

A ROUND UP OF THE WEEK AT LAUREL PARK SCHOOL**Headteacher's Message - Adele Christofi**

I'm delighted to share some of the exciting events and achievements that have been taking place at our school this week.

Our Year 11 pupils have embarked on their extended school day, with Period 7 now in full swing. The Champions Hour sessions are providing invaluable additional support as we gear up for the upcoming exams. It's fantastic to see our pupils embracing this opportunity, and I'd like to thank all staff for their dedication in facilitating these crucial sessions. Remember, Year 11s, you need to complete 30 hours of Champions Hour between now and the Easter holidays to secure your place at the prom - a wonderful event to look forward to at the end of the year!

Our commitment to developing well-rounded individuals continues with the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge. Year 10 pupils participated in sessions designed to enhance their oracy skills, with the chance for our top speaker to progress to the next stage of the competition. I'm excited to see the next cohort take on this challenge next Monday.

On the sporting front, I had the pleasure of watching the final moments of an exhilarating basketball match between our Year 10/11 team and Highlands. The excellence, ambition, and determination displayed by our pupils were truly inspiring. Under Mr Ayerh's guidance, the team secured an impressive 38-16 victory! Even more importantly, they demonstrated exemplary sportsmanship, making Laurel Park proud.

I'm also thrilled to share news of Tia in Year 11, who competed at a national level last weekend. Tia is now ranked in the top 10 fastest 60-metre runners across the entire country! Despite being one of the youngest in her age group, she finished an incredible 4th place. In our eyes, Tia, you're always number one!

Finally, I'd like to remind all parents that I've sent a letter home regarding home learning days on the 7th and 8th of April. Pupils will be set creative work to complete on these days, and you'll receive further details in advance.

As always, I'm immensely proud of our pupils' achievements and grateful for the continued support of our staff and parents. Together, we're nurturing a community of ambitious, talented, and compassionate young people.

Adele Christofi
Headteacher



Next week is
Week 1

Headteacher's Award

At the end of each week, form tutors choose one student from their form for the 'Headteacher's Award'. In a special ceremony with Ms Christofi, she shares the 'story behind their success' with the winning recipients. The students also receive a special certificate and pin badge to commemorate the achievement.

Congratulations to the Year 11 winners from this week who received a great surprise to find out they had won this prestigious award!

Year 11

Florin - Wins for **Integrity**, For always being respectful and committed to improving his school work. He is determined to do well and shows his peers excellent behaviour and discipline. He arrives to school with the correct mindset and is fully equipped. He makes valuable contributions to TTRP and PSHE.

Zhasmin - Wins for **Determination**, Always respectful and polite to everyone around her, her positive attitude and 100% effort in lessons shows how determined she is to do well. She is a role model to everyone around her, Every single day she is eager to do her best and brighten our day.

Manar - Wins for **Excellence**, Manar has been nominated for the Headteacher's Award for her dedication and positive attitude, coming to school every day ready to give her best. She actively participates in lessons (PSHE and TTRP), supports her peers, and is a kind friend to everyone. Her hard work has also led to notable academic improvement, making her an invaluable asset to the class.

Keira- Wins for **Ambition**, For her ambition and having the confidence to perform solo at the Winter Concert



Videography Day

On Thursday, we welcomed a team of videographers to capture and showcase the excellent learning and activities taking place at school. We are delighted to be working in partnership with 3 Heads Agency, who will be editing and helping us to market the final video. The company also work for Lego, Chelsea FC, Sir Alan Sugar and Richard Branson, so we're in good company!

Thank you to all the staff and students that featured in the footage taken on Thursday and we will be in a position to share the final video soon!

Mrs Tansley





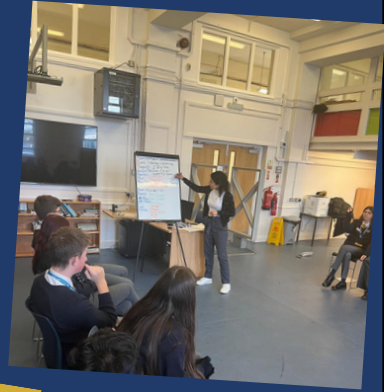
JACK PETCHEY

Jack Petchey's
"SPEAK OUT"
Challenge!

