

AS-SAWT THE VOICE



Tauheedul Girls

The Newsletter for Tauheedul Islam Girls'
High School and Sixth Form College

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(Un)predicted Grades

By Munira Khanjra, 12B3

Usually, the historic rite of unsealing that crisp envelope to reveal such phenomenal grades makes every revision session seem worth it. But this year, an air of uncertainty floated over students receiving their 'unexamined' results. A sense of relief and joy coupled with the acknowledgement these results were 'not real' epitomises what many students experienced.

When, on that dreary Thursday evening, all news headlines read: **'Schools to be closed, and 2020 exams cancelled due to Covid outbreak!'**, students were naturally engulfed by much confusion. It was a surreal and inexplicable experience – the culmination of years-long studious efforts now to be unravelled by Ofqual's enigmatic exam algorithm. Thousands of students across the country were left bewildered as to how the results of diligent efforts were to be calculated by postcodes and previous assessment performance.

But, following the Government's decision to award Centre Assessed Grades, 97% of pupils left the Tauheedul Sixth Form having achieved at least three A Levels at A*-C grade. In vocational courses, 96% of learners completed an Extended Diploma at 'DDD' (Distinction) level or better.



Assistant Principal, Mrs Ali, remarked, *"Although exams were rightly cancelled this year, it is still important for us all to celebrate and praise the achievements of each young person just as in any other year. Our pupils worked with dedication and commitment throughout their course and these results are very much deserved."*



Students celebrated exceptional GCSE results with 88% of students achieving a 'strong pass in GCSE English and Maths', whilst 74% achieved the English Baccalaureate. **Sana Patel, a Year 12 student, concluded,** *"Although we didn't get the opportunity to sit our exams, I feel my hard work has been reflected by such incredible grades. I feel so blessed to have so many amazing people in my life who have helped me reach this moment."*

Such an unprecedented, once in a generation pandemic, has not only taught students unwavering strength and courage but is a reminder that extraordinary benefits can be reaped from hard work and perseverance.



Chair's Reflections...

All praises to the Almighty, Lord of the Worlds and the Master of our fortunes, and salutations to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Seal of the Prophets and the guide for all our actions.

'The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.'

Martin Luther King's reflection on leadership in a time of crisis has particular resonance in this covid year. The disruption wrought by coronavirus on every aspect of our lives was something we had not anticipated. Providing a world-class education seemed difficult in 2019; in 2020 it has been doubly daunting.

Faced with the multiple layers of national and local guidance and dispiriting restrictions, it would have been easy to relax our drive for excellence and accept that coronavirus had beaten us. Instead, we have created opportunity from hardship and made progress on many fronts.

Of course, we have taken extreme care to ensure that scrupulous hygiene is maintained throughout our beautiful school. Systematic and thorough additional cleaning is undertaken constantly. The 'hands, face, space' mantra underpins our daily organisation. Good routines are in place, so everyone sanitises their hands on arrival and at key points throughout the day. Staff and pupils wear masks or face coverings in communal areas, such as corridors and social spaces. Good respiratory hygiene is practised, with the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach being used in the event of coughs or sneezes.

Pupils are grouped in bubbles in order to reduce the number of close contacts that they have in school. Interactions between girls in different bubbles are minimised by having staggered breaks and lunchtimes and separate entrance and exit points. Staff maintain two metres distance from each other and from pupils, their teaching space demarcated by tape. Movement around school is carefully controlled so that pupils are less likely to come into contact with members of other bubbles. These new routines are constantly supervised.

Despite all these measures, we have inevitably seen a few cases of Covid-19 following transmission in the local community, a significant challenge in Blackburn-with-Darwen. Because we have monitored pupils' contacts in school meticulously, we have been able to minimise the number of girls who have been sent home to self-isolate, and these pupils have not developed symptoms themselves.

We are very grateful to all pupils and parents for your co-operation in applying our stringent measures, and for your observance of social distancing beyond school, which I know creates heartache for you.

Covid-19 has upturned our lives and forced us to design new way of working. Prolonged school closure

fractured the education of those who were least able to engage with flexible solutions and exacerbated divisions between disadvantaged children and their peers.

But lockdown also galvanised an ed-tech revolution based on a fundamental reconsideration of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. It required the sector to find ways of connecting teachers and pupils so that a high-quality learning could still be delivered through remote interaction.

Online learning is much more than a solution to the exigency of the pandemic. It opens a world of possibilities and has the potential to transform learning forever.

Blended learning is the new normal for TIGHS and for all schools in the Star family. The combination of face-to-face teaching in the traditional classroom with complementary online experience gives us the resilience to withstand disruption but also the capacity to extend opportunities for our pupils to engage with a challenging, knowledge-rich curriculum.

