



7th October 2016

Name &amp; Tutor Group:

## Headlines by Rachel McGowan

### Government Education Policy

In this edition of Plashet Post I have included a letter that Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of Newham and Councillor Quintin Peppiatt sent to Teresa May, Prime Minister, recently. It sets out their concerns regarding Government Education Policy. The Government's recent green paper proposes to reintroduce selection in secondary schools. This risks undermining the work I and all staff at Plashet as well as other Newham Schools do to improve education and life chances of Newham children. Given the importance of these issues I felt it important to share with you. Please do take the time to read it.

### GCSE Examinations Changes

Secondary education faces some major changes over the next four years and I wish to make all students and families aware of these.

Many students and families will know that **GCSE** stands for **General Certificate of Secondary Education** and comprises a course that culminates in a series of summer examinations. For our students these will take place in May and June in the following years:

Year 11	2017
Year 10	2018
Year 9	2019
Year 8	2020
Year 7	2021

At Plashet students are required to study 'core' subjects. These are English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science, a language, RE and either History or Geography. These are then supplemented by their own choice of two subjects. Please note that some students have a more personalised curriculum and this will have been discussed with their family.

GCSEs are part of the National Qualifications Framework and at the end of the two-year course; candidates receive a grade for each subject upon which they have been examined. Last year GCSE grades were from highest to lowest: *A\*, A, B, C, D, E, F* and *G*.

From the summer of **2017** new **reformed GCSE** examinations are being bought it. Key structural features of the new GCSEs, include a **numbered grading scale**. This system uses the numbers 1–9 in order to identify their levels of performance. **9** is regarded as the **top level** and **1** the **lowest**. Please see the diagram for how the new numbered system relates to the old lettered grading system.

The Government's definition of a GCSE '**good pass**' for school accountability purposes (currently a **C**) is changing to bring it into line with standards in other high-performing countries and to keep pace with employers' and universities' demands. It will be set at grade **5**. Grade 5 will be awarded to around the top third of pupils gaining the equivalent of a grade C and bottom third of a grade B. The new 'good pass' will be **harder to achieve** than the current grade C and we therefore expect the number of pupils achieving a 'good pass' to be initially lower than currently.

# New GCSE Grading Structure



NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE	CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

**GOOD PASS (DfE)**  
5 and above = top of C and above

**AWARDING**  
4 and above = bottom of C and above

**Content** – GCSEs are being reformed to make them more rigorous. They will still be suitable for young people of all abilities, but syllabuses will include more challenging and knowledge-based content and exams will be changed so that exam boards can identify and reward the highest performers.

**Linear GCSEs:** all assessments and examinations are now taken at the end of the course in the summer.

**Assessment by external exam:** this will be the only method of assessment, with the removal of assessments such as coursework.

New reformed GCSEs will affect different year groups in different ways as follows:

Year 11	2017	New English Language, English Literature & Maths + all other subjects old legacy examinations.
Year 10	2018	All new above + new Art, Biology, Chemistry, Combined Science, Drama, Food, French, Geography, History, Music, PE, Physics, RE + everything else old legacy GCSEs.
Year 9	2019	All new above + new Bengali, Business, Design and technology and Urdu. Therefore, all new GCSEs by this point.
Year 8	2020	All new
Year 7	2021	All new

## Visit to the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge University

On the 21<sup>st</sup> September, 9 Year 11 Plashet girls were invited to the Physics at Work Exhibition at the Cavendish Laboratory of Cambridge University. The girls travelled by tube from East Ham to Redbridge Station and then by coach to the University with Seven Kings Secondary School; Walthamstow Secondary School and Eastbury Community School.

In order to explore their communication skills, the students from all the four East London schools were split into groups upon arriving and after eating lunch then went on to complete their exhibition visits. There were a total of 14 exhibitions, wherein which each group were shown 5. We'd learnt about electrical polymers and how they are made and used; the formation of a black hole (a star exploding, thereby causing a singularity) and how when two stars orbit each other and as a consequence play with time and space. The higher the ripple, the more space expands and the slower time gets; whilst, meanwhile on the lower end of the ripple, space shortens, and time quickens. Rather extraordinarily interesting for most minds, to be frank.

