

# Victory Park Academy News

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Summer Term 2022

## Update from the Head Teacher

Dear Parents and Carers,



I have written a number of newsletters home to parents over time but this is without doubt the most difficult of them all. It is with great sadness that I have to

inform you I will not be returning in September. I am deeply saddened to be leaving as I have had the most amazing experience at Victory Park Academy. I can say with complete honesty that Victory Park pupils are the best I have ever met.

We have young people who are full of positive energy, who look out for one another and turn up to school and try their best. They make me extremely proud and I know they will all go on to do great things in later life. I have so many things to be grateful for, not many Headteachers have the experience of having an entire staff team that they love working with. They all work extremely hard to give the best they can to our pupils.

I have also been surrounded by a leadership team who saw my vision and worked with me to make it happen, I know at times its not been easy, but even through the tough times we've always managed to

see the humour and keep a smile on our faces.

I will truly miss you all. To all of the Victory Park parents I cannot thank you enough, without hesitation you took me in and made me feel welcome from the start. Knowing how difficult change can be you have made the experience at Victory Park a good one.

You have engaged and voiced your opinions shared your concerns and worries and I hope that you have found that I have taken the time to listen and take on board what you have said. I will never say I get everything right all the time but I do strive to do my very best. Although I am sad to be leaving, I am excited about the future, and the next chapter. I wish the Victory Park community all the best.

I leave you then with this terms newsletter. You will read about some of the fantastic opportunities and learning that Victory Park pupils have taken part. Enjoy.

**Mr M Aspel**

## Literacy with Focus

Literacy deserves and demands focus, and Lexia has delivered it. It is a computer programme which has developed a

breadth and depth of expertise in literacy. Lexia solutions can be used together or individually to meet all structured literacy needs for any pupil. When it's taught the right way, literacy is fully within reach of



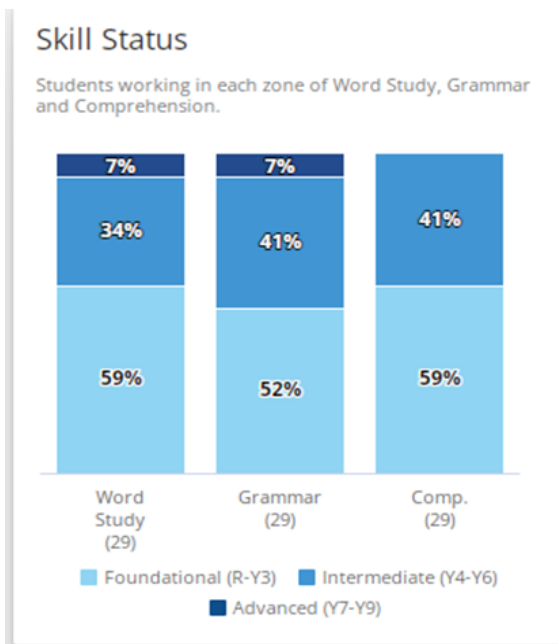


the vast majority of learners. Lexia's approach is focused on sound methodology, engaging experiences,

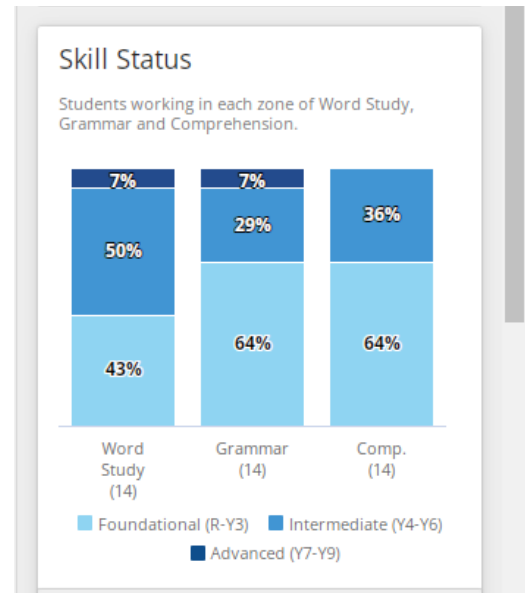
and continued acknowledgement of the value of each individual learner. By doing so, this programme is making literacy truly accessible for every pupil, to every need. Each pupil is assessed by the programme and put on their own individual literacy journey based on their needs.

