	Newspaper Club: NAS	12.40 – 1.40p.m.	F9	Years 7-11
AFTER SCHOOL	Subject Champions: RBA	3.30 – 4.30pm	G15	Years 12-13
	Netball Club: SMA	3.30 – 4.30p.m.	Playground/Gym	Years 9 - 13
WEDNESDAY				
BREAKTIME	Ukulele Group: DEA	10.40 – 11.00a.m.	S5	Years 7-8
LUNCHTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	12.40 – 1.00p.m.	S5	Years 7-11
	UAI Choir: SDE	1.00 – 1.40p.m.	S5	Years 7-11
	Mindfulness and Wellbeing: NKA	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	G9	Years 12-13
	LGBT Club: HMA/EDO	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	F19	All Years
	Music-Meditative/Gospel/Worship: GAD	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	Chapel	All years
	Spanish Speaking Club: SCL	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	G5	Year 11
	SEN Science Club: MUD	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	G11	Year 8
	Islamic Society: AAH	1.05 – 1.30p.m.	F8	All Years
AFTER SCHOOL	DT Catch Up: AKO	3.30 – 4.30p.m.	G12	Year 11
	Football Club: LBU/DOK	3.30 – 4.30p.m.	Playground/Gym	All Years
	Peer Mentor: NKA/RBA/HCO	3.30 – 4.30p.m.	G15	Years 7-13
THURSDAY				
BREAKTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	10.40 – 11.00a.m.	S5	Years 7-11
LUNCHTIME	Worship Band: SDE	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	S5	Years 7-11
	Woodwind Ensemble: SDE	1.10 – 1.40p.m.	S5	Years 7-11
	Art Club: RBU	12.40 – 1.40p.m.	S2	GCSE Students
	Knitting Club: HMA & Mrs Mackie	12.40 – 1.40p.m.	F18	Years 7-11
	Charity and Enterprise: LBU	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	F10	Years 12-13
	Rosary/Prayer Group: GAD	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	Chapel	All Years
Fortnightly	African Caribbean Society: TKA/NKA	1.10 – 1.40p.m.	S6	All Years
Fortnightly	ECO Club: HCO/JMC	12.40 – 1.00p.m.	G3	Years 7-8
AFTER SCHOOL				
FRIDAY				
BREAKTIME	Music Practice (Invitation only): SDE	10.40 – 11.00a.m.	S5	Years 7-11
LUNCHTIME	UAI Band: SDE	12.40 – 1.10p.m.	S5	Years 7-11
	Glee Club: SDE	1.10 – 1.40p.m.	Dance Studio	Years 7-11
	Art Club: RBU	12.40 – 1.40p.m.	S2	Years 10-13
	Bible Study Group: GAD	12.40 – 12.10p.m.	Chapel	All Years
	Chess Club: BFA	1.00 – 1.30p.m.	F13	All Years
AFTER SCHOOL	Running Club (all distances): JMA	3.20 – 4.15p.m.	Playground/Gym	All Years

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance is a term used to refer to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. It's often rooted in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. The rate of children who miss school more than 10% of the time in England has more than doubled since before the pandemic: rising from 10.9% in 2018-19, to 22.3% in 2022-23.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics, bullying and friendship difficulties at school, pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams, or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include complaining of a tummy ache, headache, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity which is making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGING OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

While there may be times you feel frustrated or angry, try to stay calm; acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss a range of coping strategies together to help them face the discomfort and overwhelming feelings. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk and practice the strategies in less overwhelming situations first.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and limited time on screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

REDUCE STIMULATING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

If a child is avoiding school, reduce their access to more stimulating activities (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends) during school hours, where possible. This reduces the potential for the child having rewarding experiences at home, which could be interpreted as a positive aspect of avoiding school.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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