



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY MONTH

AT VISION ACADEMY LEARNING TRUST



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY MONTH - JUNE 2023

At Vision Academy Learning Trust (VALT), we chose June to be our Celebrating Diversity month to recognise and celebrate the diverse communities within all three secondary schools.

This has proven to be a month of exciting and informative educational experiences for our students across all three schools. We have aimed to outline just a flavour of the events that have taken place in this newsletter.

Undoubtedly our students at Eggescliffe School & Sixth Form College, Huntcliff School and Laurence Jackson School have been able to experience first-hand how this focus has promoted cultural awareness, discouraged discrimination, helped to overcome stereotypes and encouraged unity within our school communities.

We now hope to make this an annual event across our Trust secondary schools and we would welcome any parents/carers getting in touch if they would like to be involved next year.

CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIVERSITY-UNITING OUR THREE SCHOOLS

During Culture Week seven Year 12 students from Eggescliffe School & Sixth Form visited both Huntcliff and Laurence Jackson presenting about different countries and their cultures. Students had presentations from two groups of sixth formers who called the event 'Culture Week on tour'!

One group spoke about countries such as Iraq and Pakistan. Students were shown pictures of famous buildings such as the Taj Mahal and The Golden Temple and pictures of everyday and formal dress such as saris. They were taught how to say simple phrases such as 'hello' and 'my name is' in Urdu and Arabic. They were also given a chance to try and write their name in the Arabic language. A language which they learned is 2500 years old and has 28 letters. There were eager volunteers for this and the students all managed to successfully write using this new alphabet. Students were also given customary food of a parcel of mincemeat and rice wrapped in a vine leaf to try.

The second group of students focused on countries in Africa such as Zimbabwe, Malawi and Nigeria. They educated the students about these countries and also taught them some key phrases in their native language. Students learned about capital cities such as Lilongwe, which is the capital city of Malawi, as well as other interesting facts such as Nigeria has 500 languages! In both of these sessions, students were given the opportunity to ask questions, which included questions about food, transport and the landscape. It was wonderful experience that the students thoroughly enjoyed.





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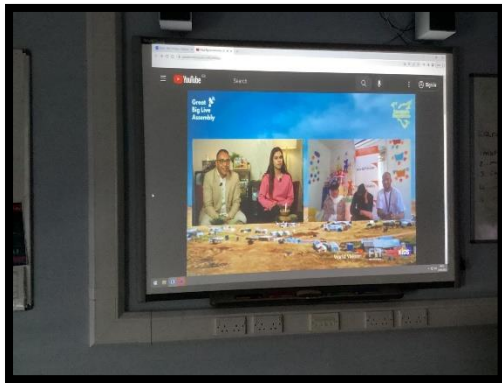
AMAL PROJECT VISIT

Forty of the Year 9 students at Egglecliffe enjoyed a cultural afternoon during this focus week. There was dancing, trying on traditional dress and henna. Thank you to Sahida from the Amal project for supporting the event. Everyone had a great time learning about and celebrating other cultures.

Students and their families also supported the Amal project by donating food and clothes to support the community.



EGGLESCLIFFE SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



GREAT BIG LIVE ASSEMBLY

Students at Huntcliff and Laurence Jackson watched the Great Big Live Assembly for World Refugee Day on Tuesday 20th June. The 20-minute Great Big Live Assembly helped students to see for themselves what life is like for many children around the world. It was hosted by Dr Krish Kandiah OBE from the Sanctuary Foundation, and Daniel Orlova, a 9-year-old refugee from Ukraine now living in the UK.

MEDIA CULTURED VISIT TO EGGLESCLIFFE

Egglecliffe students had the pleasure of welcoming Amjid Khazir from MediaCultured to speak with their students about life as a British Muslim. The students asked some excellent questions, and were able to improve their understanding of the importance of cultural diversity. Amjid talked honestly about his own experiences of racism and how this had significantly impacted on his own family. He also outlined how as a society we can become more inclusive and promote understanding as well as tolerance of differences.

What an inspirational and engaging speaker; a great opportunity for the students to actively engage with a member of the Teesside community on cultural diversity.





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CELEBRATING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

KS3 Trip to a Hindu Temple & Jewish Synagogue

In all three schools, Key Stage 3 students had the opportunity to visit the reform Synagogue and the ISKCON Hindu Temple in Newcastle. It was a fascinating day given the students insight into different faiths and religions enabling them to bring their RE lessons to life.

This visit also helped students gain a greater understanding of the customs of these two specific religions. At the Jewish Synagogue they saw the Torah Scrolls, Shabbat candles and the Tallit (Jewish Prayer Shawl) amongst many other things. Whilst at the ISKCON Hindu Temple they learnt more about the Hindu religion, poetry, music and clothing.

Students in all three schools excelled in asking and answering questions in order to develop their understanding. They will now have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt back at school. Thanks to Mrs Tate, Director of RE for organising these visits.



