BOW
SIXTH FORM

WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION?

Bow School Sixth Form

Where ambition and hard work realises successful futures

WELCOME

We are delighted to welcome you to our first newsletter where we share all things Sixth Form. In these pages you will read about our recent successes and initiatives, reward trips and university visits we have been involved in. You will find out about why our Sixth Formers decided to stay on and there is a spotlight on what it means to be world and career ready at Bow Sixth Form.

It is true to say that we have been inspired by the mentoring programmes that are on offer and by those global organisations who have visited and given us an insight into the world of work and moving on to university.

As our Year 13 peers, and our Year 11 students, prepare for this summer's exams we have published a guide with some tips for both students and parents – we are all in this together and we want everyone to succeed. We wish everyone the very best of luck and look forward to sharing more good news with you in the summer.

Student Ambassador Team

BOW SIXTH FORM

What our sixth formers say as to why to stay

We interviewed some of our Year 12 and 13 students about staying on in the Sixth Form and the opportunities they are currently experiencing.

"I chose to stay on at Bow Sixth Form because of the familiar environment and the teachers. My highlight so far has been the enrichment trip as we got to work together, learning new skills, as well as have fun during paint-balling. I would recommend the Sixth Form because of the small classes which makes it easier to ask for help from teachers and stay engaged with lessons. In the future, I am going to study Sociology at university and have aspirations of becoming a teacher." **Amirah Yasmin**

"Asking for help is so much easier here as we are already acquainted with the teachers, and they know a lot about us so they can target the support. The atmosphere is very friendly and I have benefited hugely from working with my mentor who has guided me through the challenges.
We have also had the excellent opportunity of becoming lunch supervisors and I have learnt many transferable skills. The added bonus has been receiving a salary for this onsite work! I plan to go to university to study finance and then to pursue a career in private equity or venture capital." **Tanvir Chowdhury**

"Like most of my peers, I chose to stay on because I already knew my surroundings, the teachers and the smaller class sizes. Being given additional responsibility beyond our studies, primarily through a paid job in school has provided me with new experiences and knowledge. I would recommend coming here as the team has done everything possible to provide us with so many opportunities, regardless of Covid. I'm still not entirely sure what my future plans are but I'm planning to study a dual degree of a language with international relations." **Anu Mhlanga**

REWARDS & RECOGNITION

CREATIVE THERAPY

Pottery club has started involving our Sixth Formers and students from lower year groups. The feedback from this enrichment activity has been very positive with a range of benefits including improving creativity, motor skills, sensory development and self-esteem. Our Sixth Formers have said that pottery club has helped calm their nerves and been a source of stress relief in time of preparation for exams.

Women empowerment

Every Wednesday afternoon female students gather with Ms Rahman to discuss many topics and issues affecting them in everyday life as young women of tomorrow. This club is well attended and is a safe place for women to air their views. The group also participates in wellbeing activities to support mindfulness.

CELEBRATORY BREAKFAST

Twenty of our top Sixth Form students with the highest achievement points had a celebratory and informative morning with our Headteacher, Mr Lye. There was an open discussion about career steps, coping with A Level exam stresses (see page 7 for more information), and balancing work and wellbeing. Mr Lye gave a fascinating insight into his own career journey which has really inspired our students to believe they can achieve whatever they set their minds to and that success will naturally follow.

Going for gold

Seven Year 12 students are currently participating in the Industrial Cadets Gold Project. This is where young people from across the country have the opportunity to engage first hand with mentors from industry and solve real life challenges. Our students are working with a national company called Overbury to develop important life skills and gain a better understand of STEM. The project objective is to reduce the temperature in a building that has no windows and will involve a site visit to a newly built building in Canary Wharf to carry out their mission. We wish our team the best of luck in their endeavours in going for the gold awards!

EVERYONE IS CAPABLE OF BEING A HERO

Nearly 50% of our students in the Sixth Form went on a reward trip to the cinema to watch the action adventure Spiderman movie – No Way Home. The film had just been released and the students were eager to be the first to witness the superpowers of Peter Parker. The moral came through loud and clear with the famous line *"with great power comes great responsibility" – never truer a word spoken in today's world.*

TEAM BUILDING SKILLS

A trip for Year 13 students came in the form of a competitive paintballing experience. Students thoroughly enjoyed as they went on a never to be forgotten team-building trip. Paintballing develops a number of skills that are essential in the workplace, improves relationships within the teams and keeps morale and productivity high. Our Sixth Formers developed strong leadership and problem solving skills whilst learning techniques on strategy and tactics. Essential communication skills came to the fore as they shared knowledge and ideas on how to work together to achieve their goals. There were no winners or losers just an amazing, fun day out for all involved.

