OPCH Newsletter

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YEAR 3 THRIFTWOOD RESIDENTIAL

Year 3 children went on a one night residential trip to Thrift-wood, where they had the opportunity to take part in a wide range of outdoor activities over two days. Throughout the trip, the children embraced every challenge with enthusi-asm and positive attitudes. They enjoyed activities such as Crate Stacking, where they developed their coordination and courage while climbing onto the crates. During Bushcraft, they learned outdoor survival skills, including how to safely build and light a fire. On the Inflatables, the children worked together as a team, developing their communication and

cooperation skills. The Cresta Run encouraged them to show bravery and physical strength. These activities provided memorable experiences and helped to develop the children's resilience, independence and confidence. They learned the importance of encouraging one another and overcoming challenges. One of the children's favourite activities was the Water Roll. They had great fun balancing, rolling, and laugh-ing together on the water, making it one of the highlights of the trip.

As one Year 3 child said, *"At the beginning it was a bit scary, but then it was really fun!"* This perfectly captured how many of the children felt as they challenged themselves and dis-covered what they were capable of. The children also got to sing around the camp fire and to enjoy some hot chocolate before bed. The residential experience created lasting memo-ries and gave the children the opportunity to increase their independence and build new friendships. Thank you to the staff who attended in order to make all this possible.

IMPORTANT DATES

END OF SUMMER TERM HOLIDAYS
School finishes 2pm Thursday 23rd July 2026

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-26
Return Tuesday 1st September 2026

Please visit our school website for a full list of term dates
www.oldpalaceprimary.co.uk

YEAR 6 MERSEA ISLAND RESIDENTIAL

Our Year 6 pupils recently embarked on an unforget-table two night residential trip to Mersea Island, where they challenged themselves and developed vital life skills through a variety of outdoor activities. The children showed fantastic teamwork and communica-

tion as they engineered their own vehicles during kit karts and navigated unfamiliar terrain together when orienteering. They demonstrated immense personal resilience and bravery while tackling the dizzying heights of the aerial adventure and navigating the dark tunnels of caving. Additionally, the pupils sharp-ened their problem-solving and self-reliance skills while learning survival basics in bushcraft, and prac-ticed their focus and coordination during an exhilarat-ing off-road biking session. We are incredibly proud of how our Year 6s supported one another, stepped out of their comfort zones, and grew as leaders through-out this brilliant adventure! Thank you to the staff who attended in order to provide the children with this amazing opportunity.

CORE VALUE AWARD - June 2026

The value of the month for June was **COMPASSION.** Congratulations to:

Reception:	**RK Ameera** & **RN Aynan**
Year 1:	**1B Hafeezah** & **1C Alayna-May**
Year 2:	**2S Amelia** & **2T Ysura**
Year 3:	**3E Hudayfah** & **3H Musa**
Year 4:	**4M Isam** & **4O Jannah**
Year 5:	**5A Rayan** & **5H Shafayat**
Year 6:	**6D Ayaan** & **6K Fatima**

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Coffee Mornings at Old Palace

Attendance Reminders & Board Games

On Thursday 4th June, Shelly, one of our Parent Support Workers, spoke to the parents about the importance of attendance and the ways to inform school of a child's sickness, including our new app Study Bugs. She also discussed appointments and how it is important to book these towards the end of the day, so less learning time is lost. The office will also request evidence of the appointment when you collect your child. Lateness, and how this impacts the child and the rest of the class was also discussed. Parents thanked the school for having a good clear system and said they felt supported. The session ended with parents taking part in board games to help build relationships and get to know one another in a relaxed and friendly environment.

SEND families

On Thursday 11th June, our guest Alison Jones, (a former Parental Engagement Officer), was unable to attend, Instead, Shelly facilitated a discussion about the families' different experiences and shared details regarding support services available in Tower Hamlets.

School Dinners—Nourish

On Thursday 2nd July, we welcomed Nicola Payne, (Area Manager from Nourish), our school meals provider, following parents' concerns at Parent Council Meetings about portion size and food quality. Nicola explained to parents the importance of providing balanced, nutritious meals and answered parents' questions. Nourish is committed to serving healthy lunches that provide children with the essential nutrients, vitamins, protein, fibre and carbohydrates they need to support their growth and wellbeing. Parents felt reassured after meeting with her.