Each pupil is timetabled 3 x 20 minute sessions per week and the summer term has shown an increase in all three areas:

### KS3 Data



### KS4 Data



Both KS3 and KS4 pupils have improved as now they are moving into the higher advanced areas.

Literacy across the curriculum has shown improvement through pupils' work and learning walks.

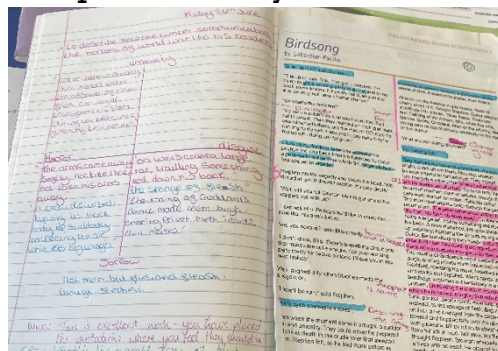
The English room has a reading corner with beanbags; carpet and a range of books for



pupils to read. We hope in September to have more reading areas for pupils to relax and read.

### Work Scrutiny

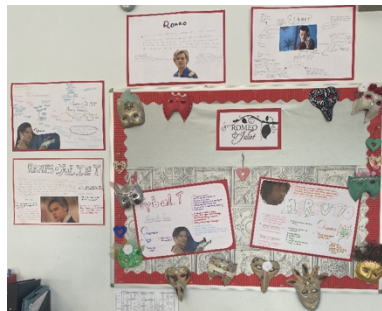
Work Scrutiny has continued to be completed weekly on a staff rota and we



have seen some fantastic work from pupils and

feedback from teachers. Books are well presented and the Marking and Feedback Policy adhered to.

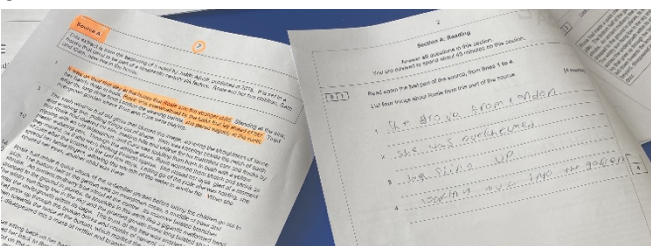
## **English**



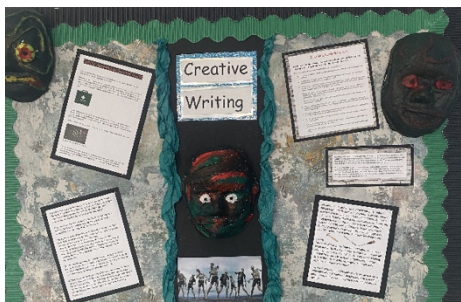
Best of luck to all year 11's who have now completed all their English GCSE exams with English Functional Skills

qualifications already banked!

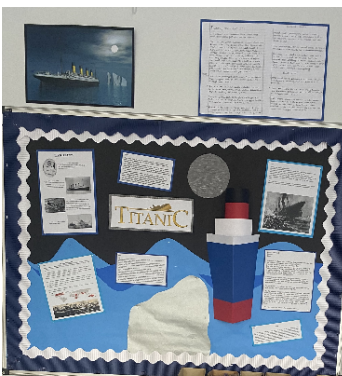
Year 10 pupils are currently beginning their GCSE English language preparation ready for year 11. They have studied Romeo and Juliet earlier in the summer term.



Year 9 have been focusing on the play DNA- each pupil has a part to read. The pupils are learning about



characterisation. Earlier in the summer term they were developing their creative writing skills using the 'Zombie' genre.



Year 8 are reading the novel 'Stone cold' about a homeless teenager. It features a double narrative and for some pupils this is a new way of reading a story.

Prior to this, we were using the Titanic as a topic to explore writing non-fiction.

## **Counselling**

It has been a busy, and successful, first year as counsellor at Victory Park Academy. Many students have engaged in the one to one sessions, and used the time to explore and discuss various aspects; counselling essentially provides a safe space to talk and I work in various different ways, finding the best way for the students.

