

A photograph of several pupils in a workshop or laboratory setting, overlaid with a blue tint. One pupil in the foreground is wearing safety glasses and working on a project on a workbench. Other pupils are visible in the background, some looking at their work. The scene is busy and focused on practical learning.

PUPIL
VOLUNTEERING

The Pears National Centre for Autism Education



Pupil Volunteering at Highgate School

Highgate does not exist in a bubble: we are connected to, and part of, a community.

"I helped the students design the props and backdrops for their Nativity Play, The Snow Queen. We used all sorts of objects to create the artwork, like plastic bottles, toothbrushes and cardboard tubes. It was really fun getting to know the students and seeing their skills develop."

Daniel, Year 10

At Highgate School, pupils are given the opportunity to help in the local community, by taking part in volunteering projects. These range from helping children with special needs at a neighbouring school for Autism, to taking part in musical performances at elderly care homes, to fundraising (and even visiting!) our partner school in Uganda and becoming a Chrysalis Fellow as a Gap Year project.

Tree House Project

Since March 2013, Highgate School have been community partners with TreeHouse School, a special school for children and young people with complex autism from ages three to nineteen. Over the past six years, Highgate have built up this community programme and developed it into a highly subscribed co-curricular activity. It is now a 'buddy scheme', whereby 12 Highgate pupils across Years 9, 10 and 12 volunteer to take part in a weekly activity with a TreeHouse pupil of the same age. Projects and activities are wide ranging from musical performances to sports and cookery.

Matthew Wilder, Year 12 explains:

"Wholesome is a key word that sums up the experience for us. Building up repertoire and connection with the pupils over a series of weekly visits solidified this. One of the highlights was creating musical instruments such as ukuleles. It was incredibly rewarding because, although in some cases, our partners could not talk, by the end of our time with TreeHouse, they had started to smile through recognition."

Michaela, Year 12, learnt how to use sign language via one of our ongoing co-

curricular clubs to engage and communicate with the autistic children who are non-verbal. She says: "Volunteering at Treehouse once a week was both a rewarding and educational experience. It enabled me to gain the knowledge I didn't have before about the school and to have an inside perspective into the student's life at Treehouse. I enjoyed the interaction with the students whilst playing games or cooking and being able to bond with them one on one, which allowed me to really get to know the pupils over the few months."

Marina, Year 12, explained how she found the partnership humbling, and offered personal insights into autism: "We realised that, truly, we are all the same: with similar interests, similar goals and similar love of life's pleasures such as music, cookery, team spirit and art. It has been a humbling experience as one can easily take for granted abilities like verbal communications that are pivotal to living everyday life."



O LEVEL SCIENCE LAB

SPONSOR:

HIGHGATE SCHOOL

DEDICATED:

25-07-2018

Charity and Community Projects

Both the Senior School and Junior School pupils can get involved in age appropriate volunteering projects varying from taking part in our biennial whole school sponsored walk and bake sales through to traveling to Uganda to help teach pupils at Great Lakes High School.

Great Lakes High School, Uganda

Highgate is proud to have supported GLHS, a well-performing secondary school in southwest Uganda, since its 2008 foundation. GLHS currently educates over 300 pupils between 13 and 20 who complete Ugandan O and A levels, and undertake co-curricular activities. Education is seen as a way of overcoming poverty and, since most pupils come from poor backgrounds, there is a strong work ethic. Every year, Highgate pupils, families, staff and alumni take part in numerous fundraising initiatives to help our partner pupils in Uganda have access to a better quality of life.

On alternate years, Highgate staff and pupils take part in sponsored walk, which in October 2019, raised an incredible £110,000 to enable the building of a new science laboratory the creation of a new tapped water point, providing a much-needed reliable and accessible water supply to the school and the purchase of a new school truck to help with running a busy secondary school in a remote location.

Each Summer, Sixth Form pupils are able to apply to take part in an excursion to GLHS where they take part in daily schooling, helping teach music, dance and English to pupils.



Safi Coffee Enterprise

In connection to GLHS, Safi Coffee is the pupils' very own Ugandan coffee brand that they are responsible for branding, marketing and selling through creative means with all proceeds going to Uganda. Pupils from Year 6 through to Year 13 can get involved, and often partner with other schools to help leverage brand awareness and set up 'pop up' coffee shops at school events such as the Christmas fete.

