

High Flyer



**International
Women's Day**

**The Importance of
Outdoor Learning**
For our youngest pupils

Spotlight on Chemistry
Year 7 through to Sixth Form

– NEWS FROM –
**Prep to
Sixth Form**

IN THIS EDITION OF

High Flyer

International Women's Day	pg 04	The Importance of Outdoor Learning	pg 22
Balance Week	pg 06	New Preparatory Department curriculum	pg 24
School News	pg 08	Prep Adventures	pg 26
Our Librarians' Recommendation	pg 11	Inside the Classroom: Mandarin	pg 28
Founders' Day 2023	pg 12	Spotlight on Chemistry	pg 30
Head Girl Team	pg 13	Out & About With the Archivists	pg 32
Introducing Our New Head of Sixth Form	pg 14	Alumnae Events	pg 34
Sixth Form Enrichment Programme	pg 15	Where Are They Now?	pg 36
One to Watch	pg 17	Meet the Governors	pg 38
Celebrating Diversity & Inclusion at MHSG	pg 18	Support the Bursary Fund	pg 40
Partnerships	pg 20	Giving Back to MHSG	pg 42
		Our School Values	pg 43

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Welcome

Welcome to the 63rd edition of Manchester High School for Girls' High Flyer Magazine.

As always, in this Spring/Summer edition, we are celebrating our students' achievements both inside and outside of the classroom. We are also recognising the hard work and accomplishments of our dedicated staff, extensive alumnae network, friends of the School, governors and the wider school community.

In this issue, we look back at our School's 149th Birthday celebrations, and look forward with excitement to our 150th anniversary in 2024. We will hear for a final time from our outgoing Head Girl Team, explore the new curricula being introduced in both our Sixth Form and Preparatory Departments, find out all about our extensive and fulfilling Balance Week activities and introduce you to our newly appointed Director of Sixth Form.

We will also share a snapshot of the other events from the Spring Term; including our annual Model United Nations Conference, trips and excursions and sporting successes.

The theme of this issue is Individuality. One of MHSG's core values, Individuality is incredibly important to how we operate as a school. We ensure that every child is nurtured, supported to learn and encouraged to develop a love of learning, as an individual.



The theme of this issue is Individuality. One of MHSG's core values, Individuality is incredibly important to how we operate as a school. We ensure that every child is nurtured, supported to learn and encouraged to develop a love of learning, as an individual. We are proud of our diverse community and ensure that every child is known within school for who they are. We support their unique aspirations and encourage the development of resilience and self-confidence, so that our pupils can become tenacious, independent and happy.

Indeed, one of our aims as a school is educating the whole child and prioritising their wellbeing, so that pupils leave school with a sense of self-awareness, self-worth, self-discipline and an ability to contribute with confidence in an increasingly competitive and technological world. We do this by drawing on the School's social, cultural, and religious mix of pupils to enable all to live and grow in an atmosphere of mutual respect and compassion, while encouraging qualities of caring, kindness, honesty, and loyalty. The stories, news and photographs shared in this issue are shining examples of each member of our community's dedication to fiercely being themselves.

I hope you enjoy this edition!

Mrs Helen F Jeys
Head Mistress

International Women's Day

Mrs Helen F Jeys - Head Mistress

I had the pleasure of interviewing Catherine Mayer, an alumna of Manchester High School for Girls, when she visited the School last term. As a writer, activist, speaker and the co-founder of the Women's Equality Party, she inspired all present with her compassion, as well as her absolute commitment to equality. As Head Mistress, I talk a lot about equality and – very importantly – equity; both of which are essential to ensuring fair outcomes for all.

Heather Hanbury, the President of the Girls' Schools Association, recently hailed the benefits of traditionally feminine and 'soft power' traits such as empathy, creativity, and collaboration, when speaking at the annual GSA Conference. She noted that girls' schools are 'incubators of new and better ways of thinking and being' and that no one should feel they have to 'be like a man' to succeed in life. I do not always feel very comfortable hearing comments which stereotype gender characteristics in such a binary fashion. However, a recent report by Cranfield University and Ernst and Young shows that 91% of the 413 women on FTSE 100 boards are in advisory non-executive director roles. Just nine chief executives are women. This has led to accusations that top firms have made an 'appalling' lack of progress in promoting women to executive roles and that so-called targets have been 'met' by boards appointing women as non-executive directors. Appointing women only to non-executive roles is, arguably, not doing enough to increase female representation in the top echelons of business.

I asked two of my Sixth Form students and School Newspaper editors, India and Natalie, about their thoughts on such issues. I was not surprised by their eloquence, nor by their strength of feeling about the continued importance of feminism and intersectionality. They also provided me with a fascinating insight into the dangers of social media. Feminism has, in their view, become 'demonised' by a few outspoken people who

suggest that continuing to strive for change and equity is not necessary, because equality has already been achieved. Indeed, Catherine Mayer referred to some people feeling that 'feminism can go home and put its feet up'. The students' fear was that feminism was often perceived as a 'woke' sentiment and that far more needed to be done to provide opportunities for women to speak out about intersectionality and to lead on conversations about equality. Fundamentally, they wanted their peers – all of them – to be allies. It was a refreshing conversation and one that reminded me about the ongoing importance of discussions about diversity and allyship.

At our recent and fantastic Model United Nations Conference in school, I spoke about the importance of diverse teams. At a time when most academic papers in science, engineering and medicine are written by teams, diversity is the critical ingredient in driving what Matthew Syed calls 'collective intelligence'. Rather than embedding ourselves within echo chambers (something most frequently seen on social media platforms) and associated 'perspective blindness', we must encourage all pupils to actively listen to each other, so that they can gain richer and more nuanced understanding of their fellow human beings. Indeed, some of the greatest philosophers – Plato, Mill and Hume included – were geniuses, but their genius blossomed because of their willingness to interact, work through disagreements and benefit from the cross-cultivation of ideas.

I really enjoyed reading Syed's chapter on Steve Jobs' designing of the Pixar building that he bought from George Lucas in 1986. In this building, Jobs decided to create just one set of toilets, but did so for a reason. Everyone had to traipse from all over the building to access these facilities. Thus, in his words, 'everybody has to run into each other' and this resulted in a 'symphony' of chance encounters. I do not necessarily advocate for a limited number of toilets in any organisation, but the point stands. Diversity within teams, across gender, sexuality, religion, race, age and class, is essential. As a girls' school, we cannot underestimate the important role our pupils will play in contributing to such diverse teams in their future.

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International Women's Day on Wednesday 8th March enabled us to celebrate the contributions of girls and women to the past, present and the future. Every day, I see students at Manchester High and know that they will contribute to our future in so many ways. It is particularly pertinent that the theme for this year's IWD, a time when we celebrate women's achievement, raise awareness about discrimination and take action to drive gender parity through 'equity'; is 'Embrace Equity'.

Catherine Mayer imagines a fictional land, 'Equalia', where women are equal in every respect. I think that striving for Equalia is as important now as it was at the foundation of MHSG, almost 150 years ago. What I also know is that our pupils will continue to be at the forefront of the campaign to achieve it.



Mrs Jeys and members of the Head Girl Team 'Embracing Equity'.

Balance Week

Mrs Helen F Jeys - Head Mistress

This year, for the first time since before the Pandemic, we celebrated 'Balance Week' in school. Wellbeing is an MHSG core value and something that the Head Girl Team wanted to focus their work upon this year. Reintroducing Balance Week was, therefore, an important aspect of achieving their objectives. For all of us – pupils and staff alike – balance is key to enjoying a happy life. As a school, we focus on a holistic approach; academic success is, of course, important but happiness and wellbeing are also crucial.

Balance Week has two main objectives. Firstly, it provides our staff with an opportunity to remind pupils about the importance of balance and perspective. Indeed, our lives are incredibly busy, and we have lots to juggle. Therefore, learning the importance of balancing work and play as a student is a lesson for life, and one that I hope pupils will remember, way beyond the week itself. Secondly, Balance Week is devoted to a myriad of lunchtime sessions that enable pupils to take part in activities that they have never tried before; enabling them to push themselves out of their comfort zones and, quite simply, be reminded about the importance of having fun with friends.

There were over forty activities organised for the week itself and I am incredibly grateful to the PTA for supporting the initiative, which enabled me to invite external organisations into school to provide extra experiences for our pupils. I was also very grateful to our staff who organised and led so many fantastic activities throughout the week and handled the inevitable complications of 750 students booking themselves onto our daily activity schedule. From skateboarding to martial arts, fragrance workshops to rag-rugging, chocolate masterclasses to self-defence workshops, Pilates and Zumba to archery and the wonderful silent disco, all of our pupils had a huge amount of fun.

My favourite Aristotelian quote is: "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all". At MHSG, our aim is certainly to do both; to educate our pupils academically, as well as proactively teach them about values, characteristics and habits that will enable them to flourish well beyond the school gates. Our pupils singing their hearts out at karaoke, watching the Head Girl Team compete against staff in our own version of University Challenge and competing in the annual Harry Potter Quiz have no doubt provided them with memories and lessons that will linger well beyond the first week of February 2023.



