

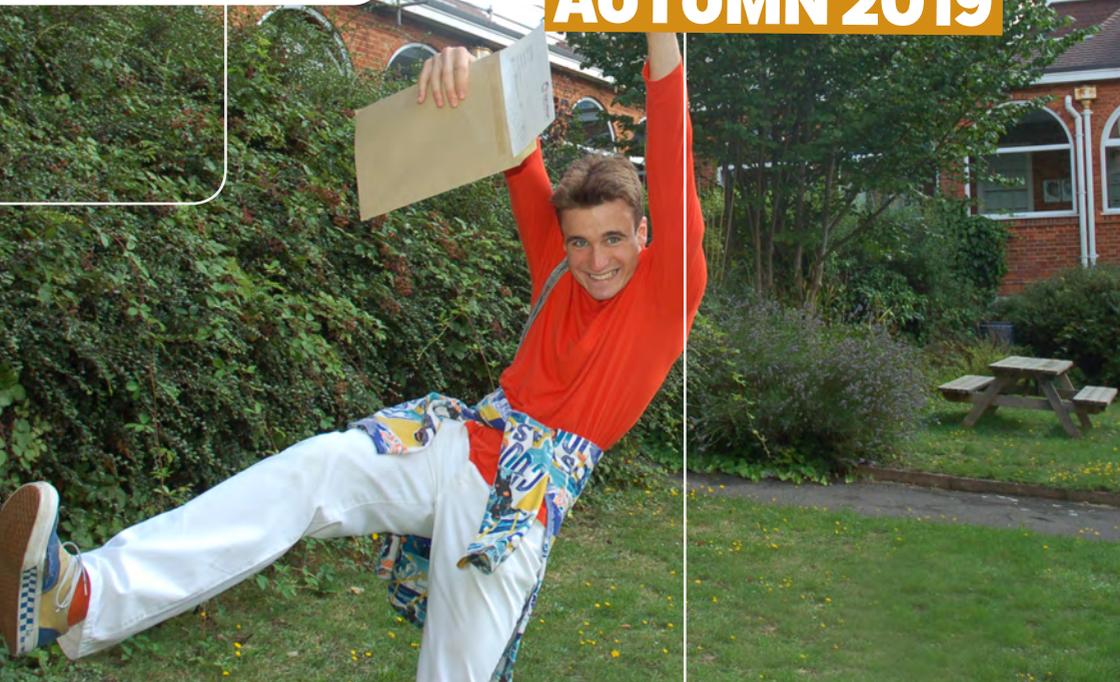


**Varndean**  
College Brighton & Hove

# UPDATE



**AUTUMN 2019**



# WORLD-BEATING SCORES YET AGAIN FOR VARNDEAN COLLEGE IB STUDENTS



IB MEDICINE STUDENTS



DYLAN PONSFORD

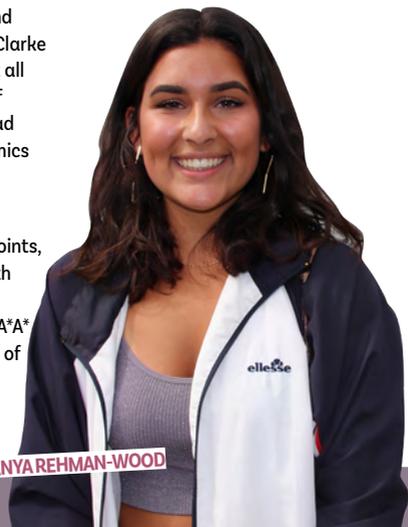


KATE GRANLUND

Varndean College once again celebrated outstanding International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma results back in July, with this year's cohort of students bound for leading universities including Cambridge, Durham, Bristol, UCL, Warwick, York, Sheffield and Leeds.

