

# connect

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

## A message from the CEO



Welcome to the spring issue of Connect.

We were all so very happy to see students and staff return to school at the beginning

of March. It was a joy to see smiles on so many faces!

Adapting to remote learning has proved a significant challenge, which has disrupted the crucial flow of our students' education journey. That's why I am so encouraged by the energy and flexibility displayed by our school community to adapt to this ever changing landscape. Our schools continue to ensure that children's talents are nurtured and high academic standards reached.

Our feature story covers Mulberry's conversation with **Mrs Michelle Obama** that featured on the BBC. It was a very proud moment for the school.

The **Mulberry STEM Academy** in partnership with Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd, continues to exceed our students' expectations. Our extensive network of partners, also led to a stimulating online careers event for students interested in medicine.

I hope this issue provides you with examples of students at Mulberry School for Girls, Mulberry UTC and Mulberry Academy Shoreditch receiving exceptional support and lessons, as well as plenty of opportunities for fun, enjoyment and excitement.

Dr Vanessa Ogden  
CEO

## Mrs Obama Zooms in to Mulberry to reconnect with our girls!

On Wednesday 31st March 2021, current and former students from Mulberry School for Girls and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School were super excited as they joined Mrs Michelle Obama for a 60 minute conversation on Zoom, to celebrate the publication of the paperback and younger reader editions of her bestselling memoir **BECOMING**.



BBC One's The One Show aired a package about the event on Thursday 1st April, which featured Year 7 student, Synicia Weidmann, former students Tamanna Islam and Nusrath Hassan (a governor at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch) and Dr Vanessa Ogden, Headteacher and CEO. Following the broadcast, Penguin released the full recording of the Zoom conversation on their YouTube channel, which you can [watch here](#).

**“This whole experience is overwhelming. I will take all that I have learnt and use my resilience to continue to push myself out of my comfort zone, so that I am the best I can be, right now!”**  
*Synicia, Year 7*

Commenting on the event, Dr Ogden, said: “At Mulberry School

for Girls, students past and present are so excited about the launch of Michelle Obama's book 'Becoming', especially adapted for young readers. Childhood and adolescence are such a formative period. Learning from Mrs Obama - one of the greatest, most inspiring women of our time - could not be more important. Her use of her platform to drive change for girls is critical, breaking down barriers to education and building a sisterhood of young women advocating for each other.” Mulberry School for Girls plans to commemorate this significant occasion with a special celebration event that will involve all its students, parents/carers and the local community.

The launch event marks yet another momentous moment in the school's ongoing relationship with Mrs Obama.

# First online event with Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix is huge success

On Saturday 27th February, the first exciting event in this year's programme was launched, provoking excitement, curiosity and a sense of community.



The 40 successful STEM scholars, along with CEO, Dr Vanessa Ogden, joined the Mercedes F1 team through a virtual

programme. Several former Mulberry Schools Trust students who are studying Science, Computer Science and Engineering at university also joined the event, alongside members of the Mulberry Schools Trust Board.

Designed to introduce the Mulberry students to the team and inspire them as they set out making decisions on their future education and careers, the groups heard from the team's Graduates about their roles, how their education choices influenced their career paths, and what it is like to work for a World Championship winning Formula One team, taking the opportunity to ask many insightful questions.



event for an inspirational Careers Talk with Technical Director James Allison, Chief People Officer Paul Mills and four of the team's Graduates, who volunteered to be part of the stimulating STEM

## What's coming soon?

In the summer term we have more exciting initiatives planned!

Our Mulberry STEM Academy scholars will be participating in another Careers Conference with inspiring graduates from Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd. This will be followed by an intense course in Robotics for Year 10s and an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) for Year 12 students.

Students in Year 10 will be using *Choregraphe* and *QiChat* to animate Pepper the robot, as well as designing their own sequence of interactive animation.

Year 12 students will engage in their EPQ which is worth half of an A-Level and will allow students to produce a project in an area of STEM that they are passionate about. We will end the summer term with all scholars taking part in a competition called 'GreenPower', where students will build and race an electric car in a live race!

## What's currently happening?

We have 48 STEM Scholars learning Python programming. The five week course designed to allow students to stretch and challenge their programming skills, regardless of their starting point.

