

UCS  
HAMPSTEAD



# UCS PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY REVIEW

2022-23





# Introduction

Community is a central theme running through the life of UCS. As a school, we talk about being a community of individuals bound by mutual respect for our shared humanity. The importance given to strong relationships extends to developing strong ties with our local community, including local charities, organisations and maintained-sector schools.

Our partnership projects this year have spanned STEM and Modern Languages 'immersion days' as well as Maths and English literacy mentoring for local primary school children, Drama and Art projects, and the annual Oxbridge preparation events, among other initiatives. One 'new kid on the block' meanwhile was the recently launched Sports Science partnership with Westminster Academy.

Whether providing mentoring opportunities, or organising exchange visits for UCS pupils and their peers from partnership schools, however, each collaboration aimed to be mutually beneficial. It certainly benefited our young

people to have their horizons broadened and their collaborative skills stretched, so we are grateful for the enrichment and insights they received.

The volunteering options available to our pupils, meanwhile, took them out of their comfort zones and involved them in exciting activities and schemes, as well as inspiring their own undertakings like the North Paddington Foodbank collection. If this annual endeavour is a chance to help people less fortunate, it also reflects outwards the generosity and kindness inherent at UCS. The collection also prefaces the pupil-led charity fundraising period of 'Community Action', which this year raised more than £27,000.

I hope you will enjoy reading this review as it helps to explain how far-reaching the Partnerships and Community provision is at UCS. We will do well to continue to look outwards and to develop further such links, understanding and relations with others beyond the school gates.

Mark Beard  
*Headmaster*



# Visual & Performing Arts



## Breaking Character

In the Spring Term, an exciting collaborative project took place under the leadership of teachers in the UCS Art and Drama Departments. Pupils from LAE Stratford were invited to attend and participate in a workshop based around building narrative, in response to the Mohammed Sami exhibition at the Camden Arts Centre.

The objective was to give an example of different ways to interact with, or take in, an art exhibition; of how you can use what you see to help you come up with your own ideas; and to help you with your own practice. In the Drama section, pupils were encouraged to create a character and short play from an image they'd seen in the exhibit. Each group was given an image showing a piece of art on a postcard, and

the students worked together to design their own story. Thus they learned the process of creating a simple story arc and protagonist, as well as thinking about how situations and other people can affect characters. In Art, pupils were introduced to the concept of the uncanny – sharing knowledge and skills at once alien and familiar – and they discussed how this device crops up in film and TV. From these collaborative discussions, pupils experimented with drawing an object as they saw it, an object as they remembered it, and an object as they imagined it. They drew this into their own different scenarios, and used the process of monoprinting to draw from memory or imagination and create their own scenes.

## Art Felt

Towards the end of the Summer Term, a group of excited Year 5 pupils came to visit UCS to see the culmination of a fantastic Performing Arts partnership that had been running throughout the term.

Year 5 pupils from Rhyl Primary School in Camden had participated in a series of playwriting workshops run at their school over several weeks by UCS Drama teacher Mr Swanson. They each wrote a series of plays that involved household objects. Six of these plays were chosen to receive their London premieres on 19th June, performed

by a group of UCS Remove (Year 10) actors from Drama Enrichment lessons. These actors did a superb job of bringing these surreal plays to life.

Each play contained its own bizarre inner logic and communicated wittily to an appreciative audience. *Haters to Friends* featured a crazed Sharpie and a pristine Notebook. *The Brush and the Bad Hair Day* told the story of Hair rejecting the hurt that Brush would insist on causing each morning to make her look good. *The Watermelon and the Strawberry* were both petrified of the lurking human chomping down on them. *The Tale of Ketchup and Mayo* involved an Anglo-Gallic battle to see which of the great condiments was more appreciated. *The Golden Gear* featured a football boot and shirt being rejected by Ronaldo and turning instead to Riyad Mahrez as someone who would wear them; and *The Battle of the Sharpener and the Pencil* was a terrifying tale of a crazed Sharpener trying to shorten the Pencil until the paper slid between them to save the day.

The Rhyl Primary pupils were delighted to see their work performed so professionally and even took home the costumes as a souvenir of the occasion. The last word should go to their class teacher, Emily Duits, who helped make this event happen:

“The plays were a joy to watch – so well acted and those costumes were just brilliant! We really appreciate you working with us to give the kids this experience.”

