



## Vandyke Alumni Programme

It is always wonderful when ex-students return to update us on what exciting paths they have taken after Vandyke. We created our Alumni programme in 2020 to capture these stories and offer our current students a valuable insight into post-18 opportunities. We have looked far and wide - from networking on LinkedIn, to tracking down students in supermarkets and sporting events, we are always seeking new contacts!

So far this year, we have been able to offer talks from a range of inspiring young people. Heather Emery spoke to Art & Photography students about her role as a Photographer for River Island. Dion Ellis spoke to aspiring Physiotherapists just before he began his new role for the NHS. Alysia Orbell has returned twice to describe life as an Engineering student at Durham University. Callum Shortt secured a highly competitive investment banking degree apprenticeship with UBS and offered a powerful message about the benefits of this route.

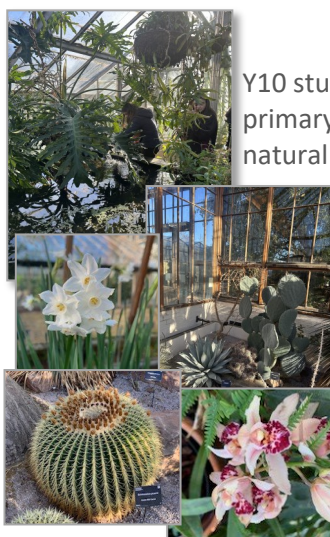
Recently, Harry Ewing has extolled the benefits of university life, having just graduated from Sheffield University. Harry is currently in Qatar reporting on the AFC Asian Cup in his role as a Sports Journalist. Finally, Charlie Sellar offered a reassuring insight into life as a Medical Student – dispelling some of the myths about Med School and delivering a highly positive message about the opportunities for enrichment available on such courses.

We're grateful to our former students for giving up their time to share their inspiring stories. Any past students wishing to join our Alumni

programme should contact the Sixth Form team.

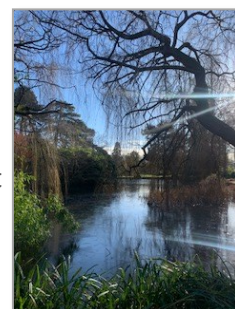


## Y10 visit the Cambridge Botanical Gardens



Y10 students recently visited the Cambridge Botanical Gardens to enhance their primary photography skills. Art and photography students are currently working on a natural forms project, which involves researching various artists and photographers to develop their GCSE project further. They are producing observational studies and editing their photographs to create a final outcome.

During the trip, a photography competition was organised, and we would like to congratulate Emma (1<sup>st</sup> place) Demi (2<sup>nd</sup> place) and Olivia (3<sup>rd</sup> place) – you will have seen their winning photos in the last Fine Artist of the Fortnight slot! Thank you to Mr Killoran, Mr Hogan, Miss Noble, Mr Murray and Miss Rhoden for their assistance and enthusiasm on the trip.



## Visit to Bedford Police HQ

The Public Services and UPS class recently visited Bedford Police Headquarters. We had a general talk about policing and then a couple of officers spoke to us about their roles. We listened to a talk from SOCO, a child protection officer and forensics staff – then had a go at taking each other's fingerprints, which was really fun!



A traffic officer allowed us to have a look at their car and explained what their job is like. We also got to go in the custody suite to see what it was like inside. It is very secure, every door shuts straight behind you and there are numerous alarms and cameras all over the place. We saw what the cells and interview room were like and it was like a virtual courtroom.

Finally, we met a dog handler and their German Shepherd. The officer explained the extensive training their dogs receive so that they can do their jobs properly. We watched the dog find an item that the officer had hidden, so we could see how quickly they could sniff the item out and find it. The officer said that they have different breeds which all have different roles. For example, the German Shepherds are used to protect their officers and to search for weapons and drugs.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit - special thanks to the Bedford Police Recruitment Team for organising such an informative and enjoyable day.



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## The Big Picture Careers Fayre



On Thursday 1st February 2024, we held The Big Picture Careers Fayre here at Vandyke. The event was a resounding success, with the venue at capacity. Many students from all year groups attended, including students from other local upper schools and our local feeder



middle schools. It was superb to welcome visitors and see so many students discussing their future pathways.

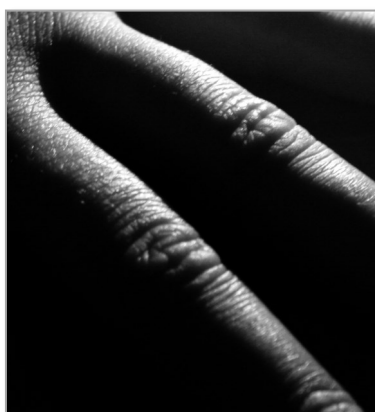
There were over 40 representatives from different universities, apprenticeship providers, local colleges and nationwide employers. As well as one-to-one conversations with these representatives, students and parents had the opportunity to listen to presentations on

the value of a university education, the varied and diverse world of apprenticeships, and local college opportunities at post-16 and post-18.

Our thanks go out to all of the providers

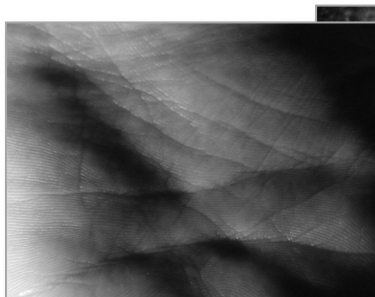
who took time out of their busy schedules to help support this event. As always, our students were excellent ambassadors for the school and the providers noted the maturity and curiosity for their learning. We already look forward to the event next year.

## Fine Artist of the Fortnight



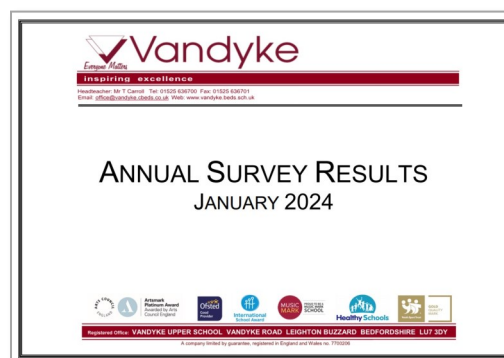
Well done to Erin M, our Fine Artist of the Fortnight.

Erin used the formal elements of texture and tone to create beautiful abstract body photos. (Special thanks to Miss Butler for being the subject.) Well done Erin!



## Annual Survey results published

We have now published the results of our Annual Survey. This is a survey of students, parents/carers and staff which is conducted anonymously. It provides feedback that we take seriously and use to guide future developments. Thank you if you contributed to this. The report on the survey results can be found on our website: <https://vandyke.beds.sch.uk/annual-survey/>



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w/c Monday 11th March	Y11 Catering Exams
Wednesday 13th and Thursday 14th March	Y10 Subject Consultations
w/c Monday 18th March	Y12 Internal Exams
Monday 18th March	Vandyke Voice published