

KALEIDOSCOPE

APRIL 2024 EDITION

CREATE
CONVER
SATION





WELCOME



A message from our Editor-in-Chief Millie Carroll

This edition of our magazine is a celebration of diversity in every form - exploring different cultures, embracing marginalised voices and campaigning for inclusivity. I believe every story adds a unique perspective on traditionally more taboo topics that need to be addressed. This is not just a magazine, it is platform to inspire, educate and connect us all. This is a student led magazine, where we want to change the narrative and have our voices heard.

So why the name 'Kaleidoscope'?

When gazing through the eye of a kaleidoscope, what do you see? An array of rich colours, dancing and dazzling; no one pattern being the same. Our magazine is a bit like that too. We celebrate differences, challenge perspectives in our community and create purposeful conversations that encourage us to reflect on the people we are and the world in which we live in.

Here at Ian Ramsey Church of England Academy, we celebrate diversity.

We hope you enjoy our first edition.

MEET THE TEAM

NEVE PACK - CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Design is a language, to convey and express the beauty in the understated. I've always had a love for the aesthetics so getting the chance to display that on a large scale is amazing.

HOLLIE MATTHEWS - HEAD PHOTOGRAPHER

Growing up in a family that expresses themselves through photos rather than words has had a positive influence on the person I am today and my need to capture and encapsulate my experiences. However, on a less serious note I am simply a teenager with a camera, using it.

LUCY VAINES - PHOTOGRAPHER

Coming from a family where every memory was caught on camera by my dad, photography has always come naturally to me.

KASI ANUCHA - FEATURE WRITER

Writing is one of my favourite things to do; I joined this magazine so that I could represent diverse topics and different perspectives through my writing. As a POC I wanted to show diversity from an ethnic perspective in a creative way.

ALICE SMITH - GRAPHIC DESIGNER

I've always been interested in art, when offered the opportunity to create a piece for the cover, I knew that I wanted to join.

EMILY LANGTON - REPORTER

From a young age, I've always enjoyed expressing myself through writing so when I heard about the magazine, I was eager to join. When I did, I was excited to write and I adore the fact that we chose the theme of diversity, as it is a regularly overlooked and avoided topic.

CHLOE KINGSTON - REPORTER

I've always had an interest in writing and loved the idea of writing my own pieces. When I found out about the magazine I was excited to see what it was like to write and create.

KATIE LINDLEY - REPORTER

I joined this magazine to fight against judgment. I believe writing is a beautiful way to express yourself and share passion. Everyone should be able to pursue what they love no matter what!

MELANIE BALLOTT - REPORTER

Taking Miss Heslehurst's Media Studies GCSE only made me want to learn more about how the media and journalism works.

ELI PEARCE - COPY EDITOR

I've always loved reading and began to enjoy writing a few years ago. I thought the magazine would be a great opportunity and it is, I really enjoy reading everyone's different writing styles and helping them improve their articles.



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“PURSUE YOUR PASSION FEARLESSLY AND UNAPOLOGETICALLY”

SHAKK, TEESSIDE RAPPER AND BBC MUSIC INTRODUCING NORTH EAST PRESENTER ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS AND PUSHING OUR CREATIVE BOUNDARIES.

Dynamic, inspiring and empowering are just some of the words we'd use to describe Shakk. Earlier this month, we were fortunate enough to interview him and find out more about his journey to success so far.

Growing up in a Persian/Iranian household, music was just part of life. Car rides with my dad meant jamming to Dean Martin, Queen, and George Michael, while Mam's playlist was a mix of Iranian singers that filled our home with vibrant melodies. I remember winning talent shows in primary school by singing to Michael Jackson tunes and, despite not having the best voice, (which was probably why I became a rapper) my moves always stole the show.

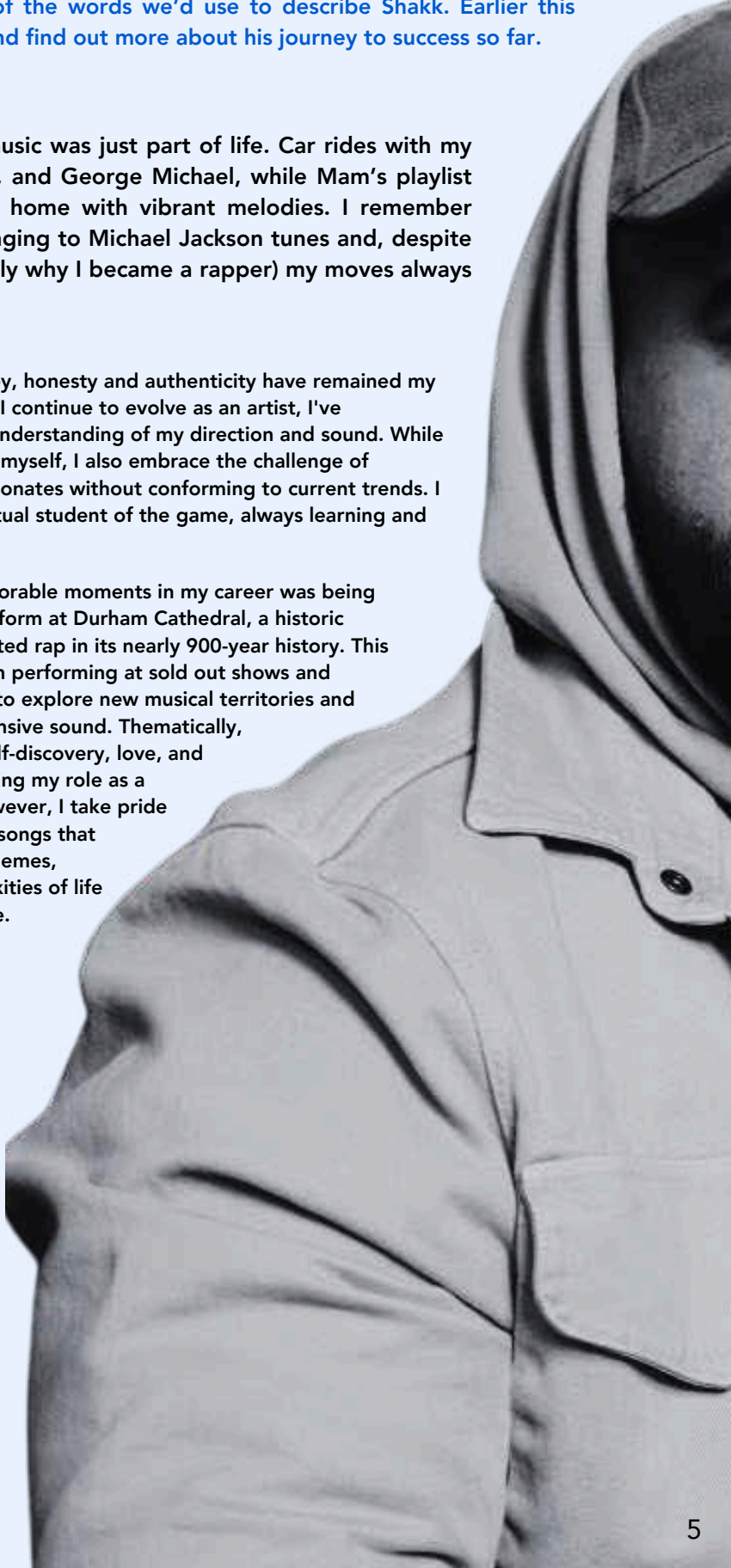
Initially starting as an MC in the rave scene, I transitioned to hip hop and performing alongside big bands, where I discovered the power of live instrumentation. Collaborating with a band allowed me to breathe new life into my music, prompting a shift towards a more diverse sound. My musical journey has been a dynamic one, spanning from hip hop to trap and now evolving into a fusion of funk, psychedelia, soul, rock, and jazz with my band. Influenced by the likes of Nas, The Roots, John Coltrane, and artists like Khruangbin, Robert Glasper, Kendrick Lamar, and Little Simz, my sound is an eclectic blend of genres and influences.

Music became my way of expressing myself and connecting with others, especially in a world where I often felt different because of my Iranian roots. At thirteen, I saved up for my first turntables and dove headfirst into the rave scene. Moving to London at sixteen to study digital production exposed me to a whole new world of music, from Jeff Buckley to Nina Simone. Performing for big crowds from a young age taught me the power of music to bring people together and inspire change. Now, as an adult, I'm balancing the creative and business sides of the music industry which has been a journey, but my love for music has only grown stronger, fuelled by a need for self-expression and authenticity.

Throughout my journey, honesty and authenticity have remained my guiding principles. As I continue to evolve as an artist, I've developed a deeper understanding of my direction and sound. While I strive to stay true to myself, I also embrace the challenge of crafting music that resonates without conforming to current trends. I see myself as a perpetual student of the game, always learning and growing as an artist.

