



**VARNDEAN'S
NEW LEGAL HUB**



**CULTURE
DAY**



**STUDENTS CHALLENGE
LABOUR MP**



UPDATE

SPRING 2025

**VARNDEAN COLLEGE PLAYS
HOST TO FATBOY SLIM**





VARNDEAN COLLEGE REACH NATIONAL FINAL OF EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT DEBATING COMPETITION

A huge well done to the incredible team of eight Year 1 students who competed against schools and colleges from across the South East in the regional round of the European Youth Parliament Debating Competition at Bedes School on 12 March. Varndean College have now made it to the national final to be held in Liverpool in July! Congratulations to Lila Crockett, Olivia Dearn, Evan de Barnardi Jones, Ali Israr, Clara Previ Naylor, Megan Stubbs, Arun Webb, and Vanessa Zhou. We're so proud of your achievement and can't wait to see you in the final!

OXFORD UNION SCHOOLS DEBATING COMPETITION

On 30 January, four Varndean Year 1 students took part in the Oxford Union Schools Debating Competition at Ibstock Place School in Roehampton. Olivia Dearn, Evan De Barnardi Jones, Arun Webb and Clara Previ Naylor took on teams from prestigious independent schools including Winchester College and Eltham College. They all did brilliantly and absolutely loved the experience. Well done to all of them.



POLITICS AT VARNDEAN

Varndean Politics Society has had another phenomenal year with guests including local MPs, James MacLeary, Sian Berry and Chris Ward, as well as Jacob Taylor, Deputy Leader of Brighton & Hove Council, and the human rights lawyer, Chris Callender. Varndean Politics Society regularly attracts over 40 students each week, with some events being so popular that they are standing room only!

INTRODUCING THE VARNDEAN COLLEGE STUDENT LEGAL HUB!

On 13 November, Varndean College launched its first ever student run 'Legal Hub' in collaboration with the University of Sussex. The service will be run entirely by a team of university student volunteers and is designed to provide Varndean College students with legal support on a wide array of topics. From employment to bursaries, and everything in between, the team of dedicated volunteers has trained and researched to help identify legal issues, advise on where they can best get support and signpost information about programs or organisations within the community that can help. Set up in conjunction with law school finalists in the University of Sussex Streetlaw clinic, the Legal Hub will help make the first steps the easiest. Throughout October, the StreetLaw team have already worked with A Level Law

students at Varndean College to help them with their new 'Legal Hub' project. Working with Jo Hambleton, Varndean College Assistant Principal, and Jeanette Ashton, StreetLaw lead at the University of Sussex, the team have delivered a series of interactive workshops, including how to interview a client, provide information, and signpost to useful resources. Varndean students practised these essential legal skills through interviewing the StreetLaw team, who developed a series of roleplays on issues which Varndean students might be experiencing.

Following the launch of the 'Legal Hub' in November, the StreetLaw

team will be on hand to assist. Reflecting on the benefits of the work, Jeanette said "The project has provided the StreetLaw team with the opportunity to design, project manage and deliver a bespoke programme, which not only empowers the Varndean students to develop those skills themselves, but also gives them the opportunity to assist their peers." Elli, one of the StreetLaw team, thoroughly enjoyed the experience, stating "Watching Varndean students learn techniques to assist in the functioning of their legal hub, was both rewarding and inspiring. The students benefited from our legal knowledge, but it was also the StreetLaw team that benefited from the chance to engage with young people in our community."



CULTURE WEEK AT VARNDEAN COLLEGE: A CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

