## الرسالة AR-RISAALAH

## THE MESSAGE

The Newsletter for Eden Boys' Leadership Academy Manchester



Autumn 2020

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# Message from the Principal

Principal Shabir Fazal



Welcome to the Autumn 2020 edition of Ar-Risaalah, our Eden Boys' Newsletter. I hope and pray you are well and keeping safe in the midst of the COVID pandemic, the most serious global event any of us have had to live through.

As a school, we have made extensive plans to keep our children and staff safe whilst also ensuring they continue to learn. Every day counts and especially for our oldest learners who will be sitting early entry GCSE exams in 3 subjects this year. Our parents and staff have been amazing: their efforts have helped us to ensure our boys continued to learn in school (face-to-face) and at home online. Through the various lockdowns, our staff, students and families have become experts at online learning and making the most of every learning opportunity.

Our curriculum is much more than just the subjects we teach.

As part of that we always try to make sure we also enrich the learning through engagement in important events around the World.

This year, Black History Month in October (an event we mark every year) became even more important as people around the world started talking about 'Black Lives Matter' in response to events in the USA. For us, fairness, equality and dignity are key values and are part of Respect in our STAR values.

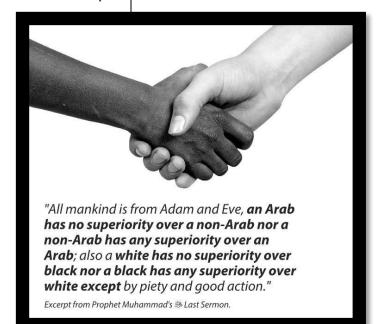
1400 years ago, the prophet (SAW – Peace Be Upon Him) made this clear in his last sermon. From Hazrat Bilal RA (The first Muezzin to call the Adhan), to Hazrat Sumayya RA (the first martyr in the name of Islam) and Hazrat Umm Ayman RA (the Prophet's foster mother) – Black people played a prominent and crucial role in early Islam.

1400 years later, Martin Luther King said, 'I have a dream that my

four little
children will one
day live in a
nation where
they will not be
judged by the
colour of their
skin, but by the
content of their
character'.

Throughout October, our boys learned about lots of famous black people throughout history so that they can begin to understand that history is not just about the achievements of White Europeans. Men and women of all backgrounds, all races and all religions have made valuable contributions throughout time. By learning about them we also begin to feel empowered that we too can make a valuable contribution to the World by living up to the ideals and values of these 'heroes'. This issue of Ar-Risaalah focusses on that, although obviously there is so much more going on in school. You'll get to read more about those things in our next issue.

We are blessed with amazing staff, governors, students and parents – please accept my thanks for all your hard work, sacrifices, encouragement, kind words and du'aas (prayers). Your trust in us is the driving force for our continued efforts to be the best school we can be.





## **Black History Month**

### By Miss Butt

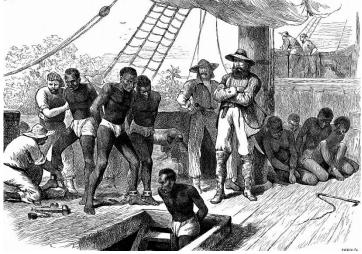
Eden Boys Leadership Academy had a whole host of activities celebrating Black History Month.

### Subject based activities

Teachers in their subjects delivered subject specific lessons connected to Black History Month.

The Science department learnt about influential black inventors, whilst the history department delved deeply into the transatlantic slave trade.



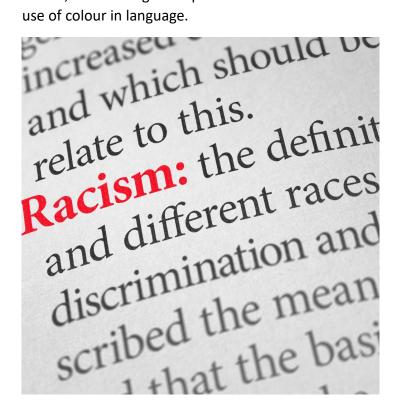


In creative Arts, students explored blackface through drama activities, whilst the French department looked at the use of language when speaking about people of colour.