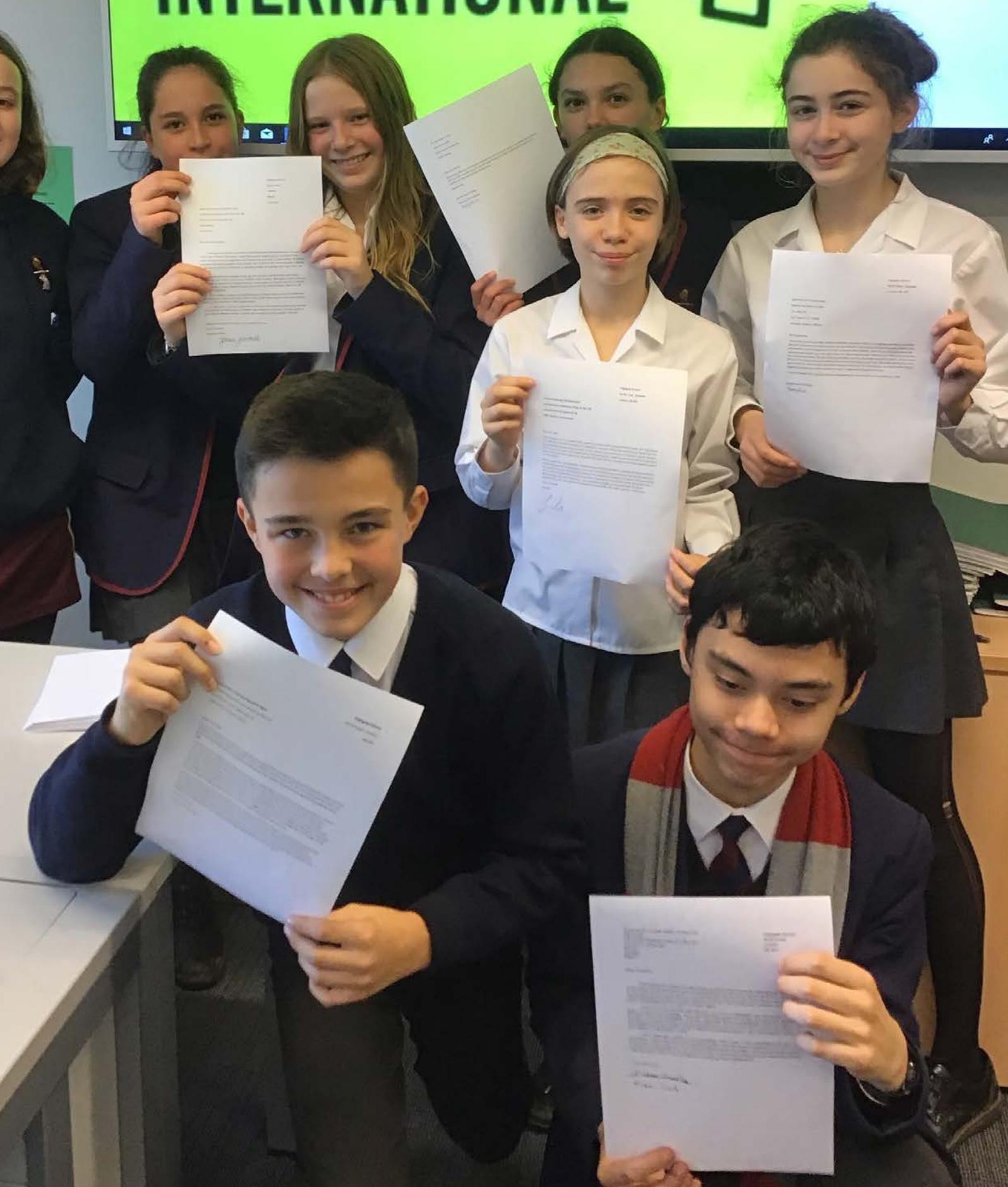
"With the majority of us never having previously visited a remote village in Africa, we were overwhelmed by the stark differences between our two opposing cultures; however, these were swiftly replaced by a sense of true community and friendship as we were welcomed"

Millie & Robert, Year 12

Pupils' Charity Committee

This society, led by pupils, is concerned with all charitable initiatives in the local community. A recent example includes HighgateFest, a live virtual music performance that pupils hosted during the 2020 lockdown to raise money for Noah's Arc Children's Hospice, Shelter and Highgate is Here, the School charity formed to help those impacted during Covid-19.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Self-reflection and Kindness

There are many opportunities for pupils to offer goodwill and kindness to others outside of Highgate School.

"I painted a big cardboard rainbow to stick on our window, not only to show support to the NHS but also to brighten people's day. I also sent virtual cards to my friends to lighten their spirits and just to check in on them."

Maddie, Year 9
Co-founder of Random Acts of Kindness Society

Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh Award aims to help young people learn teamwork, resilience and the importance of giving something back to the community. In 2020, over 250 Highgate pupils have been involved across Bronze, Silver and Gold awards, meaning we are the largest centre in Haringey. As part of their DoE award, pupils take part in volunteering across a range of places from charity shops and elderly care homes to reading with partner primary school children. In 2020, our DoE pupils carried out over 4,719 hours of voluntary work equating to £20,528 in social value.

Random Acts of Kindness

Another pupil-led society, Random Acts of Kindness (RAOK) was co-founded by two Year 7 pupils in 2018 who wanted to offer gestures of kindness to everyone from staff and fellow pupils through to those in the nearby neighbourhood. Activities have included bake sales, visiting the elderly and donating to the homeless. The group has also launched a *Star of the Month* initiative, to recognise lesser known figures in the School and commend them for their own kindness.

Community Days

In Year 9, pupils spend a day per term fully dedicated to volunteering at local events as part of our Community Day initiative. This could involve helping at a soup kitchen, food bank or primary school; it means each pupil spends time taking part in a project that gives the pupils a sense of independence, empathy and understand how good it feels to 'give back' through helping others.

Zaki, Junior School pupil's thoughts on creating food boxes and letters for the homeless; "I hope this make them feel like there are people helping and supporting them. I hope this box makes their day better and just makes them feel happy."

Chrysalis Fellowship

Each academic year, Highgate recruits a team of Chrysalis Fellows, most of whom are 'Year 14' pupils on a Gap Year. They work to deliver partnership teaching projects in our partner state schools and to administer the wide range of projects and events that form this important work, which we call Chrysalis. The Fellows join us because they are keen to pursue a career in teaching. A number from previous cohorts have now gone on to become qualified teachers.

Chrysalis Fellows work on a wide range of projects, from enriching maths and science clubs in state primary schools to mentoring of young people, including looked after children and children with special educational needs, in our community.

HIGHGATE



www.highgateschool.org.uk