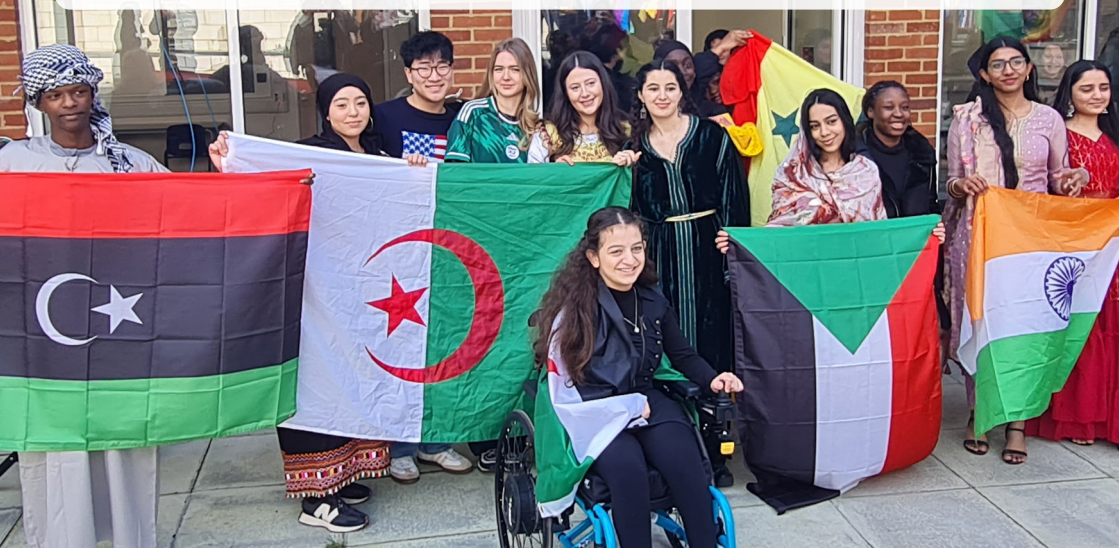
Varndean College's highly anticipated Culture Day returned for its third successful year in February - only this time, it was bigger and better than ever! Evolving into a full Culture Week, the event brought together students, staff, and the wider community for an inspiring celebration of diversity, heritage, and global connections.

The excitement kicked off on Monday 10 February with a 'Drop Your Pin' event, where students and staff marked their heritage locations on the world map. Other mid-week activities included a Language Speed Learning session allowing everyone to share and explore languages from across the globe, as well as a 'Culture Iceberg' workshop, where students shared meaningful messages about their identity and

values on colourful Love Hearts.

As the week drew to a close, the grand finale took place on Valentine's Day with a spectacular celebration of fashion, food, and entertainment. Students showcased traditional attire from different cultures, bringing a dazzling display of colours and styles to the College's new outdoor amphitheatre. The event also carried an important message of global awareness and social responsibility, as funds were raised in support of Amnesty International.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated, supported, and contributed to making Culture Week 2025 such an unforgettable experience. Here's to many more years of celebrating the richness of our global community!



ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDENTS EXPLORE T.S. ELIOT

Huge thanks to Peter Howarth from Queen Mary University of London for delivering an inspiring T.S. Eliot masterclass to our English Literature students earlier this month. It was a fantastic opportunity for our students to explore Eliot's works in depth, gaining expert knowledge and fresh perspectives on one of the most influential poets of the 20th century.



FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS AT VARNDEAN COLLEGE

Health & Social Care students raise money for charity

Some very festive Health & Social Care students helped raise money for local charities on the Santa Bus in Saltdean. Great fun was had by all and lots of money raised for local charities!

Festive eCard Design Winner

Congratulations went to Year Two student, Daisy Hannigan, who was the 2024 winner of our Festive eCard design competition. Daisy (formerly of Lewes Old Grammar School) is studying A Levels in Art, Film Studies and English Literature, and is pictured here being presented with her cash prize by Principal, Donna-Marie Janson. Daisy's truly imaginative design captured the eye of the senior management team and was used as the official Varndean College ecard.

Festive Tree

As in tradition at the time of year, our Student Union decorated a beautiful and uplifting festive tree for the college foyer.

3D Modelling enrichment students

3D Modelling students embraced the joy of season by designing Christmas trees. Pictured is one of the amazing designs, crafted by student Oliver Bint in under 30 minutes!

Drama Society

Students from the Year 2 Drama Society got everyone in the festive spirit with a selection of songs from their Xmas Showcase. The students volunteered their time on Friday lunchtimes to put together a programme of performances, bringing cheer and entertainment

to an audience of friends, family and local community.

Early Years students take to the ice!

First and second year Early Years students went ice skating at The Royal Pavilion ice rink as a celebratory end of term trip. It also served as a great opportunity for team building. It was lovely to see the students being so kind and helping each other if they struggled on the ice and we had some talented skaters there too! A wonderful festive activity for a wonderful group of students!





VARNDEAN COLLEGE HOSTS EXCLUSIVE EVENT WITH FATBOY SLIM AS PART OF FE SUSSEX LIVE FESTIVAL OF CAREERS

On Friday 7 March, Varndean College hosted an exclusive live event with world-renowned DJ and producer Fatboy Slim as part of the FE Sussex Live Festival of Careers series. The event saw Fatboy Slim in conversation with BBC and Juice FM radio presenter, Guy Lloyd, for an engaging interview about his career, the music industry, and the secrets behind his success.

