



**Holocaust Memorial day**

Thamesmead students watched as Eve Kugler shared her amazing story, P2.

**International Women's Day**

Celebrated at the start of March we have two articles focussed on the day, P4-5.

**The Power of Positivity**

Nearly a year on from the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, positivity is more powerful than ever, P6

# Thamesmead Times

The Student Newspaper for Thamesmead School



Winning entries in the Lockdown Art competition. A special congratulations to:  
Max Kirk- 1<sup>st</sup> place.  
Nadia Mousawad- 2<sup>nd</sup> place.  
Rowan Norbury- 3<sup>rd</sup> place.  
Honourable mentions must also go to: Cara Stevenson, Ben Lamb, Florence Rolt, Sally Barrister, Vika Nekhaenko.

There is always room to look on the positive side, however; lots of people will be able to spend more time with their family and create closer bonds with siblings and parents, and others will develop new skills such as learning a new language or improving their baking (especially in banana bread!). This shows us that although we have and will be affected, it is different for everyone.

An issue that has been discussed frequently, and has been carried through from the last lockdown, is mental health. During the last lockdown, 75% of people with pre-existing mental health problems between the ages of 13-24 have said that their mental health deteriorated in this period because of the isolation and loneliness induced by it, and this is something that we all must try to lessen during this lockdown. We need to stay in touch with friends, have facetime calls, check up on those you know who could be suffering in silence.

The core Thamesmead values of resilience, commitment and aspiration are ones we will need to keep close to heart during this period while we complete our job of learning, taking in new information and using it to aid us in the future, to find our passions. Although this is going to be a difficult job to do during this period of remote learning and many of us will struggle, everyone can push through and come out of lockdown confident; all we must do is keep going.

Sarah Campion Y9

## Thamesmead back in Lockdown

Lockdown is a word that we had all been dreading since we emerged from our nations last one on May 10th, 2020, a word that has now been reintroduced and lives will abruptly change once more. Over the time that our world has experienced the nature of Covid-19, mixed emotions

have been felt and shared. From schools and workplaces closing and moving online, to completely empty shelves in supermarkets, we have all felt feelings of shock and worry, and have been affected by this pandemic. As a school, we have all moved onto remote learning (as you probably know),

and learning is going to be harder than ever, however we are all capable of getting through this.

Many negatives have been thrown onto this lockdown, for example, one student, Charlotte Seymour, has said: "Not being able to see friends is a definite negative".



## Remembering the Holocaust

**"When you hear from a witness of the Holocaust, you become a witness."**

Holocaust Memorial Day UK is marked every year on the 27th January and is dedicated to remembering the suffering of Jews and others under Nazi persecution. It was first held in 2001, and in 2009 the day was supported by the Holocaust Educational Trust for the first time. This year it was an honour to watch and listen to Eve Kagle, a Holocaust survivor,

tell the powerful story of her life as a Jewish child in Nazi Germany. Eve spoke of the gradual changes made during the early years, that slowly took away Jewish people's freedoms. Her father owned a business which was soon listed on a flyer telling people not to shop at Jewish-owned places. There were then signs everywhere saying "Jews prohibi-

ed". She remembers when one day her and her sisters were no longer allowed to go ice skating which they used to love.

Eve recounted the "Kristallnacht" or "Night of the Broken Glass" where her family's apartment was rampaged and windows smashed. This was particularly poignant, having learnt about "Kristallnacht" in history lessons. Seeing her describe and remember the night gave a face and a voice to the facts we'd learnt. It made them even more of a reality and was so valuable in having a proper understanding of the Holocaust, much more so than an information video, facts on a page or even a visit to a concentration camp. It was a window into the fear that was felt by millions.

One positive aspect of Eve's testimony was the miraculous reuniting of her and her parents after she and her sister

had been sent to America. She reflected on how lucky she was that her family had survived, despite her parents' time in the horrific conditions of the transit camps. Her mother had managed to escape being transferred to the concentration camps by assisting a nurse for the three months spent in the camp. When it was time for the Jews to be transported to a concentration camp, the nurse intervened and said that the couple were Swiss and therefore, -- because Switzerland is a neutral country, didn't have to go. Eve didn't tell her story for many years but later wrote a book called 'Shattered Crystals' with her mother which she urges everyone to read. From her incredible story and this precious first-hand information, I have learnt so much that I didn't know about the horrors of the Nazis and the Holocaust.

