



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## STUDENT VOICES



### OCTOBER EDITION

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**FEATURING NEW SECTIONS, CHALLENGES,  
ARTICLES AND MORE!**



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Hello, I hope you've all had a great half term! Now before you rush through this next edition, I would like to mention a few things.

Firstly, I want to say a big thank you to all of you who not only read last month's edition but also responded to the survey. Your feedback was really helpful so please respond to this month's one as well. Next, I would like to thank everyone who was involved in this month's edition of the Spotlight. This month, in addition to our writers we now have our very own Spotlight artists who will be providing us with amazing drawings for you.

Now as usual, I still need more writers and photographers so please, please email me if you want to get involved and show up to one of our meetings on a Thursday lunchtime in T2. It would be amazing if you could come and help the Spotlight team as it seems our school does so much that we simply can't keep up! We need passionate writers, photographers and artists who want to show their work to the school (even if it is anonymously).

On top of that you get a badge which has been designed by other students to add to your blazer.

Next, you may notice that the layout has not changed and that is simply because when we asked all of you as our readers what your thoughts were on it majority of you told us that you liked the new layout which unfortunately means that some of you are going to have to deal with this new layout for at least a bit longer until we can come up with something even better!

Finally, I hope that you all have a well deserved break during the holidays and come back to school feeling reenergised and ready to take on the next half term. I hope you all enjoy this edition and I can't wait to see your feedback on the survey.

As always I hope you enjoy this incredible new edition of the Sharples Spotlight and if you like what you see and want to join our team then be sure to send me an email at: [22mangeraa@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:22mangeraa@sharplesschool.co.uk) Happy reading!

*BY AMAARA MANGERA - EDITOR*



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## Y10 GCSE CITIZENSHIP TRIP

BY FATIMA ISMAIL

On Tuesday the 21st of October, a group of Year 10 pupils went to visit the People's History Museum in Salford, Manchester as part of their Citizenship GCSE course. The PHM is the national museum of democracy and it highlights the story of how protest and speaking out had shaped Britain to how it is today. We were given a guided tour of some of the main events in history which contributed greatly to how the law is divided and operated in the UK, including the suffragette movement and the protests for equal rights for immigrants in the 20th Century.

We learnt about how people in the past had suffered for what they believed in, who they were, or where they came from and we were given an insight into how many people, despite their efforts, had not always succeeded in what they were trying to gain at the time, but had heavily influenced future decisions which would have concerned them and others who had similar beliefs. There were many collections and historical documents which exhibited real life objects that would have been used in the past in protests and the development of democracy to how it is today.

After the tour, we explored the museum on our own, and we were able to experiment with the different activities and models which showed us how the development of Britain would have affected the people of that time. These included life-sized representations of how things worked in the past, and interactive activities like microscopes and a model of the first printing press.

The trip was very enjoyable and the things we had learnt will greatly contribute to our current Citizenship GCSE course and will make lessons more understandable and interesting as we will be able to link back our knowledge to real life objects and visual representations.

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## Riddle me this and riddle me that:

This month we thought that we should give Sharples students a new challenge: riddles! The answers to the following riddles are in the survey.

**It takes 5 machines 5 minutes to make**

**5 bracelets.**

How long will it take for 100 machines to make 100 bracelets?

**A clock in a shop window fell and broke.**

When it fell the hour hand broke off and pointed straight up.

The minute hand was stuck pointing at six.

The shop owner said the clock stopped at exactly the right time.

What time did it stop?

**Poor people have it.**

Rich people need it.

If you eat it you will die.

What is it?

**There is a lake.**

There is a patch of lily pads in the lake.

Each day the number of lily pads double.

If it takes 48 days for the whole lake to be covered in lily pads, how long will it take for half of the lake to be covered?



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## THE SPOTLIGHT IS ON MR POOLE!

When Mr. Poole was a student at Sharples School from 1996 to 2001, things were quite different! The building looked quite different back then, with two canteens, one of which was famous for selling lots of junk food. Students wore black uniforms with only red ties—no color choices or gold ties like today. Back then, there were no subject ambassadors or badges, and students didn't need to apply for the ties. School life had no year coordinators or additional support systems. Instead, students had only 7 classes each year. The France trip lasted a thrilling two weeks, and they didn't have roles like head boy or head girl. The school colors were darker, and PE lessons were not the same. They also didn't have ALS or PSHE courses. Instead, in Year 7, students had German lessons but no Computing classes, which were replaced by typing lessons.

