

NUR HUDA'S SEAT

This seat is a symbol of our respect and affection for Nur Huda El Wahabi who lost her life, with all of her family, in June 2017 in the Grenfell Tower fire. In remembering her we think of all whose lives have been affected.

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Et Cetera

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

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Cover shot:
Nur Huda's bench

HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

Saturday 8th July. The sun is shining on Thorpe Lodge Gardens, the lavender and rosemary delight. There are no students in school for seemingly the first Saturday ever and the end of the academic year feels close. Of course there are mountains to climb yet. Closure is required. Rest is desired. My desk is covered with kind cards about Perfect Tense though the event this year will forever hold a memory of the tragic loss of one of our students in the Grenfell Tower fire. In the quiet of an early Sunday morning I spent an hour close to it and the horror and terror I could not begin to imagine. It has cast deep shadows across school life which will resonate for years to come. School is reflective and thoughtful. I reflect, not for the first time, on children's resilience, but they have been, in Hazlitt's phrase, 'hurt by the archers' and had an all too sudden awakening to tragedy. I am proud of them and teachers, who put their own feelings to one side to offer support. Our job: to pay our respects by increasing our endeavour. Mrs May's notion of grammar schools thankfully has bitten the dust. I doubt that any release on public sector pay will assist the retention of London teachers, but we are well used to that situation and it is with a sense of gratitude that I reflect on the talent and longevity of so many colleagues: Ms Halfpenny, Ms Chapman, Ms Harris, Ms Pugh, Ms Hennah, Ms Le Poidevin, Messrs Robson, Wilson, Seed, Northover, Dobson, Ball, Mitchell. Summer term examinations have been marked: whoops of delight abound but I have my eye on those who have had less success. The art shows gave great pleasure. Ms Bromhead's inaugural A level exhibition rightly delighted its viewers. Ms Pugh's baby is imminent - not one day off in her eight months of pregnancy. I was equally moved by the Year 13 Dinner. Chater Jordan, Otis Valentine and Nishat Uddin, I reflected on my way home, were beyond delightful and wonderfully mature. Ah, the privilege of seeing those 11-year-olds transformed. The warmth of Josie Dixie-Watson and Rose Norris' welcome to me and the closure of the evening seeing Chater at ease with himself and leading the dialogue – all so reassuring. That's education. And, I see the next coming up in line and wonder about an 18-year-old Will Gove, Vivien Taylor, Omar Ait El Caid, Oliver Bercow, Milla Kahl-El Gabry, Felix Orrell, Rae Tarbox, Daniel Clarke et al. I shall look forward to those Year 13 dinners.



A WALK TO REMEMBER

'Those long, uneven lines', writes Larkin of a noteworthy sight of gathered enthusiasm in the days preceding the outbreak of the great war. A similar sight of the enthusiasm of youth, similarly tinged with the darkest of tragedies, greeted passers by on Friday 23rd June. Stretched endlessly through Kensington Palace Gardens and along the streets of Bayswater Road, our whole school, thousands of students, alongside John and Sally Bercow, Sally Clarke and Governors, stood in loose formation, walking shoulder to shoulder in solidarity as they completed this reflective walk in the memory of the Grenfell Tower disaster. This colossal human monument was a poignant spectacle, prompting hundreds of passers-by to compliment students' impeccable conduct and to ask about the walk's purpose and aims. Our green ribbons, worn as an acknowledgement of the local 'wear green for Grenfell' movement, were sober symbols of respect for lost lives and shattered homes, so many of whom attend our school. Despite the inevitable obstacle to local traffic, residents and bystanders happily stopped and were filled with admiration for our walk.