"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." - Aristotle



"Learning the importance of balancing work and play as a student is a lesson for life, and one that I hope pupils will remember, way beyond Balance Week itself."

School News

Sport

Hockey Nationals

Both our U14 and U16 hockey teams reached the National Schools Finals this year.

Our U14 team came third and our U16 team narrowly missed out, losing 6-5 on sudden death penalty flicks in the title-deciding match. We are so proud of all of you.

Well done to Hattie, Sophie, Eliose, Gracie, Izzy, Aneesa, Armaani, Maysoun, Halle, Enna, Frankie, Jessica & Martha in the U14s and Kate, Didi, Maisie, Mia, Coco, Jemima, Molly, Georgia, Sophie, Millie, Emilia, Matilda and Emily in the U16s.



Music

Our ABRSM examinations have been ongoing throughout the term so far and our Music Festival was also a fantastic success.

Alumna Mia Serracino-Inglott, Mezzo Soprano at the Royal Academy of Music, returned to school to adjudicate this year. There were 108 performances throughout the day. Mia said students could ask her anything - about her singing, their singing and how MHSG has changed. It was lovely to welcome Mia back.



Trips

Our students enjoyed a fantastic trip to the Business Live and Computing Live conferences in Paris. They had chance to stop off at Disneyland and made plenty of memories.

Our annual creative writing residential to Ty Newydd was magical once again this year. Students had a wonderful experience, developing poetic and narrative writing skills with professional writers, Clare Shaw and Mary Colson. The beautiful setting and home-baked cakes made for an inspiring visit.



Performing Arts

Well done to all performers and staff who delivered a fantastic Performing Arts Medals evening this half term. It was a treat for all who were there!

And well done to the latest cohort of pupils who sat their LAMDA examinations this term – 99% of whom passed with distinction.

MUNHigh Model United Nations Conference 2023

From Saturday 4th to Sunday 5th February, MHSG welcomed more than 250 delegates and advisors from twenty schools from across the UK and beyond to debate in ten committees and councils during our ninth Model United Nations Conference. An especially warm welcome was extended to International School Lausanne, who joined us from Switzerland, and Rudheath Academy, Northwich, who were attending their first MUN conference.



More than 250 delegates and advisors from twenty schools from across the UK and beyond

Interest in Model United Nations at MHSG continues to flourish, with students from Year 7 to Senior Sixth involved. Our Senior Sixth Organising Committee worked tirelessly under the direction of joint Secretary Generals, Anna and Catrin, to produce a welcoming and professional conference. Other MHSG students acted as Committee Chairs, students from Year 8 to Sixth Form represented three delegations and Year 7 students played a vital supporting role as Conference Secretaries.

The weekend saw an impressive level of debate. Issues covered ranged from the integration of Ukrainian refugees and drone warfare to the role of Artificial Intelligence in the diagnosis of illnesses.

After a welcome address from our Head Mistress, Mrs Jeys, Secretary General Anna gave the opening speech of MUNHigh 2023 and outlined this year's conference theme of unity. Her speech linked back to the long tradition of student engagement with international issues at Manchester

High, that dates back to the very first League of Nations Conference held at MHSG 95 years ago, in 1928.

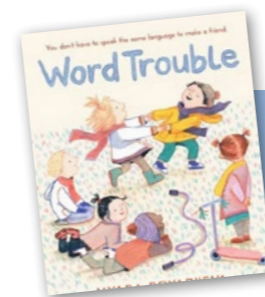
We were fortunate to welcome BBC Radio Five Live host and author, Nihal Arthanayake, as our keynote speaker this year. Nihal drew on his experiences of interviewing high profile guests, such as Greta Thunberg and Mary McAleese, to outline the importance of active listening to improve our conversations. Delegates were encouraged to reflect and notice if they were ever just listening to respond, or rather listening to genuinely understand others' opinions.

After two days of fruitful debate, the conference came to a close with an awards ceremony, led by the Organising Committee.

We are already looking forward to planning the tenth MUNHigh conference in February 2024.

Our Librarians' Recommendations

For our pupils from Reception to Year 2 we recommend:



WORD TROUBLE
by Vyara Boyadjieva

When Ronnie moves to a new house in a new country, he initially struggles to make new friends due to the language barrier he faces. He mixes up his words when introducing himself to his new classmates, which makes them giggle. It makes Ronnie miss his old home and friends, but he soon overcomes this. This book confronts language barriers in a sensitive and moving way. It helps to create empathy within the reader and explores the challenges of communication for young immigrants. It is ultimately uplifting, with Ronnie discovering that kindness and laughter are universal and that he can, in fact, communicate with his new friends.

For our pupils in Years 3-6 we recommend:



SKANDAR AND THE UNICORN THIEF
by A.F. Steadman

A.F. Steadman is one of the most exciting internationally bestselling debut authors and her first published book, 'Skandar and the Unicorn Thief', has already been translated into more than 45 languages, was named the Waterstones Children's Book of the Year, and has even secured a film deal with Sony Pictures. This exciting new series will eventually consist of five books, with the second title published in April 2023. This book has it all; from likable characters and an abundance of magic, to blood-thirsty unicorns!

For students in Years 7-11 we recommend:



THE INHERITANCE GAMES
by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

'The Inheritance Games' is the first book in a trilogy that is just plain fun to read. It never sits on the library shelf for very long and ranks incredibly highly among our most popular titles for reservations and borrowing. Avery Grambs is an incredibly likable and relatable main character, who finds herself in the position of inheriting a fortune from a complete stranger. In order to do so, she must first move into a mansion filled with secret passageways and the deceased billionaire's relatives. Avery must solve riddles, puzzles and codes while finding her way around in the unfamiliar world of privilege and wealth. This a very fast-paced and fresh novel that has great appeal.

For our Sixth Formers we recommend:



WHEN OUR WORLDS COLLIDED
by Danielle Jawando

'When our Worlds Collided' is written by local author Danielle Jawando and takes place in Manchester. The story is told via first person narrative from characters Chantelle, Jackson, and Marc, who meet after a tragedy occurs at the Arndale Centre. Bound together by this tragic experience, the three begin spending more time together and develop a strong friendship. This is a sobering and important novel that explores themes of social and racial injustice.

Founders' Day 2023

On January 19th, Manchester High School for Girls celebrated its 149th birthday.

MHSG was founded on January 19th, 1874 and was the first academic all girls' school in the North of England. The School was created by pioneering women and men from Manchester; to provide for Manchester's daughters what had long been provided for its sons.

Over the years we have celebrated Founders' Day in a variety of venues across Manchester, including the Whitworth Hall, Bridgewater Hall and, of course, on the School's own premises. It is amazing to look back over this period and see the transformation of our school and the incredible achievements that its students and staff have accomplished.

Next year, in 2024, we will be celebrating 150 years of being at the forefront of girls' education. So, this year, as we look forward to the 150th anniversary, our wonderful Archivists have been busy exploring the story that led to the foundation of our School.

Through their research, our Archivists considered questions, such as why was Manchester High founded in 1874? What went on 150 years ago in 1873 to prepare the School for opening? And what does it take to open the first academic all girls' school in the North?

Our Archivists' latest short film, 'A Model High School for Girls' tries to answer some of these questions and is available to view on MHSG's YouTube channel.

In January, we celebrated our founders in special assemblies and, of course, there was birthday cake!

We were also delighted to welcome alumnae, donors, governors and trustees to join in the celebrations with our Prep students; who treated guests to a wonderful rendition of 'We Know The Way' from the Disney film, 'Moana', and shared what the School Values mean to them as individuals.

We hope to involve more members of our whole school community in next year's 150th birthday celebrations - keep your eyes peeled for ways that you can join us.

"A Manchester High student learns to judge her fellows by the standard, not of what they possess nor of what they profess, but of what they are."



Head Girl Team

Individuality is a consistent part of our experience at Manchester High and is something we are encouraged to reflect on regularly. We understand that each of us is unique and MHSG is a wonderfully diverse environment, where we embrace difference and are empowered to pursue our personal passions. Having individuality as one of our core MHSG values ensures each student is known and nurtured by the School. The value embeds a culture of inclusivity, acceptance, and mutual support which, in turn, allows for authentic friendships, teams, and communities to emerge.

As a Head Girl Team, we pride ourselves on the different perspectives and experiences we each bring to the table, which enable us to be a strong and effective team.

In the words of the USA's Vice-President, Kamala Harris: "Our unity is our strength, and our diversity is our power." This speaks not only to us as a team, but also to our wider school community. We celebrate our differences and embrace the strength that comes from the variety of backgrounds, cultures and experiences of our students and staff.

At Manchester High School for Girls, each person's unique qualities are seen as pivotal components, contributing to our strong, dynamic, and resilient community. And when we can express our individuality within School, the foundations are

laid for us to transfer that authentic self-expression to our lives beyond the school gates.

Manchester High students are encouraged to harness and utilise their individuality, with the support of our community. This has enabled many of our alumnae to go on and achieve remarkable things. As current students, this legacy inspires us to understand ourselves, aim high and become agents of change - because, if we believe in ourselves and celebrate our individuality, we can go on to achieve so much more.

