



THE YARDLEYS NEWSLETTER

From our headteacher...



I am delighted to be able to bring you another edition of the Yardleian, the school newsletter published for over 100 years. This academic year of 2022/23 has already been a season of reflection of yesteryears, notably the national mourning of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and, more locally, our former Headteacher, Mrs Jones. For many, this has triggered feelings of grief, but also celebrations of lives given to so much loyal service. This newsletter gives just a small flavour of the many wonderful activities and opportunities our students and staff are involved in. As I often say, learning in the classroom is only a small part of a child's school experience. What is also important is the learning that takes place beyond the classroom and the wider opportunities that help to shape our students' thinking.

Reflecting on some key events within school this term, in September we held a highly successful open week with much interest from prospective parents, despite the school continually being oversubscribed. In October, we had an encouraging visit from the Minister for School Standards and we held our annual 'Attitude to Learning Day' almost 90% of parents/carers who signed up for appointments.

We have welcomed eight new members of staff to our school ranging from Attendance & Welfare, Computing, Languages, English, Music as well as an additional Assistant Headteacher, Ms Robbins. We have also provided a number of teaching placements and academic mentors within a range of subjects.

In response to listening to our 'student voice', we continue to welcome outside organisations into our school assemblies. For example, West Midlands Police and Loudmouth. We also hosted a number of themed events, such as European Week and have facilitated many field trips, sports events, tournaments, extra-curricular clubs and enrichment opportunities. We also continue to welcome a number of parents into our school for workshops, such as ADHD, Dyslexia, Y11 revision.

I am pleased to announce that the school will be bringing in new caterers in the new term and is currently working on introducing a new praise and reward system. More details will follow in due course.

From all the staff and trustees at Yardleys School, we hope that you have a peaceful break and all our best wishes for the New Year. We look forward to seeing students back in school on **Wednesday 4th January 2023**.

Neil Warner

Neil Warner
Headteacher



Results & Achievements

GCSE Results 2022

We are pleased to announce that one third of students attained at least one grade higher for every subject than their SATs predicted and 20% of all grades were 7+. A great achievement for all.

Grade 5+	Subject/s
60%	All grades
46%	Maths
75%	English
90%	Biology
86%	Chemistry
88%	Physics
77%	Computer Science
85%	Religious Studies
70%	MFL (French or Spanish)

Overall, it was an excellent day, with many students clearly excited about their results and looking forward to their future destinations.



Attitude to Learning Day

On Thursday 20th October, we held our annual 'Attitude to Learning Day' where almost 90% of parents/carers attended appointments to discuss student behaviour and attitude towards learning at school, which plays a huge part in being able to achieve their best academically. We would like to thank all parents/carers for their active participation, which was extremely positive and we are addressing any concerns raised.



Praise & Reward

Headteacher's Commendation - School Charter

Letters and certificates of commendation were awarded to four students for their outstanding achievement and initiative associated with the completion of the 'Switch-on Reading Programme' in record time.

Callum Furlong	8 GRI
Kian McEwan	8 GRI
Mustapha Rauf	8 PYE
Amara Shakeel	8 GXT



Young Writers Twisted Tales Competition

The competition was to write a short story from an unusual point of view or a new/skewed version of a well-known story. The intention being for students to engage in creative writing and to consider character development/narrative voices, generating their own creative ideas to help them grow as writers.

A special assembly was held on 3rd October for the 78 Yardleys students who took part, where a letter and certificate of commendation, together with a bookmark, were personally presented by Mr Warner. Five of those students were selected by the school as overall winners and received a goody bag from Ms Arshad. A special mention also goes to **Mujtaba Nadeem 8JTA** who helped with the collation.

An anthology of the short stories has now been published in a book for the parents of all the students who participated. We hope that this excellent demonstration of initiative, creativity and talent inspires other students in developing valuable life-long literacy skills and other future creative writing ventures.



School winners

Babli Sangida	8 DSR
Isha Shahenn	8 GXT
Mehrunisa Mahmood	8 PYE
Christal McLeod	10 AQS
Kawsar Hassan	11 TDN

Religious Education Competition

Students in Year 7 were invited to learn about Diwali, the festival of light by either producing their own lantern, creating a poem or storyboard about light over darkness, or producing a rangoli pattern.

Competition winners experienced a 'school langar' where pizza was shared and we discussed sewa within Sikhism, the festival of Diwali and other spiritual and philosophical topics. The winners had lots of questions and comments they put forward to the RE team.





Subject Spotlight



Music Maestro!

Music and Performing Arts remain an important aspect of the school's curriculum and 'whole child' aim. Since the relaxation of the challenges faced by Covid, we were able to appoint Mr Dodds, Head of Music in September and will continue to offer GCSE music to all students.