In religious studies, students looked into the roots of racism, and the English department learnt about the use of colour in language.





#### Form time activities

Each week, during form time, classes explored one significant chapter in the struggle for racial equality.

In the first week, all students learnt about the life and work of **Harriet Tubman**, the American abolitionist and political activist who helped dozens of people escape slavery. Her story was used to initiate discussions about the Transatlantic Slave Trade.



In the second week, students learnt about **Rosa Parks**, the civil rights activist who made a stand against racist segregation policies by refusing to surrender her seat to a white passenger on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. This was used to initiate discussions about segregation and discrimination.



In the third week, all students discussed the **Bristol Bus Boycott**, remembering the first Black bus driver in Bristol. This led onto an exploration of the Windrush scandal, when hundreds of Caribbean immigrants living and working legally in the UK were wrongly targeted for deportation by immigration enforcement, along with a look into the influence of Martin Luther King Jr in the UK.









Finally, students discussed the controversy around the removal of statues of slave owners in the UK.



In the fourth week, the life and work of **Nelson Mandela** was studied. This was used to initiate discussions about segregation, discrimination and, the qualities of leadership required to generate effective change.



In the final week, the Faith and Character Lead delivered a session on **Influential Black Muslims**, and highlighted a number of black people who were companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and many others who, despite their dark skin, were highly respected scholars.



Finally, a whole school competition was launched at the end, wherein students were asked to create a poem exploring one of the figures we looked at in form time or a key event in Black History. This was supported through History lessons.

See the article on the Black History Month competition to find out who the winner was.



## The young Revolutionists

## By Elham Baraki (8i)

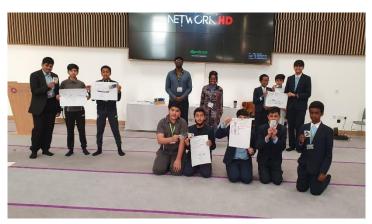
Eden Boys shone a light on the struggles of Black people by inviting "Young Revolutionists" in to educate pupils on the significance of Black History Month. Two individuals who work with schools and have dedicated their life to informing people about this subject came to our school to inspire our students.



They discussed famous black people who had invented revolutionary technology such as Garrett Morgan who, in 1923, invented the three-way traffic light system and a combined gas mask and safety helmet. Most people have never heard of him, or even know that a black engineer invented traffic lights.



We were taught that black people had an important impact on the advancement of the world. It made us think and realise the prejudice that happened back then. After that we did an activity on making a tableau on a word which showed the wide contrast between the people back then.



Words such as poor or dirty would be used to describe a black person, whereas rich and happy would be used to describe white people. It caused realisation in the fact that the black races were labelled through negative words resulting in poor job opportunities and the lack of anyone persevering for equality.



In summary, we learnt a great deal about the history of black people and gained a clear and vivid view about why this month is important.





## All hail King Samuel

## By Salwan Inayat

At Eden Boys' Manchester, we have done a lot of activities and invited many influential people to our school so that we may further enhance and broaden our knowledge about black history. The pupils at Eden really appreciated the visitors who came to talk about their black identity and empower young men like us: it was a real eye-opener. One of the visitors that we invited to our school was renowned poet and spoken word artist, **Samuel King**.



Samuel King talked to us about how WE are in charge of creating our own identity and that the only person we should be better than is who we were yesterday. He taught us to change our perception of ourselves and look at ourselves from a different perspective, intentioned towards bettering who we are as our self.

We had many workshops with Mr King and he really opened our eyes to our future, and in setting goals. We learnt that we don't let other people control who we are in our mind; rather, our cognitive impressions of our own self are what's vital: we become who we want to become and be what we want to be. He empowered us with his spoken words and told us about his experiences and his desire for us to be the voice of the youth in future, just like he is today. Samuel King was fantastic in relating to the boys because of his easy-going nature and young age which helped the boys learn a lot. We thank our Religious Studies teacher, Miss Butt, for inviting him in to inspire us.