## Dance

Rose Tran, Head of Dance at UCS, worked with pupils at another of our partnership primary schools, Argyle Primary School, alongside our Remove (Year 10) pupils on some Dance lessons. UCS pupils visited Argyle to teach certain choreography and skills that they had been working on with Mrs Tran.

*“It was an extremely fun adventure going to Argyle Primary to teach the children what we had been working on this term. I especially enjoyed teaching our choreographed motifs inspired by urban living and watching them take on board our creative advice as well as adding their own ideas. It was also exciting to take them through a partner exercise in which one of them was the architect and their task was to mould their partner into interesting shapes. They were all very welcoming and enthusiastic. I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did.”*

J. SAINSBURY  
Year 10 pupil





# The Nobel Laureate Series

We held our second Nobel Laureate Lecture Series event in the early stages of the Autumn Term. These events are designed to stretch Sixth Form pupils' learning beyond their lessons and to engage with super-curricular knowledge at a higher and more creative level.

This time the lecture evening shone the spotlight on the Humanities and Social Sciences. It was an exciting evening to be hosting this flagship lecture programme in the company of our keynote speaker, Alexandra Heal, and our partnership schools. Students from UCS, LAE Stratford, UCL Academy and Westminster Academy listened to each other's presentations, discussed university applications, and had the opportunity to get to know one another on a night that celebrated all things Humanities.

We heard impressive talks spanning 20th-century history, contemporary economic structures and the philosophy of maths. We also listened attentively to our special guest, Alexandra Heal, from the *Financial Times*

storytelling team. Alexandra gripped the audience with her presentation on visual journalism, research and how she began her professional career. Alexandra's closing Q&A really helped attendees think about a future in investigative journalism and gave them plenty to muse over.

It was a truly enriching event, and a real joy to see UCS and partnership pupils talking about their subjects, university choices and next steps, both academically and socially. With the Great Hall abuzz, it was also a really positive forum for teachers from across our network to develop stronger professional relationships.



*“I thoroughly enjoyed sharing my research and answering the audience’s questions – and was pleased to find that they found my topic just as interesting as I did! I also learnt so much from hearing from other presenters equally passionate about Social Sciences as myself.”*

PARTNERSHIP PUPIL ATTENDEE



# University Preparation

## Interview evenings

Every November, UCS holds two key mock interview evenings to support Sixth Formers in their university applications for competitive STEM courses and Medicine. These events welcome both UCS pupils and their peers from partner schools spread across London.

The first event this year was a panel interview for prospective medics and the second a practice interview for those applying for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects at either Oxford or Cambridge. Some 78 pupils from UCS, LAE Stratford, Michaela Community School,

UCL Academy and Westminster Academy were hosted for the medics interview evening. They each had a 30-minute interview involving two expert professionals on topics ranging from their desires to pursue a career in Medicine, to questions on patient care, via tackling some of the NHS hot topics.

A few weeks later, the STEM Oxbridge event welcomed 59 students from the same schools. Here, each pupil was offered a similar half-hour interview, but focusing on their chosen subject. From Geology to Maths and Computer Science, pupils were afforded the experience of meeting their interviewer there and then, simulating that real-life scenario, and received feedback to help set them up for the real thing. These evenings could not happen without the panels of expert volunteers willing to interview, of whom we had over 75 in total. We are very grateful to the many parents and Old Gowers involved, as well as colleagues and teachers from UCS and our partner schools.

*“Being interviewed by someone I had just met really helped give me the feeling of the real thing. I was asked questions I thought would not come up, so it highlighted the range of knowledge needed.”*

A. CHRISTENSEN  
*Sixth pupil*



## The UCAT Training Day

The UCAT day is a training day for pupils applying to study Medicine at university. It is run by an external company and provides support specifically for the aptitude test that pupils take as part of their application. As we had done in previous years, we were pleased to invite a group of pupils from LAE Stratford to attend. At UCS, there is a small cohort of prospective medics, so opportunities like this are great for them to mix with fellow students. They can provide different insights and ideas, resulting in more stimulating discussions for all concerned.

