



Family Matters

Summer 2020

Welcome

As we reach the end of the year I would like to thank all the students, parents and carers for your continued support, particularly over the last few months. I am very proud of all our students and how well you have adapted and coped with new routines and ways of learning. In this issue you will be able to read some of the success stories that students have achieved over the last term and also some exciting developments that we will be preparing for over the summer.

For those of you who are leaving College this year, I wish you all the very best for the future; please keep in touch to let us know how you are getting on in life after Orchard Hill College!

Have a lovely summer and I look forward to seeing students back in September.

Kelly Phillips,
Principal

A new college centre

From 1st September, we will have an additional college centre in Camberwell (Southwark) to accommodate 15 students initially, which will bring our total number of college centres to six. We look forward to welcoming students to this new centre, offering fantastic vocational opportunities to students.

Webinars for leavers

Moving on after college often can be a difficult time for students, parents and carers. The search for the right job, or exploring the right opportunities in the community is often involves many hours planning, visiting and working with employers and adult groups.

Since April 2020, Sarah Webster, Student Placement Manager, with Ashley Jordan-Diaper (leading on transitions and partnerships in Orchard Hill College & Academy Trust), have revamped the whole advice and guidance offer with key partners in local authorities, disability organisations supported assistive living providers and employment groups.

The results have been impressive: since May, Ashley, with Sarah's team have broadcast 30 specialist webinar workshops with key professionals and groups, as well as offering specialist advice sessions for students and parents who required additional assistance accessing local services. The feedback on this support has been excellent.

Parents have told us how much they enjoyed the opportunity to meet and

question a range of professionals on finding work and enterprise schemes, explore virtual supported living housing opportunities and understanding the different ranges of community day groups across boroughs.

Sarah and Ashley will be building on the success of this programme and are hoping to extend it to others in the new academic year.

During the recent Coronavirus pandemic, OHC has barely skipped a beat - moving seamlessly to provide informative and bespoke webinars on many topics relevant to our young people. Personal 1:1 follow ups were also offered and I now feel very well informed and confident about my son's imminent transition.

- parent

"Drive-By" Awards

Sadly, we were unable to hold our usual awards celebration this year, an event we look forward to all year round. Instead, we held celebrations in centres for students in college, and for our students at home we took to the road and delivered a package to each of them, with their personalised framed

certificate, yearbook, a leavers hoody and some special gifts.

It was wonderful to be able to say goodbye to our leavers, congratulate them on their successes, and wish them all the best for the future.



Building works at Beaconsfield

We are further developing our building at Beaconsfield to meet the needs of students and the vocational curriculum offer. Our garden is being adapted and upgraded to include a new polytunnel and sensory garden with internal vocational opportunities available. The extensive renovation at Beaconsfield has made it a bright, welcoming, and fit-for-purpose learning environment, and we look forward to welcoming students back.

Black Lives Matter

Having seen the news and social media recently, students at VPC started to look at the Black Lives Matter movement. The group's lecturer guided a discussion about oppression, racism, certain statues and why they are now being removed, and how something that was thought of as right in one period changes over time. They spoke about how important Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) have been throughout history, and how many of their stories haven't been told.

They looked at the lives of many prominent Black people including Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

Students watched films, developing their English and communication skills while answering questions in group discussions, with some students dialling in via Zoom to join in. Everyone showed great interest, enthusiasm and passion throughout the discussion.

Digital learning platform

We have launched a new video learning platform to encourage students and parents to try out sensory activities whilst at home. We will be sharing a range of different resources from informative videos to yoga, there's even a shaving foam art tutorial! To watch the videos please visit our website and go to the 'news' section; there's a link in the story titled 'New sensory activity videos'.

Keeping in touch

Students at Wyvern House are keeping in touch with as many of their peers as possible while they are not able to physically see them. Student Evie said "I miss all my friends, so it is really nice that I can still see them and speak to them on Facetime"

You can find planned term dates, news stories and updates on our website
www.orchardhill.ac.uk

If you need to get in touch you can email enquiries@orchardhill.ac.uk
or phone 0345 402 0453

A hair-raising fundraiser!

One student from Beaconsfield used lockdown (and lack of haircuts that came with it!) as an opportunity to raise money for causes that matter to him. Joseph took the plunge and shaved off his hair which, as he described, had become "thick and long!"

Joseph has raised an astonishing £1,275, and quite rightly feels very proud of himself. He has decided to donate the money to TAG Youth Club and Claygate Youth Club.

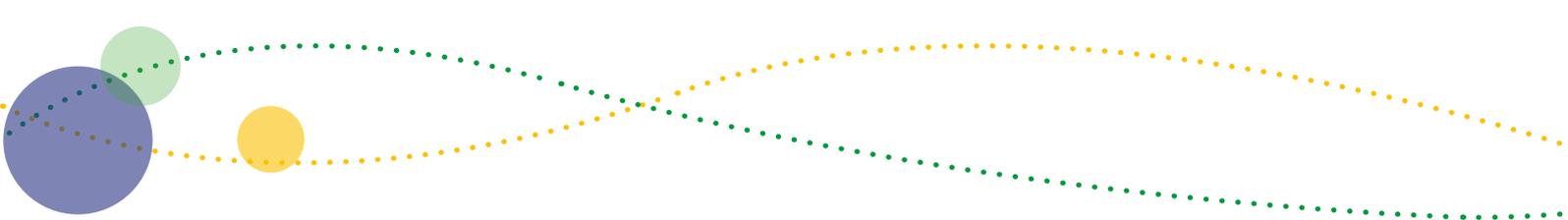


Students make protective visors for local care home

A group of our students were keen to do something practical to help key workers and show their support to the NHS. After some discussion, staff produced a step by step guide on how to make protective visors.

The first batch of visors was delivered to the staff members at a local care home in Sutton, who were over the moon that students had thought about them and produced items to protect their workers. Frances Mckay, Curriculum Lead, said: 'This project has been a win-win for everyone involved, students wanted to help the cause and this project is giving them the chance to make a real and meaningful impact in their community.'





A fantastic success

Dylan, a student from Lomond House who will be leaving college this year, has got a job at a locksmith in London. Dylan will be doing administrative tasks to support the smooth running of the business. Dylan is very excited about his new job and couldn't wait to tell everyone at college. Previously, not a 'morning person', Dylan now can't wait to get up in the morning and start working! Well done, Dylan!



Please support us

Easyfundraising.org.uk is a great way to raise money for charities just by shopping online. You don't pay anything extra. So far they have raised over £9 million for causes throughout the UK.

We're asking parents, carers, staff, friends, and family who shop online to create an easyfundraising account, which means at no extra cost to you, you will generate additional donations to benefit students throughout the college.

Follow the simple steps on the website to create your account; it's 100% free, no payment information is needed, and you will be helping to raise money by shopping with your favourite retailers.

Amazon has also launched a charitable scheme: **AmazonSmile**. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support a charity of your choice every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.co.uk, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as amazon.co.uk, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your selected charity.

To register visit www.smile.amazon.co.uk and type Orchard Hill College in to the search bar, then follow the next step. Together we can raise more funds to benefit students across Orchard Hill College!