Mr. Poole's journey into the working world began with a variety of jobs that taught him valuable lessons about responsibility and hard work. As a youngster, he started with a classic paper round, delivering newspapers in his neighborhood while catching the early morning sun. One of his more memorable roles was working at a McDonald's drive-through, where he mastered the art of speedy service and cheerful customer interactions. Later, he took on the role of a manager at Carpet Right, gaining valuable leadership skills and business insights. His willingness to try different types of work led him to paint a factory, adding a splash of color to his work history. Finally, Mr. Poole worked with United Utilities, which honed his problem-solving skills and deepened his understanding of the utility sector. These experiences not only diversified his skillset but also shaped him into the dedicated and resourceful individual he is today.

Mr. Poole wears many hats, both as an educator and as a leader. Once an English teacher with a knack for bringing literature to life, he is now the head of a dynamic team, steering the educational journey of many students. Known affectionately as an "angelic troublemaker," Mr. Poole brings a unique blend of creativity and a dash of mischief to his classes, keeping students engaged and eager to learn. His passion for working with children is evident in the way he connects with students, helping to cultivate a positive and inspiring learning environment. Now, as the head of PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic education), Mr. Poole is committed to guiding students through important life skills, ensuring they're prepared for the challenges and opportunities beyond the classroom. His dedication to education makes him a beloved and influential figure in the school community.





# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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Mr. Poole's life outside the classroom is as colorful as his teaching career. He once had the unique opportunity to appear in a Bollywood movie, though he ultimately decided not to take the part. His expertise in geography extended beyond the classroom when he contributed his vast knowledge to BBC Bitesize, writing about geography topics to help students across the country. Poole's dedication to education and advocacy led him to be featured on the news for participating in a strike, making his voice heard in support of teachers and education reform. His expertise has taken him globally, including an interview in Africa where he shared his insights and experiences. In addition to teaching, he has shown a strong commitment to humanitarian efforts—on a trip to Cuba, he participated in distributing aid, making a difference in the lives of others far and wide. These rich experiences underscore Mr. Poole's passionate and multifaceted approach to both life and education.

Mr. Poole often shares a powerful piece of wisdom with his students: to take every opportunity that comes their way and remember that each of them can make a difference. He believes in the potential of every student to impact the world positively, no matter how big or small the action. Whether it's stepping out of their comfort zones, engaging in new experiences, or simply offering a helping hand, Mr. Poole encourages students to embrace opportunities with open hearts and minds. His life, rich with diverse experiences and choices, serves as a testament to his belief in seizing opportunities and the power of change.

Mr. Poole is passionate about enhancing the educational experience by advocating for more comprehensive and enriching programs in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic education) and citizenship. He believes that dedicating more time to these subjects will allow students to explore them in greater depth, equipping them with crucial life skills and a deeper understanding of their roles in society. By expanding these programs, Mr. Poole aims to foster a well-rounded education that empowers students to become informed, responsible, and active members of their communities. His vision is to develop the curriculum in such a way that it nurtures each student's capacity for empathy, critical thinking, and civic engagement, ultimately creating a positive impact that extends beyond the school environment.

Mr. Poole possesses a remarkable ability to connect with his students, rooted in both his personal experience as a parent and his own childhood. Having kids of his own provides him with firsthand insights into the challenges and joys that young people face today. This personal connection allows him to empathize deeply with his students, understanding the dynamics of their experiences from a relatable perspective. Moreover, recalling his own youth, Mr. Poole remembers what it feels like to navigate the ups and downs of growing up. This dual perspective helps him to support his students effectively, offering guidance and encouragement as they tackle their own challenges. Mr. Poole's genuine care and understanding make him a trusted ally in the classroom.

*BY AAMIRA VALLI*



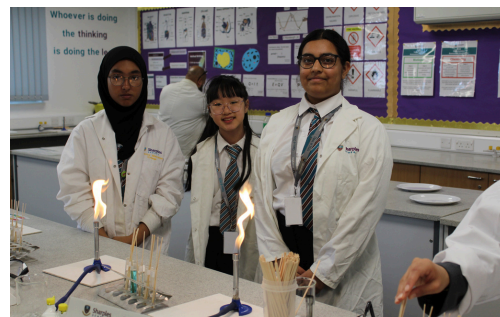
# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## OPEN EVENING

On the 25th of September from 4.00 till 7.00 Sharples High School opened its doors for its annual Open Evening, welcoming intriguing Year 6 and 5 pupils and their families to explore the school, meet staff and students, and get a sense of life at the school.

Upon arrival, guests were greeted by the Headteacher, Miss Moleyneux, who delivered a presentation in the school hall. In her talk she introduced the school's ethos of "academic ambition, personal growth and community responsibility", and highlighted recent achievements such as outstanding exam results, new facilities, and student leadership. Miss Moleyneux also highlighted our school motto 'Learn, Dream and Achieve' but also our core behaviour and value principles: courtesy, cooperation, consideration and common sense.