*“The UCAT prep day at UCS was very good. I personally found the session very useful in terms of providing resources, giving tips and explaining the best ways to approach the UCAT and also what ideal practice looks like. The staff and students were also very kind and accommodating.”*

LAE PUPIL PARTICIPANT

## LAE visits



Our partnership relationship with the London Academy of Excellence (LAE), Stratford is a hugely rewarding and important one. One feature of this collaboration are the two exchange visits that take place annually. LAE has designed its House system along the lines of its partner schools, meaning that every year a group of LAE pupils belong to ‘UCS House’. These students visit UCS in October before hosting their UCS counterparts in June.

This October, as is tradition for the visit to UCS, our Transitus (Year 12) pupils and their LAE equivalents were brought together to engage in academically enriching activities and to think beyond their A Level studies. The programme sought to draw links, perhaps unexpected ones, between their subjects.

This year's theme of 'Life, Growth and Death' tied together three lectures by pupils in the Sixth:

#### Life

'Is de-extinction possible?'

*I. Spooner*

#### Growth

'Why is the teaching of evolution in American public schools still such a widely-debated issue?'

*R. Kapoor*

#### Death

'Is Yiddish dead?'

*J. Abrahams*

All three lectures were challenging, well-informed and left the audience utterly inspired for their next task. Having been confronted by such a range of perspectives on the theme, the pupils were put into mixed UCS/LAE groups and asked to produce their own responses to the theme. These included:

**'The Brain Versus the Mind'** – a thorough analysis of the concept of neural plasticity which sought to determine if the nervous system can change its activity in response to intrinsic or extrinsic stimuli. It concluded that the link between having a growth mindset and increased neuroplasticity is that personal growth and progress are possible.



#### 'Social Media and the Death of Democracy'

– using Cambridge Analytica as a starting point, this piece examined various social media platforms and their algorithms to determine whether social media poses a real threat to democratic systems, concluding ultimately that “the divisive efforts of authoritarian governments to manipulate social media to buttress their regimes are not necessarily destroying democracy but acting as a fatal hindrance to it”.

Then in the summer, a group of UCS Transitus pupils joined LAE at two main locations in central London. Firstly, they headed to the offices of Arup, a global sustainable development consultancy based in an incredible building on Charlotte Street. Pupils got to mix together and tackled an interesting set of discussion questions on the future of school inspections and assessment, reflecting on their own experiences of

schooling in London or further afield and on what makes a good education. They also viewed a documentary on Ofsted that was made with, and filmed in part at, LAE during lockdown. After this introductory session, the students listened to presentations by Arup employees who talked about the process of designing and building a space, linking together engineering, architecture, sustainability and finance as well as social sciences. The presentations were wonderful and matched in brilliance by the probing and thought-provoking questions from pupils on sustainable materials, gentrification and the educational background of colleagues at Arup.

After a sunny stroll through London to Kings Cross, the group visited Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children. The UCS/LAE delegation was split in two and everyone received a fascinating introductory lesson on British Sign Language and then a tour of the school. The place was nothing short of inspirational and all of the pupils were taken aback by its truly bilingual approach to using BSL alongside English.

As always, we are so grateful to our colleagues and the students at LAE for welcoming us so warmly and organising such an interesting and insightful day. We look forward to seeing the new intake of UCS House here at UCS in September 2023.





# The Lund Gallery

The aim of the Lund Gallery this year was to continue to provide a platform to exhibit the creative work of members of our school and our partnership schools. The year kicked off with our first show, *Founding*, which celebrated the work produced by Lower School students. The experience of school life for these pupils is integral to their building the foundations for a successful education at UCS and beyond.



A lot of things are formed and established during Years 7 and 8. Friendships, sports teams, club attendance, play habits and working methods, to name a few. Lower School is a space for children to embark on journeys of self-discovery, to take risks they never imagined taking; a space to challenge perspectives, debate topics and reach new understandings.

Among the items displayed were postcards sent over the holidays by new Year 7 or Entry pupils. These boys were tasked with researching their Head of House and designing a motif that celebrated this person. Our new Entry were joining UCS during the first year of the rebooted Lower School Houses, so there was a buzz about the system and much chat among the pupils as they identified with their Head of House and discussed the threads that bound them as a sub-group within the school.