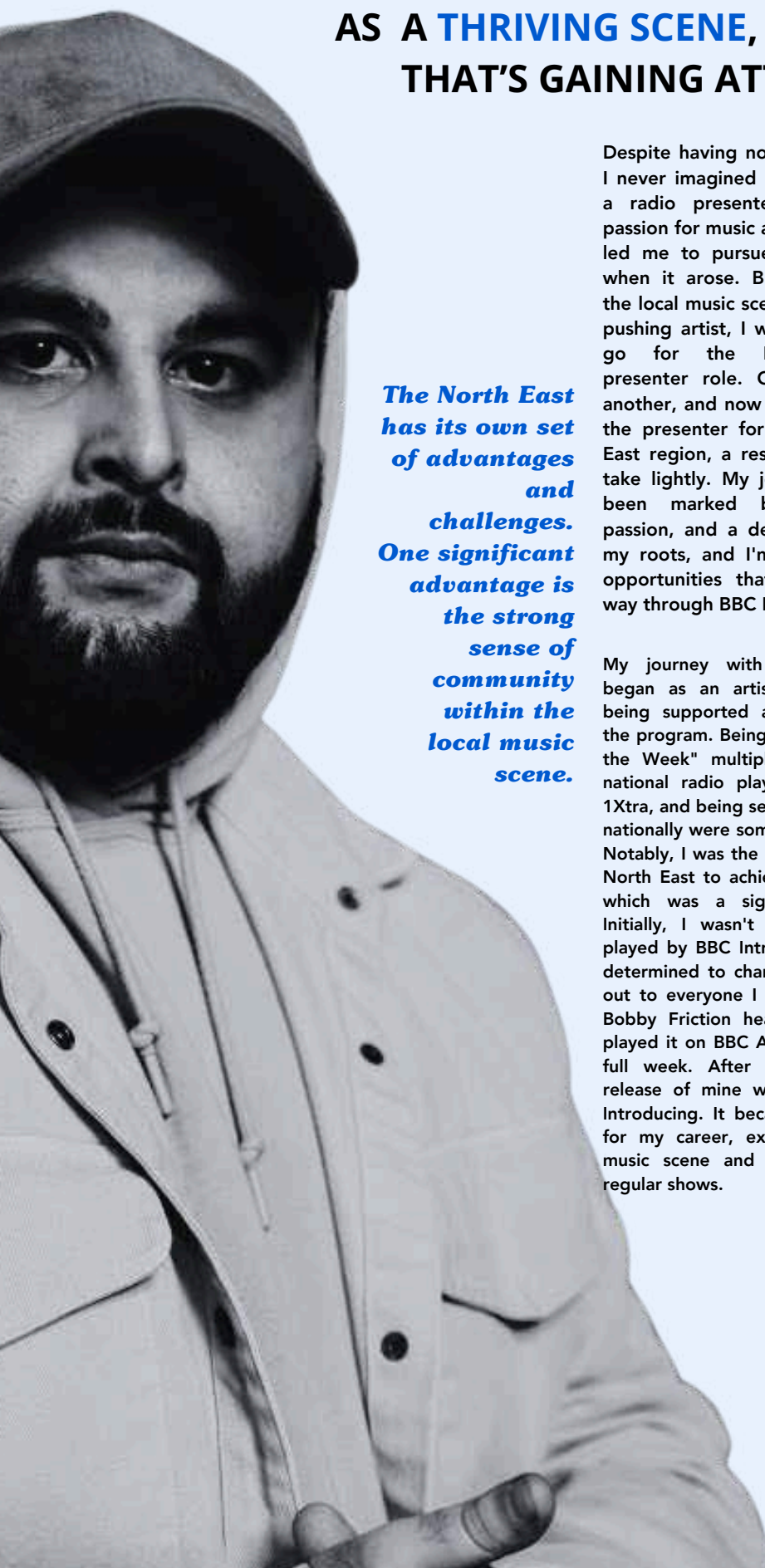
One of the most memorable moments in my career was being the first rapper to perform at Durham Cathedral, a historic venue that hadn't hosted rap in its nearly 900-year history. This experience, along with performing at sold out shows and festivals, inspired me to explore new musical territories and embrace a more expansive sound. Thematically, my music explores self-discovery, love, and societal issues, reflecting my role as a conscious rapper. However, I take pride in my ability to write songs that touch on a range of themes, reflecting the complexities of life and human experience.

By embracing and celebrating my cultural heritage, I hope to inspire others to embrace their identities and share their stories authentically through music.



As a conscious rapper, I'm committed to using my platform to address important themes and spark meaningful conversations. Whether it's advocating for social change, exploring the complexities of human relationships, or sharing personal struggles and triumphs, these messages are important to me because they reflect the realities of life and resonate with listeners on a deeper level. Music has the power to inspire, unite, and empower, and I strive to harness that power to make a positive impact in the world.

THE NORTH EAST IS INCREASINGLY BEING RECOGNISED AS A THRIVING SCENE, SHOWCASING REAL TALENT THAT'S GAINING ATTENTION FROM OUTSIDERS.



The North East has its own set of advantages and challenges. One significant advantage is the strong sense of community within the local music scene.

Despite having no prior experience, I never imagined myself working as a radio presenter. However, my passion for music and the North East led me to pursue the opportunity when it arose. Building respect in the local music scene as a boundary-pushing artist, I was encouraged to go for the BBC Introducing presenter role. One thing led to another, and now I proudly serve as the presenter for the entire North East region, a responsibility I don't take lightly. My journey so far has been marked by perseverance, passion, and a deep connection to my roots, and I'm grateful for the opportunities that have come my way through BBC Introducing.

My journey with BBC Introducing began as an artist, with my music being supported and recognised by the program. Being awarded "Track of the Week" multiple times, receiving national radio play on Radio 1 and 1Xtra, and being selected as a hot pick nationally were some of the highlights. Notably, I was the only artist from the North East to achieve this distinction, which was a significant milestone. Initially, I wasn't getting my music played by BBC Introducing, but I was determined to change that. I reached out to everyone I could find until DJ Bobby Friction heard my music and played it on BBC Asian Network for a full week. After that, every single release of mine was played on BBC Introducing. It became a springboard for my career, exposing me to the music scene and opening doors to regular shows.

Operating independently on a limited budget, I've continuously pushed boundaries, keeping pace with artists who have larger resources and teams. In doing so, I've aimed to expand people's musical horizons, particularly with rap - a genre not traditionally associated with the North East. I've worked to inspire others and serve as a testament to the importance of perseverance and determination in pursuing your passion. Ultimately, I hope that my journey and music serve as an example of why it's crucial to never give up on your dreams, regardless of the challenges you may face.

The North East is slowly but surely emerging as a hub for the music industry, and there are several factors contributing to this trend; one of them being that the strong sense of community within the local music scene has fostered a supportive environment for artists to thrive. Diversity and equal opportunities regardless of gender are being addressed by organisations like Noisy Daughters for example, who are all about boosting women and gender minorities in music, but hey, we know there's still work to be done. Sure, there are always going to be limitations in any scene, but I'm all about breaking those rules. I've been carving out my own path and bringing others along for the ride, instead of playing by someone else's rules. As a presenter on BBC Introducing North East, I'm all about giving everyone a chance to shine: no matter who they are or where they have come from. Let's keep celebrating the awesome mix of talent we have here and make the scene even more inclusive.

"Don't be afraid to back yourself, you have what it takes"

Georgia Lisney on the importance of women embarking on careers within the stem industry.

In today's rapidly advancing world, the presence and participation of young women in STEM fields are more crucial than ever. As engines of innovation, these disciplines drive societal progress and economic growth. Unfortunately, even in today's climate, women remain underrepresented in STEM professions, limiting diverse perspectives and talent pools. By actively engaging and supporting young women in STEM, we not only promote gender equality, but also unlock a wealth of untapped potential, stereotypically and traditionally reserved for men in this field. In light of this, we were interested in speaking with young women who are beginning their careers in STEM and were privileged to speak with Georgia Lisney, a 23 year-old student at The University of Wollongong, Australia, who is currently completing her PhD in brain cancer research.

Hi Georgia! Firstly, we'd like to know more about why you chose a career in STEM. What brought you to this industry?

'Hello! My journey began in high school, where I actually wanted to be a forensic scientist. Unfortunately, that dream was shut down when I found out that only two people were hired a year across all of New South Wales. Then, when I finished school, I thought I was going to be a tattoo artist, but I was too young to apply for an apprenticeship as I was only 17. Eventually, as I'd managed to get good grades in Chemistry and Biology at school, I was able to get my foot in the door by studying for a degree in medicinal chemistry. One of my subjects was focused on inorganic chemistry (which is all about metals) and during my study of this, I learnt about toxicology, gemstone chemistry, and making jewellery, fuels and medicine. I learnt how the body needs metals to survive and from that point on, I was hooked! What's really cool is that the person who taught me that subject is now my supervisor for my PhD and I am practically in an all-female lab group (five females, one male).'

'If you told 10-year old G that she would be completing a PhD in brain cancer research at the age of 23, she would never have believed you. Don't be afraid to back yourself, you have what it takes.'

What is your PhD in and why did you choose this?