Writing to us in response to our letter informing the community of our intended walk, one resident commented: "If I may say, your initiative to write and inform local residents of the way your team has approached this dreadful occurrence was most constructive; but more important what you are doing demonstrates your sensitivity towards these traumatised students". The pain is still raw and so many lives remain in pieces. There is a limit to what practical and financial activity can repair. We give our commitment to play our part in students' emotional, spiritual healing. We are privileged to work with adults and young people possessing enormous generosity, grace, sensitivity and kindness in the face of this unspeakable disaster. Colin Hall's gift of his own restored garden bench (pictured as the cover photo of this magazine) stands as a memorial to Nur Huda El Wahabi's life, our student who died in the blaze. The fund-raising, resilience, stoicism and care of our students has been a powerful testament to the extraordinary young people at Holland Park.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON
ASSOCIATE HEAD



Sir Simon visits 'Plodge'

Thorpe Lodge stands at the entrance to school and is the only survivor of seven houses built and designed by John Tasker between 1808 and 1817. In this time the Lodge has served as a residence for a number of prominent figures, many of whom substantially altered the building over its 200 years. Notably Henry Tanworth Wells RA, a portrait and miniature painter, who took over the house in 1875. His most famous work, *Victoria Regina*, 1880, was probably completed in the house. Following his death in 1903 the house was purchased by its final resident, Captain Montagu Collet Norman, in 1904. The prospectus of sale at auction on 10th December, 1903, stated, 'the residence occupies an unrivalled position. In the healthiest of all localities and within fifteen minutes drive of Piccadilly. The aspect of the reception room is due south over the broad terrace and beautiful lawns'. Montagu Norman was Governor of the Bank of England

between 1920 and 1944. He was married in 1933 to Priscilla Worsthorne (Lady Norman) and together they took up home in the Lodge, which they later affectionately nicknamed 'Plodge'. They remained in the house until Lord Norman's death (in the Lodge) in 1950. Lady Norman later wrote in her memoirs, 'Thus it was in 1954 that the dramatic experience of leaving Plodge took place. The lease was up, and the L.C.C had acquired the house and garden under a compulsory purchase order for a comprehensive school'. Holland Park School opened in 1958, it was officially inaugurated a year later by Lady Norman. Some years afterward she wrote, 'I am sure that in 1954 the L.C.C meant well, and intended to keep the house as near a dwelling place as possible when they built their large comprehensive school for 2000 on the garden site. But the beauty and peace that existed has died. Plodge is no more. I will not enlarge on what has happened except to



The Music Room c.1950

say, with hindsight and a heavy heart....destruction of the old house, would have been preferable'. We recently hosted a visit to the Lodge from Sir Simon Townley. Sir Simon is the eldest of Lady Norman's two children and spent his childhood growing up in the house. Now 95, he had not set foot over its threshold in over 60 years; indeed Sir Simon assumed the house to have been demolished many years ago. His visit arose because we are currently working on a plan to refurbish Thorpe Lodge, now a grade II listed building, and bring it 'back to life', creating new learning spaces for the school. Working with Dr Jonathan Foyle, an architectural historian, led us to Sir Simon and the invitation for him to return to his family home. On a beautiful sunny afternoon in late May, with a mix of joy and trepidation, he entered through the front door and back into Plodge. Sir Simon regaled stories of the house, bringing each room to life, filling them

with descriptions of the furniture that once stood in them and the people that inhabited them. 'And that's the telephone cupboard' he said, 'PARK 5067. We weren't encouraged to use it and 'no one from the bank called. Well, I guess you wouldn't call the Governor unless the world was coming to an end!' We climbed the short flight of stairs to enter the maid's room; Sir Simon held my arm tightly. At the threshold he paused, there was a long silence and I saw a tear appear in his eye. He gathered himself and said, 'I was very fond of her; she was a real friend'. The moment was joyfully sad; for Sir Simon, he was back home, and a small child again. He considered our plans for refurbishment and embraced them with enthusiasm.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL
ACADEMY HEAD