Ultimately, we know the value of individuality is already embedded in Manchester High's culture. As a Head Girl Team, we will continue to promote individuality within School, along with all other core MHSG values, to ensure this essential aspect of our School community continues to empower both current and former students to reach their full potential.

Introducing Our New Director of Sixth Form - Mr Robert Crumpton

We are delighted to announce the appointment of our new Director of Sixth Form, starting in September 2023.

Robert is thrilled to be returning to Manchester to take up such a challenging and exciting post, and looks forward to getting to know the students, parents and staff at Manchester High.

Born and raised in Manchester, Robert was educated at The Manchester Grammar School, before attaining a First Class Degree in Modern History and English at Jesus College, University of Oxford.

He went on to obtain a Master's in English from King's College London, and trained as an actor at Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art.

After teaching in London and Manchester, Robert moved to Madrid in 2011 to become Head of Drama at Runnymede College; the highest-achieving British school in Spain.

He has been Co-Head of Sixth Form at Runnymede since 2016, as well as Deputy Head for Co-Curriculum & Outreach since 2020.

He is also the Creative Director of the professional theatre company, English Theatre Madrid.

We look forward to welcoming Robert as a new member of the Manchester High School community at the start of the next academic year.

He will replace Mrs Sarah Norton, who is standing down from her role as Director of Sixth Form at the end of this academic year.

Sarah will remain at MHS as an English teacher.

On behalf of everyone in the MHS community, we thank Sarah for all of her hard work and the dedication she has shown to all of our Sixth Formers during her tenure as Director of Sixth Form since 2014.



New Sixth Form Enrichment Programme

Ms Jennie Hodson, Deputy Head (Teaching & Learning)

Students joining our Sixth Form in September 2023 can look forward to exciting learning opportunities within our new enrichment programme. From student cookery to 80s pop music, and from classical Greek temple architecture to astronomy, there should be something for everyone!

Year-long courses

In addition to their four A-level subjects, students in Junior Sixth will be able to enhance their studies with a variety of additional courses. We have been offering the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) very successfully at MHS for the past 10 years; this is a popular option with students who wish to carry out their own research project on a topic of their choice, leading to the award of a formal qualification worth half an A-level. We will continue to offer the EPQ, alongside additional year-long courses, which in many cases will also lead to the award of formal qualifications.

The Gold Arts Award, for instance, will be available to students who wish to pursue an interest in creative arts. Students create a portfolio, showcasing their work in an art form of their choice - for example, dance, painting, creative writing or drama. This course allows students to develop critical-thinking, collaboration, and communication skills and can be studied alongside seemingly unrelated subjects such as Science and Maths.

For those interested in languages and culture, our Mandarin course, leading to the Youth Chinese Test from the University of Sheffield will be an attractive option. We are also considering offering a course in Classical Greek and the Silver/Gold Crest Award (a project-based science qualification).

Short courses

In addition to the year-long courses, we will be offering short courses (one lesson per week for a total of approximately five weeks) from which students can 'pick and mix'. Through the short course programme, we will offer support and preparation for university entrance examinations (increasingly important for highly competitive courses such as Medicine, as well as applications for Oxbridge), 'taster' courses for university subjects such as Philosophy and Geology, opportunities to discuss and debate in courses on current affairs, politics, and recent scientific research, as well as the chance to develop new skills such as coding and possibly even crochet!

Amongst the staff at MHSG, we have a range of interests, skills, areas of expertise and subject knowledge. We intend to make the best possible use of this to offer our students an innovative and interesting enrichment programme. I hope that the choice and variety within the programme will help to inspire a lifelong love of learning in our Sixth Form students, allow them to find and pursue their passions, encourage them to take intellectual risks and develop their academic curiosity.



One to Watch

Olivia in Senior Sixth has had a fantastic academic year so far.

She made it to the national finals of the FDM EveryWoman in Technology Awards in March. The awards shine a spotlight on tech's most exceptional talent and she was a finalist in the 'One to Watch' category.

Early in February, Olivia had the chance to visit Bletchley Park, where she was announced as the overall winner (with 'the closest to perfect solution') of the Trinity College, Cambridge award in the National Cipher Challenge.

She collected her £1,000 prize money and had a tour of the famous home of the Enigma Machine and Alan Turing's breakthroughs during WW2.

What's more, she was also named the Girls' School Association's Woman of the Week in February.

A spokesperson for the GSA said: "This week, we are celebrating the exceptional achievements of Olivia, a Year 13 student at Manchester High School for Girls. Olivia has been passionate about Mathematics and Computer Science from a very young age, and this passion extends well beyond the classroom.

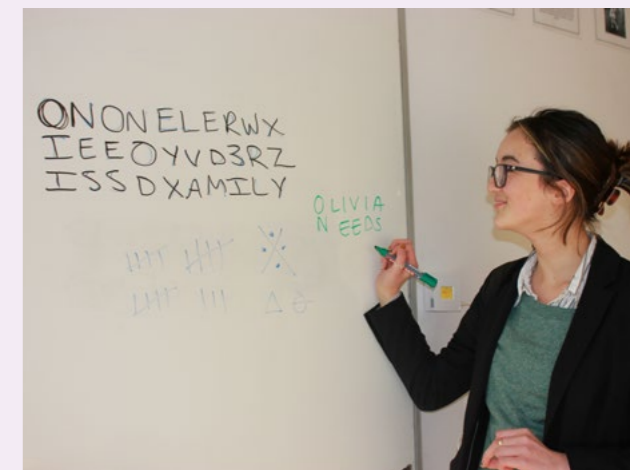
"Olivia understands the importance of role models in inspiring future generations of female programmers and this inspires her further to raise her own online profile as a future tech star. She has written a number of online articles that help people improve their coding skills. Her latest project is an app similar to Duolingo that helps primary school children learn their times tables. It uses adaptive learning techniques to help the students focus on the calculations they struggle with in a fun and motivational way.

"Olivia's consistent dedication to spreading her knowledge among her school community, particularly her work with younger pupils to make coding more accessible for everyone, is a truly admirable quality. We believe there is a very bright future for Olivia where she can continue to inspire as many girls as possible to consider pursuing the tech industry. Well done, Olivia!"

Last year, Olivia also won the Best Game award from Maths blog site, Resourceaholic. Numble, her home-made Maths app, helps children with tricky division sums in a fun, accessible way. She even shared how to program it yourself online. The inventor of the popular word game app Wordle, Josh Wardle, also congratulated Olivia on her fantastic app.

Josh said: "Love Numble. Please give my compliments to [Olivia]. As may be evident by me creating Wordle, numbers are not my strong suit!"

The whole MHSG community is incredibly proud of what Olivia has achieved, and a special thank you to her teachers who have been dedicated in their support for her both before and throughout these successes.



"Olivia understands the importance of role models in inspiring future generations of female programmers and this inspires her further to raise her own online profile as a future tech star."

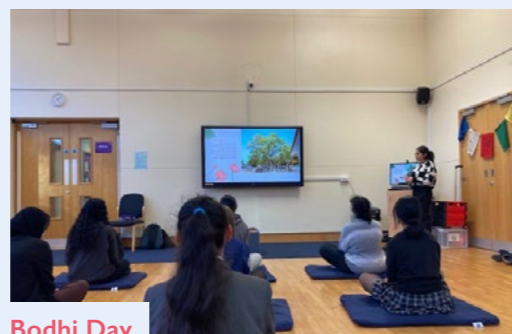
Celebrating Diversity & Inclusion

at MHSG

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) student leadership team are continuing to work hard behind the scenes to create opportunities to fulfil our commitment to the goals of our whole school DEI Charter: education, enrichment, engagement and empowerment.

Education

Our student leadership team are dedicated to educating other pupils about the experiences of all members of our community and those beyond it. In November, our DEI student leadership team led assemblies for all year groups throughout Disability History Month, raising awareness of the experiences of blind and partially sighted people. Our fundraising efforts, through the collection of used stamps, continue to be well supported throughout the school community.



Bodhi Day



Christmas Carols

Enrichment

There have been many opportunities to enrich the experiences within the MHSG community and broaden our understanding of the experiences of others.

In December, we celebrated Bodhi Day, a Buddhist festival which marks the awakening of the Buddha. Some of our Buddhist pupils were joined by their peers to spend time learning about this festival and exploring mindful meditation.

As Christmas approached, we celebrated the diversity of the global Christian community through our global advent calendar display in reception. We also enjoyed a craft workshop making Christmas stars and gathered in reception at lunchtime to sing Christmas carols as a community.

In January, we celebrated the Lunar New Year of the Rabbit. Mrs Fan led a calligraphy workshop, teaching pupils about the history and art of calligraphy and allowing pupils the opportunity to practise this new skill during a calming lunchtime workshop.

Engagement

With support from J6 pupils, our Diversity Captains prepared and led Wellbeing sessions for pupils in Years 7 and 8 to educate them about the LGBTQ+ community, and how we can better understand and offer support to those around us. Younger pupils have responded with enthusiasm to learning from authentic LGBTQ+ voices and allies from within the MHSG community.