Amy Wallis Y11



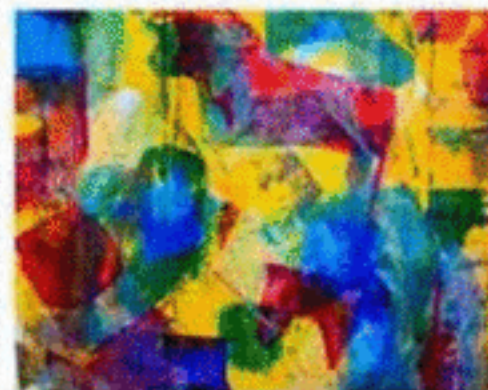
Lily Pratt Y8

## The Importance of Art

No matter how big or small the wonderful and intricate pieces are, art is a crucial part of everyone's lives. It can bring joy to the saddest souls, which is why art is vital, especially within the curriculum. For instance, art therapy helps children, adolescents, and adults explore their emotions by helping them to relieve stress, improve symptoms of anxiety and depression, and cope with a physical illness or disability. Art is an inherently enjoyable experience, which can be a powerful tool in a therapy setting. It can give you the opportunity to express your inner thoughts and feelings, whilst helping you to better understand and make sense of your emotions and the outside world. It can be used as a complement to traditional mental health treatment. The aim of art therapy is to manage behaviour, process feelings, reduce stress and anxiety, and increase self-esteem. Creating

pieces of art can help you acknowledge and recognize feelings that have been lurking in your hidden self.

Art is like many subjects, such as Music. People can express themselves in a painted or drawn piece, like how people express their thoughts and feelings by playing or composing a piece of music. Some pieces of artwork are harder to draw than others, like how some pieces of music or instruments are harder to perform or learn. Art also links to Science, Drama, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Education and Food technology. In Science, you can learn what paint is made of. Like drama, Art provides scope for talent, we can become individuals through practice and performance. Numbers, or geometric shapes can be used in paintings- these ideas come from the subject



called Mathematics. You can always link art to many topics.

Without art, we would not have a Vincent Van Gogh, or Leonardo Da Vinci. No one would have been inspired to become artists, and the fascinating world of art would have never been born. Galleries would never have opened, and

Museums would never have that interesting spark to them. When art came into people's lives, it gives inspiration, passion, and determination, to be the best they can be. Art is so important in reality- it can be used not only for an occupation, but in everyday life.

Rebecca Pops Y7

## Safer Internet Day

Two years ago, we were free. We were able to go outside when we liked, without thinking about the dangers of this horrid disease. Some of you may be finding this time tough, but just remember, the generations before us managed to survive the Black Death and the Spanish Flu, without the technology that we have today.

To escape from this wretched lockdown, many of us are now switching to online discussions, more of our personal data is being shared online with people who you might think are trustworthy. Cyber-bullying is a growing concern on the internet, with more people logging on, there are more people to target, and there are more people to

spread the negativity. Would you be unkind to the same person if they were face to face with you? If the answer is no, why are you being unkind to people online?

Fear not, there are things out there to slow down and stop this problem. One of these initiatives is 'Safer Internet day', which is on Tuesday 9th February. It is a day about

promoting the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young adults; to inspire us to all think about the way we use the internet. Remember to think before you post, everything you do on the internet is there forever, your digital footprint has everything you have ever texted, posted, commented on. If you ever feel like you are being bullied online, talk to a trusted adult or a teacher. You would have heard that statement a lot, but it is true, adults can help with cyberbullying more than you realise. The internet is a gift, and we should treasure it. Be free on the internet, but be safe at the same time. Together for a better internet.



Harrison Pescod Y9



# International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a holiday, celebrating many achievements of women throughout the past, and the progress continuing to be made regarding equality for all. It is a celebration rich in history, and with a bright future ahead of it. I hope we can all recognise the amazing women who have changed the world, and to this day reflect on those who do not get the recognition that they deserve.

International Women's Day

is celebrated on March 8th, a tradition unknowingly set by the Russian women in 1913. Despite their efforts in the war, the women faced food shortages and a lack of necessary supplies. Increased, they took to the streets and protested, bringing with them the start of a monumental tradition.

Protesting led to tradition, and now International Women's Day is celebrated all over the world, including in Afghanistan, Laos, Cuba, Rus-

sia, and Vietnam. The holiday takes many different shapes, for example, in Laos and Vietnam, men honour their wives, girlfriends, and colleagues with small tokens of affection. In China and Nepal, it is only a holiday for only women. In the USA and UK, it is not an official holiday, however, many women refuse to let this stop them and protest in cities across the countries.

Getting involved in International Women's Day is incredibly easy, and there are many ways to participate. Many different women's organisations hold events ranging from informative conferences to powerful art exhibitions. In addition to this, the colour purple is a symbol of justice and dignity and has become to symbolise women's rights from the Suffragette movement in the early 20th century. This year's theme is #ChooseToChallenge and the aim is to

create a more aware, educated, and alert society to prevent bias and discrimination. There are many missions that International Women's Day has decided to help forge. For example, women's equality in sport (for example, both men and women receiving equal prizes), inclusive workplaces in which we can thrive and, increasing visibility for women's creatives.

It is safe to say that women's rights have greatly improved, but there is still more to be done. No matter what your cup of tea is, or even if you're not a woman, showing your support is vital for a less sexist society, so that women can thrive and show their full potential.

