

# The Heathland School Sixth Form Spotlight



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## Visit to Google headquarters

I had the amazing opportunity of visiting Google headquarters located in Kings Cross St Pancras as part of the Languages For All global ambassadors award.

**W**e started off the day by listening to a welcome presentation by the Senior Director of Google and the Program Leader for UK Apprenticeships. We then had a panel and Q&A with Google employees to discover more about their connection to languages and how it helped them to get where they are now. After that we were provided with a delicious lunch and were able to ask more questions to the employees. Following lunch, we had a leadership workshop where we got to work firsthand with google colleagues and learn more about what it's like to actually work at Google.



### What I gained from the experience:

- It was eye-opening to learn about the different types of apprenticeships that Google offered as it's a route after my A-level studies that I hadn't considered before.
- Learning about how diverse the jobs and people are at Google encouraged me to consider working at Google in the future.

- This experience allowed me to understand the role that modern languages take in the world and how they can be seen as a tool from employers.

Languages For All is a new non-profit initiative aiming to make modern language study more appealing and accessible to state school children in the UK. They work with several

schools across the Hounslow borough to encourage and support students studying modern languages. As part of their initiative, they host multiple trips for students to gain insight into how important and valued modern languages are to future opportunities.

In October, we had a launch day and were given the opportunity to visit Royal Holloway, University of London, where we had a tour of the beautiful campus and deepened our knowledge of different countries and their cultures. We also had a fantastic lecture held by the university principal.

*Written by: Hadia Kashif, 12 Sheridan*

## Memorable experience at The Crown Estate

I had the privilege of completing a weeks' worth of work experience placement at The Crown Estate located in the heart of London. This opportunity allowed me to immerse myself in the world of property, guided by experienced specialists from various departments working together to create properties that meet the nation's needs.

The week was filled with inspiring activities, including tours, insightful talks, and in-depth case studies, which provided a comprehensive introduction to key areas such as development, sustainability, asset management, and customer partnerships. A particular highlight was getting a tour and lecture at the RICS building in Westminster, which gave me valuable insights into industry standards and professional

practices. We concluded the week with a presentation session, where we had the chance to pitch a hypothetical land development idea alongside my peers Malak Dahir, Sophia Kumbea, Sydra Ghamian, Zaki Sala, Earl Johnson to members of the Crown Estate. Collaborating with such a talented team made this project both rewarding and enjoyable.

This experience was made possible thanks to my prior involvement in the Pathways to Property summer school, so I extend my gratitude to Tom Woolmer and the Pathways to Property team for facilitating access to this opportunity. I'm truly grateful to The Crown Estate team for their support and for making this experience memorable.

*Written by: Hodo Suleiman, 13 Sheridan*



## Dreaming of Oxford

It's been a dream of mine for a long time to attend Oxford University, but it had always seemed so unreachable considering it's consistently one of the three best and most competitive institutions in the world.

Initially, I didn't even want to apply for fear of being rejected, but through the support of teachers and friends, I realised that Oxford wasn't as exclusive as I'd formed the image of in my head. What I found was that I'd glamorised it to the point of inaccessibility, but I later realised that it was the point of an aspirational university to push us further, and so I mustered up the courage to begin my UCAS journey.

I initially wanted to apply to Politics, Philosophy and Economics, which is what I based my A-level selection on, but after attending an Eton summer school on a course for Classics (the study of ancient civilisations, language and literature), I realised that it wasn't really the subject for me, since I'd never enjoyed a subject as much as I did Classics before. It highlighted to me the importance of exploring other options rather than just the mainstream ones, because you might find something you enjoy even more. Classics fostered my long-time love of the ancient past and aligned with my future aims of becoming an author and editor, so I made the decision to switch degrees even though I'd already started my PPE personal statement.

It's never too late to switch, and it's always good to note that you'll do best with whatever you're most passionate about. You're applying for an education, not for a job.



I attended a personal statement mentoring class with Mr Spragg, who was incredibly helpful in perfecting my personal statement. After switching degrees my personal statement constructed itself much more smoothly, a testament to the fact that passion breeds good learning, and I submitted my application, the first to do so in my year. Soon after that I booked my entrance exam for October, a daunting time that really tested my patience and nerve. I held on, though, because it's nearly impossible to prepare for humanities entrance exams, which are nearly impossible to predict. For my exam, the Classical Languages Aptitude Test, I had to decode an artificial language, an immensely difficult task. I felt nervous but satisfied after completing it, and received an excellent score of 87%.