For the first time, new technology recently installed across seven Sussex colleges enabled students throughout the region to participate in this event. It was also livestreamed on YouTube, offering fans and students across the globe a unique opportunity to hear from one of the most influential figures in electronic music.

Guy Lloyd, known for his work with BBC and Juice FM, hosted a lively conversation, bringing a fun and insightful atmosphere to the interview. Attendees saw a candid and inspiring discussion with the iconic artist, offering a window into his career as a global music legend.

The event was attended in person by students from Varndean College, with students from 15 college campuses across Sussex watching and participating through shared teaching and spaces equipped with state-of-the-art technology.

FE Sussex is a charity that brings together seven further education and sixth form colleges across East & West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. Varndean College is proud to be a member of FE Sussex, with College Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, sitting on its Board.

With the support of £4.5 million in funding from the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF), FE Sussex has undertaken a digital transformation project across Sussex, which has included the installation of 15 immersive and shared teaching spaces across all of its member college campuses, designed to address the skills gaps and labour market needs identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). These state-of-the-art classrooms will enable colleges to deliver the skills

that Sussex businesses, charities, and public sector organizations need to grow and flourish.

In order to showcase this new technology, FE Sussex organised a Festival of Careers, a series of five live cross-campus events featuring workshops and presentations led by high-profile speakers. Other inspiring talks included Paralympian gold medalist Will Bailey MBE, scuba diver and Instagram sensation Gio Prince, mental health expert, Nicola Harvey, playwright and digital creative Chris Hogg, VR/AR immersive games designers BRIGHTBLACK, and Peter Kyle MP, Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Innovation.



ISOBELLA DELIVERS INSPIRING TALK AT GEOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION LECTURE

We're proud to share that one of our talented Environmental Science students, Isobella Corder (formerly of Hove Park School), delivered an excellent and inspiring talk at a Geographical Association lecture back in November.

Addressing an audience of over 50 students, teachers, and university lecturers, Isobella rose to the challenge with confidence and professionalism. Isobella was this year's recipient of the Liz Williams Travel Bursary (£150), awarded annually by our local GA committee to a student embarking on a travel experience that combines learning about places or the environment with a sense of adventure. Her journey took her to the stunning Vancouver Island region, where she undertook an impressive sea kayaking expedition. In her talk, she shared her motivations, which included a Duke of Edinburgh Award task, exploring wildlife, and stepping out of her comfort zone to embrace new challenges.

Well done Isobella.

VARNDEAN COLLEGE WELCOMES YEAR 9 SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR ASPIRING TO STEM WORKSHOPS

On Wednesday 11 December, Varndean College hosted an afternoon of Aspiring to STEM workshops for Year 9 students from Varndean School.

Approximately 60 top-set Science students from Varndean School had the opportunity to spend an afternoon on site using our fabulous STEM facilities, during which time they participated in workshops in Chemistry, Biology and Physics.

A great time was had by all and it gave students an opportunity to experience what it would be like to study as a sixth form student at Varndean College. We hope to repeat the event again in the future.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE CELEBRATES GREEN CAREERS WEEK

It was Green Careers Week back in November and Varndean College opened its doors to various guest speakers, empowering over 100 students to explore dynamic and forward-thinking career paths that contribute to environmental sustainability. Talks took place to make students aware of the job opportunities that they can access which also help to protect the environment.

Speakers included filmmaker Andrew Finch, Siân Berry (Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion), and Sophie Atkinson from the Sussex Wildlife Trust who spoke about the variety of roles in wildlife conservation and the importance of volunteering.

One of the highlights was a talk by Kelvin MacLeod from Rampion Wind Farm on renewable energy careers. Students were informed about the workings of the wind farm, as well as the range of different careers available in this sector. They also heard about future plans for expansion which will lead to the creation of hundreds of local jobs.

Green Week then took place from 24-28 March with the theme of circular economy. Events included a 'Green Surgery' with Green Party MP Siân Berry, a live-streamed talk from sustainable fashion researcher, Amy Twigger Holroyd, as well as a clothes swap.

SPOTLIGHT ON CAREERS

Last term, the Film Production Department hosted a series of inspiring Career Spotlight events, giving students exclusive insights into the industry from accomplished professionals.

BAFTA-winning Zoe Hines (Series Producer/Director) shared her experiences filming across 20+ countries on acclaimed shows like *Muslims Like Us* (BBC2) and *Hunted* (C4).

Documentary filmmaker Ollie Scarth-Saunders discussed his work, including Netflix's *I AM A KILLER*, highlighting the art of impactful storytelling.

