



# MONTSAYE ACADEMY NEWS

February 2021



In many ways, this has been a difficult term in which we have had to grapple another lockdown and experience more time for our pupils being away from school and their normal routines. In other ways at Montsaye Academy, we have been exceptionally proud of the way in which we have all adapted to remote teaching swiftly and our children are getting a good proportion of time with their classroom teachers over Teams. Assemblies, tutor time and intervention are all still taking place and we are exceptionally proud of how we continue to adapt and respond to the changing situation daily.

We have also been able to set up mass testing with a fantastic group of staff who have all taken time out of their normal routine to support this huge endeavour and to continue to keep our community safe. Staff on-site are continuing to be regularly tested.

There have been a number of key activities including the #KeepActive Challenge, which has encouraged all of our community to keep active and take much needed time away from the screens. We have been mindful of the increased screen time and built in regular breaks away from screens and a longer break and lunch to ensure some activity is able to take place. Progress leaders and student welfare officers have been on hand to ensure that all of our pupils are supported fully, whilst they are learning at home. Teaching staff have found new and innovative ways to teach their curriculums virtually.

We have frequently had a large group of pupils in our in school critical worker provision who have been working well and have been accessing their remote lessons from within school. They have been enjoying their additional PE and art lessons to keep them active and engaged.

It is a true testament to our generous and supportive local community that our request for donations of devices was met with such a fabulous response. We received many and various gifts for which I am enormously grateful as it enabled more of our pupils to access their online lessons. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

**I cannot write this newsletter without saying a huge thank you to ALL of my staff, every single one regardless of your role in the academy, your role is key; your commitment to Montsaye Academy is tenable and your sheer tenacity is humbling. I could not be prouder to be leading my school right now.**

As always during challenging times, I am heartened, by the support and positive feedback that we are regularly getting from staff, parents and our community. I thank everyone for their patience during the forthcoming weeks, whatever comes, we will overcome it and look forward to a very hopeful future.

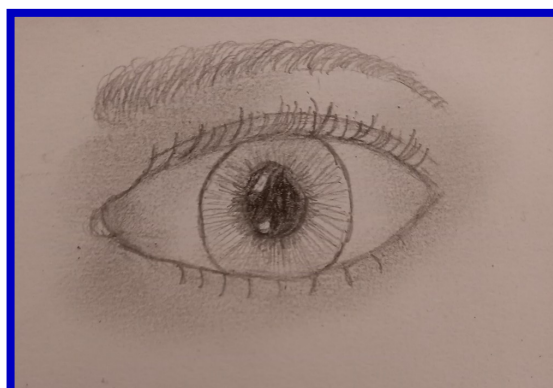
**Meena Gabbi - Principal**

## Observational Drawing of Eyes

Dotted throughout this newsletter you will find some wonderful 'eye' artwork which has been completed by our Year 9 pupils. We hope you enjoy them. This one is by Emily B.

Fantastic highlight to pupil and gentle marks showing the altering colour of the iris. The soft smudged shading gives the effect of smooth skin. Great work Emily, well done!

**Julia Roberts - Teacher of Art**



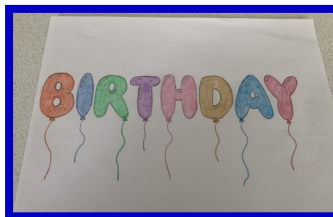
## Year 7 design work...

In design our Year 7 topic was pop-up cards.

We experimented with a range of mechanisms and typography, looking at lettering for specific occasions, to create our design iterations.

Pupils really excelled at this challenge with a range of the ERA values being displayed.

Meghan created some wonderful examples. She has really excelled and has spent time and effort in the completion of this challenge.



Very well done Meghan and thank you for your work.



RJ produced a superb design using typography for the 'Monsters' example.

Excellent refinement, confident and well controlled – well done RJ!

Examples of typography by Harry.



The car one I think is especially good, careful use of colour too. Well done Harry.