The wait to find out whether we received interviews or not was sickening, but eventually we received our emails in December, and I was thrilled to be one of those who had received an interview. Though some did not, as I previously mentioned, just applying to Oxford to begin with was a massive achievement. But after interviews began, the pressure

really ramped up, with me receiving four interviews, from two constituent Oxford colleges and the Classics faculty. It was a test of our mental fortitude and a simulation of the one-on-one style learning of Oxford to make sure we were suitable candidates, and was incredibly stressful but rewarding. Truly treating it like a conversation about your subject was the most successful way you could go about it, because it allowed me to demonstrate my true passion for the subject.

Finally, on January 14th, we discovered whether we were to be given offers or not. By this point I'd received my four other offers from UCL, King's College, Edinburgh and Royal Holloway, but this was my main aim. It was still incredible to me that I'd gotten this far to begin with, but after receiving the impossible email that I'd gotten an offer to read Classics at St Hilda's College, Oxford, it made all the difficult slog feel worth it.

I truly couldn't describe the relief I felt after all the sleepless nights and countless hours of effort I'd dedicated to the application, and I'd only want anyone to treat it as a testament to the fact that if you wanted to, anyone could apply. Oxford is exclusive but it's a centre of higher education like any other, and imposter syndrome should never stop anyone from going as far as they can.

*Written by: Sahaba Ali, 13 Adam*

## An engaging day at UCL

I was absolutely thrilled to have been invited to UCL as a conditional offer holder for a day spent with current Biomedical/Medical students, student ambassadors, and lecturers. The day was packed with enriching experiences, from sitting in on taster lectures and seminars to exploring the campus and getting a true feel for what university life will be like next year.

The taster sessions provided a great insight into the academic challenges and opportunities at UCL, and it was fascinating to see how lecturers engage with students in such an interactive and dynamic learning environment. The opportunity to meet and interact with fellow offer holders from different schools and colleges was equally exciting. It was inspiring to hear about their experiences and aspirations, and it made me even more excited about the journey ahead.

From the welcoming atmosphere to the engaging activities throughout the day, it was clear how much effort the university puts into ensuring that prospective students have the best possible experience.

A massive thank you to all the student ambassadors, lecturers, and staff who made the day so enjoyable and for hosting such an insightful and engaging event.

*Written by: Nimra Malik, 13 Jenner*



# Sky Apprenticeship Event



I had the privilege of attending the Sky Apprenticeship Event at their Osterley branch, and it was an incredible experience.

The day began with a warm welcome from the Early Careers team, who shared valuable insights into their apprenticeship programs and the recruitment process. Then, under the direction of dynamic speakers like Lina Papa and Jack Hawkins, we attended presentations on Sky's motivational initiatives, such as Sustainability, Social Mobility, Diversity and Inclusion, and Branding. These talks showcased Sky's commitment to

innovation and employee well-being, supported by insightful statistics and data that left a lasting impression.

The event also included a tour of Sky's impressive campus, which features diverse workspaces, in-house restaurants, a gym, a movie room, and even a mini-Waitrose, all designed to enhance employee well-being. Later, Gabrielle Morris shared her inspiring apprenticeship journey, highlighting the incredible growth opportunities at Sky. The

day concluded with a networking session where I spoke with current apprentices, particularly from the marketing team, a field I aspire to pursue.

Overall, this event broadened my perspective on apprenticeships and provided me with a clearer vision for my future. A huge thank you to the Sky team and the speakers for making the experience so impactful.

*Written by: Alisa Rattansi, 13 Adam*

I'm thrilled to share that I've been selected for the Future Leaders UK online program!

Excited to embark on this journey focused on developing leadership skills, fostering collaboration, and inspiring innovation. This opportunity will not only support my professional growth but also connect me with passionate individuals and organizations dedicated to creating a positive impact.

Looking forward to all the learning and experiences ahead!

*Written by: Banuli Ilandari Dewage, 12 Palmer*



## Term dates 2024

**Half Term: Monday 17 February - Friday 21 February 2025**

Easter Holiday: Monday 7 April - Monday 21 April 2025

**SUMMER TERM 2025**

**Tuesday 22 April - Thursday 24 July 2025**

Tuesday 22nd April INSET Day

**Half Term: Monday 26 May - Friday 30 May 2025**



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