Following the talk, visitors were guided around the school on student-led tours. The tours offered a behind-the-scenes look at subject departments: science labs buzzing with demonstrations, a modern language classroom holding an amazing taste of Spanish food, the music suite with students performing short pieces, and the sports hall showcasing the school's multi-use games area. We also had escape rooms with many themes in maths, and make your own masterpiece in the art department.



In each department, teachers and students were available to answer questions, share work displays, and talk about what makes their subject exciting. Our school as a whole also showcased to y6 and y5 pupils, why they should pick our school and the amazing opportunities our school offers. Not only are we the top school in Bolton but we also prove it.

For many families, choosing the right secondary school is one of the most important education decisions. Open evenings provide a chance to move beyond, giving a lived sense of the school's culture, leadership and everyday life.

The evening also included refreshments in the dining hall and an informal Q&A session with teachers and current pupils. Many families stayed to chat, ask individual questions, and collect information packs.

Every single pupil on the 25th of September made our school proud and we should also thank every single one of our teachers as this night couldn't have even occurred without them. Once again we proved to Bolton why we are the best school.

*BY KAREEMAH MUSA*



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## COUNCILLOR VISIT

As leader of the Labour and Cooperative group and head of Bolton Council, Peel brings over two decades of political experience to the table. First elected in 2000, he now leads the council's majority party and serves as the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's portfolio lead for Digital City-Region. From championing digital innovation to securing national recognition for supporting the armed forces community, Peel's leadership reflects a blend of progressive vision and grounded local commitment.

### **Q: Why did you decide to enter local politics?**

Nick Peel: "When I was in school, I was interested in history- the more you look into events that have taken place over the years, the more you understand things that happened. At University, I became increasingly involved with politics."

### **Q: What are some pros and cons of your role?**

Nick Peel: "There are enjoyable moments, as well as ones where we deal with issues. People are hungry for constant and instant change"

Nick Peel mentioned how the council has to deal with hostility, especially as social media turns everyday problems into far worse things. "Online, people present their opinions as facts." Said Mr. Peel. "Now, basic facts are being challenged due to social media. Challenge what you see – don't always accept negativity."

### **Q: What is your day-to-day role?**

Nick Peel: "Every day is different. Today, I'm at Sharples, then I have a couple of meetings, then I'll meet with the director of Finance, then with a member of a mosque community to discuss issues of cohesion and community, then finally, I'll meet with the other Labor members of the council."

### **Q: Do you get paid?**

Nick Peel: "You get an allowance, about £1100 – which is much lower than the living wage, so you can't just live off of it. It's important to remember that people don't go into politics for money; they go into politics for making change."

### **Q: What is the council's budget and how is it spent?**

Nick Peel: "We receive 400 million pounds, which is passed onto schools and council services. It's a never-ending struggle; two thirds of that money goes into a small amount of people and children who require care. If you can imagine the demographics, the number of the elderly living in poor health grows year after year. Basic services, like pothole filling, have taken a cut and the whole thing needs decisive action to solve it. In reality, councils have to use a set budget whilst the government, prisons and schools don't use one, so you have to make difficult decisions."



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## **Q: As a member of the council, what are things you wished you had more power on and why?**

Nick Peel: "Definitely, absolutely. One thing I would like to have more power on is the power to take over empty buildings owned by offshore companies. Places close, and streets and town centers are left with empty shops and buildings that can't be used for something else, which is unacceptable."

## **Q: What are some of the things that the council is doing at the moment?**

Nick Peel: "Economic Growth – without economic growth, there's no money to spend on public sectors. Private investors need to invest in better public services and taxation needs reform, especially business rates. Greater Manchester has had the biggest growth in technology in Britain. This will move out if there aren't enough skills, so we make sure colleges and universities are preparing people for new jobs created and those that don't exist yet."

Mr. Peel also talked about improving the town center. "We are attempting to try and bring a population back into the town centre." explained Mr. Peel. "People shop online now more than ever – those living in the town centre would spend more money there rather than online, which would help keep shops and businesses alive."

Councilor Nick Peel's insights reveal the challenges and opportunities of leading a modern town. As Bolton continues to evolve, Councilor Peel's leadership offers a steady hand and a clear vision. Whether through regeneration or digital innovation, his focus remains on building a town that works for everyone.