We have been really impressed with the creativity and ERA values shown, particularly in excellence, demonstrated by our Year 7 pupils with this challenge. We are looking forward to the final designs for the completed cards coming through. Well done and keep developing those ERA values Year 7.

## Observational Drawing of Eyes by Alex in Year 9



Great lines showing the direction of the eyelashes and subtle shading to suggest the spherical form of the eye itself. Well done Alex.

Julia Roberts - Teacher of Art

## Music lessons continue online...

We are so proud, that against the odds, pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have still been engaging in practical music lessons.

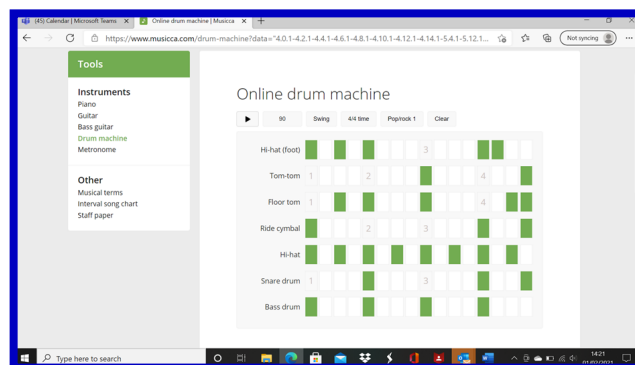
Where the majority of pupils aren't lucky enough to have a musical instrument at home, we have been using a wide variety of virtual instruments and free piano apps to continue to make music.

Pupils have been sending us amazing audio recordings and screenshots of their various compositions and performances.

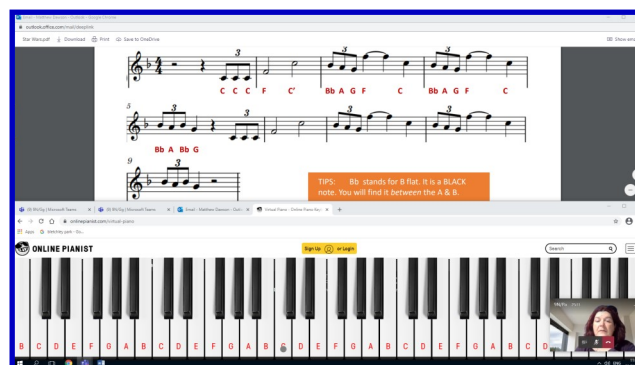
The most successful virtual instrument sites we have discovered are: musicca.com, onlinepianist.com, steinberg.net/dorico/se and 'Perfect Piano' for Android (available from the App Store).

All of these virtual instrument sites and apps are free of charge. It has been truly wonderful to witness so many pupils able to engage in the arts in this way. Here are a couple of examples of pieces of work which our pupils have submitted:

### Alfie in Year 8 has been on a virtual drum machine...



### Matthew in Year 9 has been playing the keyboard...



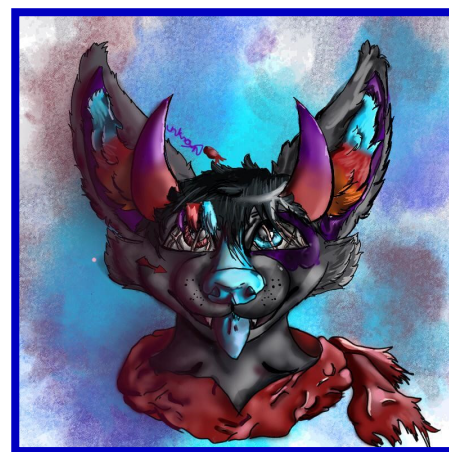
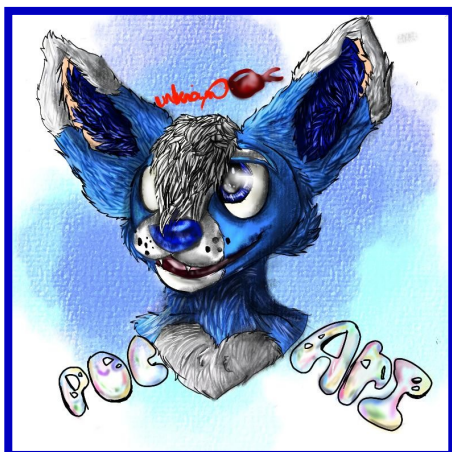
Natalie Gardner and Giles Urwin  
Music Department