Our vision is for every teacher to be proficient in using Microsoft Teams and other Ed-Tech platforms to engage, encourage, inspire and motivate their pupils. We aspire for every learner to develop the technical competence and resilience to use the platform to communicate, participate, research and present their learning. As well as joining lessons that are streamed via MS Teams, our pupils will have opportunities to collaborate remotely with peers on shared projects, undertake independent research and engage in 'flipped learning' by exploring aspects of a topic in preparation for delivery by the teacher.

An adaptable, flexible learning environment will enable bitesize intervention to take place remotely and will support dialogue between teachers and pupils, creating dynamic assessment for learning.

As well as engaging in high quality teaching and learning through lockdown, TIGHS staff and pupils fulfilled their civic duty by supporting many disadvantaged members of the community. The school cooked around 240 hot meals each day for local people in need, distributed copious hygiene packs and food parcels. Charitable fund-raising made a vital difference to local people. The level of need in Blackburn-with-Darwen, as in other communities served by Star schools, continues to be disturbingly high. We intend to relaunch and maintain our Star Family Hub to play a significant role in the ongoing battle against social inequality that Covid-19 has illuminated.

The pandemic has reminded everyone of the crucial

role teachers play in maintaining society. On 5th October, we celebrated World Teachers' Day, a significant event in our calendar, during which we reflected on the profound impact teachers have, an influence that extends far beyond their classrooms. Our teachers kept the school open for the children of key workers throughout lockdown. They continue to give up their own weekends, holidays and family time to help our pupils to achieve their very best outcomes. TIGHS is blessed with many amazingly dedicated, skilled and humble staff. They create opportunities, raise aspirations and shape futures. I know that you will echo my wholehearted thanks to them for their continued excellent work, day in, day out.

The first weeks of the academic year have tested

our resilience and we have emerged stronger. I am extremely proud of the entire TIGHS community. Despite the myriad challenges, our future is bright. The best days are still to come.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the As-Sawt magazine and remember the school in your prayers.

@Hamid Patel

(Mufti) Hamid Patel

Chair of the Local Governing Body, TIGHS

New Times Call for a New You

By Mariya Pennells, 12B3

In the current climate we are facing, setting goals at the beginning of this academic year was even more crucial as the future remains murky and unclear. It's more important than ever to stay organised and focused, outlining what you want to achieve from day one as opposed to coasting along with the uncertain tide.

Saarah Hasan, a Year 12 student, said, *"At the beginning of this academic year, I was sure to set myself some spiritual, personal and academic goals as I felt lockdown had particularly demotivated me and so I wanted to make sure I was prepared for a fresh start with clear, focused goals."*

Lockdown has undoubtedly shaken up our lives and torn our previous plans to shreds, so it is imperative we begin again from step one. It is important that we consider the actual rules of goal-setting.. While it may sound easy to jot down a list of tasks you want to complete, goals actually need to meet requirements so that the most rewards can be reaped from them. **Goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time constrained.** Furthermore, in our busy world, it is easy to forget the basic

principles and values which define us - but these are some of the most important goals we are encouraged to set. Values such as service, teamwork, ambition and respect should be at the forefront of our goals as embedding these values into our goals means they will have greater meaning.

Another significant area of goal-setting is in relation to spirituality. This is the aspect of our lives which will contribute directly to our character development and spiritual wellbeing. This could mean setting weekly goals regarding prayers, reflection time and behaviour. Not only will this

accentuate a more organised schedule, but it will also increase personal happiness for you as an individual because you will begin to achieve inner peace, one of the most important things we can nurture in our lives.

The tumultuous nature of our lives under the pandemic means that serving the community and those who are vulnerable significantly informs our goal-setting. One way students at Tauheedul can do this is through the Tauheedul Baccalaureate, an award that consists of achieving excellent behaviour, attendance and community service. Many students completed this award this year, getting involved in the multiple opportunities to help the vulnerable, especially in the current climate in which many more people are suffering and need our help. During lockdown, students helped to deliver parcels to those in need and helped to write letters and notes to the elderly to comfort them during the stressful and lonely times in lockdown. Students set the goal of achieving this at the beginning of the year and recently were awarded their certificates to celebrate their excellent efforts towards the community.

Miss Ougradar praised the Tauheedul Baccalaureate: *"The Tbacc Awards were an opportunity to celebrate all of the wonderful community service our girls have been doing, from sponsored walks to mentoring young people."*





Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Notorious RBG

By Amina Kamaluddin, 10T4

A beacon of justice in the US Supreme Court, Ruth Bader Ginsburg has tragically passed at the age of eighty-seven. A champion for gender equality and other vital causes during her twenty-seven years on the bench, Ginsburg left a lasting impression as a fierce advocate for minority rights.

Born to Jewish parents at the height of the Great Depression in 1933, Ginsburg soared through her studies and became very successful. In 1956, she was one of only nine women accepted into Harvard Law School out of a class of five hundred. Despite this clear example of success, she did not receive one job offer even with her prestigious qualifications. Ginsburg famously said, "I was struck on three ground: I was Jewish, a woman and a mother."