Other exhibitions included practicals for example the Rolls Royce Exhibition which taught us that the company create power. The fact that they are proud of every motor they make means that they plaster their logo on each of them. We were shown how planes stay upright in the air via their wing position and in order to make us feel a part of it, they asked the students to create their own paper planes and modify them accordingly. Those who had been present in this exhibition were given a goody bag, explaining the physics behind motors and were given a poster of the world's most efficient motor, their *Trent XWB* model. We then had a break where the students were given a drink and a chocolate, after which we continued our excursion.

Other exhibitions were on the making of polymers and how they are used in the everyday world, for example, plastics. There was another exhibition that was slightly Geography based and included how Scientists used seismometers for seismic activity notifications. Alongside these, there were



others that included experiments revolving around liquid nitrogen and how it's used in various ways for example in medicine to remove unwanted skin, and on computers to cool them down, even in the cooking industry in the production of ice cream!

Each session every group had visited lasted about 30 minutes and each were informative as well as interesting. The actual aim of the whole trip was to encourage and promote Physics for young people. I can gladly say that for most of these students, the workshop was incredibly influential and some are in fact considering an A-level course in the subject.

For students who are considering or are beginning to consider taking Physics as a higher course of education, we would encourage it, and I would like to point out that the course does open many more doors than most subjects. Now, that's not to say, go for it, no matter what... but just, *consider* it. It might be one of the best subjects you'll take.

**Bushra Patel 11N**

# Letter from Sir Robin Wales & Quintin Peppiatt



The Rt Hon Ms Theresa May  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AA

19 September 2016  
REF: MAY 25684/PE

Dear Ms May

When you took office this summer, you spoke of the “burning injustices” in modern Britain. It is those same injustices that motivate me in Newham, one of the most deprived communities in the country. I now write to express my grave concern that your Government’s education policies will entrench disadvantage and set back the life chances of Newham’s children.

## Grammar schools

Following the release of your green paper “Schools that work for everyone” last week, I must now place on record my vehement opposition to selective secondary schools. I can scarcely believe it is necessary to do so in 2016.

This is not the place to pick apart the evidence on grammar schools, but the key statistics are stark: poorer children are less likely to attend grammar schools in the first place, they benefit less when they do attend them, and they suffer most when they are left behind.

Your green paper claims to have resolved this problem by introducing quotas for deprived children. In other words, you are offering social mobility for the lucky few and “burning injustice” for the rest of my residents. However you dress it up, you will still be branding children a failure at aged 11: you cannot have a grammar school system without also bringing back secondary moderns and placing a cap on children’s aspirations.

We believe every child in Newham should have the opportunities available to those in leafier boroughs, not just those who pass a test aged 11. Rather than divide our children into winners and losers, our approach is to unite our residents in solidarity. We offer one-to-one reading tuition for children who fall behind, universal primary free school meals, and a free instrument and music tuition for every pupil. As a result, we are now exceeding the national average attainment at all age groups – an astonishing achievement for one of the most deprived boroughs in the country.

The outgoing OFSTED Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshsaw, praised Newham Council’s leadership for helping to drive up standards. Thanks to the hard work of head teachers, teachers and other staff, parents, and – of course – the students themselves, Newham’s exam results improve with every passing year. In the last year for which national data is available, 55 per cent of disadvantaged children in

a place where people choose to  
**live, work & stay**

London Borough of Newham  
Newham Dockside  
1000 Dockside Road  
London E16 2QU

T +44 (0) 20 8430 2000  
W [www.newham.gov.uk](http://www.newham.gov.uk)

Newham received five good GCSEs including English and Maths, compared with 37 per cent across England. More than 90 per cent of Newham pupils attend schools rated as Good or Outstanding.

As commentators from across the political spectrum have noted, results like these flow from high expectations, world class teaching, and evidence-led practice – not outdated structures. The reality is that Newham does not need grammar schools, we do not want them, and as long as I am the Mayor I will do everything in my power to oppose them.