## Shaykh Bilal Brown

## By Adwil Khan

On Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, Eden Boys' Manchester were fortunate enough to be visited by Sheikh Bilal Brown in commemoration of Black History Month. Sheikh Bilal had shared with us a truly phenomenal story about his past which had deeply influenced me as well as some of the audience who had participated in the talk. Sheikh Bilal told us how he was quite irreligious in his younger days. This was evident when he told us that he used to engage in gang crime, drugs and theft so much so that he spent almost 6 years in jail.

After spending significant time in jail, Sheikh Bilal decided that he would need to change his life around. He began looking into religion, and began reading the

Quran and used to spend time reading books about Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Furthermore, he began travelling to places such as Yemen and Syria, before they fell victims to civil war, to study the contents of Islam and the Quran. Upon his return, Sheikh Bilal began teaching Islam and the Quran to people and became Muslim in 1999. Amazing! From gang crime and drugs, to becoming a teacher of Islamic studies and Quran. A truly remarkable transformation.

Moreover, during his talk, Sheikh Bilal shared some black figures who inspired him through his life, including Malcom X, Mohammed Ali, and companions of the Prophet (pbuh), Bilal (RA) and Barakah (RA).

In addition he engaged the audience by asking them to mention some black historical figures who influenced them too.





I particularly enjoyed Sheikh Bilal's talk - I learnt many things from it and was able to derive many lessons.

Sheikh Bilal's story is most relevant in today's day and age, growing up in a generation where gang crime, drugs and theft are easy to fall into. We see the horrific consequences they have on families and friends, and on the society we live in.

The story shared had an exceedingly high impact on me as it inspired me to spread messages of peace and solace. We learnt that anything is possible and by God's will, even the worst and the most misguided people can change.

Moreover, that this can only happen if we are determined to change ourselves for the better and abstain from bad acts. Sheikh Bilal's story is a clear illustration of dedication and devotion towards the right path, which can be followed by those who share a similar past.

In a world full of injustice and envy, it is important that we should exhibit moral and ethical behaviour wherever we are.

We should take time out to study and read about the lives of iconic figures such as Malcom X, Muhammad Ali and Bilal (RA) who brought about change and equality for black people.

We should admire the very personal and highly moving story which Sheikh Bilal shared with us and become individuals and citizens who act upon Islam and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and become role models for the rest of society.

Year 9 student Ilyas Ige commented:

Samuel was inspiring to me because he told us that we should not let people shape our future. Samuel also told us that we should be in control of our lives and that nobody should manipulate us and our thoughts on what we want to become when we are older. He told us about self-fulfilling prophecy which is when you try and create your own future for yourself and don't let anyone force a future upon you.





## **BHM** competition Winner

## By Miss Butt

As part of the Black History Month programme, Eden Boys' Leadership Academy launched a poetry competition to bring together all the work that had been done.

With support from outstanding History teacher Mr Bhana, students were asked to write a poem about a key figure or event in Black History.

The poem could be in any form, verse or metre.

Year 8 stood out with the volume of entries and it was incredibly difficult to make a decision.

There were some fantastic poems written by Sarim Altaf (8N), Eesaa Khalid (8A), Muhammad Bilal Dar (8A) and Ahad Syed (8A), who wrote about racism, Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela.

However, the winner of the competition was Elham Baraki (8I) who wrote a thought-provoking poem about the inspiration that is Nelson Mandela.

Well done Elham – your prize is on its way to you!





He had quite a troublesome childhood,

And like others thought apartheid wasn't good,

He decided to take some violent action,

And then was given a government sanction,

Again and again he protested, so that his voice was heard,

But amongst the powerful whites, he was just a tweeting bird,

Eventually he was arrested,

But made the world become unrested,

27 years was his time in prison,

In the rest of the world he had sparked a mission,

To carry on the campaign he had started,

The peace from both races had now become parted,

Finally came the day he was free,

After all the protesting from overseas,

He became head of the ANC,

And due to votes of democracy,

The president of Africa became he,

In his speeches he touched many hearts,

And aimed to fix a Nation in parts,

Came the day where he would make an announcement,

And Apartheid was rid and so was the White government.



