

Senior School Newsletter



This has been another year of remarkable academic ambition and success. Our pupils continue to raise the bar, gaining offers from world-leading institutions including Oxford and Harvard. Their curiosity and intellectual drive extend far beyond the classroom, with pupils competing with success in national and international competitions as well as developing their own academic societies. In March our pupil-established Psychology Club organised a trip to the Neuro-Science Centre of Madrid to see the world's first FONAR Stand-up MRI scanner.

As the world around us evolves, so too does our provision. We are actively responding to the challenges and opportunities presented by new technologies and shifting global dynamics. Our staff AI Working Group is exploring the educational implications of artificial intelligence, ensuring we continue to prepare our pupils for a world that demands adaptability, ethical thinking, and sound judgement. We remain deeply committed to offering expert, forward-looking guidance as our pupils plan their futures amidst uncertain political and economic landscapes.

Runnymede is, and must always be, outward-looking. This term saw pupils attend a European Model United Nations conference in the Netherlands, Year 10 exploring future possibilities in a Careers workshop and panel discussion as part of their Activity Week. As you read this, a Global Action trip to Borneo and a visit to China are inspiring personal growth and cross-cultural understanding, while the dedication of pupils and staff to teaching Afghani girls and Ukrainian students online speaks volumes about our values of compassion and service. The Charity Committee has also worked tirelessly, not only raising significant funds for vital causes but also furthering the vision of Fundación Runnymede – opening doors to UK university education for talented students in our local community.

Success in sport has also been a highlight this term, with pupils emerging as overall champions in several inter-schools athletics competitions including a standout performance from Mateo G in Year 9⁺ who ran 100m in a remarkable 11.23 seconds.

To all our pupils and staff, thank you for another term of commitment, curiosity, and courage. You embody the best of Runnymede.

Ms Hawkins, Senior Deputy Head

— House Winners 2024! —



— Senior School Speech Day and Prize Giving —

On Saturday 31st May we hosted our annual Senior School Speech Day and Prize Giving. After several years of considering the idea, this year Mr Powell invited a current Runnymedian to speak to the school. Lucía L from Year 13 delivered a powerful and thought-provoking speech which made us all reflect on our day to day life at Runnymede and the extent to which we make the most of the interactions opportunities available to us. A heartfelt thanks to Lucía.

The Prize Giving element of the ceremony saw huge applause for our pupils, with prizes awarded for Academic Excellence, for showcasing Runnymede Values and for sporting achievements. We were delighted to award **Rafael in Year 11** the Founders Award this year, for recognition of his academic excellence, perseverance and determination.



— Year 10 Enrichment Week —

Year 10 recently completed an enrichment week filled with activities designed to broaden their horizons. Students completed a Model UN project to consider how to best improve the lives of children around the world, developing their presentation skills and their awareness of the complex issues in the wider world. The careers and university pathways day was a fantastic opportunity for students to reflect on their academic achievements and consider how their decisions in school will impact their futures.

Students also enjoyed three days of fantastic trips. Kayaking, archery and pedalos at San Juan Panadero offered some well-deserved respite after the intensity of exam week. We also put students (and staff) to the test with a Monopoly-inspired scavenger hunt around Madrid - which revealed that some of them are experts at orienteering, whilst others can intricately map the best shopping spots in the city. Finally, students completed a Lengua trip to Alcalá de Henares to visit the university, museum and historic theatre.

Ms Logan, Head of Year 10



— Model United Nations —



Sixteen Year 10 and Year 12 pupils travelled to the Netherlands for five days to take part in the 31st International Model United Nations of Alkmaar.

The MUN is an educational simulation where students represent diplomats from member nations and debate global issues, mimicking the procedures of the United Nations. Participants research, debate, and negotiate resolutions on topics ranging from peace and security to human rights and sustainable development.

Runnymede pupils worked hard prior to the trip in order to prepare, and should be proud of the manner with which they participated. Special congratulations goes to Claudia M in Year 10 for winning Best Delegate of the Conference. Thanks also to Ms Koppinen and Ms Ramsden for all their support for the MUN team and travelling with them.



— Regional, National and International Maths Competition Success —

Few schools can boast the success of our Maths Department, which consistently achieves top A-Level marks among the best in the world. Once again, they have triumphed in a range of regional, national, and international competitions, showcasing their exceptional talent and dedication.