### **School funding**

This March, the Government launched a consultation on a so-called fair funding formula for schools. This follows years of private lobbying by the F40 group of affluent local authorities. Overall, F40's plan would see children in the 30 most deprived local authority areas in the country face a net loss of £245million, while the 30 least deprived areas gain £218million. Newham would lose more than £30million. Many of your colleagues have endorsed this affront to social mobility.

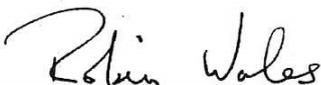
The principles set out in March did little to reassure parents in deprived communities that the formula will be fair for all – and not just those in affluent areas who shout the loudest and have privileged access. Indeed, the document proposed excluding the "pupil mobility" factor which recognises the proven impact of population churn on educational attainment in inner city communities like Newham.

In July, I wrote to the Secretary of State for Education (to whom I am copying this letter) imploring her to add a new, firm principle to the formula: that it will make no school in a deprived area worse off than previously. I am yet to receive a response from the Secretary of State, and I ask that you impress upon her the importance of this principle.

The transformation of schools in London and other cities has been one of the most remarkable social accomplishments of the last thirty years, I urge you not to put those achievements and the futures of Newham's children in jeopardy.

Finally, I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail with you or the Secretary of State and look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely



**Sir Robin Wales**  
**Mayor of Newham**  
**E: [Robin.wales@newham.gov.uk](mailto:Robin.wales@newham.gov.uk)**  
**CC SOS**

## Student Leadership 2016 - 2017

As you are aware, we have an exceptionally proactive group of young women leading student voice at Plashet School. I would like to introduce a selection of the Student Leadership Team and Prefect Coordinators who will be in Post for 2016-2017.



"Hello, my name is **Zainab Naqvi, 11A**. During the past 4 years at Plashet I have undertaken a variety of different positions of responsibility within the school. I believe that my experiences in those roles enable me to perform my duties and responsibilities as Head Girl successfully. I, alongside the student body, aim to improve our school to ensure that we all develop into successful young ladies. My main aim is to continue the previous legacy of the Student Leadership Team and make sure that every student at Plashet is involved in making vital decisions our school. I will be focused on improving the lunch system and hope to set up revision sessions for students. I would like to encourage all pupils at Plashet to provide us with their ideas and concerns so that the team and I can work with them to improve our school environment. I want to ensure that all pupils have a good learning experience and attain amazing results, as well as take part in activities to make them a well-rounded individual."



"My name is **Zainab Ajao, 11E** and I am a Deputy Head Girl. Over the course of the 4 years that I have spent as a student in Plashet, the skills I have gained are immense. As an ambitious and independent young woman, I have used the school's facilities to the fullest. A major aim for the next year is to encourage students from the younger years to take part in extra curricular activities. Yes, success in academic subjects is important, but you can gain invaluable skills from extra curricular

activities which will mean you become an all round individual - something that any employer will want."

"Hello, my name is **Tahsin Arabi 11N** and I am a Deputy Head Girl. As a member of the Student Leadership Team, I aim to do three things along with my team; to minimise the segregation due to age differences within the school between students; to make lunchtime a more pleasant experience and to raise the profile of female empowerment within our school. The last point is particularly important to me and formed the basis of my application in June 2015. I would like to promote female empowerment, as I

believe that striving to strengthen confidence and celebrating female achievement is vital in order for us to succeed in a world that is not always equal."

"Hello, my name is **Katelyn Dharmajan 11H**. As an Assistant Head Girl, I line manage a team of Prefects and Prefect Coordinators, each belonging to the English, Languages or Library departments. Alongside the Year 7 Coordinator, I help to line manage Year 7 Pastoral Prefects. My main aim for the duration of my role is to begin a mentoring scheme. This is for members of the younger years to



be taught by older students who may be doing a GCSE in the subject they are experiencing difficulty in. I believe this would be mutually beneficial as the mentee will be able to improve, while the mentor will have an opportunity to show they fully understand their work by being able to pass the knowledge forward. I believe this would make for improved cohesion between year groups, so that Plashet is a community, undivided by years or forms."