By Elham Baraki 81



## Shamaail Mastermind

## By Mr Limbada

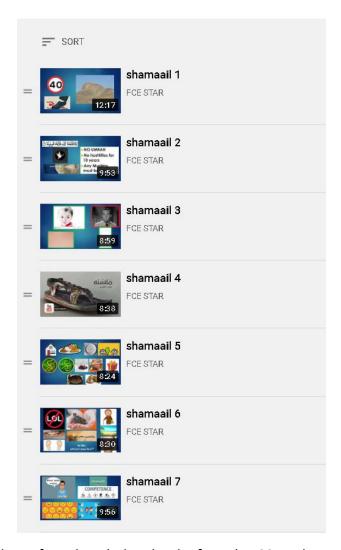
Eden Boys' held their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Mastermind competition to teach students about the life and character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Shamaail means the character of the Prophet (pbuh).

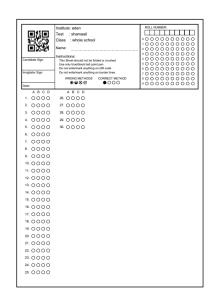
The competition was fierce this year, with students showing amazing feats of memory as they competed to become the Shamaail Mastermind champion.



Shamaail Mastermind began with all students watching 7 video presentations on the life and character of the Prophet (pbuh) during form time. Students listened with rapt attention, as one-by-one, each of the videos revealed more and more aspects about the Prophet (pbuh)'s social life and mannerisms. Once the video presentation series was complete, the videos were made available on the school YouTube channel, and students were given a few days to revise them.



Thereafter, the whole school, of nearly 500 students, took part in a whole-school multiple choice quiz, answering 30 multiple-choice questions on the shamaail. The answers were then auto-marked using a phone- app, and the top 3 then moved on to the next round.

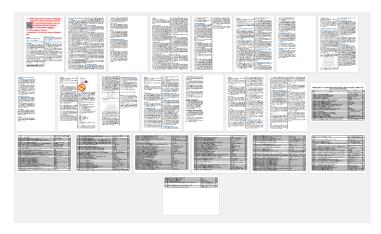






In round 2, the top 3 from each of the 17 forms were quizzed verbally on the shamaail, and the top student from each form then moved onto round 3.

To prepare for round 3, students were given a print out of the script for the Shamaail video presentations and asked to revise that for the next round. Once again, in round 3, students were quizzed verbally to see who would go through to the grand final, which was to be held the next week. The top 2 from each year qualified for the final, meaning the final line up was 8 students – 2 from each year.



The final was live streamed through YouTube to the whole school. All teachers were sent a YouTube livestream link, and at 8:05 on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>

November, the final began, with Mr Limbada the host, and Heads of Year and Mrs Sara Bashir helping to keep the event running smoothly.

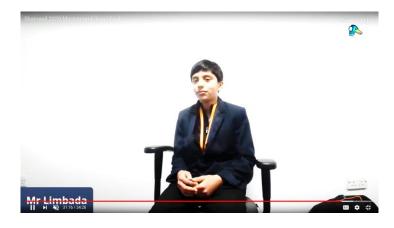
Competition was fierce. Year 10 student and Head Boy Yunus Bobat was first to go, and laid down a marker with a huge score of 27 out of 29 questions correctly answered in 2 minutes.



Aaidh Milad in year 9 then beat that score with 28.



However, there was to be a surprise in store, when year 7 student Ibraheem Ahmed, the final contestant, answered all 29 questions correctly, with no passes, and 19 seconds still left on the clock!





It was a remarkable performance, that left everyone stunned, and made clear that this young man was destined for great things in life.

The finalists all received a beautiful finalist certificate, designed by the multi-talented Miss Kiran Hussain, and Champion Ibraheem Ahmed also received a Mastermind trophy and £100 Amazon voucher which he promised to share with his mum!





You can watch the final by clicking on, or scanning the QR code on the left.



## **Eden Boys Go Tree-planting**

## By Mahad Anjum

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of November, the Student Shura representatives from each year group took part in a mammoth treeplanting operation on the grounds of Eden Boys' Leadership Academy. The trees were donated by the Woodland Trust, and a total of 480 trees - one for each pupil in the school – were planted.