The second show was titled *Breaking Character* and showcased artwork produced by the newly formed Lund Gallery Committee and our partnership school LAE, Stratford.

This exhibition was the first of its kind at UCS. The Lund Gallery Committee collaborated with the cast of the school musical *Oliver!* to make a series of works that were presented alongside the production.



It aimed to explore subtexts of the story and encourage the audience to question scenes, look more closely at characters and challenge their understanding of the narrative.

Three very large-scale drawings of the actors during rehearsals wrapped the walls of the gallery, serving to envelop the viewer in a panoramic bind. Snippets of audio offered an insight into the exquisite chaos of pre-production practice, yet a series of fades and cuts sliced away any familiarity or fluency of time.

Next came a project space for students from Entry to Sixth to explore the title *Warriors*. As viewers browsed the resulting work in this exhibition, they discovered projects from an assortment of subject departments, assemblies and enrichment

activities all demonstrating the importance of, and a willingness to enter into, dialogue concerning identity and fighting for the right to express it.

This was a timely show, being open during LGBT+ History Month and on International Women's Day, and it hoped to shine a light on a range of issues surrounding equality and diversity, across all walks of life. Some of the works exhibited were:

#### Power Poses

Transitus and Sixth pupils explored the concept of power poses within their life making session. Working in clay and from a life model, they looked into body language, powerful poses and the use of props.

#### Lunar

The Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post's* 'Lunar' initiative sought to highlight stories for women and by women as well as gender equality issues. Transitus Mandarin scholars examined the articles produced by Lunar and discovered the latest news, analysis and opinion on key issues facing women in the Asia region.

#### Kafka-inspired Story Bugs

Entry pupils had been discussing Franz Kafka's novella *Metamorphosis* and considering the parable that lies within it. They pondered what it might be like to go through changes to their bodies or sense of self and the obstacles they may face. These obstacles involved mental health, gender identity, physical body changes and mood changes. In response, the pupils wrote their own stories and used printed versions to create a series of origami 'bugs'. These sculptural works embodied the concepts discussed in class.

Among these and other examples, there was plenty to explore about what the term 'Warrior' means and when one might embody this persona.







