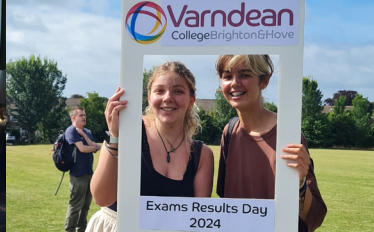




**CREATIVE ARTS
SHOWCASE**



**OUTSTANDING
EXAM SUCCESS**



**CITIZENS
UK**



UPDATE

AUTUMN 2024



BIOLOGY STUDENTS SUCCESS IN BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

Two Vardean College students, Aisha Zia and Nyx Cook Hayward, have competed in the Intermediate Biology Olympiad and have been awarded the highest GOLD level award. Isobel Morgan achieved a SILVER; Zoe Oliver, Polly Ashton Prettvett, Vinuji Jayasekara were awarded BRONZE, and a number of other students were either highly commended or commended. A

big congratulations to all who took part.

The Biology Intermediate Olympiad is a competition open to students in the first year of post-16 education, consisting of a one-hour multiple choice paper to which is taken online. Questions are set on topics students are likely to have covered at GCSE and in their first year of A level, but additional ideas are introduced requiring their

problem-solving skills and understanding of core principles, as well as a knowledge of Biology beyond the syllabus.

As part of their prize, Nyx will be attending a field trip to study ecology during October half term organised by the Institute of Biology. This was only available to a very small number of students in the whole country. A superb achievement.

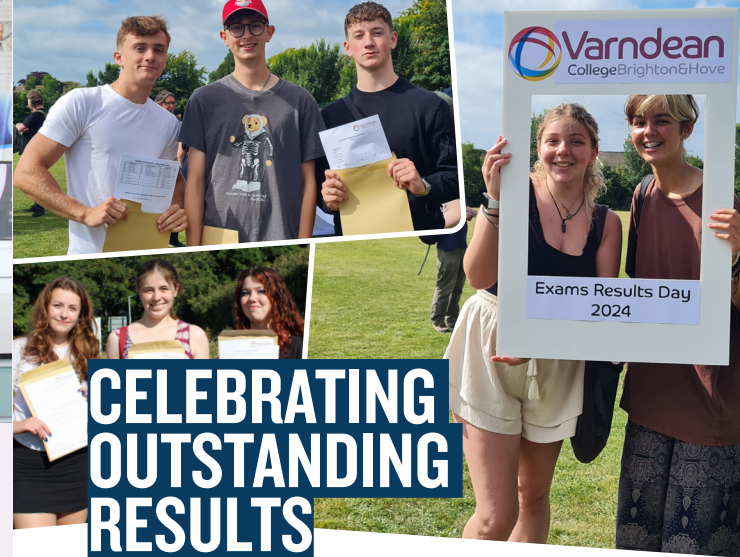
BIOLOGY STUDENTS REAP CREST GOLD AWARDS

CREST is a national scheme which helps inspire young people to think and behave like scientists and engineers. With six competition levels available, from 5-7 year olds to those aged 16+, the scheme helps children and young people become independent and reflective learners through an enquiry-based project. In the 16+ age category, taking a minimum of 70 hours, students must complete a project which makes an original contribution to a STEM field of study, whilst working with an external mentor from their chosen STEM field category. This year, three Vardean College students Ella Anderson, Tisa Sinanagic-Djolai and Alessandro Vignes (an international student from Italy) have all been awarded the prestigious GOLD award.

The students were working in conjunction with Sussex University to

trial the Photofolia app which has been developed by the university to measure chlorophyll levels in plants. The students were mentored by Dr Haruko Otamoto, senior lecturer in Biochemistry and Dr John Anderson at the university, principal lecturer, Brighton and Sussex medical school and supported by Yaso Shan and Brian Marriott in college.

Each student investigated a different use of the app, designed their own method, gathered and processed the data and produced a report in the format of a scientific paper. This is an outstanding achievement by all three students and will give them valuable skills for their future degrees. CREST Gold awards can be used by students to enhance their UCAS personal statements and are recognised and respected by universities and employers.



CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING RESULTS

Vardean College was proud once again to announce yet another year of outstanding A Level and vocational exam results back in the summer, highlighting the dedication, hard work and talent of both its students and staff.

The college once again demonstrated its commitment to academic excellence, achieving a remarkable A Level overall pass rate of 98%. This year, over half of all students achieved top grades of A* to B, reflecting the high academic standards upheld by Vardean College. Additionally, an impressive three quarters of our students earned grades of A* to C, showcasing the broad success across the student body. These results are an increase on results in 2023.

Vocational qualifications achieved a pass rate of 99%, with over half of students achieving the coveted Distinction* or Distinction.

Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, expressed immense pride in the students' achievements, stating, "We are incredibly proud of our wonderful students and their outstanding exam results this year. Their achievements are a shining example of their hard work, resilience, unwavering determination

and talent. Our staff have worked tirelessly to support and inspire them, and today we celebrate their well-earned success. I would like to thank every one of them for their incredible dedication, hard work, and commitment. Together, we've created an environment where our students thrive, making Vardean College the exceptional place it is. I am confident that this success will inspire even greater accomplishments in the future. Congratulations to all our amazing students - you have truly earned this moment!"

