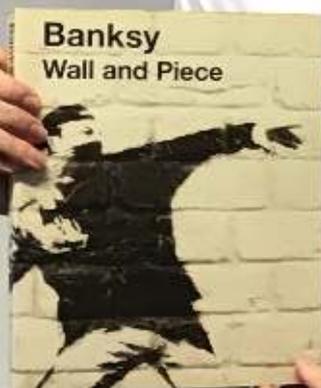
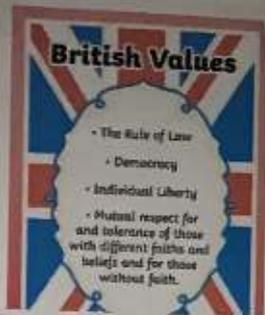




Orchard Hill  
College

# Family Matters

Spring 2021



## Welcome

I have been so proud to visit the centres this term and to see how well you have all settled back into college life and new routines. We have been really pleased with our blended learning approach that we have been able to offer you all, including virtual field trips, music to movement, circus skills, social stories and much more. This has received positive feedback and we will continue this offer for those of you who may benefit from accessing sessions remotely.

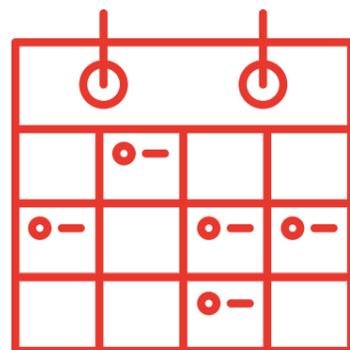
During this term we have had a big focus on transitions to ensure that all of you who will be moving on from college at the end of the year have meaningful and ambitious destinations to move on to. We have put in place extra job coaches to help support these transitions and to ensure they go smoothly.

I am also pleased to inform you that the college has now become Trauma Informed and all staff have received their training, meaning they are better prepared for students who have experienced trauma. The college has also achieved the commitment accreditation through Edupod, which is a new way to plan, manage and evaluate our journey to creating happy and mentally healthy environments for the whole college community.

Next term I am looking forward to more local facilities being open and you all being able to access things you enjoy in the community. It has been brilliant to see so many of you back at college and we will be pleased to welcome more of you back after Easter.

Happy Easter and I wish you all a well deserved break.

Kelly Phillips  
Principal



## Key dates coming up:

Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	First day back
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Virtual IAG Session
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	INSET day
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Virtual IAG Session
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> May	Last day of half term
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	INSET day
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	First day back
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> July	Last day of term
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	INSET day



## Highlights from across the centres

### Vocational Progression Centre (VPC), Carshalton

This term has been a busy one for students at VPC, with many new external partnerships in place to support students to reset, reconnect and recover from the lockdown period. This has included canine therapy, dance and art at Charles Cryer theatre. In addition, students voted to participate in World Book Day. The joy this brought to the centre was inspiring and one we will be repeating next year!

### Vocational Centre, Wandsworth

Students at the Vocational Centre have been working hard this term creating and preparing a café enterprise. This has included learning how to use a professional coffee machine ready for the Summer term when we will be launching the café on site. The potential customer base will include staff from Nightingale Community Academy and the college, as well as visitors to Tom's Farm and other vocational courses. There is a walk to any local cafés in the area so students and staff expect the on-site refreshments to be well received!

### Lomond House, Southwark

Students and staff have been very busy at Lomond House this term! Every Monday students have been accessing Herne Hill Velodrome and taking part in cycling to ensure they are staying fit and healthy. A number of students have also started rehearsing for a performance of Shakespeare's The Tempest. When they can, students hope to take to the stage at Southwark Playhouse, alongside students from Camberwell Road.

### Camberwell Road, Southwark

This term students at Camberwell Road have started a Horticulture course at Brockwell Gardens and have already been working hard on grounds maintenance and preparing the gardens for the summer. The students and staff were also thrilled to welcome some alumni members to the centre this term, the meeting went really well and the students planned to start a lunchtime social club.

A number of students have also started rehearsing for a performance of Shakespeare's The Tempest. Students hope to tread the boards at Southwark Playhouse with their peers from Lomond House.

### Beaconsfield Centre, New Malden

This term students at Beaconsfield has been working hard engaging with the college walking competition. Students and staff have come up with innovative ways to keep their step count up including dancing and completing a 1000 step seven-minute workout.

The Student council have also been busy researching and choosing resources they would like to see included in the upcoming garden refurbishment.

### Wyvern House, Hillingdon

A number of students from Wyvern House have been attending virtual sessions and have been able to engage with students from other bubble groups at the same time. A popular session was the virtual field trip where students explored a range of places and were able to engage with the session using iPads. A number of class groups are also attending weekly virtual sessions with Uxbridge Library, which is quickly becoming a great community-based session to build friendships!