My lab group (the Dillon research group at The University of Wollongong), focuses on medicinal bioinorganic chemistry. Pretty much, what this means is that we design complexes (drugs) that have some sort of metal associated with them. Our lab group has a collaboration with a pharmaceutical company called Phebra, who is the leading distributor of arsenic trioxide (ATO) in Australia. ATO is currently used for the treatment of relapsed/ refractory acute promyelocytic leukaemia (APL), but unfortunately produces side effects that we would typically associate with chemotherapy (vomiting and hair loss, for example). This is because ATO alone has low selectivity for malignant tissue, meaning that it kills healthy cells at the same time as cancer cells. With regards to this, our lab group tries to design complexes which contain arsenic that are selective only towards cancer cells and have been successful in this for the treatment of APL. Furthermore, my PhD involves the translation of this same concept to different cancer types, notably cancers of the brain and central nervous system. The overall aim of my PhD is to design arsenic complexes which are selective towards cancers of the brain and central nervous system. There are so many interesting parts to our research, notably, performing stability studies which is where I put the complex in different solvents to see how long it takes for it to fall apart. If the complex doesn't fall apart in 24 hours, I can perform cell work with the compound. Ultimately, this means that I can incubate my complex with brain cancer cells and investigate if it kills them.'

How do you feel the STEM industry has treated you so far? In particular, as a young woman in a stereotypically male-dominated field?’

The landscape of women in STEM is definitely getting better than what it was 20 years ago, but there are still practices and behaviours that we need to work on as a society. In the past, STEM was a hugely male-dominated field (especially inorganic chemistry). As a result, women weren't taken very seriously and had to really fight to get their voices heard. Unfortunately, what I've found as a young woman working in STEM is that we have a generation of female scientists who are very cut-throat and competitive. These habits are hard to shake and so, often, older women in science can sometimes come across as blunt and nasty. Whilst it is easy to understand why they are the way they are, it doesn't always make for a productive work environment. However, fortunately, this isn't the case for everyone. There are plenty of older women in STEM who are a lot calmer because they remember what working in those conditions were like and what it took to get where they are today. Overall, it's challenging, but improvements are definitely taking place.

As a young woman, have you faced any obstacles when entering the STEM industry and if so, what have they been?’

Generally, working in STEM is challenging for everyone, not just women, although we have had to work hard to be recognised in this field. When you are completing a PhD, you work very long hours, often consisting of 14-hour days, weekends and overnight shifts and for very little pay. On average, my experiments cost \$1000 (which is around £500) and research grants are competitive and widely sought-after. This is why industry backing is so important. In addition to this, your thesis is not complete until you have sufficient data, so if your experiments don't work, you need to be quick on your feet to come up with alternatives. Overall, it's a very self-directed job, with academics not having much time to give to you so you have to be capable of problem-solving on your own. Another obstacle for me is burnout and mental health. People go into a PhD because they have a passion for their area of research and so you can take it very personally when things don't go to plan. Also, relationships can be difficult to navigate. Completing my PhD ended my relationship with my partner because he didn't understand the amount of time and effort that I needed to put into my project. Ultimately, your passion for your area of research keeps you going but I do think there could be more support. Do I think this needs to change? Absolutely.

Despite obstacles faced, would you recommend STEM as a career path to women? Why or why not?’

I will always recommend STEM as a career path for women, particularly in drug design and medicine (as this is my field). Not only are women capable but they also have the capacity to give a unique perspective on women's health issues such as infertility, PCOS, endometriosis, breast and ovarian cancer etc. For anyone that has endometriosis, they know that the medical issue is not taken very seriously. In Australia, it affects at least one in 9 girls and women and those assigned female at birth, and typically takes 7-10 years to be diagnosed and to be put on a treatment plan. Having more women in this field helps to shine a light on health issues that have been previously overlooked like endometriosis. I should preface, though, that I do not think that women should only be working on women's health issues, but I do think that having more women in the field has helped shed a brighter light on such pathologies.

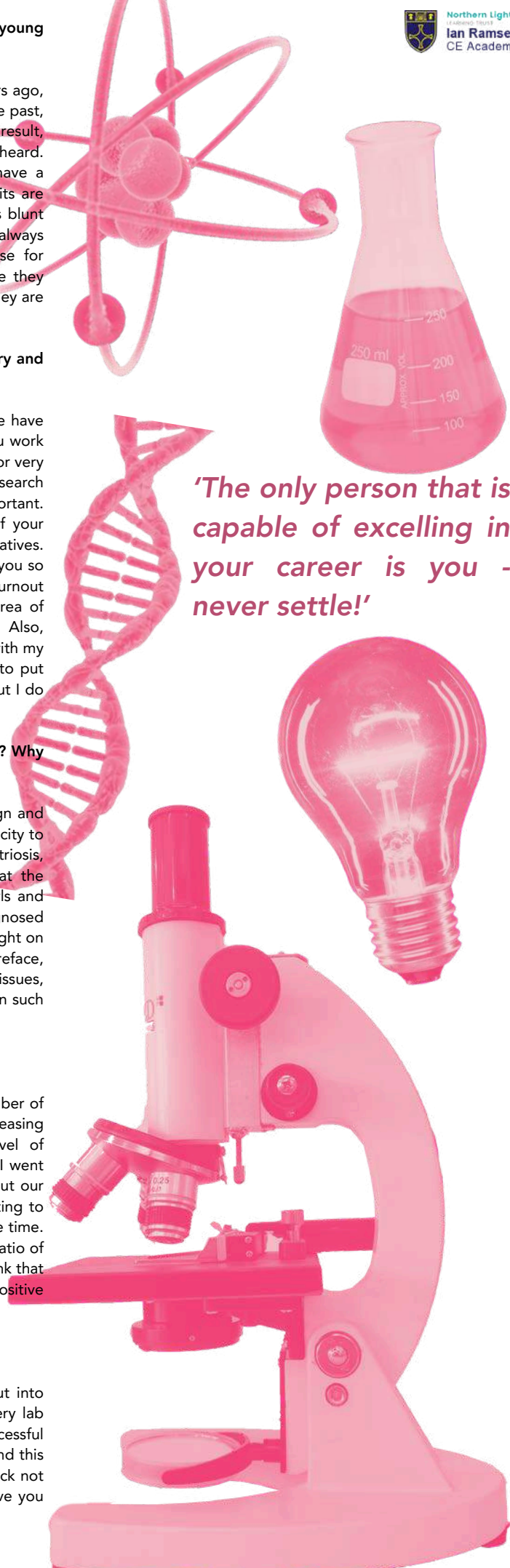
Do you think that the STEM industry needs more diversity? Why or why not?’

Over the past 5 years, there has been a massive push in Australia to increase the number of women working in STEM. As someone who teaches, it is very exciting to see increasing numbers of women taking university-level chemistry and showing the same level of enthusiasm and competence as men. When I completed my undergraduate degree, I went through all my classes with five guys. There were two other women in my degree, but our classes didn't align so I didn't see much of them, especially in a lab space. It's exciting to think that girls now will have a network of women all completing chemistry at the same time. In my PhD position, I am in the only female-dominated lab group in my building. The ratio of men to women in the chemistry department is around 60:40 which is pretty good! I think that the landscape of STEM is ever-changing and we're definitely moving in a more positive direction.

Finally, what are your hopes and dreams for the STEM industry in the future?’

The biggest hope that I have for STEM in the future is that more prevalence is put into recognising the work scientists do. Science is a very competitive landscape and every lab group wants to be the first in the world to discover something and design a successful compound. Sometimes though, this results in people's efforts not being recognised and this has been a long-standing issue in STEM. One of the best examples is Watson and Crick not giving Rosalind Franklin any credit in the discovery of the structure of DNA - I'll leave you with that - google it, it's wild!

'The only person that is capable of excelling in your career is you - never settle!'



GENDER

Editor-in-Chief, *Millie Carroll* talks gender equality

When you think of gender equality, what do you think of? The Suffragettes? Feminists? Protests?

For me, I think of school. In school I am treated the exact same as my male counterparts. We receive the same education, the same work and same opportunities. Despite us being treated the same, we all have different perspectives, experiences and opinions. Some people roll their eyes when we say 'gender equality', as they believe everyone already is equal and on paper everyone is, however the reality is a different story. It's the snide remarks, the 'jokes', the back handed comments. Outdated views are still being displayed in society, just not as blatantly as they once were.

Recently, there have been a number of protests about gender equality and womens' rights. This has led to the rise of movies with a dominant female lead. In 2023, The latest blockbuster Hollywood film Barbie was released. Initially, some people deemed the film pointless and boring however, when released it broke the media with its strong underlying message.

Most people see the character Barbie as being the stereotypically glamorous, blonde-haired doll, however, the film portrayed her in a different light. The film showed us that the character Barbie is a representation of the unrealistic standards that people have for women, the ideology that women are incompetent, vain and overall inferior to men.

In the film, Barbie is exposed to the 'real world', where, within 5 minutes she experiences 'cat calling' - in the scene, a group of male construction workers whistle and make sexual comments about Barbie's appearance. The writers may have done this because statistics show that the majority of women have experienced sexual harassment. The use of this scene helps to reveal that even in today's society, women still have to experience misogynistic views both verbally and physically. However, this scene got a lot of backlash from the media with the phrase 'it's not all men' stating this scene was demeaning and had demonized men.

'Outdated views are still being displayed in our society'

The film was marketed as a movie about feminism, which caused a lot of controversy as there is a misconception that if someone is a feminist they believe that women are superior and are 'anti - men' but the real meaning of being a feminist is the complete opposite. To be a feminist is to be an advocate for women's rights on the basis of equality for all genders. Feminists believe that neither men or women are superior and nobody should be a victim to discrimination.