Supporting Children's Emotional Regulation

On Thursday 9th July, we welcomed two guest speakers:.

Firstly, Rebecca Hopper, a Community Educational Psychologist, delivered an engaging session on Supporting Children's Emotional Regulation. Rebecca explained how children's behaviour is often a form of communication and introduced the "traffic light" model of emotional regulation. Parents learned how to recognise the early signs that a child may be becoming dysregulated and how responding calmly at this stage can help prevent emotions from escalating to the "red" zone. The session provided practical strategies that parents can use to support their children's emotional wellbeing at home.

Next Mehnaz Rahman, a Support Worker at the Women's Inclusive Team (WIT), shared information about the wide range of support offered to Black and minority ethnic communities in Tower Hamlets. These services include youth programmes, women's empowerment projects, mental health support, a food bank and a community kitchen. Mehnaz also highlighted the **HAAWA Project**, which empowers Somali women to access support and live free from all forms of abuse. If you need support or know someone else who does, contact the organisation on 0207 790 2650 or email, contact@Wit.org.Uk.

Date for the diary...
Summer Holiday Activities

On Thursday 23rd July, Shelly will lead a Coffee Morning, sharing information about the wide range of free activities available to Tower Hamlets residents and families this summer. As well as promoting events, Shelly will be on hand to support parents to plan their journeys. Please come along.

Parent Workshops at Old Palace Idea Store ESOL Class

On the afternoon of Thursday 2nd July, the Idea Store ESOL tutor, Jonathan Farringham presented 'Confidence Certificates' to parents who attended the ESOL course.

Throughout the year, parents completed practical tasks which allowed them to made excellent progress in grammar, spelling and speaking, They also enjoyed a visit to the Docklands Museum, linking local history to their learning. Their hard work and positive attitude made the course a great success. If you're interested in joining the ESOL course in September, please speak to Forida/Shelly.

Family Action ESOL

Sarah Selvarajah, LifeSkills Coordinator from Family Action at the Bromley by Bow Centre, delivered free ESOL and LifeSkills sessions every Monday and Tuesday afternoon. The sessions helped parents to build confidence, develop their financial literacy and improve employability through support with CV writing and interview preparation. The course will return n September, so please sign up if interested.

Dads ESOL

Daisy Langton, an English teacher from Family Action, delivered free ESOL classes every Wednesday morning for dads, helping them build confidence in speaking, reading and writing English. Practical tasks are used to enhance skills in accessing services and better supporting the children's learning at home. Due to the success of the course, it will continue in September, giving more dads the opportunity to build essential English skills and confidence. Free fruit and drinks help create a welcoming and supportive environment.

Picnic at Bob's Park

The parents of Old Palace have organised a series of "Picnics in the Park" where everyone brings a dish to share and spends time together while their children are at school. The picnics have been held at Bob's Park from 1:00–3:15 pm and have provided a relaxed opportunity for parents to connect. The gatherings have helped build new friendships among both existing and new families, strengthening the sense of community within the school.

Walking Group

During Summer 2, parents asked for more walking group sessions to make the most of the warmer weather. Together, we explored scenic routes along the canal, Three Mills Park and Stratford, discovering local green spaces that parents can also enjoy with their children during the long summer evenings and weekends. Walking is a great way to improve both physical and mental wellbeing and reduce isolation. If you would like to join our walks in September, we leave from the school gate at **9:00am every Monday**.

Transition Visits & Meetings

At Children's House meetings have been held with the parents of children who will be joining the nursery or two year old provision in September. As well as sharing key information, the meetings also provided an opportunity to tour the building and to meet the child's key person. Home visits will be taking place in September before the children's first day in nursery.

Over the last few weeks, the children who will be joining our Reception from Children's House, have had the opportunity to visit Old Palace with their parents. Mrs Rahman met with the parents before the visit to share key information. The parents then visited the classroom with their children, who got to explore the setting and complete some fun activities. A separate meeting was also arranged to meet with the parents of children who will be joining us from other nurseries. We look forward to welcoming our new Reception children in September.