Mr Dodds comes with 8 years' experience as a music teacher and is very much a 'one man band' when it comes to playing instruments, including guitar, drums, bass, keyboard and is heavily into music production and technology, having recorded all of the instrumental parts for the backing track for the new staff tradition of performing the '12 Days of Christmas'.

One of our aims at Yardleys is for students to take up the opportunity to complete GCSE music. To help with this, we are investing heavily in musical instruments and making greater use of the sound room and IT equipment for students to write, record and sample their own music.

Yardleys has a rich history of music and we would like to expand its offer to include new and exciting experiences outside of the curriculum. This will include instrumental lessons, extra-curricular clubs and trips to experience the local music scene, historic venues and recording studios in order to give a broad view of what music has to offer for recreational purposes, career opportunities and benefits to life and

mental health generally. Initially, the instruments offered for additional lessons will include: drums, guitar, bass guitar, singing and piano, with plans to expand into brass, strings and world instruments from a variety of cultures. We plan to showcase this for parents, trustees, friends and staff members in concerts and other events, celebrating students' progress each term and we very much look forward to seeing you then.

The Music Department historically had a strong ensemble ethos. All musicians work together as part of a band, choir, duet, quartet or as a whole-class, uniting musicians and equipping students with the skills of teamwork, the discipline of learning and practice and the lifelong benefits of resilience and creativity that are needed both in music and in all other aspects of life. Expanding the experience of music at Yardleys now will give students a passion to continue their development as performers and appreciative cultured musicians beyond Yardleys. The experience offered is designed to give students responsibility for their musical progress, towards being lifelong musical enthusiasts enriched with the skills and knowledge to continue making progress beyond the classroom.

School Choir

Yardleys is founded on British values and tradition, one of which has been that of the Yardleys School Choir, often winning awards for performances across the county. We would like to resurrect the school choir and currently have a unique opportunity of working with a third generation Choir Director, Ms Wilson. She has been involved with many projects, including working with schools across the West Midlands and with well-known names, such as the Ministry of Defence. We see this as a great opportunity, especially as she lives right on our doorstep in Yardley, Birmingham and is passionate about helping us get together and sing!

Any students interested in joining the choir or just finding out more, please speak to Mr Dodds.



The 'House of Wisdom' Choir from the Yardleian 1954-1955

Events & Experiences

European Week

To assist with Modern Foreign Languages ("MFL"), in September we hosted a week of European themed activities. Year 7 Spanish students enjoyed a Spanish dance workshop, Year 8 students wrote their first letter to their new PenPals in France and Spain and Year 10 students: **Iman, Hasan, Ehsanul, Akifah, Afia, and Kiera**, delivered a Spanish lesson to Year 6 students on 'food and drink' at Arden Primary School. We finished the week with Year 9 and Year 11 French students enjoying some breakfast at the French Restaurant Experience.



Duke of Edinburgh Awards

We are excited by the number of Year 9 students who have signed up to begin their journey to a bronze award this academic year. They will be preparing alongside several students from Year 10 who will be starting their silver award. The real work, and fun, will begin next term.



Crazy chemistry open evening

Mr Warner, Headteacher, enjoys experimenting with methane bubbles!



The 'Station Clock' - Our students make history!

Miss Ling & Miss Price took eight students to Birmingham Conservatoire on 10th November 2022, to take part in the recordings for a new Station Clock, being permanently installed at HS2 Curzon Station public plaza, Station Square.

The clock is a new large-scale public artwork created by Turner Prize winning artist Susan Philipsz. It is a sonic clock that will sound on the hour, every hour over a 7-day cycle with a changing composition of the voices of 1,092 Birmingham and Solihull residents; our students will be the tones of 3pm and 4pm.

The students were really excited and, in the words of **Eimaan Saghir**, it was a "big slay". The clock will be completed in 2028/2030, so we will just have to wait a little while longer to hear their enthusiastic vocals.

Children in Need Week

Ms Perry did a fantastic job of co-ordinating all the activities for both students and staff. These included a sponsored silence, staff bake-off, colouring competitions as well as various sporting tournaments.

One of the really nice aspects were some of the kind words written on the cards created by students and put on display. One of those cards read as follows:

I really hope help comes your way. Just know that there's always light at the end of the tunnel. 😊 **Amara Atif, Year 10**



Attendance Matters

Careers

Attendance at Yardleys School

- Students with the highest attendance achieve better exam results.
- Students with the highest attendance have a greater chance of securing a place at the college / sixth form of their choice.
- Students with the highest attendance maintain stronger friendships.
- Students with the highest attendance will engage in more extra-curricular and value added opportunities.