LGBTQ+ History Month



Calligraphy



Lunar New Year

Empowerment

We continue to meet regularly each term with our form Diversity and Inclusion Representatives to discuss any matters arising from DEI within school. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions for new ways to educate our community on important DEI topics and to help to plan for and evaluate our events and initiatives. We are looking forward to another exciting term of DEI work led by our Diversity and Inclusion representatives and Captains.

Partnerships

at MHSG

Physics Partners Workshops

Mr Paul McDaid, Head of Physics

The crisis in Physics education is well-known. Most GCSE Physics lessons in schools across the country are being delivered by non-specialists, due to a shortage of Physics teachers. The charity Physics Partners has demonstrated significant impact on classroom practice by boosting teacher knowledge and confidence through its training programmes. MHSG's Physics Department hosts six sessions for Physics Partners during the school year to

support non-specialists from local schools. Each session is devoted to a single topic (e.g. Electricity) and I lead the sessions. Practical work plays a key part in these sessions and is combined with pedagogical strategies for teaching Physics theory. Details of our programme can be found on the Physics Partners' website at www.physicspartners.com/events/manchester-high-school-for-girls.

Primary School Outreach Programme

Miss Nicola Reddin, Primary School Outreach Coordinator

We work with two local primary schools with the volunteered support of our Sixth Form students to deliver fun and educational activities for Year 6 pupils. Children come to MHSG for an hour-long session every week and work closely with our oldest students to build confidence as well as practical and academic skills. Sessions include sporting activities like rock-climbing and

swimming, practical skills like cooking and other subject lessons, including Mandarin, Science, Art, Maths and Computing (Coding). The connection we have with these local primary schools encourages our own students to give back and extends MHSG resources to benefit the wider community.



Charity Fundraising

Mrs Frances Smith, Charity Fundraising Coordinator

Our whole school community works hard to raise funds for charitable causes throughout the academic year. We have recently raised over £1,400 for the Turkey & Syria Earthquake appeal, as well as sending a mountain of donated clothes, baby supplies, food and sleeping equipment out to those in need in these areas. Annually, we raise thousands of pounds for numerous charities, including Children in Need, Cancer Research UK,

Macmillan Cancer Support, Comic Relief and smaller, local charities including the Christie Hospital, St Anne's Hospice and more. Our students are incredibly proactive in initiating and continuing charitable fundraising, and often undertake their own personal challenges to do so. Our staff are also incredibly forthcoming, regularly donating through charity coffee mornings, food bank collections and local fundraisers.



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The Importance of Outdoor Learning for our Youngest Pupils

Mrs Samantha Gibbons – Head of Preparatory Department

Curiosity and wellbeing are so deeply entrenched in the values of MHSG that we actively look for all opportunities to fulfil our aims in this regard for all of our pupils.

Following a review of our curriculum last year, we included Outdoor Learning lessons for all pupils in Key Stage One and as part of our Enrichment Programme for Key Stage Two. You may well have read the article in last term's High Flyer, in which Mrs Esther Garbutt, our Reception teacher, discussed the importance of 'enquiry' for our youngest learners and the opportunities to fully exploit this within school grounds. But this aim does not stop at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

It might seem obvious to state that the pupils really enjoy spending time outside in all weathers; that they enjoy the sense of awe and wonder when icicles form like rows of teeth on wooden fencing, creating mud faces and decorating them with natural materials. But what underpins the choice of activity we provide for our pupils, and what really interests us as educators, is the science behind the benefits of outdoor learning and the effect it can have on wellbeing and academic attainment.

A paper from the American Institute for Research into the Effects of Outdoor Education Programmes for Children demonstrated that children who engage in outdoor learning show higher levels of self-esteem,

conflict resolution and problem solving skills, as well as the motivation to learn. Personal and social skills are improved, as is their environmental and ecological understanding. Perhaps the concrete nature of the learning, its increased relevance, and the accommodation of a variety of learning styles, help to bring about these developments. More importantly though, the fuller sense of freedom and the independence to make choices in this environment have the greatest impact on wellbeing. Drawing together the emotional boost gained by connecting with nature with the confidence to experiment, and build relationships with a growing sense of community, act to create balance.

Outdoor learning has also been proven to reduce stress. The greener the area, the wilder the shrubs and trees and the wider the view – the greater the increase in levels of calm. Learning outdoors brings every sense alive in a way that can be difficult to achieve in a classroom. Learning outdoors can inspire children to take up physical activity, give them real-world, practical experiences and widen their horizons.

It is our opinion that to fulfil our obligations to promote high academic attainment, we must first attend to the physical and mental health of our pupils. Outdoor learning is one way of doing this, where skills and knowledge are drawn together and acquired in equal measure and no pupil feels they are failing. Our next adventure will be to get some vegetables growing in our planters!

"...children who engage in outdoor learning show higher levels of self-esteem, conflict resolution and problem solving skills, as well as the motivation to learn."



New Preparatory Department curriculum heralds key skills for our youngest pupils

Mrs Veronique Shingler, Deputy Head of Preparatory Department

The beginning of this academic year has been an interesting and exciting time in Manchester High School for Girls' Preparatory Department. In the Infants, we continued the development of our Phonics programme and we introduced two new subjects, Drama and Reasoning, for our Junior pupils.

The decision to introduce two new subjects has allowed us to reorganise where and when other subjects are being taught during the week.

Drama is now also being taught once a week to our pupils in Years 3 to 6 using a cross-curricular approach; enhancing understanding of key texts in English, extending vocabularies, encouraging empathy with characters and improving creative writing outcomes.

Furthermore, the introduction of Drama links directly with MHSG's core values of Wellbeing, Compassion and Individuality. Drama encourages girls to dig deep, allowing them to engage and interact with difficult themes and emotions, all within a safe and creative sphere.

In effect, Drama is teaching our pupils more about the wider world in which we live and preparing them for it, as individuals. As detailed in David Farmer's book 'Learning Through Drama in the Primary Years': "Drama's multi-sensory approach allows children to develop such skills as creativity, enquiry, communication, empathy, self-confidence, cooperation, leadership and negotiation."

For pupils in Years 3 to 6, we have introduced a weekly Reasoning lesson. As well as solving problems in a range of contexts as part of the regular curriculum, the introduction of Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning lessons hones techniques pupils can use to help become more independent and more powerful learners.

The rationale behind this introduction is very strongly connected to MHSG's core value of Learning. The Preparatory Department promotes a 'have a go' attitude, where mistakes are part of learning, and it is vital that we effectively equip pupils to solve different questions and problems.

Developing the ability to think critically takes time. Our key aim is to ensure pupils leaving the Preparatory Department at the end of Year 6 are able to effectively use logic to construct ideas and communicate those ideas successfully. By introducing Reasoning into Year 3, we are teaching pupils to approach problems confidently and analytically, while simultaneously developing awareness of their own learning styles.

Reorganising the timetable has had a positive impact on pupils' learning so far. We have placed an emphasis on teaching Maths and English in the morning, which allows us to teach a new technique at the very start of the day. We then embed that new learning in afternoon lessons.

This approach allows us to best support our pupils' learning and development needs, while prioritising their wellbeing and maintaining the highest academic standards.



Prep Adventures

Our youngest pupils have been extremely busy so far this term.

They have been learning lots, having plenty of fun and developing their creativity and individuality along the way.

Here are just a few of the highlights of what they have all been up to.

Archivists' Visit

Our Year 2 pupils enjoyed a visit from our wonderful Archivists. They learned all about the history of MHSG and even had the chance to try on some of the old uniforms! Thank you to Mrs Roberts & Mrs Hobson for a fantastic morning of learning.



Balance Week

Our pupils had a surprise as part of our Balance Week activities at the beginning of March! A pet farm visited MHSG and our pupils enjoyed meeting and learning about alpacas, miniature donkeys, pigmy goats, rabbits, ducks, chickens and Meg the sheepdog! Thank you to Ian's Mobile Farm (as seen on the Yorkshire Vet) for bringing in some very cute companions for us to get to know!



Author Visit

It was fantastic to welcome author, Annabel Steadman, to MHSG this term. Our Prep and Senior pupils, as well as visitors from nearby St James' C of E Primary School, all enjoyed hearing about her new novel, 'Skandar and the Unicorn Thief', as well as Annabel's inspiration for her book.



Physical Theatre

Our Reception class had a fantastic time in a theatre workshop with Hope Mill Theatre this half term! They enjoyed learning about physical theatre and performing with their friends.



Sporting Success

Well done to our U11 hockey team who went to Preston for the AJIS tournament. They played seven matches, won six and drew one, scored 19 goals and kept a clean sheet! Congratulations Amelia, Georgie, Mattie, Sanjivani, Izzy, Gabriella, Millie & Naimah!

Congratulations also to Iris, Demi, Eshal and Alice who swam incredibly well and won the plate at the School Games Swimming Finals! Iris & Demi swam freestyle, Eshal backstroke, Alice breaststroke and all four girls took part in both the freestyle and medley relays.