Students take part in one of three different teaching groups depending on their prior knowledge of programming. Students that take part in the Python Basic group cover the aspects of programming needed for GCSE such as file handling, creating user-defined data structures and much more. Those taking part in the Python Advanced group take a deeper dive into programming aspects, where they are also introduced to third-party libraries, interacting with web sites and other online data. Students who are confident at programming had the opportunity to build websites using Flask, build a desktop app using Kivy, build machine learning models and create 2D video games using the Pyglet library.

## Mulberry STEM Academy Year 10 Scholars have their say...

**"I have really enjoyed the Mulberry STEM academy so far because I'm learning things that feel extremely relevant to future career possibilities. It is also challenging me to think in different ways about solving problems, but most importantly, its great fun and an excellent learning experience."**

*Lana Mulholland, Year 10, Mulberry School for Girls*

**"The Mulberry STEM Academy has provided us with an incredible opportunity to develop our coding skills as well as teamwork skills. I'm looking forward to building and programming robots which is extremely exciting."**

*Masud Sharif, Year 10, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch*

**"Undoubtedly, my favourite moments on the programme so far was the collaboration in making the adventure game. Working with people with a similar goal has encouraged me and was an engaging experience."**

*Yusra Mohamed, Year 10, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch*

**"The Mulberry STEM Academy has opened up a world beyond my reach, understanding and thinking. By participating in the weekly programme, it has allowed me to flourish in a comfortable and uplifting environment and compels girls like me to want to pursue a career in STEM."**

*Semmin Sane, Year 10, Mulberry School for Girls*





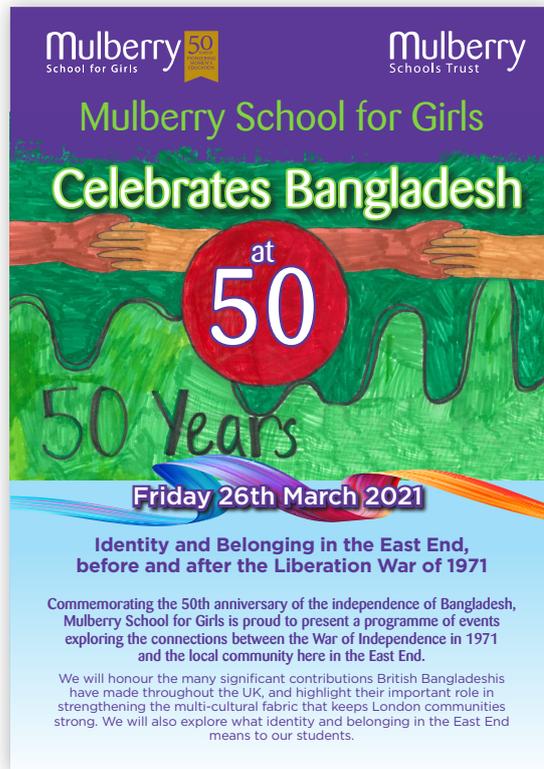
# Mulberry School for Girls celebrates in style: 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh

On Friday 26th March through to April 1st, Mulberry School for Girls was proud to present a programme of events to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Bangladesh.

We explored the connections between the War of Independence in 1971 and the local community in the East End; and sought to celebrate some of the fantastic contributions of the British-Bangladeshi community on both London and the UK. We ran a panel event, hosted by an MSG alumna, with local organisations Nijjor Manush and the Swadhinata Trust, centred around the anniversary celebrations and the legacy of the War of Independence.

We also held a whole-school screening of the film 'Justice in Action', which explores justice, peace and reconciliation; values we hold close at Mulberry.

During the final week of term, out of hours activities took place including henna, a book club, poetry sessions



and a film screening – and many more resources were uploaded onto the Mulberry Learn Enrichment Hub. These included a virtual walking tour of the East End, voiced by sixth-form students. The East End is an area of rich cultural diversity and the British-Bangladeshi community has been key in shaping this part of London.

# Global events keep students busy

The Mulberry School for Girls Enrichment Office has been very busy this term engaging with their peers across the nation and the world!

Throughout March, Year 10s took part in Annual WOW Festival workshops. Students also took part in numerous conferences in partnerships with other schools such as the the United Nations International School, Young Power (American School in London) and ASL Model United Nations, where we won two awards.

Year 7 students took part in a leadership programme ran by the Mayor of London's office resulted in our own Eco Club.