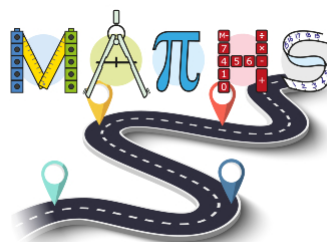
I am looking forward to my second year and seeing many, many more students. If you would like to know any more about counselling at VPA, I can be contacted via the school office.

**Best wishes, Alison**

## **Exam Outcomes**

As we near the end of the year and with all exams and coursework complete, we have a very good idea of which qualifications and grades our current Year 11 pupils are likely to achieve. This has been the first year since the pandemic that exams have actually taken place! We are predicted that 82.4% (14 out of 17) will achieve at least 5 (9-1 or equivalent GCSEs) qualifications. As well as English and Maths GCSEs, qualifications this year include Applied Science, Art, Hair & Beauty, Occupational Studies, ICT, Personal Wellbeing and Prince's Trust.

The Academy will be open between 9:00am and 11:00am on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August for pupils to collect their exam results.



## **Maths**

All the maths teachers from across the PLT

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met on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July to share teaching ideas and resources as well as discussing new developments for learning online. Victory Park is now looking at introducing a new online maths learning platform called 'Mathelitics' in the very near future!

### **Occupational Studies**

We have had another successful and productive year in occupational studies.

Pupils have been learning about a broad range of skills from

bricklaying, carpentry, painting and decorating as

well as horticulture. Pupils have shown



great levels of engagement and have particularly enjoyed the practical elements. Occupational studies has opened our pupils up to new possibilities and

experiences that we hope will build confidence and expand their options when moving on from VPA. Thanks for all your hard work, farewell to year 11 and look forward to working with the rest of you next year.

### **Princes Trust**

This year in Princes Trust our year 10 and 11 pupils have been working towards gaining their level 2 qualifications. Pupils have been learning about a broad range of skills, from managing money, how to research career options and working as part of a team. Princes Trust has been a

great benefit to our pupils as it has given them new skills which will stay with them and help them through life after school. Great work everyone.



### **Careers**

The Careers advice and guidance service at Victory Park has been busy discussing the options open to young people after they leave school.

Students asked about working on constructions sites, careers with children, as well as jobs in the always updating world of technology and the continuously moving logistics industry.

When students talked about “working and learning” we explored apprenticeships and how to create a CV for employers.

Students feedback was:

1. You felt that the careers meeting was good and it was useful to find out that grades you need to get into college.
2. You felt that you could make some time to carry out careers research
3. You felt that you would like to visit a College open event
4. You felt that you were ready to apply

### **SENCO**

As we reach the end of another busy year, 2022 has welcomed many exciting opportunities and experiences for our students at Victory Park. During the year many of our students have worked with Alison our student support, participated in a number of trips, including a successful visit to the farm and engaged well in some of the sports interventions.



Cooper our therapy dog has been a welcomed addition to the team and is enjoyed, by both staff and pupils. Many of our students have enjoyed using some of our sensory resources in order to support regulate their feelings and engage in learning.

We have continued to welcome new students into Victory Park along with supporting many of our young people transition back to their mainstream school or access alternative provisions.

Katie Blight

## **Primary**

This term primary students enjoyed watching ducklings hatch from eggs in an incubator. Once hatched pupils were able to handle them and even watch them swim! One student said



to an adult "this is an awesome experience!" As well as having the ducks students have enjoyed their enrichment activities including basketball, swimming, kickboxing and football.

As part of their animals topics both primary classes enjoyed a trip to Barley lands Farm. As part of their visit they got to feed a calve, a kid and hold chicks and ducklings. They also had a farmer's tour to see all of the



animals and visited the nocturnal animals area.



In our KS1 group there has been a focus around phonics and the introduction of read write inc. The children have enjoyed learning new sounds and using Fred talk to help them.

We even have our own Fred frog in class. For those children who have learnt their phonic sounds we have focussed on spellings and learning them in different ways including using magnetic letters and the chalkboard in class.