Former student, Kate Shelley, now a versatile Assistant Producer for commercials, offered lessons on creativity and collaboration, drawing from her projects with major brands and artists.

On 9 December, former student and multi-talented musician and producer Josh Tarzi came in to speak to Year 1 Music Production students about transitioning from being a student to carving out a career in the music industry. From recent plays on BBC Radio 1 to his

weekly slot on Select Radio, as well as a position at the world-renowned Fabric record label, Josh has gone from strength to strength since leaving Varndean. Sharing his expertise regarding promotion, networking and accessing grant funding for start-up musical projects, Josh provided valuable insight to the students on a number of different facets of becoming a working musician. We can't wait to see what he does next!

Also in December, Level 3 Diploma in Early Years students experienced our new immersive classroom when they had an online meeting with Norland College and discovered more about their prestigious Degree in Early Childhood Education and Care and the many job prospects it can lead to. Norland College provides nannies to the royals, rich and famous. Students then had a play with the Nursery Vue application where they were immersed in a nursery environment and learnt about food allergies and children's health and safety.

Also, last term, the College also received a visit from Keith MacFarlane of UK Air Traffic Control who came in to give an inspiring talk to our Engineering students.

In January, our Protective Services students took part in an action-packed Public Services Careers Week, filled with inspiring and insightful sessions designed to showcase the vast opportunities within the sector. Throughout the week, students engaged in eye-opening talks from professionals across policing, paramedicine, counter-terrorism, and police diving, gaining invaluable real-world insights into these vital,

fast-paced and high-impact careers. We were also delighted to welcome representatives from The Army and The Royal Navy, who shared their knowledge on the wide-ranging career pathways within the armed forces.

Students also visited Sandown Park where they attended the Armed Forces Gold Cup Day to engage in inspirational talks, witness the military at work and at play, as well as view old and new military vehicles.

To round off the week, the Army led an engaging, hands-on team-building experience, where students took part in activities designed to strengthen communication, collaboration, and resilience, all essential skills for a successful career in public services.

Sociology students had a fantastic visit in February from two researchers

from the Institute of Employment Studies. Our guests explained how they use research methods in their jobs and told students about some of the highlights of their work including conducting interviews

in a range of places including playgrounds and prisons. Students also learned about different routes into social research from degrees to internships to degree apprenticeships.

In March, we welcomed Marie Hillier to the College to deliver a talk to IB ESS students about her work at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) which is an executive agency of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). She gave a summary of her duties as an Import Inspector, which include the crucial checking of goods that enter the UK for dangerous pests, diseases and parasites. She highlighted the need for such inspection to prevent and ensure the safety of our health, the health of the environment and ensuring food security. She gave an insight into a typical day which could involve her team inspecting potential illegal trade in animals and plants brought into the country. She also provided important information on careers in Government agencies and in the civil service including APHA.

Varndean has been delivering the hugely successful and popular IB Diploma programme for many years and in 2023 introduced the Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) course in direct response to students' changing attitudes and concerns around climate change. The ESS is an interdisciplinary subject which falls within the natural sciences and humanities.



MEDICINE SCHOOL APPLICANTS GAIN FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE AT VARNDEAN

At Varndean College, we offer all our medical school applicants regular clinical workshops and in March, we had two of our ex-students return to the college to deliver theory and practical sessions to our Year 1 students.

Dr. Calvin Liu successfully completed the IB Diploma Programme in 2018 and qualified as a doctor from the Queen Mary University of London in 2022 after completing his clinical training at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London. He is currently working as a junior doctor for the University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust and is hoping to

specialise in orthopaedic medicine.

Fii Oladipo is currently in his final clinical year of study and will qualify in 2026 from Imperial College London following completion of his rotation at various hospitals, including Charing Cross, Hammersmith, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea, St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals. He is hoping to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology. Fii also studied the IB Diploma and left Varndean College in 2020.

Yaso Shan, who runs the workshops at Varndean said "whilst we have a diverse and inclusive approach that can

transform lives, we also have some of the highest achievers with high aspirations who study on our A level and IB Programmes. The Clinical Case History Workshops are designed to support such students to, not only confirm and consolidate their ambition to pursue Medicine, but to also better prepare them for the rigours and challenges of clinical training. We are incredibly proud of every student who achieves their career ambition and is willing to return to Varndean to contribute to the education and training of the next generation of doctors."