*BY SAFIYA IBRAHIM*

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## **YEAR 10 RS TRIP: WHAT DID STUDENTS GAIN?**

Last Thursday (9th October), our school and the R.S Department treated some of the pupils who are studying the R.S GCSE course to a fantastic trip to visit the three iconic places of worship: 2 Liverpool Cathedrals, the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King and the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, and the Abdullah Quilliam Mosque- Each offers its own unique atmosphere, architectural wonder, and a chance to reflect on the city's rich spiritual tapestry. It was an unforgettable experience and allowed pupils to gain a greater understanding of Liturgical and Non-Liturgical worship, as well as different religious practices in both Christianity and Islam that are a requirement in the R.S Qualification. Here is a recap of our brilliant day.

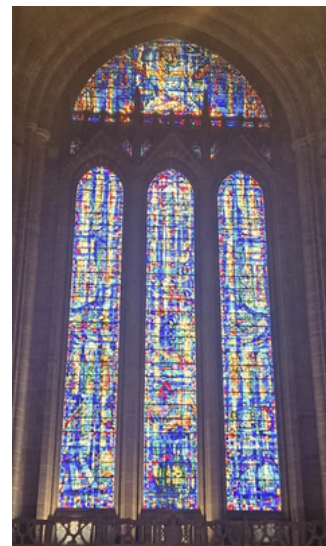
Firstly, all students going on the trip arrived at school at 8 a.m to set off on the coaches to Liverpool by 8.15. It was almost a 2 hour drive from Sharples to the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, but the coach was really comfortable, allowing the journey to go smoothly and fast. Liverpool is a city rich in culture, music, and maritime history- but tucked within its heart are sacred spaces that tell a deeper, more historical story.





# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

Once we arrived in Liverpool, our journey began at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, a truly awe-inspiring structure. It was 10 a.m and everybody was very excited to get off the coach and finally see the Cathedral. Designed by a young Giles Gilbert Scott in 1903, construction began in 1904 and wasn't completed until 1978- making it one of the longest building projects in British history. Today, it's the largest cathedral in Britain and the fifth-largest in the world. From the outside, its red sandstone towers over the city, crowned by the highest and heaviest peal of bells anywhere on Earth. Gothic arches, immense towers, and intricate carvings give it a timeless majesty. Step inside, and you're greeted with a sense of space and serenity. The stunning stained glass windows, and the immense organ (one of the world's largest) are simply breathtaking. Even if you're not religious, you can't help but feel moved by its beauty.



Just a short walk along Hope Street brings you to Liverpool's second great cathedral- though this one looks completely different. The Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King is the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool. After multiple failed design attempts in the early 20th century, the current structure- designed by Sir Frederick Gibberd- was finally completed in 1967. With its circular, tent-like shape and iconic crown spire, it's unlike any other cathedral in the world- it is absolutely and utterly stunning. Inside, you're surrounded by radiant, rainbow-hued stained glass that bathes the entire space in colored light. The altar sits in the center, with pews circling around it, creating an inclusive, communal feel. The Lutyens Crypt beneath the cathedral- a hauntingly beautiful space left over from an earlier, unrealized design- is a hidden gem worth exploring.

Our final destination ended with something that was truly unique. Tucked away on Brougham Terrace near the city centre lies the Abdullah Quilliam Mosque- the first ever mosque in the UK. Established in 1887 by William Henry Quilliam, a Liverpool-born solicitor who converted to Islam and took the name Abdullah, this mosque was once the heart of a thriving Muslim community. It also housed an Islamic centre and even a printing press that produced religious publications distributed across the world. The building blends quietly into the row of Georgian houses, but behind the modest exterior lies a space rich in significance. Inside, restoration efforts have brought new life to the prayer rooms, lecture halls, and Quilliam's original library. The decor is modest compared to the cathedrals, but there's an undeniable sense of history and peace that fills the air. Knowing you're standing in the birthplace of British Islam gives the visit a powerful sense of meaning.





# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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What makes this route so special is not just the buildings themselves, but how close they are to each other- physically and spiritually. Walking from one site to the next, we crossed through some of Liverpool's most charming streets, past theatres, cafes, and parks. The journey is reflective and enriching, a reminder of how diverse traditions can coexist in harmony.



After a morning filled with wonder, history, and thought-provoking stories, there's no better way to wrap up the trip than with a fun and relaxing lunch at Archie's Burgers and Shakes. Located right in the heart of Liverpool's city centre, Archie's is bold, colourful, and bursting with energy- just like the city itself. With its bright pink interiors, funky decor, and buzzing atmosphere, it's a hit with students and teachers alike. The menu is packed with mouth-watering comfort food: juicy smash burgers, crispy chicken wraps, seasoned curly fries, and their famous milkshakes in flavours like Biscoff, Oreo, and strawberry cheesecake. For those with dietary needs, there are halal, vegetarian, and vegan options available too, making it an inclusive stop for all. It was more than just a meal- it was a chance to sit down together, share favourite moments from the trip, and enjoy a modern taste of Liverpool's youthful, multicultural vibe before heading back.