But things began to change for Justice Ginsburg when, in 1971, she made her first successful argument to the US Supreme Court which examined if men were automatically preferred to women as estate executors. The court agreed with Ginsburg, making it the first time the court had struck down a law because of gender-based discrimination.

Ginsburg's fame increased when she co-founded the ACLU project, (American Civil Liberties Union for Women's Rights) in 1972, where she became the first female professor at Columbia Law School, an achievement with huge significance. When nominated to the United States Court of Appeals for the district of Columbia under Jimmy Carter, she earned a reputation as a liberal revolutionary.

Finally, in 1993, under the nomination of Bill Clinton, Ruth Bader Ginsburg became the second woman to sit on the bench after Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Ginsburg often dreamed of becoming an opera singer, but as the **Chief Justice John Roberts said**, "She was not an opera star, but she found her stage behind me in our courtroom. There, she won many famous victories that helped our nation grow closer to equal justice." He continued, "She later became a star on the bench."



Ginsburg said,

*"I was struck on three grounds:
I was Jewish, a woman and a
mother"*

Appointed by President Bill Clinton, Ginsburg ruled on wage equality, healthcare and immigration and was known for her forceful, convincing arguments, shaping modern American life forever with progressive opinions her fellow justices did not always share.

Ginsburg continued to grow in popularity when she was introduced to the younger

generation through a Tumblr page created by a law student named The Notorious RBG, highlighting her as a feminist with unwavering devotion to fairness and equality which inspired many. The page also described as a woman with "boundless courage in the face of her own adversity".

Justice Ginsburg, a national treasure with an international impact, is sorely missed. Not only by the courtroom and her fellow benchers but also by the country she served for many years and the people she touched of all generations.

An Abundance of Katherines – How a Novel Teaches Us Morality, Consciousness and Self-Growth

By Faiqa Murtaza, 9S1

A quick check of attendance, a moment of chatter and nod of approval. As pages of distinguished authors loosely held with their binding emerge from the depths of our rucksacks, a sudden silence falls upon all.

The 'One More Page' scheme, a weekly morning registration reading programme, introduced last year to encourage pupils to read more. Because of the recent lockdown and unfortunate global pandemic, now more than ever, it is important to relieve the burdens of our minds-and where better to do that than in a roundabout of carefully crafted phrases. It could be in a forest on the outskirts of District 12, through secret tunnels in Hogwarts, or amongst the beauty of the Yorkshire moors of Thornfield Hall. There's just something about the adventures of Miss Marple, or the woeful tale of Anna Karenina that you cannot find in day-to-day life.

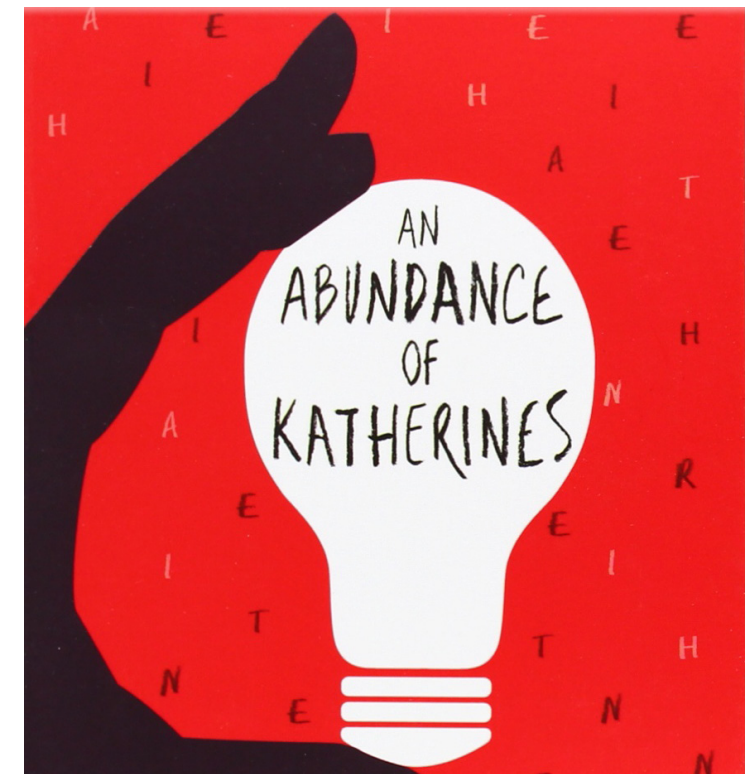


Year 9 student, Maliha Khanjra, said,

"I think the reading in form has helped me discover new books as I don't usually like to read books, and it's also helped me build on my vocabulary"



Currently, I too have been exploring a book of my own. 'An Abundance of Katherines' by John Green follows the story of Colin Singleton, a child prodigy with only one dying wish: to matter. After reliving the torture of 19 girls with the same name once again, he is left with a missing piece he hopes to fill. His only friend, Hassan Harbush, is an overweight, carefree bachelor of Lebanese descent, who, at one point, decides... to fool some strangers into thinking he is a Kuwaiti exchange student whose dad works as an oil baron, providing evidence of his down-to-earth concept of life. Following their failed road-trip, he finds himself in the fictional town of Gutshot, Tennessee. Soon, a Eureka! moment hits Colin, and he finds his life taking unexpected turns, determined to complete his Theorem and, eventually, achieve what he has always wanted.