An Inspector Calls

There is a certain elegance, reservation and dignity about the writing of Agatha Christie. Her detective stories of 'gentle murder' amongst the genteel and middle class are written in a style that is charmingly and beguilingly benign. And so, when Colin Hall taught some Year 8 students a unit of work on crime writing, it was in that spirit of picture-perfect 1950s Britain, polluted by the most heinous of crimes, that he set the scene. And being no ordinary lesson, the murder mystery was fully furnished. An actor playing dead; a scene constructed; potential murder weapons aplenty; hints to motives strewn across the set; fragments of conversations, relationships, arguments, secret loves suggested in notes; gifts, picnics, champagne flutes for two, shopping bags, stopped clocks. The scene was rich in creativity and ripe for harvesting ideas and inspiration. The resulting work, excited by the presence of students' very own film set was

marvellous. Various styles and methods abounded and the plurality of the output was a testament to the quality of open-ended teaching. Amongst some impressive pieces of work, Vivien Taylor's introduction to a crime at Frome Manor. Across the page is an excerpt of this work which captures crisply the subtleties of style and format that defines the genre. It is a phenomenal achievement, a remarkably mature and well-judged piece of writing. Its pace, its diction, its sense of suspense, its depiction of character are exquisitely constructed and make for writing of masterful maturity and elegance.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON
ASSOCIATE HEAD

An Indecent Murder

(introductory paragraph) by Vivien Taylor

A visitor to Frome Manor, Buckinghamshire, should they make their journey by car, will take the old station road from Monks Risborough and pursue it as it winds uphill, past dense green coppices and black-tilled regular field until, in the midst of the thickly populated woodland, the gate to the manner is reached. Much of the route is visible from the village below, so a little after 7 am on Friday 11th May 1958, the early risers of Monks Risborough could clearly realise a vision of the lines of flashing blue. Bright, in an eastern sun, emergency vehicles were snaking their way uphill, flickering through the glade and casting electric shadows in the early morning light.



PERFECT TENSE

The sun shone, the lavender and rosemary wafted in the breeze, black bow ties, new haircuts, glorious dresses, stripes in the grass, gifts wrapped in linen, antique silver spoons in handmade presentation boxes, shimmering candlelight and a collection of wonderful people young and old. So they came together for an evening to mark those who display exceptional human qualities. Sixty friends of the school gave sixty students a gift of silver, but more importantly, some wisdom and an example of how to live a life. Some had travelled miles: Anna Kendall OBE, once Headmistress of Christ Church Primary School in Chelsea, came from Yorkshire, and from even further north, Mildred Hunter, leaving Durham for the first time in fifty years and at such a grand age! Members of Colin Hall's class of 1983 – 1990 from Harrogate reassembled, Brigid Jennings, resplendent in a red spotted dress, effervesced with boundless joy (what an inspiration she continues to be). Lucy Colenso brought her 16-year-old daughter as a guest and she wants to travel from Derbyshire to come to school here as a result! Loyal and long-standing friends Sally Price, Celia Birtwell, David Mantle and Simon Griffiths were joined by new friends Lady Elizabeth Arnold, Amanda Harris, Sheelagh Leith-Taylor and William Taylor, all of these and more, proud to meet their student winners. Music interspersed words and two music aficionados Sally Clarke and Katharine Kent, gave their awards to young musicians: Yola Khodja, Gabriel Rumney and Susannah Rumney. Leonardo

Rossi rightfully took the Elizabeth Rutherford Cup and Otis Valentine, after seven flawless years of dry wit and earnest effort, took the Melinda Libby Bowl – a well-deserved recognition of his maturity and sensitivity. Alumni students and parents combined with brilliant newcomers, such as Omar Ait El Caid, Betsy Griffiths, Will Gove and Clementine Yates. This was an evening to celebrate those who have made fabulously long-lasting contributions, as well as those starting out in the school for the very first time. Sarah Bagheri, Sophia Ellis, Chater Jordan and Sophie Harrington were amongst those picking up awards for the very final time. They were joined by a number of other Sixth Form students who are moving into their final year with us. Thus, time and the connection of the old and young and the circularity of life was Colin Hall's theme. No wonder guests took home Eliot's *Four Quartets*! As ever, the evening was a subtle blend of humour, bonhomie and sensitive reflection on matters deep. Whilst the evening looked splendid and might indeed outshine much more privileged institutions, the real triumph is that the stories and lack of privilege of many of the recipients is deftly masked. It was not without its sadness and embraced some of the darkest elements the school's experience this year. But in so doing, it was profoundly affirmative, joyous and celebratory of all those indomitable virtues that underscore the strength of the human spirit: warmth, generosity, gratitude, stoicism, faith and resilience.