Star performers included Anya Rehman-Wood (ex Downlands School), whose near-perfect score of 44 points out of 45 - comparable to five A's at A Level - placed her in the top 1% of 169,000 IB students worldwide. Anya will study Medicine at University College London. Dylan Ponsford (ex Lewes Priory), with 42 points, will read Mathematics at the University of Warwick, while the 41 points achieved by Cardinal Newman's Sophia Stamoulis and ex-Dorothy Stringer duo Freya Clarke and Ella Remande-Guyarde put all three of them in the top 2.5% of students worldwide. Ella will read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of York.

Nearly half of the 50 students achieved 36 or more Diploma points, equivalent to AAA at A level; with nine gaining an impressive 40 points or more, equivalent of A\*A\*A\* and placing them in the top 3% of students worldwide.



ANYA REHMAN-WOOD

Congratulations went to Kate Granlund (ex Dorothy Stringer) who achieved 40 points and is studying English at Cambridge, as well as all our IB students who secured places on Medicine degree courses: Daisy Beddall, Amalia Coburn, Louie Garnett, Ella Shepherd, Anya Rehman-Wood and Jessica Simpson.

These results came at the end of another successful academic year for the IB Diploma at Varndean College, praised recently by Ofsted who commended the "exceptional quality" of IB students' work at the College, adding, "Students on the IB course make outstanding progress. Their achievement is exceptionally high and well above the international average."

Varndean College is the only local state-run provider of the IB Diploma in the local area, which it has offered since 2008. This prestigious Diploma is one of the world's most highly-regarded and academically rigorous educational programmes, requiring students to succeed in six subjects - including English Literature, Mathematics, a Science, a Foreign Language and a Humanities subject - as well as completing a 4000-word extended essay on a subject of their choice and undertaking community work.

Lee Finlay-Gray, IB Diploma Coordinator, commented: "The IB Diploma is a demanding course, which yet again has inspired our students and teachers to excel. Our learners leave us as confident and articulate young people, independent, questioning and knowledgeable about the world around them. They are a credit to the College and the IB community."

Ex-IB student Ella Cohen-Haddon, who graduated this year from Oxford University with a degree in Oriental Studies, said: "My enthusiasm for languages was really cultivated by the wonderful French and German teachers I had during my time on the IB at Varndean and more broadly I think that the IB encouraged me to think beyond the UK and Europe in terms of education and possibilities."

# ANOTHER YEAR OF EXAM SUCCESS FOR VARNDEAN COLLEGE



**Varndean College is once again delighted with the success of its students who have yet again achieved an impressive record of A Level and Vocational exam results.**

- 1229 A Level exams were taken
- Overall pass rate at A level was 97.5% with almost 50% achieving A\*-B and 72% achieving A\*-C grades
- 21 vocational courses had a 100% pass rate.
- Visual Arts courses (Art, Graphic Design, 3D Design, Textiles and Photography) were once again extremely impressive. Out of the 254 entries, 94% of students achieved A\*- C grades.
- Our English, Film, Humanities and Law continue to be outstanding. A level Law students gained 100% pass rate with 63% getting A\*-B, Film Studies 100% pass rate with 64% A\*-B, English Literature 100% pass rate with 84% gaining A\*-C, Politics students 100% pass rate with 77% gaining A\*-C.

Principal, Phil Harland, said; "We are extremely proud of the excellent results achieved by our students again this year, particularly with the A Level linear format being reintroduced recently. This has made the exams even more challenging; and students and staff have worked tirelessly over the last two years in order to deserve the success they have achieved. I would like to thank my entire staff for their hard work and enthusiasm over this past year and for giving our students the drive and passion to achieve the best they can."

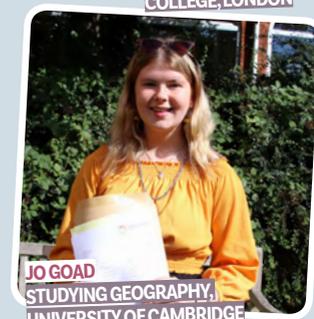
This exam success follows on from the successful International Baccalaureate results earlier in July, when 50 IB Diploma students averaged 36 points, the equivalent to 3 A grades at A Level, with nine students gaining an impressive 40 points+ (equivalent to 3 A\* grades). See opposite page for full story.