## Our pupils are keeping themselves busy...

One of our Year 7 pupils, Poppie (7AJ0) sent me some artwork which she has completed at home during lockdown. Poppie explained why she likes art so much: *"Art for me is a way I can express myself and emerge myself in an alternate world. When I am drawing, it's a time where I can forget about the daily struggles and stress and have some time to relax and concentrate on only one thing."*

The artwork is wonderful and I thought this would be a good opportunity to share some of the images with everyone:



Well done Poppie; keep up the good work!

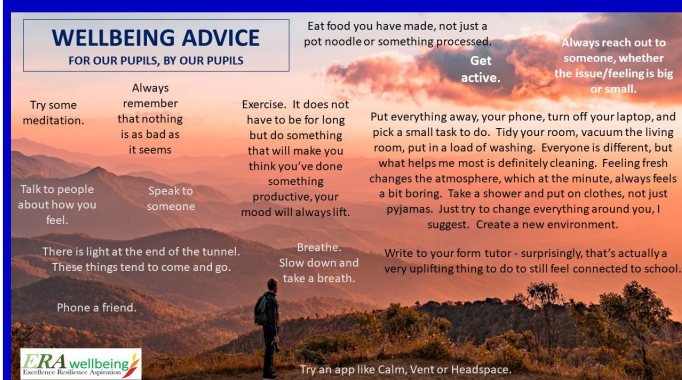
Claire Petchey - Year 7 Progress Leader

## A wonderful piece of PE homework sent in by Year 7 pupil, Charlie (7NE)



Sophie Collins - Teacher of PE

## From Reps Contribute to Wellbeing Resource



In conjunction with Northamptonshire Mental Health Day - Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February, we wanted to put together a guide for pupils. However, there is so much advice out there around the topic of mental health, it can be difficult to know where to start. Luckily, at Montsaye Academy, our ERA values extend beyond lessons and into all aspects of life, so who better to ask for brilliant wellbeing advice, than our wonderful pupils.

When I asked form reps for top tips, practical ideas and powerful mottos I got exactly that. Form reps from Year 7, all the way up to Sixth Form, shared what works for them, how they shake off a negative mood and generously opened up about their own experiences.

The results have been truly inspiring.

Emma Lopes - SMSC Co-ordinator

## Staying safe online

Online safety is always important to us and our pupils, particularly now that so many of us are having lessons online. Our pupils are incredibly savvy when it comes to online safety, but we used Safer Internet Day which took place on 9<sup>th</sup> February to reintroduce some key ideas to pupils in ICT lessons.



Year 7 looked at mobile apps and social media. Year 8 explored blogging and used it as an opportunity to consider what we post online. Year 9 developed similar topics, revisiting social media and finding out about digital footprints. If these are topics that families would like to explore further, all the resources below are very useful and can promote discussion with your children and young people.

There are lots of great resources on the safer internet day website:  
[Safer Internet Day](#)

The ThinkUKnow website has many resources appropriate to different age groups:  
[ThinkUKnow](#)

Learners have been told about the AskSam website:  
[AskSam](#)

ThinkUKnow Youtube channel:  
[ThinkUKnow YouTube Channel](#)

Safer Internet Day Channel:  
[Safer Internet Day Channel](#)

Emma Lopes - SMSC Co-ordinator



## A message from our parent governor:

As a parent governor I get to see, read and hear about the behind the scenes workings, meetings and efforts that, as parents, we are usually unaware of.

What I can tell you is, that despite the challenges the school has faced this year with adapting to Covid-19 measures and at home learning, the staff have not put on hold their continued drive for further improvements for the school and for outcomes for the children. Whether staff training, new curriculum planning, new teaching strategies, classroom and facility maintenance, it has all continued.



The governors continue to work with the school through these difficult times.