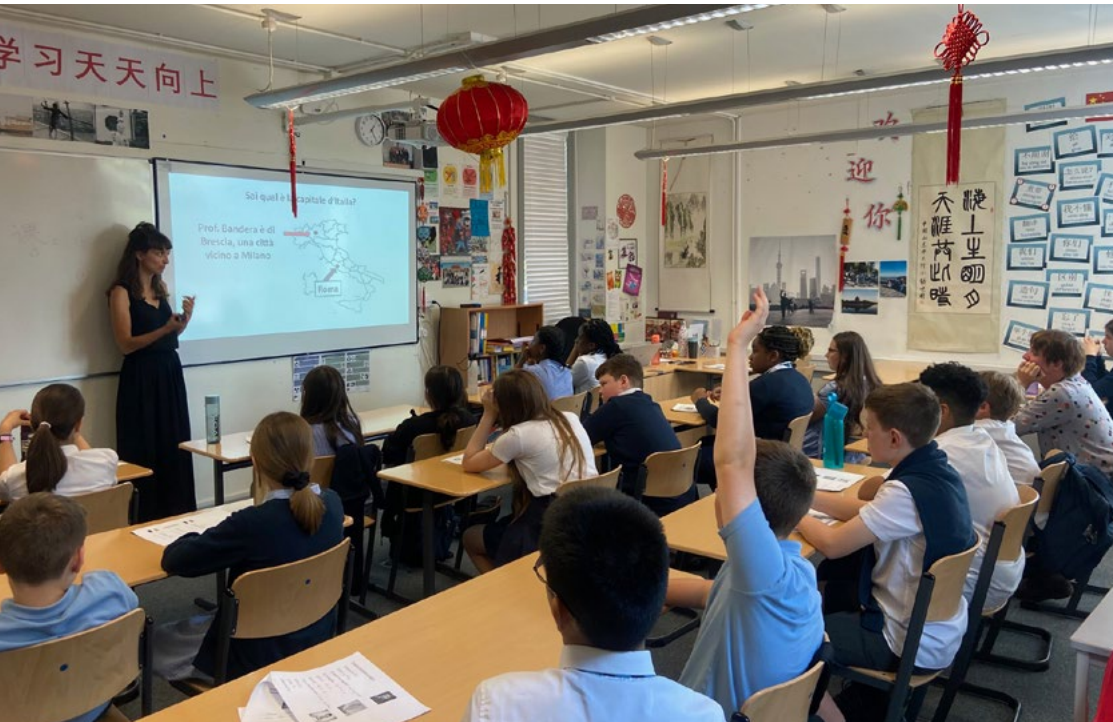
## Sports Science

This year saw the early development of a new sports science partnership launched in the Summer Term. The project will seek to connect our Lower Remove (Year 9) pupils with peers at Westminster Academy.

The project was born out of a desire to provide increased co-curricular options for both sets of pupils and to help develop their collaborative skills. Westminster were the perfect partner for the scheme given their experience both in sports qualifications and in preparing pupils to participate in The Big Bang, the UK's top science and engineering competition for 11 to 18-year-olds. The partnership is still in its initial stages, but already the ideas are flowing. Both sets of pupils have met once to begin planning their studies.

Supported by Westminster's Science Department and the PE Department at UCS, in the form of Mr Peck, the pupils explored possible research ideas. There were various proposals, from the effect of cold showers on reaction time to the links between resistance training and joint health. Happily, a suggested study on the positive impact of video games on cardio performance didn't gain much traction! Instead, the team settled on the following: the effects of sleep and those cold showers on a range of physical and cognitive metrics (with the latter undoubtedly influenced by the current Wim Hof method). Baseline tests were carried out in the weeks before the summer holidays, with the break being used to implement changes, before retesting in the autumn. We're really excited to see how this develops!

# Primary school visits at UCS



## STEM

Across the Spring and Summer Terms we were delighted to welcome groups of local primary school pupils for a number of exciting practical science sessions. In all, over 75 pupils donned their lab coats and tried their hands at a range of activities including space engineering, cardiac surgery, salt extraction and genetic decoding, all in our laboratories at UCS.

*“Being able to help out the younger students was a great experience. I have always loved Physics so I enjoyed showing other younger pupils how fun it can be.”*

J. NEUMANN-NAIMSKI  
Year 12 pupil

Different pupils from Holy Trinity Primary School in our local borough of Camden visited three times for Physics, Biology and Chemistry mornings. Led by UCS teachers and Sixth Formers, the Holy Trinity children designed and built parachutes that would help spacecraft land successfully on the planets of the solar system. In Biology, they examined organisms, looking for key physical characteristics to help categorise them; and finally in Chemistry, Mr Edwards led them through a process of extracting salt from solid rock. The session was supported by a number of Transitus (Year 12) chemists, enthusiastically helping pupils who were using Bunsen burners for the first time and fielding their challenging and impressive questions.

In the Biology laboratories again, pupils from Fleet Primary School, another local school in the borough, were guided through an exploration of a dissected sheep’s heart. Alongside another group of UCS Transitus helpers, the children tracked the route taken by blood through the heart, giving an excellent demonstration of the concepts they had been learning in class about the muscle and the importance of cardiac health.

*“The pupils were so enthusiastic recalling the trip and what they learnt. It really enriched the children’s learning and we all thoroughly enjoyed it!”*

HOLLY KINGHAM  
Teacher at Fleet Primary School

These sessions are fantastic for everyone who is fortunate to be involved. The primary school pupils get the opportunity to see science in action and develop their skills and experience in a laboratory environment, preparing for what awaits at secondary school. For UCS Transitus pupils, it allows them to convey their own infectious love of STEM and challenge their knowledge; there is nothing quite like the inquisition of a 10-year-old!

Always well-received, the sessions also introduce the junior pupils to the ideas of safety in the lab and using equipment they might not have available in their schools. This year we made sure to match up the topics of the sessions with those that the pupils were currently studying. For future sessions, this will be further refined to align specifically with the concepts and key terms they are using so that these perfectly mirror their in-class learning.