Inside the Classroom: Mandarin introduced for Year 7 pupils

Mrs Elizabeth Counsell, Head of Modern Foreign Languages



Mandarin has been introduced this academic year to complement the current Modern Foreign Languages offering of French, Spanish and German. We are hoping that the differences between the European languages and Mandarin will allow pupils to broaden their cultural knowledge and develop their language learning strategies.

In lessons, Year 7 students are learning greetings, numbers, months, days and family members. Whilst we do not learn different tenses in French, Spanish and German until Year 8, in Mandarin, past present and future tenses are all covered as part of the Year 7 taster course, along with the Chinese characters and the calligraphy associated with these. Pinyin, the phonetic way of writing Chinese, is taught alongside the characters during the course.

Pupils also learn about significant cultural aspects of China, such as different festivals, including Christmas. Students take advantage of web-based software to practise their language as well as using our language laboratories to practise speaking. They are also provided with specially ruled books which make it easier to write Chinese characters.

The aim of the taster course is to give our pupils the opportunity to experience learning all of the languages that we teach here at MHSg, so that they can make an informed decision about which two languages they would like to carry forward into Year 8.

Earlier this year, MHSg celebrated the Lunar New Year of the Rabbit. As part of the celebrations, Mrs Fan held a calligraphy workshop in our Senior School hall, attended by pupils from all year groups.

Esha in Year 7 said:

“The calligraphy workshop was interesting and I learned a new skill. Even though it was hard at first, I enjoyed the challenge and hopefully improved. The calligraphy was really calming and it was great to learn more about the rich culture of China.”



In the Spotlight: Chemistry at MHSG

Mr Alex Guinan, Head of Department

In the Chemistry Department we aim to provide a safe, engaging and rewarding experience of studying Chemistry. From Year 7 through to Senior Sixth classes we want to make sure pupils have a strong chemical understanding for life, both in and out of school. Students who take Chemistry at Manchester High School for Girls gain an appreciation of how Chemistry operates in the wider world and are ready for the next steps in their education and future career.

Double 0, Year 7: a licence to... use Bunsen burners!

In Year 7, pupils begin their Chemistry journey by gaining their all-important 'Bunsen Burner Licence'. With this in place, they are then ready to study simple chemical reactions – a highlight being the 'screaming jelly baby' experiment. This provides a startling reminder to students about how much sugar there is in sweets!

Year 8: From atoms to nappies

Students in Year 8 continue to develop their understanding of Chemistry concepts through topics on acids and alkalis, the structure of the atom and chemical calculations. As a Department, we highly value practical skills and there is a focus on the development of this in Year 8. The students carry out investigations, from looking at the best remedy to cure indigestion, to the science behind absorbent hydrogels in disposable nappies.

Key Stage Three (Year 9): Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths Club: Fire Writing and slime

Keen Chemists are encouraged to come along to our Key Stage Three STEM Club throughout the year to undertake a variety of experiments. The weekly sessions give students the opportunity to get more involved in the fun and magic that Chemistry has to offer. Students get to try out real, hands-on Chemistry, including fire writing, fizzy rainbows and making slime. Staff and students alike are very enthusiastic about this club.

GCSE Chemistry: Real world problems, Chemistry solutions

The GCSE Chemistry course begins in Year 9 at Manchester High. By studying GCSE Chemistry, the students begin to gain an appreciation of the impact Chemistry has on the world around them. It also encourages students to become better citizens, with a

focus on creating a sustainable future. At GCSE level, students cover many interesting topics, including the development of the atomic model, chemical equilibria, life cycle assessments and organic reactions. The variety within the course helps to engage all students and provides them with many key skills, including communication, data handling, and risk assessment. Delivery of a GCSE course over three years presents a challenge with regards to retention of information. As a department we provide regular retrieval practice sessions so students can revisit earlier concepts and processes; enabling them to overcome the challenges of completing a GCSE course over three years. The Chemistry teaching staff use evidence-based research in their teaching practices to support students in the best way possible.

A-level Chemistry

The Chemistry Department is thriving in Sixth Form with many students taking this subject as they begin to crystallise their plans for higher education and future careers. Our students enjoy the challenge of A-level and studying three distinct strands of Chemistry. From multi-step mechanisms and the colours of complexes in Organic Chemistry, to buffer calculations in Physical Chemistry - students are faced with many challenges which help to develop their resilience, determination, and creativity. The introduction of the 'Practical Endorsement' requires students to complete a minimum of 12 practical tasks, which we deliver using practical lab-books. Students have the opportunity and support to show several competencies to achieve the endorsement. All of our A-level students achieve this award.

Extra-curricular Opportunities

Advanced Chemistry Club: Glow sticks, Pseudo Science and Cyanide poisoning

Advanced Chemistry Club runs at lunchtime, providing our Year 12 Chemists with the opportunity to go beyond the A-level syllabus. This club covers fascinating discussions and complex practical work. Junior Sixth students have delved into questions such as 'Is turmeric really a wonder drug?', 'What is Chemiluminescence?' and 'Which poison is the best?'. They have also carried out experiments to extract caffeine from tea and the synthesis of Paracetamol. The opportunity to learn about new concepts, find explanations for natural phenomena and develop new practical techniques are of great benefit to our students, particularly those that go on to pursue science-based degrees.

Prep Science Club: Encouraging the next generation of Chemists

Our Junior Sixth Chemists also get to share their passion with our youngest students by becoming mentors in Prep Science Club. In this club, Sixth Form students accompany Mr Guinan to the Year 5 classroom on Thursday lunchtimes to deliver a variety of fun practicals to engage and enthuse young scientists. The Sixth Formers design and run the activities, including investigating fizzy sweets and making

bottle rockets. It is a wonderful thing to see the Year 5 and J6 students working collaboratively on an experiment and sharing a love of Chemistry. Prep students also get to ask questions about the Senior School ahead of moving up.

National Competitions: Gold, Silver, and Copper awards (Did you know: Bronze is not an element!)

Every year Sixth Form students are encouraged to enter the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge (Year 12) and Chemistry Olympiad (Year 13). We always have strong representation as students wish to test themselves. The competitions take them beyond their curriculum learning and encourage them to think about science as a university student would. Students regularly achieve success in both competitions.

From the moment a student gains their Bunsen Burner Licence, to receiving their A-level results with 'Practical Endorsement', students have a challenging and stimulating Chemistry education. We are proud to provide a happy and supportive environment for students to flourish.

As Linus Pauling, Nobel prize winner for Chemistry, once said: "I feel sorry for people who don't understand anything about Chemistry. They are missing out on an important source of happiness."



Meet the Staff

Mr Alex Guinan
Head of Department

Dr Alex Bushell
Chemistry Teacher

Mrs Amy Kember
Chemistry Teacher

Mrs Penny Inglis
Chemistry Teacher and Higher Education Advisor

Miss Kathryn Large
Chemistry Teacher

Out and About With the Archivists

Mrs Gwen Hobson and Mrs Pamela Roberts

We are now getting very excited about preparations for our 150th anniversary in 2024. Whose idea was it? How did they go about setting up a model girls' school 'of the highest type' at a time when educating girls to the same standard as boys was considered by many to be unnecessary or even dangerous?

The driving force behind the opening of the School was the Manchester Association for Promoting the Education of Women. In 1871, they wrote a report that said: "Well, has Manchester ever realised even the idea that to give to girls as good opportunities for a thorough education as is given to boys is, to say the least, an experiment worth trying? Girls here have nothing on a par with the Manchester Grammar School: and why should they not have? Much less have they such resorts as Oxford or Cambridge. A stimulus, indeed, has been imparted by the University examinations, and perhaps especially by the Cambridge examination of girls who are turned 18 years, about which you will today receive a brief report from a Committee in union with us. But, omitting here and now mention of certain other acknowledged educational wants for girls in Manchester, we do very urgently need a school of the highest type for girls, carried on under a public committee of competent governors, and at a comparatively inexpensive rate. Such schools and colleges

They concluded: "We do very urgently need a school of the highest type for girls, carried on under a public committee of competent governors, and at a comparatively inexpensive rate."

Working through the papers and minutes we hold in our collection, we are amazed by the speed at which the Association's original vision became reality. The first draft scheme for the proposal to establish a model girls' school in Manchester was published in December 1872. This meant that the founding committee only had a year to raise funds, find and equip premises, appoint staff and recruit pupils. From a 21st century perspective, this seems like a very daunting task. The early handwritten minutes give us wonderful insights into the problems they encountered. Even on Christmas Eve 1873, one of our Founders, Edward Donner, was obliged to go in person to the Manchester Corporation to discuss the gas meter for the converted houses on Portland Terrace, Oxford Road. These had been taken on a seven-year lease in September 1873, only four months before the School opened.