The R.S trip wasn't just a sightseeing trip- it was an experience that opens minds, connects people, and sparks meaningful conversations. Whether you're planning a family day out or simply looking for something different to do in Liverpool, this journey through the city's most sacred and historic spaces is something everyone should try at least once. It's a day that combines learning with exploration, reflection with adventure, and culture with fun. Young or old, religious or not, everyone can take away something valuable- from the soaring heights of the Anglican Cathedral to the rainbow light of the Metropolitan, and the quiet history of Britain's very first mosque. So whether you're looking to explore new places, bond with others, or just see your city in a different light- this is the trip for you.

*BY AAMEINA MAROTHI*

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## September edition, best article:

Last month, in our Spotlight survey I asked you all which article was the best and the results are in...

**The Year 7 Freshers fair!**

Well done to our amazing writer, Safiyyah Patel!!!



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY:

## I hope that doesn't come up!

Revision is all about finding out what works for you so here are a few ideas to up your study game:

### 1. Active Recall

Active recall involves testing yourself on information rather than simply rereading notes. For example, after studying a topic, close your notes and try to write down or explain what you remember. Flashcards or self-quizzing apps can also be used to practise recalling key facts and concepts. This method strengthens long-term memory and improves your ability to retrieve information during exams.

### 2. Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a visual technique that helps organise ideas and show connections between them. To start by writing the main topic in the centre of a page then create branches for subtopics and supporting details. Using colour and clear structure can make difficult information easier to understand and remember. Mind maps are useful for subjects that require linking ideas, such as history or science.

### 3. The Pomodoro Technique

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management strategy designed to maintain focus and prevent exhaustion mostly for those who struggle to concentrate for long periods of time. Work for 25 minutes on a single task before taking a 5 minute break. After four sessions of those 25 minutes, revision takes a longer break of 15 to 30 minutes. This technique encourages consistent concentration while allowing time for rest and reflection.

Just remember that this isn't it. You still have to do revision over a long period of time for it to be most effective but either way this takes you one step closer to becoming a grade 9 student!

*BY SAFA DAKRI*

## SHARPLES RADIO

This year in Sharples we are introducing a new form of communication around the school! This being the tannoy system. A way for Ms Molyneux to start singing to the students! Jokes aside, it's a great way to broadcast messages and important information to others, better than emails sat in your inbox for weeks! Either way, Ms Molyneux and gold tie Zak Stuart will be forming a team of passionate students to take on the role of entertainment to the school. We really hope you guys enjoy this and once in action, any feedback would be helpful! Thank you for reading!

*BY ASNA PATEL*

## JOKES COLUMN:

Knock, Knock. Who's there? Wherefore means. Wherefore means who? No, "wherefore" means "why.- Miss Patel (English)

What's the best thing about Switzerland? The flag is a big plus - Rufus 7P4

How does the man on the moon cut his hair? Eclipse it - Mary Humphreys 8S5

What's the difference between a teacher and a train?

The teacher says spit your gum but the train says choo choo chew.- M Dasu Y7

Knock, Knock. Who's there? To. To who. No, to whom- Mr Fowlds





# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## BLACKHISTORYMONTH:

Let's remember the Black Heroes who have shaped our future today!

Every October, people across the globe celebrate Black History Month— a time to recognise the achievements, struggles, and lasting impact of Black people throughout history.

The idea for Black History Month began nearly a century ago, with Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a historian who wanted to make sure Black stories were included in history. What started as a week of learning and celebration in the United States grew into a full month and later spread to the UK by Akyaaba Addai-Sebo, where it is celebrated each October to honour the many contributions Black people have made to society.

In the UK, Black History Month is celebrated in October because it marks the beginning of the academic year — a time when schools and communities can come together to learn and reflect. The month also aligns with the traditional African harvest season, symbolizing a time of renewal, growth, and appreciation for cultural heritage. This year's theme for Black History Month is 'Standing firm in power and pride', it honours the strength, resilience, and dignity of Black communities, encouraging everyone to celebrate heritage and identity with confidence. The theme invites students, teachers, and communities to stand together proudly while continuing the journey toward equality and unity.

Throughout the month, schools and communities highlight important figures, events and achievements. It's also a time to learn about leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Rosa Parks, whose dreams of equality inspired millions, as well as the everyday heroes in our world who have influenced music, science, sports and beyond.