TATYANA GOODWIN  
STUDYING POLITICS & PHILOSOPHY,  
LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

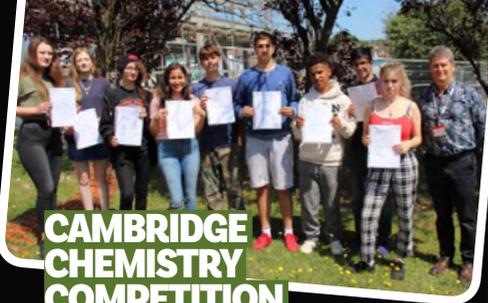


DANNY DUFFILL  
STUDYING BIOMEDICAL  
ENGINEERING, IMPERIAL  
COLLEGE, LONDON



JO GOAD  
STUDYING GEOGRAPHY,  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE





## CAMBRIDGE CHEMISTRY COMPETITION SUCCESS

Varndean College students once again competed in Cambridge University's annual C3L6 Chemistry Competition and yet again won an impressive array of copper, silver and gold awards. Thirty-six Varndean students were granted awards; 1 gold, 15 silver and 20 copper. This represented just under 50% of first year International Baccalaureate students and 63% of first year A Level students.

The competition is open to any UK student in Year 12 (ie first year of sixth form) studying either A Levels or the International Baccalaureate. It takes the form of a 90 minute written paper which students take within college. Students who do well in the competition are sent certificates of achievement (either a copper, silver or gold award), and those who perform best win an invitation to a residential camp at the University of Cambridge at the end of August.



## STUDENTS CELEBRATE FRESHERS' WEEK

The very dynamic Varndean College Student Union organised a lively and fun 80s themed party to celebrate the end of Freshers' week. All Year One students were treated to some refreshments in the Student Common Room where they took the opportunity to chat and meet fellow new students.

Outside in the quad, our SU had booked an inflatable pod, complete with a full set of 80s props and students took some very inspired photos! What a great start to the academic year!

## CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION DIPLOMA STUDENTS YET AGAIN ACHIEVE OUTSTANDING RESULTS

Varndean College's students undertaking the two year NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Childcare and Education have once again achieved an outstanding set of results; some continuing their studies on higher education degree courses and some receiving offers of employment.

The fourteen students who recently completed course achieved an impressive 100% pass rate, with 50% achieving an A\*- A grade and 50% achieving B-C.

Samiya Ali and Serine Toumi will study Childhood and Youth Studies at Greenwich University; with a third, Ali Rabina, also going to Greenwich University to study Criminology & Criminal Justice. Laila Elhadadoui will study Early Childhood Studies at the University of East London and Danielle Moss, Children's Nursing at Edge Hill University, Lancashire. Ella Collins and Kaitlin Holford have offers of employment in childcare and education. Ella as a teaching assistant at Downs View School and Kaitlin looking after children at a children's holiday club in Greece.

This follows on from last year's success when three Childcare Diploma students took up places at Brighton University to follow Teacher Training degrees and two students went to the prestigious Norland College in Bath to become 'Norland Nannies'.

The NCFE CACHE Diploma is a two year vocational course, equivalent to 3 A Levels, in which the students undertake a series of coursework units. They also have to complete 750 hours of work placement, as well as undertaken a 5000-word essay.



KAITLIN HOLFORD



DANIELLE MOSS, ALI RABINA AND SERINE TOUMI

## BERLIN

Our second year German A Level and IB students went on a trip to Berlin last December. To improve their language skills they attended lessons in a language school in the trendy district of Prenzlauer Berg every morning. The lessons were tailor-made to their abilities and they enjoyed learning with students of all ages and nationalities. The quality of the lessons, the inclusive learning environment, friendly teachers and excellent facilities in the school made this an unforgettable and highly valuable experience.