Vardean College remains a leading educational institution in Brighton and Hove, renowned for its exceptional academic success. The college offers a transformational educational experience where every student flourishes, preparing them for the next steps into university and future careers. With a strong emphasis on both academic excellence and personal growth, Vardean College ensures that all students achieve their full potential in an inspiring, enriching and happy environment.

Congratulations and well done to all our exceptional students and we wish them the very best of luck for their futures.

BRIGHTON GEOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION LECTURES

Geography and Environmental Science students have the opportunity to attend monthly lectures by the Brighton Geographical Association. Held at the University of Brighton, the lectures are delivered by local academics and key experts from the business and voluntary sectors and provide valuable case study material and insights into topics that appear in our college curriculum. Speakers discuss current research, as well as highlighting academic and career progression opportunities.

The October lecture 'wrong trees in the wrong place - issues in maintaining planetary health through large-scale afforestation' was delivered by Professor Rebecca Elmhirst from the University of Brighton and discussed the context of carbon sequestration through tree planting. The next lecture on 20th November by Dr Gary Fuller from Imperial College London is titled 'The Invisible killer - Air pollution'. Dr Fuller is one of three national clean air champions for UK Research and Investment and is a regular contributor to The Guardian newspaper.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE CELEBRATES SUCCESS IN SPRING OFSTED INSPECTION

Varndean College was thrilled to announce the overwhelmingly positive outcome of its Spring 2024 Ofsted inspection. The inspection highlighted Varndean College's exceptional achievements and its unwavering commitment to providing an outstanding learning environment for its students. The college received glowing commendations across various areas, highlighting its dedication to providing high-quality teaching, supportive learning environment, and exceptional student outcomes.

Key highlights from the inspection report included:

High-Quality Teaching and Learning: Ofsted commended Varndean College for its high-quality teaching standards, noting the expertise and dedication of its teachers in delivering engaging and effective lessons that support student progress and achievement.

Supportive Learning Environment: Varndean College was praised for its inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students feel valued, respected, and motivated to succeed.

Excellent Student Outcomes:

Varndean College received accolades for its excellent student outcomes, with Ofsted recognising the college's success in helping students achieve strong academic

results and progress to higher education or employment.

Effective Leadership and Governance: Varndean College's leadership and governance were commended for their strong strategic vision, effective management, and commitment to continuous improvement. Ofsted acknowledged the college's robust leadership structures and their positive impact on the overall performance of the institution.

Ofsted inspectors also reported:

Students flourish in the vibrant and highly inclusive culture staff create. They are respectful towards others, value equality, and embrace diversity.

Students benefit from expert teachers using their specialist knowledge to deepen students' understanding. As a result, students are secure in their knowledge and produce work that is of high standards.

Managers provide programmes of learning for students to develop the knowledge, behaviours, confidence and resilience they need to be successful.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision to provide high-quality and inclusive education for all students, including those who are disadvantaged. With staff, they share a very strong commitment

"We are delighted with the positive feedback received from Ofsted, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and students. At Varndean College, we are committed to providing an exceptional learning experience that inspires students to flourish and achieve the very highest of outcomes. Varndean College looks forward to building on its successes and continuing to deliver outstanding education and support to its students."

Donna-Marie Janson, College Principal

to social mobility and justice and place students firmly at the centre of their work.

Students value deeply the extensive support and care staff provide for their mental health and well-being.

Leaders provide students with a programme of high-quality careers information and advice to help them make informed choices about their futures.

Students develop valuable employability skills in work experience and through the courses they undertake. As a result, students are prepared well for their next steps and progress successfully to further learning, training and employment.

This outcome highlighted what an exceptional place Varndean College is to study at, where students achieve excellent results, are aspirational, and flourish as part of a supportive and close-knit community.

"This report reflects our own feelings about what a great place Varndean College is to study at, recognising both the academic excellence and supportive environment it provides. Students and staff should be proud of the vibrant, welcoming community they have created."

Jill Arnold, Chair of Governors





VARNDEAN COLLEGE CELEBRATES A SUCCESSFUL CREATIVE ARTS SHOWCASE

Varndean College celebrated the resounding success of its Creative Arts Showcase in June. The event was a vibrant celebration of the diverse talents and creativity of the students graduating this year, featuring live music, dance and drama performances, interactive gaming and film screenings, alongside exhibitions of 3D design, textiles, graphic design, art and photography. The evening attracted a large and enthusiastic audience who were treated to an exceptional showcase highlighting the hard work and dedication of Varndean's talented students.

For the first time, the evening culminated in a prize-giving ceremony, recognising students who made exceptional progress in each creative discipline. Awards were presented to:

Dance: Ava Donnelly

Drama: Olivia Locke, Poppy Yorke-Williams and Finlay Brookes

Music Technology: Ellie Hagan

Games Development: Harry Jordan

Film Studies: Elkka Nyoukis

Media Studies: Poppy Dodd

3D Design: Milo Bowen and Tom Wise

Creative Media: Hayley Long

Textiles: Louie Shubbar

Graphic Design: Marta Rozek

Photography: Jess Flower

Art: Otto Dann and Enzo Brace-Miotto

College Principal Donna-Marie Janson commented on the event's success, saying, "It was a truly wonderful evening where we celebrated the success of the exceptional talent, creativity and passion of our Varndean College students. With these students at the heart of the creative industries the future is bright."



