

## *Season's Greetings from Mr Barzey*



September seems like a distant memory!

We have come to the end of a long and busy term and the whole school family is looking forward to a well-earned rest. The prospect of Christmas cheers us and lifts our spirits away from the cold, dark and depressing weather of the season. It was particular heart-warming to see staff and students (below) recognise the spirit of the season, dressed in their lovely colourful Christmas jumpers.

Our school continues to grow with additional children starting all of the time, which is a wonderful compliment and testimony to the team here. During a recent review, we were yet again recognised as being a Leading (Outstanding) school which is a fantastic achievement and something we have all contributed towards. It was highlighted that our provision for children's literacy and English, among other subjects, is of a commendably high standard. I am also proud to announce in this vein that our young authors worked with a professional writer to publish an anthology of short stories and poems. A celebratory book launch will, circumstances permitting, take place in January.

The highlight for this term was going to be sharing an audience with parents at the Christmas production. Students and staff of the Creative department have been working extremely hard to showcase this production in our main hall, which has been recently fitted with state-of-the-art, light and sound technology. Unfortunately, due to the risk imposed by the possible spread of the COVID virus, we have had to postpone the live productions. We hope to circulate a recorded version of the production.

It is important that we do not just dwell on recent events but also reflect on the work of the school since September. There is indeed a great deal to be positive and confident about with regard to children of the Heron Hall family both in terms of their learning and wider contributions to school life. Winning debating competitions, football and netball matches and National Computing competitions are a hall mark of the resilience of both staff and students. They are not distracted by the challenges and upsetting events of the recent times but are seizing every moment and recognising it as a step towards achieving and releasing their undoubted potential. A supportive and caring family, nurturing resilient and tolerant children as the excellent visionaries of tomorrow is what we are proudest of at Heron Hall.

May I take this opportunity to record my thanks and admiration for the collective efforts of all members of our Heron Hall Family-staff and students. We are all looking forward to Christmas and our whole staff team would like to wish everyone peace and happiness in all homes and families during this holiday season—may we all be safe and keep healthy. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.



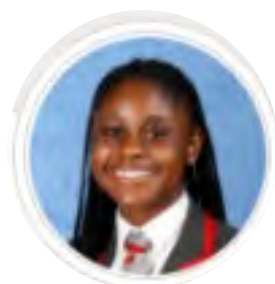
## New Student Leadership Team

The start of the new year brings a new Student Leadership Team. The new Head Boy and Head Girl are looking forward their year ahead and we will be hearing from Michael and Phoebe a little later on. It is an honour to have a new crop of young students at Heron Hall looking forward to making a difference and continuing to improve the school experience for all of the students at the school. Mr Molokwu is looking forward to leading the new crop of leaders this year and helping to make and affect real change. Here are the students looking to lead the school this year:

✓ Summer Ford	7E	✓ Sumayyah Ozturk	10T
✓ Batur Yakub	7Y	✓ Boran Sahin	10U
✓ Rohey Sey	7Y	✓ Sumayyah Shiekh - Nur	10I
✓ Ayana Binkoreng	7L	✓ Faiza Ahmed El Arbi	10Q
✓ Francesca Silva - Baker	7Y	✓ Sumayah Osman	10T
		✓ Mary Safoa Botwe	10Y
✓ Afolabi Okusage	8Q		
✓ Aiden Keefe	8E	✓ Michael Amankwah - Baidu (HB)	11Q
✓ Najma Mohamed	8T	✓ Phoebe Agi (HG)	11Q
✓ Aleyna Kaya	8Q	✓ Joshua Jackson (DHB)	11L
		✓ Safia Sriskandarajah (DHG)	11L
✓ Joseph Bunda	9Q	✓ Tamarah Edwards	11Q
✓ Zainab Abdalla	9U	✓ Chinemerem Christian - Iwuagwu	11E
✓ Amir Ashraf	9A		

## Messages from the Head Boy & Head Girl

### Head Girl: Phoebe Agi



I am beyond grateful for the position of Head Girl here at Heron Hall Academy. It is now my mission to lead and manage our students into success whilst making sure that they use our STRIVE values to encourage positive behaviour and actions. I believe that every student here at Heron Hall Academy has a thought and a say and I am here to manifest those thoughts into reality. Heron Hall has a comfortable, loving and educational environment but I want to further emphasise this. I want the students to feel heard whilst taking into consideration the teachers' and parents' thoughts.

As Head Girl, I believe that it is my duty to properly represent the students of this school, as well as being the bridge between the two aspects of the school, the students and teachers, and to, along with my fellow members of the student body, bring forth ideas to help build a more harmonious future for the school.

After secondary school, I intend on furthering my education by taking my A Levels at Sixth Form and then going on to University to study fashion design or business management. I am grateful for the support Heron Hall has given me in taking my first steps on this journey.

