**Year 12 Visit Auschwitz**

In February, two History A-level students with Mr Hamilton travelled to the city of Krakow in Poland to visit the Nazi concentration camps (Auschwitz 1 and Auschwitz-Birkenau). GDA was given the opportunity to take part in the Lessons of Auschwitz Project set up by the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Immediately after arriving, we were taken to the village of Oświęcim where the camps are located and where a local Jewish community lived prior to the start of WWII. Auschwitz 1 was the first camp to be built and was used as the SS headquarters, but is now a museum. There are buildings dedicated to the Extermination plan and the monstrous medical experiments conducted by Doctor Mengele. Rooms with victim’s belongings, including suitcases and human hair, were certainly some of the hardest to visit.

We then travelled to Auschwitz-Birkenau (3km from Auschwitz 1). This is the camp associated with gas chambers and inhumane living conditions. It held more than 1.5 million people, 90% killed were Jews. We actually stepped into the gas chambers, leaving some students completely numb. You will never really know how you will respond to this because you simply can’t prepare yourself.

The final part of our day was one of the most memorable experiences; a ceremony held by a Rabbi next to the destroyed crematoria. It was dark outside and we sat in the snow but no one really minded because we were there to pay our respects. The Rabbi read his prayers and we listened to poems and testimonies of the prisoners. The day ended with a moment of reflection, lighting candles and a long, silent walk back to the coaches.

It’s not humanly impossible to imagine the pain, suffering, hunger and emptiness of people who died there. There was no trace of the ghosts some were expecting to see. No feelings, just emptiness, matched by the physical emptiness of that immense camp. We can’t change history and will never understand what happened; it is terrifying that people still use Nazi wording and imagery today. We must learn and remember the holocaust so we don’t repeat the mistakes in the future. The persecution of minorities is still a hugely significant issue (genocide of Muslims in Myanmar, Burma from Buddhist monks) with people attacked, abused and discriminated against simply because they are different.

Ilwaad Omer Abdullahi, Year 12 History Student

---

**Remembering Srebrenica**

Why I will always remember Srebrenica?

When I first wrote the application letter for Remembering Srebrenica, I was not fully aware of the profound effect that this trip would have on me. On July 11, 1995, Bosnian Serb forces, led by General Ratko Mladic, massacred 8372 individuals, the greatest atrocity in Europe since the Second World War. The International Court of Justice ruled that this mass execution constituted genocide. In 2009, the European Parliament declared 11 July the official day of remembrance. Nearly 23 years on, ‘Remembering Srebrenica’ is a British charitable initiative and their aim is to raise awareness about what happened in Bosnia.

When I first heard about Remembering Srebrenica, a personal interest was sparked. I am from Turkey, an empire where people from different ethnicities and beliefs lived together and from this view of diversity, the Ottoman Empire may seem similar to Yugoslavia. There were approximately 2 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. When the massacre ended, 1.5 million of them were dead. The Turkish government denies this genocide but we live with what happened to those innocent people. This is why I felt so attached to this project, I empathise.

It is within this context of that I, Bilal and Esfandiar travelled to Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as part of a delegation including students from King Edward’s Camp Hill School, Telford Girls’ School and Solihull Independent School during the February half term. I am now an Ambassador for Remembering Srebrenica and my peers and I will be appearing at an assembly near you, very soon.

Doga Lamper, Remembering Srebrenica Ambassador

---

**Remembrance**

Students with one of the Mothers of Srebrenica who shared her deeply moving story

Remember and Appreciate

Every day, people die, not just ‘naturally’, but by means of war. Wars that never bring peace but death. In Srebrenica, seeing the elongated pillar stones, marked with names. I never would have expected in my entire life, to see 8732 stones at one time.

Hearing a mother lose family for what they believe in is just so painful. She couldn’t bury her son properly for 13 years until his remains were found and now must survive with her daughter in another town many miles away.

My message to all is to appreciate everything you have and will hopefully have in future. Try not to take your life for granted and try to contribute something that can change society. Help those currently deprived of their rights and their beliefs. Fight for what you believe in and make sure that you are heard.