EQUALITY

There have also been many protests about men's rights and a group called Men's Aid has taken an active campaign for equality. They aim to eradicate many stereotypical views about men; negative views relating to abuse, violence, fatherhood and parenting. Did you know that only a small number of men gain custody of children after a divorce? This is because of a belief that children should stay with their mothers. This is an outdated view that men can't raise children and that it is a women's job, when in reality a man is just as capable of raising a child than a woman. This is an extremely controversial argument but if we expect that both genders should be equal, then we also have to consider that Fathers are just as equal to Mothers.

'Fathers are just as equal to Mothers!'

Growing up, girls were always complimented based on appearance and boys were always complimented based on strength. If a girl is authoritative, she's bossy but if a boy is, he's a leader. If a boy shows emotion he's weak, but if a girl does, she's just expressing her feelings. The beliefs that a person's worth is based on these factors and phrases such as 'a pretty girl' and a 'big strong boy' installs the wrong mindset for a younger generation.

Furthermore, just because we have come a long way with equality does not mean that both genders are equal. Throughout history, men predominantly have done manual labour jobs such as building, plumbing and engineering. This has connotations with the belief that men should be strong, intelligent and handy. Similarly, women predominantly had caring jobs such as nursing, cooking and childcare, which perpetuates the beliefs that women must be kind and nurturing. Men can be nurturing and women can be strong.

We all have the ability to feel the same emotions and have the same characteristics. Both genders are marginalized in their own way and in a modern society we should see past these stereotypes and look into the bigger picture that anyone can be successful no matter their gender.

"Just because we have come a long way with equality does not mean that we're there yet."

At Ian Ramsey, we have a wide range of sports and activities both in and outside of the school day. We believe that everyone should be able to play and get involved in any sport they want regardless of gender, race or sexual orientation, their ability to participate, compete and enjoy sport is not and should never be a factor.

'Everyone should be able to play and get involved in any sport'

The Ian Ramsey girl's football team is composed of 25 players throughout year 7 to year 10, with various different races, beliefs and sexualities. We think the opportunity for everyone to play what used to be known as 'mens' sports', such as football, is incredibly valuable.

In Ian Ramsey Academy we want everyone to feel comfortable playing sports, regardless of who they are.

I had the fantastic opportunity to interview Miss Lavender, a teacher in our P.E department. She told me all about her experience growing up while playing a wide range of sports she had a passion for, such as football. Miss Lavender fell in love with the sport in her childhood, however, she felt there was a lack of options for her as a young woman and that the pitch wasn't always a welcoming environment. She believes that with the right encouragement and inspiration more people will feel comfortable playing sports of all kinds.

'We must stand up against stereotypes!'

Inspirational teams such as The Lionesses have had a massive impact on girls and young people and changed ideas for the better. We must stand up against stereotypes and discrimination in sports because it is our right to play the sport we love without judgement, not an idea we are forced to dream of for the distant future.

Levelling The Pitch



Tackling gender discrimination in sport

To achieve real fairness in Ian Ramsey, we need to challenge stereotypes, ensure equal opportunities are embedded at a young age and make sure our school embraces equal opportunities. This is in order to transform our culture to value everyone as equal, regardless of age, gender, disabilities, race or religion. I am very passionate to identify if equal opportunities are embedded at our school and that everyone achieves what they want to achieve in life. It is known that Ian Ramsey doesn't have a girls Rugby team and this is very upsetting for a wide range of girls who have a passion for Rugby. Hopefully, one day in the future this can change, writes *Katie Lindley*.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to interview Sabina Williams, a 15 year old student at Ian Ramsey, currently in her final year studying her GCSES. Sabina is very passionate about playing sports and is captain of Stockton girls under 16 rugby team outside of school. We discussed the way Rugby is perceived today by society. I asked Sabina about her experience in the sports she plays and how she feels that girls are just as capable of doing typically 'mens' sports. Sabina started playing rugby about 2 years ago. Rugby is stereotypically known as a sport for 'big, strong boys' to play, this is mainly due to the fact that rugby involves tackles and scrums, which can be viewed as very dangerous and often scary. However, any sport can be viewed as dangerous if the individual has not received the right training.

Sabina adores rugby, although she can receive discrimination on the pitch, such as feeling that some of the boys don't think she is capable of playing such a 'dangerous' sport and that 'girls are too weak to participate'. She ignores this and carries on playing the sport she loves. However, Sabina did express that she often struggled with the stereotypes and stigma surrounding girls that play rugby, worried that she was judged as being seen as 'unfeminine' because society tells us that tackling and showing aggression are inherently 'manly' things. Sabina stated that it did take her a while to realise that it's about strength and power that can be just as feminine, it's about putting all your energy into something that you love.

Sabina believes girls can be amazing at sports just as much as boys and that rugby has defined her as a woman and no longer succumbs to some of society's beliefs that the only way to be a woman is through looking gentle and being polite.

In Ian Ramsey, we want everyone to carry out what they want to do in life, don't listen to other people's opinions, do what makes you happy!

Written by Katie Lindley
Copy-edited by Eli Pearce



Hope for JAX



Motor neuron disease (MND) is a neurological disease that affects the nerve cells responsible for controlling voluntary muscle movement. Whilst relatively rare, motor neuron disease can have a profound impact on an individual's life and currently has no cure.

Some people can live with the disease - for example, Stephen Hawking lived with MND for over 55 years. Another example is Rob Burrow, a rugby league legend whose life changed dramatically with MND. He now uses a wheelchair and is cared for by his wife, however, it is a harrowing story to see a once-successful sportsman become trapped in his own body.

Our very own member of Ian Ramsey CE Academy, Mr Hooker, has a very personal experience with MND and is now doing something inspirational in memory of his sister. This is Jackie's story. Jackie was diagnosed in 2022 with MND and deteriorated rapidly. Over the a period of a few months, her speech deteriorated so she used her mobile phone to communicate. Her mind was there but her body had failed her. Sadly, on the 28th of June 2023, Jackie passed away. After her death, her family knew that Jackie would want them to use her story to raise awareness for the disease and that's when they set up **Hope for Jax**, a fundraiser where all donations go to the Cleveland Branch of the MND Association and My Name's Daddie Foundation.

To raise money, Hope for Jax is doing seven big challenges. These include the 40km three peak challenge, the Edinburgh marathon, coast to coast walk, the Gallon walk, three marathons in three weeks - Loch Ness, Kielderer, York, and the grand final: the extreme challenge - the John o Groats to Land's End Bike Ride 1913 km.

They have currently raised £14,125 of the £20,237 target and they won't stop until they reach it. Ultimately, their goal is to give back to the MND community that helped Jackie so much through her journey and to raise the much-needed funds for the MND research.



**'HER MIND WAS THERE BUT
HER BODY FAILED HER'**

Written by Millie Carroll
Copy-edited by Eli Pearce

UNDERSTANDING GIRLS WITH

autism

'People need to be more educated'

Autism is hard to define and can be difficult to understand for people who are neurotypical or have never had conversations about what life is like as an autistic person. I am not autistic but I have done some research that led me to having some eye-opening talks with close friends of mine who are autistic, about how drastically different life is with autism.

Autism is a spectrum, which means that every autistic person is unique in how they are affected in their day to day life, some might benefit from assistance both in and outside of a learning environment but others may be fine without, it varies from person to person.

Autistic people can struggle with things that many people take for granted; they might struggle to understand social cues and facial expressions or how to perform certain tasks and focus. These things are all barriers to autistic people but with the right help and support there is nothing stopping them from achieving great things. There are a large range of stigmas and stereotypes about autistic people which are untrue and harmful; hopefully this article may help to disprove some of them.

In the past, education about autism has been focused on boys and young men because some of the signs that are presented are easier to see in boys, this impacted girls and young women quite drastically and has put even more barriers in the long road of diagnosis. Due to this, over many years girls were overlooked and told to 'just deal with it' because of a lack of understanding and research of autism in girls.

After being told to 'suck it up', lots of young autistic people develop what is known as a 'mask' which hides their true personalities and interests; masking can be uncomfortable as it often means an individual doesn't feel safe, accepted or comfortable in expressing themselves in an environment. Often someone may have multiple masks that they use depending on where they are or who they are with. Girls often learn to mask considerably younger because it is less socially accepted to behave in certain ways, they are told they have behavioural issues when it's actually ADHD or autism. Phrases like 'boys will be boys' dismiss actions by boys that girls would be scolded and criticised for. It's affecting our young girls and thankfully in previous years the media has brought it to light, but we need to keep talking about it.

Our Feature Team had the fantastic opportunity to interview Poppy in Year 7 and here's how it went:

What does autism mean to you?

For me, it's not a disability, it's a hidden superpower, it stops me from doing certain things, yet makes me better at other things. When I'm outside of school I'm a different person; I'm in 'school form' now and when I get home I'm in 'home-form'. When I'm at home I'm more relaxed and when I'm horse riding I'm more confident.

How does horse riding make you feel?

It's almost like therapy to me, it makes me feel relaxed. I'm a proper animal person, your horse is your home. In some circumstances, I can feel terrified to go over a jump, but I try to embody someone else - part of something I do as Poppy. I will be watching someone at horse riding and it will give me confidence if I think I'm like that person and forget about being myself for a minute. I also have confidence in myself but I rarely show it, I hide it at school.

Do you think people don't understand autism?