100%	Outstanding
97%	Good
95%	Good
90%	Improved reader
85%	Very concerned legal intervention is likely
80%	Extremely concerned legal intervention is very likely

← Yardleys School remains attendance target

Students should not be absent from school for the following reasons:

- A headache.
- Stomach pains.
- A cold, runny nose, temperature (that does not require medical attention) or sore throat.
- Toothache.
- A sports injury that has not required medical attention.
- Going on a school trip or educational visit the previous day.

How Parents Can Help

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child goes to school every day.
- Take family holidays outside term time.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness.
- Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework).
- Praise and reward your child's effort and achievements at school.

**** Please contact your child's Head of Year immediately if you need support with child's attendance—we want to help!**

School attendance and the law

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:
 "If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence."
 • The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a victim surcharge, and/or make a Parenting Order.

Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996:
 "If in the above circumstances you, the parent, know that your child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fail without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend, you are guilty of an offence."
 • The court can fine you up to £2,500 per child and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months, impose a victim surcharge and order payment of the prosecution costs.

Year 11 Leavers' Destinations

The 2021/22 Year 11 leavers' destinations resulted in 99% of the year group having a positive destination, continuing their education and training at a college or apprenticeship training provider. Leavers went into a wider range of post-16 options including apprenticeships and T-Levels, with 63% of the leavers continuing their studies on a L3 qualification (choosing either A' levels, a BTEC Extended Diploma or a T-Level). There was also a strong focus on Science Technology Engineering & Maths ("STEM") subjects with 61.5% of students choosing a STEM-related course.

Careers Programme

Some examples of the range of opportunities:

- Amazon Web Services** - Ten Year 8 girls are currently taking part in this programme which aims to inspire more girls to think about going into careers in technology. It provides an opportunity for students to find out more about the technology sector and take part in a competition to design an app, with the best designs being entered into a national competition.
- Taster Day at the Hall Green Campus, South & City College** - A group of Year 10 and Year 11 SEND students attended the taster day, which provided an opportunity for them to experience what it is like in a college. The students got to try a range of tools (under supervision!) to make a door stop in the shape of a slice of cheese.
- Work Experience Programme (13-17 March 2023)** - Year 10 students have had a number of assemblies about the programme and been tasked to find their own placements, having been given tips on how best to approach employers. Part of this programme will also involve students taking part in mock interviews in January, to be carried out with representatives from a range of external employers. We encourage all students to complete work experience as this gives an opportunity to gain a better insight into certain occupations, develop people skills and maybe even do something good for their community. It also helps with having a broader aspect on personal statements for UCAS applications!
- Assemblies** - Several post-16 providers have delivered assemblies to the Year 11 students, helping to make students aware of the different post-16 routes that are available and to gain a better understanding of entry requirements.
- University Experience Taster Day** - A group of high achieving Year 7 and Year 8 students attended University of Birmingham to learn more about what universities have to offer, the range of courses that are available and the opportunity for the students to ask some very inspiring questions about Higher Education. Students were inspired by a number of Student Ambassadors from the university who talked about their university experience.
- Birmingham Conservatoire 'Station Clock'** - As mentioned on page 5, a group of students from Years 7-9 had their voices recorded in actual recording studios and were given an opportunity to find out more about some of the different job roles within the creative sector.
- Future Makers Show** - Six Year 11 students got to go to the [show](#) at Millennium Point, designed to inspire the next generation of engineers and makers. The show was supported by some large engineering employers, many of whom sent their own apprentices along to inspire the students.



Ms J Price, Careers Co-ordinator

Travelling abroad during term time

The main reasons recorded for student absence at Yardleys, include illness, late arrival at school/lessons, no reason provided (unable to make contact with parents/carers) and unauthorised family holiday/absence. The school receives a number of requests for holidays to be taken during school term time, the huge majority are **not authorised**. The school has always been clear that leave cannot be taken during term time, except in exceptional circumstances. Absence not only disrupts a student's learning, but can adversely affect the learning and behaviour of other students in their class. **Please be aware that where any child is absent for a prolonged period without authorisation, this can result in legal action which may then lead to court action, a fine, a criminal record and put the child's school place at risk.**

Enrichment

Wide range of activities

Ms Patrick and Ms O'Loughlin have done a fantastic job of co-ordinating the vast variety of enrichment activities. Enrichment is all about encouraging our students to 'know more and do more' and this term has been no different.



We offer some fantastic activities throughout the year for enrichment purposes, ranging from Amazon Girls Coding group to Zumba and covering the four key areas - physically active, mentally stimulating, creative and community based. Staff have been able to share their hobbies and wider knowledge/experience and we aim to offer more and different the future.

Students have enjoyed the new activities introduced, some that may develop into hobbies/interests and new skills of their own.