The students not only benefited from language

lessons; in the afternoon they had a chance to explore the vibrant and historical parts of the city and enjoyed a variety of excursions and diverse activities, in which they learned about German politics, history and food!

The evenings were packed with cultural programmes and included a mix of light hearted theatre, a multi-media exhibition and the fabulous German Christmas markets.



## DANCING TO SUCCESS

This year, we said goodbye to five more of our dance students who are heading off to continue their dance training as full-time students on various dance courses throughout the UK.

**Milly Stead** (ex Patcham High School) - BA (Hons) Dance at Chichester University

**Erjia Lui** (from China) - BA (Hons) in Contemporary Dance at London Contemporary Dance School (The Place)

**Sienna Collins** (ex BACA) - BA (Hons) Dance at Chichester University

**Georgia Simpson** (ex Varndean School) - BA (Hons) Dance at The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA)

**Hannah Parker Geoghan** (ex Lewes Priory) - BA (Hons) Dance Performance at Middlesex University

We wish them all the best of luck for their future careers.



## LAW STORIES

## MOCK TRIAL AT BRIGHTON MAGISTRATES COURT

Varndean's annual mock trial competition moved off site this year to the Brighton Magistrates Court. JP Shirley Venning and School Governor, Jeff Nixon, presided over two mock trial competitions. Students had spent weeks preparing for the court case in which a teacher was charged with assaulting a pupil whilst in his class. Heated exchanges took place between barristers over key pieces of evidence. Fraser Howell and Bobbi Perrerrell-Farnes, acting for prosecution, secured a guilty verdict by staying cool under pressure and having exceptionally well-prepared questions courtesy of the whole teams. Both students now intend to pursue this as a career - well done to all!

## VARNDEAN LAW STUDENTS INVITED TO NATIONAL LEGAL APPRENTICE FINAL

Five Varndean Law students, Lottie James, Erin Young, Anna Nye, Angel Fullylove and George Vranceanu, were all personally invited to attend the National Legal Apprentice final at News UK, in London. The two teams had competed nationally with 900 other teams for the potential of an apprenticeship at international law firm Kingsley Napley. Varndean teams came within the top 50 teams. Participants took part in three rounds of legal competition, varying from identifying difficult legal issues such as employment rights, health and safety law and negligence to interviewing witnesses and preparing witness statements. All agreed however that the last challenge of pitching to a potential high-profile client was the most difficult - something they all aim to perfect for this year's competition.





The 3D Design department organised a visit to Brighton Marina for their first year 3D students. The purpose of the visit is to use the Marina and the planned 'Tower' development site as the context for their first practical project. We did extensive drawings, photographs and recording of the Marina and surrounding area to use as a resource in the development of ideas for this project. It gives the students the opportunity to work to a 'live' project brief.

# VISUAL ARTS SUMMER EXHIBITION 2019

Vardean College Visual Arts Department supports the work of more than two hundred A Level Photography, Art, Textile Design, Graphic Design and 3D-Design students and from 7-11 June this year opened its doors to the public to view the students' work at its annual Visual Arts Summer Exhibition.

Head of Visual Arts Rob Macdonald said, "the exhibition was a wonderful celebration of the creative talents of our students. In a time when visual arts subjects are sometimes side-lined, we are proud to champion how important creative subjects are for the future success of these brilliant young people and we welcome visitors in to see for themselves these stars of tomorrow."

**Scarlett Wish**  
Scarlett Wish, (ex - Lewes Grammar) studied her A Level Fine Art. Scarlett says "doing Art at Vardean has really helped me develop my confidence". Scarlett's tutor Amy Dury said "Scarlett took the streets of Lewes as her inspiration, with vibrant colours and lines in her stunning paintings". Scarlett is now at Northbrook MET doing an Art Foundation course.