In our KS2 group children have enjoyed learning about Fantastic Mr Fox in

English and enjoyed roleplaying as the character to answer questions about his crimes. Whilst over in Science children have enjoyed learning about how light is reflected in mirror by playing mirror games including walking along a wavy line only using the mirror to guide them.

## **Reading**

Reading has continued to be a big focus at VPA. In our KS 1 and 2 classes, reading for pleasure takes place every day and in The Harbour a text is used to support many aspects of English. Primary staff have been receiving additional training in phonics this term and are looking forward to teaching the next stage of our phonics

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programme from the start of next school year.

In KS3 and 4 there has been a continued focus on ensuring that reading is a big part of the curriculum and that it becomes the gateway to learning. Our learning walks for Summer 1 and 2 show that 75% of lessons were graded as at least strong when we looked at reading being prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer and reading materials being closely matched to ability. Our book scrutinies in Summer 1 and 2 show that 92% of work monitored was graded at least strong when we checked that reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer.

We aim to have more areas in our KS3 and 4 classrooms for pupils to read for pleasure and we already have purchased books after consulting with pupils. The English room has a comfortable and attractive reading area and pupils enjoy using it.

#### **Pupils' views of reading :**

Harry (7) likes reading Peppa Pig books and thinks his reading has got better at VPA because he reads every day and gets extra help from staff. He likes the pictures in Peppa Pig books. When Harry goes back to his mainstream school his teachers have noticed a difference in his reading. Well done Harry!

Cameron (13) loves reading -especially Diary of the Wimpy Kid -he has nearly read all of them and he likes the humour. Cameron enjoys both fiction and non-fiction books. He says that books keep him entertained. Cameron has said that he could read five books a week !

**Anne Sturman**

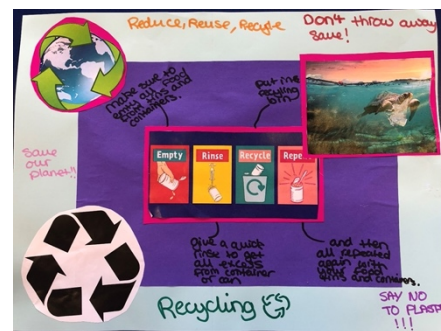
#### **Applied Science**

This term the students have been looking at the impact we are having on our environment. The students looked into all the resources we use and how we could do more to protect the environment and

become more efficient in the way we use our resources.

KS3 looked at ways we could protect our environment and where our wider community are failing. They created some fantastic posters to encourage others to help the environment.

Year 10 looked at ways we could be more efficient and how as a school how we could do better at helping reduce the effects our impact is having on our environment. They came up with some fantastic ideas such as;



- Bring in refillable bottles for water instead of using plastic cups
- Using electronic based platforms to complete work rather than print worksheets
- More vegan/vegetarian meals in our school dinner menu

Year 11's handed in some fantastic coursework based on forensic evidence and creating personal progression goals which I hope with the good grades they achieve will be able to follow these plans. Good Luck to all our year 11's on your next steps!

#### **Deputy SENCO**

We have been busy supporting our year 11's in their transition process to Further Education. We have helped them to complete applications to their chosen colleges and accompanied pupils and their families to interviews at college. We have been liaising with support staff at College and providing them with the information they need to ensure pupils' success in September.



Primary and Secondary pupils enjoyed a visit to Barleylands Farm this term, this trip is great



for social and emotional development, communication and interaction, sensory and physical and cognition and learning.



We have been reviewing our SEN offer for September and are looking at more therapeutic interventions to include horse riding and a pet's corner in our garden which is already well under way!

We have also been working on revamping our website to include a new SEN area and developing our SEN policy and information report.

Any SEN enquires are to go to Katherine Blight (SENCo) [kblight@victorypark.org.uk](mailto:kblight@victorypark.org.uk) or Rosie Honeysett (Deputy SENCo) [rhoneysett@victorypark.org.uk](mailto:rhoneysett@victorypark.org.uk)

### **Hair and Beauty**



Hair and Beauty has been popular this term, with both boys and girls enjoying learning about skin care and hand care. Pupils took part in a "build the skin" activity where they had to make the layers of the skin using various

sweets. Then they had to present their creation to the class and peer assess each other's work. This activity helped to develop many soft skills, for example, public speaking, creativity and problem solving.