STUDENT PROGRESSION

This year has seen a bumper number of students apply to Higher Education courses through UCAS.

Career pathways include: Architecture, Biomedical Sciences, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Comparative Literatures, Computer Science with Artificial Intelligence, English & History, Fashion Design, Film Production, Law, Maritime Engineering, Maths, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Neuroscience, Politics & International Relations, Primary Education, Psychology,

Textile Innovation, Veterinary Science, and Zoology.

The students were supported by our specialist HE mentors, as well as by the Careers department's HE preparation programme, which has involved a number of workshops, seminars and 1:1 meetings with representatives from a wide range of universities. As students are hearing back from universities about their offers, students are learning about budgeting and finance through the tutorial programme to help them prepare for their next steps.



VARNDEAN COLLEGE STUDENTS CHALLENGE LABOUR MP, CHRIS WARD

Varndean College Principal, Donna-Marie Janson, along with members of the College Student Union, and Varndean School Headteacher, Shelley Baker, attended a very positive Citizens UK meeting in December with Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown and Peacehaven, Chris Ward.

Chris Ward, who is also the Prime Minister's parliamentary private secretary, was questioned whether civil servants from the Department of Education and the Department for Health and Social Care could come and visit to see how our mental health work is being implemented across the city and whether this could then be fed into what the Government is planning to

undertake on a national level. Chris agreed.

Chris also agreed to work in collaboration with us to ensure that local senior NHS leaders engage with our mental health work, to ensure a better strategy is created to reduce the pressures currently placed on CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service).

He also agreed to work with us to start looking into the possibility of redeveloping a large site for affordable housing on the Brighton General Hospital site.

Great work from the key leaders involved in our housing and mental health teams and such a positive way to finish a busy 2024!

APPRENTICESHIP FAIR

On 12 March, we hosted our annual Apprenticeship Fair, where students explored a wide range of local and national opportunities. From Network Rail and Sussex Police to Shoreham Port, HOP Consulting, and many more, students connected with industry professionals and discovered exciting career pathways. A huge thank you to all the organisations who joined us and shared their expertise.





RECENT TRIPS

Education and Childcare

Foundation Year Childcare students had a great day at Drusillas back in November. They observed a wide range of animals and took part in an animal handling session where they held hissing cockroaches, a chinchilla, an armadillo, a millipede and a snake! The students all became immersed in the activities. They visited the children's play area, where they discussed how to assess risks for children visiting the zoo. Back in college, the students are now planning activities and risk assessments that would be suitable for young children as part of their coursework.

Our Level 3 T Level Education and Early Years students then had an insightful day out at Brighton University in January. Highlights included a "Routes into Teaching" talk, a campus tour, an engaging education taster session featuring robots, and a talk on student life and finance.

Parisian History

In December, Varndean College A Level Law and History students spent four magical days in Paris exploring the roots of the French Revolution and history of human rights; all integral to their studies. After a chilly riverboat trip down the River Seine, taking in the newly

opened Notre Dame and other famous sights, they were regaled with tales of revolutionary slaughter and intrigue. Their trip ended at the Palace of Versailles, where they saw the aristocratic opulence juxtaposed with the evident suffering of the masses. A true human rights journey.

Sociology Conference

In January, our Sociology students took a trip to University College London to attend a conference where they listened to sociologists talking about their research on a variety of topics, including urban youth and schooling, health inequalities and LGBTQ+ groups, and the experiences of Afghan children being resettled in the UK. It was a really inspiring day and students also met Professor Louise Archer, a key figure in their Sociology A Level studies.

Brighton Sports Conference

Sport students studying A Level PE, BTEC Sport & BTEC Sport & Exercise Science recently took part in the University of Brighton Sports Conference in January.



IB STUDENTS SEE 'THE YEARS'

Also in January, some of our Year 1 IB students went to the Harold Pinter Theatre in London to see a powerful and thought-provoking performance of 'The Years'. Based on Nobel Prize winner Annie Ernaux's fearless masterpiece, this unique production brought to life an unapologetic portrait of a woman shaped by a rapidly changing world—an unforgettable and deeply moving experience!

WASHINGTON & NEW YORK

From 12-18 February, our Economics, History, and Politics students visited the USA for a 7-day trip to Washington and New York. This inspirational trip kicked off in Washington where students took in the US Capitol Building, a tour of US Congress where they had the opportunity to see both the history of the building and of present politics, a glimpse of the White House, as well as a walking tour of all the Washington monuments (approximately 13000 steps), such as the Thomas Jefferson Memorial,

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Martin Luther King Memorial, and the Lincoln Memorial, via the Korean and Vietnam Memorials. The afternoon was spent at the National Museum for African American History and Culture where students were able to explore the history from slavery to the 21st Century.