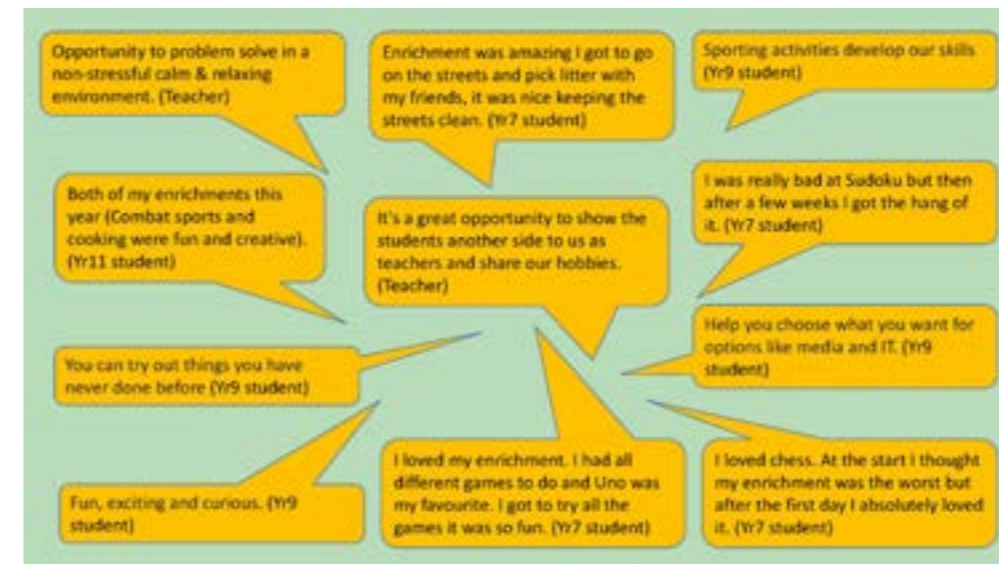


What do the students think about it all?

After the first half-term, Enrichment Block 1, we asked our staff and students what they thought of enrichment, around the following questions:

- What do you like about it?
- What could be improved?
- What do you get out of it?

...and this is what some of them had to say.....



The Library

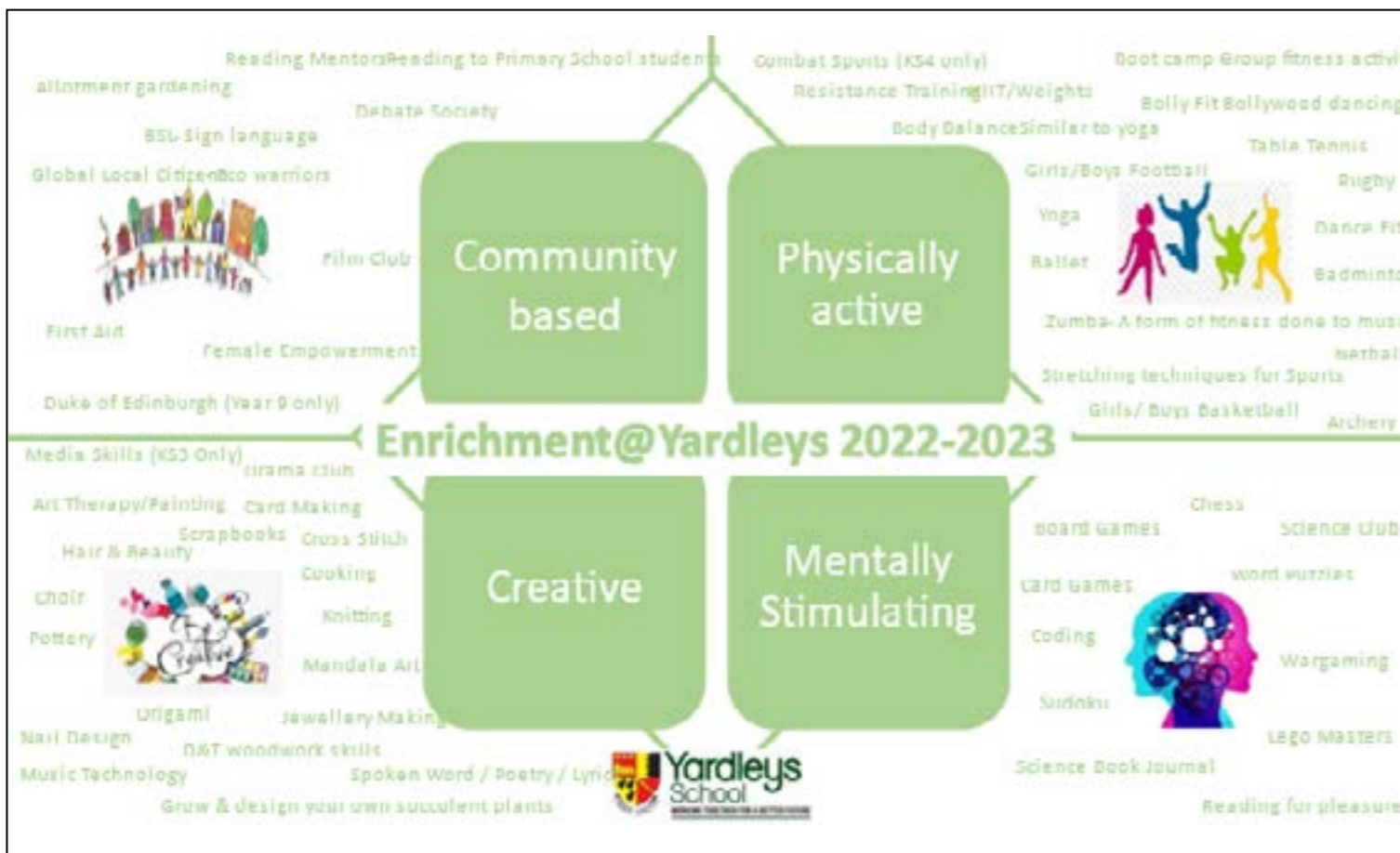
Yardleys School is very privileged to have been given the opportunity by the Federation of Children's Book Groups to participate in choosing the books for the national [Children's Book Award 2023](#). Our students are currently reading and voting on the long list of books for this prestigious event next year.