Pupils planned and took part in a "Salon Day" to raise money for enrichment activities. They provided manicures and facials to staff and pupils, which was a great success! They also took part in the staff and pupil well-being day, providing relaxing treatments for the whole school!



### **Google Classroom**

Google classroom has provided a useful platform for our pupils on a modified learning plan. Pupils can access and submit work for various subjects at home and we also offer face to face remote learning sessions too. Pupils in school continue to use google classroom to complete coursework set for different subjects.

### **Staff and Pupil Well-being Day**

Due to the excellent feedback we had from the "Salon Day" We held a staff and pupil well-



being day on the 29<sup>th</sup> June. Activities we had were guided meditation, colour calm, manicures, facials and hair styling, a football

match and a BBQ. We then had an afternoon tea for all staff!

### **Girls Group**

With the number of female pupils increasing at VPA, the need to spend quality time with these young ladies was abundantly clear. Each week, Siobhan Taylor, Assistant Head Teacher, meets with this group with the aim to further develop their social and emotional skills and also cement friendship groups. Whether it is a picnic in the park, a trip to Starbucks or a classroom activity on keeping ourselves safe, this group has proved successful and we have seen progress in how they value and respect one another. We plan to continue this group next term.

#### **Quotes from the group:**

- "It's well nice to have time together and get out of school"
- "Siobhan looks out for us and listens to our needs which helps"
- "Actually having time to chat and listen to each other is good"
- "We should have this group every week forever"
- "It's nice to be able to be ourselves with no pressure but also its good we still have rules"

### **STAG**

The summer term arrived and the beginning of the new Secondary Turnaround Group (STAG). They have settled in and I'm happy to say, enjoying the opportunities they have been given in Basketball, Football, Food Technology and Combat Academy, where they have develop their personal skillset further in many different ways.

As well their classwork in English, Maths, PHSE and Personal Development, a session per week as part of the Curriculum at Southend Combat Academy where a team of highly trained instructors under the calm

guidance of Simon are working on their Health, Fitness and Nutrition. This has become a huge success with fantastic support from our Local Authority. In a conscious effort to help our Mental Health and improve the Mind, Body and Soul.

This term has also seen the introduction of The Thriftwood Camp Site. An outdoor activity centre which has offered the pupils Climbing, Abseiling, Water Rolling, a Vertical Assault course, Archery, Axe Throwing, Zip Line and the Cresta run. This helps build confidence and self-esteem with a number of quality instructors.

### **Staff/Pupil Wellbeing**

Our Mental Health Champion, Mr J Williams



and Deputy SENCo, Rosie Honeysett arranged a Wellbeing day for Pupils and staff. The pupils engaged in activities such as

Colour Calm Art, Relaxation, Manicuring and Football. This was followed by an amazing BBQ run by Adam Packer, Tommy Lammin (pupil) and Steve Morgan. The day was a great success and we look forward to developing this further and having the next one.

During the term we have set out to support all our pupils and staff regarding their Mental Health and Wellbeing and will continue to do so as part of our efforts during by working closely with our wonderful School Counsellor.



This term STAG at Victory Park Academy continues to develop and will hope to see more success in the next Academic Year.

Thank you to all the pupils for the endeavours and their families for their continued support.

**John D Williams**

**STAG Lead/Senior Teacher**

### **Food Tech**

Year 11's have been coming in to complete



their unit 4 assessments, with one pupil cooking Miso Steak on the BBQ! We have been reviewing our Food Technology

qualifications for next year and are looking to include a level 1/level 2 qualification, plus a level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene Certificate. This will help pupils gain employment in the catering industry.

KS3 have been learning about healthy eating.

They planned and cooked their own healthy breakfast meal!



analysis.

Year 10 have been practicing different skills in the kitchen and learning how to evaluate their work using sensory

### **Enrichment**

Our enrichment timetable has also been popular this year with Southend Combat Academy



which we have at least 10 students regularly participate in and show some truly great effort!



Street Art Karl, some of the students work is just incredible and they should be very proud

of themselves, I know I am!