WILD, WET AND WINDY

It has been a summer of adventurousness, with students hiking, camping, surfing, rock climbing, abseiling, tunnelling, water-skiing and even rope swinging. The PE team have taken students from a range of years away on different visits. Year 7 and 8 students visited Devon for an outdoor residential. Some fifty of our Year 10 students toiled with the raging weather as they completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award in the South Downs National Park. Mr Goodsell also took a group of Year 8 students to Battersea to take on the Go Ape tree top adventure to reward them for their endeavours in PE. In addition to these outdoor pursuits students have been running, jumping and throwing their way through our House Sport Week in athletics. Students competed in boys' and girls' javelin, discus, shot-put, standing jump, short-, middle- and long-distance runs as well as the crown in the jewel of Olympic sport, the 4 x 100m relay. Displaying grit and determination, teams were cheered on from the side-lines as tension mounted and points were robustly challenged and

steadily accumulated. Chappell House came out triumphantly as winners of the week, with Seely House in second and Bennett House in third. There have been competitive successes for our school teams with the Year 7 & 8 girls' rounders teams triumphing over Burlington Danes and the Year 7 & 8 boys' cricket team also defeating Burlington Danes and the West London Free School with comprehensive victories of up to 10 wickets. Our all-dominating Year 9 girls' netball team secured their place at the London Youth Games by defeating all other schools in the borough. Our sporting year was brought to a close with the hosting of our annual Sports Tea to celebrate the successes and performances of all students involved in school sport this year. Zaccaria Tramarin and Laura Wharton took home the top prize of Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year respectively.

MR TOM MITCHELL
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

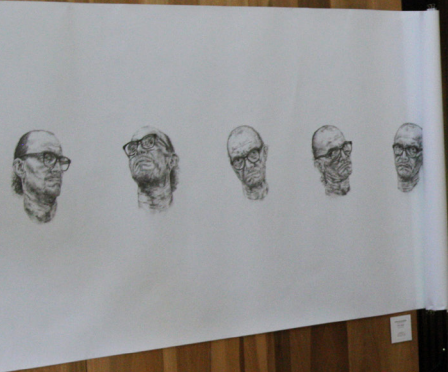


KATHARINE KENT CONCERT

Each year of the Katharine Kent concert seems to be different in flavour and improved in vintage. The marked success of this year was the extraordinary number of talented singers, many of whom we had not heard before. Yola Khodja is well known to the Holland Park stage and her performance of 'Night and Day' was predictably virtuosic. But Scarlett Dredge-Fenwick revealed a rich mezzo tone in her performance of Adele's 'Hiding My Heart'. Gabriella Azevedo was also a star singer, oozing a moody on-stage confidence and singing with a beautiful tonal clarity and delicacy. Jonah McLeod's raucously funny performance of the Tom Lehrer song 'Poisoning Pigeons in the Park' was a deliciously macabre in its tongue-in-cheek sadism. And in addition to solo work, the ensembles performed superbly well. The choir sang some new numbers and amongst the Orchestra's set 'In the Mood' proved a soulful and entertaining rendition, with Leonardo Rossi and Sophia-Isabella Gutierrez the stand-out performers on the clarinet, filling out the main theme in harmony with pin-point precision