VARNDEAN COLLEGE'S HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL ART TUTOR, AMY DURY, SHORTLISTED FOR CASS ART EDUCATORS AWARD

The visual arts tutors at Varndean College are practising professionals in their own right and we are delighted to announce that Art tutor, Amy Dury, recently had her work exhibited as part of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition and she has also been shortlisted for the prestigious Cass Art Educators Award in November! Her painting 'Good Boy' will be on show with all other finalists at the Copeland Gallery in London from 8-16 November. Amy regularly exhibits her work

throughout the UK, most recently in Rogue Women 3, Manchester; Brighton College's new performing arts building; The Stratford Gallery in the Cotswolds, as well as a collaboration with Tambaran 2 in New York

Her latest exhibition 'Souvenir' will be at The Lido Stores, Margate, from 13th-30th November 2024, where the theme will be a mix of seaside and animals, ownership and belonging, bare skin and patterned clothes, women and donkeys and the weights they bear.

VARNDEAN TEXTILES STUDENTS GET AWARDED THE MR X STITCH NEEDLEWORK PRIZE!

We are so proud of our Year 2 Textiles students Mia Rigg and Asha Minns Behrens, who were awarded for the Mr X Stitch student Needlework Prize 2024!

Mia Rigg's incredible Queen of Hearts dress was awarded third place in the 3D Textiles category, whilst Asha Minns Behrens has won first prize in the Machine Stitch category of this amazing competition.

This is fantastic news for several reasons, but not least because many of the other entries were created by students completing their university degrees, while Asha and Mia are only just completing their A levels. Well done Asha and Mia!

Thank you so much to Jamie Chalmers and the other incredible judges Lizzy Chambers, Danielle Clough, Helen Adams, Peter Tarrant, Claire Barrett, Selina Pearce and Dr Sarah Joy Ford. We are so proud to know that you have seen and appreciated the talent of our students.



METALWORKER AND SCULPTOR JON MILLS VISITS VARNDEAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Varndean College students were honoured to have a visit from the talented metalworker and sculptor, Jon Mills, back in October. Jon delivered an inspiring and insightful talk to our students, covering the impressive breadth of work he has created throughout his career, showcasing his expertise across a variety of projects, from major film commissions and bridges to innovative local installations.

Jon shared not only the creative process behind his pieces, but also the practical side of his craft, emphasising the importance of weatherproofing, anti-vandal precautions, and health and safety - crucial considerations in public installations.

His talk was a true masterclass in forward-thinking design and problem-solving, offering our students valuable real-world insights.



EX-STUDENT JACK PATTISON WINS PEWTER LIVE 2024 STUDENT COMPETITION!

Congratulations to former Varndean student, Jack Pattison, who in July won the Pewter Live 2024 Student Competition for his Pewter point Pencil, inspired by metal point drawing, which was exhibited at the V&A earlier this month.

Jack (formerly of Patcham High School) was a student with us from 2020-2022, studying 3D Design, Geography & Early Modern History. He then went on to study Product & Furniture Design at the University of Plymouth.

Jack's 3D Design tutor, Sarah Lampard Sawyer, said about Jack's time with us, "I am so incredibly proud of Jack, he worked so hard, learnt so much with us and produced amazing work. Jack showed a huge talent in design."

Jack said about his award-winning entry, "My design is a pencil made from one solid piece of pewter. I discovered earlier in the year that pewter has the ability to make marks just like a piece of graphite, and as far as I can tell, this function of pewter has never been explored in its nearly 4000-year history! What sets it apart is the way that you can write with any part of it, you can create fine lines, bold lines, calligraphy lines, rubbings etc. all with one pencil - which makes it a very versatile tool".

VARNDEAN STUDENT'S SHORT FILM SHORTLISTED FOR INTO FILM AWARDS

Varndean College student, Phoebe Young, has been shortlisted for the prestigious Into Film Awards with her powerful short film, 'Headphones'. Among 21 nominees across seven filmmaking categories, the Into Film Awards recognises and celebrates exceptional talent in filmmaking across the UK.

Phoebe's film competes in the Time for Action category, sponsored by Swatch, which challenges young filmmakers to raise awareness of important issues and envision the changes they wish to see in the world, whether big or small; personal or society wide.

Headphones is a poignant short film that explores an immersive journey of a young autistic girl navigating a seemingly ordinary day. We are invited to experience the bustling corridors and classrooms through the heightened auditory lens of our protagonist as she grapples with the sensory overload that everyday life presents her. Phoebe's lived experience infuses every frame with emotion, her own experiences woven seamlessly into the narrative.

VARNDEAN STUDENTS GAIN VALUABLE INSIGHTS AT BRIGHTON'S MEANINGFUL FUTURES WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK

Our students participated in Meaningful Futures Work Experience Week, a city-wide event held in Brighton. Orchestrated by Celine McKeown of Do What Matters and Paris Palmano of Citizens UK, students were engaged in a week's work experience with companies across the city. They worked with new people, cold-called, and interviewed business leaders. They also used the Map of Meaning to help them explore where best their skills are placed.