In our school, we celebrated Black History month with a special assembly about Jack Leslie, a leading footballer who faced racial discrimination during his career but continued to excel and leave a lasting legacy. Throughout the month students also took part in various activities, exploring Black history and helping everyone learn more about the importance of equality and representation.

More than just a history lesson, Black History Month is a reminder to celebrate diversity, stand up for equality, and recognize the Black voices that continue to shape our world. Black History Month reminds us of those who sacrificed and paved the way for freedom and for future generations. From Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who led nonviolent protests for civil rights, Rosa Parks whose courage sparked a movement in history, and Nelson Mandela who despite having spent 27 years in prison, stood with a vision of spreading peace and unity to change the lives of many. This month, we shall honour their legacy and remember what they did for us and the world today.

*BY SAFIYYA KHAN*



# The Sharples Spotlight

VOL. 15, NO. 8



MOST WANTED NOW



2025/2026



## Photographers,



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# WANTED



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# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

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## HIGHLIGHTER MAYHEM

### THE GREATEST STATIONERY DEBATE OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Hello again readers! After the recent success of our 'Back to School Haul' article (refer to the September edition), a debate has broken out. One of the most controversial debates in the world of stationery - NEON vs PASTEL highlighters. So, stationery lovers get cozy and prepare to enter the whirlwind and chaos of comparisons and decision-making. Don't worry though I'll try to keep the chaos to a minimum.

#### WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Pastel highlighters are fairly new and far more popular amongst the younger generations as a result of their more muted tones and aesthetics. On the contrary, neon highlighters are famed for being extremely vivid and eye-catching particularly the yellow highlighter, and are favoured more by the older generations. Perhaps, I should have clarified earlier, but this debate is centered around the opinion stemming from a few specific English teachers that 'yellow highlighters are ultimately the greatest'. I'm here to reach a personal conclusion and maybe appease Mrs Smith.

Let's first discuss neon. Neon highlighters are beneficial for really drawing attention to critical information. For some, this makes them preferable, however others find them to be quite jarring to the senses. During my study of the internet I came across the same debate on a Reddit post (if you don't know what that is it's a social media app where adults gather to complain and argue), someone on this particular post described neon highlighters as 'like using your phone on full brightness' however another user said that they help with retaining information. According to my research neon highlighters also leak through pages more heavily due to the pigment use, and as a result may not be the best for highlighting in school books or large sections of text.

Next let's approach the newer pastel territory. Pastel highlighters are infamous for their beautiful colours and being far less aggressive on the eyes. Now I'm not here to be overly biased and grovel over pastel colours, because that would not be a fair evaluation. Pastel highlighters are made with a pigment which leaks far less, which makes them preferable for workbooks. Never highlight at all in novels. Their more muted colours make them better for highlighting large sections of text. They are still attention catching, just less distracting. However my question is 'is the pastel world going too far?'. I'm all for an aesthetic pencil case, but recently I've noticed cheap brands filling Amazon and other cheap stores like Shein and Temu with highlighters so muted they do nothing in terms of highlighting and post fake images of beautiful colours. They make me furious when they come out barely visible. However, if you get good quality packs like Stabilo they are fantastic for calm organisation of notes. Pastel highlighters do however fade over time and are less durable compared to conventional neon colours.



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

Overall, pastel highlighters have definitely stolen the hearts of the younger generation but are also gaining popularity in the hearts of older stationery enthusiasts. I don't think I could ever return to neon highlighters, however there are days when I favour the classic fluorescent yellow over the pastels. I did find that a lot of people actually dislike the other neon colours but love yellow. I do hope you loved reading this article, as much as I loved writing it, let us know in our survey. Also, let us know what other stationery related issues and controversies you'd like us to investigate.

BY KHADIJA MOOSA

## WITCHING YOU A HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Are you ready for some spooky vibes at the end of this month? It's October, and October is one of the most highly anticipated celebrations around the world...Halloween! Being an annual tradition, people from all over the world come together to celebrate. With spooky costumes going around town's scariest decorated houses, you'll be sure to be greeted with a trick or treat

Halloween is celebrated globally on October 31st dating back to thousands of years originating from the ancient celtic festival of Samhain, marking the end of summer and the start of winter. Celts believed that on this day, the line between this world and the spirits became thinner and therefore the spirits became free. Due to this, Celtic farmers would help build bonfires, wear costumes and offer food.