## Languages

In June, we hosted a group of Year 6 pupils from another of our local partnership primary schools, Rosary Primary School in Camden. They joined us for our now annual Language Immersion Day. These pupils got to grips with the basics of Mandarin, Italian and French, as well as exploring the cultures and traditions of these countries. All lessons were delivered by members of the UCS Modern Languages Department.

This was a fantastic opportunity for the primary school children to sample a range of languages they were not currently learning, and gave them the chance to think about which languages they might like to study in the future. Such events play a vital role in raising the profile of languages in the local community, as we hope to help inspire the next generation of linguists.



## Debating

UCS pupils are afforded regular opportunities to get involved in debating with each other in Debating Society and Model United Nations, both co-curricular clubs that run weekly. Excitingly, debating featured in our partnerships initiatives this year, giving UCS pupils and those from our partner schools the chance to debate with new people and listen to their perspectives.

During the Spring Term, a group of UCS Transitus (Year 12) French students visited LAE Stratford to take part in a debate against a contingent of LAE Year 12s – all in French! Below are accounts from Lucien and Charlotte who attended the event with UCS:

*“My team was debating against the motion ‘The high rate of divorce in France is not such a bad thing’. There were three people on each team and I took part in the ‘lutte acharnée’ as well as reading the summary of our points. What I liked most were the activities we did before and after the debate in order to get to know the other pupils better, as this helped to ease nerves. Overall, my listening skills in French were tested as I really had to focus on understanding what the others were saying, as well as speaking clearly and concisely to get a point across.”*

L. AKLE  
Year 12 pupil



*“I really enjoyed all the activities; however, my favourite was the final speaking one, as I felt I learned a lot from speaking in French to the LAE pupils. They shared ideas on themes that I had never thought about, so it was really interesting to hear the perspectives of another school’s pupils, who had been taught by different teachers. Responding to the intense questioning of the opposition really challenged my French grammar and vocabulary, as well as improving my overall confidence in speaking the language.”*

C. GOODGAME  
Year 12 pupil

In the Summer Term, a group of Middle School pupils from Westminster Academy came to UCS to take part in a day of debating with UCS pupils. This proved a great success, because the students really developed their confidence and ability to speak publicly and work alongside people they had never met before. We are excited about this initiative continuing next year.

## Mentoring

Fostering mentoring relationships between pupils at UCS and our partnership schools is an important component of our partnerships programme. Much of this work grew during Covid lockdowns and has been able to run remotely via Zoom.

One such initiative that continued to flourish this year is the Middle School Maths and English mentoring programme with Richard Cobden Primary School. With the aid of a Zoom link, our dedicated team of Middle School pupils supported their mentees in key areas of English literacy and Maths. In the former, they worked on identifying and pronouncing unfamiliar words, thinking about synonyms and antonyms, and reading a text with the correct expression and tone.

In Maths they helped Year 4 with numbers and rounding, and Year 5 with fractions.

As the sessions progressed, there was also an increasing number of mentors looking to stretch their mentees, using challenging questions typically pitched at secondary school students. It was a pleasure to see them work together and, with some well-scaffolded support, tackle tricky problems. This partnership project worked so well because both sets of pupils really benefited from it in different ways. While the UCS contingent developed their communication and interpersonal skills, our primary school partner pupils gained greater confidence in the all-important areas of Maths and literacy.

### Pupil reflections:

*“It was a great experience, as it’s been really rewarding and enriching to help the younger students. It’s helped our communication skills and problem-solving – exploring different ways to explain a difficult question is challenging and definitely developed our Maths too.”*



*“I really enjoy reading with young people because it reminds me of when I was younger and had a similar experience and that really made a difference for me.”*

*“I often find myself learning new things along the way too.”*

*“It has been incredibly rewarding and insightful to enhance and improve their literacy. I have truly enjoyed spending my mornings with them.”*

*“Mentoring not only gives the opportunity to help other children, it also teaches you so much about yourself!”*

*“It’s very rewarding to help people learn through mentoring and it greatly improves your public speaking and communication skills too. I did not expect to be attempting to explain climate change to a primary school pupil!”*

## Community Action

Charity is woven into so much of what we do as a school, but the period between October half-term and the Christmas holidays – known fondly as ‘Community Action’ – sees this approach ramp up as our pupils develop and lead a vast range of charitable activities and initiatives. This year was no exception!