In UK Competitions:

- **Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, Year 9, 10, 11:**
22 Gold certificates
26 Silver certificates
47 Bronze certificates
- **Senior Mathematical Challenge, Year 12, 13**
8 Gold certificates
13 Silver certificates
13 Bronze certificates



In US Competitions:

- **Purple Comet! Math Meet, Year 11, 12, 13**
Runnymede College was **1st** in Spain and **2nd** In Europe



In Spanish Competitions:

- **Concurso Primavera, Years 6 - 13**
Which includes 53,000 students, 560 schools, the following Runnymede Pupils were in the top 25 for the Comunidad de Madrid:
 - **Nivel 3 - Y10/11:** Rafa R
 - **Nivel 4 - Y12/13:** Diego H, Tingwei Z

In addition out of the 560 schools, Runnymede was placed 4th in Nivel 3 and 3rd in Nivel 4

- **Concurso Intercentros** - Teams of 6 students take part and this includes all the schools in the Comunidad de Madrid.
 - Runnymede College were **1st!**
The team was: Luka B (Year 7); Zach C (Year 8); Zhijing Q, Rafa R (Year 11); Diego H, Tingwei Z (Year 12)



On Monday 9th June the Maths Department went to the Universidad Computense de Madrid, along with six students in Prep and Senior School, to celebrate our pupils' phenomenal success in Regional and National Spanish Maths competitions.

Huge congratulations again to the team of Diego H and Tingwei Z in Year 12, Zhijing Q and Rafa R in Year 11, and Zachary C and Luka B in Year 8, who received first place overall in the Madrid-wide competition.

Special mentions to Zhijing who achieved first place in her level, and Jeremy X in Year 9 who won a silver medal in the National Maths Olympiad.

Huge thanks to Mr Holtham for organising this and allowing our students to have access to such prestigious competitions.

Ms Atkinson, Mathematics



— Gold Duke of Edinburgh —

Twenty-four Yr12 participants and two teachers travelled to Snowdonia and returned safely on Sunday 8th June after successfully completing their Gold Award qualifying expedition.

The Gold Award is the highest level of the DofE programme – a personal development scheme that encourages young people to challenge themselves, build new skills, and gain confidence. To achieve the Gold Award, participants complete five sections: Volunteering, a Physical Activity, a Skill, a Residential and an Expedition. For many, the Gold expedition is often seen as the most exciting and memorable part of the award.

This year the Runnymede Gold Expedition took place in Snowdonia National Park, Wales. To prepare, pupils had to plan their expedition including learning map skills, camp craft and first aid. The expedition was four days and three nights and pupils had to carry their own kit including tents and equipment, cook for themselves and navigate their route using a map and compass. They also tackled tough terrain, relentless rain, and an army of midges with real resilience. After a challenging start, they were rewarded with some sunshine and stunning views — and throughout it all, they showed impressive determination and teamwork.

Following the expedition pupils embarked on a sightseeing trip to Liverpool. They visited the Beatles Experience, went on a historic walking tour and enjoyed a celebratory dinner together. The pupils were fantastic throughout the trip, even when the weather was less kind! Well done to all of them.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Mr Hornshaw. After setting up the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at Runnymede he has overseen its operation for many years. Under his guidance it has gone from strength to strength. For many Runnymedians their memories of DofE are one of the real highlights of their time at the school, and this is down to him. Thank you Mr Hornshaw for your leadership, guidance and for leaving us this legacy as you embark on your own next adventure.