Students' reflections revealed they all discovered something about who they are, what they are capable of, how to create more meaning in your life and work, as well as taking away some really practical next steps towards crafting a meaningful future for themselves.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS IN GRAPHIC DESIGN COURSES

The rollout of Level 3 and Level 4 graphic design short courses at Varndean College have been a huge success, with students learning everything from foundational layout and photo editing to advanced motion graphics and post-production skills.

Two standout students from the short course were honoured with achievement awards and certificates by Chloe Batchelor, an established freelance designer. These awards recognised exceptional talent and dedication, celebrating the commitment and innovative designs that set their craft apart from others.

As they move forward in their creative practices, both students will take forward the skills learnt on the course and further develop their technical and creative talent.

Their achievements are just the beginning of what promises to be a bright and impactful future in the world of graphic design.



POLITICS SOCIETY KICKS OFF TO A GREAT START

The Varndean College Politics Society has kicked off to an exciting start. On 4 October, we welcomed James MacCleary, MP for Lewes constituency, to the first event of the term. The event included a lively and informative Q&A session, with our students bringing forward a range of thoughtful and topical questions. Discussions covered a variety of pressing issues, including the future of the NHS and concerns around potential privatisation, prison backlogs and what solutions are being considered to improve the justice system, as well as local issues such as the future of Lewes Bus Station, and environmental concerns about sewage disposal in our local rivers and coastline.

Following this was a visit by Sarah Webster, who stood as the Conservative candidate for Brighton Pavilion in the 2024 General Election and first visited the college back in June for our hustings event. She was so impressed with our students' engagement in politics that she vowed she would return. At her return visit, she shared why she is a Conservative and answered questions on Brexit and immigration, planning controls and austerity, the final two candidates for party leader and how the party can engage with younger voters.

We look forward to more opportunities in the weeks to come to connect with many more local leaders!

A LEVEL POLITICS STUDENTS AT LIB DEMS CONFERENCE

A Level Politics students also attended the Liberal Democrats Annual Conference at the Brighton Centre in September. They listened to a debate on voting reform, explored the exhibition, and had the opportunity to hear Daisy Cooper deliver her excellent Deputy Leader's speech. They also managed to meet up with James MacCleary, MP. What a great opportunity to see politics in action!



VARNDEAN HUSTINGS WELCOMES ELECTION CANDIDATES

A stimulating and engaging debate took place at our Hustings on 20th June. We had the pleasure of welcoming two election candidates for Brighton Pavilion: Sian Berry from the Green Party and Sarah Webster from the Conservative Party.

The keen engagement and thought-provoking questions from our students made the event truly memorable, with questions covering several important topics including:

- Affordable housing
- Gender self-identification
- Wealth inequality and asset taxes
- Nuclear deterrent
- The effectiveness of austerity measures
- Improving trade relations with the EU
- National Service
- The benefits of having a Green MP rather than a Labour one
- The key strengths of each candidate's party

We'd like to say a massive thank you to both Sian and Sarah for their participation in this event. Their willingness to engage with our community and address a wide range of pressing issues has greatly enriched discussions for all involved.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE CELEBRATES FANTASTIC IB DIPLOMA RESULTS

Varndean College was thrilled to announce the exceptional performance of its students in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme in July. Our students outperformed the global average by a stonking four points showcasing Varndean College as world class yet again.

Varndean College students achieved an impressive average diploma score of 34.34 out of 45 and an outstanding pass rate of 97.73%. That is more than 4 points higher than the global average of 30.32 secured by 187,826 students worldwide with a pass rate of 80%.

The IB Diploma Programme at Varndean College is renowned for its holistic and exceptional approach to education, fostering not only academic excellence but also the development of critical thinking, research skills, and global awareness. Through this programme, students become globally minded citizens, equipped with a broad set

of skills and knowledge that prepare them for success in higher education and beyond.

“We are immensely proud of our students and how hard they have worked over the past two years,” said Diploma Programme Coordinator Lee Finlay-Gray. “The IB Diploma Programme is a rigorous and challenging course to study, and our students’ achievements are a testament to their dedication, resilience, and intellectual curiosity. Our students have embraced the challenge of the IB Diploma Programme and have excelled. Their hard work and determination have truly paid off, and we are confident that they are well-prepared to make significant contributions to the global community.”

In addition to their impressive scores, many of our students secured places at prestigious universities, of which some highlights include:

Madeleine Burgess Smith (formerly Hurstpierpoint College) achieved 43

points, now reading Biomedical Sciences at the University of Oxford

Meadow Osborne (formerly Dorothy Stringer), with a score of 39 points, reading Law at the University of Oxford.

Deneb Marden-Rull (formerly Hove Park), who scored 42 points, studying Economics, Politics, and International Studies at the University of Warwick

Ruby Nunns (formerly Burgess Hill Academy), who achieved an impressive 42 points, studying Civil and Structural Engineering at Leeds

Ellen Cross (formerly Warden Park) achieved 38 points, at Bristol studying History

Laura Cooper (formerly Downlands), with 41 points, studying Dentistry at the University of Birmingham

Matti Rogers (formerly PACA), with 39 points, at Sheffield studying Aerospace Engineering

Luka Miles (formerly Worthing High School), having scored 38 points, studying Osteopathy at Swansea

IB STUDENT ADAM ALEXANDER SECURES PLACE WITH THE BRITISH ARMY



Congratulations to Year 2 IB student Adam Alexander (formerly of Lewes Old Grammar School).