In this innovative and original novel, Green puts forward an important subject: making an impact on the world, a recurring theme in many of his novels. We normally assume only celebrities and academics who have contributed to different fields of expertise receive recognition. However, Green ends up unearthing a different matter altogether – self-actualisation, achievement and morality are more important at this stage of life.

Colin had just graduated high-school; therefore, he is of a similar level of moral-understanding to us. Thinking outside of the box, building good relationships with others, and having a general understanding of the world are habits which we take into the later phases of life. One person's notion on life would be very different to another's; whether you take each day as it comes, or you like to plan ahead, the one thing that matters is putting in every ounce of effort. You could be hit one hundred times and still get up, more motivated than ever.

I would like to end by quoting the author, John Green:

"I think writers and publishers and readers need to go to the places where people are, and make the argument that there is great value to the quiet, contemplative process of reading a novel, that reading great books carefully offers pleasures and consolations that no iPad app ever can."



Reading for the Stars

By Amina Iqbal, 13B5



In 1933, book burnings preceded by a Nazi parade under the instruction of Hitler aimed to tighten the shackles on the German people. And in the 20th Century, the epic poetry written by Allama Iqbal inspired the birth of Pakistan. It is agreed by writers and rulers alike that literature moulds society and the minds of those who read.

The fact that a high literacy rate is characteristic of a sophisticated nation, and the opposite a symptom of educational deprivation, signifies how important reading is to a learned society.

Yet, despite the 99% literacy rate in the United Kingdom, the average reading age is just eleven years old, meaning the average Briton has a reading capacity no better than a primary school child. Clearly there is need for intervention in the education system to encourage reading for leisure.

Following the enthusiasm the scheme was met with last year, the Star Readers Challenge has been relaunched. Each year group is provided with a selection of books that they are encouraged to read

at the recommendation of experienced staff. **Ms Bux, the Challenge lead at Tauheedul, commented that, 'Students were captivated by the books last year and I'm hopeful it will be the same this year. The Challenge isn't just for reading enthusiasts as there are quality books for all genres. I just hope we have enough copies of them all!'**

Students can access books from the school library, which is now operating remotely. A library catalogue is available in each form class, Microsoft Teams and Pupil Shared. After browsing the catalogue and selecting a book, students can request to loan or renew a book by filling in a library 'slip'. These 'slips' will be collected and processed on the allocated day for each year group, with books being shared within forty-eight hours. The remote system has been designed to function as efficiently as possible, a credit to the dedication of the English Department, to ensure no student is left 'bookless'.

For Yasira Salim, a student in Year 13, 'Reading is a form of escapism. The Hunger Games explores deep rooted issues in society such as propaganda and child poverty, but does so without losing its adventurous spark.'

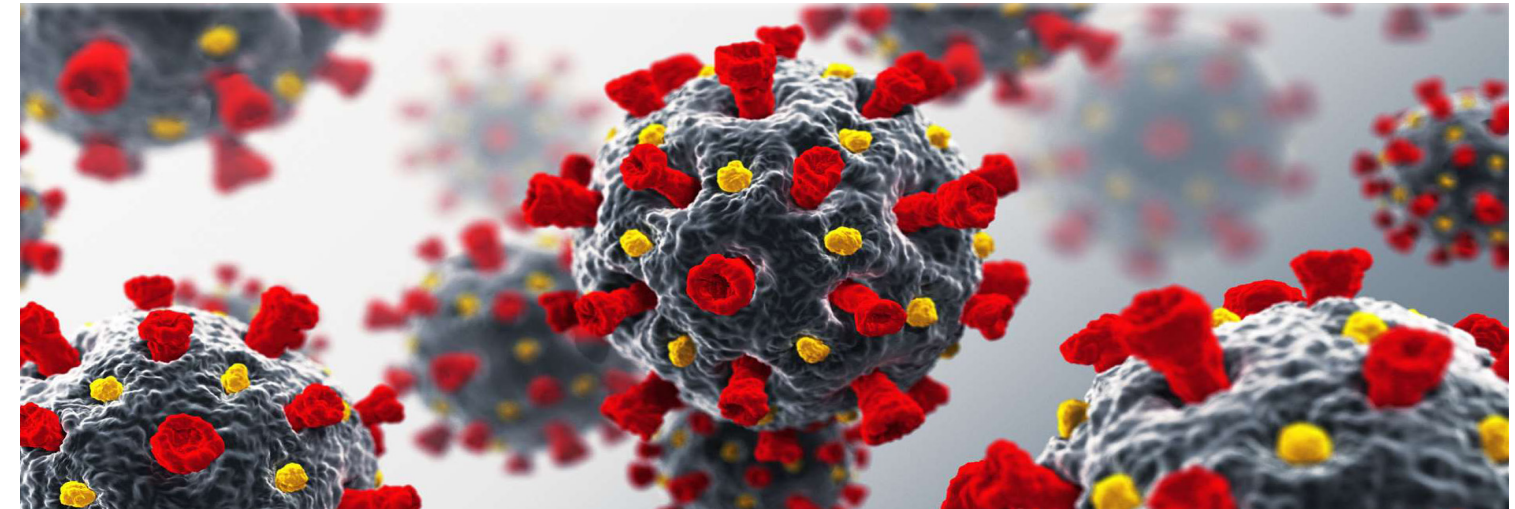
In July, an Awards Ceremony will recognise the passionate commitment of students who took up the Challenge and read ten books during the course of the year: a magnificent achievement. This friendly competition will certainly encourage students to continue their pursuit of knowledge through literature.