Next stop was New York, where students continued having an amazing time exploring the 'Big Apple'. Highlights included visiting the Stonewall National Monument, 9/11 Memorial, the 'Top of the Rock' observation deck at the Rockefeller Centre, Lower Manhattan and the New York Stock Exchange, plus a tour of the United Nations. An unforgettable trip filled with history and discovery!



ST IVES

In February, 46 Visual Arts students went on a residential trip to St Ives in Cornwall. St Ives has been home to many of Britain's great artists and they combined the visit with stops at the Eden Project and Falmouth University.

Whilst in St Ives they undertook many workshops, including making pots at the Leach Pottery, abstract painting with the St Ives School of Painting and dawn photography shoots. The students cooked and served their own dinners, working in groups at the hostel, and had some wonderful freedom in the town known for its safety and beauty. The weekend was rounded off with a ghost walk by a local storyteller before a visit to Falmouth University where the students were treated to workshops in their chosen arts subject. The long coach trip was worth it for a fabulous weekend.





GREECE

More than 40 students of Classical Civilisation and Philosophy went on a trip to Greece in early February. The crisp cold and sunny weather fuelled expeditions to awe-inspiring sites, like the Acropolis in Athens, the monumental remains of the fortified citadel of Mycenae, the 'spa' complex at Epidavros, and the sculptural time-travellers' treat at Corinth. Staying in the lovely little coastal town of Tolo offered the added bonus of proximity to the sea. It was a memorable experience that brought to life much of what the students had been learning, and gave them an opportunity to get to know one another and have a grand time.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES AT HOVE FIRE STATION

Protective Services students took it in turns to spend a day at Hove Fire Station in March as part of the emergency services 'Safety in Action' programme. The project, provided by East Sussex Fire and Rescue, Sussex Police, SECAMB, RNLI, Network Rail, Brighton & Hove Council and Electric Power Network, gave students from schools and colleges across Sussex the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and learn about fire safety, road safety, water safety, first aid, railway, internet safety and electrical safety.



STUDENTS EXPLORE CAREER PATHWAYS AT PINWOOD STUDIOS' FUTURES FESTIVAL!

Students had an incredible opportunity to step behind the scenes of the film and TV industry at Pinewood Studios' Futures Festival 2025. Held at the world-famous studios, the event brought together leading employers, industry experts, and creatives to offer insights into the wide range of careers available in the screen industry. The event gave students a clearer understanding of the industry and the skills needed to succeed. They left inspired, informed, and ready to take the next steps towards their future careers.



BUSINESS STUDENTS VISIT MACKENZIE THORPE

A group of Year 1 Business students visited Mackenzie Thorpe's art studio in Hove to learn about the challenges of running an international art business. Susan, Mackenzie and the staff team welcomed the students into their work space and gave a fascinating insight into the ups and downs of starting out in the art industry. Now an internationally renowned artist, Mackenzie's commercial journey provided the students with lots of brilliant examples to apply to their classroom studies. One key message was the importance of authenticity to his brand. The students left, not only with a tote bag full of goodies, but an engaging story of a successful business in the most difficult of markets.



PORTSMOUTH

Geography A Level students visited Portsmouth in February for a day of fieldwork on the theme of urban regeneration. The day involved carrying out a range of methods to evaluate the success of the Gunwharf Quays and Spinnaker Tower regeneration projects. Although the day started with a downpour it soon perked up, and a highlight was visiting the top of Spinnaker Tower to get a view of the city and the different developments. Students learnt about the history of the city, how its identity has changed over time and collected some valuable data and trial methods.

FILM STUDIES VISIT LEWES DEPOT

Film Studies students had the valuable opportunity to attend one of Lewes Depot's Explore Film Study Days designed specifically for A Level and AS students. This day was based around Hitchcock's classic, Vertigo and focused on auteur theory, film form and covered elements of the Hollywood studio system of the time. The lecture was led by Ellen Cheshire, a film historian, writer & lecturer. Finishing off the trip was a screening of Vertigo on Depot's big screen. Students from both the Drama and Performing Arts courses loved 'The Importance of Being Earnest' at The National Theatre recently. An absolute treat of a show.





CONSTELLATION!

Our first year A level & IB students showcased an outstanding collection of their work at the CONSTELLATION exhibition from 17-27 March.