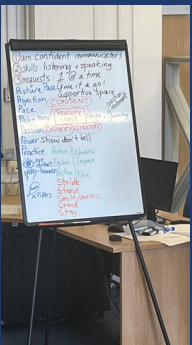
On Monday a group of Y10 students were involved in an all-day workshop for The Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge. Students spent the day participating in a range of activities to help improve their confidence with public speaking. By the end of the session students performed their speeches in front of their peers and the finalists have the opportunity to attend the regional final against other local schools in February. We look forward to repeating this again on Monday with a different group of Y10 students! - Mrs Nicolaou



"The speak out challenge was very fun and engaging. I really enjoyed it. The event really helped improve my public speaking skills and self confidence" Gideon Y10



"The speak out challenge was very enjoyable and it challenged me to be my best. I never really enjoyed public speaking before but know I would like to find more public speaking to do." Mary Y10



"The speak out challenge was very nerve-wracking and exciting. The instructor created a very comfortable environment" Nathan Y10



I loved the speak out competition. I loved that we got to choose a topic we were passionate about for our speech. I am more confident in my public speaking skills already" Miracle Y10



"The day was absolutely amazing! It built my confidence, taught me many skills and I learnt so much. It was a wonderful experience I am so lucky to have taken part in it!" Khadija Y10



UNDER 16 BASKETBALL MATCH

On Tuesday our U16 boys basketball team played against Highlands School. This was a match that they dominated from start to finish. Showing some great offensive play and also some great defensive plays. The scorers on the day were Qusai with 8 points, Mubarak, Endri, Caleb and Sakaria all scored 4 points each, Mohammed scored 2 and Aymn; who was the player of the match with 12 points. This is the 3rd win of the season for the team, after winning against Wren Academy and St Ignatius!

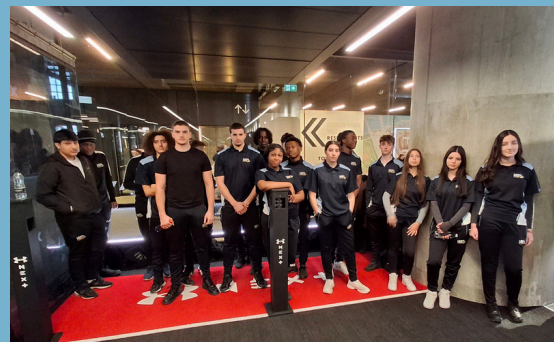


Under Armour Trip

Our Year 11 and Sixth Form students had an amazing time at the Under Armour Next Academy Testing Challenge at Battersea Power Station. Accompanied by Mr Sroka and Mr Ayerh, 27 students participated in exciting fitness tests that challenged their skills.

They took part in various activities, including the hand and grip test, the Sargent jump test, the 20-meter sprint, and the aim reaction time challenge. Everyone was enthusiastic and engaged throughout the day, making it a memorable experience.

A big thank you to Under Armour for organising such a fun and active day for our students!



YEAR 11 NOTICES

This week sees the launch of period 7. Year 11 are now completing targeted intervention after school in order to improve their grades before their next mock exams, which start after February half term.

It was fantastic to see so many students engaging in their sessions, with staff supporting those in attendance in driving up their techniques, knowledge and confidence which will make a difference.



Thank you to all the parents and carers in attendance at Year 11 Parents Evening this week. It was great to have such a positive atmosphere and your support in their build up to their GCSEs. All students have received their predicted grades as well as their feedback sheet for them to use to plan their revision time in the next few weeks and months.



Welcome to Careers Corner

On Monday we were fortunate to have David Wake from Galldris Group come and speak to Year 10s. who have been involved in the planning in many exciting projects such as Canada Water redevelopment, HS2 and the new Brent Cross Town.

David was fantastic at looking at the scale of what they do, as well as the many different industries, skills and technologies involved in these projects. It was a very informative presentation looking at some myth busters about the construction world, which opened a lot of eyes to the possibilities for our Year 10s.

Thank you so much for David for coming in. We are always looking for experts to come in and to present to our young people. If this is something you think you can offer, please email careers@laurelparkschool.co.uk



Character Education focus of the week

The vision of Laurel Park School is to develop well rounded students who have the ambition and determination to excel in life whether this be through academic study, vocational training or employment.

Alongside this, we have a commitment to developing character and integrity across the school and wider community. Opportunities are provided outside of the taught curriculum to develop core life skills, preparing our students to be proud global citizens.

Finally, Laurel Park is a school where all members of the community are treated with care and respect, whilst supported both with their well-being and their academic aspirations.

This is achieved through our Core Values of **Integrity, Determination, Excellence** and **Ambition**

Each month we will see a Skill and each week we will try to link this Skill to one of our Values.

This month's Skill is Creativity!

"Creativity takes courage." – Henri Matisse

This week's value is Determination.

How can Creativity help us achieve Determination



- **Boosts Confidence:** When you create something new and achieve success, you feel proud of yourself and become more confident in your abilities.
- **Develops Resilience:** Creativity helps you bounce back from setbacks and failures, making you more determined to reach your goals.
- **Reduces Stress:** Creative activities can be a great way to relax and unwind, helping you stay determined and focused without feeling overwhelmed.

Students will be presented this in assembly each week but please also speak to them at home



Member of the



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT



While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app *could* potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS



With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables *anyone* to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app: that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025>