Book club - What are you reading?

During enrichment, we have been running the 'Reading for Pleasure' activity where students are encouraged to read books of their choice, write reviews or give verbal recommendations to others, whilst some students help with displays of books and make bookmarks etc.

Separately, a group of other students have been visiting Al-Furqan School to run a reading group. Ms Deakin also started a Professional Reading Group for teaching staff this term. We therefore wanted to expand the offer to our students here.

If any students are interested in leading or joining a book club as part of extra-curricular or enrichment activities, please speak to Mrs Keskinilinc in the Library or Ms Patrick.



Prize draw

Each half-term enrichment block, staff nominate two students from each activity to enter into an end-of-year prize draw. We will bring more details about this as the academic year unfolds.

Pastoral

At Yardleys, our pastoral team, led by our senior leaders, Ms Basra and Ms Yates, oversee and provide a range of pastoral provision. Within school, this currently includes mentoring, a school counsellor who visits twice weekly and Heads of Year support and family liaison. We retain two counselling sessions each week to accommodate urgent referrals. For example, in the case of unexpected traumatic events, such as a close family bereavement. Our extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities also provide a huge opportunity to develop the 'whole child', aiming to help students better manage their emotions, physical and mental health. A triage of senior staff meet half-termly to review both safeguarding and mental health referrals.

We continue to develop all of our school programmes, including pastoral, and are considering further preventative measures and early intervention support, which may extend to include more specialist support, whether via sign-posting or bringing in external charities and other such organisations into school.

The Bereavement Journey



We recognise that there may be specific traumatic or life events, such as family bereavement, job loss, serious accident, illness or separation, all of which can impact on students' behaviour and the

ability to focus on tasks. As mentioned on the front page, this past year has seen a number of bereavements, including for some of our students. Bereavement is often described as a 'journey' and needs the love and support of a community of people. More specialised information and external support is available, such as via the charity website, [Cruse Bereavement Support](https://www.cruse.org.uk) who provide some really helpful and practical material, including specifically for children and those who support others going through the grieving process, all helping us to better understand and support our friends, family and colleagues.



Special Educational Needs & Disability ("SEND") - Parent Workshops

To further support the parents/carers of our SEND students and to promote the fantastic community inclusivity that we have here in Yardleys and are so proud of, we have run several parental workshops this term. The workshops have focused on autism, Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder ("ADHD") and moderate learning difficulties, with the latter being divided into two sessions for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, as this need is by far the most common in schools. Each workshop was designed to inform and inspire a greater understanding of the child's need, including reference to definitions, characteristics and strategies of support. This was followed by an open forum, including Questions & Answers where parents/carers were able to share ideas, their experiences and good practice. The sessions have been well attended, with some parents/carers commenting that it was 'helpful', 'very informative', and that they 'learnt things they did not know or understand'. Some especially found the open forum really useful, particularly as they could share their own experiences with those of others, pick up new strategies or adjust slightly the ones they were already using.

From my own perspective, I found the sessions to be extremely useful, especially listening to the experiences and strategies used by the parents/carers of our SEND students and am really pleased with the feedback and requests for more sessions. A huge thank you to everyone involved, especially our parents/carers, who by taking part made the sessions a success. I am also grateful to our SEND students, who teach me something new every day.