Football at Chase has been really popular amongst both boys and girls this year which is amazing to see.

Music with Nav and Destry (which resulted in a song being recorded and a video being shot at Southend Pier and Wakering boatyard!) All 4 boys that completed this did an amazing job and we might just have some music stars on our hands!

Our trips have been to Stubbers which everyone has enjoyed such as Kayaking, Paddle boarding, Wall climbing and the ever popular Laser Tag!

Our year 11 leaver's trip was to Paintballing and everyone really enjoyed the day. Mr B only got shot once and won every game he played in. He's the best!

### **Teaching and Learning**

All subjects have had meetings with other academies across the Trust in order to plan and share good practice. Teachers find

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these particularly useful as it allows teachers to discuss new ideas and

amend planning. Resources are dropped into folders on Microsoft 360 so everyone can view or use these.

Within VPA, we have reviewed the curriculum for 2022-2023. The key purposes of the review are to decide what worked, what didn't work and what needs to be amended. It's to enhance pupil learning, engagement, experience and outcomes. In addition, it improves communication and collaboration between staff, leading to a stronger programme team ethos which filters down to our pupils.

As a result, VPA will have a secondary STAG class whereby pupils are on a 12 week programme plus a separate nurture group (Carousel) managed by our Deputy Senco which will be located in different part of the academy. The Carousel group will be focussing on Personal Development, Life skills, communication, literacy and numeracy.



Learning walks have taken place so we can collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for the academy development. Within these, other subject teachers are able to hold academic conversations with pupils about their learning experiences. They are intended to be developmental and constructive rather than judgemental, and are a whole-school teaching and learning improvement activity. Learning Walks



recorded have shown good teaching practice across the curriculum including providing reading opportunities for

pupils in lessons.

**From all of us at Victory Park we wish you all a restful Summer, and see you in September!**

### Key Dates

- **Pupil Finish Date** – Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 12pm.
- **INSET DAY** - Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022
- **Results Day** - Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2022 from 9am-11am
- **Pupils Start Date** – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022

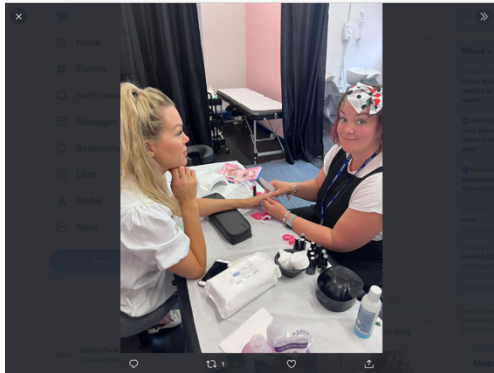
### Gallery







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Victory Park Academy (@vpa) ·  
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Our afternoon was all about our staff wellbeing! #vpa

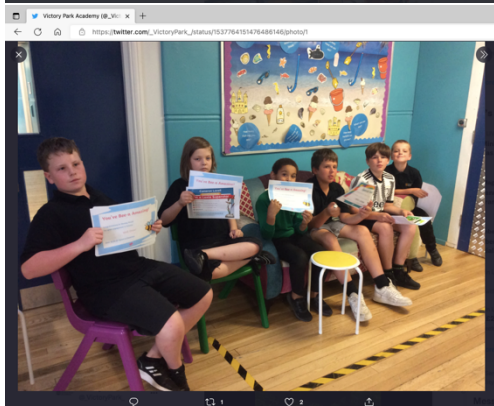
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We love celebrating our primary pupils achievements! Well done boys! #vpa

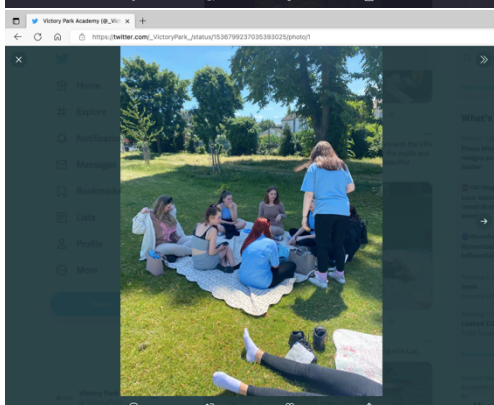
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Victory Park Academy (@vpa) ·  
https://twitter.com/VictoryPark\_Academy/status/1536799237026392025/photo1