### Safety!

Everyone knows we all want to celebrate halloween as freely as we want, but we have to be cautious even if we are the scary ones out there! Many dangers are out in the open that we may not know about. You can stay safe with these easy reminders:

Avoid trick or treating by yourself as much as possible

Always walk on the sidewalks

Never go into a strangers home or car

Avoid eating home-made treats made by strangers

Have a flashlight for when it is dark outside

And last but definitely most importantly have fun!!!



Ultimately, Halloween endures not just as a night for costumes and sweets, but as a month of history, myth, and celebration. It's a night that allows us to play with our fears, connect with the past, and embrace what others once believed in. Whether you're a trick-or-treater on the hunt for sweets or a storyteller sharing tales by a flickering jack-o'-lantern, the spirit of this ancient holiday remains a beloved tradition for all ages.

BY MARYAM MUNSHI AND AASIYA AHMED



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## WORLD MENTAL HEALTH

Fuelled by curiosity, driven by passion, I am Afia a new writer for the Sharples Spotlight. I am very eager to start my journey writing for Sharples Spotlight which consistently produces compelling, high quality articles worth reading. This leads me to say that I am proud to present my first article on World Mental Health Day.

As you must have observed that the World Mental Health Day was celebrated on 10th of October 2025. Countries across the world participated to raise awareness and promote advocacy for mental health. Throughout the world awareness campaign took place which included events and activities to educate people on the impact of mental health. Additionally it encouraged people to interact and speak about their experiences related to mental health. The mass participation focused on this year's theme " Access to Services : Mental Health in Catastrophes and emergencies ".

Let's have a look at how our school celebrated the Mental Health Day.

1. First of all students were given the opportunity to accessories Yellow (not gold!) as emphasised by Miss Molyneux. This meant that students were allowed to wear bracelets, ties, glasses, badges etc, which on a normal day would be confiscated.
2. In addition, "Caught being Kind" cards were issued to teachers to award to students who highlighted compassion, generosity, and a positive attitude to learning.
3. Also the "Digital Detox Diary Challenge" was introduced by Miss Bennett and Mr Jackson to reflect on our relationship with digital devices and social media. All participants would be granted 30 reward points and best entries would be rewarded with prizes.
4. Lastly, the yellow wristbands and treat bags were being sold in the canteen and new block at break and lunch time by the gold ties. The money collected from the sale would be delivered to the charity, Young Minds, which supports the wellbeing of children and young people.

If you are someone struggling with mental health then here are a few tips to improve your wellbeing:

### **Understanding your emotions**

Some people know that they are sad but unable to understand why. To help with this try keeping a reflection journal where you can write about the emotions you felt and delve deeper into what made you feel that way.

### **Time for nature**

Spending time outdoors such as taking a walk to the park, cycling along with friend or simply alone and just laying on the grass can have massive impact on mental health. Some individually believe that nature can help them feel calmer ; others just see it as a getaway from busy life.

### **Talk to someone you trust**

Often in life you will realise certain people had a positive impact on your mental health. So the question is why? Is it because they listened to you when no one else did and made sure you were supported throughout your journey, if yes then you know who to ask for help. If not then you can access organisation such as Kooth and "Be kind to my mind" which offer supports to anyone willing to reach out.

Mental Health Day was well celebrated throughout the world and specifically in our school. It was amazing to see to see many individuals willing to talk and support others.

I hope you enjoyed the article.

*BY AFIA ZUBAIR*

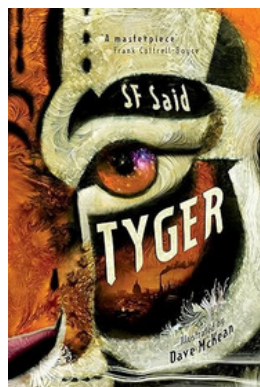




# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## A SPOTLIGHT ON THE LIBRARY

### Form time reads- By Reading ambassadors:

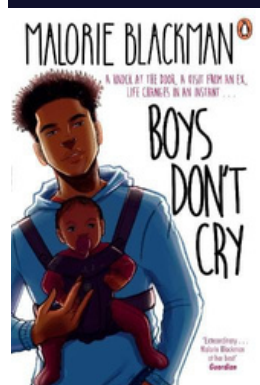


**Tyger-** Tyger is an amazing fantasy book about a boy named Adam who lives in a strange version of London where the slavery never ended. One day, Adam finds an immortal, talking tiger called Tyger, and then his life is thrown upside down. Together, they go on a dangerous journey to fight against sir Mortimer Maldahyde to save their world. This story is about courage, friendship, and believing in yourself. I liked this book because it made me think about right and wrong, and My favourite character is Tyger because he is a really cool and mysterious character.