"Hello, my name is **Saira Ahmed 11P** and I am the English Prefect Coordinator. My role includes trying to strengthen all that the English Department offers students. This will include being involved in extra-curricular clubs for younger years where they can stretch their knowledge of the English Language by expanding their reading to a wider range of texts. One of several targets that was set out for this year was to improve and update the displays in English classes and hallways to keep up with the changing curriculum, present students' recent work and create a enjoyable and presentable learning environment."

"Hello, my name is **Anika Khadra 11L** and as the Maths Prefect Coordinator, I aim to make Maths a subject that is enjoyed by a variety of students. I plan to run Maths clubs with the support of Maths Prefects and regular puzzles and challenges to get everyone thinking!"

"Hello, our names are **Maisha Alam 11A** and **Afnaan Firthous 11E** and we are Science Prefect Coordinators. Our roles will include offering assistance to the younger years in Science and promoting the work of the fabulous Science Department. We want to raise the profile of Science as a possible career path for the young women who attend Plashet."

"Hello, my name is **Zahra Kunchu Mohamed 11L** and I am one of the Language Prefect Coordinators. I have some responsibility for improving the experience of students within our department and to support students' learning and participation. The Languages team would like to see more students being excited and eager to expand their knowledge of languages."

"Hello, our names are **Saffa Iftikhar 11E**, and **Anum Israr 11L** and we are Library Coordinators. We both wish to promote reading across the school and to encourage students of all ages to access our excellent facilities available in both the North and South libraries. We intend to support all events and hope to see everyone participating fully throughout the next academic year."

"Hello, we are **Mahveen Alan 11S**, **Seema Bosor 11E** and **Khadijah Rouf 11N**, the Textiles, Home Economics and Graphics Prefect Coordinators. We all want to promote our various subjects and encourage students to engage in lessons and extra curricular activities. We think that there is a wealth of opportunities available from studying Design and Technology subjects at GCSE level, so we want to ensure students experience all that Technology has to offer."

"Hello, my name is **Tahmina Rahman 11E** and I am the ICT and Business Studies Prefect Coordinator. I want to raise the profile of women in ICT as I thoroughly enjoyed my work experience at a software testing company, but noted that women were not represented. I'll raise the profile of both subjects where possible and I hope to support Year 8 and Year 9 students considering selecting either subject as best as I can."

"Hello, my name is **Fatima Razzaq 11T** and I am the Year 9 Prefect Coordinator. My intention is to utilize my Pastoral Prefect team to ensure that Year 9 receives as much support as we can offer. We will be working with 9P through to 9N as they move through the year and make their guided choices around GCSE study."

**Miss Sanderson**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

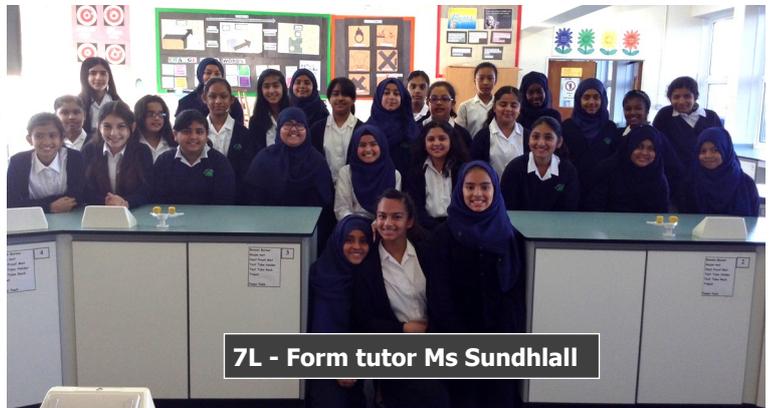
# Our new Year 7 Students

September saw the intake of the new Y7s. As they filed in one by one a sea of mixed emotions was upon their faces. Some were excited, nervous, curious but all were ready to begin the next chapter of their lives. I hope that their journey through Plashet is a positive and successful one!