and musicality. Our new string quartet, led by the Rumneys, had its maiden performance, with a sensitive execution Haydn's 'Emperor' quartet. Incidental music, used in the transitions from one live performance to the next, brought back some much-loved performances from yesteryear, with the Paso Doble duet, played by our two talented Year 13 pianists, Vesa Drejta and Erona Jashanica, a very impressive recording of musical talent at its best. And in addition to the music, it was stunningly conceived. Under a theme of foreign travel, the design of the evening suggested that global music was akin to receiving postcards from friends and relatives visiting interesting and colourful places. And in the same way as a postcard serves to share the memory of travel, students left their own memento of the evening through the latest edition of the *Live from Holland Park Music Magazine* which features a CD of the event.

MS AMY CHAPMAN
LEAD PRACTITIONER



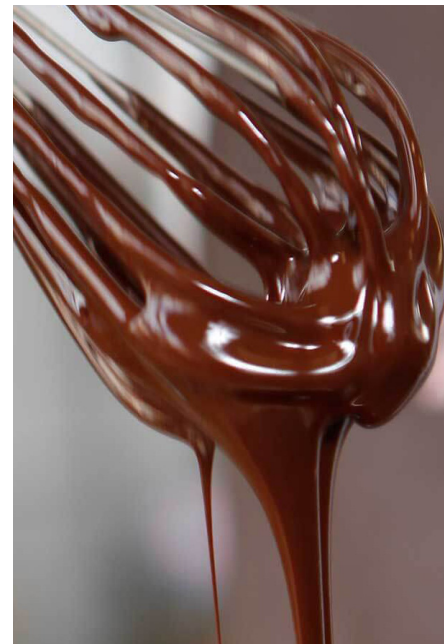
BETTER THAN THE REAL THING - THE SUMMER EXHIBITION

Once again the Lodge played host to this year's summer exhibition of work completed by our A level Art students. The sun shone, a gentle breeze blew through the open windows, and once again visitors waxed lyrical about the ability of our young artists, this year taught by the formidable Mr Herbert and Ms Bromhead. A community of twenty of London's youngest talents presented a show that wove a journey from the elegiac to the joyful and romantic. Entering, one was immediately struck by the delicate playful lines and marks of Kemi Ade-Onojobi's drawings. A remarkable snapshot of the vibrancy and vitality of our community. Familiar and unfamiliar faces peer over grocery store displays, glance through barber shop windows and adorn chaotic market stores. Seven years of friendship and camaraderie were chronicled in Yevhen Nahirna's oil painting 'The Lads', a title that jars a little with the soft-focus iconography typified by Yevhen's application

of paint. 'Paintings' by Calypso Eaton provided a sense of space and contemplation. Rothko-esque, one felt moved by the skilfully applied layers of paint and graduated colour; there was life in this abstraction and, as with the act of making and viewing such works, one could not help the reflection that art meets a spiritual need in people. Erona Jashanica's sharp naturalism was a striking self-portrayal in a beautifully rendered pose. Her improvement one year on from the end of her first year of A Level is remarkable. Mona Barakji once again exhibited her effortless skill in representing depth on paper, by giving tremendous life to work that was miniature in size but maximal in impact and Sequoia Murrell's abstract messages in string struck very a resonant chord!

MR OLIVER HERBERT
LEAD PRACTITIONER

CHOCOLATE DINNER



Chocolate (apparently) doesn't make the world go round... but it certainly excites our students and makes the ride worthwhile. One Tuesday in April, some of our most highly awarded VIVO students joined the company *My Chocolate*, specialists in deliciously indulgent chocolate making workshops. As well as the practical side of the workshop, they learned about the humble beginnings of Mayan chocolate and its meteoric rise in the 20th century, to the height and delight of the chocolate bar. The workshop also reminded us of why chocolate has certainly found a special place in our hearts (and tummies). Students put their taste buds to the test in a taste challenge and then delved into their task to design artisan truffles; with a promise that they could take any left uneaten home to their friends and family. Students left the morning with sticky chocolate fingers, stomachs rumbling with chocolate and truly decadent truffles coated in an array of mouth-watering toppings to savour over the Spring break. Yum!