— Year 9 Trip to Cadiz —



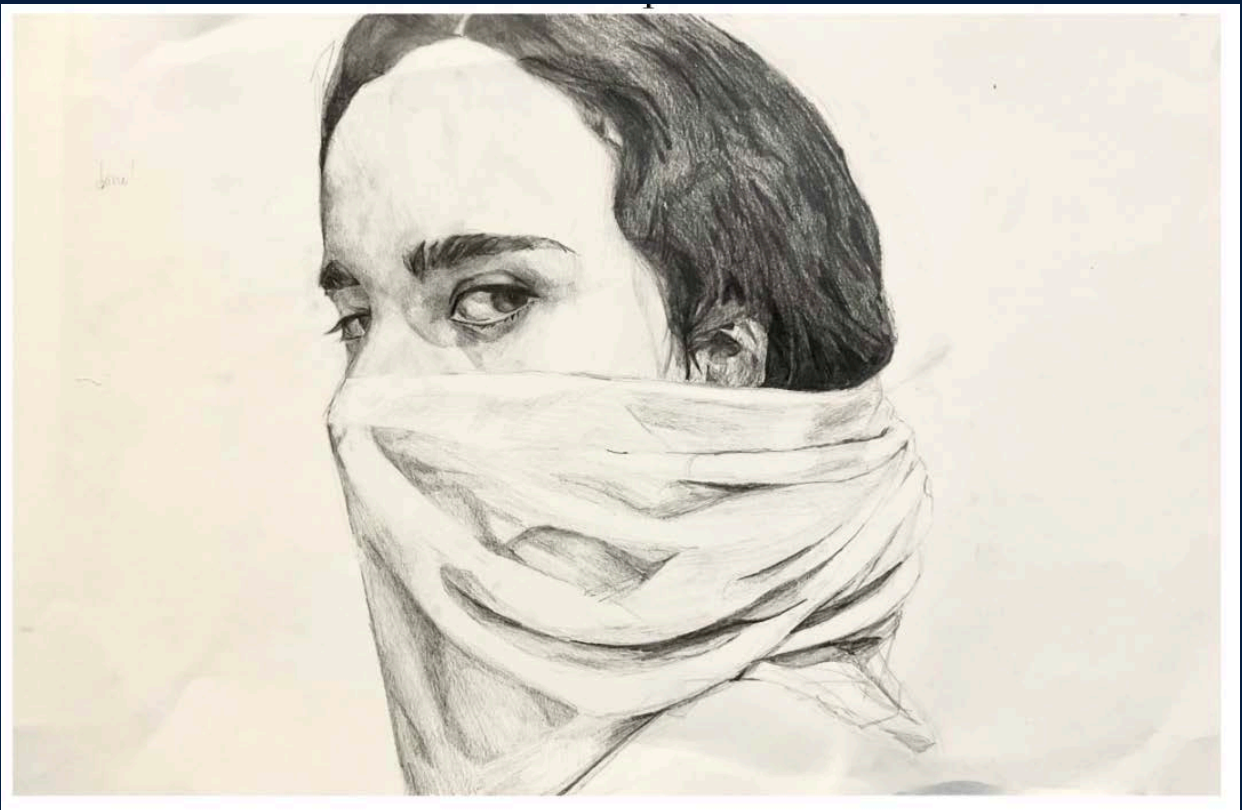
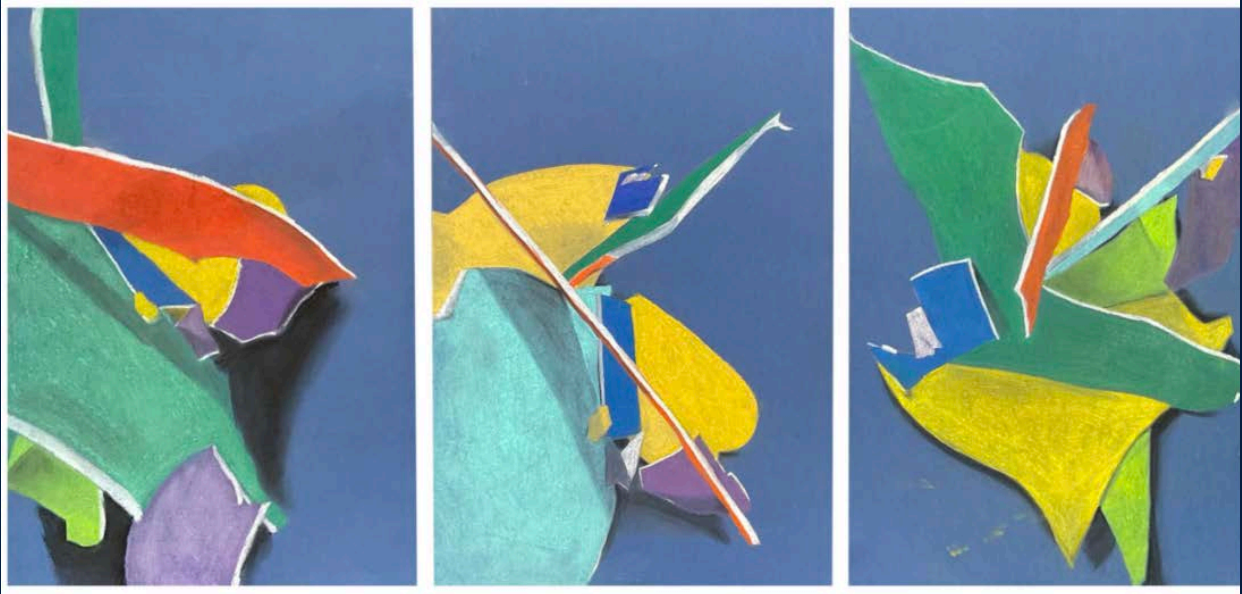
Our Year 9 students recently returned from a very successful trip to Cadiz, where they combined excitement and education through a variety of outdoor activities and fascinating visits to the historical town of Arcos de la Frontera and the Roman ruins of Baelo Claudia. The adventure began with students diving into thrilling water sports like kayaking, surfing, and paddleboarding, set against the stunning backdrop of Cadiz's beaches. With expert instructors guiding them, students developed their skills and enjoyed the thrill of the waves. The trip also included a cultural exploration of Baelo Claudia, an ancient Roman city located near the picturesque Bolonia beach. Pupils had the chance to step back in time, exploring well-preserved ruins, including an impressive theatre, temple, and bathhouse, learning about Roman life and trade. This blend of outdoor adventure and historical discovery made the trip both fun and enriching, offering students the chance to bond, learn, and create unforgettable memories.