This has predominantly been online at the moment, and we are really pleased to see all the hard work that has gone into adapting to online working, as well as the planning and changes that have been made to ensure the minimal impact of the last year on the children's learning.

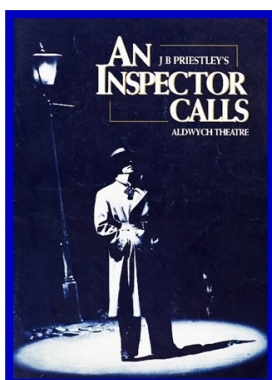
As a governing body, we are really proud of the children, you the parents and the school staff. You all need commending, children for being resilient and adapting to new ways of learning, you the parents for the extra support you have given to the children, and the staff for extra work they have put in to minimising the impact of these strange times on our children's outcomes.

**Ryan Thompson - Parent Governor**

## An Inspector Calls...

Year 10 pupils have been working hard this term, showing excellence and resilience in English lessons, as we studied a new literature text; J. B. Priestley's intriguing morality play, *An Inspector Calls*.

Pupils have been learning all about dramatic conventions, Edwardian society and evaluating Priestley's big ideas raised in the play.



The English department are really impressed with the fabulous ideas and insights our pupils have shared so far. We are looking forward to continuing our study of this play with our Year 10 pupils next term and hearing their thoughts about Inspector Goole and his investigation!

We would particularly like to take this opportunity to celebrate the following Year 10 superstars who have been nominated by their class teacher for excellent engagement and insightful contributions to class discussions this term: Keeley M-B, Charlie H, Kate D, Jacob F, Katie H, Piper F, Antonio C, Taylor A -L, Lily F, Emily F and Megan B.

**Steffie Dixon - Second in English**

## English KS3 Superstars

This term, KS3 pupils have been looking at a range of fantastic creative opportunities in their English lessons.

From narrative writing influenced by *The Hobbit* and *Ruby in the Smoke* in Years 7 and 8 respectively, to the study and creation of political campaigns in Year 9, there has been some incredible ingenuity on the behalf of our KS3 pupils that we would love to share.

This phenomenal piece of description is by Callum in Year 7: *"I realised I was the one that would tell the truth about all the things they saw and tell them it is not the truth. With desperation in my legs, bravery in my head, strength in my arms and courage in my heart I stepped up and shouted at the top of my voice."*

Several pupils have been picked out for their imagination and creativity in their work this term.

Well done to all of you, we are very proud of you: Meghan T, George S, Olivia S, Jessica G, Ricky M, Alfie F, Lillz T, Caitlin B, Eryn C, James G, RJ Shaw, Corbyn A, Lucy J, Jennifer B.

Thank you to all of the KS3 pupils who have been regularly engaging lessons and striving to show our ERA values.

**Adam Sloper - Second in English**

## The survey results are in...

**W**e recently sent out a survey to all pupils to allow us to gain feedback about their experiences of home learning so far, as well as allow us to offer further support where required. As part of this survey we asked pupils what they felt was going well for them.

We are sure you will agree that the Montsaye community has adapted to online learning extremely well, allowing us to continue our learning whilst supporting each other. Some of the responses are included below:

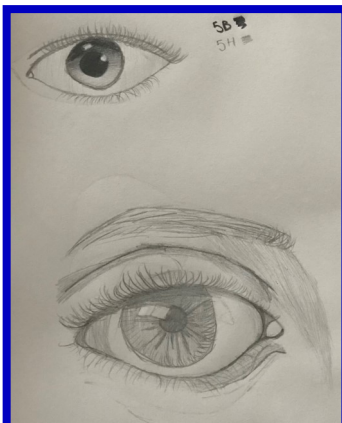


*I am still able to learn.  
How the teachers can easily help us.  
We can still communicate as a group.  
Easy access to different websites to learn.  
We get to be more independent in our learning.  
I'm able to search things I am not sure about.  
The fact that teachers make the lessons interactive.  
Some lessons we get to do Kahoot and quizzes which is good fun.  
Still being able to talk to teachers even though we're not in school.  
I enjoy still being able to learn and communicate with class mates and teachers.  
That I still get to learn and that I get to have a teacher in front of me if I get stuck.  
That even though we're not in school, we're still learning like normal.  
We still have proper lessons with the teacher there helping us.  
The teachers try their best to make them as fun as they can.  
I feel more confident to participate in lessons online now.  
Being able to contribute through the chat or microphone.  
I enjoy it because it makes sure that we still do school.  
Getting feedback on the work we upload to teams.  
The fact that in some ways we still see each other.  
Being able to learn still and hear familiar voices.  
We get to be more independent in our learning.  
Being able to show my parents what I know.  
The feeling of still being together.*

We are all very proud of how our pupils have adapted to online learning, continuing to demonstrate our ERA values of Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration.

We are looking forward to having everyone back in school, whenever that may be. In the meantime, please remember that we are all still here to support our pupils, as we would be in school, should they need anything.

The Progress Leader Team



## Observational Drawing of Eyes by Ellie in Year 9

Two beautiful examples of realistic eyes.

Fantastic use of different grades of pencil to create depth and reflective qualities of the form of the eye. Confident placing of highlights enhances the overall effect.

Very well done Ellie, you should feel really proud of your drawings.

Julia Roberts - Teacher of Art

## Year 10 Pod Gallery Goes Virtual

The Year 10 pod gallery is run by one of our pupils, Corey. This half term, the gallery went virtual.

Pupils sent me work which they are proud of. I have shared it in our assemblies to celebrate the incredible projects which everyone has been completing. I am proud to give you a glimpse of what they have been up to.



Jack 10ELB  
has been working on his Photoshop skills



Corey 10EAB  
took this wonderful picture of a snowy street



Jake 10EAB  
had a go at baking



Live cook-along lessons with Mrs Brotherston from her kitchen at home





## Investigating oil and water in science lessons



Another national lockdown was no reason for science experiments to be put on hold.

As part of the GCSE science topic on formulations and emulsifiers, our Year 11 pupils investigated how to slow down the separation of oil and water.

Does oil separate from water more slowly with or without washing up liquid? Does the amount of washing up liquid make a difference? This can also be done with egg yolk for extra messy fun!

**Jon Roberts - Teacher of Science**



## Drama department news...

During this lockdown period, the pupils have worked extremely well under difficult circumstances. There have been some amazing scripts, costume designs and ideas for plays.

Our Year 7 pupils embarked on a project to bring the world of an evacuee to life using their script writing and design skills. The drama will be set to a soundtrack written by the pupils themselves. We can't wait to see and hear them. Year 8 were given the task of dramatizing a true story. So far we have had some fantastic ideas including a WW2 fighter pilot, Chernobyl and the Cuban Missile Crisis. We look forward to reading the scripts and hearing the soundtracks.

As we approach the options process for our Year 9 pupils, we gave them a chance to interpret some scripts and compose their own music. Year 10 are busy choosing their extracts for an exciting performance at the end of year.



Under normal circumstances at this time of the year, we would be in full preparation for a school musical. I can assure everyone that we will be back with bang as soon as we can!

**Tim Shea - Head of Drama**

## Year 11 Careers Interviews

Every year, all Year 11 pupils at Montsaye Academy are offered the opportunity to receive a careers advice session. The session supports them in their decisions for their journey post-GCSEs.

Before Christmas, Mr Doherty, the academy's careers advisor from Prospects, was regularly providing face to face sessions with our pupils on a one-to-one basis. Sadly, due to lockdown we have been unable to continue these in person, but we have adapted to the circumstances to enable the support to continue.

Our Year 11 careers advice sessions have continued over the telephone. Mr Doherty spends time with each pupil discussing their interests, current progress and thoughts they have around their post-16 plans. He then provides guidance on steps moving forward. Each pupil is provided with a detailed action plan which offers further support. These sessions have been gratefully received by pupils: "very helpful", "the call went really well", "we talked about either looking at sixth form or Tresham College". Equally, feedback from Mr Doherty about our pupils has been fantastic, commenting on their high level of aspiration.