### Head Boy: Michael Amankwah-Baidu

It is so strange to me that I was elected to be the new Head Boy. At times, it feels like I haven't fully adjusted to the immense status and expectations that have been placed onto me, but deep down, in spite of any fears I may have, I am fully assured that I have what it takes to live up to those expectations.

I'm proud that I was able to stand in front of a room full of teachers, people whose authority I admire, and make them a solemn promise that I deserved their support, their belief and their trust. A promise to the parents and children of the school that I would be someone worth following, someone who they could trust with their problems and someone whose actions I would ultimately be able to benefit.

My aspirations of creating a respectable legacy in this school, and the world at large, have only just begun. And accepting this position with pride was the first step on a long journey of prosperity and excellence.





## Heron Hall visits Parliament

In October, Mr Warner, Madam Chalmers and Madam Zindilis took 29 students to visit the Houses of Parliament and see the seat of British democracy for themselves. Although they went during conference season so there were no politicians on show, the students got a tour of the parliament building including the House of Lords, the House of Commons and Westminster Hall where parliamentary debates used to be held. One of the touring parties even managed to sneak into the Prime Minister's private dining room. They then took part in a session on democracy and voting and created their own political parties and manifestos with an eventual vote. It really helped the GCSE Citizenship students to understand the importance of democracy, voting and how the government works.



On the way back from Parliament the students took a tour of central London and went to see 10 Downing Street, the British Cavalry regiment at Horse Guards Parade and even took a trip to Buckingham Palace – unfortunately the Queen was not at home! It was great to finally be able to take students out on a trip and be able to experience learning back outside of the classroom. Hopefully this year will see many more exciting trips across this year.

## Heron Hall is Officially Leading the Way in Local Education

Each year Heron Hall takes part in a peer review scheme called Challenge Partners. Following on from the success of the school last year when they were nominated for the Pearson Secondary School of the Year and came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the entire country the school entered the review in high hopes. Over 3 days, Head teachers from a range of schools across the South East of England came into the school to review the teaching, behaviour and support provided to the students. Over the 3 days they observed lessons from a range of departments, spoke to students and looked at the marking and feedback provided to the students. They spoke to all of the Senior Leadership Team and even spent time looking at the careers and PSHE provision given to students at Heron Hall.

They were especially impressed with the English department and the work being done on literacy across the school. Special praise was given to the library and the work that Madam Morris is doing there. Each month the library promotes a range of new reading materials and the progress made by students in their literacy is fantastic. You can see the fantastic displays put together for Black History month by the library team. We have always known that literacy is at the heart of everything that we do at Heron Hall and to have this validated by head teachers in other schools was a proud day.

After the three days all of the reviewers were extremely happy with what they saw and rated the school as “Leading” in all aspects. This is the equivalent to Ofsted's outstanding and highlights the excellent work that is going on in the classrooms at Heron Hall but also the hard work and dedication of the students who attend the school. It really is great to see the vision and aspiration of all of the students, staff and parents being recognised.

**AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT - BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**DAVID OLUSOGA**  
*Black and British: a Forgotten History*

David Adetayo Olusoga OBE is a British historian, writer, broadcaster, presenter and film-maker. He is Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester. He has presented historical documentaries on the BBC and contributed to The One Show and The Guardian.

*Black and British: A Forgotten History*, is not about slavery as such, but it is a radical reappraisal of the parameters of history, exposing inaccuracies in the nation's version of its past.

**PROUD TO BE**

Available in Heron Hall Academy Library!

### Year 8s Tackle Climate Change

In October Madam Nelson took the Year 8s to the Royal Institution, the birthplace of the Electric Motor by Michael Faraday in 1821. The Royal Institution was hosting an exhibition on experiments that might help to save the planet from Climate Change. Held at the same time as COP26 was going on in Glasgow students were able to see small scale operations of generating electricity using renewable resources and got to meet engineers and ambassadors as they demonstrated STEM innovations that can be used to tackle climate change. Students came away feeling that, they too, even on an individual basis, can start to make a change to reduce climate change.



### Year 11 Theatre Trip



Year 11 Drama students took a trip to the West End to see 'The Woman in Black' which is proclaimed to be 'The Most Terrifying Live Theatre Experience in The World'. The performance didn't disappoint, with everyone on the trip on the edge of their seats after being lulled into a false sense of security at the start of the performance ... some were gripping onto each other (not naming names!) in fear of where the Woman in Black might appear next! Students thought the production elements used, especially the terrifying use of sound and lighting, enhanced the performance and now have lots of theatrical moments to write about in their GCSE Drama written exam!