I think when people ask me questions about it they see it in a different way. It's hard to explain autism. I get compared to other people with autism in a good and bad light.

Do you think that the school is understanding of autism?

Some teachers understand, other teachers find it hard to understand, such as making me talk in front of people. Because of this, I sometimes don't feel like they're properly listening to you, or they assume that I'm okay. It makes me hesitant to ask for help in fear of being shouted at. Boys tend to show more signs so the teachers often help them more. I get quite a bit of support from some teachers but some don't understand, it makes me feel hesitant to talk and I close up. Uneducated teachers aren't rude but they don't understand that there is a lot more going on inside the mind.

Is it easy talking to those without autism?

When first meeting someone, it's awkward trying to start a conversation but when meeting those with autism it's easier because they are a lot more understanding. My friends and I have been close for a long time so they understand and are very supportive. They make me feel comforted and understood when receiving support.

Does society need to be more educated?

People need to be more educated because some people think that autism is obvious and that I have no self-control but it's actually masking and I can be very reserved; I like to be quiet and keep to myself. When doing things I enjoy, I can be very outgoing and confident as I feel more like myself. People think girls should be immaculate and nothing should go wrong, expecting them to be perfect. This is because growing up it's always been about perfect hair, perfect makeup, no imperfections. This can feel like too much pressure at times.

Is it harder to learn new things?

I can sometimes find it hard to learn things because the smallest noise can distract my brain and I switch off. When reading books I'll read 3 chapters before I get bored or forget so it's hard to keep focused but when I'm hyper focused nothing can stop me. It's very annoying that I cannot grasp onto what I'm learning because I'll be in the zone but something small will distract me and then it's hard to refocus.

What brings you joy?

Horse riding and being around people that I'm comfortable with, I'm really observant, I notice the tiniest details and I like to people-watch and take in my surroundings. I also love Italian and Indian food, spicy food - the spiciest food I've ever eaten is Mexican hot sauce and Japanese spicy ramen.

How has cadets helped you and how long have you been in it?

I've been in it for a year, I'm really interested in medical stuff and I am now trained in first aid. It's good in stressful situations to help in keeping calm.

What made you want to speak up?

I wanted to speak up because some of the questions people ask are stupid and I sometimes feel a bit of anger towards society and people's own lack of knowledge. I hope to help others with autism feel more understood and know there is someone who does understand them. I wanted to educate people to show that girls with autism can be very reserved and don't always like to be outgoing. I also hope to join the magazine team next year because I love writing. I want to give people like me a voice.

What are your hopes for girls with autism in the future?

That people are more understanding of it and don't judge us the way they do now, just the teacher knowing can mean it doesn't feel as hard for them to understand me. I want people to be accepted for who they are.



After reading the interview performed by the feature team, I felt inspired and was talking to my friend Zsofia Majer (Year 10) who is also autistic. She agreed to an interview so I asked her some similar questions and gained some truly enlightening answers.

What does autism mean to you?

Autism to me means an alternate solution. It's like in maths where there's multiple ways to solve an equation, sometimes one way is easier to some but harder to others; it's nothing outwardly 'different' or 'special' but at the same time it's just as important and deserves to be appreciated.

Do you think people don't understand autism?

I feel like to an extent, it depends on how open and educated you are. Sometimes not everyone is going to understand everything and that's okay but with the right support, patience and appreciation I believe that everyone can be understood in their own ways. Of course, not everyone is going to go through the exact same thing, but to find people to relate to and be able to find similarities in can be comforting and allows someone to be more expressive and comfortable in who they are!

Do you think that the school is understanding of autism?

Once again, to an extent. There's always things to learn and to appreciate with autism, however I believe that the school has a great understanding. It is full of acceptance, appreciation and support. That's everything you need in a school to allow students to express who they are.

Is it difficult talking to neurotypical people about autism?

Sometimes yeah, especially when someone is not as aware or educated on autism, it can be difficult to express myself fully and I (along with a lot of other people who I've met) tend to 'mask', which is the uncomfortable process of hiding things we do to comfort or to express ourselves. Of course this isn't their fault however if someone is aware of autism and the different ways we may 'process' things, it is easier to communicate and show expression.

Does society need to be more educated?

I believe so, yes, as society continues to modernise and talk about how other disabilities and other things can affect a person's life mentally or physically, I believe autism should be expressed and appreciated within society. With movements like autism awareness month and others, it provides a free and less-judgemental place of self expression: which is essentially what we need to learn, grow and develop as people. It's important to understand the world around you just as much as yourself and being educated allows for so much comfort to be found with you by other people, intentional or not.

Do you struggle to learn new things? How do you get around it?

When it comes to learning new things, it mainly depends on how a person takes on challenges and approaches different situations. Some may hide and choose to reject it for comfort reasons, while some may express love for the challenge and take it head on. With me personally, it can sometimes be a challenge, especially in a new school with new subjects as I tend to stick to my interests in comfort. A lot of people I do the same, as it provides a feeling of solace and like you are able to enjoy something that you know. Getting past that however, can be a challenge. All that is needed is the right support and patience not only from yourself but other people too! I personally like to talk to other people about it to get a better and deeper understanding, as I believe the basic understanding unlocks a lot of doors to excelling.

What brings you joy?

I honestly find joy in English literature. Everyone has their own special interest which they believe is their best subject, their strong suit and I find mine in the English classroom! I like to write and analyse poetry, I like to read and I like to talk about things. I also enjoy psychology, I tend to theorise and delve deep into interests which some may find weird or different and I don't mind that! I believe that what matters is that someone finds joy in what they do, no matter what it is!

Do you ever have breakdowns? How do you cope?

Yes! Sometimes when I'm in a large crowd, experiencing sudden and loud noises or just generally being stressed, I tend to experience breakdowns. This can be through going non-verbal (in which I feel more comfortable not speaking), having panic attacks with shifted breathing and shaking hands, or they can be quiet and internal: which can lead to zoning out and fast heart rates. It is different for everyone of course. I tend to cope with music and find it to be a reliable support system for me, which is why I bring headphones everywhere with me. I can also cope by isolating, more specifically in quiet rooms or even just being around the people I love, who understand and support me!

What do you think about how autism is presented in the media?

It depends on where you look. Mainly and unfortunately, I see autism as used as an insult: which is far from the truth. It can be quite saddening when people view something you struggle with as something to be thrown around with negative intent, it can hurt quite a bit. However, some sites and people are wonderful with their information and knowledge on autism.

What made you want to speak up?

I believe that autism, despite being well known, should be talked about more. There are a lot of things that nobody talks about, there's always an unfortunate side which people don't speak about. Families who struggle to take care of something or someone because they don't understand, kids who struggle to pay attention in school, people who are put in the wrong places for being 'different' and being treated as if they were something inhumane and wrong. There is nothing wrong with autism, just as much as there is nothing wrong with ADHD or ADD, having a loving and accepting society with patience and kindness allows for increased awareness and improved support. Sometimes it can be a struggle, for some they can't speak up at all and it's important to use your voice to share that.

After interviewing Zsofia, I can confidently say that I have once again gained a deeper understanding of how autistic people experience and live in the world around them. I'm extremely glad I took over this article and both you and I should never stop talking and educating ourselves about diversity and inclusivity.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

By Kasi Anucha



a roadside market in Nigeria.

When the topic of diversity comes up, in relation to people, often it is thought of as a distant or isolated concept. We might think about representation in the media or how we ourselves might differ with our individual characteristics, but often we don't think about how diverse or uniform our surroundings are. Is this something we absolutely must think about? Maybe not - but as a person of colour, I think it's an interesting conversation to have. I often find myself thinking about how much I stand out somewhere, or I subconsciously look for someone that looks like me, that I can relate to, when I'm feeling out of place. I think that everyone can relate to this feeling in some way; wanting to be around people who they see themselves as having things in common with.

I interviewed three students, who at some point in their lives immigrated here from the country they grew up in. I wanted to hear them explain how it feels coming from a place where they are surrounded by 'skinfolk' - never really feeling out of place due to cultural differences, to a place that is completely different.

DAMISI RUNSEWE



A traditional Nigerian masquerade called Ekpo. They embody spirits with the masks.



Plantain/banana plants.



A busy street in Nigeria, vehicles transporting goods and keke transporting people (they are like taxis).

Damsi transferred to Ian Ramsey this year - although she's been in England for 8 months now, she lived most of her life in Ibadan and Lagos in Nigeria. Ibadan is a city in Nigeria, capital of the Oyo state. Lagos is the largest city in Nigeria and one of the largest in Africa as a whole. It is a cultural and financial hub; it even used to be the capital city of Nigeria.

What was it like to live and grow up in Nigeria?

Nigeria has a very different environment to the UK. When I lived there I spoke Yoruba as well as English. One thing that I didn't like about there was that there were way too many insects in Nigeria. I lived in Ibadan, my favourite thing about living there was visiting my best friend but to be honest there wasn't really much to do. I also liked to go to the beach, I went every half term. My favourite Nigerian food is jollof rice, with sweetcorn and chicken.

Yoruba is one of the most common languages in Nigeria, spoken by almost 40 million. Like most of the languages spoken in Nigeria, it is also a tribe. Jollof rice is probably the most famous Nigerian dish (even though it technically originates from an ancient kingdom of Senegal.) It can be eaten with just about anything - chicken, salad and plantain are popular examples - or by itself.