CONSTELLATION was held at Gallery 19a in Brighton and included work by 3D Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Photography & Textiles students. The exhibition was curated by students from our Art Curator enrichment course and these industrious curators worked collaboratively to select the artwork and to install the exhibition.

"You get to see not only how each artwork differentiates from one another, but also how they can work cohesively together when looking at the colours, subject or mood," said Lucia, one of the curators.



IB ART EXHIBITION 2025

The 2025 IB Art Exhibition celebrated the creativity, conceptual depth, and technical skill of this year's IB Visual Arts students.

A highlight of the exhibition was the work of the Visual Arts prize-winning student Anageem Elfarouq, whose painting was selected as the official publicity poster. Her evocative composition masterfully captured the essence of time's movement - sometimes steady, sometimes erratic - encouraging viewers to reflect on their own perceptions of its passage. Rich in symbolism and intricate detail, her work stood out as a compelling visual interpretation of her theme The Passage of Time.

Anageem's exceptional artistic vision earned her the IB Visual Arts Prize, recognising both her technical excellence and her hard work throughout the course. The exhibition as a whole served as a testament to the talent and dedication of this year's IB artists, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.

TEXTILES STUDENTS DISPLAY THEIR WORK AT OUTFIT

The A Level Textiles department had a superb time at Outfit Brighton for their first birthday celebrations. Outfit is a brand new second-hand vintage clothing store, launched in January 2024 and our talented students had the fantastic opportunity to showcase their work to the public and then see it on display!

LUKE PERFORMS WITH NATIONAL YOUTH DANCE COMPANY

Year 2 Dance student Luke Curran has had a very busy time since October, balancing his studies whilst working with the National Youth Dance Company (NYDC). NYDC aims to create and perform innovative and influential dance, bringing together some of the brightest dance talent from across England to work with Sadler's Wells' internationally renowned associate artists and visiting companies.

Luke was selected via a highly competitive audition process to be an NYDC company member this year to create and perform a piece by Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy, a visionary force in the world of dance and the co-founder and co-Artistic Director of Boy Blue. His impressive screen credits include T2 Trainspotting, Street Dance 3D, and high-profile events like the BAFTAs, MOBO Awards, and Brit Awards. Sandy has also choreographed for artists such as FKA twigs, Rita Ora, and brands like Nike and Adidas. Recognised with an MBE in 2017 for his exceptional contributions to dance and the community, he is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of talent, inspiring students to discover their unique voices and become some of the UK's top street dancers.

We are looking forward to supporting Luke when the piece starts its national tour in April.



VARDEAN ART TUTOR, AMY DURY, SHOWCASES HER ARTISTIC BRILLIANCE ON SKY ARTIST OF THE YEAR MASTERCLASS

Vardean College Art tutor, Amy Dury, has recently appeared on Sky Arts tv showcasing her artistic brilliance. The 'Artist of the Year Masterclass' is a new series featuring tutorials from a host of talented artists who have previously taken part in Portrait Artist of the Year or Landscape Artist of the Year. In this 40-episode series, they demonstrate easy-to-learn techniques for budding artists to practise at home.

In her first episode, which aired on Monday 24 February, Amy created a monochrome oil painting inspired by a vintage photograph. You can watch Amy again if you tune in on Tuesday 4 May to see her next masterclass.

SPORTS NEWS

Our dynamic sports teams have been showcasing their skills across a range of sports these last two terms.

Football

Varndean College secured a 4 - 2 win over Cardinal Newman in the ESFA National Super League back in November. This victory secured them the top spot in their group and sends them through to the last 32 in the country. Goal scorers were Wilf Jenkins, Oscar Kemp, Ayub Harun (x2) and Man of the Match was Jaydan Orji

Then a fantastic start to the year was had for our Men's Football 1st team, securing a 3-1 victory in their first home fixture of 2025 against BHASVIC on 15 January.

Our First Team also progressed to the last 16 of the ESFA National Cup with a sensational 6-2 victory over Godalming College on 29 January. Unfortunately, they then narrowly lost to Bradfield College in a thrilling match. Whilst managing important cup competitions the boys also managed to finish 3rd in the SSFA league.

In other football news, Sonni Nealgrove was selected in the final 20-man squad for the England Colleges National Team. Amazing news for Sonni and something that he should be really proud of.

Our Women's football team played several fixtures against local rivals Lewes and have put out some excellent performances. Having over 15 girls competing in football fixtures is excellent. We look forward to seeing even more next season.