### Wild Flower Spring

The Eco-Committee have met several times this year already to discuss how we can make Heron Hall Academy a 'greener' school. One idea the students had was to plant wildflowers around the school. Early this year groups of students went out to various outdoor areas of the school site to sprinkle the seeds in various locations. We look forward to warmer weather in Spring to see if this idea has worked. Plans are also in place to build the bug hotel and bird boxes for the biodiversity area. Recycling of plastic, paper and cardboard is still ongoing and students are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to school.

### Diana Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

Earlier this year 20 students were trained to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors by the Princess Diana Award scheme. Madam Italia, Madam Edwards and Mr Martin were also trained alongside students and staff and students now proudly display the anti-bullying ambassador badge on their lapel to show that they belong to this group. Students are able to help report any issues of bullying that they see to these ambassadors or to tell any staff member. There are 5 students in Year 7 to 10 who are able to help mediate and resolve conflict between students as well as working to make sure that students feel included and that concerns can be reported. For Anti-bullying week, the Ambassadors produced a video that was shown to all year groups focussing on words and being kind to others. It is hoped that the students will lead on workshops next year.





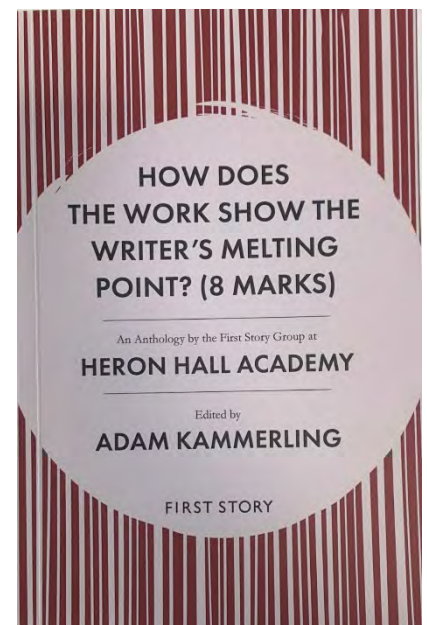
## English Shoebox Theatres

As part of their Year 7 English curriculum, the students made shoebox theatres at the end of the summer term to represent their interpretations of the Shakespeare Play, a Midsummer Night's Dream. The students enjoyed being able to put what they had learnt into practice and had fun taking a 500 year old play and turning it into a modern day, creative interpretation. Here are some of the winning contributions from Aidan Keefe, Habib Simek, Zehra Hermanci and Rhea Bamotra.



As literacy is the heart of our school, we always look for ways to entice our students so that they can become the future writers of society. One such initiative began last academic year, working alongside First Story: a charity that places authors into schools to help students unlock their creative writing potential.

We have been very fortunate to have been placed with Adam Kammerling, a London based writer who has begun to inspire our students from his very first visit. 15 year 9 students, now year 10, have created their own anthologies: a mixture of creative writing pieces, which has culminated in Heron Hall receiving its very own publication of texts, written entirely by our students. We look forward to our celebratory event in January 2022, when we will present each of our students with their very own copy and celebrate their success with their loved ones.



## Heron Hall Prepares for Performances

The fantastic Performing Arts department have taken on the challenge of not one, but two, musical and drama performances this year. Now that the stage has been kitted out with lights, curtains and a sound system there is no stopping the dramatic performances. There were plans to have a Christmas performance to demonstrate the fantastic musical ability of the students at Heron Hall but the live version of this has been postponed due to COVID-19. A recorded version will be uploaded to YouTube in due course – watch this space!

Not satisfied with preparing for this Madam Hester has been working with Madam Regelous to put on a full scale musical performance in March. Auditions were held and rehearsals are well under way for the performance of Aladdin which will be taking place later on in the year. This will be the first in a long line of school productions and performances and we are excited to help our students develop themselves in all of their talents. Tickets will be on sale soon and it will be a great opportunity to see what the staff and students can achieve creatively.

### **Heron Hall Debating Success**

Heron Hall now has a weekly Debating Society open to all year groups with an ethos of openness, tolerance for those who disagree and polite discourse. Students are diligent in preparing for their debates. We have discussed a range of topics from holding America to account for war crimes following September the 11<sup>th</sup>, the banning cell phones in school, the necessity of school uniform, social media and its dangers/ gender assignment at birth and many more topics which the students select themselves, with some guidance.



We follow Parliamentary debating rules and so far this year, we have taken part in the prestigious English Speaking Union's Mace competition and The English Speaking Union's Churchill Competition, winning our round and progressing in the latter to the second round to take place at Dartmouth House in Mayfair in January. Our Mace team comprised of a year 8 student and a year 10 who had only been debating for a few weeks taking on an experienced sixth form team from another school. Despite not progressing, they performed with wit and articulacy and were unfortunate not to progress. In the new year, we will compete in the Oxford and Cambridge Debating University Competitions.