— Art Exhibition —

Following the completion of IGCSE and A-Level coursework and moderation, we were treated to the annual Private Viewing. As ever, it was a vibrant celebration of creativity and talent, showcasing an impressive range of work from pupils in Years 11 & 13. From detailed drawings and bold paintings to imaginative installations and mixed-media pieces, the exhibition highlighted the diverse skills and artistic voices of our students.

Parents, staff, and visitors were invited to explore the gallery-style displays, with many commenting on the originality and thoughtfulness behind the work. It was a fantastic opportunity for pupils to share their artistic achievements and be recognised for their hard work and creativity. As ever, a particularly special moment was when Pre-Prep pupils came to visit the exhibition and see what Senior pupils have been up to! Thank you to Ms Magnus and Ms Rosser for their hard work in curating the exhibition.





— Shakespeare Speaking —



Our Year 9 Shakespeare Speaking Competition was a true celebration of drama, language, and creativity. Pupils performed scenes from a range of Shakespeare's plays, bringing the Bard's words to life with confidence, emotion, and humour. As part of the challenge, each group also designed and created their own costumes and props to reflect the characters and settings of their chosen scenes, adding an extra layer of creativity to their performances! Judges were particularly impressed by the energy and expression pupils put into both their acting and presentation.

Special mention goes to Christina T, Hugo C, and Felipe I for their outstanding individual performances, each capturing the depth and complexity of their characters with real flair. Congratulations to the winning group – Luciana C, Juan A, Pablo L, and Shunyao C – whose powerful performance and imaginative costume design truly stood out. The competition was a fantastic opportunity for students to explore Shakespeare in a dynamic and engaging way, and we're proud of everyone who took part.



— Year 9 Poetry Competition —

The Year 9 Poetry Competition, organised by the English Department, was a fantastic event that celebrated the creativity and talent of our students.

Pupils wrote their own original poems, and performed them in the library in front of a supportive audience. The range of themes and styles was impressive, showcasing the depth and originality of the pupils' writing.

Congratulations to Alex K, who was crowned the winner for his imaginative, sharp and humorous poem. Special recognition also goes to Gabriela A and Kara B, who were named runners-up for their moving and thought-provoking poems. The competition was a wonderful opportunity for students to express themselves creatively and gain confidence in public speaking. Thank you to the English Department for their support.