Other students have taken to the local park and have been improving their boccia skills for future competitions at the Dash Hub.

## Move for Ramadan

Students and staff found innovative ways to keep their spirits up and stay connected with each other and their community during lockdown. This term has seen a cross-college walking competition, in which the equivalent distance of walking all the way to Mecca has been covered!

Students, whether attending college or learning at home, have used pedometers and apps to track their steps. Some students have linked the challenge to their work experience placements by litter picking in their local community while walking.

Every time the students have reached a new country they have been linking this to their learning by exploring the culture and language of that country.

Well done to all the students and staff who took part in the competition. Collectively we made it to Mecca and back and completed over 40,000,000 steps.



## Supporting students back into college life - Canine therapy

To help students settle back into their routines, we have been pleased to offer additional services. Canine therapy will be offered at all centres and has started this term at VPC and Wyvern House. Pets as therapy can provide a range of benefits to the health, emotional wellbeing and mental health of our students. Student Skye from VPC said "I love that dog!"

Students have also been able to benefit from mindfulness sessions and acting courses at the Savvy Theatre. To support our students who have suffered bereavement during the last year we will be running a trip to Centre Parcs to give those students the opportunity to have a break and recuperate.

This term students have been able to get back to their vocational courses in a range of areas. This has been supported by every centre now being equipped with a people carrier to enable smaller groups of students to be able to access the local community more easily.

### Supported Internships

We are thrilled to announce that from September 2021 we will be offering a Supported Internship course in partnership with the London Borough of Sutton (LBS). Interns will be able to experience a range of different job roles during their one-year course, in both LBS and Orchard Hill College. Interns also have the opportunity to gain employability qualifications and work towards their dream career.

Following two successful years of our Supported Internship in partnership with Project Search and Hillingdon Council we are pleased to be continuing to run this next year.

If you are interested in applying to join this course, complete an expression of interest form here:

[www.orchardhill.ac.uk/admissions/how-to-apply/](http://www.orchardhill.ac.uk/admissions/how-to-apply/) or contact the Assessments and Placements Team on 0345 402 0453 (option 2).

For more information please visit [www.workstart.me](http://www.workstart.me).



## National Apprenticeship Week

We were delighted to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week this term with some exciting news from some of our apprentices.

We were pleased to have a new apprentice who joined us this month and is working at Bedelsford School. Joe's long term career plan is to become a speech and language therapist. Joe feels his Teaching Assistant (TA) Apprenticeship will be a valuable step in gaining the required knowledge, experience and skills he needs to achieve his career aims. Joe is working towards his Level 2 Functional Skills English and Maths, alongside his TA Apprenticeship programme.

Alongside this we are thrilled that one apprentice from Addington Valley Academy achieved her Supporting Teaching and Learning Apprenticeship this week! She also successfully achieved her Level 2 English and maths, as part of her Apprenticeship programme and is planning to progress on to the Diploma in Education and Training programme this September 2021.



## Students supporting their communities

Despite restrictions this term, students have still been keen to support their local communities. Students from Lomond House have been taking pride in their local community by litter picking, planting flowers outside the local library and cleaning graffiti off walls. One student has been working with the Site Supervisor. During the snowy spell he helped to ensure the area around the college was gritted and safe for his peers and neighbours.

At VPC students have been collecting food donations and delivering them to a local food bank in Merton. The students were all really pleased to be able to support people in need in their communities.



## 2021 Virgin Money London Marathon

Orchard Hill College is very excited to announce that we have a place in the 2021 Virgin Money London Marathon. The event will be taking place on Sunday 3rd October. We are looking for candidates who have previous experience of fundraising and are asking for a non-refundable registration fee of £50 and for a fundraising target of £1,950. If you, or anyone you know is interested in applying then please contact Kayleigh on [kmcleod@orchardhill.ac.uk](mailto:kmcleod@orchardhill.ac.uk) with your experience and information on why you think you would be the best candidate.



## Shortlisted for Natspec Awards 2021

We are thrilled to announce that the college has been shortlisted for two Natspec Awards.

The Natspec Awards aim to recognise and celebrate excellent practice in the specialist further education sector. They promote innovation, continuous improvement, and raise standards across the sector.

The college has been shortlisted in two categories for Curriculum Innovation and Innovative Use of Technology. Our Reset, Recover and Reconnect curriculum to support students during Covid-19 has seen us nominated in the Curriculum Innovation category. While our nomination for Innovative Use of Technology was for adaptations made to Alexa for students with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

We look forward to sharing the results in May.

## See you next term!

We wish all our students a wonderful Easter break, and look forward to welcoming everyone back in April.

Keep up to date with news stories across the college on our website at [www.orchardhill.ac.uk](http://www.orchardhill.ac.uk) and follow us on Twitter @O\_H\_College

If you have any feedback on Family Matters please contact us at: [marketing@ohcat.org](mailto:marketing@ohcat.org)



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