Can you describe the culture in Nigeria?

I love my culture, I like how we have get togethers and parties, for different causes or just to have fun. I enjoy our traditional dancing and music (like afrobeats). We have a lot of respect for our elders, we value them a lot and they pass on traditions and knowledge to us. We love to have festivals and enjoy ourselves. Another food I love is swallow with egusi soup. You can eat swallow with different soups, but egusi is my favourite. We have our own traditional clothes, they're very colourful with different patterns.

Nigerians have many types of celebrations, festivals and parties, they also have various ways to enjoy them. Traditional dancing, masquerades and lots of music - for example, afrobeats (artists like Rema). 'Swallow' describes a meal that can be found almost all over Africa, connecting various cultures. It's a starchy food with many different names (eba, fufu, amala, to name some). It's cooked into a dough like food that is served in a ball with a soup that is probably more similar to what is considered stew.

What do you miss about Nigeria?

I could list loads of things that I miss: my family, friends, I miss the people who trained and nurtured me to become who I am today, I miss the food, I miss the homely feeling of my house in Nigeria, I could go on and on. But life has stages, there are always circumstances where you have to leave things behind, even though it's painful it's worth it in the end - because you're exposing yourself to new opportunities and a new phase of your life.

Do you still feel connected to your culture, despite moving?

Not really, but still, being at home and with other black people makes me feel like I'm at home, like I can be more myself.

What do you think of Ian Ramsey as a school and community?

It's definitely a new experience, since the school system in Nigeria isn't the same as the one here. It was difficult to make friends at first. Being a part of the pupil parliament is good to get to speak for other people and people who want their voices heard can be heard, it's a great achievement for me.

How did it feel to move to a country with such a different culture? Is it something you struggle with?

At first it felt strange moving into a new environment, having to interact with new people, trying to fit in, to learn the method that people use to do things here, which is way different from back home in Nigeria. Now I feel that I am familiar with the way things are done and things don't feel new like it did when I got here.

Would you say that you're aware of the diversity of the surroundings?

Yes, as I see it on a daily basis. Everyday I see different people with different origins coming together. I feel like no matter what your origin is, you should still be accepted by others.

Abiya transferred at the beginning of Year 9 from Bethany Rosedale Residential Senior Secondary School in Kerala, India. She lived in Saudi Arabia until she was two, then moved to India at 7, where she grew up and became the person she is today. Kerala is a state on India's tropical Malabar coast, a region of natural beauty.

What was it like to live and grow up in Kerala?

It was really nice. I spoke Malayalam there. Kerala is said to be a place like heaven, it's a beautiful place with a lot of greenery. One of my favourite things about it is our food - it's spicy and delicious. There are many festivals but I didn't actually go to all of them since I'm a Christian.

Malayalam (the language that Abiya grew up speaking) is the official language of Kerala; it's spoken by around 34 million people in India. Kerala is nicknamed 'God's Own Country' for its green and rich landscape of cultivation.

As a Christian, how does your experience differ here, since Christianity is more prominent here whereas Hinduism is more common in India?

Actually I don't know, but my thoughts were before being in the UK that the whole school and most of the pupils would be strong in Christianity and support the growth of the understanding of the word of God in people. But I found that the Christian label was just a name, and that in this country I see more atheists. In India the area where we lived Hinduism was not that big but it was still quite present. But I'm glad that there are still churches and some people who really work for God here in the UK.



Do you still feel connected to your culture, despite moving?

Yeah, I still feel connected, the culture is precious to me like a gemstone. Things like respecting elders and parents which are a part of my culture aren't things that I've stopped after moving.

What things do you miss about living there?

I miss my friends and family, especially my cousins and best friend. And also I miss my home, staying on the balcony when it rains. The view from there is the best thing.

What do you think of Ian Ramsey as a school and community? What was your experience settling in?

For me it was really difficult coming here. It's really different for me here so at first it was hard, but now it's better.

How did it feel to move to a country with such a different culture? Is it something you struggle with?

I think I struggled with it a bit at times when I was really new. It is definitely different in terms of Christianity because Indian schools don't have any RE lessons, worships or teachings about Christianity. So I actually prefer UK schools for all these things as a strong Christian.



Leona moved here recently, leaving Zimbabwe on the 23rd of December and arriving here on the 24th. She lived the majority of her life in the country of her ethnicity and like the others, this has greatly shaped who she is as a person.

What was it like to grow up in Zimbabwe?

I lived in Harare until I moved when I was two to a different part of Zimbabwe. It was really nice, it's an amazing place with different adventures each day that always tamper with the way that you view the place and I miss that. Harare is the capital of Zimbabwe, it's a place of cultural heritage, history and wildlife. It beautifully connects the more traditional natural beauty of Africa and contemporary African culture.

Growing up was a bit hard because of having to learn how to interact with my peers, but in high school it was so much better and I loved it all - the drama around school, the intense pressure from being in top set classes, the amazing trips and school dances each term.

I enjoyed travelling around Zim, one of my favourite things to do was to visit different animal parks. I loved how predictable the weather is compared to here and how I could always enjoy the warm sun. There were bad things like the terrible network, power outages and issues with our government but besides that, growing up and living there wasn't so bad. In Harare there are safari parks where people can be face to face with animals that we can only see in zoos in England, like giraffes and zebras.

Can you describe the culture in Zimbabwe?

It's really different from here, during the time I grew up it was more modern and we wore the same clothes and styles as here and the US but we also had certain events whereby we would wear cultural clothes with unique patterns and designs with headbands and bracelets to match. We also had different types of cultural dances for different situations like funerals, celebrating love, hope, happiness and so on.

During our dances both the men and women wear shakers on their feet and no shoes, the faces are painted with white dotted patterns, the skirts are short and seem to be made of animal skin.

Zimbabwean dances have history and meaning, reflecting the traditions, artistry, spirituality of the country and its people. They can vary between the different ethnic groups within the land.

Do you still feel connected to your culture, despite moving?

I'm not really sure in all honesty, I used to think it (the culture) was weird but ever since I left, I've found new ways to view it, it's good and I'm fascinated by it.

What things do you miss about living there?

I miss a lot of things about Zim, like the weather, many of my friends, family and the natural environment and animals. I miss the strong bonds I had with my peers back home and how it was a little bit easier to fit in there than it is here. Everything about this place is different and a lot to adjust to but here and there are both great. The opportunities here are a lot better.

What do you think of Ian Ramsey, what was your experience settling in?

I think it is a really good school and I'm quite proud to be going there. The teaching methods are great and I think they help us learn better, especially me - I found it a lot easier to settle in here compared to the other school I had gone to before. I also think that the school is getting diverse over time as there is an increasing number of people from different nationalities and different races joining.

Do you feel that this country has a very different culture to Zimbabwe? Are any differences something you struggle with?

It is certainly different in almost every way, some ways good and some bad, but I wouldn't say I'm struggling with any of it.



Victoria Falls.



Marula fruits, fallen from their trees. Used to make an alcohol drink, called Amarula.

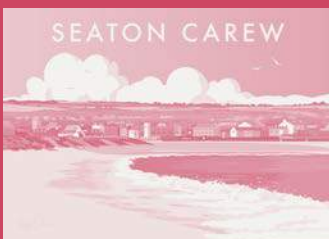


A signpost leading to different places.

The opinions and memories that I received from Damisi, Abiya and Leona, definitely helped me answer questions that I had, as someone who grew up in England (without having many experiences in the country of ethnicity) about what it might be like to grow up in a non-Western country. Nigeria is quite alien to me, despite my Nigerian name and passport. It's clear that moving from one place to another will always be something that is hard, especially for people who are generally the most susceptible to discrimination and prejudice when they are outside of their homeland. I don't think that diversity is something to be hyper aware of, but why ignore it when it could be celebrated? When we notice the differences in the people around us (sometimes when it comes to skin colour), we might make assumptions about who these people are and how we should interact with them, but, rather than this we should recognise our similarities - letting diversity be a natural part of our lives, rather than seeing differences as boundaries.



'The northern creative duo'



As part of our diversity theme, I'll be focusing on geographical diversity and how it affects the North East as a whole as well as our Stockton, Middlesbrough area. This is demonstrated through the discrimination and often self-inflicted ridicule by and surrounding northerners - accents, stereotypes and even nicknames such as 'smoggies' being used for the people of Stockton and Middlesbrough due to the industrial revolution taking over the area with smoke. This often diminishes the natural aspects that make up the landscapes that people have become so accustomed to, that they lose their charm.

This is why I personally believe Abby and Owen represent our area and capture the artistic potential behind its environment and scenery. In addition, Abby + Owen strongly contradict the ideology that 'London is everything' because our own local areas can hold many kinds of art, big cities may be a hub of life and art, as well as inspiration, but art exists everywhere and it's up to us to appreciate it.

The dynamic duo first met in college when they both studied graphic design and later on progressed to university together after graduating from the Northern School of Art which then was known as the Cleveland College of Art & Design, therefore studying for a total of five years. Before this, Abby attended Ian Ramsey, having Mrs Barnfather as her graphics teacher to support and push Abby to pursue a career in the arts, setting an example for artists our age to be proud of where they are from. Then, in their words they "began to map out our future in pencil, leaving plenty of room to doodle in the margins.