On Wednesday 15th July, we held a transition meeting for Reception parents to talk about Year 1. The meeting provided an opportunity for parents to find out more about what life in Year 1 will be like. We shared information about the Year 1 curriculum, daily routines, expectations, and the ways in which learning builds on the strong foundations established during the Early Years Foundation Stage. We also discussed how the transition from play-based learning to a more structured classroom environment is carefully managed to ensure every child feels happy, confident and supported.

Positive Parenting Course

Forida delivered a three week parenting course in June at Old Palace School. The sessions offered parents practical strategies for creating a structured and supportive environment, helping to foster their children's development and wellbeing. Parents explored ways to set healthy boundaries, maintain consistency in routines and use effective behaviour management techniques. It was great to see parents openly discussing their challenges without worrying about being judged. Thank you to those parents who attended and shared their parenting experiences. If any parents would like advise, guidance or support please speak to Shelly /Forida.

Old Palace RSHE Curriculum Update

New DfE guidance becomes statutory from 1st September 2026. During the week of June 22nd, 2026, Mrs. Bowley hosted two coffee mornings to discuss upcoming changes to our Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum, to ensure our teaching aligns with the new requirements.

Our Curriculum Structure

- **Core Lessons:** We continue to use the **Jigsaw PSHE scheme** to resource and support most of our lessons. However, we do review and change these to fit the needs of our pupils, where necessary.
- **Bespoke Resources:** Please note that we **do not use** the Jigsaw "Changing Me" units. Instead, we deliver our own custom-made resources for these topics, which are shared with parent/carers.
- **Summer Term Focus:** In the second half of the summer term (Summer 2), our curriculum focuses heavily on child safety. Mrs. Bowley shared the updated safety materials, alongside other new teaching resources.

We are incredibly grateful to the parents and carers who attended and shared their thoughts. Your valuable feedback has been used to help support our updated RSHE policy, which is now available to view Here

Parent Workshops at Children's House
Supporting Fine Motor Development

Mirka led a parent workshop on supporting children to develop their fine motor skills. She discussed the difference between gross motor skills, which involve the large muscles used for movements such as running and climbing, and fine motor skills, which use the small muscles in the hands and fingers needed for everyday tasks such as holding a pencil, using scissors, fastening buttons and feeding independently. Parents and children enjoyed taking part in a range of practical activities together, including threading dried pasta and making homemade playdough. Mirka also shared simple ideas for supporting fine motor development at home through everyday activities such as cooking, baking, stirring, pouring and using child-safe utensils. These enjoyable experiences help to strengthen hand and finger muscles, develop hand-eye coordination and build the skills children need for writing and everyday independence.

Exploring Maths in the Environment

We were delighted to welcome parents to our Exploring Maths in the Environment workshop led by Shazna. Together, parents and children enjoyed a walk around the local area, exploring numbers, shapes and patterns in the environment. They were encouraged to look for patterns on the drains, walls, fences, paving stones and bollards, identifying different shapes and discussing their properties, for example, they recognised that a triangle has three sides and three corners. Parents were encouraged to continue these mathematical conversations during everyday walks, helping children to develop their understanding of shape, number and mathematical vocabulary through meaningful real-life experiences.

Building Independence Sessions

Forida Rahman, one of our Parent Support Workers, ran sessions on 'Building Independence'. These focus on topics, such as toilet training, routines & how to support a positive transition to primary school, The aim of the sessions was to share information on how parents can support their children to feel confident, independent and emotionally secure before they start Reception or moving from our 2-year old provision into the main nursery. Lots of ideas were shared on how families can work with their child at home in a fun way to promote independence, highlighting that children who manage simple routines can focus more on their learning in school.

It was lovely to see many families engaging and sharing ideas at the session. If you unable to attend and would like to find out more, please speak to Shelly or Forida. The summer holiday is an ideal time to provide toilet training to any pupils who may require this.

CONTINUED ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Old Palace is well known for its strong academic results, and rightly so, as we continue to achieve above the national average in all the national tests.
In Reception, 73% of our Reception children achieved a Good Level of Development. This was the same as last year, but as 7 pupils joined during the school year, this is an even greater achievement. The national average for 2025 was 68.3%

In Year 1, 86% of the children passed the phonics screening compared to 80% nationally in 2025.