ANIKA USMAN VISIT

Both Laurence Jackson and Huntcliff were fortunate to welcome Anika Usman to their schools. She spoke about her experience as a British Muslim and students had opportunities to ask questions to further develop their understanding of diversity, British Values and equality.



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RAISING DISABILITY AWARENESS

DISABILITY SPORTS

Students at Laurence Jackson enjoyed taking part in a variety of disability sports including wheelchair basketball, seated volleyball and blindfold football. It helped them understand and appreciate the challenges faced by these sports people.

Students at Egglecliffe also got the opportunity to take part in blind football. Students wore blindfolds, used a rattle football and each team had a guide. It was a brilliant experience for students and they quickly realised that they had to be very good at listening and communicating.



RAISING DISABILITY AWARENESS- KEYNOTE SPEAKER-STUART MYERS

All three schools welcomed [Stuart Myers](#), during Celebrating Diversity month. Stuart came to speak to our students about disability and his own personal experiences growing up and overcoming challenges. It was an inspirational talk filled with great humour and countless examples of personal moments in his life where he demonstrated perseverance and determination which have all contributed to the person he is today. He told the students that they needed to 'Have a go' at opportunities that come their way and never fear failure.

Thank you, Stuart, for the wonderful assemblies across the Trust and for delivering such an inspiring message to our students; they can achieve anything they wish with determination and a positive mindset!





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ENDEAVOUR FUND RAISING EVENT

As part of our Diversity month the students and staff from the Endeavour department at Eggescliffe wished to try and raise money in support of an organisation that provides so much support to students, families and staff in our school community.

They decided to raise Money for 'STARS' (sensory teaching, advisory and resources service) who support young people with hearing and / or vision loss. This is a wonderful organisation who work very closely with students in school to offer guidance and to ensure that they provide the support required in school working together to help all young people reach their academic potential and become active members of society. They also provide specialist equipment that young people need in addition to providing opportunities to access out of school activities such as horse riding and residential trips.

In order to raise money in support of STARS the students made and sold hand crafted sunflower keyrings, pin badges and bookmarks as well as cakes and savoury items. Through the fantastic support from the Eggescliffe community we are proud to say we raised an amazing **£200 in just 3 days**.

They will be inviting members of the STARS team in to present them with their money and they will be sharing with the students what this will be using this for and how it will make a difference to some young people. We want to thank all staff and students who kindly supported this event. It was amazing 😊!



AWARENESS ASSEMBLIES

At Huntcliff, Miss O'Shaughnessy delivered a whole school assembly on neurodiversity. Different conditions were explored to show how people living with these conditions experience the world.

At Eggescliffe Mrs Wright, led assemblies on hidden disabilities. Form time activities across all three schools also focused on this theme looking at disabilities such as Type 1 diabetes, blindness and hearing impairments.



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CELEBRATING LGBTQ+ PRIDE

PRIDE MARCH AT HUNTCLIFF

On the 20th June, Huntcliff students took part in a Pride march around their school field. It was wonderful to see so many of the Huntcliff students and staff taking part in the march, demonstrating the school values promoting equality and inclusion. The laps around the school field also counted towards their Miles for Refugee total, raising funds for the British Red Cross.



RAISING AWARENESS OF LGBTQ+ PRIDE

All three schools had assemblies on LGBTQ+ across this week. At Egglecliffe, Hart Gables, a charity that supports the LGBTQ+ community that work across Teesside and Durham, led assemblies at Egglecliffe. All schools learnt about the history of Pride through form time activities which educated the students on the Stonewall riots in the 1960s.



COLOUR RUN AT LJS

To complete Laurence Jackson's Celebrating Diversity month, they hosted a colour run on the school site. This was enjoyed by a number of students across all Year groups. Money raised from the event will be donated to a local charity.



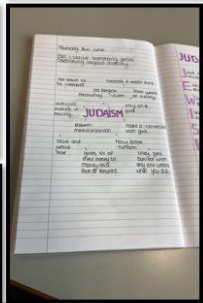
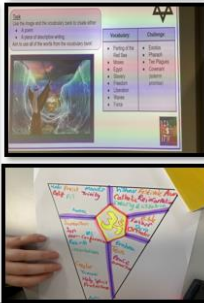
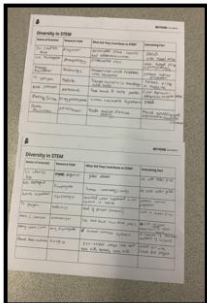
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CELEBRATING DIVERSITY THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

In all three schools, students have benefited from studying and celebrating diversity through the curriculum. From art to maths to PE, subjects have been involved ensuring that our students across the three schools had a wealth of opportunities to understanding how diversity and equality can link to the various subject areas. Below is just a small sample of photographs of how this was promoted throughout our ambitious, engaging and education curriculum.



A huge thank you to all of the external speakers, staff and students who were involved in the Celebrating Diversity Month across our Trust Secondary Schools.