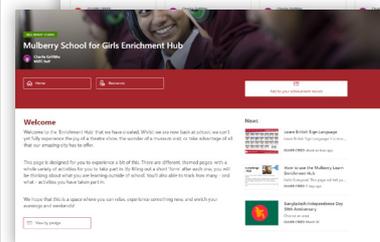
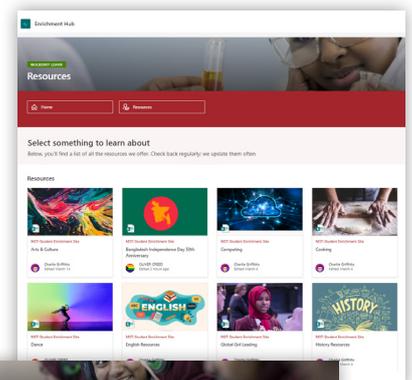
A team of Peace Ambassadors from Year 8 and 9 will be spreading messages of kindness, resilience and hope as we begin to come out of lockdown.

We look forward to sharing more updates in the next issue!

# Exciting Enrichment Hub launched

We have now launched the Mulberry Learn Enrichment Hub – hosted on our Mulberry Learn platform powered by Microsoft Teams. The Hub will allow students to take part in a variety of enrichment activities – from cooking, to language learning, to creative and performing arts and sports, and more!

This move towards remote enrichment reflects the changing context we now work in, and we hope that it will enable students to still engage in enriching experiences despite the restrictions that lockdown has imposed. The Hub will also enable us to track and monitor who has taken part in activities, which helps us in our future planning and allows us to target students with more exciting opportunities.



Finally, the Hub will allow students to take ownership over the activities they do – they can choose which enrichment they want to take part in, and by logging their progress we hope that this will help students to achieve the Mulberry Pledge.

## Celebrating Identity at Mulberry School for Girls

In the coming months, staff and students across Mulberry School for Girls will be collaborating on the creation of a major new piece of work celebrating the heritages, identities and ambitions of all members of our school community, through the creation of a new immersive gallery space in the school.

This new gallery will be a physical expression of our commitment to making sure that we celebrate everyone in our community, no matter who they are, where they come from, or where they are going.

Through a combination of permanent displays and student work across subjects and across year groups, we will consider and reflect on the many interrelated factors that make up our identities as individuals, the common threads which link us together, and the potential that we have as a community to change society and the world.

These ideas will be communicated through a wide range of displays including visual art, design, sound installations, timelines and photography, and will feature contributions from every faculty in the school.

## Weaving together the many threads of the Sixth Form

There was great excitement and a hive of activity when Mulberry School for Girls Sixth Form students coordinated their creative response to acknowledging Bangladesh's 50 years of independence.



Sixth Form students organised a cultural day to celebrate the diversity and heritage of all students in Year 12 and Year 13. Students wore traditional clothing and shared stories with one another about the unique histories of their dress and its cultural significance, capturing the rich tapestry of design and colour in students' diraac, kaftan, sari, abaya and salwar kameez.

As Spring brought hope to students after being apart during lockdown, this special occasion united students and celebrated their individuality.



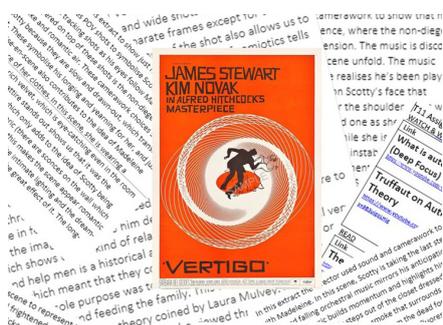
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 Principal: Dr Katharine Vincent

## A-level Film Studies students critically examine masterpieces

A-Level Film Studies students have been busy critically examining key masterpieces as part of their studies this term.

After delving into Lang's German expressionist sci-fi drama Metropolis (1927), Year 12 A-Level Film Studies students have been studying Hitchcock's masterpiece Vertigo (1958) as part of their Film Form in US Cinema study. Students have been critically analysing narrative structure via key theorists such as Todorov and Levi-Strauss as well as applying the theoretical perspectives of Barthes as semioticians and Mulvey as representation critics.

Some students have found themselves so inspired by Hitchcock they have experienced Rear Window (1954), while others have planned and penned opening extracts to their own screenplays using Vertigo's key themes of obsession, romantic delusion, death, voyeurism and spirals.