In the Year 4 Multiplication Test, the average score for our children was 21.7, higher than the 2025 national average of 21.0

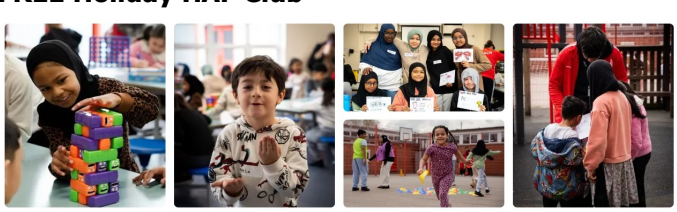
In the Year 6 SATs, our results were as follows:

% achieving Expected	OP 2024	OP 2025	OP 2026	National 2026
Reading	83	93	85	75
Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation	73	98	85	74
Writing	86	86	85	73
Maths	88	82	79	75
Combined (R,W & M)	81	75	68	63

This year we had our lowest ever number of pupils in year 6, 53 in total (two of which joined us during the academic year). This meant that there was a higher proportion of pupils with SEND in the year group than usual. Despite their needs, we still managed to exceed the national average at expected in all subjects.

Even though Nursery children do not have to complete any statutory tests, we still track there progress closely. Of the 80 children who will be leaving Nursery this week, 26% of the children made expected progress and an impressive 61% made outstanding progress. A third of the children have additional SEND needs, which impacts on the average achievement. 47% of pupils achieved the expected standard. This rises to 65% when pupils with SEND are removed from the data. Whatever the children's starting points, we are confident that the excellent provision they have received at Children's House has ensured that the children will have the best possible start to their primary education.
A big thank you to all the children for working so hard, to the parents for supporting them and to the teachers and support staff at both our schools for their ongoing dedication. We are very proud of your achievements.

FREE Holiday HAF Club



HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) club is a government-funded initiative that provides free childcare, enriching activities, and nutritious meals to children during school holidays. To be eligible, families must be in receipt of benefit related Free School Meals (Universal Credit). If you want to check your if you are eligible, please call the school with you National Insurance Number and we can check for you.
We Are Bow will be delivering a HAF Club at Old Palace from 27th July to 13th August for 5-11 year olds. To book a place , please use this LINK

NSPCC 'Speak out. Stay safe' Assemblies

Last week, Mrs Bowley delivered the NSPCC Speak out. Stay safe. assemblies to all the children at Old Palace from Reception to Year 6.
The safeguarding of our pupils is our highest priority, and this initiative provided a fantastic, age-appropriate way to help children understand how to protect themselves from harm. Through the interactive virtual assemblies, featuring the NSPCC's mascot, Buddy—the children explored essential topics, including:

- Understanding their rights to be heard and kept safe
- Recognising different forms of harm and abuse in a simple, child-friendly way
- Identifying safe adults they can speak to both at school and at home
- Knowing how to seek help through services like Childline if they ever feel worried or unsafe

The assemblies were designed to empower our pupils, ensuring they know that abuse is never a child's fault and that speaking out is always the right thing to do.

Father's Day Celebration

On Friday 19th June, both schools had a wonderful time celebrating Father's Day.
At Children's House, fathers, grandfathers, uncles and other special family members joined us for this special occasion. Families enjoyed taking part in a range of fun activities, including making Father's Day cards, creating special keepsakes, decorating biscuits and enjoyed sharing books. Everyone also had lots of fun exploring the outdoor learning environment, where the morning ended with a range of exciting races.
Meanwhile, at Old Palace, we had a fantastic time celebrating Father's Day in Reception! It was wonderful to welcome so many dads into school to join us for a day of fun and excitement. We kicked off indoors with a hilarious game of "Guess Who My Daddy Is?" Then the children made rosettes and handprints with their dads and enjoyed making breakfast at the breakfast counter. Outside, everyone got active with some energetic sports activities, balance the ball, aiming game and the piggy back race. To wrap up a brilliant day, the children performed a lovely, heartfelt song for their dads that brought smiles to everyone's faces. Thank you to all who joined us!