From guessing the number of sweets in a jar to a literature-themed mufti day, from five-a-side football to a teacher talent contest, everyone played their part to make a success of Community Action 2022–23. Overseen in the Senior School by Miss Alborn and Mr Enemuwe, pupils took charitable fundraising to the next level with their leadership, creativity and determination. They had responsibility for coming up with ideas, sorting logistics and advertising their initiatives to the school community. In particular, the level of responsibility assumed by the Deme Captains in spearheading all of this endeavour was incredibly impressive, not to mention the Lower School’s creativity and passion.



Spilling into the Summer Term was the eagerly anticipated Year 7 Disco. This was a highlight of the school calendar and the Year 7 boys were excited to welcome 90 girls from neighbouring Francis Holland School, South Hampstead High School and Channing

School. So hotly contested were the tickets that they quite literally sold out in a matter of minutes!

Disco included, the 2022–23 Community Action grand total was over £27,000 for the charities picked by our pupils.

Below follow two accounts from pupils who led their own Community Action initiatives:

*“This year, the Lower School had a big impact on Community Action. We saw many different events raising money for the two Lower School pupil-chosen charities: Secondary1st and the Red Cross Ukraine Appeal. Many Lower School pupils planned, organised and staged events to raise money for these deserving charities.*

*A group of Shell [Year 8] pupils baked delicious cakes and ran a homemade bake sale stall every Friday – often selling out at breaktime! There was also a popular ‘Sponge the Teacher’ event, a teachers’ ‘Baby Face Competition’ and initiatives led by the Young Leaders Award pupils including a ‘Team Treasure Hunt’. Community Action is a great opportunity to apply the UCS learning values, as all activities require resilience, resourcefulness, relationships and a sense of responsibility in order to run successfully.*

*I really enjoyed taking part in Community Action and already have lots of ideas for future fundraising at UCS.”*

J. KERMISCH  
Year 8 pupil

*“As is Community Action tradition, the six Demes, the Sixth Form Union and the Lower School all chose a charity to fundraise for, organising multiple events during the second half of term. The chosen causes were diverse in their aims. Several responded to active humanitarian crises: Baxters and Shell picked appeals for the crises in Pakistan and Ukraine while Evans raised money for the refugee charity Choose Love. Others combated cancer – Macmillan Cancer Support and Secondary1st; others still dealt with health and wellbeing issues faced by children – ECHO, Malala Fund and Child Poverty Action Group. Each Deme as well as the Lower School and SFU had short time slots within whole-school assemblies to promote the message of their favoured charities, which helped motivate the pupil body to get involved with fundraising and contribute as much as they could to these causes.*

*The first Community Action event of 2022 actually came before the official start date, as four Olders pupils – Jake*



*Marchant, Sam Harding, Max Riche and Luca Jason – participated in a notoriously difficult ‘Tough Mudder’ assault course in September, managing to raise £4,578. Olders also held a sponsored ‘Run in the Dark’ in December at the school fields, where students and staff defied the darkness to undertake a 5km run. Continuing the sporting theme, the entire Flocks Deme banded together to walk, run, cycle and swim an astonishing collective distance of 3,500km – equivalent to the diameter of the moon – so kudos to pupil Samir Rahman for coordinating this shared enterprise. There were other continuous activities across the six weeks*

*or so of effort and ingenuity, such as the return of the cookie and Domino’s pizza stands outside the Bentham building every break and lunchtime respectively, with pizza sales accounting for more than £4,000 in funds by the end of the Autumn Term. But really, there were far too many events to mention here, which underlines the incredible passion and enthusiasm of our pupils and teachers in making this one of the most memorable Community Actions ever. Here’s to another great instalment in 2023!”*

A. KASSAM  
Sixth pupil



# Charitable collections

## North Paddington Foodbank

In keeping with a long-standing tradition, we held our annual collection for North Paddington Foodbank in October on the final day of the first half of the Autumn Term. The entire UCS family – Senior School, Junior Branch and Pre-Prep – came together to raise awareness of, and collect donations for, a singular organisation in our local community.