### **Heron Hall STRIVE Day**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Heron Hall held their first STRIVE Day of the year. The 6 STRIVE values of Supportiveness, Tolerance, Resilience, Integrity, Visionary and Excellence underpin all of the work that we do at Heron Hall. As well as learning about the academic subjects and succeeding in their exams it is important that students also develop the wider, character education skills that will help them to succeed in their futures.

Students in Year 7 were learning about social media and the dangers and benefits of a life lived on line. They thought about the way that social media shapes our perception of image and identity and how we change our behaviour to fit what we think others might want us to be like. They also considered how diverse the world around them is and especially how diverse the media is. In Year 8 they studied the way that the British government works and how democracy functions in the UK. This was followed up by watching a documentary about a Holocaust Survivor called Arek Hersch who will be visiting the school in January to speak to the students about his experiences in the death camp, Auschwitz, in WWII. In Year 9, the students were learning about personal health thinking about obesity, dieting, and how to carry out emergency first aid. This session was especially important with students learning about how to carry out CPR – with some studies saying that CPR can save a life 80% of the time this is a vitally important life skill for our students to learn.

Over the course of the year, we will continue to teach the students the importance of developing themselves as well rounded individuals and focusing not just on their academic skills but also their character education as well.

### **Maximise & Revision for Year 11s**

This half term the Year 11 students at Heron Hall had the benefit of accessing high quality revision experience and techniques from the organisation Maximise. Maximise sends in highly trained teachers and educators to schools to teach students about how to revise, techniques on managing revision schedules and the problems and pitfalls of revising badly! The students were engaged and enthusiastic and the trainer said that he had not taught students who were that passionate about their exams and ambition in a long time and he was confident that they Year 11s would go on to have great success in their exams next year.





### “Crime Of the Century”



Back at the start of this half term, the Year 10 students were given a live theatre production of a play called Crime of the Century. Crime of the Century is a hard-hitting, raw piece of theatre which explores the issues surrounding gang violence. Using words and movement alongside a contemporary score of hip-hop and dance music, the performance packs a frightening punch and acts as a positive tool in the fight against the savagery of knife crime.

Educational tools like this have helped us to be able to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of the dangers that can exist in society today and how to protect themselves from them.

### “Black Men Teach”



Some of our Year 11 boys were lucky enough to have access to an award winning organisation this half term.

Madam Chalmers organised for a social enterprise called “Black Men Teach” to come in and speak to our young men in Year 11 about aspiration, careers and striving to succeed in life.

It was a truly inspirational event where the students were able to listen to the success stories and pathways of people who had walked the same journey as them beforehand.

The organisation states that one of the targeted focus areas for them is outreach, where they deliver workshops raising the profile of the teaching profession. They point out that recent data shows that black men are massively underrepresented when it comes to teaching because there aren’t many men in the profession, thus negatively impacting the diversity of role models for young black men. They highlight that:

- ❑ In 2019, 85% of all teachers in state-funded schools in England were White British
- ❑ White British made up 85.8% of male teachers and 85.7% of female teachers
- ❑ The Black ethnicity only accounted for 2.3% of the teacher workforce
- ❑ 1% of Headteachers were black

3 of our students have been lucky enough to secure an additional virtual mentoring partnership with the organisation and they will be meeting them over the course of the year to explore more about their own vision for the future and how to achieve success. These opportunities really help our students to continue to strive for excellence and aim higher.

### **Filming Experience for Year 10 & 11 Students**

Over the half term break twelve students from Year 10 and 11 took part in filming for a new up and coming film funded by Enfield Council and written and produced by local director, Leo Powell. Leo's previous film, Step Back, was nominated for a raft of awards at national and international film festivals and he invited students with a passion for drama to act as extras in his new film. The focus of the film was on ambition and success and the students play a key role in several scenes. At Heron Hall we are always looking for new opportunities to help students engage in their passions.

### **Panto Experience for Year 7**



The students in Year 7 were lucky enough to experience a traditional Christmas tradition this week. The dramatic tradition of Pantomime has long been associated with Christmas and this week a company came in to deliver Dick Whittington to our Year 7 students. There were plenty of jokes and slapstick moments and it was a truly memorable and enjoyable experience for all involved.

### **Breakfast & Bike Sheds**

The PE department sourced some money to build a new lockable bike shed at the front of the school building. Students were encouraged to cycle to school and with somewhere now to lock up their bike it was great to see an increase in the number of students helping the planet and getting fit by cycling to school. I think it also helped that the PE department were providing breakfast for any student who chose the greener, healthier way to get to school. Keep it up Heron Hall – saving the planet one school journey at a time.