## Ms Ali, Year 7 Co-ordinator

My transition to Plashet went really smoothly. At the beginning I was really worried because I thought I would get lost and not make any friends, but luckily the lovely teachers and the prefects helped every student settle in. Everyone is really friendly and we aren't put under any pressure to do things we aren't confident in doing. Personally, I think everyone found the transition really easy and so far, we are having a great time here at Plashet School.

## Safa Patel 7L



7L - Form tutor Ms Sundhlall



7S - Form tutor Ms Hogan

The transition from year 6 to year 7 was huge for me. I needed to learn a lot of things like settling into a new environment and a new community. My Primary School taught me many things, which have helped me a lot when I came here.

## Jiny Joy 7A

After my first 4 weeks at Plashet I feel like I have stepped out of my comfort zone and became more confident in myself. I feel more grown up and challenged. I have settled in really well and I am enjoying Plashet a lot. I can't wait to see what's in store next!

## Y7 Student



7G - Form tutor Miss Aigbe



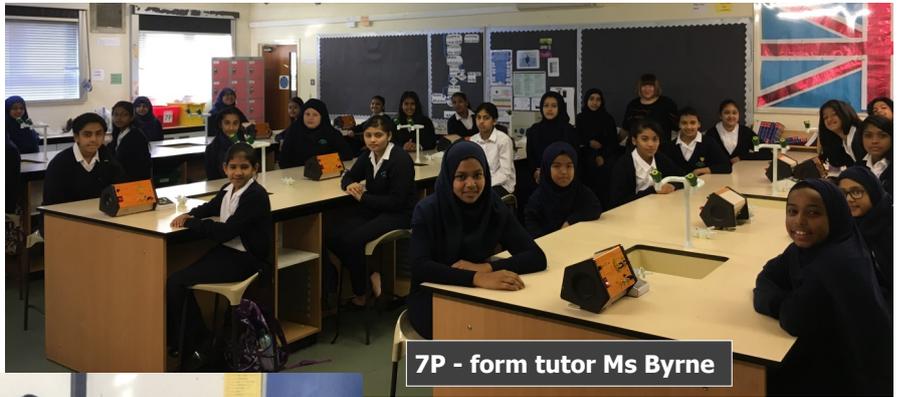
7N - form tutor Ms Taninki

Settling into Plashet started out quite tough but now I am an expert in certain subjects and I am extremely illuminated that I am Form Captain. I have made lots of new friends. My head teacher is the best and I am really glad I have an awesome form teacher. I love Plashet School!

## 7T Student

I packed my bag for the first day to join the Plashet Community. I was nervous but my friends helped me settle in. I got used to Plashet and I am having a great experience. I have made so many new friends, I've met so many nice teachers and I feel more independent now.

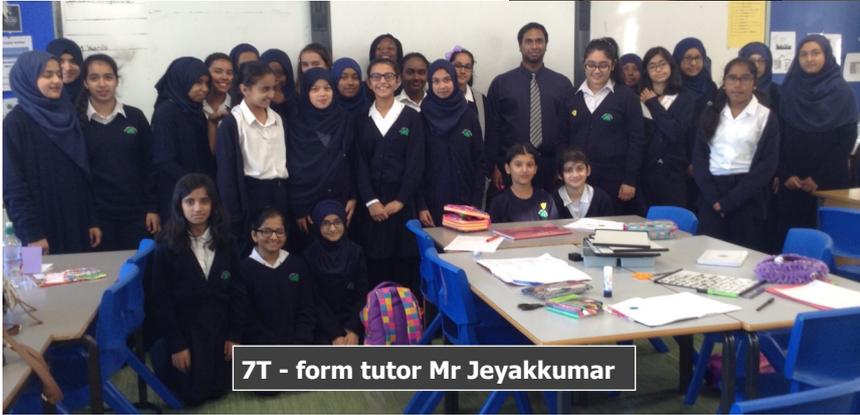
**Jathavi Thayalapavan 7L**



**7P - form tutor Ms Byrne**

In my opinion I think I have settled in well. I made a lot of friends; I have found my way around the school, and finally, know where my classes are. I feel happy to be a student rep, because I have a big job, and I can add a smile to people's faces. Plashet is now a family home!