We celebrate the fact that Manchester High was a pioneering school, the first academic school for girls in the North of England and one of the first few in the country. Being in the vanguard posed problems, of course. There were really only three schools on which MHSG could be modelled. The MHSG Archive contains a letter from Miss Dorothea Beale, Head Mistress of Cheltenham Ladies' College, giving detailed advice on funding and setting up the School. The Committee also looked at North London Collegiate School and Queen's College, Harley Street, where our first Head Mistress, Miss Day, had been a pupil and a pupil teacher. Finding staff with the appropriate qualifications and experience was a major headache. You may be surprised to learn that Miss Day did not have a degree, because at that time women were not allowed to graduate from university. She was only 29 when she was appointed!

Our latest archive film, 'A Model Girls' School', gives more information about the story behind the opening of the School. To view this video, visit MHSG's YouTube channel.



Miss Elizabeth Day

The progress made in getting some partial instalment of justice for girls as thus described by one of the Commissioners is most hopeful. Let us trust that Lancashire, and Manchester in particular, will not wake up suddenly some day to find itself behind all other parts of Great Britain in the ideas of our generation and in the education of its women. People will naturally say to us, "What are the wants of Manchester in respect of the education of women?" Well, has Manchester ever realised even the idea that to give to girls as good opportunities for a thorough education as is given to boys is, to say the least, an experiment worth trying? Girls here have nothing on a par with the Manchester Grammar School: and why should they not have? Much less have they such resorts as Oxford or Cambridge. A stimulus, indeed, has been imparted by the University examinations, and perhaps especially by the Cambridge examination of girls who are turned 18 years, about which you will today receive a brief report from a Committee in union with us. But, omitting here and now mention of certain other acknowledged educational wants for girls in Manchester, we do very urgently need a school of the highest type for girls, carried on under a public committee of competent governors, and at a comparatively inexpensive rate. Such schools and colleges

Extract from the First Draft Scheme 1872

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A MODEL GIRLS' SCHOOL IN MANCHESTER

First Draft Scheme

a. A school to be opened with (1) an elementary department, (2) a junior department, and (3) a senior department; and the school year to be divided into three terms.

b. The students of the school to be of two kinds - regular and occasional. Regular students to follow the course of instruction laid down; the occasional students to be allowed to attend special classes in the senior department only.

c. Progressive courses of instructions will be laid down; but, as in the great schools of the country, the authorities alone of the school to determine the course of instruction for each scholar.

d. The working of the school and of each scholar to be tested periodically by independent and competent examiners. The examiners to report fully, and the reports to be open to all persons interested.

e. The course of instruction to include such provision as will meet the requirements of the University Local Examinations. Religious instruction in preparation for these examinations to be provided for every scholar whose parent or guardian desires that she should receive it in the school.

f. The school is to become self-supporting. As regards payments, your Committee suggest the following scheme:-

a. All fees payable in advance.

b. A small entrance fee.

c. Fee per term in elementary department ... £1 10 0

" " in junior " ... 3 3 0

" " in senior " ... 4 4 0

The fees will cover the school course.

The institution might be set on foot, in the first instance, by renting a large house.

It is essential that the school should eventually become self-supporting. But for the expenses of the first year in rent, taxes, furniture, apparatus, wages, salaries of teachers, etc., donations to the amount of £3,000 at least would be necessary. In addition to this sum, annual guarantees for the succeeding four years must be obtained.

The committee submit this scheme to the public of Manchester, and very earnestly invite all who are interested in promoting the better education of the

First Draft Scheme 1872

Jan. 15/73

Dear Madam

I have to thank you for sending me the Reports of the Manchester Association. It is perhaps no business of mine to give advice, but believing as I do, that these colleges are likely to be of great service to the cause of education, I am anxious that might be made self-supporting.

Letter from Miss Dorothea Beale

Manchester Association for Promoting the Education of Women.

Patron:
THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

President:
REV. W. J. KENNEDY.

Committee—1874-75:

— Mrs. ANSON, Birch Rectory, Fallowfield
— Mrs. BARRATT, Kersal Villa, Higher Broughton
— Mr. F. BISHOP, The Oaks, Fallowfield
— Miss ESKELLEY, 50, Blossbury
— Rev. Canon BIRCH, Prestwich Rectory
— Mr. BIRCH, Prestwich Rectory
— E. H. BIRCH, Esq., Tallow Field, Cheetham
— J. CHAUVIN, Esq., Prestwich
— Miss CANNAN, Clerk Hill, Prestwich
— Mr. CHAMBERS, O'Brien Hall, New Mills
— Rev. H. COYMAN, Cornwell
— Rev. Canon CRANE, Old Trafford
— R. D. DAKESHIRE, Esq., Victoria Park
— Mr. DONNER, Victoria Park
— Miss GASKELL, 24, Plymouth Grove
— J. S. GREENWOOD, Esq., L.L.D., Owens College
— W. H. HERWOOD, Esq., Fallowfield
— O. HEWOOD, Esq., Eccles

— Miss HIGGINS, Stocks, Cheetham
— Mrs. KENNEDY, 21, Ardwick Green
— Mrs. LESLIE, Victoria Park
— Mr. McCORMACK, Brooklands, Prestwich
— The DEAN of MANCHESTER, The Deanery, Broughton Park
— Mrs. MICHELL, Grove House, Oxford Road
— Rev. A. McLEOD, Woodles, Upper Chorlton Road
— A. NIELL, Esq., Bowdon
— Mr. O'NEILL, 16, Needley Road, Pendleton
— Miss PUTTER, Greenheys Lane
— Mrs. SHUTTLEWORTH, Wilton Polytechnic
— Miss WOODCOCK, Old Trafford
— Rev. F. B. WRIGHT, St. John's Rectory, Higher Broughton

Treasurer:
Mrs. R. D. DARBISHIRE, Victoria Park.

Hon. Secretaries:
Hon. Mrs. ATKINSON, Longlight Rectory.
Miss LIVESEY, 9, Wellington Road, Moss Side.

Manchester Association for Promoting the Education of Women Committee 1874

Manchester Model Girls' School

Meeting of Subscribers 23rd March 1873

Present
Rev. W. J. Kennedy (in the Chair)

M^{rs} Anson
E. H. Birck Esq
M^{rs} Chambers
Rev. H. Cotton
R. L. Darbshire Esq
M^{rs} R. D. Darbshire
E. Donner Esq
M^{rs} Principal Greenwood

Rev. W. H. Herford
Miss Higgins
G. Midner Esq
M^{rs} Micholls
Miss Naylor
M^{rs} Schuster
M^{rs} Shuttleworth
M^{rs} Knickworth
Miss Headcock.

1. The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Com^{tee} of the Man. Assoc. for Promoting the Education of Women, bearing on the proposed Model School for Girls were read and confirmed. It was moved by M^{rs} Principal Greenwood seconded by M^{rs} Knickworth and carried: That the Committee for the School

Governors Minutes 23rd March 1873

If you have any questions about the history of MHSG, or if you have any memories, photographs or mementos of your time at the School that you would like to share, please contact the Archivists by emailing archives@mhs.g.manchester.sch.uk.

Alumnae Events



Back in Time Walking Tour

Date: Saturday 20th May 2023

Time: 11.00am to 2.00pm

Venue: Manchester High School for Girls

Address: Grangethorpe Road, Manchester, M14 6HS

Price: £10 including a branded travel mug, refreshments and tour

Join School Archivists and MHSG stalwarts Mrs Gwen Hobson and Mrs Pam Roberts, as they lead us on a guided tour around the School, exploring some of the history and figures associated with MHSG over its 149-year existence. 'Back in Time' promises to be a nostalgic trip down memory lane that provides fascinating insights into the story of our pioneering school whilst giving you the opportunity to put your questions to our resident experts!

Save the Date - Annual & Decades Reunion 2023

The date is set for this year's big Reunion, and we can't wait to welcome you back to MHSG on Saturday 30th September 2023.

If you left MHSG in a year ending in a three, this is your year! We would, of course, love to see alumnae who left in any other year groups, as well as former staff.

Ticket bookings for this event will open in due course, but for now please tell your friends and save the date!

For more information and to book on to any of our Alumnae Events, please visit our website at: www.manchesterhigh.co.uk/alumnae/events.



Alumnae News

Connections Welcome - By Anne Simor (née Crowe), Class of 1958

I turned 84 last year. School remains a vivid memory; friendships, plays, studies and laughter.

I have not been able to keep up with MHSG until recently, and I would love to hear from any of my year group who remember me. Miss Bozman was our formidable Head Mistress and her staff were devoted.

My term as an Oxbridge student was amongst the most thrilling and stretching of my academic studies. We have two daughters and one son. Rebecca is Head of Festivals and Series with the British Council and Jessica a KC, with expertise in public, environmental and human rights law. Damian is a freelance writer. We live in central London.

New book - By Helen Hackett (née Cobb), Class of 1980

I'm a Professor of English Literature at University College London. I recently published my seventh book, 'The Elizabethan Mind', a study of sixteenth-century ideas about the mind, how they differ from our own, and how they shaped the literature of Shakespeare and his contemporaries.



Obituaries

Cherry Simpson (née Mutch), Class of 1958

We are sad to report that Cherry passed away in Summer 2022. Her family and friends are keen to gather any recollections of her from former classmates. If you would like to share any memories, please contact the Development Team and we will pass these on.