Bilal Hussain, Remembering Srebrenica Ambassador
Art Clubs

Photography Competition

The Art Department ran a photography competition in the autumn term to get students and staff looking and observing their environment and using SMHW as a means of competition submission. As inspiration they had to investigate the work of Vivien Maier, an American street photographer. Shadows, reflections and self-portraits were the main subjects and all work was displayed near to the LRC.

Clay Club

As a trainee at the Academy, I have recently joined Clay Club. It has been a fantastic experience forming cross curricular links with Art and Religious Studies. Students are working on designing and making their own candle holders which will be displayed in St Germaine’s church.

Textiles Club

Year 9 Pre GCSE Textiles club shows students what GCSE Textiles is all about. Students learn about textile techniques such as Batik, dyeing, felt making and using a sewing machine. At present, students are getting to grips with how to thread and sew on the machine to make a mobile phone case, purse or bag. Come along on Tuesday lunchtimes to see if Textiles is for you.

Extra Curricular at GDA

Students go to an extra-curricular club to learn more or practise a certain skill. At GDA, there are plenty of clubs and opportunities for students to take part in. Some examples of the brilliant activities we host are music tech club, computing club or journalist club. We spoke to students who take part in activities and asked them some questions:

- Safah (8.1): ‘I am in the journalist club and I enjoy it. In the club I write blogs for the school newsletter. I take part in this club because it helps you with your English. I go once a week.’
- Pajwan (8.7): ‘I am a student councillor and journalist and I love writing about my experiences. I get distracted but these help me concentrate. I take part because I enjoy sharing my ideas.’
- Miesha (7.7): ‘I am in science club, we do loads of practicals and it helps you improve in science.’

Year 7 Trip to see the CBSO

On 30 January, Year 7 went to the Symphony Hall. It was a magical trip; the performances were phenomenal and well executed. We firstly got into our groups, there were 6 groups in total. My group caught the 126 bus and luckily, the journey wasn’t too long! The hall was colossal and had a magical feel. Tienna said “It’s great here; I’ve been many, many times.”

The conductor was Michael Seal and the presenter was Tom Redmond. There were 9 songs in total; including ‘The Four Seasons’ by Antonio Vivaldi, ‘Eroica Symphony’ by Ludwig Van Beethoven and ‘The Rite of Spring’ by Igor Stravinsky. Joanna said “It was somewhere where I’d like to go again! It was great to hear the songs, it was really relaxing and the last song was really nice.” Hamdia told me “I really liked the music! I liked the people playing too.” Afterwards, Amit gave his opinion, telling us “It was good, because it taught us about the history of these musicians as well as the music.” Next I asked Thana, her opinion was “It was a lot fun and very educational.” Lastly I had asked Asad, which he gave in response “The music was interesting and it was good to find the history behind it as well!” Overall, I can safely say, most people did enjoy the visit and loved the Symphony Hall.

Leila Le, Year 7 Student Journalist

Work Experience

Year 10 students had work experience placements in December. Employers were delighted with the students’ attitude and impressed by student’s preparation and claimed that students were “a real credit to the Academy.” Student evaluations showed they enjoyed and learnt from the experience; one student “really enjoyed learning the experience, and is coming back on Saturday to volunteer.” Feedback from parents was very positive, “at the end of her work experience she had gained more confidence in herself. I think this has helped her in making a decision for her future career.” Many students found their own placements, however if you could provide and opportunity, please contact Mrs Buckingham.

Year 11 Post 16 Planning

Year 11 students are being interviewed to ensure plans and pathways are in place for post 16. Lunchtime and after school sessions will follow to advise and complete applications. This is to ensure that the academy maintains our record of zero students Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Year 12 guidance

Year 12 students were interviewed to support career development throughout Sixth Form. Outcomes include work experience placements at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, signing up for Barclays Life Skills and students researching summer schools.

‘Experience Exeter’ University Programme

GDA’s relationship with the University of Exeter has enabled sixteen year 10 students to secure places on the new ‘Exeter Scholars’ programme. Students will attend a week-long residential at Easter followed by mentoring and careers seminars.

Deloitte Business Engagement

Year 12 students have started the second year of the Deloitte partnership programme. Focusing on employability skills, students will be mentored to propose a cost reduction and income regeneration proposal for GDA. Students will present to Deloitte. All students will receive personal careers guidance and certificates.

Careers Support on the Academy Website

Families can access materials to support students on the website under the ‘Students’ tab. You will find student’s Careers Entitlements, latest news and useful links to help young people make the best career choices.