We are very proud of the year group and how they have adapted to this, and we are looking forward to continuing to offer this to Year 11 pupils over the coming weeks.



**Hannah Pickering**  
Year 11 Progress Leader



## Chemistry pupils get stuck into making glue...

Our Year 10 and Year 11 chemistry pupils were set an unusual challenge during one of their recent online lessons. The chemistry specification covers formulations or the recipes needed for medicines, fuel, polymers etc., that ensure they do “what it says on the tin”. The pupils were given a formulation to follow to make an adhesive using milk and some other ingredients. Firstly, they looked to see if the adhesive was able to stick cardboard together and hold different masses and secondly, to see whether the adhesive still worked if we changed the formulation by altering its ingredients.

The method involved heating the ingredients, washing the sample and filtering it; some creative thinking was needed to use measuring jugs, saucepans, sieves and kitchen roll. It was great to see so many of them taking part and having a go at the task – even if their formulation was sometimes not successful. Working in this way certainly does teach us about resilience as well as, hopefully, some ‘excellent’ cleaning up skills. One positive is that we have, so far, received no emails from the parents complaining about the state of their kitchens when they got home.

Apparently, the formulations worked well with vinegar or lemon juice; trying to separate the two pieces of cardboard was impossible. Some pupils managed to balance tins of beans on the bonded cardboard.

Some pupils chose to do some research about formulations in medicines instead of making a mess, but I think they enjoyed a little bit of a change from their online lessons.

**Joey C** told us about his findings:

*Today I made an adhesive glue in my kitchen whilst being isolated in the third lockdown. The adhesive glue was made from milk, vinegar and baking powder.*

*The idea was that I could make my own adhesive to stick some cardboard together, to hold an object's weight. To do this, I heated 100cm<sup>3</sup> of milk and 20cm<sup>3</sup> of vinegar. This made a curd from the proteins in the milk called casein. The vinegar is used as the acid to neutralise the curds, so that I can separate them from the mixture. I then removed the curds from the mixture using a sieve, lined with kitchen roll, to ensure that I didn't lose any of the curds. I placed the curds into 15cm<sup>3</sup> cool water, so that any of the acid remnants would be washed away.*

*To finish off the final process of making the glue, I had to add a base, which for me was baking powder. I added a spatula full of baking powder to my curd and water solution. My glue was made.*

*My first test was successful in holding one tin of beans, so I scaled-up.*



*My final results were that the adhesive had worked. Successfully, I had stuck together three pieces of cardboard to hold a combined weight of 3,800 grams (3.8kg).*

**Erin F** shared some images of her experiment with us. From the milk and vinegar curdling, through to the filtering and removal of liquids and the adding of water and baking soda.

The resulting adhesive was able to stick two plastic straws together.



As expected, the pupils were really competitive; keep up the good work everyone.

**Lucy Cooper** - Teacher of Science

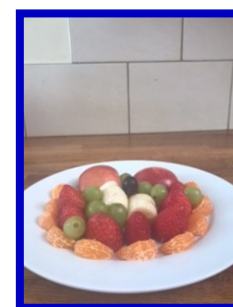
## Key Stage 3 pupils take a look at healthy eating in PE

During their PE theory lessons, our Key Stage 3 pupils were looking at healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. They were tasked with creating a healthy sweet or savoury snack. Pupils had to produce a recipe for the snack and submit a photograph of the finished article. The snack needed to focus on health, in particular, looking at reducing the amount of sugar. Pupils also had to work out costings and energy contained within their snack.

We received lots of wonderful pieces of work, including a full video submitted by Oliver F in Year 9 who made a fruit smoothie and healthy pasta meal.

Jack S in Year 8 sent us a picture of his aptly named 'fruit explosion', together with the all-important nutritional information:

- This snack counts as your full 5-a-day so it is super healthy. All of the fruit used is 0% fat and full of vitamins.
- Strawberries contain a huge 97% vitamin C which is important in your immune system to help prevent colds especially in these Covid-19 times.
- Grapes contain vitamins A, C and B6.
- Oranges are high in vitamin C and vitamin A.
- Bananas are a good source of potassium which is vital for a healthy heart. Potassium, along with sodium, helps the electrical signals in the heart.