Mr R Thornton, SEND Lead



Photo: Parent with our Chair of Trustees, Mrs J Helme

Geography

It has been great to get the students back out and about, experiencing beyond the classroom what they learn within the classroom. Since the restrictions of Covid 19 have been lifted, all year groups at Yardleys School now experience practical fieldwork. We tried virtual fieldwork during lockdown times, but you simply cannot beat getting out into the world and testing in reality the models and theories learnt in the classroom.



Year 7 will be studying the microclimates around the school site in the summer term and starting to build their geographical enquiry skills. How exactly is geography fieldwork different from a science experiment and what skills can you take from one area and use to help you in another are some key questions that we ask. Students will learn how to ask sensible and realistic enquiry questions and then carry them out.

Year 8 students travelled to the Lickey Hills Country Park to investigate the local deciduous woodland ecosystem. Students had to navigate around the site using their map skills to investigate the local flora and fauna, aided by the Ranger Team. They also spent time working together to build waterproof shelters from forest materials.

Year 9 students looked back at the industrial history of Birmingham, how the factories of the city became unprofitable and closed down and then what happened to the sites. The fieldtrip to study urban regeneration at Brindley Place and to ask if the money spent was worth it, a complete success, and if so, how. One student even found time to find out how uncomfortable a policeman's hat was!



At Key Stage 4, students take these same skills and build on them, investigating upland environments at Carding Mill Valley in Shropshire and evaluating the impact of the coming HS2 line to inner city Birmingham.

It has been a pleasure to get all students back out into the world and I am proud of the effort and enthusiasm both students and the members of staff put into the fieldwork provision here at Yardleys School.

Mr J Porter, Head of Geography

Round-Up



Our PE Department always has lots to offer students, both within the curriculum and as part of many lunchtime clubs, enrichment activities and after school tournaments/fixtures against a whole host of surrounding schools. We are currently unbeaten in all year groups in the cricket tournaments and have made a promising start to the football season. This year has even seen the introduction of a series of staff -v- students sports matches. Students drew in football, closely lost in netball but won victoriously in cricket. The series is finely poised for the New Year with a basketball fixture up next.

Mr L Smith, Acting Head of PE

Football Focus



Year 7 Football

Year 7 football has proved to be a crowd pleaser on and off the pitch as participation numbers are through the roof. With so many players to choose from it's no wonder they have put

'Match Fit'

Year 7 Cricket

The Year 7 team strode out to their first game against Small Heath, behind interim Captain, **Abdul**, as the corridors of Yardleys had filled with hushed questions all day. How would the team fair without Captain **Hadi**, who is known for his fast and precise bowling? Would **Saif** continue to perform in the field? Who would provide the firepower with the bat? Over the next 45 minutes any doubts were washed away with a dominant performance from the students. Mr Ziebeck's office was receiving warning calls for flying objects as Abdul teed off on any full length delivery launching it for 6. When he finally departed for a well-made 22 **Yusuf** and **Abdulla** picked up the reigns to carry the side to 79 off their 10 overs. What followed was a clinic in fast bowling by **Fazaan**. Picking up 5 wickets including 4 off 5 balls the pace bowler carried the team to a commanding win over a talented Small Heath side. Saif put the icing on the cake with an outrageous one handed catch leaving Mr Burt speechless. Up next for the side is Washwood Heath as they hope to carry on this hot start.

together so many strong performances with the solid core led by **Basit** and **Kader** up front. The goal threats are a constant throne in the side of opposition teams as they proved as they linked up for the only score in a 1-0 win against Holy Trinity to start the season. **Jabir** and **Ibrahim** in the middle of the park promote Mr Burt's love of free flowing, total football with their silky dribbling

beat not one, not two, but FOUR Year 8 tacklers before slotting in home. These marauding runs have been causing sleepless nights for many opposition defenders as it only goes to show the embarrassment of riches this side has at their disposal on the pitch. With tournaments coming up the side will be looking to continue to get results on the field to reflect their hard work.

Year 8 Football

An unbeaten start to life under the leadership of **Nabeel Mahmood** and Mr Burt is exactly what students were dreaming over the summer. A pair of 2-1 wins over both the Year 7s and a tough Cockshut Hill side have left fans and players wondering just how far this team can go. Starting from the back with a solid defence of **Abubakar** and **Harun**, the side prides itself on tough tackling and stoic defence. Captain Nabeel has scored in both games as **Basit** got a late winner against Cockshut to send the crowd wild and keep the Year 8 marching on in the cup. Who knows what the **Ali brothers** up top can continue to conjure up with aspirations of a deep cup run on the cards.