Netball

An excellent performance from our netball team, who triumphed 29-20 against Newman B! Player of the Match was Maisy Ball. The team finished the season

strongly with a victory over St Pauls. League standings are yet to be released but the girls are hoping for a strong finish!

Basketball

Our Basketball team had a great enrichment training and developed so much that they had the opportunity to play a fixture against Worthing College. Although the result did not go our way the team put out a great performance and the coach was very impressed with all players. Resilience to the end of a tough game against tough opponents.

Sports Leadership

Also, a huge well done to our BTEC Sport students who spent an afternoon in November volunteering at the Brighton & Hove primary school's cross-country event, as well as a Year 7 & 8 indoor athletics event at BACA in December. The students were fantastic role models for the younger athletes and played a huge part in the success of the event. The Sport Leaders were also involved with coaching in a local primary school, demonstrating great leadership skills. A huge well done to everyone involved!



VARNDEAN'S OWN SKI CHAMPION!

Huge congratulations to second year student Artemii Teplov, who has been making waves on the ski slopes with some incredible achievements. Artemii is now the 2024 UK World Rookie Tour Champion, and also secured 24th place at the 2024 Slopestyle Junior World Championships in Livigno, Italy and was selected to represent Team GB at the European Youth Olympics. At the European Youth Olympics, Artemii delivered one of the best slopestyle runs of his career and qualified for the finals in 10th place! Unfortunately, due to a collision during practice for the finals, Artemii had to withdraw from the competition but his determination and talent continue to shine and we wish him all the success in all his future competitions.



NEWS FROM THE FILM PRODUCTION TEAM!

Behind the Camera with Industry Pros!

Film Production Technician Em Morgan is teaming up with Knock Knock Productions' Niamh Lynch on a professional short film and our students are right in the thick of it! From cinematography to sound, they're getting hands-on experience in key behind-the-camera roles. Real industry work, real credits - and an unforgettable experience.

Interviewing a Palme d'Or Nominee!

What's it like to direct an award-winning film? Year 2 students Max Bell and Ben Hernandez found out when they sat down with Palme d'Or-nominated director Emma Sullivan! Their in-depth interview explored filmmaking, storytelling, and breaking into the industry - a massive opportunity to learn from one of the best.

Lights, Camera, Livestream!

We took professional live broadcasting to the next level at the Fatboy Slim event! Our Film Production team ran a full-scale,

multi-camera professional livestream, delivering high-quality coverage of an unforgettable night. Huge effort, huge success - and proof that our students can handle industry-level productions.

Festival Nominations Rolling In!

Our student films are making waves! This year, we've secured nominations in Little Venice Film Festival, Made in Sussex Film Festival, LiftOff Global Network, and more. That's real-world recognition for the incredible creativity and hard work coming out of our department. Watch this space - big things are happening!

Varndean Film Production: Now Open for Business!

We've officially launched Varndean Film Production as a professional videography company! Students are working with real clients, delivering high-quality video content for Dad La Soul, The Outdoors Project, Pharmacie Coffee, and beyond. This is industry experience like no other - real jobs, real clients, and real career opportunities.

...our education institutions
a commitment to a collaborative anti-sexual
campaign between the Council, Train and
...ies. We have a poster design competition
launched soon.



VARNDEAN STAFF AND STUDENTS ATTEND CITIZENS UK BRIGHTON AND HOVE DELEGATES ASSEMBLY

Varndean College staff and students attended the Citizens UK Brighton and Hove Delegates Assembly at Sussex University in February.

The focus of this meeting was to reflect upon the successes that the alliance has achieved and identify work that is yet to be done. This was centred upon the campaigns that we have been involved in transport/safety, mental health and housing.

It was a fantastic celebration of the social action being taken by local community groups and our students were heavily involved in the presentations which reflects their high level of involvement and commitment thus far. At the assembly, a new campaign was agreed and we vouched our participation in this work to help Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the City.



SU PRESIDENT, LYSANDER PIERCE, DEBATES ON BBC 'POLITICS SOUTH EAST'

On Sunday 19 January, Varndean College SU President, Lysander Pierce, joined Peter Lamb MP, Josh Babarinde MP, and Cllr Lizzie Hacking in the BBC studio for Politics South East to discuss the Citizens UK campaign for affordable housing.

Interviewed by tv presenter, Laura Kuenssberg, Lysander passionately emphasised the importance of affordable housing for all, stating: "Everyone deserves access to affordable housing," and represented the College brilliantly in this vital conversation. Well done Lysander.