MS MARISA PILLING
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

Dressed in their finery and with the weight of examinations lifted from their shoulders, sixty Year 13 students (and their teachers) gathered at Beaufort House in Chelsea, on a sultry Friday evening in June, to celebrate the end of A-Level examinations and the closure of their time at Holland Park School. And what a joy students were on the evening! They offered us a very touching reminder of just how mature our young adults have become. Oozing charm and radiating the finest of manners, the year of 2017 exuded grace and sophistication, engaging in dialogue that departed from the rigidity that a formal school context facilitates and instead permitted the warmest of encounters. Though this is a yearly event, few years boast this extent of students' charm. It was an evening filled with laughter and smiles but, inevitably, tinged with an air of finality as students departed as young adults to embark upon their own journeys to universities across the country and beyond.

MS FAYE MULHOLLAND
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



A PROM-PER SEND OFF FOR THOSE ON THE BALL

In one of our busiest Year 11 balls yet, the Cumberland hotel heaved with over 200 students and a host of school staff wishing students the very best for the last time. Students were in celebratory mood, beautifully attired with best dresses and finest dinner suits being sported by one and all. Some humorous awards were given on the evening, as students voted tongue-and-cheek for the best dressed amongst a range of other categories. A three course dinner gave way to a spot of dancing and after-dinner discourse as students relished being together as a year group for the very final time. Students' charm, impeccable manners, good humour and desire to reminisce about their time with us certainly contributed to an fun-filled evening. The rite of passage offered one and all a moment to reflect and recognise their successes in their journey through Holland Park School and, for those not returning in September, a moment to bestow our good wishes. And just as these students were marking the end of the road of their compulsory schooling (many of whom will be returning next year), there was a whole other

Park, interested in exploring our Sixth Form for their future study. Inundated with requests to visit the school, we opened our doors to over 70 students on 26th June to give them a taste of what is in store this coming September. Joined by willing and energetic ambassadors, their contemporaries from amongst the year ahead of our prospective entrees, excitement and anticipation were the flavours of the day. Students met those who had already made the leap to Holland Park School, who accompanied them experience a lesson in one of the subjects they hope to study in September. In these lessons students were immersed in Tudor England, engaged in philosophical debate and challenged to match Ms Pugh's extensive vocabulary in English. Students left in eagerness for August to arrive to reveal their sought-after grades. We wish the best of luck to all candidates and look forward to welcoming our new Year 12 students in September in what promises to be an exciting year in the Sixth Form's expansion.

MS FAYE MULHOLLAND
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

QUIZZICAL AND PHYSICAL

A sticky late afternoon in June saw the height of competition surge through each member of the mathematics team. Ably supported by students, teachers took it in turns to show their mettle (rulers!). Mr Fuller, once an energy abounding PE teacher, perfectly positioned to incorporate the physical into the quizzical, oversaw the protracted proceedings. The competition encompassed a riddle from a sequence of clues laid out around the circumference of the asymmetrical Reading Garden. The aim was to unscramble them to reveal an answer to the question, 'What happened to the plant in the maths class?' Thus proceeded a flurry of activity and whirring of minds as students attempted to solve the challenges that lay ahead of them. First position went to Ms Rahman's mean Year 9 team, closely followed by students in Year 7 and 8 representing Ms Harris. In a storm of algebraic confusion came the angry Year 9 students (otherwise known as the cross section). And if you are wondering what happened to the plant; well, it grew square roots of course!