Extra Curricular at GDA

Students go to an extra-curricular club to learn more or practise a certain skill. At GDA, there are plenty of clubs and opportunities for students to take part in. Some examples of the brilliant activities we host are music tech club, computing club or journalist club. We spoke to students who take part in activities and asked them some questions:

- Safah (8.1): ‘I am in the journalist club and I enjoy it. In the club I write blogs for the school newsletter. I take part in this club because it helps you with your English. I go once a week.’
- Pajwan (8.7): ‘I am a student councillor and journalist and I love writing about my experiences. I get distracted but these help me concentrate. I take part because I enjoy sharing my ideas.’
- Miesha (7.7): ‘I am in science club, we do loads of practicals and it helps you improve in science.’

Extra Curricular at GDA

Students go to an extra-curricular club to learn more or practise a certain skill. At GDA, there are plenty of clubs and opportunities for students to take part in. Some examples of the brilliant activities we host are music tech club, computing club or journalist club. We spoke to students who take part in activities and asked them some questions:

- Safah (8.1): ‘I am in the journalist club and I enjoy it. In the club I write blogs for the school newsletter. I take part in this club because it helps you with your English. I go once a week.’
- Pajwan (8.7): ‘I am a student councillor and journalist and I love writing about my experiences. I get distracted but these help me concentrate. I take part because I enjoy sharing my ideas.’
- Miesha (7.7): ‘I am in science club, we do loads of practicals and it helps you improve in science.’

I go twice a week:

- Meron (10.1): ‘I am in self-defence club and get to learn techniques on how to defend ourselves. Other students should get involved because it helps in real life and you get to meet new people and make new friends.’
- Halima (10.1): ‘I go to netball, we train for matches outside of school and learn techniques for games. It helps to keep you healthy whilst having fun at the same time.’
- Kanika (10.3): ‘I am a freedom ambassador, we discuss important topics such as forced marriage or FGM. It is important and people should be aware of the topics that we talk about.’

There are many more clubs for students to attend and you can see them all on the noticeboard in student reception. If you have some ideas for new clubs, please see Mr Ibbotson, as we would love as many students as possible to participate.

Rayan Kader, Pajwan Gareb and Safah Ikram, Year 8

Follow us @GeorgeDixonAcad
Read if you Dare! World Book Day at GDA!

Leila, Adja and Jonefa who won the WBD competitions

Mrs Chapman as Queen Victoria, who was voted favourite costume by GDA students!

Good evening my Mad Hatters and Ludicrous Lords! The reason why World Book Day is celebrated is to recognise all the amazing illustrators, authors and the most crucially, BOOKS! It is the biggest celebration of its kind and is celebrated in 100 countries all over the world.

What have we done in GDA in honour of World Book Day?...is probably what you’re wondering. Well, teachers dressed up as wonderful characters from all different stories; however, most of the teachers were from the book Alice in Wonderland, by Lewis Carroll which was a theme used by the LRC and the student council. FACT: Everyone around Lewis Carroll’s time thought he was completely mad, which isn’t very surprising. You may have noticed there was a hefty vote going on in the canteen for the teacher with the best costume. The winner was...Miss Chapman dressed as the wonderful Queen Victoria! FACT: Queen Victoria only wore black after her husband, Albert, died. Next, we did a wonderfully wonderful treasure trail! There were fabulous clues that got people as mad as a hatter! The first one was to find hidden letters around the academy that made a word and confirm the word at the LRC. The second was to fill out the sheet of paper with as many teachers and their characters as you could find. Both hunts were Adja Sall, Jonefa Maxwell and myself! Jonefa and I won the book trail and Adja found lots of staff members in costume. Now, we did two debates each, Team A with Adama, Grace, Shania and Syeda who won both, Team B with Louise, Assa, Shazmeen and Adjele who won one and Team C with Mamadou, Najad, Fatoumata and myself who also won one. Coming up, Gracia, Adama and Syeda will be speaking at Warwick University support! Our success only makes me want to work harder and I hope this article inspires students to work harder to achieve.