A SPOTLIGHT ON WORLD & CAREER READY

We know that universities and employers value aptitude and attitude as much as academic qualifications so we provide active development of critical and self-reflective capabilities, and a real understanding of future needs as our young people face a world of exciting possibilities.

On our list of priorities is authentic problem-solving situations so that students experience practical learning that reflects human ingenuity and creativity. We provide support with developing a skill set that allows our young people to adapt, adjust, move sectors and acquire new skills and competencies throughout their working life.

What do we have on offer in terms of mentoring programmes? An interview with Ms Mohamud, Careers Lead, explains all:

"We are delighted to be working with a Tower Hamlets charity called The Switch who are committed to helping children and young people meet their potential through a wide range of volunteer-based programmes, providing a vital link between education and the world of work.

We are thrilled to have been partnered with ADM Investor Services International Limited (ADMISI), an independent, full service multi-asset brokerage company with 106 years corporate history in London and extensive international reach; offering clearing and brokerage services into all major investment markets. As part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programme our students are undergoing a structured mentoring programme with ADMISI employees who are professionals in a wide variety of sectors who have been matched with our students' interests and future career pathways. Students also have a handbook to complete as part of this programme.

Our Sixth Formers are also working with ReachOut UK, a national mentoring charity that provides weekly one-to-one support from a volunteer mentor on a long-term basis. Their aim is develop key attributes of our students including character, increasing confidence and self-esteem, raising aspirations and improving academic attainment. The mentors will also work with our students on developing transferable skills, working on CVs, support in applying for jobs, internships, college, etc, building positive relationships with new adults and peers, support in becoming an independent person and achieving individual goals. The uniqueness of this mentoring programme is that along with an hour of mentoring there is one hour of sports; the aim is to balance the physical and mental wellbeing of our students.

Our Year 13 students are now making steady progress towards achieving their target grades at A Level and they have been embracing an online education platform called Up Learn. Up Learn was created to deliver a world-class learning experience using cognitive science research that brings out the best in every student ensuring they can learn effectively and master their subjects."

VIRTUAL TOURS & PHYSICAL VISITS

Cambridge University comes calling

Magnus Oakes, a second year student at Cambridge University, came to speak with our students about his experiences and encouraged them to apply to Cambridge. Magnus also advised students on preparing their UCAS forms and courses to select when applying for university. Thank you Magnus for sharing your invaluable insights!

Queen Mary University of London goes virtual

This prestigious Russell Group University, one of the most diverse in London and committed to high quality teaching and research, provided our students with a virtual experience on what to expect and information on the different campuses around London.

IntoUniversity provide inspiration

IntoUniversity staff visited us recently and provided Year 13 students with vital advice on their personal statements for their UCAS application forms. They offer an innovative programme that supports young people to attain a university place or another chosen aspiration.

Agile opportunities

We were delighted to welcome James Poole, Managing Director of AGILE RISK Partners, a venture based risk advisory boutique in London. He provided an exceptional careers speech to our Sixth Formers and offered work experience and paid apprenticeship opportunities to our students. A huge thanks to James and AGILE RISK!

We're hiring!

Some of our Sixth Formers have joined the lunchtime supervision team in a paid role within the school. Their responsibilities are to support members of staff to lead activities such as chess club and various sports, and also to have positive interactions with the younger students, maintaining a presence and assisting keeping all our students engaged and safe. If you're interested, students have to formally apply for the various positions and complete an Enhanced DBS check. What an excellent way to earn money during the school day!

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Our Sixth Form Sports Leaders are currently working towards their Level 2 Qualification in Community Sport Leadership (CSL2).

These SLQ qualifications develop leadership and life skills in young people that boost confidence, aid attainment and develop employability skills. Students take part in four **P.R.E.P.** learning principles:

Practically applied-learning
Recognised learning
Experience through volunteering
Peer-to-Peer delivery

We know that these awards and qualifications equip our young people with employability skills for life improving motivation, self-esteem, communication, team work and confidence.

Leadership volunteering is a vital part of all our courses allowing young people to practice and build their skills to help them in employment and education.

We were delighted to be involved in a Tower Hamlets' initiative when our Sixth Form Sport Leaders led and organised an Athletics Tournament for Year 5 pupils – here's some photographic evidence of our young people in action.

"I enjoy speaking in front of large audiences and being a positive role model around the school. I know that the work I am doing will stand me in good stead on my personal statement and when I attend university interviews. I have learnt brand new skills and one of my highlights has been working on exciting DIY initiatives in the Sixth Form area with my peers." **Nimu Islam**

MAKING THE GRADE
Tips and techniques for exam season

Revision and exams are on the minds of many young people with the fast approaching summer examination period. Here are some revision tips and advice on exam techniques for all the family. Whatever you're studying – we wish you the very best of luck!