In a digital world where we are encouraged to resign to passive phone scrolling and mindless conformity, it is through the critical thinking nurtured by reading that one can claw back the power of the individual mind.

'The ability to read awoke inside of me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive,' said Malcolm X.

The Star Readers Challenge paves an avenue to this mental awakening.

So, which book are you reading?



Sorry to Burst Your Bubble: The School's Approach to Covid Safety

By Aaminah Issa, 10T3

8:00am. Wednesday morning. 2nd September 2020. Return to school is no longer the first-day-back, predictable and familiar march down the steps, jostled by the crowd of hundreds returning. Now, the crowd is thinner, arrival times spread out, routes more specific and destinations non-negotiable: welcome to the world of bubbles.

Amina Modan, Assistant Principal at Tauheedul, talked about the school's approach to Covid safety, and the new plan the staff have created to consolidate what students have learnt during the period of online schooling, stating, "Since September, the school and staff have focused its efforts on ameliorating the effects of lockdown and ensuring the students have a robust "Catch Up Plan" in place. This has included delivering a recovery curriculum, focusing on mental wellbeing and the missed learning due to such a tumultuous year. We are also ensuring the school is as safe as possible, making sure clear protocols are in place; track, trace, seating plans, masks, staggered breaks, lunches and much more! It's all about embracing the 'new normal' and ensuring we look forward to a safe and successful year."

Within Tauheedul, there are many 'bubbles', one for each year group. The somewhat dystopian and almost childish term is ingenuous in its simplicity: bubbles are the year-groups of students who can easily communicate with each other whilst learning in their classes. In a world where

existing words continue to take on new meanings, let me introduce you to 'homebases' – the physical area of the school assigned to each year group in which only their 'bubble' can move along assigned routes to classes and breaktime areas. What about masks, I hear you ask? These are a compulsory part of the uniform, especially when a student moves away from her homebase. And, of course, to sanitise or not to sanitise, that is no longer the question. The cleaning of hands is as familiar a routine now as the use of calculators in maths and adjectives in English.

This leads me to thank the superhuman army of cleaners and estate staff who are a meticulous force of detergents, efficiency and willpower, swooping onto germs before the germs can finish their first thought!

For the small number who stay at home, the online learning setup allows them to participate from home during the lesson. This secures their learning by allowing them to stay in their classes whilst keeping their health the number one priority.

Hafsah Vali, a student in Year 10, when asked about her opinion on the new school experience, says, "I think that the school has put in a lot of effort to create a safe environment. Sometimes following the regime can be slightly difficult, as it's hard to remember to sanitise all the time and to maintain social distancing when coming across another "bubble." However, if we forget to sanitise or put on our mask, the teachers remind us, and like this, we are slowly getting used to this new school life."

3:00pm. The school bell rings. After a long day of 'clean' work, students go home in their designated sections of the bus or the comfort of their cars or by walking outside, surrounded by cool air. Tomorrow, they will return for another day, as the magic of learning bubbles on.



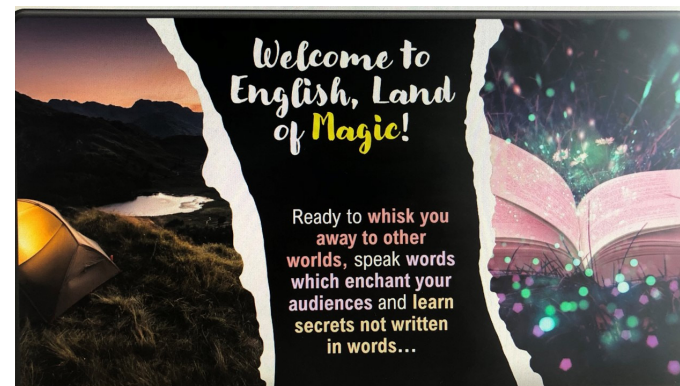
Welcome to Tauheedul, World Wide Web!