Rowan Norbury #KWA



International  
Women's Day

## Who is Kamala Harris?

International Women's day is coming up on the 8th of March. An individual whose achievements stand out to me are those of Kamala Harris. Not only the first female Vice President of the United States of America, but the first Black woman and the first South

Asian woman to hold the position. Breaking through gender and racial barriers, Harris challenges many girls and women to be 'firsts' in their fields and hopes that she "inspire[s] young people to pursue their dreams." Below I pay tribute to her life and career.

### Background

Born in 1964 in Oakland, California, Harris came from two immigrant parents - an Indian physician mother and a Jamaican Stanford University professor. Kamala attended Thousand Oaks Elementary school - a public school situated in a more prosperous neighbourhood of her city, Berkeley, which had previously been 95% white. Kamala and hundreds of other school children took part in the town's comprehensive desegregation program, and after the plan went into effect Thousand Oaks became 40% black.

At age 7, her parents divorced, and Kamala and her younger sister, Maya, were primarily raised by her Hindu single mother, a cancer researcher and civil rights activist. In her 2018 autobiography, Harris wrote that her mother 'understood very well she was raising two black daughters [...] she was determined to make sure we would grow into confident black women.' Harris went on to study at Westmount High School and then at Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C. which she graduated from in 1986 with a degree in political science and economics. In 1989, she graduated from law school

at the University of California and the following year was hired as a deputy district attorney in California. From there, she was recruited as assistant district attorney of San Francisco; and then was voted in as district attorney (the top prosecutor) for two terms - from 2004 to 2011. In 2011 she was narrowly elected attorney general of California - the main legal advisor to the government - and became the first female and the first African American to hold the post.

### Politics

Three of Harris' main political doctrines are: pro-choice, opting to allow abortions at state hospitals and family planning clinics; against the death penalty, describing it as 'immoral' in 2019, and is also in favour of legalising recreational drugs, such as marijuana. However, she has previously been criticised for 'political opportunism' - the attempt to maintain political support or increase political influence in a way which potentially disregards relevant ethical or political principles. For example, she voted in favour of closing abortions at Hoag Hospital in 2013, defended the death penalty in court in 2014, and opposed legalising marijuana in 2014.

### Political career

After a memorable speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2012, Harris was widely considered a rising star of the party. This prompted her to run for the US senate seat in early 2015, and in 2016 she easily won the election - becoming the first Indian American and only the second black woman in the Senate. In January 2019, Harris formally announced her run for the presidency, a candidacy which seemed promising. However,

it was the same tactic of attempting to please everybody and a lack of clarity on important issues such as healthcare, which were significant contributors in her polling average dropping to 34%, leading to the suspension of her presidential campaign. Nevertheless, Harris put up an admirable fight, peaking at a 19% polling average in July 2019, far ahead of her fellow democrat opponents (one being current president Joe Biden) after a blockbuster speech in June, and explained that the suspension of her campaign was due to funding issues, stating 'my campaign for president simply doesn't have the financial resources we need to continue'.

However, these factors were not alone in causing the termination of her presidential race - she was at an inherent disadvantage, as Dr Lori Cox Han, professor of political science at Chapman University, explains. Dr Han's main area of expertise is American government, with research and teaching interests in topics such as women and politics, the presidency and political leadership. Han said that audiences will expect more but tolerate less from Ms Harris than they would from most male candidates, simply because she's a woman. It's a double-edged sword, stereotypically feminine behaviour can lead voters to see women running for office as more likable but less of a leader, while stereotypically masculine behaviour can make voters see them as more of a leader but less likable.

Dr Han explained that women are fundamentally at a disadvantage in contests like debates where individuals are measured by how 'presidential' they look, because the idea of a president in US society is almost always masculine. "You can't be too harsh or too aggressive because it

plays against you as a woman, but you can't come across as too weak because then you're viewed as not being able to handle the work," she states. "It's a very fine line, and it's always an extra burden placed on women due to their gender." Take Donald Trump, for example, he has grossly described Harris as 'angry', 'mean', 'aggressive' and 'disrespectful'; all these words were also used against previous first lady Michelle Obama and play to the disgusting stereotype of an 'angry black woman'.

Despite this, in August 2020, Joe Biden announced Kamala as his vice president candidate, outlining that she is 'a fearless fighter for the little guy, and one of the country's finest public servants', a decision widely welcomed by prominent democrats, including former President Barack Obama who stated that Harris is an 'ideal partner to help him [Biden] tackle the very real challenges America faces'. Furthermore, on the 20th of January 2021,

in Washington D.C., Kamala Harris took the vice-presidential oath after Joe Biden's successful presidential campaign, cementing her role in American democracy. Another many more firsts were gained in the process.

So, what do you think? A woman to admire or a contradictory political opportunist? Whether you agree with her politics or not, she is undeniably a woman of many firsts, a pioneer who reminds us all that we have a voice and that every voice should be heard. She is certainly a fantastic symbol of what International Women's day represents and she is the epitome of the 2021 campaign theme #ChooseToChallenge. In my eyes, undoubtedly a woman to admire.

Holly Fletcher HIBL



**BIDEN  
HARRIS**