The collection for North Paddington Foodbank is a pupil-run endeavour, and its organisers for the past couple of years, Sixth Formers Xavi Mesquita and Dylan Ireland, led a team of volunteers on the school playground and at the school gates from early in the morning. The Headmaster, Mark Beard, was proud to witness the Foundation-wide effort, saying: “The annual collection is an opportunity to be part of something that actively benefits people who are less fortunate as well as a chance to reflect outwards, to the wider community, the generosity and kindness that really are integral to the school ethos.”

In order to rally the Senior School to give as generously as possible, Dylan and Xavi wrote and delivered a stirring assembly on how pressing the issue of food poverty is

in the local community. Their words also dispelled some myths and misconceptions about the types of people who may need to use such a service from time to time. By reaching out to North Paddington Foodbank when preparing the assembly, they could share with pupils and staff the reality of the situation. As always, we were proud and humbled to support such an important organisation in our community and we look forward to working with them again.

*“We have been really proud to support North Paddington Foodbank over the last few years. It may be difficult to comprehend but food poverty happens in this country.”*

D. IRELAND  
Sixth pupil

## WrapUp London

In November, two Shell (Year 8) pupils held the school’s inaugural collection for ‘WrapUp London’, which is the annual collection of warm winter coats by the charity HandsUp London. Sam Downs and Alfie Heslam were these two generous and driven pupils.

Alfie and Sam had stumbled upon the collection when they were thinking with Mr Roberts, Head of Lower School, about ways they could help benefit the school’s wider community. Their excellent poster design, organisation of the wonderful UCS Maintenance Team and rallying of the school community really paid off. The donations of coats of all ages, designs and gender flooded in – with approximately 200 coats being collected in total.

Mr Roberts commented, “I was delighted by how Alfie and Sam led this initiative. They came up with the idea and they really captured the imagination of the school community. Within the Lower School, we frequently discuss compassion, empathy and the need to help other people. We also look at leadership development and how to build successful teams. Alfie and Sam certainly embraced all these qualities and I look forward to seeing them lead future charitable initiatives here at UCS and beyond”

*“I thoroughly enjoyed the coat collection because it made me feel like I was helping the community. When I saw how many coats we got, it made me feel happy because I knew they would all go to people in need. I really think we should make the coat collection an annual fixture at UCS because it influences us to donate what we don’t need to someone who does – that’s important.”*

A. HESLAM  
Year 8 pupil



# Sixth Form Volunteering

Volunteering remains an important, rewarding and exciting part of the Sixth Form experience at UCS. This year, around 240 Sixth Formers were involved in volunteering at our partnership schools, including local primary and secondary schools. We work with approximately 14 schools in total each year.

We are grateful to our partnership schools for giving our Sixth Formers this brilliant opportunity and for welcoming them so warmly every Friday afternoon. A full range of activities took place this year, ranging from environmental programmes to Maths and reading mentoring, via playing mentors, music, DT and so much more!

All schools we collaborate with thoroughly enjoy having our pupils work with the little ones and act as role models/references whom they can see on a weekly basis. Some pupils make great pairs – and the younger children really look forward to seeing them!

We are excited to see how this programme continues to develop and to enrich the experience of UCS pupils as well as those from our partnership schools.

*“Voluntary work can be great for building new relationships with others and requires responsibility and resilience when given tasks to carry out. Helping primary school pupils doing Maths after the pandemic was easy for me and I felt I also gained experience. It was fun!”*

T. NATHAN  
Transitus pupil

*“UCS has a big ethos about community and giving back to the community through voluntary work is a way of solidifying this value. I really enjoyed working at Kilburn Grange School during two terms.”*

J. HIRSCHKORN  
Transitus pupil



*“Pupils at UCS and partner schools will benefit from forging relationships and learning off one another. That keeps me motivated as I am doing something for my community.”*

C. GORDON  
Transitus pupil

*“A broader view of the local community through interaction with people outside UCS. The opportunity to use my skills and time to help others. Last year at UCS, I organised a donation collection for Ukraine.”*

T. KENDIX  
Transitus pupil





University College School  
Frognaal  
Hampstead  
London  
NW3 6XH

T. 020 7435 2215  
F. 020 7433 2111  
E. [seniorschool@ucs.org.uk](mailto:seniorschool@ucs.org.uk)  
🐦 @UCSHampstead  
[ucs.org.uk](http://ucs.org.uk)