By Haleema Ougradar, 10T3

Tauheedul's Open Evening this year transferred the usual dazzling displays of departmental talent to a virtual presentation explaining life at Tauheedul. In the lead-up to the evening, volunteers worked hard to showcase their department's creativity, pulling out all stops to entice the young viewers who were treated to a synoptic view of the school.

There was a vibrant atmosphere throughout the evening with many families taking part in the vast array of activities on show. There were many exhibits within curriculum areas: the Modern Foreign Languages department showcased the culture of different nations through multilingual role plays held in makeshift cafes, whilst the English department wowed with an interactive murder mystery activity. Featuring a popularly demanded experiment of 'fire bubbles' in the department, Miss Mulla and the other Science teachers illustrated the effects of methane gas and the heat-conducting properties of water.

One of the highlights of the evening had to be the speeches given by our SLT.



Head Girl, Lubna Shah, spoke about her journey at Tauheedul, claiming,

"At this school, the students are truly treasured, with teachers going above and beyond to help us achieve all we can whilst also infusing us all with passion and zeal not only for learning but for life, a passion unique to Tauheedul."



The event was a chance to present the best of our learners and teachers working hard together and having fun. It was also an opportunity to advertise other aspects of Star's educational package at Tauheedul, including the Purple Hearts Charity Ambassadors and several reflection services. Several students enjoyed the high-spirited experience and, over the course of the evening'

To conclude, Assistant Principal, Mrs Modan said,

"It is sad that unlike any other year, we were unable to open our doors to prospective parents. However, we thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone in our virtual event, the feedback and live Question and Answer enabled us to connect, and we hope parents were able to obtain the information they required."

Who's Who: The 'Little' Senior Leadership Team

By Hana Ali, 11M3

Lubna Shah, Y13

Head Girl

Favourite quote: 'A person can stand just about anything for 10 seconds, then you just start on a new 10 seconds. All you've got to do is take it 10 seconds at a time.' - Kimmy Schmidt.

Favourite female role model: Malala Yousafzai - she risked her life for the benefit of others, and I think that is extremely inspiring.

Where I see myself in 10 years: Becoming an academic in the Literature field along with helping my community in a greater way through charity and volunteer work.



Hana Ali, Y11

Deputy Head Girl

Favourite quote: 'Don't wish for it, work for it' - Jim Rohn

Favourite female role model: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez - in my opinion she is one of the most powerful people in politics today and a huge role model for all, especially for young girls like me.

Where I see myself in 10 years: Working in the medicine field, making a change and saving lives.

Khadija Usman, Y11

Deputy Head Girl

Favourite quote: 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again' - Thomas H. Palmer

Favourite female role model: Jacinda Arden - her ability to lead a country with such courage and compassion is greatly inspiring.

Where I see myself in 10 years: Working in a field that I thoroughly enjoy and helping and nurturing the community around me.

Aaliyah Gorji, Y13

Senior Prefect (Sixth Form)

Favourite quote: 'Regression to the mean' - Sir Francis Galton. No matter how bad things get, or how good, things always come back to the middle.

Favourite female role model: Aisha (may our Lord be pleased with her) - she was an amazing wife, an enlightened scholar and a true inspiration to us all.

Where I see myself in 10 years: With the help of our Lord, I hope to be a doctor as I have always had a passion for the sciences and I always try to help people.

Iman A Mahmood, Y11 Senior Prefect (Main School)

Favourite quote: 'Be the best you can' - Audrey Hepburn

Favourite female role model: Malala Yousufzai - a truly inspirational young woman, I think her story resonates with anyone who hears it.

Where I see myself in 10 years: Working in a job where I can help others, lifting their burdens and allowing them to lead fulfilling lives

Aisha Nadat, Y13

Senior Shura Rep (Sixth Form)

Favourite quote: 'Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced' - James Baldwin

Favourite female role model: My auntie - she is the most 'perfect' person I have ever known. She is such a good, kindhearted person who is well knowledgeable and balances everything well.

Where I see myself in 10 years: I hope to be in a position where I can help somebody in need, in refuge, providing basic needs to children all over the world.

Sabeen Haq, Y13

Senior Shura Rep (Main School)

Favourite quote: 'Verily with every hardship comes ease; with every hardship comes ease' - Holy Quran

Favourite female role model: My biggest supporter and my source of motivation - my mother.

Where I see myself in 10 years: I want to strive to be the best at my field of work, taking part in opportunities where I can develop my skills and work around people with integrity and similar aspirations in life. With the help of our Lord, I see myself banked with a degree in biomedical science.



Three students in Year 9 won an interclass competition, writing to argue their opinion on a topic of their choice. Well done!

Could a Regular Lockdown be Good for Us?