We were given the root plants and shown how to correctly plant them. It was important to plant a stick alongside each tree, and bind the plant to the stick so that it would grow straight up.



All the Student volunteers worked well together, and with hard work and team spirit, all the trees were planted.

Everyone was very enthusiastic and motivated to plant the trees, as we were aware of the environmental benefits from our geography lessons, and also aware of the spiritual blessings, mentioned in the hadith of the week we had learnt the previous week. The hadith mentions that planting a tree and looking after it would result in you getting a reward every time an animal, human or organism benefitted from that tree.

We hope this activity will inspire other students to go out and be eco-friendly by growing their own trees and gaining reward themselves. This world is a gift from the Lord, and we are required to look after it, so we should try and plant as many trees as possible.





## Children in Need

### By Mr Limbada

Eden Boys' Leadership Academy held a fundraising and events day to raise money for Children in Need.



Students donated to participate in a number of sporting activities, including basketball hoops and Beat the Goalie, although with potential England starlet and PE Teacher Mr Sohaib Ahmed in goal, very few students were able to score. The majority of students came dressed in non-uniform and made a cash donation towards Children in Need.





Staff also took part, coming dressed in more casual (but still very smart and professional) clothing, and holding a cake auction, in which a fantastic Children in Need cake, made by our amazing baker and potential future Great British Bake Off contestant, Miss Kiran Hussein, was auctioned. The final winner was Miss Omerji, who took the cake home with a winning bid of £46.



Students also took part in a FIFA 2020 tournament, paying £5 to enter, and playing each other in a multi-week tournament to become the FIFA champion. The total sum raised was £1520.00.





## Making Money for Macmillan

## By Mrs Akhter

On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September Eden Boys Manchester took part in Macmillan's annual Coffee Morning to support cancer victims. This was the first event for this year's school Charity Cup and so everyone's competitive side came out! Forms groups battled it out against each other to raise the most money.

Mrs Kiran Hussain baked some delicious Macmillan themed cupcakes that were quickly snapped up by the students.



Students also got into the fundraising mood by decorating their rooms.



There was a large supply of confectionaries for students to purchase as part of the fundraising drive.



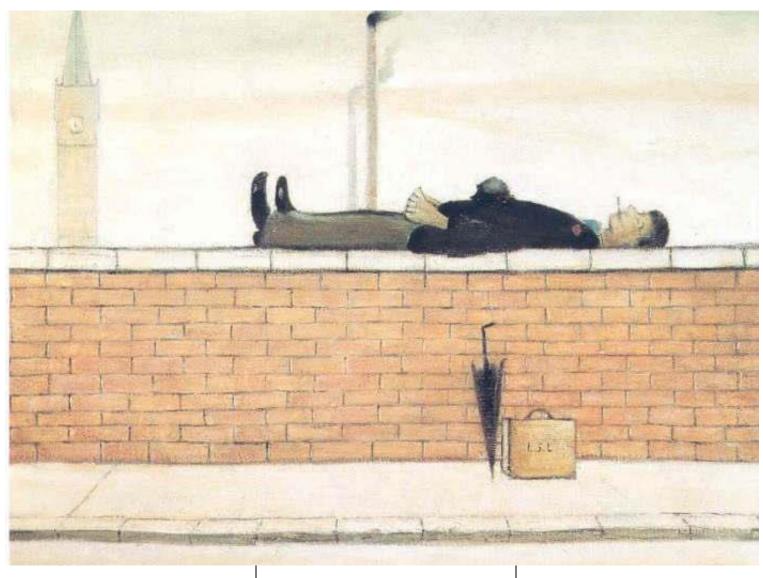
Staff also got involved in the fundraising, in the form of a staff badminton competition that was well attended. Principal Mr Fazal surprised everyone with his athletic ability and excellent badminton skills.



As always the EBM students, parents and staff were very generous and raised a grand total of:

£1,429.69





# Flashback to the Lowry visit

## By Yunus Bobat

A group of current year 10 students took part in an LS Lowry workshop at the Lowry theatre where we got the amazing chance to see most of Laurence Stephen Lowry's brilliant paintings of society in England during the early 19th century.

The trip was part of an English writing activity, aimed at inspiring us to write a descriptive story or poem based on what we saw.