**YURI BLISHEN**

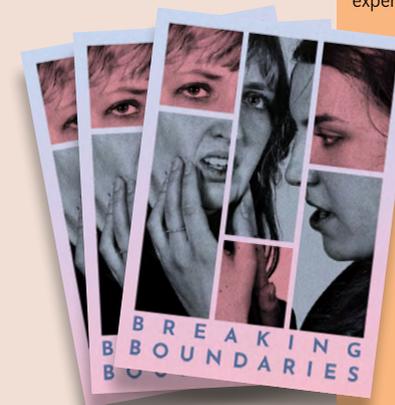
**Yuri Blishen**  
Yuri Blishen, (ex Dorothy Stringer) studied A Level 3D Design. Yuri's exhibition featured a vinyl record storage unit. Yuri said "I really enjoyed my time in 3D Design, it was my favourite course". Yuri's tutor Belinda Coyne said "Yuri responded to an initial design brief about movement in nature and his final piece showcased his exceptional making skills." Yuri is now at Brighton MET doing an Art Foundation course.



**Hetty Lucas**  
Hetty Lucas, (ex Downlands), studied A level Textiles. Hetty's project was based on armour, recycling plastics and wool to create a fashion garment. Hetty said "I would highly recommend the course to anyone wishing to express and explore their creative side." Hetty's tutor Jill Hurst said "Hetty is a really innovative student and she has created beautiful pieces." Hetty is now at York University studying Business Management.

**Imogen Longley**  
Imogen Longley, (ex Lewes Grammar) studied A Level Graphic Design. Imogen's end of year exhibition featured a series of eerie illustrations for the nursery rhyme Ring-a-ring-a-roses. Imogen said "I wanted to examine the dark and sinister elements of its origins in the Great Plague". Imogen's tutor Jas Chopra said "Combining lino cut techniques, traditional mark making and digital processes allowed Imogen to establish a bold and illustrative style while also maintaining strong and meaningful concepts." Imogen is now at Kingston School of Art in London.

**Lotti Terry**  
Lotti Terry, (ex Vardean School), studied A Level Photography. India's portraits were shot on a trip to Morocco. Lotti said "Being thrown in at the deep end in Morocco was one of the most challenging things I have ever done. I was given lots of access to domestic life and the genuine generosity of the people who befriended me comes across in the portraits". Lotti's tutor Gail Eastwood said "Lotti has been such an inspirational student and her work has been awarded the Anne Howard Memorial Golden Shutter Award 2019." Lotti is now studying Musical Theatre at The MET.



## GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENT DESIGNS POSTER FOR BREAKING BOUNDARIES

First year Graphic Design students were in close collaboration with the Dance Department earlier this year to produce publicity for the annual performance of Breaking Boundaries, held at the Sallis Benney Theatre in Brighton in May.

Archie Redgrave's design was selected out of the many outstanding designs created by the students, who all gained valuable experience working on this live

project with Lisa Yelland, Artistic Director, and the dancers as clients. Archie's design was inspired by the Bauhaus and used an avant-garde typeface, subdued colour scheme with cropped photographs to express the elements of different identities, which was the theme of this year's performance.



## VARNDEAN COLLEGE SCIENCE STUDENT WINS UK 'YOUNG SCIENTIST OF THE YEAR' AWARD

Varndean College Science student Anya-Niamh Tidey was the winner of Uptree's 'Young Scientist of the Year' Future Talent Award in July. Sponsored by the NHS, the award recognises students who have made the most progress on their science career journey. Anya-Niamh first reached the final ten nominees, then made it down to the final three and on 1st July at a celebration ceremony hosted by J P Morgan, was awarded the outright winning gold award. Her prize is a unique tour of the Healthcare Science Department at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, including the Critical Care Unit, Renal Dialysis,

and Clinical Engineering departments. Anya, who for the past two years has been studying A Levels Biology, Chemistry and Physics at Varndean College, has her eyes set on a medical career in The Army in the future; and her passion, skills and achievements were last year recognised by The Army, who awarded her a remarkable seven year bursary to fund her throughout her training. Anya-Niamh is now following a six year degree in Medicine at St George's College, University of London, hopefully followed by training as a military doctor in The Army.