By Kauser Patel, Year 9

Since the past few months, lockdown has become a barrier for many people across the globe who are prohibited from doing the everyday things we took for granted such as seeing family and buying groceries. The news and media have portrayed it to be a terrible event, and the public's growing hatred for lockdown doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon. However, with every cloud comes a silver lining. Some people believe lockdown has made them happier and brought out skills they never knew they had, and I believe participating in 'lockdown' every year for a week would be beneficial to us all. When you finish reading this article, I hope you will feel the same.

During lockdown, people have become less worried about costs and spending. Since non-essential shops have closed, nobody can go out to waste money on frivolous things they don't need. I'm sure you have been to a shop wanting just the essentials but have come back spending much more than you expected. The closing of non-essential shops puts people in a better position financially and mentally- APA's latest stress in America survey found that 72 percent of Americans reported feeling stressed about money at least some time in the prior month. It is evident that the financial stress lifted off their shoulders has improved mental health in lockdown.

Also, lockdown has helped strengthen relationships between family and siblings and given people time to reflect which is useful in improving your wellbeing and mental health. Also, many people have reported on trying new skills and improving ones they already have- in fact, since start of lockdown, there has been a 60% increase in baking supplies showing how people want to develop their baking skills. Not only has lockdown improved people's skills and wellbeing, but it has also improved the environment. Statistics show that public motor vehicle use has been decreased by 75% which improves air quality and is therefore better for the environment.

Many people have also improved their daily exercise, bettering their health. I began to go for my daily walk around my neighbourhood every day, and it has helped me feel more active and energized. Many other people have also reported feeling happier after going out for a walk/run in the sunshine.

One can easily suppose that lockdown has raised anxiety levels. However, according to statistics, the anxiety people feel isn't for the lockdown itself but the virus causing it. People also worry about how they don't know when this will end. Having a regular week in lockdown once a year will reassure people there is no illness to be afraid of and how it will all be over in a week. Although we may not get much free time due to having online school/work, many people have reported how virtual school feels more laid back and that they have less work to complete after school, giving them more free time allowing them to bond with family and reflect. Personally, I think schooling online is more relaxed as we have more time to finish a task and I understand better without the distractions I would get in a classroom.

In conclusion, lockdown may be portrayed negatively by the media, but it has its advantages. This lockdown has improved skills, relationships and helped people to relax, focus on their wellbeing and reflect. Thank you for reading and I hope you can now agree that we should implement a more relaxed lockdown once a year to focus on our wellbeing.

Fast Food - Fantastic Yet Fatal

By A'isha Ally, Y9

Are you willing to risk your health for something as brief and short-lived as taste? The negative effects of fast food on our society are unmistakable. Vulnerable young children are introduced to fast food as early as two and are quickly developing a dangerously unhealthy taste for it. The average person spends at least half their budget on restaurant food. This unhealthy increase of eating fast food is beginning to take its toll on society.

Each year more and more sugar is consumed, and more food chains are taking advantage of susceptible young people by adding a higher quantity of sugar in their products. The average daily consumption of sugar in the nineteenth century was only twenty-two grams and most of the people who ate sugar daily consisted of the rich. However, in just two hundred years this has drastically changed. Now the average American consumes two hundred and twenty-seven grams every day, that's a whopping forty-one kilograms a year! Britain is worryingly not far off. Unsurprisingly, most of that sugar comes from fast food.

Swinging into a drive-thru or hopping into your favourite restaurant tends to happen more often than not. While an occasional night of fast food won't hurt, developing it into a habit could have a number of problems coming your way. Just last week, an article recounted the story of a young teenager who lived off a diet of chips- due to the lack of nutrients his body was getting. Over time, he became blind in his left eye. In today's world many young children are exposed to countless adverts, including those of fast food. These gullible young children are liable to be taken in by these adverts, ignoring their health and feasting on the temporary delights of fast food, not giving a second thought on what may happen in the long run.

A recent discovery says the popular food chain, McDonald's, has tripled the quantities of sugar and salt in their products. In the nineties, a burger would contain two grams of sugar and a mere point four grams of salt, whereas now burgers can contain up to ten grams of sugar and two grams of salt. Throughout the years, it has been clear people have chosen to disregard their health and instead opted for a sweet and unhealthy lifestyle. The world we live in today refuses to change their ways of a continuous diet of fast food. I have told you the consequences, so it is now up to you whether you act or not.

The dire truth of forever eating fast food is too terrible to contemplate. Therefore, I urge you to stay away whenever possible. There is no doubt fast food tastes heavenly and sometimes we can't resist it once in a while (even I am guilty of that!) but you shouldn't eat more than necessary. At the end of the day, we all know eating too much of anything isn't good for your body, and if you think about it to yourself, are you really willing to risk your health just to satisfy your temporary cravings?

Can Reading Make You Happier?

By Ayesha Asim Patel, Year 9

When was the last time you immersed yourself in a good book or an interesting magazine article? Have you thought about how you felt afterwards?

