St Paul's Way
Aspiration • Integrity • Community
PART OF UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS TRUST

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OCTOBER 23, 2026

FAMILIES

NEWSLETTER



Welcoming BBC Bitesize Careers Tour to Inspire Year 9

We were delighted to welcome the BBC Bitesize Careers Tour, giving our Year 9 students an exciting opportunity to explore future career possibilities and hear from professionals whose journeys show that success can take many different paths.

We welcomed three inspiring guests with links to the local area: Trenton Harrison Lewis, a signing artist who works with artists in the music industry; Anika Raan, a BBC project manager who joined the organisation through an apprenticeship; and James Gibbs, a creative venue technician specialising in lighting. Each speaker shared their experiences, offering students an insight into the skills, opportunities and decisions that have shaped their careers.

During the panel discussion, our students discovered that the speakers had not always known exactly what they wanted to do. Trenton explained that he had once considered becoming a helicopter pilot, while Anika initially wanted to become a doctor. James had originally hoped to pursue music before beginning his career as an apprentice technician. He now works as a freelancer across a variety of venues.

Their honest stories showed our students that it is perfectly normal for ambitions to change and that there is no single route into a successful career. The guests encouraged everyone to explore their interests, follow their passions and remain open to unexpected opportunities.

Students also took part in a BBC careers quiz, helping them identify roles that might suit their interests and strengths. This interactive activity encouraged them to think beyond familiar job choices and consider exciting possibilities for their future.

We are grateful to the BBC Bitesize team and our guest speakers for inspiring our students to think positively about what lies ahead.

The visit strongly reflects our school value of Aspiration, encouraging students to aim high, discover their passions and believe that, with determination and the right opportunities, they too can achieve their ambitions.



Welcoming Local Primary Pupils to our Open Day

We were delighted to welcome schools from across the borough to our recent Open Day, giving primary pupils the opportunity to experience our school community and discover the wealth of opportunities available to them.

Throughout the day, visiting pupils explored our school through tours of the playground, food technology rooms, sports hall, library, classrooms, dance studio and theatre. They also visited interactive subject displays, where they could meet teachers and take part in activities, including exploring circuit boards and learning how they work.

Speaking directly with our teachers gave pupils an authentic insight into secondary school life, while science demonstrations and subject activities showcased how we aim to make learning engaging, purposeful and enjoyable.

Our Headteacher also spoke about the importance of choosing the right school and understanding its values. Pupils then heard directly from Year 8 students and a Year 13 student leader, shared their personal experiences of St Paul's Way.

Their stories highlighted the support, opportunities and sense of community that students can find here. From developing confidence in maths to discovering new interests through extracurricular clubs, our students demonstrated how much can be achieved when young people are given the encouragement and opportunities to thrive.

Open Days such as this play an important role in bridging the gap between primary and secondary education. As part of University Schools Trust, we are proud to work alongside our Trust schools to support young learners through crucial stages in their academic journey and make the transition to secondary school an exciting one.

Above all, we hope the day inspired visiting pupils to see the sheer range of opportunities available at St Paul's Way and imagine what they could achieve here. This reflects our value of Aspiration, encouraging every student to aim high, embrace opportunities and believe in their potential.



Open Day 2026

Celebrating Asher's Place in the National Youth Orchestra

St Paul's Way Secondary School is delighted to celebrate an outstanding achievement by Asher, who has secured a place in the prestigious National Youth Orchestra (NYO).

Entry to the orchestra is highly competitive, with applicants required to have achieved Grade 8 Distinction before applying. This achievement reflects Asher's exceptional musical talent, dedication and hard work.

As a member of the NYO, Asher will have the opportunity to learn from world class professors and conductors, while performing at some of the country's most prestigious concert halls, including the BBC Proms next summer.

We are incredibly proud of Asher and look forward to seeing him continue to flourish in his musical journey.

Celebrating Creativity Through the Young Writers Programme



St Paul's Way Secondary School is proud to celebrate the achievements of 19 students in Years 8, 9 and 10 who completed this year's Young Writers Programme with First Story.

Through 16 creative writing workshops led by writer in residence Adam Z. Robinson, students developed their writing skills, creativity and confidence. They explored new styles, discovered their unique voices and learned to express their identities through writing.

Now in its ninth year, the programme continues to inspire our students. Their anthology, Why Won't You Hear?, showcases their talent, imagination and dedication, marking an exciting milestone in their creative journeys.

Building Confidence for the World Beyond School

Our Year 11 students recently took part in The Switch mock interview programme, giving them a valuable opportunity to develop their interview skills, build confidence and prepare for the opportunities that await them beyond school.

As part of the programme, each student took part in a one to one virtual interview with a business professional who brought real-world experience of interviewing, being interviewed, or both. This provided students with an authentic opportunity to practise speaking with professionals and experience the expectations of a real interview.

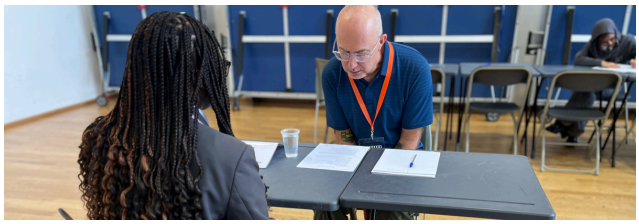
Ahead of the session, students received an Interview Practice booklet to support their preparation. This included step by step guidance on using the CV Creator tool to create their own CV before their interview. Following their interview, students received verbal feedback, practical tips and written feedback, allowing them to reflect on their performance and identify areas for development.