Social and emotional building exercise at the picnic in the park with the VPA girls group. Home made cheese twists made this morning by the pupils and then shared with all as just part of the delicious picnic on a beautiful summer day! #vpa

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Afternoon staff wellbeing! #vpa

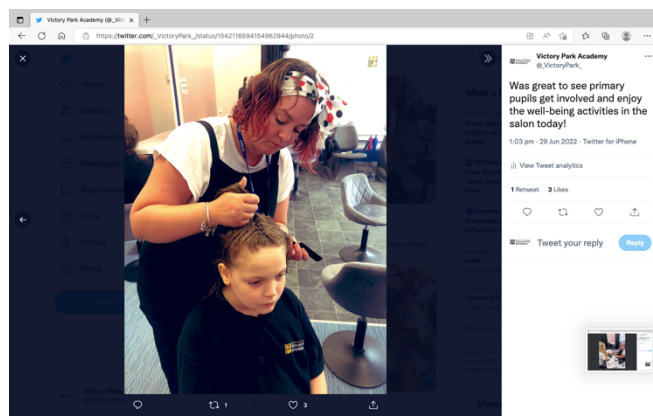
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Was great to see primary pupils get involved and enjoy the well-being activities in the salon today! #vpa

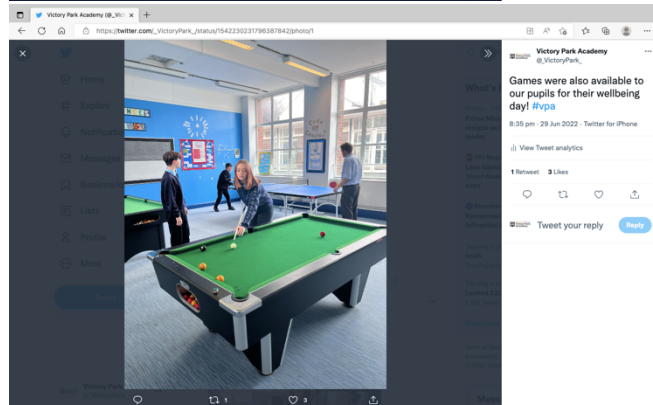
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Games were also available to our pupils for their wellbeing day! #vpa

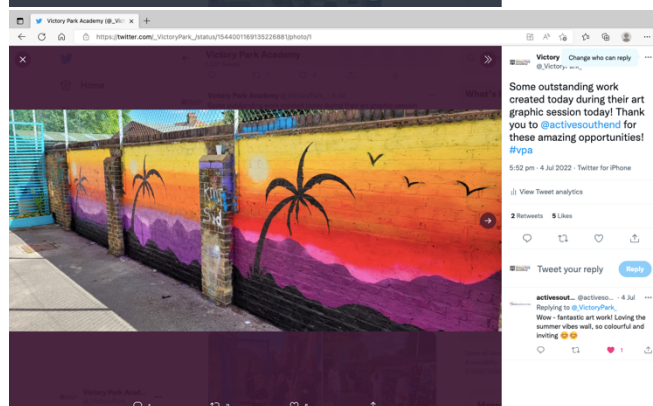
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Some outstanding work created today during their art graphic session today! Thank you to @activesouthend for these amazing opportunities! #vpa

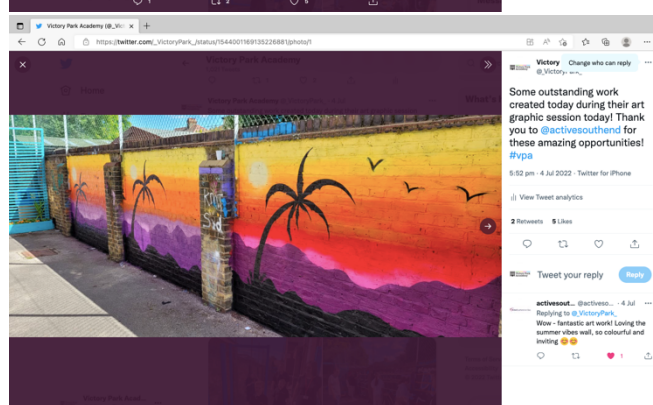
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Victory Park Academy (@vpa) ·  
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Some outstanding work created today during their art graphic session today! Thank you to @activesouthend for these amazing opportunities! #vpa