Miss Mollie Blake, Head Mistress 1975-1983

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Miss Mollie Blake, Head Mistress of Manchester High from September 1975 to August 1983. Miss Blake passed away on 24th December 2022 at the age of 100.

Miss Blake read Geography at St. Anne's College, Oxford and also gained a London Diploma of Education in Theology. She became the sixth Head Mistress of MHSG after 15 years as Head Mistress of Selby Grammar School. She was elected President of the Association of Head Mistresses in 1976 and in 1978 became the first President of the Secondary Heads' Association.

Under her guidance, the School transitioned from direct grant to independent status, which meant having to rely solely on fee income. It was therefore vital to set up a Bursary Appeal to ensure that MHSG was still accessible to bright girls whose parents could not otherwise afford the fees.

She continued the School's building programme to include the new Music House, and the transformation of the old music house into an infant block. She planned provision for a new school subject, Technology, and inaugurated the Careers Department and School Careers Conventions, now the Futures Fair.

Miss Blake will be remembered for calmly steering the School through a period of enormous change with great distinction, as well as her boundless energy and willingness to join in with School functions and activities. She will be greatly missed.

Vanessa Walsh (née Rosenthal), Class of 1962

By Lynn E. Soens (née Lamont), Class of 1960

My dearest friend Vanessa Rosenthal died in July 2022. We had been friends for 74 years and I cannot believe that she is not here.

She was an actor and worked for 55 years in film, television and radio. Vanessa was acclaimed for performances including Alan Bennett's 'The Lady in the Van' and 'The Importance of Being Earnest' with the National Theatre. She also appeared on television shows including 'Emmerdale', 'Heartbeat' and in the film 'Weatherby'.

Vanessa wrote for radio and stage and 28 of her plays were broadcast on BBC Radio 4. One of her plays was nominated for a BAFTA and another was chosen to represent the UK for the European Broadcasting Union.

Being a passionate supporter of the arts, she was frustrated by the lack of opportunity for older actors and founded the Yellow Leaf Theatre company and they travelled all over the country; one of their plays was performed in Jerusalem.

I first got to know Vanessa when I was in Upper Primary and she was in Lower Primary. We travelled on the bus together and I visited her home frequently. Over the years



Miss Blake in front of the nearly completed Music House in 1984.



Former Head Mistresses, Miss Moon (left), Miss Blake (centre) and Miss Cottrell (right) at an Old Girls' Federation Meeting in 1994 to celebrate Miss Moon's retirement. Miss Blake succeeded Miss Cottrell and was followed by Miss Moon.

we did many things together, including a very memorable trip to Hatzenport, Germany.

I moved to Canada in 1968 but we kept in touch by letters, phone calls and email. Whenever I came back to Manchester I would visit her and the last time I saw her was when I visited her in Italy. What a joyous time that was!

As usual, we laughed and reminisced about things that we had done in the past. One little thing that she did at school was very wicked! On Wednesdays we went to 'The Field' to play hockey or cricket depending on the season. Unbeknown to the gym teacher she would just hop on the bus and go to the Central Library! Nobody ever knew but me!

Vanessa was a brilliant, intelligent and highly talented woman. I miss her terribly. She will never be forgotten.





Where are they now?

An interview with Dr Laura Ajram PhD FBPhS – Class of 2009

After leaving MHSG in 2009, Laura studied Pharmacology at King's College London (including a year in industry with GlaxoSmithKline) before completing her PhD at the Institute for Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience on the topic of 'the Neuropharmacology of Autism Spectrum Disorders'.

In 2021 Laura was awarded the 'ELRIG Early Career Impact Award' for making a 'significant impact in the drug discovery community'.

In 2022, Laura was awarded a prestigious Fellowship to the British Pharmacological Society in recognition of her ongoing contribution to Pharmacology. She is the youngest woman elected as a Fellow to the Society in its 90-year history.

What A-level subjects did you study?

Biology, Chemistry, French and Psychology. I started AS Maths in my Senior Sixth year after a sudden panic that I should have taken Maths to be a scientist, but I didn't get on with it at all. After battling for a few months, I decided to give up on that struggle and I'm so glad I did.

Was your career journey to get to where you are today as you expected, or did you find yourself redirected in unexpected ways?

My PhD involved working at the university and at a pharmaceutical company, Eli Lilly, with some additional clinical work at the Maudsley Hospital too. It was a real mix of lab and clinical research across multiple groups, and I loved jumping between the different types of research and translating across different disciplines.

After completing my PhD, I knew that I wanted to continue working in research and drug discovery but wanted a break from conducting experiments in the lab. I knew I enjoyed working across the perceived boundaries between academia and industry, the lab and the clinic, but didn't know whether there was a career in that middle ground.

During my job search post-PhD, I stumbled upon an advert for a 'Translational Research Facilitator' at the University of Manchester. I had never heard of such a role, but was attracted to taking on a research management role, co-ordinating and driving research activities rather than being in the lab myself.

Since that first step away from the lab, I have actively chased opportunities where there is a need for the combined skills of research management and scientific understanding, where I can apply my passions for neuroscience, research and bringing people together from different sectors to create shared visions that require collaboration to succeed. I work in the gap between great ideas and action, and drive partnerships between key institutions, clinicians, patients, researchers and companies that are required to turn drug discovery ideas into projects.

In my current role, I work for the Medicines Discovery Catapult as the 'Partnership Lead' – I lead a small team to develop and deliver international, multi-million pound initiatives that enable collaborative research efforts to progress faster than they would if everyone was working in isolation.

What advice would you give to any budding Pharmacologists?

The greatest asset I've had in my career has been a strong network of colleagues, mentors and friends that I've developed over time. Joining professional societies in my first year at university kickstarted this network for me – I've been involved with the British Pharmacological Society for over 10 years, first as a member, then as a

Trustee (Non-Executive Director) of the Society where I held a position on the Council, and most recently as an elected Fellow. I think joining a society that's aligned to your area of interest is a great first step that opens up networking opportunities, training and a support system that lasts a whole career.

I'd also say follow what interests you and keep an open mind for your future career after your studies. Career options after a science degree are often perceived to be limited to the dichotomy of 'academia vs industry', but there is a vast array of careers that you can apply a love of science to. I had no idea that my current role was an option when I graduated - sometimes you need to step off the 'career path' to find what's right for you.

How do you feel Manchester High prepared you for your career and life beyond the school gates?

Manchester High encouraged and celebrated a real love of learning – something that has stayed with me, and no doubt helped my career. Compared to other scientific disciplines, we really don't know that much about the brain, so there's always something new to learn every day in neuroscience!

I was also surrounded by some wonderful female teachers and role models in the science department – including Miss Catlow [now Mrs Inglis], Dr Hoban, Dr Poucher and Dr Tranter - that meant I left school thinking it was perfectly normal for women to have scientific leadership roles.

It was a bit of a surprise when I entered the workforce and experienced the level of gender imbalance in STEM subjects. Around 60% of Pharmacology undergraduate students are female, but only 20% progress to become Professors and only 13% of scientific management level roles are occupied by women. Manchester High gave me the confidence to believe I could be in that minority.

Are you still in touch with any MHSG contemporaries/staff?

Yes, I count myself as really lucky to have built such strong friendships at Manchester High that have lasted over 20 years and counting!

What is your fondest memory of your time at Manchester High?

School trips to Italy and Greece with Miss Welsby and our GCSE Latin class were so much fun – I can't believe I was so lucky to have the opportunity to explore ancient Rome and live those classics lessons - I look back on those trips with really fond memories.

Meet the Governors

This year, two of MHSG's governors featured in the New Year's Honours List; Kate Dickson for her services to heritage and Wakkas Khan for his services to charity, young people and interfaith relations. We caught up with them both after receiving their honours.



How did you feel when you found out you were featuring in the New Year's Honours List?

Kate: "My first reaction when I saw an email from the Cabinet Office was to assume it was a circular. Finally, when I opened it, I assumed it must be a hoax! When I eventually decided the notification was authentic, I wanted to squeal and jump up and down, but I couldn't in the office with colleagues around me! I had butterflies when I thought about it for days afterwards."

Wakkas: "I was overwhelmed, surprised and incredibly humbled. I was not expecting a nomination and definitely was not expecting to receive an honour. I work with a number of organisations, I have no idea who nominated me and it could be any one of them. But certainly, this is recognition of all of the wonderful and inspirational people I have worked with over many years."



What does your award represent and what was it awarded for?

Kate: "A British Empire Medal (BEM) is usually awarded to people who have volunteered for a local cause. In my case, the BEM award for Services to Heritage is specifically in relation to my time on the Board of the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF), and on its grants panel."

"At the AHF, I guided the Fund's financial support to the real heritage heroes – the voluntary organisations and projects that rescue historic buildings and repurpose them for uses that benefit the community. I used my heritage expertise and experience in this role, but I think the award is more an acknowledgement that I was a good trustee; contributing to sound decision making."