Adam has been successful in his application with the British Army and is now eligible for financial support for the remainder of his college studies as well as during university with a place on RMA Sandhurst Officer training secured where all officers in the British Army are trained to take on the

responsibility of leading their soldiers. This is a highly competitive and demanding process and all of Adam’s teachers and peers at Varndean College are hugely proud of his achievement.

Adam has aspirations to attend university before Sandhurst Officer training with his sights set on joining the Royal Artillery and is now making exciting decisions around his university and degree choice with the support of his family and tutors at college.

Lily Tanswell (formerly of Patcham High) at Sussex University studying International Relations and Development

Tom Ford-Gunningham (formerly Varndean School) at Leeds studying Chemical Engineering

In addition, after taking a gap year, a further two IB students from our 2023 leavers have secured places to study at Cambridge university this September; Ella Tingley is now studying Engineering at St Catharine’s College whilst Martha Rayner is studying HSPS at Queens College.

Principal of Varndean College Donna-Marie Janson writes “The excellent results achieved in the International Baccalaureate at Varndean College are a testament to the dedication, hard work, and passion

of our students and teachers. We cannot emphasise just how well our students have performed. Many of our students have achieved the equivalent of 4 A*s in A level; with the vast majority of students achieving a point score of over 36, the equivalent of 3 As in traditional A Levels. What an exceptional achievement! We are immensely proud of our students; they have been an absolute pleasure to teach and get to know and we wish each and every one of them a wonderful future.”

2024 has been an exciting and rewarding year for the college’s IB provision. Recently the outcome of an in-depth five-year review carried out by the International Baccalaureate praised the high quality of provision, exceptional student experience and the excellent

commitment of staff to delivering a world-class Diploma. The IB described the college’s leadership team as “exemplary in their pedagogical approach, aligning closely with the philosophy and mission of the IB.” They continued that “the school’s dedication to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment is evident in its strong sense of community and comprehensive student support services. Varndean College has made substantial investments in its learning environments reflecting the college’s innovative and student-centered approach to education” concluding that “with a solid foundation, committed leadership, and dedicated staff, Varndean College is well-positioned to continue its IB journey. The school remains steadfast in its commitment to the IB philosophy and is dedicated to the ongoing sustainability and development of its IB programmes.”

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all our IB Diploma students for their remarkable achievements and sincere thanks to our staff across the college community for their commitment and the unwavering support. As we celebrate these wonderful results, we look forward to continuing our tradition of excellence in education and supporting our students in reaching their full potential.





VARNDEAN COLLEGE BECOMES A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Varndean College is delighted to announce that it is now a lead partner of the Brighton and Hove Sussex Schools and College Alliance (BHSSCA) alongside the University of Sussex.

The programme is dedicated to fostering the next generation of outstanding educators and our collaboration with the University of Sussex ensures that student teachers receive top-class educational theory and practice, supported by a university renowned for its research in teaching.

As part of BHSSCA, we emphasise innovative teaching strategies and inclusivity, equipping our trainees with the skills needed to succeed in today's diverse classroom environments. Student teachers will gain hands-on extensive experience in partner schools and colleges, working alongside experienced teachers who offer real-world insights and mentorship. We will offer a comprehensive career development pathway, including job placements, interview preparation, and continuous professional support during and after training.

There will be several flexible training pathways, including

The Sixth Form PGCE

Sussex School Choice PGCE

The PGTA (postgraduate teaching apprenticeship)

The Government is offering tax-free bursaries of up to £29,000 and scholarships up to £31,000 in a wide range of subjects. Details of these and how to apply will be available from our website in the very near future.

VARNDEAN COLLEGE PARTICIPATE IN CITIZENS UK EVENTS

On 1 July, Varndean College representatives attended the Citizens UK General Election Assembly in London, where community leaders shared testimony and asked politicians from different parties for change on the living wage, citizenship, housing, mental health and more. Varndean's SU President, Lysander Pierce, spoke on behalf of our young people, addressing Angela Rayner to campaign for better mental health support. Speaking at the event, he stated "We need statutory counselling in every school & college in England, so every young person has support. Plus, votes at 16 to take the next step in our democracy".

Later in July, the Student Union then took a trip to London to attend a further Citizens UK meeting where they had the opportunity to hear about the impactful work Citizens UK has been doing in various critical areas. These include initiatives to improve mental health support, efforts to end racial inequality in education, and strategies to tackle the housing crisis. The visit provided valuable insights and a deeper understanding of the significant contributions Citizens UK is making towards building a fairer society.

In October, our Student Ambassadors visited Varndean School where they met Sian Berry, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, and Emma Daniel, Brighton & Hove Cabinet member responsible for Children, Families and Youth Services. The College's campaign proved a huge success, with the Council agreeing to fund free counselling in all of the Brighton & Hove secondary schools. Next step is to ramp up the campaign to include all post-16 providers.