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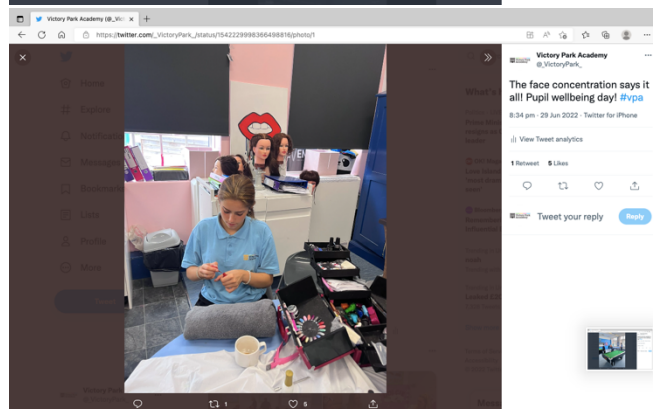
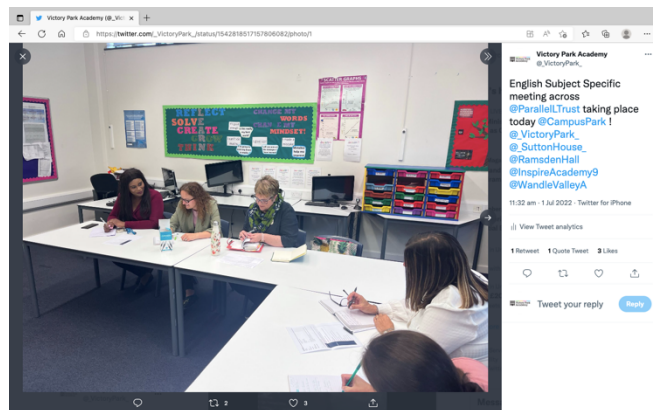
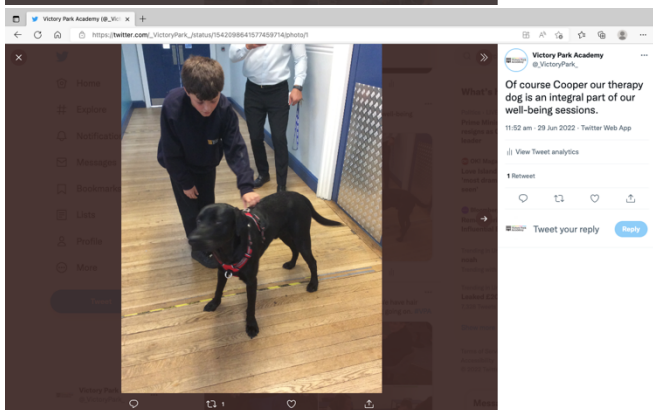
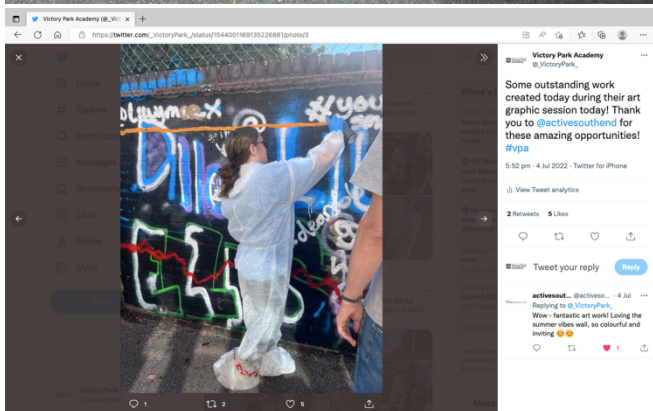
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**Victory Park Academy @VictoryPark · 23h**  
 Personal Development afternoon with ks3 pupils. Learning to take turns and working independently! #vpa