"What you do outside your core academic studies is almost as important as getting good grades in your exams. I have always done extra-curricular activities – music, hill-walking, gardening, church and heritage interests in particular – and they enrich my life, and, I think, help me enrich the lives of others." – Kate

Wakkas: "I have been honoured for three things, which is quite rare, I think. I was honoured for my services to charity, to young people and to interfaith relations. I worked for many years with the charitable mentoring initiative of King Charles III's MOSAIC, which is part of the Prince's Trust."

"In the aftermath of the Manchester Arena Bombing, I founded a young people's interfaith charity, was a trustee at Oxfam for number of years and have been working to increase the representation of minorities on trustee boards for a number of years."

What advice would you like to give to our current MHSG students?

Kate: "What you do outside your core academic studies is almost as important as getting good grades in your exams. I have always done extra-curricular activities – music, hill-walking, gardening, church and heritage interests in particular – and they enrich my life, and, I think, help me enrich the lives of others."

Wakkas: "Twenty years from now, you will only regret the things you haven't done, rather than those you have. These aren't my words, but attributed to Mark Twain, and I have always found them to be true. Michael Jordan said you miss 100% of shots you don't take."

"My second piece of advice would be, a school like Manchester High affords its students with a great deal of opportunities; through sports, engagements, trips and meeting people who are different from you. You have to take those opportunities and make the most of them."

What does being part of the MHSG community mean to you and your family?

Kate: "As an alumna, Manchester High gave me the academic grounding I needed to pursue a career in architecture, with an ability to think strategically and have

an eye for detail. I often quote a university tutor of mine, who said that architects have to be able to design the masterplan and the doorknob, at the same time. School and my parents together engendered my conscientiousness and responsibilities to others, and made me confident in voicing my opinions."

Wakkas: "My sister was at Manchester High in the 1990s. I've known for a long time that Manchester High represents excellence and opportunity."

"Being part of the community now is a real privilege. I feel that I gain more than I give and get the opportunity, day in, day out to share in the achievements of the most able and capable girls in the country. Being a part of that journey has been an inspiration."

"MHSG is one of the significant anchor institutions in the city and to be part of an institution like this, in the city where I was born and raised, and seeing the next generation come through, thrive and excel, and reap the rewards of this great city and a world class education, is amazing to see."

"In the aftermath of the Manchester Arena Bombing, I founded a young people's interfaith charity, was a trustee at Oxfam for number of years and have been working to increase the representation of minorities on trustee boards for a number of years." – Wakkas

Support the MHSG Bursary Fund

Every year we are faced with more applications for bursary places than we can offer. As an increasing number of families face financial difficulty, the Bursary Fund is more crucial than ever.

Our vision is excellence: to deliver a pioneering, innovative, and dynamic learning experience within a compassionate and caring environment for a needs blind, diverse community where the wellbeing and happiness of every individual and the fulfilment of their potential are our priority.

As the School of choice for girls in the North-West, our pupils - like those who have attended the School before them - will go on to be global citizens and courageous motivators of change.

Our Bursary Fund honours the intentions of MHSG's founders – to enrol the brightest pupils regardless of their financial circumstances.

By donating a small amount each month to the Bursary Fund, you can help us ensure that we fulfil our ambition to support any child who would benefit from an MHSG education.

<p>£10 a month</p> <p>will buy PE kit for a bursary student</p>	<p>£15 a month</p> <p>will pay for a bursary student's first residential trip</p>	<p>£25 a month</p> <p>will cover a term of lessons on a musical instrument</p>
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Support us



You can set up a monthly donation online by visiting www.manchesterhigh.co.uk/support-us/support-manchester-high or email development@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk

Why They Give

"I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to attend the school (especially as I got an assisted place) and wish to contribute to helping another girl have this opportunity through the Ivy Leaf Society."

"I have no children of my own and through the MHSG Bursary Fund I can provide by virtue of a legacy for a number of children to have a free MHSG education, just as I was lucky enough to benefit from one through a Foundation Scholarship."

"In 1958 I was fortunate to receive a Direct Grant, which enabled me to attend Manchester High School for Girls. The excellent academic education that I was given was my springboard to University, graduate studies, a stimulating career and an interesting life."

"The Direct Grant system no longer exists, so I am leaving a legacy to the MHSG Bursary Fund to help other young women enjoy the opportunities that were made available to me."

"I never want to feel that an able girl had to miss the opportunities offered by MHSG simply on the grounds of cost. Someone donated funds to help me and it is my turn to help a future pupil."

The Difference It Makes

Recent leaver and former bursary recipient, Orla, said:

"MHSG has given me more opportunities than I could ever have imagined. I have found my family and my home and I couldn't have wished for a safer place to grow up."

"I am so fortunate and so aware of the impact it's had on my life; I wouldn't be the person I am today without the care and support from the School."

"This couldn't have happened without the support of the Bursary Fund. I think it's so important that we offer students from all kinds of backgrounds the opportunities that this school can give you."

"I couldn't be more grateful to anyone who donates even the smallest amount to the Bursary Fund. It makes such an impact."



Recent leaver and former bursary recipient, Hawa, said:

"I'm now studying Medicine at Cambridge. My time at Manchester High has helped me to do what I want to do in the future."

"I want to say thank you again and again, because it means so much to me. I hope that you all continue to donate, because it puts a smile on your face knowing that people care enough to donate."



Giving back to MHSG

We recognise that not everyone has the means to give financially, and we value those who can give their time just as highly as those who contribute financially.

There are numerous non-financial ways of giving back to MHSG.

Our alumnae community is an invaluable asset in terms of career knowledge and advice, so we regularly ask our alumnae to speak to current students about their journey. From showcasing your job or field at our biennial **Futures Fair**, sharing your journey in one of our industry-specific **Insight Into...** careers talks, or supporting a current Sixth Form student through the **Project Pankhurst** mentoring scheme, your unique experiences give our students an unparalleled insight into life beyond Grangethorpe Road and the opportunities open to them.

Our students learn how to develop their work-life balance through weekly Well Being lessons. External speakers are welcomed into School to support students in developing the knowledge, understanding, skills and characteristics needed to thrive personally and in their relationships with others.

You could also help to shape our current and future students' experiences at school through being part of the **Alumnae Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Group**. This group has provided valuable input into the School's DEI Charter and meets online termly to discuss relevant topics and the School's approaches and solutions.

If you are interested in volunteering your time in any of these ways, please contact the Development Team on development@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk or call 0161 224 0447.



Our Values

Manchester High School for Girls nurtures...



COMPASSION

We foster a culture of respect for others, tolerance, kindness, honesty and service. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to their community, locally and globally.

INDIVIDUALITY

We are proud of our diverse community and know every pupil as an individual. We support their aspirations and encourage the development of resilience and self-confidence, so that our pupils can become tenacious, independent and happy.

INNOVATION

We empower our pupils to think for themselves and to experiment, express opinions, develop new ideas and challenge stereotypes. We encourage them to be 'risk-takers', embracing the importance of failure and viewing challenges as stepping-stones to future progress, enabling them to be self-confident agents of change.

LEARNING

We inspire a lifelong love of learning and promote the highest standards of intellectual curiosity and academic rigour among both our staff and pupils.

WELLBEING

We believe in prioritising the all-round development of our pupils and encourage the pursuit of enjoyment, fun and mindfulness; recognising that happiness is fundamental to success.

Our Vision

Our vision is excellence: to deliver a pioneering, innovative and dynamic learning experience within a compassionate and caring environment for a needs blind, diverse community where the wellbeing and happiness of every individual and the fulfilment of their potential are our priority. As the School of choice for girls in the North-West, our pupils - like those who have attended the School before them - will go on to be global citizens and courageous motivators of change.

Scan here to update
your details!



Don't miss out
on MHSG's
150th birthday
celebrations!

As you may be aware, in 2024 we will be celebrating our 150th birthday.

We have a host of events planned to bring our community together to mark this incredible milestone.

There will be plenty of opportunities to revisit the School and catch up with your former classmates at events throughout the year, as well as talks from some of our alumnae and, of course, our wonderful Archivists to find out more about the history of this pioneering institution.

We know that the MHSG community is strong, and in your time at MHSG, whether that was as a student, member of staff, or part of the wider community, you will have made lifelong friends.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) laws mean that, as a charity, we need your clear consent to stay in touch and send updates and information regarding fundraising campaigns and general activities such as mailings and events.

Unfortunately, when this came into force in May 2018, we lost contact with a number of alumnae and members of the wider School community who did not provide us with their communication consent preferences.

If you are a member of our community and received this issue of High Flyer directly from us by post or email, it means that you have already provided us with your communication consent preferences, and we are thrilled you want to keep in touch!

We need you to pass it on!

Manchester High School for Girls is nothing without its alumnae and the wider school community, and we would like to reconnect with as people as possible so that nobody misses out on being a part of such an exciting and significant anniversary.

Make sure your MHSG friends are still in contact with us – if they haven't received this directly, it is likely we don't have up-to-date contact details and preferences for them, so please encourage them to update them online.

Please also let us know if you have moved house, your contact details have changed or if you want to update your contact preferences.

www.manchesterhigh.co.uk/alumnae/keeping-in-touch

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