## FIRST FEET EXPERIENCE!

Last summer, Varndean College medic students visited The Leaf Hospital in Eastbourne, a university hospital specialising in podiatry. They were given the opportunity to experience first-hand what it would be like to study on a podiatry course run by the University of Brighton. Firstly, they tried plaster casting on each other, which helps a podiatrist to observe the foot structure and any defects. They were then consulted on choosing the right footwear and some students were advised on changing their own shoes to avoid future feet problems.

Later, Professor Ivan Birch introduced them to Forensic



## STEM TO GROW AT VARNDEAN

Construction of our new £2.9m STEM Centre is now rapidly taking shape and over the past few months we have seen the main external frame structure completed, with work now currently being undertaken on the interior.

Over the next 4/5 months, contractors will continue working to construct the impressive two-storey centre comprising of four science labs; six teaching rooms; prep room; toilet, kitchen and staffroom facilities, office/IT space, as well as an attractive lobby and atrium. There will also be an accessible lab, toilet and lift for students with disabilities. The Centre is due to be completed by the end of February 2020.

At Varndean College, through our challenging and engaging teaching, we hope to inspire and motivate the next generation of scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians. Through this teaching we encourage students to move on to higher level STEM courses and into a STEM career.

**From September 2020, as well as continuing to offer A Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Physics, and vocational courses in Applied Biology and Applied Science, the College will be introducing a brand new Level 3 vocational course in Engineering. The course will be the equivalent to one A Level and will include units on: engineering principles; engineering practices; engineering product design and manufacture; and electronic devices and circuits.**



## DRAMA & PERFORMING ARTS

Varndean students explored and performed the play 'Lungs' by Duncan Macmillan this Summer. 'Lungs' is a play exploring the dilemma facing a young couple thinking of having a child and the impact of our actions, and choices, on the environment. The students found this highly topical, given the rise in environmental protest in recent years. Always up to the minute with production choices, the students performed this play just before it is due to be presented by the Old Vic company in London.

Making the most of the good weather this summer, A level Drama & Theatre Studies and BTEC Performing Arts Students also got to express themselves in a outdoor workshop, developing their acting and vocal skills by exploring roles from Shakespeare's 'As You Like It' and Moliere's 'Tartuffe' at the Brighton Open Air Theatre.



## NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Congratulations to our International A STAR 2019 graduates who have all achieved a place at university in the UK. We wish them all the very best for their future careers.

**Yifan Wang: University of London - Foundation degree in Fine Art**

**Yunxuan Shen: University of Manchester - Business Management and German**

**Chiungyi CHIU: University of Durham - Japanese Studies**

**Runshi LU: Queen Mary College, London - Accounting and Finance**

**Sigi Mi: University of Ravensbourne - Illustration and Digital Communication**

**Erjia LIU: London Contemporary Dance School - Modern Dance**

We are also very pleased to welcome 57 new International students from 14 countries across the globe: Brazil, Chile, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Korea, Norway, Russia, Slovakia and Switzerland! All the students have arrived, bubbling with high expectations, keen to experience our different learning styles and UK culture.

Our thanks to the friendship and guidance offered by the Varndean 'Student Buddies' in their first days of orientation here. Everyone in the college makes such a positive impact on our visitors' lives ... here are just a couple of our past students' reflections on leaving in June.



### From a Slovakian boy

I really like the way the teachers at Varndean talk to you like a person, and honestly want to know your opinion. This is very different for me, and it took me some time to really believe it! I have also learnt to look after myself in so many ways, instead of relying on my parents. This experience has opened my eyes to the world of travel. And to myself. I know I am transformed!"

### From an Italian girl:

I feel I have had a chance to breathe. I really loved studying three subjects in depth, instead of the twelve subjects we study at home. I love the hands-on practical lessons in Biology and I feel I've really learnt a lot academically. But also, I feel more confident because I have been treated like a person not a number, as in my big school in Italy."