## Student leaders plan for the future

The Student Leadership Team at Mulberry UTC have recently met to set out their plans for 2021.

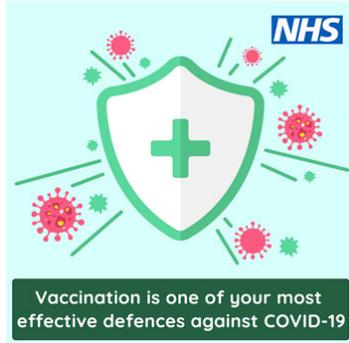
These include:

- Developing a democratic student council in which all MUTC students have the chance to have their voices heard.
- Developing a peer support system in which students are assigned a mentor. Mentors will take part in a full training programme to learn the best ways to support their mentees, both academically and with their wellbeing.
- Producing the Broadcast newsletter with help from the whole school community.



## Student scientists tackle misinformation about the Covid vaccine

This half term, Applied Science students in Year 13 have been looking at the importance of good scientific communication with the public



further research about the impact of this misinformation, including the phenomenon of 'vaccine hesitancy'. Students created infographics showing how, despite some sensational headlines, short term health effects of the

Students had noticed that there was a lot of misinformation being passed around in recent months. This includes conspiracy theories about Covid-19 and about the Covid-19 vaccine.

As part of their study of this topic, students shared information they had seen on social media platforms. They then conducted

vaccine are a normal sign that it is working properly to stimulate the immune system.

Students also learned about the important of looking at different sources of information, including the results of clinical trial research, in order to ascertain the validity of scientific information and make informed health decisions.

## Virtual Academic Review Day a success

On Wednesday 24th March, Mulberry UTC had its first ever virtual Academic Review Day using Microsoft Teams.

In advance of the day, reports were sent home to our parents/carers. The reports were discussed with students and parents on the day during their online meetings.

Teachers took the opportunity to celebrate students' successes and set targets for the rest of the academic year.

A huge well done to the Mulberry UTC community for once again finding an innovative solution to ensure this important event could take place virtually.

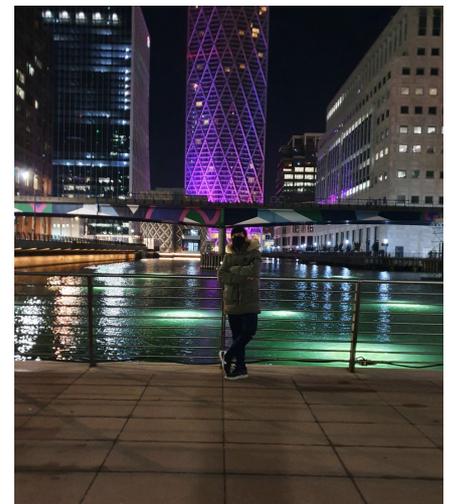
## Students awarded following creative House competitions

Students at Mulberry UTC have had great time participating in a range of exciting competitions to win points for their Houses: Elm, Ash and Oak.

The creative and fun competitions have included designing house logos, taking pictures and baking lots of delicious food! A total of

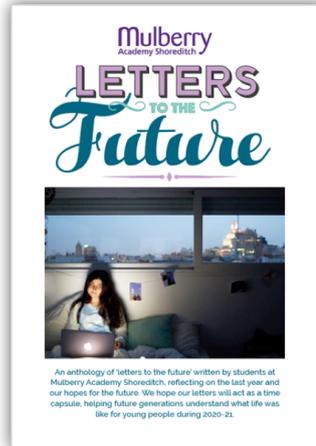
2569 achievement points were given out during the time students spent at home.

Students demonstrated excellent participation in their lessons and produced amazing work in their online lessons. The top achievers in each year group and competition winners were awarded Amazon vouchers in for their incredible efforts.



## Letters to the future bring hope

During the recent lockdown, the English Department at Mulberry Academy Shoreditch ran a competition asking students to write a letter to the future, reflecting on the last year and our hopes for the future. We hope the letters will act as a time capsule, helping future generations understand what life was like for young people during 2020-21. Read all their letters to the future [here](#) .