**Sumaria 7S**



**7T - form tutor Mr Jeyakkumar**

My first month in Plashet has been amazing. I enjoyed all the lessons so far and all the opportunities the school has to offer. I enjoy break times and lunchtimes as I get to spend time with my friends.

**Aaliyah 7H**



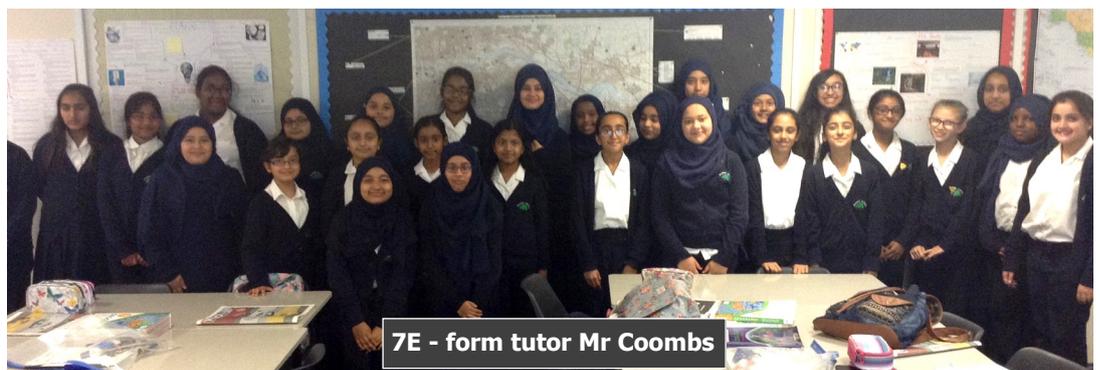
**7H - form tutor Ms Forshaw**

So far, my first month in Plashet has been amazing. All the teachers are kind and helpful. It has been hard trying to figure out my classrooms, but I think I have got the hang of it. In my first year, I have become a form rep and I'm proud of myself.

**Najah Kunchu Mohamed 7H**



**7A—form tutor Ms Roche**



**7E - form tutor Mr Coombs**

## Jack Petchey Awards

On Monday 19th September our 9 Jack Petchey Award winners celebrated with other winners from Newham at the Cineworld Cinema in the O2. Whilst it wasn't quite in the borough, the venue was certainly big enough to host all the winners and their families.

Jerin Karim formally of 11G, Zainab Naqvi 11A, Juma Rahman 11L, Ubeydah Shah 11T, Aidan Abasov 10N, Absana Yasmin 10P, Ebony Brown 9T, Arpita Chowdhury 9H and Monica Argyo 8G all represented themselves and our school brilliantly. They have all had an exceptionally productive year and are wonderful ambassadors for the Jack Petchey Award scheme, and most importantly, Plashet School.



Joining the nine student winners was Ms English, our Leader Award recipient for 201-16. Ms English has also had a highly successful year with several high profile wins for her STEM projects, so we want to congratulate her for everything she has achieved over the past year.

**Miss Sanderson**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

## Visit to see The Woman In Black



60 year 11 GCSE drama students travelled to the glitz and glamour of London's West End for a special theatre visit. Armed with notebooks and pens, they set out into the balmy September weather to face the unknown and the mystery that is 'The Woman in Black'.

With the help of Ms Dawson, Ms Ali, Mr Wilson, Mrs Lawlor, Ms Saunderson and Ms Leming, they bravely entered the old Victorian building in Covent Garden, the very haunted 'Fortune Theatre'.

The play is adapted from the novel by Susan Hill

and its theatre form creates the impression that even the audience may be paid a visit by the lady herself. With jump scares, false frights and dark and moody lighting, the students were plunged into the story of Arthur Kipps and his visit to Eel Marsh house. Secrets were shared and stories told. The action is beautifully played out by 2 actors skilfully portraying a number of roles. The set is minimal and everything is used to tell the story – a woven basket becomes a bed, a pony and trap, a train and a desk. We hear the myth of the Woman in Black and the terrifying way Arthur is turned from ghost sceptic to reluctant believer.