Experiences such as this are an important part of preparing our students for life beyond the classroom. In a competitive world, strong interview skills are essential as young people begin their journeys towards further education, training and employment.

The ability to communicate clearly, present themselves confidently, respond thoughtfully to questions and learn from feedback are core skills that students will carry with them throughout their lifetime.

We are grateful to The Switch and the business professionals involved for providing our students with valuable insight and practical advice. Their experience has helped our young people understand what employers look for while giving them the confidence to take their next steps.

The programme reflects our value of Aspiration, encouraging every student to aim high, embrace new opportunities and develop the confidence and skills to achieve their ambitions.



Visiting Queen Mary University of London Centre of a Cell

Recently our students visited the Centre of the Cell at Queen Mary University of London for an exciting and interactive workshop exploring cells, the human body and the science behind medicine.

Students learned how the human body is made up of cells and explored how cells divide and develop, including the process that begins when a cell splits and eventually contributes to the formation of an embryo. They also discovered how genes, disease and our environment can influence the way our cells work, and how doctors and researchers are working to understand and treat different conditions.

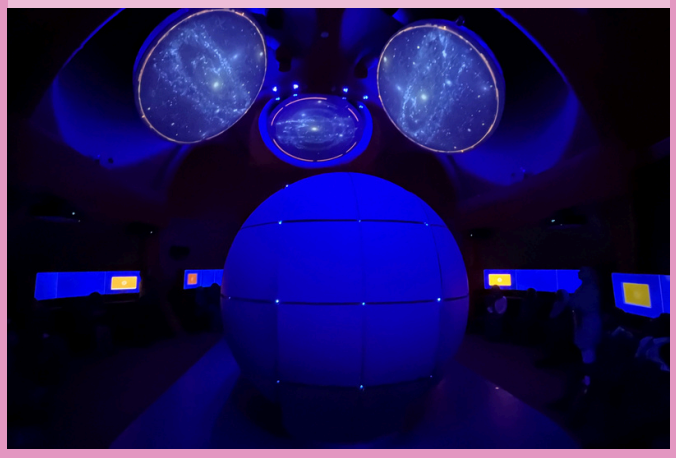
A highlight of the visit was the interactive Cell Pod, where our students were the first group to take part in this activity. They explored the inside of cells through a range of engaging games, including Gene Quest, Cell Trumps, Lab Bench Chaos, Asthma Dodge, Baby Grow and Killer Cells. Students could even take on the role of a robot exploring different cell parts or race through tunnels representing the intestines while collecting bacteria points.



They learned about the role of helicopters at the Royal London Hospital and explored the work of researchers investigating genes, disease and the impact of our environment on cells.

The experience brought science to life and encouraged students to consider the many opportunities available within medicine, healthcare and scientific research.

The visit reflects our value of Aspiration, inspiring students to explore new possibilities, develop their curiosity and consider how their interests in science could shape their future careers. It showed our young people that science is not simply something studied in a classroom, but a field where they can make a meaningful difference.





THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD: LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

At St Paul's Way, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) provides students with valuable opportunities to develop essential life skills beyond the classroom. Our recent expedition was a fantastic example of this, allowing students to challenge themselves, work together and discover strengths they may not have realised they possessed.

For staff involved, the experience was equally rewarding. Watching students navigate challenges in an unfamiliar environment highlighted the importance of independence, resilience, teamwork and problem solving. Expeditions also offer a unique opportunity to build stronger relationships with students and see different sides of their personalities that may not always emerge in the classroom.

A special thank you goes to James, who is taking part in his final expedition. His expertise in planning and organisation, alongside the care and attention he gives to students and staff, has been invaluable. His guidance helped make the expedition such a positive learning experience, and we are grateful for the time, knowledge and support he has dedicated to DofE.





Looking ahead, we hope to encourage more staff to get involved in future expeditions.

Staff participation makes a real difference to the experience and provides a rewarding opportunity to support students as they develop confidence and independence. Although a comfortable night's sleep cannot be guaranteed, staff can certainly look forward to good food, plenty of fun and lasting memories!

We would like to thank everyone who helped make the expedition such a memorable experience. At St Paul's Way, we look forward to continuing to support our students through DofE and helping them embrace new challenges, discover their potential and develop skills that will benefit them for years to come.





DROWNING PREVENTION ASSEMBLIES

This half term, assemblies were held on open water safety, in order to raise awareness of hazards as well as tips for any young person who encounters open water dangers.

Ms. Ayres (pictured) the Aquatics Manager for Be Well in Tower Hamlets, joined us to emphasise the core message to students: Don't risk open water. Please remind your child/ward to swim only in supervised pools or lidos, and to call 999 (free) in an emergency.

If families are interested in swimming lessons for their child/ward, please see https://be-well.org.uk/what-we-offer/swimming. The SPW Community remember and honour the lives of those who have been lost by water tragedies, including Banta Sillah.