General study skills

At school:

- Good attendance and punctuality are essential
- Listening and participating in lessons, asking questions if you do not understand and sticking to deadline dates
- Keeping complete and accurate notes

At home:

- If possible, have a special place to study, ie. a place associated only with work (ideally a quiet room and a comfortable straight-backed chair at a table/desk)
- Ensure that there is good lighting
- Try and avoid distractions and interruptions such as mobiles and TV

Advice for parents:

Every parent can help by taking an active interest in their son/daughter's work and helping them understand that school work is a stepping stone towards achieving greater goals. Please seek help if you feel that your child is feeling undue pressure - some signs to look out for: loss of appetite; problems sleeping; headaches; frequent days off sick or a sudden change in behaviour.

How to help your child cope with exams:

- Accept the system but don't pile on the pressure
- Keep your child's confidence high
- Make sure that revision is structured
- Talk to teachers
- Don't overload your child (cut down on extra-curricular activities during exam/assessment time)
- Invest in revision guides
- Soothe pre-exam nerves

Revision tips from the NHS

1. **Make a realistic revision schedule.** Work out how much you have to do and the time you have to do it in, then break it down into manageable chunks. Aim to do a few hours of revision each day, and mix up your subjects so you don't get bored.
2. **Find a revision style that suits you.** Studying alone in a quiet room suits some people, but not everyone likes working in silence. Try playing music quietly in the background, or revising with a friend (but do not let them distract you!).
3. **Customise your notes to make them more personal.** Experiment with colour coding, notes on postcards, diagrams or whatever helps you learn your topic.
4. **Make sure you understand everything**. If you come across something you do not understand, try to find a new source of information that will help you understand it. Just memorising it will not help you in your exam. Do not be afraid to ask your teacher or a friend for help if you need it.
5. **Look at past exam papers.** It means you can familiarise yourself with the layout and type of questions you'll be asked. Practise completing exam papers in the set time limit to improve your exam technique.
6. **Take regular short breaks.** Studying for hours and hours will only make you tired and ruin your concentration, which may make you even more anxious. A break every 45 to 60 minutes is about right.
7. **Reward yourself.** For example, you could take a long bath or watch a good movie once you have finished your revision session.
8. **Do something physical.** When you're not revising, use your spare time to get away from your books and do something active. Exercise is good for taking your mind off stress and keeping you positive, and it will help you sleep better.
9. **Ask for help.** If you're feeling stressed, it's important to talk to someone you trust, such as a family member, teacher or a friend. Lots of people find exams difficult to deal with, so do not be embarrassed to ask for support.

Exam day preparation

Before the exam

1. **Body fuel:** ensure you eat prior to the exam, either a good breakfast, lunch or snack – even if you don't feel like eating it is important to put nutrition and water in your system in order to steady your nerves and to give you energy throughout the morning/afternoon exam.
2. **Time is your friend before the exam:** ensure you allow plenty of travel time and preparation time to get to the exam hall.
3. **Panic plan:** if you know you panic in exams, work out a strategy before you enter the exam hall, for instance some students wear elastic bands around their wrists and ping them if they feel panic rising (pain interferes with the panic signals to the brain). This may not work for you but have a strategy that does!
4. **Ready, steady, go:** have a checklist of things you will need to bring to every exam and ensure you take these items with you! Things to include on your list: pencils, pens, calculator, water, tissues.

The exam

1. **Take a breath:** before you begin, take deep breaths and clear your mind. Listen to instructions from the exams officer. Keep taking deep breaths to calm your nerves!
2. **Read the instructions:** before launching into the paper spend time reading the instructions and questions carefully. Ask if anything is unclear – the exams officer is there to help you.
3. **Plan:** scan the paper and plan how much time you will need for each question. If relevant, identify where the high mark questions are and make sure you leave enough time to answer these questions. If you get stuck on a question, don't worry, move on and try to leave time at the end to come back to complete
4. **Highlight:** when reading the questions, highlight or underline key words and instructions – this will help you structure your answers.
5. **Remember:** the wise words from your teachers should help you plan your written answers – remember it's quality over quantity.
6. **Timekeeping:** keep an eye on the time and make sure you write something on each question – it is more important to start answers than to finish them (if you are running out of time).
7. **Proofread:** allow time at the end to revisit your answers: double checking, correcting grammar and inconsistencies.
8. **Check:** carefully turn every page to ensure you haven't missed a page, including the back cover.
9. **Believe in yourself:** you have worked hard so be kind to yourself – know that you have given it your best shot!

Once the exam is finished, forget about it. Do not spend too much time going over it in your head or comparing answers with your friends. Just focus on the next exam instead.

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

Thomas A Edison, Inventor

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