Ewan P in Year 7 made fruit and nut oat bars which contained rolled oats, sultanas, chopped walnuts, apricots, bananas and honey.

It was baked in the oven for 15 minutes and cut into bite-sized bars. They look good enough to eat, Ewan.

Giacamo in Year 9 made Revani which is a semolina-based cake. It normally involves a sugar syrup but in order to reduce the sugar content, as stipulated in the brief, Giacomo used a powdered sweetener. He also included chopped apples and pears.



Not everyone chose to make a sweet treat. Charlie H in Year 7 made scrambled eggs and avocado on pitta bread. He shared the recipe with us:

- 2 eggs
- 50mls skimmed milk
- A dash of Worcestershire Sauce
- Pepper to taste
- Half an avocado
- Wholemeal pitta bread

Mix the eggs, milk, Worcestershire sauce and pepper in a jug and microwave for two minutes.

Peel and slice the avocado half. Toast the pitta until warm. Add the avocado and put the scrambled egg on top.

Well done everyone, you have shown the true Montsaye values of **Excellence**, **Resilience** and **Aspiration**.

Sophie Collins - Teacher of PE

## Pupils investigate Holocaust Memorial Day



Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK is marked on 27th January. At Montsaye Academy, our Year 9 pupils learned about the significance of this event. They studied the experiences of a Holocaust survivor named Renee Salt, an absolutely inspirational lady who, against all odds, survived six years of Nazi persecution.



Renee and her family lived in Zduńska Wola, Poland, and in 1939, they had their lives turned upside down when the Nazis invaded their town and they were forced into the local ghetto. In 1942, Renee's family were to be moved to Lodz to a bigger ghetto; tragically, this was the moment Renee's younger sister was taken from their family and killed. Renee and her parents survived the awful conditions of the Lodz ghetto but unfortunately their story was not over.

In 1944, the family were moved once again. This time to the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau camp where, upon arrival, Renee's father was selected to be killed. At that moment, Renee believes she was saved by God as she was sent to work in the labour camp with her mother.

Another year passed, Renee and her mother were moved again in 1945, to Bergen-Belsen. In April of that year, the camp was liberated by British troops. Sadly Renee's mother passed away 14 days after being liberated.

After the Holocaust, Renee returned to her hometown in an attempt to find any members of her family who may have survived.

She found an aunt who was living in Lodz, and she moved in with her. At the end of 1945, Renee's aunt married and they all moved to Germany. From there they moved to Paris, where Renee met Charles who was with the British Army. They were married in 1949 and had two children. Renee now lives in north London and has five grandchildren. She regularly speaks in schools about her experiences during the Holocaust.

Our Year 9 pupils were asked to write a letter to Renee to explain what they had learned in their history lessons, and by experiencing the Holocaust through Renee's story. They showed amazing empathy and really connected with Renee's story; what really came through was how inspired they had been because of Renee, and the strength they had taken from her tragic story of survival.

Now more than ever, we need to be resilient and have a sense of determination and belief that things will get better. I think the character and strength Renee showed our Year 9 pupils was definitely something that will live long in their memories.

Here are a few extracts from their letters, which we are sending to the Holocaust Memorial Museum:

*"Our names are Keeley and Kiara. We go to Montsaye Academy and recently our class have been learning about the Holocaust in history and have come across your documentary. It really touched our hearts, knowing what you and your family went through."*

*"Your story is one I will never forget. It will live with me and many of my peers forever. Once again, thank you for sharing your story."*

*"I think that you're an inspiration to my generation because during that dire time, when all hope was lost, you displayed resilience and strength. I believe that those two characteristics that you showed are qualities that we should all learn and reflect in our day to day lives."*



We are hoping that the museum will forward our letters onto Renee for her to read.

**James Wiggins**  
Head of History