Scariest still the students now have to write a 2000 word review of the show, which judging by their enthusiastic responses, shouldn't be too hard!



**Ms Dawson**  
**Curriculum Leader, Drama**

## Poetry Success for Students

I am delighted to announce that two Plaset Students have been successful in the prestigious 2016 Betjeman Poetry Prize, judged by Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy.

**Raeesah Abdul-Ahad** and **Tahsin Rahman** were among 50 poets out of thousands of entries from around the country to have had their poems accepted for inclusion in a special volume of poetry. This is wonderful news, and I hope you will all join me in congratulating Raeesah and Tahsin on their fantastic achievement. Here are there award-winning poems:

### **The Unknown Land**

by Raeesah Abdul-Ahad

*When I have a moment's peace, when I  
am trapped or torn,  
I look to you for guidance.  
Deep within me, my shining bright beacon  
of light,  
I come to you for comfort, for peace.  
You're where I feel free,  
A bird gliding through nothingness.  
You're where my imagination quenches its  
thirst,  
Where my fantasies run wild, No rules or  
regulations.  
My home,  
My place that I own.*

*I retreat to you, my fortress of solitude.  
Your silence is my permission to build my  
barricades,  
To block out the sound And plunge into  
the depths within me.  
Memories fly by, happy and sad.  
Emotions sit there waiting to be released,  
All waiting for their time to come  
In my home,  
My place that I own.*

*You are my mind, Creating dreams and  
nightmares.  
You are where my common sense Is  
overruled by my temper.  
You are my soul,  
There but not there,  
Existing but not existing,  
Unable to be found and proven  
But believed and influential.  
I know you are my home,  
My place that I own.*

### **My House**

by Tahsin Rahman

*School kids with a box of KFC in  
hand  
The aroma of hot wings and chips in  
the air  
Mixed with tobacco and alcohol  
Broken glass, shattered on the floor  
Sounds busting out of cars  
Music up, windows down  
Blaring sirens  
People under arrest  
Everyone rushing out their houses  
Peeping out the windows  
Uploading the scene on Snapchat  
Middle of it all – There's my house.*

145

*Jet black door  
A square-eyed, spoiled little brat  
hogging the telly  
Doing the dishes or sweeping the  
floors  
Screaming or shouting –  
That's my mum  
And the ghost called Samia  
Hovering from the car  
To the laptop,  
That's my sister.  
The other sister  
In the world of her phone  
But I run past the rainbow rooms  
To the pot of gold The arms of my  
hero,  
My dad.*

## Visit to the theatre to watch Matilda

On the 28<sup>th</sup> October, the Music Department took 30 Year 8 and Year 9 girls to see the excellent Matilda musical in the Cambridge Theatre. When we got to the theatre, we realised we had the best seats in the house – right at the front!

The story is based on the Roald Dahl book and had all the characters we know and love. Matilda was wonderful as the miracle girl who has brains and telekinetic powers which she uses to outwit the rotten grown-ups. Mr Wormwood was perfectly greasy and repellent, and Miss Trunchbull was terrifying as she launched children into space via their pig tails!



Everyone had a great time singing along and watching in astonishment as the action unfolded, and we especially enjoyed the finale where confetti rained down on us all.

It was a magical afternoon of joy and wonder. As Matilda would say: 'You could have heard a fly burp.'

**Mr B Wong**  
**Music Teacher**

## Library Corner

Students in the age of digital screens often face significant reading challenges. A library's large print collection can be instrumental in helping them change their habits for the better.

The key to *engaging reluctant teen readers* is finding books that are both appealing and accessible. Here are some books that cover topics of high interest to teens, but are written at lower reading levels.

### "Seven the Series," by seven different authors

*Seven* is a collection of seven books about seven teenage boys whose grandfather dies and leaves them a mysterious note. Each book follows one cousin as he attempts to complete the tasks outlined in their grandfather's will. These books are action-packed, making them a great choice for reluctant teen readers. Another big selling point for this hi-lo series from Orca Book Publishers is that each book is written by a different author. The books have different writing styles and can be read in any order.

**Shampa Sen**