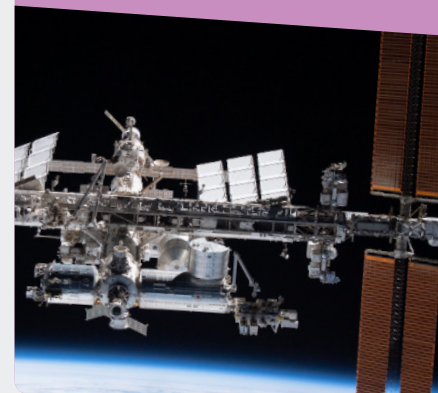


MISSION SPACE LAB

Back in March, two groups of A Level Computer Science students wrote programs to be run on a Raspberry Pi computer on the International Space Station!

Mission Space Lab is a scheme which offers teams of young people the chance to run scientific experiments in space. Mission Space Lab then downloads and sends the data captured to our teams along with a certificate in June.

Congratulations Artemii Tpelov, Dennis Cullip-Cross, Jago Polwin, Samuel Smith, and Daniel Kimber - you should all feel incredibly proud of your achievements!



EARLY YEARS CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION STUDENTS EXCEL IN ASSESSMENTS

Congratulations to our second year Early Years Childcare and Education students who all passed their 20 hour controlled assessments.

A particular well done to three students who have completed the full level 3 qualification with the equivalent of 3 A* grades.

Ashley will be heading to Teesside University to study BA(Hons) Primary Ed with QTS, Ann Marie is going to University of Brighton to study BA(Hons) Primary Ed with QTS and Lyra to The University of Northampton to study BSC(Hons) Occupational Therapy.

Best wishes to Ashley, Ann Marie, Lyra, and all our graduates for their bright futures ahead!



T LEVEL STUDENTS BECOME QUALIFIED FIRST AIDERS

On Wednesday 9 October, our T Level in Education and Childcare students had great fun whilst learning about how to keep children and babies safe. Sarah Russell - Davis from Daisy First Aid, came in to deliver the Level 3 Paediatric First Aid Qualification to our students. This was a great opportunity for our learners to gain the qualification they will need to work in an early years setting, ahead of their placement start date. We are excited to say that 100% passed and gained their qualification! Well done T Levels and thank you to the lovely Sarah who taught them so well.

PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS SHINE IN NATIONAL THEATRE CONNECTIONS PRODUCTION

Huge congratulations for the Year 1 BTEC Performing Arts - Acting students this term for their National Theatre Connections production of "The Periodicals" at the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells.

This is the College's first year taking part in the programme that sees young performers across the UK create productions of new plays commissioned by the National Theatre.

The play "The Periodicals" by Sian Owen, is set in a dystopian future, not too far from our own world, The Periodicals follows a group of young people living outside of society. Determined not to be sent back to school, the Periodicals form their own alternative community. Exploring issues important to our young people today - from mental health and friendship to the importance of having their voices heard.

The production was attended by the writer of the play, Sian Owen (Under Milkwood, National Theatre; Land of My Father & Another Place, BBC Radio 4), who was so thrilled with the students' interpretation of her play and (she wouldn't mind me saying) was moved to tears by their work.

We also had representatives from the National Theatre attend the show, who along with staff from Trinity Theatre, were all highly impressed with the production, professionalism and behaviour of our students.

The performers worked together as an ensemble beautifully and told the story with great flair and generosity. The students conducted themselves brilliantly, brimming with professionalism and an unforgettable performance to a full house. In addition, a 2nd year student Ruben Spink, designed the lighting, programmed and ran the technical production (so successfully that the venue used them to support a number of other shows in the connections programme).

All of our students were outstanding ambassadors for the creativity, dedication and communal spirit that Varndean College fosters so well.

A huge thanks and congratulations, once again, to all involved.



BETHANY TYRRELL WINS PRAGMAT SUMMER ESSAY COMPETITION

Congratulations to second-year student Bethany Tyrrell, formerly of Burgess Hill Academy, for winning the Pragmat Summer Essay Competition!

Bethany triumphed in the Senior Economics category with her essay titled "?????" The competition invited students to tackle one of 13 thought-provoking questions across the fields of Business, Economics, Politics, and International Relations. As one of the overall winners, Bethany has earned a one-to-one mentorship session with a university student studying her ideal course, along with a book voucher, and an interview opportunity on Pragmat.

Bethany is currently studying A Levels in Economics, Maths and Early Modern History.

Well done Bethany!



EVENTS SHOWCASE

Our summer and autumn terms have been jam packed with events for departing students, new students and future prospective students.

In July we held a New Students' Day where our new cohort of students joining us in September had the opportunity of meeting subject tutors in preparation for starting at Varndean College. The day was also a chance for us to provide key information about their journey at college and to set 'Course Start' work.

That same day, we said a fond farewell with a Leavers' Celebration for our fabulous Year 2 students who were leaving us for pastures new, whether that be onto further education, university, apprenticeships or directly into employment.



Later in July, we had the pleasure of welcoming over 1600 Year 10 students from schools across Sussex to attend one of our two Year 10 Taster Days. Students were able to sample four different taster sessions of their choice, as well as learn how exciting and inspirational it would be to study at Varndean College.