## The closing thoughts of Fahmida Rashid, Year 9 letter winner

I strongly believe that this experience has changed society in the sense that many people have become more considerate and respectful towards others and aided them and supported them with their needs. People are more grateful for what they have. They have learnt the true meaning of loving and supporting others. They have realised how short life is and nowadays, society is all about 'living it up'. More people wish to travel and explore the natural and physical beauties of this world.

This year has given me the occasion and time to explore the different aspects of life and things that I could pursue. I have finally found what I feel most passionate about and frankly look at life as a blessing and a gift to us. We are here to live a happy life, take care of our planet and each other and fulfil the many duties that we have.

Lamentably, this letter has come to an end. So, before I end it, there are some things in which I sincerely hope you can take from this letter. Firstly, make the most of the things you have, even if they are as small as a seed. Secondly, put life in a perspective of a roller coaster, meaning that life is a roller coaster with many twists and turns. All you need to do is sit back, relax and enjoy the ride. Secondly, as a previously mentioned, always remember that as the universe expands, so will our minds. So, fill it with as much knowledge and bright memories as possible. And lastly, don't waste a single moment of your life, as you may not get the opportunity to do something you wish to do again.

## Year 10 debate wins the argument!

On 2nd March, our Year 10 Debate Mate team participated in the second round of the Urban Debate League against a school from Bristol. The standard was incredibly high, but we are thrilled to report that Mulberry Academy Shoreditch came out on top and won the debate!

The motion put forward was environmental radicalism, which was released beforehand. This presented students with a great opportunity to

refine their techniques during their prepping session. Ms Tarannum, who leads the Debate Mate after-school club, was really proud and impressed with the fantastic teamwork on display, which was reflected in their winning arguments on the day.

Huge congratulations to our stellar team of debaters: Josiah Jonathan Burdsall, Mohammed Abdul Baki, Mas'ud Omar Mohamed Sharif, Shaira Shakera Ali and Leo Shabi.

## JP Morgan inspires environmental STEM innovation

Year 9 students have been taking part in the JP Morgan Schools STEM Challenge since November! They developed innovative ideas in response to a brief set to address specific environmental issues, competing against other schools from across the country.



During their online workshops, the students learnt how to develop and manage a design brief. The two teams from Mulberry Academy Shoreditch named Oxynet and SMP, worked well together to create innovative products called Alglix and Voithia.

The final event was held on Wednesday 25th March and the online awards ceremony gave our students the opportunity to see the different products that each participating school had produced. Our teams received gold star commendations for their presentation skills, teamwork, aiming high and perseverance.

Well done to all the students who took part and for being amazing STEM ambassadors for the school.

## Online Careers Day

At the beginning of March, we celebrated National Careers Week with a Careers Day programme full of independent learning.

Across the school, students developed the following core employability skills: independent research, problem solving, creativity, resilience, self-reflection, digital skills and taking initiative.

Students were actively encouraged to explore as many activities as possible to enhance their skills, knowledge and self-confidence. They were extremely busy all day participating in activities that included:



### Congratulations to the following students who distinguished themselves across the school as Careers Explorer Champions

- Year 7** Agit Abaci, Syed Iqbal, Greta Kilgariff, Danita Bediako, Musa Haque
- Year 8** Saif Uddin, Anisa Rahman Mir, Jennifer Uddin, Wayne Adams, Farhana Hossain, Fatuma Sahra Mohamed, Ayan Ahmed Abdi
- Year 9** Zara Raqib, Daiyan Ali Saif, Imran Miah, Mehreen Chowdhury, Arwa Mohamed
- Year 10** Leo Shabi, Salwan Razmie, Jannat Karim, Sumayyah Ferdous Hussain, Nadia Zaman
- Year 11** Imran Kamal, Ahsan Islam, Tahamina Begum Fidaus, Hani Boss, Veronica Correa Botina, Mohamed Omar
- Year 12** Habib Sharif, Mizan Ahmed, Ikrah Begum, Kelly Soares Moutinho, Maryam Kauthor, Saadaldin Yosof
- Year 13** Nasrath Jahan Khanom, Inaya Yasmin, Mishca Wright, Catia Djalo Camara

## Introducing Mulberry Academy London Dock



- A brand new school opening in September 2023 with Year 7 students
- Mixed provision for girls and boys
- A flagship school, delivered in partnership with the Local Authority and the Department for Education
- Part of the Mulberry Schools Trust
- Outstanding achievement for all

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