The trip really gave us students the opportunity to improve our interpretation and imagination skills, as well as learning to describe through differing mediums different to what we were used to seeing in a school environment.

The combination of English and art brought out a sense of enlightenment as the students got to see a clear link between the two.

The paintings we saw were phenomenal, and some of them date back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and are worth millions of pounds.

We were fortunate to meet an author who wrote a book based on

one of Lowry's paintings, 'Man lying on a wall'. He helped us as we attempted to devise our own descriptive stories based on the magnificent artworks, and he gave the students an insight into what life as an author was like.

Overall, I think that the trip was extremely beneficial since it opened up our minds to art and literature, and allowed us to see how society can be represented without words.

It certainly helped the students in terms of learning how to describe single scenes in such intriguing detail, which will indeed help us in the near future.



# Flashback to World Book Day

#### Hamzah Sarfraz

World Book Day was an exciting day where many teachers and students took the liberty to dress up as their favourite characters from a book they have read.

I had decided to make my own costume by ripping up a t-shirt and splattering fake blood all over it. I was inspired by the book Hall of Horrors by the world renowned author R.L Stine.

During the day I had witnessed many other people's costumes and the effort they had made.

Ibrahim Dar's costume was unique as he came dressed up in a striped t-shirt with a large pillow tucked underneath and brown lipstick on his face, as the character Augustus Gloop from the book Charlie and the Chocolate Factory which is written by Roald Dahl.



I had also seen the creative costumes from our teachers such as Miss Murtaza who had dressed up as the famous character Cat in the Hat.



The Humanities department came dressed up as characters from the Wizard of Oz – including (from left to right) the Good Witch (Mrs Akhter), the Tinman (Mr Bhana), Dorothy (Miss Butt) and the Evil Witch (Mrs Bashir).







Harry Potter seemed to be quite popular with the current year 8 students.



A number of current year 10 students, who had been studying An Inspector Calls, chose to come as Inspector Goole.





## **Hooray for Hegarty**

#### Interview with Adeeb Basharat



The Maths department at Eden Boys' Leadership Academy use an online homework platform called Hegarty maths to identify weaknesses in student knowledge, and assign targeted homework to address those weaknesses.

We caught up with Adeeb Basharat, who recently received a Hegarty Maths certificate and badge, and spoke to him about his experiences.

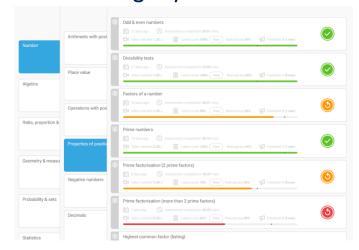
# You've been using Hegarty Maths for a while. What do you think of it?

At Eden Boys' school, we use Hegarty Maths to make us better at Mathematics. I have found it makes you really good at Maths, and helps you improve your understanding of Maths a lot. I like Hegarty Maths because it is easy to use and it has made me more confident in Maths, and I have seen my grades improve so much.

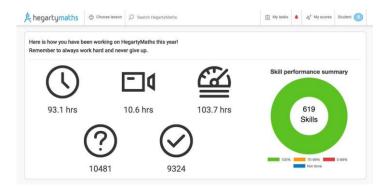
## What did you receive an award for?

I got given my badge and award because I used Hegarty Maths more than everyone else. I spent a lot of time watching and re-watching the videos until I understood the topic and could answer all the questions.

## How does Hegarty Maths work?



You log in online, and there, you have to watch videos about the work you are doing in class. You then answer questions about the topic. If you don't get a high score, you have to watch the video again and keep re-doing the questions until you get a high score.



Head of Maths, Mr Patel, commented:

"Hegarty Maths gives students the opportunity to improve their mathematical knowledge and I am extremely proud of Adeeb for using this platform to his advantage."

Adeeb's Maths teacher, Mrs Badar, remarked:

"Adeeb's marks in Maths have increased exponentially. He has gone from a lowly score of 4% at the start of the year to 52%. The improvement has been huge, and it has been wonderful seeing his confidence grow.





# World Leaders Tomorrow? Student Leaders Today,