When I get immersed into a good book, I automatically feel connected to it. It fills me with a feeling that I cannot explain. It also makes me feel like I'm actually there, in the story, with all of the characters.

Do your daily reading habits centre around tweets, Facebook updates or even Snapchat stories? If you're one of countless people who don't make a habit of reading regularly, you might be missing out.

"Reading fiction makes me lose all sense of self," wrote Ceridwen Dovey in a 2015 article in The New Yorker, "but at the same time makes me feel most uniquely myself." Dovey's reflections on reading came from an experience she had with "bibliotherapy," the practice of reading with a therapeutic goal in mind. But wait, there's more: Reading has been shown to put our brains into a pleasurable dream-like state, similar to meditation, and it brings the same health benefits of deep relaxation and inner calm.

Studies have shown that reading activates the same regions of the brain as if the readers were experiencing those activities. People who read fiction are better at empathising with other people, and people who read literary fiction are more likely to be able to guess what other people may be thinking or feeling. Additionally, people who read non-fiction will become a better communicator and will also learn valuable life lessons. A new survey commissioned by Kindle found that 71 percent of participants who read weekly reported feeling happier, compared to those who read less frequently or not at all.

Next time you find yourself in a library or a bookshop, pick up a copy of something that interests you. The benefits are boundless!

Levelling the Playing Field: The Journey Back to School

By Lubna Shah, 13B6

Every September seems to go the same way - we soak up the last few days of the summer holiday, say goodbye to long, languorous days of sunshine and watch shop shelves fill with a bountiful variety of highlighters and sticky notes, signaling the beginning of a new academic year. But this past month has not gone as expected. Students have come back to school with months of lockdown learning behind them, an experience which has not been universally kind to all.

Online learning saw teachers go above and beyond, adapting hands-on learning to the tiny confines of our laptop screens, providing students with quality lessons filtered through pixels as opposed to a classroom. But learning from a laptop cannot be compared with the robust teaching environment Tauheedul typically provides to its students.

Bilkis Nasser, a student from Year 13, referring to her quarantine schooling, says: *"Online learning was certainly a challenge, but teachers have been excellent with providing help for us to catch up, and I now feel totally ready to get on with the year."*

The consensus from all students is that since return to school, staff have done their best to ensure that the playing field has been levelled. **Mrs. Ali, Assistant Principal, spoke of the school's success in getting students back in the educational saddle:** *"As soon as lockdown was eased in May, we returned immediately to face-to-face teaching during the month of June, ensuring our students are making fantastic progress in completing the specifications. We have introduced assessments in September to ensure we are managing impact of lockdown learning and processing any gaps."*

The focus on levelling the learning of students has paid off - the comfort and reassurance of being back with our cherished friends and teachers has made it easier to catch up and focus on our work once again. The return to weekly assessments and constant lessons has been made easier with the environment of the bustling school around us, helping us reintegrate into educational life.

Lockdown was a difficult period for all. **As Michelle Obama once said,** *"It's important to understand that your experience facing and overcoming adversity is actually one of your biggest advantages."* Students have shown great resilience in this time of academic difficulty, and I am sure this strength and fortitude will continue to serve them well through this unprecedented, unpredictable year.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday 15th July

School Closes for Summer Break

Monday 26th October

Half-Term Holiday (1 week)

Monday 2nd November

School Re-opens

Winter Fast Programme Begins

Thursday 5th November

Sixth Form Open Evening (virtual)

Friday 6th November

Year 7 Winter Sports Day

Thursday 12th November

Sixth Form Parents' Evening (telephone)

Friday 13th November

Year 8 Winter Sports Day

Monday 16th November

Anti-Bullying Week Begins

Thursday 19th November

Year 7 Parents' Evening (telephone)

Monday 23rd November

Winter Refugee Programme Launched

Monday 7th December

GCSE Mock Exams Begin

Monday 14th December

Year 12 AS Level Mock Exams Begin

Friday 18th December

Termly Rewards Assembly

Spirituality Day

Monday 21st December

End-of-Term Holiday (2 Weeks)

Monday 4th January

School Re-opens

GCSE Mock Results Day

Y13 Mock Exams Begin

Thursday 14th January

Year 11 Parents' Evening (virtual)

Monday 18th January

GCSE and A Level Revision Begins

Thursday 21st January

Year 10 Parents' Evening (virtual)

Friday 22nd January

A Level Mock Results Day

Thursday 4th February

Year 9 Parents' Evening (virtual)

Thursday 11th February

Year 12 and Year 13 A Level Parents' Evening (virtual)

Monday 15th February

Half-Term Holiday (1 Week)



Tauheedul Girls



SERVICE

Being a responsible citizen
in our community



TEAMWORK

Working together
for excellence



AMBITION

Aspiring to be
our best



RESPECT

Treating others as we
wish to be treated



Part of Star