Ode to Brain Rot - Alex

"The grimace shake, chopped chin, The Costco guys"
I shut both my eyes, and try to feel free
My brain is rotting and I've not much time

Scroll from 9 to 5, should be getting paid
TikTok's the roots of my mind that's a tree
If only ninja got a low taper fade

My doctor says there's a worm in my mind
But I'm not RFK so it can't be
My brain is rotting and I've not much time

Open the app to the newest trend made
Anything else is too boring for me
If only ninja got a low taper fade

TikTok's a job yet I don't earn a dime
"KSI thick of it"- best song to be
My brain is rotting and I've not much time

Ate too much lunchly and drank too much prime
Lunchly contains lead, that might be a crime
If only ninja got a low taper fade
My brain is rotting, and I've not much time

Storm - Gabriela

With no warning, the sky blurs.
Azure is drained from the sky; darkness roams: a storm.

Over the rumble of shadows, I hear a guttural voice whispering my sins.

The chaos. The city runs from the rage-bearing clouds above from the storm.

The pages of my notebook soak, then curl. I've written:
"The worst is yet to come. The darkness encapsulates the city."

With a snap, it breaks, blinding light finds its way in - exposing it.
The eerie nakedness. A storm.

The sky is an envelope, torn open.
Like cracked glass. Lightning bursts through the city. It is a storm.

I am an envelope, afraid of being torn.
If I was to break, like a cocoon, I would let way for a horror. For a storm.

Darkness doesn't flutter through the sky. It crackles.
The clouds collapse onto the city. I am the storm.

The Caged Swan - Kara

It starts with one, hesitant Step.
Then another.
Then another.
The silence is loud,
Like a sleeping thunderstorm,
A quiet Step.
Then another.
Then another.
Nothing.
Only a smooth, white feather,
Falling,
From the stage.
Then,
Faces vanish,
One after other
The silence reduces. And she is freed.
Flowing, flying
Darting, diving,
Skimming, winding,
Weaving through thoughts,
Left behind.

Clean wings, She's flying.
Lost in motion. Unstoppable.
Then, with a click,
She stops, legs rooted.
The clock returns to the repetitive
tics,
The noise roars, a wave of bricks,
Against the soft, frail frame,
The splintered wood.
The bright white
Light
She sees.
She retreats.
Only a feather,
And a pirouette,
Remains.

— Year 13 Graduation Ceremony & Leavers' Dinner —

Despite many pupils sitting their final exam just that afternoon, the Runnymede community came together to mark a major milestone: the graduation of the Year 13 Class of 2025.

We were honoured to welcome two special guests: mother and son Old Runnymedians Anmol Manghnani and Avinash Sukhwani. Mr Sukhwani delivered an outstanding keynote speech, drawing on his own experience and offering the graduating class a clear, thoughtful and inspiring summary of his personal tips for success. His words were warmly received, striking the perfect balance between wisdom and humour, and reminding students that while academic achievement is important, character, courage, and connection are equally vital.

The ceremony continued with the awarding of prizes recognising both academic excellence and the way in which pupils have embodied Runnymede Values.

Following the formal graduation ceremony, the celebration continued with a rousing leavers' dinner with speeches from Ms O'Driscoll and the Head Pupils. One highlight of the evening was a fantastic performance from the Year 13 band—whose talent, energy, and stage presence impressed everyone in attendance and brought the evening to a lively close.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. We are proud of all you have achieved, and we look forward to seeing where your journeys take you next.



— Take a Runnymedian to Work Day —

Our annual Take a Runnymedian to Work Day took place on Tuesday 10th June, having been opportunity to step out of the classroom and into the real world of work. Spending a day in a professional environment gives them a firsthand look at different industries, a chance to connect with professionals, and a real sense of what day-to-day life in a career might look like.

This wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our incredible Old Runnymedians, supportive parents, and local connections, who kindly open their workplaces to our students. Their support makes this experience truly special—helping to spark ideas, fuel ambitions, and open doors to exciting future possibilities Thank you to them all.



— Important Dates 2025-26 —

Please see below important dates for your diaries for September...

Wednesday 3rd September: New Pupil and Sixth Form Induction

Thursday 4th January: Term begins for all pupils

Thursday 4th September: Expectations Meeting for parents of pupils in Year 9

Friday 5th September: Expectations Meeting for parents of pupils in Year 10

Monday 8th September: Expectations Meeting for parents of pupils in Year 11

Tuesday 9th September: Expectations Meeting for parents of pupils in Year 13

We hope you have a wonderful and restful
summer break.

We look forward to welcoming students back to
school in September.



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