## WHY IS ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE SO DIFFICULT?

Vardean College has entered the 2019 CORE Schools Economics Challenge (CORE-SEC). Organised by The CORE Project in collaboration with The Financial Times for Schools, this international competition challenges students from schools and colleges across the world to create a three-minute video, with this year's theme being 'Why is addressing climate change so difficult?'

Vardean Year 2 Geography students, Lily Tregenza and Grace Algar, have been working tirelessly over the past few weeks and their final video was submitted on 30 September. Winners will be announced on 25 October, with first prize being £1,000 for the College and £500 Amazon vouchers for the students. Good luck Lily and Grace.



## GEOGRAPHY AN ENRICHING SUBJECT

We all know Geography is a dynamic subject in which students get out and about and involved in hands-on activities and this year has been no exception.

In the summer, Geography students undertook three days of intensive fieldwork, visiting a range of sites including the East Sussex coast, Seven Sisters Country Park, Portsmouth Waterfront, as well as rural areas of Mid Sussex. They learnt how to collect a variety of field data in both human and natural settings. At Portsmouth, they evaluated the Gunn Wharf development within its local hinterland and in Mid Sussex measured trees to assess the carbon and water storage capacity of a small woodland.

Last autumn, Year 2 Geographers visited London to gauge the impact of globalisation around The Shard, as well as studying geology and

natural hazards at the Natural History Museum. This autumn students will visit London for a lecture programme with geography speakers, such as Professor Danny Dorling (from Oxford) an expert on global inequalities. We shall also visit an area to look at diversity.

Year 2 students are also currently working on their coursework investigations in which they undertake serious research into a small-scale human or natural environment. The outcomes may make a real contribution to our understanding of local issues as well as developing their research and analysis skills. The coursework counts for 20% towards their A level grade.

We have a long tradition of visiting international destinations, both in Europe and further afield. In October, Geographers will join with students from other courses to visit New York

City, Philadelphia and Washington DC. Over the years we have taken many groups to North America and have developed an exciting programme of study experiences, including visiting the United Nations HQ and conducting 'cultural geography' research in Harlem.

Lastly, we are delighted that many geographers have joined the College Environmental Committee. This student led group meet to organise campaigns or take part in practical conservation activities. Over the years they've helped to create our campus nature reserve, as well as promote environmental campaigns around College. This year we are hoping for some really exciting ideas to surface. Watch this space!



## COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENT MAKES BAFTA FINALS

Vardean College Computer Science student Jude Birch (who left the college this June) was one of only 11 UK finalists in the British Academy of Film and Television's (BAFTA) 2019 nationwide competition to find the country's best young game designers.

The annual competition is open to young people aged between 10-18 to submit game designs and concepts which address a wide range of social issues including mental health, climate change, conservation, disability, bereavement, and the rights of transgender people. Jude's submission in the '15-18 years Game Making' category was a futuristic adventure game called 'Space Core' using Unity.

Jude (ex Lewes Priory School), who has recently completed two years at Vardean studying A

Level Computer Science, Physics, Maths and Further Maths plans to take a gap year before hopefully studying Computer Science at university in 2020. Jude is no stranger to winning competitions. In 2018 he was the winner of Google's annual Code-In competition, winning a trip to California to visit Google's HQ, and also in 2018 was announced 'Young Innovator of the Year' in The Argus's Youth in Action Awards.



## CREATIVE MEDIA STUDENTS GET TO TRY OUT VR TECHNOLOGY

Year 2 CTEC Level 3 Creative Media students were visited by Chris Hogg, Media Arts Lecturer from Royal Holloway University on Friday 20th Sept. His visit was primarily to talk to students about progression to study Media & Film at university and to give tips about how to write a Personal Statement. However, he also brought along some gadgets too! Students were treated to a lesson in experimenting with VR technology, as he gifted the college with Google cardboard VR sets to try out. Everyone had the chance to put themselves into the upside-down world of Stranger Things, or more terrifyingly, spend time in the presence of 'Pennywise', the clown from the film IT! Creative Media



student Maisie Hudson said "It was very exciting getting to use the VR sets that he brought in, as I'd never tried it before, I really enjoyed the session!"