Leila Le 7.8, Student Journalists and Debate Mate Member

Debate Mate Update

In January, the GDA Debate Team went to a competition hosted at Shireland Collegiate Academy. We had 3 teams: Team A, Team B and Team C. I was in Team C. Everyone was told their motion (what we are to debate about) and if we were proposition (for) or opposition (against). We were proposition for both rounds. Moving on to the debates...

Round 1 Motion: Should Advertising be banned for children under 16? The motion was confusing for us and I would have preferred to be in opposition. Once we arrived, we started writing. Both teams had strong points. Overall, we lost, however this wasn’t going to stop us from persevering! After the first debate, we learnt that the other GDA teams won round 1. This only motivated Team C, and we were more determined to win the next round. We were given our next motion...

Round 2 Motion: Should police be allowed to check our personal online information? We were against Shireland. We did SO MUCH BETTER; the whole team had amazing arguments and after fifteen minutes, everyone was really confident. We used a lot of points of information but Shireland didn’t accept many which left us frustrated. Overall, it was clear that we were really improving. We found out that the other teams lost the second round, so we all lost and won one. It was a great experience and I would love to compete again.

Mrs Bakeman found out after that we were 1st place in the West Midlands and 6th in the UK! Going from the top 100 to top 10 is an amazing feeling. The second round was in March, our three teams did two debates each, Team A with Adama, Grace, Shania and Syeda who won both, Team B with Louise, Assa, Shazmeen and Adjele who won one and Team C with Mamadou, Najad, Fatoumata and myself who also won one. Coming up, Gracia, Adama and Syeda will be speaking at Warwick University a show debate with Mamadou, Shazmeen and myself going to support! Our success only makes me want to work harder and I hope this article inspires students to work harder to achieve.

Leila Le 7.8, Student Journalists and Debate Mate Member

Year 10 Students at Maths Feast

The Girls Team

On 14th February, Mrs Talwar arranged for eight year 10 students to visit Fairfax School and participate in the Maths Feast competition. The event was designed to engage and interest students as well as allow them to develop and communicate problem solving and communication skills. The day consisted of five rounds designed to resemble a restaurant menu, with each course testing algebraic and arithmetic skills. The feast focused on topics not covered in the classroom such as a 3D cube challenge and other practical and physical activities.

Both teams found the day enjoyable and interesting, involving new ways of approaching and solving mathematical problems. Well done to Mahima Begum, Meron Mekecha, Halima Farouk and Kanika Ratui finished joint third, with Stepan Antonio, Saifullah Hashim, Ifzal Khan and Muhammed Farook finishing in fifth place.

Mrs Talwar

The Boys Team

Follow us @GeorgeDixonAcad
The GDA Contemporary Dance Team at the Great Big Dance Off Finals 2018 develops the necessary skills for students to take on their future responsibilities as adults in our society.

What is SMSC?
SMSC at GDA aims to help students’ understanding of themselves, their behaviour, their health and development. It develops the necessary skills and values for students to take their roles as adults in our society.

Thought for the Term:
“Success isn’t about how much money you make, it’s about the difference you make in people’s lives.”
Michelle Obama

Students’ spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their willingness to achieve.

Students’ moral development involves acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right.

Students’ social development involves acquiring an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of being members of families and communities (local, national and global) and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good.

Students’ cultural development involves acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences.

Student A-Level PE students went on an educational visit to the All England Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon in February. As part of the Sport and Society unit of work the students went in the Tennis Museum and got first-hand experience of how tennis has developed through time. The tour of the grounds was exceptional and the guide was great at conveying interesting facts to our students. Jamel was interviewed in the press room and got to sit in the seat where the champion sits after winning the championship.


Year 12 and 13 RE trip to Coventry Cathedral
On 7 February, Zain Amjad, Nayeema Begum, Monica Chidodo, Mehtab Khan, Sandra Menka, Zain Amjad, Begum, Mehtab, Monica, Mehtab, Sandra, Zain, Sandra, Miss Harris

Visit Wimbledon in February. As part of the Sport and Society unit of work the students went in the Tennis Museum and got first-hand experience of how tennis has developed through time. The tour of the grounds was exceptional and the guide was great at conveying interesting facts to our students. Jamel was interviewed in the press room and got to sit in the seat where the champion sits after winning the championship.

Mr Lowe

The GDA Contemporary Dance Team at the Great Big Dance Off Finals 2018

The GDA Hop Hop Dance Team