A big part of their career -individually and with each other- was being able to design the artwork for Hartlepool train station, after winning the competition. Having now been a couple for 11 years and owning a successful business together, I reached out to them after inquiring with the school about alumni, and asked them some questions.

What inspired you to initiate your creative career?

For me, pursuing a creative career was the most logical and natural path, not to mention the most enjoyable. The allure of self-employment lay in its flexibility and the autonomy it provided over my work, allowing me to avoid the repetition and mundanity often found in some design jobs. Owen, who has been passionate about art since he was young, always envisioned a career in the arts. Despite his natural talent, he finds overly structured environments challenging due to his ADHD. The freedom to set his own schedule and choose projects that genuinely inspire him has been a key factor in his decision to pursue self-employment as a creative.

'What would your dream project look like?'

It's wonderful to acknowledge that we've been a part of so many projects that felt like dream projects, such as giant murals for our town centre and illustrating a wonderful book. Looking to the future, I'd love to expand our print shop and create more amazing murals.

What meaning do you want your art to portray?

Our artwork, which includes North-East illustrations of scenes and landmarks, murals, activity packs for kids, and illustrated maps, generally reflects our ethos on the importance of community, instilling local pride, and celebrating cultural landmarks and beloved spaces within the Tees Valley.

Do you think living in the North-East has limited your opportunities as an artist? Why or why not?

I don't believe it has limited us, but rather focused us. The only experience I can speak on is my own... you'd have to clone me and place her down south to see if an alternative-reality Abby would get more opportunities! I do think there's a certain underappreciated value in the North. We're resilient, supportive of each other, and strong in adversity. We're firm believers in making your own luck. 'Luck Is What Happens When Preparation Meets Opportunity' as the Roman Philosopher Seneca liked to put it. There are loads of opportunities in the North-East, you just have to be prepared to pitch in for them when they come up, and to know where to look for them. This also means having a physical or digital portfolio at the ready.

London is the creative hub of the UK. What does the North East have that London doesn't?

The North East of England contrasts London with its unique blend of cultural heritage, close-knit community spirit, and affordability. Unlike London's daunting scale and competition, the North East offers a more accessible and collaborative creative scene. This environment allows artists, designers, and creators to form supportive networks, share resources, and gain visibility in a way that feels more personal and less commercialised. Teesside's unique history and landscapes also offer a rich source of inspiration, influencing a diverse range of art, music, literature, and design.

What advice would you give to young people in the North East looking to venture into the creative world?

The Northern School of Art was a crucial resource for us, enriched by its tutors, facilities, and the vibrant community. The lifelong connections we made there have been pivotal to our careers. This institution is a must for anyone eyeing a creative career. Additionally, for those aspiring to be artists, the advice is simple: MAKE ART! Remember, your taste will evolve faster than your skills, so practise patience and self-encouragement over perfectionism — perfectionism is unhelpful and a true beast to tame.

Overall the feedback that I have received from these questions is proof in itself that even though geographically diversity can affect careers, you shouldn't let it. I truly believe that Abby and Owen represent what it means to be proud of your background and inspire teenagers to not limit themselves due to other's opinions.

What is the Festival of Thrift?

Billingham recently welcomed the nation's festival of sustainability, more commonly known as The Festival of Thrift. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn, enjoy and support all aspects of ethical living. People from all corners of the UK come to share their collective love for art, culture, food and music all in one place. September 23rd 2023 marked the move from Kirkleatham to our local town of Billingham.

This festival is a fantastic step forward in promoting the ethical and sustainable consumption of goods. Prompting us to make responsible decisions regarding what we consume, and its consequences on the world around us, Evoking conversation around a greener, more eco- friendly lifestyle for all.



What it involves:

Over the course of three days you can expect a bustling itinerary of live music, inventive performances, hands on workshops, immersive markets and a range of cuisines. From artisanal craftsmen to inventive acts, there's a commodity for everybody to engage in. This is encompassed by the various festival of thrift partners, who present inspiring upcycling and conveying sustainable living in their wake. Old unwanted furniture is rejuvenated into something captivating, ready to be loved and used anew.

Inventor Annie Sloan and subsequent patron of the festival said : 'I created my Chalk Paint for people who want to upcycle and refresh furniture they already own or have bought second-hand furniture.' Through upcycling ourselves, not only is it more cost effective, but also a great creative outlet. Annie continued by saying 'Painting old furniture with Chalk Paint is good for your health, good for the environment and good for your pocket. I was so excited to see my vision come to life at the Festival of Thrift. We look forward to forging partnerships with some of the wonderful people we met there.'

On top of that, Thirteen housing (another festival partner) sponsored many of the prolific workshops available which enabled them to be free of charge. This opened up a wonderful opportunity to many creatives alike, who previously may not have had the chance to involve themselves in activities like this. Over 2000 visitors got to try something new at the festival, doubling the number of participants from previous years. This is a great development in making creative activities accessible for the whole community.

2023 set itself apart from previous years with a greater focus towards considering the events approachability (shown by the previous paragraph). With people still being impacted by the cost of living crisis, creativity should not be held behind cost barriers, but rather open and welcoming to all. The Festival of thrift will return to Billingham on Saturday the 21st till Sunday the 22nd 2024 and is definitely something to look forward to.

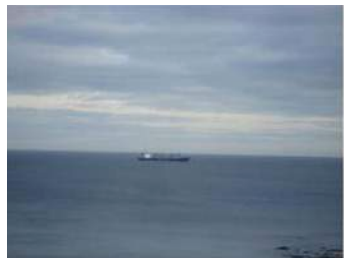
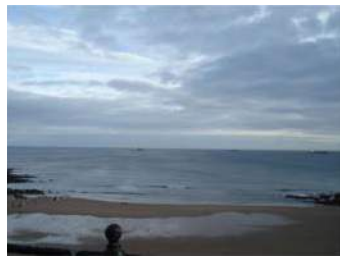
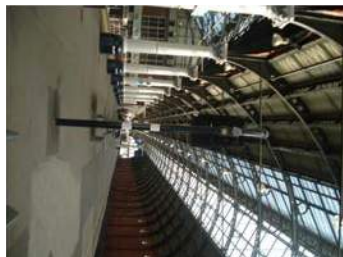
Written by Neve Pack and copy edited by Eli Pearce

FESTIVAL OF THRIFT

DIVERSITY OF IMAGERY

Shot on Nikon D40

This is my personal take on diversity as not only a member of Ian Ramsey academy, but also as a member of the new generation, who will eventually be responsible for the world we live in. I am using this opportunity to demonstrate diversity through a different perspective, or lens: to elaborate on this, I am representing a more literal meaning of diversity. Oxford dictionary defines diversity as 'The quality, condition, or fact of being diverse or different; difference, dissimilarity.' Using this definition I am closing in on the word 'difference' and portraying it through the different adventures and journeys that we as a civilization have created and experienced ourselves. Furthermore, I am showing this through a range of landscapes and architectural structure. All of which are shown through a range of both natural and man made sources.



Women in ...

Most people have heard of famous authors like Charles Dickens and Lewis Carroll, but what do both of these authors have in common? They are both men who were writers throughout the 19th Century. Unfortunately, in the 18th century it was not as easy for women to be publishers. So, aspiring female writers took a different approach. Many women decided to write under a false male name to gain more credit and appreciation for their work.

One example of this was Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), she is best known for her novel 'Little Women', and while she wrote this under her real name she also wrote 3 novels under her pseudonym A.M Barnard such as 'A Woman's Power', 'The Abbot's Ghost' and 'A Long Fatal Love Chase'.

Many women, especially during the 19th century, felt the need to write under a man's name in order for them and their writing to be taken seriously.

Alcott usually published novels and stories that did not fit the public image of how a woman should behave and write during those times which was one reason she decided to write some stories as A.M. Barnard. She used her platform as a novelist to speak up on many controversial topics during the time such as; people's lack of interest for women to gain the right to vote, the anatomy of women, the state of family and the care of children. While discussing these topics she mainly stayed under her pseudonym in hopes of people taking it more seriously when reading.

Between c1850-c1890 women in the USA were sometimes earning almost 40% less than men were no matter what job they were doing, therefore some women chose to write under men's names in order to be able to better provide for themselves and their family.

In Alcott's extremely famous novel 'Little Women' she wrote of a group of four sisters and she claims they were loosely based off of her family, including the second oldest sister: Josephine March she based off of herself. Jo is an aspiring writer who would spend her spare time writing exciting stories for the local newspaper 'The Weekly Volcano'. Alcott writes about Jo struggling to be taken seriously because she was a woman while she was writing for the newspaper. Alcott felt as though she had to write under a fake name in order to be heard of. Jo March and Louisa May Alcott go on inspiring many young women even now, she was a woman working in a predominantly male world and despite challenges she still found success.

Written by Chloe Kingston

Literature



Diversity is in everything, very few things are similar, even fewer are identical. When it comes to baking, something I hold very close to my heart, I think of how I and others can express ourselves in a variety of ways, just like how people around the globe express themselves through their culture. Diversity isn't just the way we present ourselves, they are things we eat, the things we create.