## TRIP TO HARRY POTTER WORLD

Back in May, Year 1 Level 3 Creative Media Production students spent the day at the Warner Bros Harry Potter Studio Tour in Watford. They had a fantastic day discovering all the behind the scenes magic of the Harry Potter films; practised spell casting, visited platform 9¾, jumped aboard the Hogwarts Express, as well as experiencing the iron belly dragon at Gringott's bank!

Year 1 student Sadie Funnell said "It was quite surreal to go behind the scenes and see the actual sets and props that were used during the filming of Harry Potter. Overall it was a brilliant day and I would recommend it to anyone who is thinking of going."



## THORPE PARK

On a gorgeously sunny day back in March, a group of 70 Health & Social Care and Early Years students went to Thorpe Park. They were able to look at how a major leisure attraction accommodates visitors of all abilities. Students left with an increased awareness of Guest Services, Ride Access Passes, SEND provision and the Disability Policy. An informative and fun day had by all.

# SPORTING NEWS

## AOC SPORT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

In recognition of the work carried out with sports leadership in the community (including inclusive sport and female sport), Varndean College has been recognised as an AoC Sport Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy is an AoC Sport project to support colleges to enhance and develop volunteering programmes for their students. The aims of the academy are to get more college students volunteering in sport and to diversify the volunteer workforce.



## NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BRIGHTON RUGBY CLUB

Varndean College Sports Department is also pleased to announce that it has recently formed a new partnership with Brighton Rugby Club; delivering a rugby development programme which provides players with coaching alongside their studies and supporting their pathway in the game.

# POLITICS STUDENTS IN THE NEWS!

Last week IB & A Level Politics and Philosophy students visited The Labour Party Conference here in Brighton, in what turned out to be a more action-packed day than we'd bargained for. Students attended a fringe meeting on climate change with Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP, (Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change before he led the Labour Party). They also found about careers in politics from a Labour Party staffer and from a member of Jeremy Corbyn's parliamentary team. Some of our students who were part of the climate strike movement joined the Shadow Business Secretary on stage for the launch of the Green New Deal, and were pictured in the Guardian newspaper the following day! However midway through the morning, the atmosphere was electrified when the Supreme Court announced their decision on

unlawful prorogation of Parliament. Students saw the media response at first hand, with BBC Politics Live being filmed and countless MPs being interviewed. We were lucky enough to be in the conference hall for Jeremy Corbyn's speech, which had been due to take place the following day, but was rescheduled so that the MPs could go back to Westminster for the recall of Parliament. The students were absolutely buzzing - we couldn't have chosen a more eventful day if we'd tried!



## STUDENTS RAISE AWARENESS AND REDUCE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS

In July, the College's #IAMWHOLE Champions attended a celebration ceremony. They presented their campaign to several local schools and were awarded a certificate by the Mayor of Brighton & Hove, Councillor Alexandra Phillips. The #IAMWHOLE Champions were supported by YMCA Right Here, Brighton & Hove Public Health Schools Programme and their teacher, Helen Chong. They planned and delivered a student-led action to raise awareness and reduce the stigma of mental illness. They developed a '7 Day Wellbeing Challenge' which included establishing a healthy sleep pattern. The #IAMWHOLE Champions are now working on a new campaign for 2019-20.

## NEW INITIATIVE TO HELP ANY STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Nineteen Varndean College students have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid. The training was conducted by Brighton & Hove Public Health School's team and involved students developing their skills and confidence to spot the signs of mental health issues in a young person, to offer first aid and guide them towards the support they need. The Mental Health First Aiders work closely with the College's Wellbeing team and are supervised by Psychology Teacher, Helen Chong. Throughout the year, the Mental Health First Aiders offer peer support and run campaigns to raise awareness and reduce the stigma of mental health.