Late August was time to welcome back our new applicants into college for a week of Enrolment interviews, followed by an Induction Day to prepare students for the start of teaching. Later in the autumn term, we then held a very successful New Parents' Progression Evening in collaboration with Brighton and Sussex universities. Hosted by Sussex University, parents were able to acquire a deeper understanding of the different progression routes available to their young people and learn about the UCAS application process. The event also gave invaluable experience for our new Student Ambassadors to meet the Student Ambassadors from the two universities.



The autumn term has also seen us hold our hugely successful annual Open Day in late September, at which prospective students and parents for 2025 were able to visit the college and discover what an exceptional place Varndean College is, followed in early October by an International Baccalaureate Evening for those interested in finding out more about this increasingly popular diploma.

Throughout the autumn term, representatives from Varndean College have also been participating in an extensive School Liaison Programme, in which we visit 22 schools across Sussex at Post-16 Evenings and Careers Fairs, as well as delivering talks to Year 11 students at 13 different schools in Sussex. We are now looking forward to our Open Evenings on 6 and 7 November!



RECENT TRIPS

There has once again been a wide range of trips taking place this last term.

In September, our Year 2 A Level Photography students went to The Depot Cinema in Lewes to see the film 'Lee', about war photographer Lee Miller.

First year 3D Design students went on a site visit to launch their Architecture project. A trip was held to Brighton Seafront where students were able to study the seafront architecture, visit the Sea Life Centre and most importantly, visit the Sea Lanes site as the context for their first practical project. Students undertook extensive drawing and recording to use back in the workshop to develop ideas for their project.

Second year 3D Design students visited Hyde Park to see the current 2024 Serpentine Pavilion by Minsuk Cho. Titled Archipelagic Void, the Pavilion is composed of five 'islands', each structure is unique in size, height and form. This trip was to launch their Personal Investigation. This site will be the

location for their own architectural or product-based responses. It's used as inspiration for design ideas and understanding the concepts behind other designers' work.

From 1-4 October, a group of Geography, Environmental Science and Travel & Tourism students rambled amongst the rugged lava fields, cascading water, basaltic geo forms, glaciers and volcanic mountains that make up the Icelandic tectonic shield. Their trip to Iceland concluded with a finale of colourful street art and nature



inspired buildings in the capital and the trip was deemed a great success by students and staff.

As is always the case at Varndean College, the students were lovely, showing friendship and warmth to each other and real enthusiasm to experience this exciting country. A very inspirational trip in every sense.

Our ambitious Year 1 & 2 Textiles students had an inspiring day at The Knitting and Stitching Show at the Alexandra Palace, London. Students connected with incredible textiles artists, explored innovative and beautiful work, and had the amazing opportunity to meet Holly Searle. The visit was such a positive experience.

Year 1A Level Drama & Theatre students had an unforgettable experience at the iconic Globe Theatre in London, where they watched a lively performance of 'A Comedy of Errors'. The trip offered students a unique opportunity to witness Shakespeare's work in the setting it was originally intended for!



IB STUDENTS CONDUCT ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON ASHDOWN FOREST FIELD TRIP

In June, Varndean College took students to Ashdown Forest in East Sussex for a field trip for one day so that they can gather data for their coursework.

As part of the IB ESS course, our IB students are required to complete a piece of coursework called an Internal Assessment (IA) which constitutes 25% of the final grade. One of the best ways to cover

this is for students to conduct an individual study, usually in the form of an ecological investigation.

They were accompanied by Yaso Shan (group leader), Mark Halliwell (Geography tutor and driver), Janice Brown (retired Geography tutor and driver) and Sue Craske (retired Science Technician, horticulturalist and professional gardener).

IB STUDENTS EXAMINE RENEWABLE ENERGY

Recently our IB students got the chance to examine renewable energy by visiting the Rampion Offshore Wind Farm visitor centre.

Students were able to discover the importance of offshore wind energy and explore how this relates to climate change and modern lifestyles. They also learned how electricity is generated from wind and how it feeds into the national grid distribution network, being prioritised over gas-generated electricity whenever it is made. They were able to experience a virtual reality of climbing up and

witnessing the inner workings of the impressive wind turbines and generators within.

Yaso Shan, IB tutor on the Environmental Systems and Societies course commented, "This course covers important aspects of sustainable energy and Varndean College is very lucky to have Rampion on its doorstep. It's an ideal opportunity for our students to keep pace with current technologies and new approaches to renewable energy sources as it will become more relevant than ever for them and their future generations."





MELLISSA NIELSEN-WILLIAMS WINS PLACE ON US PROGRAMME

Year 2 IB student, Mellissa Nielsen-Williams, won a place on the 13th cohort of the Sutton Trust US Programme, run in partnership with the US-UK Fulbright Commission. Entry to the programme is highly competitive and Mellissa was chosen from 1300 of the UK's brightest students as one of the 150 scholars.

The Sutton Trust US Programme allows academically talented under-resourced British students to explore US higher education and what it would be like to study at a top US university. As well as supporting students in their exploration, the programme takes all 150 students for a week-long visit to the US, visiting different campuses and giving the students a flavour of life stateside.