Ever since I was young, I've enjoyed helping my Nana out in the kitchen: she taught me many new skills including how to evenly cut sponges and the secret to making scones. I've always been fascinated by how different a dessert could become as a result of one small change. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I found myself engrossed in watching cake shows (e.g Sugar Rush and The Great British Bake Off) and found myself intrigued by the way that a baker's background can greatly affect the outcome of the dessert. In fact, hearing the reasons behind a baker's designs, or even something as small as the flavour of icing has always been an interesting topic for me.

Often I'm inspired by other people's cultures and experiences, even if I don't necessarily relate to them. When I bake, I always try to experiment with the use of different flavours and techniques as I've been inspired to do by those of other backgrounds. Though this is often extremely difficult, the people around me are able to share their diverse knowledge to contribute to my desserts so they come out similarly to how I imagined it or even better!

In the patisserie industry, no two desserts are the same. Two cupcakes from the same batch could never be identical to one another, even down to the frosting or the air bubbles beneath the surface. For example, cheesecakes. They can be different shapes and sizes, various flavours, tall or small. There could be too much biscuit or not enough, causing it to collapse in on itself or be too heavy and undesirable. A strong foundation is important, but if too thick it takes up space for the actual mixture, the part full of flavour. Although some bakers aspire to make their creations identical, I think that it's these differences or even mistakes that can lead to the perseverance to make something even greater. This is why diversity in deserts and food in general is so important.

Another confection that displays a lot of diversity is sponge cake, a dessert that can be constantly transformed and redesigned to celebrate a variety of occasions. Cakes have the ability to signify the start and the end of life, and the key moments within. For example, gender reveal cakes. These are generally prepared for baby showers to mark the revelation of the expected baby's gender to family and friends of the expectant couple. These cakes regularly consist of a plain, white frosting usually to represent the innocence and purity of a newborn baby. Inside, the cake will have a filling of either pink or blue frosting to present the gender of the unborn baby. Although, in modern day, gender reveal cakes reinforce traditional societal stereotypes by only using the colours pink and blue to represent the two biological genders. The ingredients in this cake can also be used to celebrate and welcome the dead, like in Cinco de Mayo. Cinco de Mayo is a Mexican holiday that helps people remember the deceased and celebrate their memory.

Another way diversity is shown in the food industry is through wedding cakes. Different cultures inherit different styles. For instance, the stereotypical wedding cake is white, multiple tiered and features two royal icing figurines depicting a bride and groom on top. Some traditions that follow this cake is that the newly wed couples cut the cake together to symbolise their legally recognised relationship. Although, in different cultures such as Chinese or Indian culture, the cakes are much more colourful and they consist of edible embellishment. For example, Chinese wedding cakes usually embody their culture through the utilisation of red and gold, common colours regularly related with good fortune and wealth. Another example is the Italian wedding cake, which is most commonly known as a "thousand layer cake". As the name suggests, the cake consists of various thin layers stacked neatly on top of each other. Unlike wedding cakes in many other countries, the Italian wedding cake consists of one, large tier.

Overall, diversity plays an important role in the dessert industry because our backgrounds build the foundations of all that we create. Without diversity, we would find ourselves in a bland world where all food tastes and looks the same, which would ultimately be incredibly boring. Without diversity, the food industry would not exist: nobody would be able to grow their business in patisserie or deserts if they created something the same as everyone else, people find joy in tasting the food of other cultures and religions etc. Although all deserts are vastly different, in the end they all serve the same purpose, for example whether you have an Indian wedding cake or an African wedding cake, their sole purpose is to mark and celebrate an important stage of your life. Most importantly they bring people together to simply enjoy a great dessert.

Written by Emily Langton

Lotus Biscoff Cheesecake - baked and assembled by Emily.

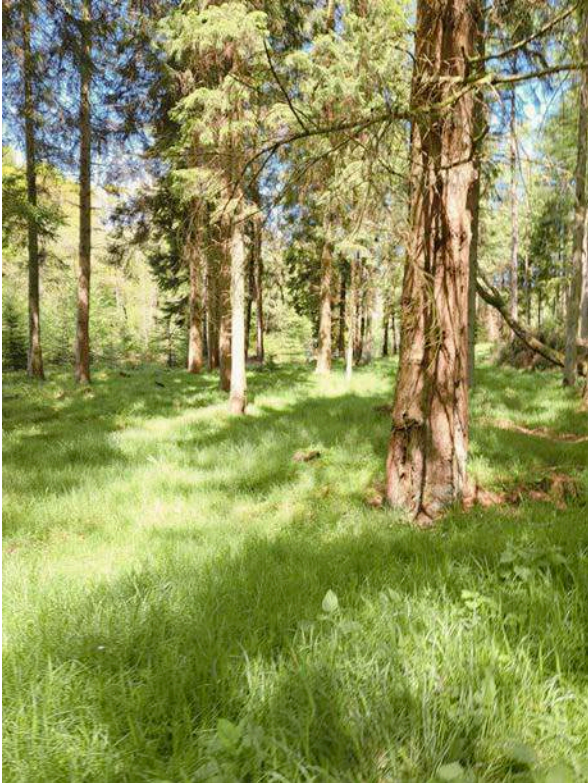


DESSERT DISCOVERY

A JOURNEY ON FILM.


To me, taking photographs of the world around me is an art of perception, and is not necessarily about the things you see in them and more about the way you see them. Photography isn't posing for aesthetically pleasing imagery, but catching a moment passing by, to capture it in its naturality. Like John Green said 'photographs are just light and time' just waiting for someone to add perspective to it. -- Lucy Vaines





Rainbow flag award

Visibility and Inclusivity; love is love



Recently at Ian Ramsey Academy, we have been taking part in the Rainbow Flag Award. This is an award that advocates for a positive representation of the LGBTQ + community. There are 6 different categories for the award - skilled teacher, supportive governors and parents, effective policies, inclusive curriculum, pastoral support, and student voice.

In recent years, The LGBTQ+ community has made significant strides toward achieving equality and recognition worldwide. However, despite the progress, inclusivity remains an issue. True inclusivity goes beyond awareness; it requires a space where everyone feels valued, respected, and understood.

LGBTQ+ education should not just be on social media but should be a part of our school curriculum, to change the narrative that heterosexual relationships are the only relationships in our society. We have entered this award in the hope that all identities are represented and feel welcome in our school. We are also re-launching a pride club in Ian Ramsey so that every pupil has a safe space to express themselves. If you are interested in taking part please contact Mrs Storey or Miss Warner.

Written by Millie Carroll and copy edited by Eli Pearce

Reflection

I couldn't do it, as they would say.

Unable to do even the most seemingly possible.

No way I could do the impossible.

Everyday appears to be an endless pain of looking at the mirror's reflection, glaring back at me.

Not so much what I had expected or hoped.

All I see is the slight figure of a tired looking guy, with apparently nowhere to go except back to bed, where I believe I'm accepted.

How inspiring eh.

That's what I thought until two days ago. When 'it' happened.

'It' was nothing at first.

I woke up as usual.

On staring at my reflection in the mirror, I realised 'it' wasn't my usual self looking back (well 'it' was, but not what I see myself as).

It was what others saw.

The reflection staring back at me, was a well rested, good looking guy.

In fact, the type to have more friends than just mice!

He was indicating something.

'It' transpired to have been a box of letters, from others at school, that I didn't plan to open.

I felt sure they were going to be the usual comments "We only tolerate you"

"He's a weirdo",

"What a clumsy guy" Or even, "Hey geek!"

My reflection persuaded me to take a leap of faith, and make my way over to discover what people were saying.

"Thank you for helping me in maths, geography, and english" came the comments. All of the comments were kind, (except from one - no need to get into that one though). People who I just presumed hated me, actually appear to like me.

However, they're not saying they like me for how I dress, or how I do my hair. Not even for my watch that has had the same scratch on its face for years, a scratch that covers the date.

They all really cared.

Wow!

I guess it's not what others see of me that counts, but for what only my true friends and I can see me for.

Myself!

"One word,

We say everyday,

That is taken for granted.

In Every way.

It shows everything we are,

Everything we desire

It shows we can be a star,

That will shine bright,

More than any light.

Love!"

By: Oliver Nesbitt - a Year 8 pupil from Ian Ramsey

"REFLECTING DIVERSITY: UNVEILING THE SHATTERED MIRRORS OF IDENTITY"



When designing the cover, I knew I wanted to create something unique. I spent a few days searching through various diversity posters, artworks and covers from other magazines, but didn't find anything that fitted my 'vision'. Instead, I tried to consider many interesting ways to show multiple faces on one page, since I knew I was limited to A4. I also thought about some of the ideas that came with diversity, which led me to the concept of identity and the way we see ourselves and others. I once again returned to researching, this time with these ideas, and noticed a recurring theme of mirrors - this was when I first came up with my shattered mirror concept. I thought it was a perfect representation of how people are divided by their differences, rather than brought together by them. Our magazine is aiming to spread ideas of being brought together by differences.

Written by Alice Smith and copyedited by Eli Pearce



If you need a place to express your creativity, engage in thought-provoking discussions, and become part of a dynamic team, our magazine may be for you. If you're interested, feel free to reach out to Miss Heslehurst or me; we welcome all interest. We hope you've enjoyed our first edition .

Millie Carroll - Editor in Chief



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MAGAZINE
*

Corporate design
text
Logic + bright
visuals
work
design-