A VIVO-CIOUS ADVENTURE

If you have ever run or cycled up Campden hill to school, some burning lactic acid might have given you the sense that you were making quite an ascent. Well, for 30 students our local incline was dwarfed by the Snowdonia National Park. This may have been a reward visit for those whose VIVO accounts reveal exceptional performance in the school year so far, but it was no chilled-out beach holiday. In addition to the trek to the eponymous peak of the area, testing students' fitness and agility. Students even took part in a biology experiment, seeing how bodily exertion related to heart rate. But we were not just testing physical prowess. Some 'geocaching' (orienteering) saw students also develop their map-reading skills, as Ordnance Survey maps were thrust into students' hands in with the challenge to navigate a course set up by I set with Ms Mulholland on a leisurely morning run before students were out of bed! With a new, ignited passion for discovery students returned to school for the final half term hungry for more VIVO points and ready for their next adventure!

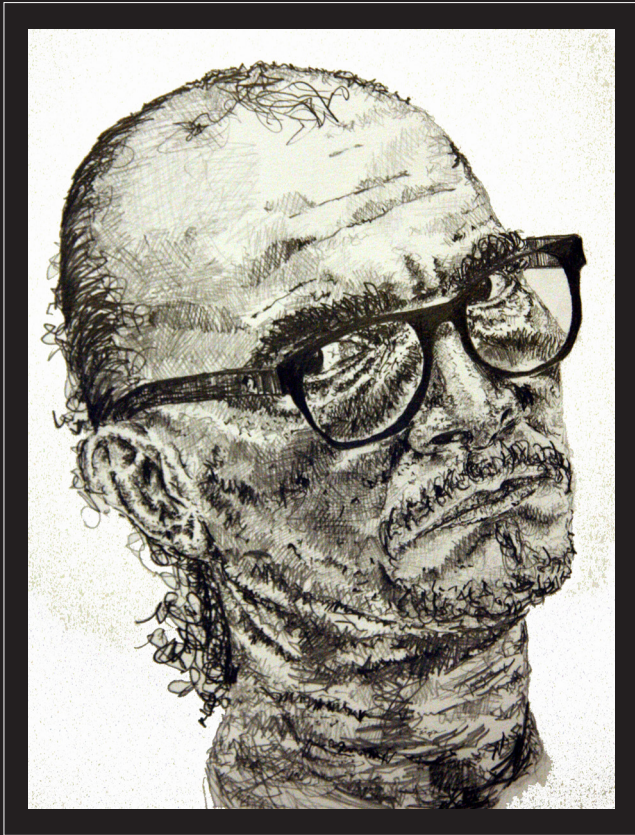
MATHEMATICAL MUSCLE

Twenty one students. Five teachers. Two days. And a whole load of mathematics. When the bus arrived at Flatford Mill, Suffolk, no amount of preparation was to have softened the intensity of a mental maze of mathematics. That's not to say that students have not undergone some rigorous training. Each Friday evening, students have been enticed with impenetrable puzzles and conundrums to tone their mathematical muscles. But at the time of arrival, the arithmetic assault course proved a worthy challenge. Students returned, ruddy from their efforts and overjoyed by their successes. Ten hours of mathematics is a challenge for any student, but this particular ten hour programme was a mathematical marathon requiring resilience and stamina, and students' capacity to absorb that challenge and respond joyously and with pleasure, was a touching privilege.

AND ONE LAST WORD...

So we close this edition in tribute to the departure of Amanda Redfearn, Deputy Head, and long-time editor of our very own *Et Cetera*. Having fought the good fight since 2001, she has been a founding figure in the transformation of the school's success and leaves us the richer and stronger for all of her work. Possessing sound judgment, clarity of purpose, decisiveness and political acumen, she has ever wisely guided the decisions of the school, most particularly in the early and difficult days. She has also been a much loved and talented teacher of English. As her last cohort of English students are launched to university this summer, bolstered by the linguistic confidence they have been given, they will have much to thank her for. And, with them, we offer our warmest wishes for the future and exhort Ms Redfearn to return frequently to our school events in her new capacity as a friend of the school!

Designed and produced by
HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL



Kemi Ade-Onojobi | Year 13 | Façade, pencil on paper, 2017