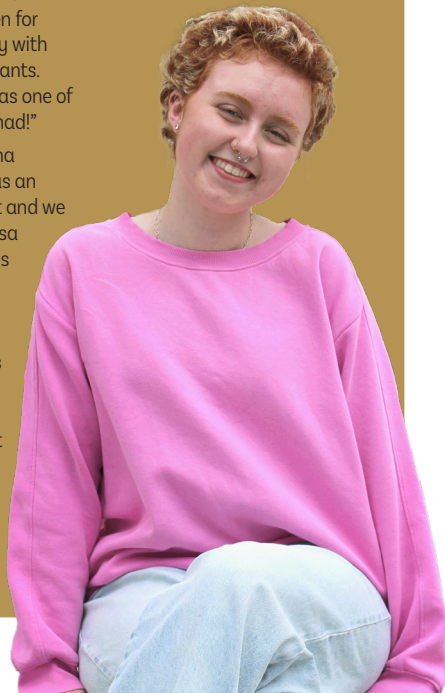
Speaking of her achievements, Mellissa said: "I was over the moon to have been chosen for this opportunity especially with so many deserving applicants. Meeting all of cohort 13 was one of the best experiences I've had!"

Lee Finlay-Gray, IB Diploma Coordinator said: "This was an outstanding achievement and we are hugely proud of Mellissa for securing a place on this incredible programme. It's great to see the IB Diploma opening up even more global opportunities for our learners and the advice and guidance Sutton Trust and Fulbright provide is extensive. The opportunity for students to visit the USA and immerse themselves in both the culture and

academic side was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Mellissa."

Before visiting the US, the students also attended UK residential and virtual workshops to learn about US universities. Now students on the programme will choose if they would like to continue to make applications to US universities alongside their UK applications. This second part of the programme includes admissions guidance from the Fulbright team, including university choices and support with applications and financial aid processes.

Across the last twelve cohorts, the Sutton Trust US Programme has supported almost 700 young people to take up offers at highly selective US universities after securing over \$150 million in coveted scholarships.



FRESHERS' WEEK

Friday 20 September saw the launch of Vardean College's Freshers' Week where we were able to welcome all our new students to Vardean.

Students attended a Freshers' Fair, where they were able to collect an array of information from our College library, careers and wellbeing teams, as well as local providers such as Sussex Police, Brighton & Hove Buses, RuOk, Terrence Higgins Trust, the YMCA, Young Carers and Brighton Food Bank.

The following week there were a host of activities for students to enjoy, ranging from arts and crafts, a cake sale, a treasure hunt and a movie day.



VARDEAN STUDENTS ACHIEVE EMPLOYABILITY AWARDS

Vardean College's first Employability Bronze Awards were presented in June by Vice Principal, Lisa Watkins Stevens. The first-year students flew through their Bronze Award work, having fun practising the kind of effective communication and practical interview skills needed in today's workplace. Congratulations went to Jennifer, Archie, Rebecca, Dennis, Anya, and Carmen!

Further Employability Skills Awards were then presented to students in July. Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, awarded students certificates to recognise



the dedication and effort of students who had excelled in developing practical skills necessary for success in today's competitive workplace. Many students achieved Bronze Awards, while some distinguished themselves further by earning Silver Awards, a testament to their hard work. Congratulations to all our award recipients!

VARDEAN COLLEGE STUDENTS LEARN THE SCIENCE OF MONITORING CLIMATE CHANGE

A Level Environmental Science is now an exciting new offering at Vardean College and this week, students were carrying out flower dissections on various species to examine different pollen grains. Climate change has been widely recognised and acknowledged as the single biggest threat to our planet and our students learn important scientific techniques that investigate and monitor changes in our environment; pollen grain analysis being one of them.

Yaso Shan who leads the scientific component of this course at Vardean commented: "this course is an invaluable addition to our Curriculum and is only set to increase in popularity being relevant to our times and a useful facilitating subject for our STEM Sciences covering important elements of Biology (Ecology), Chemistry, Physics, and Data Science."



SPORT ROUND UP!

Varndean College has had a huge success with the start of the Men's Football Academy. Recent results include a 7-0 win over Buckswood in the ESFA Super League National competition, a 5-1 win against BHASVIC, plus a draw against Bexhill which showed great fight to come back in the dying minutes of the game. The 2nd team have come together well after a narrow defeat to The Weald and a draw against BHASVIC to win 3-1 against Steyning Grammar in their league competition. The teams look to continue great form against Worthing College in the National Cup at the end of October.

Our Netball Academy have started very positively within their league competition winning against Cardinal Newman and narrowly losing in

a great competition vs Oscar Romero Sixth Form.

Our Women's football is going strong with over 11 girls competing in training every week.

Similarly, our social football enrichment is growing each week and has over 20 players on a Monday afternoon!

Basketball enrichment continues to grow with over 30+ students taking part and coaching by Worthing Thunder has been excellent! All students are thoroughly enjoying the sessions. Fixtures looking to be put in place soon.

With every enrichment running smoothly it is great to see over 60 students playing sport and representing the college respectively!



PE AND SPORT & EXERCISE SCIENCE STUDENTS BECOME LIFE SAVERS

Our A Level PE and BTEC Sport & Exercise Science Students acquired vital CPR & lifesaving skills recently and will raise awareness at local schools as part of their Higher Sports leaders Qualification. Massive thanks to Emma at Southcoast first aid for delivering such inspiring session to our students.