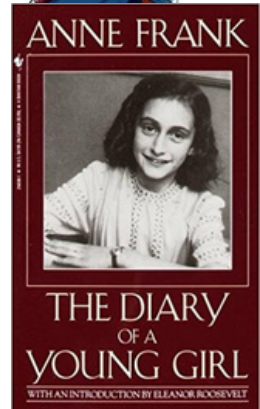


**Hacker-** In Malorie Blackman's mystery thriller Hacker, an adopted teenager named Vicky must use her computer skills [and her brother] to prove her father's innocence after he is framed for stealing over a million pounds from the bank where he works. The book is a fast-paced, engaging techno-thriller for young readers that explores themes of family loyalty and justice, and also feeling like you don't belong, and that you need to prove yourself

"It was an alright read. I'd recommend it for younger readers, maybe 10-11. The stakes didn't really feel that high, so it wasn't really exciting, but it was good enough"- Anonymous



**Boys don't cry-** Dante has passed his A-levels with flying colours and is ready to go to university, but what he doesn't expect is to see his ex-girlfriend turn up at his door with someone who would change his life. Malorie Blackman, skilfully addresses a range of different social controversies in this one novel; from LGBTQ+ discrimination, teen pregnancies, life with one parent and stereotypes placed on men. We get to watch this small family navigate life with their new addition from each of their point of views, sharing in their emotional turmoil, watching their character development, cringing, crying and laughing with them. Boys don't cry is a win for Y9 and is a must-read for all high school teenagers.



**Anne Frank's diary-** As a student in Y10, I am currently reading Anne Frank's Diary during form time. It is a great book for those interested in history and the persecution of ethnic minorities during WW2 from the perspective of a victim and a person who actually went through those experiences. Although I have only read the beginning, the book reveals a growing sense of purpose in the words of a young girl who, despite everything, believed her words could matter- and they did.

At the start of The Diary of Anne Frank, we meet a young girl on the brink of history- though she doesn't know it yet. Anne begins her writing with the everyday thoughts of a teenager: school, friends, grades, and a lingering sense of boredom. She speaks honestly about her life in hiding, often feeling restless and confined, missing the outside world, and struggling with the frustrations of close quarters and constant fear. Yet even in these early pages, there's a remarkable clarity in Anne's voice. She writes with a mix of sarcasm, wit, and growing maturity. What begins as a way to pass time- writing to her imaginary friend "Kitty"- quickly becomes something more. Her diary becomes a space where she questions the world, expresses her hopes, and shows a deep belief in human goodness, even while hiding from unimaginable cruelty.



# THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

## A SPOTLIGHT ON THE LIBRARY

### BHM books



**Hidden Figures-** three amazing south african/american women at NASA Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson serve as the brains to one of the greatest operations of all time the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit .

AUTHOR: MARGOT LEE



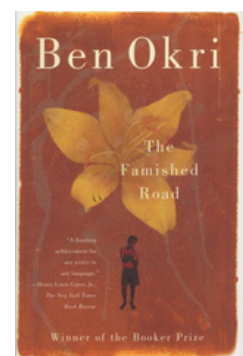
**Counternarratives-** Summoning slavery and witchcraft, a beguiling collection of novellas and stories, spanning the 17th century to the present and crossing multiple continents, draws upon memoirs, detective stories, interrogation transcripts and more to create new and strange perspectives on our past and present.

AUTHOR: JOHNE KEENE



**A Promised Land-** A riveting, deeply personal account of history in the making, from the president who inspired us to believe in the power of democracy. In the stirring, highly anticipated first volume of his presidential memoirs, Barack Obama describes, in strikingly personal detail both his political education and the landmark moments of the first term of his historic presidency—a time of dramatic transformation and turmoil.

AUTHOR: BARACK OBAMA



**The Famished Road-** As his parents struggle to put food on the table, Azaro, a little boy living in the ghetto of an African city during British colonial rule, battles the evil spirits who are tempting him. This is the first of a three book series.

AUTHOR: BEN OKRA

### National Poetry Day

On the 2nd October it was national poetry day so in

Form to celebrate we wrote

Our own poem on things we like to do

We also celebrated by listening to one of Matt Goodfellow's poems

And then wrote our own poem on what we like to play or do who we like to do them With and when.

We celebrate this day to increase people's interests in reading poems

And

maybe writing their own

Poetry is also a way to express feelings and show self-expression

**Hollie Williams**

### SUMMER READING CHALLENGE WINNERS

Every year, the Reading department releases a school-wide Summer Reading challenge. The winners receive their very own, brand new kindle! This year I'd like to offer a huge congratulations to Aameina

Marothi, Ciara Clarkson and Fatima Babariyah.