Mr J Burt, our newest addition to the PE Department

and smooth passing unlocking many a defence already this season. Despite all the quality going forward the 'Goal of the Season' for the Year 7s so far was from centre-back **Tayyub**, against the Year 8s as he picked up the ball and

Sporting Highlights



ACE Warwickshire Cricket Coaching

This autumn 125+ students participated in a coaching session led by Warwickshire Cricket coach Charlie Greening as part of the 'ACE cricket programme' offered by the board. The programme is a project delivered by the ACE charity and WCB to provide students with an African or Caribbean background the opportunity to play and progress in cricket. Birmingham's black community will be the first outside of London to benefit from the programme to reignite their passion for cricket and to provide youngsters with opportunities to play and pursue a career in the sport. Budding cricketers who come through the programme will have the opportunity further their game through the Club's links with Handsworth Cricket Club and further opportunities around Warwickshire.



Table Cricket

We have been very fortunate at Yardleys to receive table cricket coaching from Warwickshire Cricket Board on a regular basis. So far 36 students have benefited from this on three separate sessions, where they have spent an afternoon with Mr Turnbull learning how to play this new and exciting game! Our table cricket sessions are very popular so will continue in the New Year. On each coaching session we have trained up some of our own PE Ambassadors so they can continue Mr Turnbull's hard work as an extra-curricular activity which they can then lead for other students to enjoy.



Girls & Boys Active Festivals, Doug Ellis Sports Centre

Some of our Key Stage 3 girls and boys got to have an awesome time at the festivals, along with Mr Smith.

School Transition Festival at BCU (Years 7 & 8)

On 2nd December a group of 12 students attended the festival at Birmingham City University with Mr Ziebeck. The event aimed to help students with their transition journey from primary to secondary school or from Year 7 to Year 8 to make the whole process a smoother and generally a more enjoyable experience. This event was led by university students and consisted of lots of fun sports and competitions in a supportive environment. Students were awarded badges for the school games value: 'Teamwork'.

Dance Divas!

Six PE Ambassadors completed the **Young Dance Leaders Course** at the Hippodrome and returned to Yardleys upskilled ready to begin their own dance club at Yardleys on Wednesday lunchtimes. Then on 8th November they entered the annual **School Games dance competition** held at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall. The group of six Year 10 girls practised tirelessly with Ms Bradley and whilst the competition was fierce, it did not prevent our girls from performing their very best, with them finishing in fourth place and qualifying for the county dance finals at the Hippodrome in January. Well done girls for what you have achieved, your dedication and commitment.



Upcoming events

- Boccia and Kurling Festival
- Indoor Athletics Festival at Billesley Tennis Centre (combines indoor track and field events)
- NBA Basketball League - Year 7 & 8 students (mixed boys & girls)
- KS4 Badminton Tournament, Ark Victoria (two teams)
- Hosting 3v3 Basketball Collegiate Tournament - January (boys & girls)
- School Games dance finals in January, Birmingham Hippodrome
- Girls KS3 & KS4 Birmingham Basketball League
- Boy's Cricket and Football leagues

Good luck to all the students participating and representing Yardleys School!

PE Ambassadors



This term twenty PE Ambassadors applied and were interviewed to form a leadership team to help increase physical activity at Yardleys.

Their first challenge started in November when they submitted a week-long timetable of fundraising activities to raise money for Children in Need. The priority was inclusivity, wanting all students to be able to take part in fundraising and activities for a silver coin. Every break/lunch time included activities such as cake sales, penalty shoot outs, bear pong, volley ball, badminton, basketball, football tournaments, each costing any silver coin. Attendance was high and students enjoyed the competitive element.

Hansala Haider was victorious in the Bear Pong competition and well done to **Mohammed Amaan Hussain** as he knocked out all the competition through the rounds on the penalty shoot-out! Sponsorship activities left the school eerily quiet on the Tuesday as over 60 students signed up for the sponsored silence. On the Friday after school, students competed for the fastest mile in the sponsored run.

On the Tuesday after school, the staff netball team competed against four school netball teams, two Year 11 teams and two teams created from students that participate in netball extra-curricular club after school (on Tuesdays). The staff team struggled to get started, losing their first game 3-0. Fortunately for the staff team and due to the positive vibe from all of the spectators, that was the only loss of the night. It was so enjoyable a female cricket staff team is in the making ready for another competition after Christmas!

Thanks to all the staff that participated in the staff bake off. **Congratulations Ms Deakin!** Your Chocolate orange cookies were voted the best bake by teachers! We hope you enjoy your baking prize!



The PE Ambassadors raised a whopping **£132.43!**

If you can imagine every silver coin in that total equating to a student competing in an activity - AMAZING!

Ms E Perry, PE Teacher

Onboard with Who's Who

Another very busy term! Our trustees have met regularly and continue to visit the school to carry out special link trustee responsibilities. As chair, I meet the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team ("SLT") every fortnight and I am regularly in the school, talking with staff and students. For example, through the students I have ensured we are environmentally friendly. I am also the link trustee for the Communications Faculty and have various statutory responsibilities. However, all trustees are responsible for:

1. Setting the values and ethos of the school;
2. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of all in the school; and
3. Making sure that the school is financially secure.

On the Yardleys' [VLE](#), trustees have written a brief pen picture to introduce themselves; and I thought you would like to know what their individual interests are in the school.

- **Adill Hadi** is a very experienced trustee and leading youth worker. He is vice-chair and link trustee for safeguarding, liaising with Mr Lawrence to ensure that the school is a safe place.
- **Helen Handford** joined us last year is a new vice-chair. As a previous teacher at Yardleys, she is looking at our EAL practice and also how languages are taught at Yardleys.
- **Peter Lee** has been a trustee for many years. His experience was in education and he is now link trustee for Humanities, so students may see him at Loudmouth productions!
- **Chris Owen** became a trustee here last year. She was a highly successful Headteacher and is our link trustee for Pupil Premium ("PP"), overseeing how the PP money is spent effectively.
- **Nadeem Khan** is our financial expert. An ex-student who is very much involved in the community and a great advocate for the students.
- **Suzie Bennett** is an experienced parent trustee with us and one of our two SEND trustees, alongside **Pat Saunders** who is our newest community trustee and link trustee for mental health and wellbeing, working with Adill and Mr Lawrence.
- **Saiqa Rafiq** is our second parent trustee, working with Pat and Suzie to share their knowledge of the community with other trustees, raise any issues and help parents become more involved. For example, they are actively looking at how we can ensure school uniforms are passed on.
- **Bob Johnson** is the longest serving teacher at Yardleys! He has returned as a trustee in his retirement and is now the link trustee for behaviour, attendance, and alternative provision.
- Our three staff trustees are amazing and bring so much experience and wisdom to our meetings. They are **Edward Lawrence**, Head of Year 11 and Designated Safeguarding Lead ("DSL"), **Tim Gordon**, a committed maths teacher with an added interest in engineering; and **Benn Gray**, from the support staff, managing resources and equipment, who is the trustees' Health & Safety Lead.
- Our final trustee is **Neil Warner**, our Head Teacher, who needs no introduction here!

The Board and school have excellent support from **Ms Gemma Webb**, our governance professional (clerk) and **Ms Tracy Grimston**, Finance Manager.

Mrs J Helme
Chair of Trustees, Yardleys School



Poetry in Motion

'Keep Troth', by Zaynab Khaliq, Year 7

Just a small message from a casual Year 7.

I would like to start by saying how honoured I am. Out of thousands of students I was picked to attend Yardleys School. Of course, when starting a new school you expect change but honestly, this school has had a big effect on my mental health and knowledge. I love being surrounded by amazing friends (you know who you are)! I have all the company I need right here, knowing that I am safe and surrounded by brilliant teachers always puts a smile on my face.

Thank you Yardleys, I (so far) am having the best journey here.

Former Students

Two former Yardleys students, Munisah Mustafa and Asiaa Begum, now undergraduate biology students at Coventry University, spent a four-week placement in the Biology Department supporting teachers and getting a feel of what the day-to-day job involves. Both students were fantastic in the classroom offering support to students. Munisah has been successful in her PGCE interview with Birmingham City University ("BCU"). She has requested Yardleys as her main placement school next year as she was so impressed with the teaching in the Science Department and the support the school offered. The Biology Department has also gained two Initial Teacher Training ('ITTs') students from BCU, Ms Hussain and Ms Rahman, both chosen to train as a teacher at Yardleys.

School Council

Eight students consisting of Year Captains, Head and Deputy Prefects took an active part in this term's School Council meeting on 29th November. Mr Warner led the discussions to advise what the school had done to address the suggestions previously raised. This included the much welcomed news of agreeing a new school catering contract and the launch of a new praise & reward system in the New Year. Students had specifically appreciated the use of more practicals and group work within lessons, a variety of trips and feel that the quality of teaching and learning is good and they are safe and happy here at Yardleys. Other student suggestions discussed included the development of sports facilities, greater opportunities for more specific careers and life skills discussions and increased visiting external speakers, charity events and local experiences. We will bring more news on this as they are considered further.

Student Editorial

We are considering including a Student Editorial page in future Yardleian newsletters. **If there are any budding student journalists who would like to be considered to take part, please speak to a member of the school council, your Form Tutor or Head of Year.**