SPORTS MORNINGS

On Thursday 9th and Friday 10th July, Children's House Nursery School held its annual Sports Day, bringing together children, families and staff for two fun-filled mornings of games and teamwork. This year's event was particularly special as it was the first Sports Day since COVID -19 where families were able to join in the activities alongside the children. The children dressed in their colour groups to represent their teams. Everyone enjoyed taking part in a range of races, including the egg and spoon race, sack race, hurdles and many more exciting challenges. The morning ended with the much-anticipated children's, parents' and staff races, followed by a picnic for everyone to enjoy together.

At Children's House, we believe that everyone is a winner for trying their best, supporting one another and having fun together. Back at nursery, our two-year-olds enjoyed their own special Sports Day, they took part in a range of fun races specially planned for them. They loved running, cheering each other on and celebrating their achievements together.

The following week, it was Old Palace's turn.

On Monday 13th July, Reception and KS1 leaped into action with the accuracy throw, sack race, egg and spoon, long jump, obstacle course, ring balance, and water relay. Then on Tuesday 14th July, LKS2 took over, followed by UKS2 on Wednesday 15th July. They tackled the tennis racket balance, agility run, long jump, javelin, hockey dribble, skipping, and football dribble.

The children who attend our ARC also got to enjoy their very own Sports morning, including activities such throwing and balancing.

As ever, the parents also got their chance to compete in the tug of war and the running race. It was great to see so many participate and the competitiveness was very evident! Well Done to Mr Yousuf, who won three running races special!

The games kept everyone active, boosted mental health, built self esteem, and inspired amazing teamwork. All the teams: Red, Blue, Yellow, and Green gave their all, but this year it was the **Red team** who took the crown! Congratulation to them and a huge thank you to the staff for arranging the events and to the many parents who came along to give their support.

Thank you to all the families who joined us and helped make the event so special.

YEAR 4 CRICKET

During Summer 1, Year 4 worked incredibly hard training with a specialist Cricket coach to prepare for a community competition at Victoria Park. Other Primary Schools in Bow, also took part in the competition. The children did us proud, as they competed against several other local schools, by putting their newly acquired cricket skills into action. Every single player gave 100% effort, showing a positive competitive spirit. While we didn't make it through to the second stage of the competition, our team's amazing attitude and hard work were recognised by everyone there. Special recognition was given to the children who were named ***MVPs*** *(Most Valuable Players)* by the external cricket coaches!

The children really enjoyed the competition and the chance to show off their new cricketing skills.

Learning About Journeys at Nursery

At Children's House, the Summer 2 topic has been Journeys. This has led to lots of great learning across the curriculum:

Communication and Language Skills: the children have been sharing their own experiences of journeys they have taken with their families, including holidays, visits to relatives and our recent trip to the zoo. These conversations have provided valuable opportunities to develop children's communication and language skills, confidence in speaking, and understanding of the world around them.

Mark Making: the children represented their experiences through drawing and early mark making, giving meaning to their marks and talking about their ideas. These activities have supported early writing skills whilst encouraging children to reflect on their own experiences and listen to those of others.

Being Imaginative: The children planned and created models of their favourite types of transport. They selected their own resources and then used a range of cutting, folding and joining skills to create them. Some children also chose to use clay and painted their creations once they had dried. This activity supported children's creativity, problem-solving, fine motor skills and confidence in using tools independently

Similarly, they also got to create their own large scale transport models, working together to design and build these using a variety of large cardboard boxes and loose parts. They also needed to decide which features of their bus and train they would need to include, such as windows, doors, seats and a steering wheel. The children then used the models to support their role play, taking on different roles including: bus drivers, passengers and ticket inspectors. As they acted out familiar journeys, they used lots of transport vocabulary and recreated experiences from their own lives.

The World & Maths—The children explored both familiar and less familiar vehicles including: submarines, hot air balloons, helicopters and rockets. The children sorted different vehicles into the categories of land, sea and air, discussing why each vehicle belonged in a particular group. These activities supported children's vocabulary and mathematical thinking (sorting and classifying). They also used small world resources such as roads, train tracks and construction blocks to build their own towns, roads and transport systems. Furthermore, through block play, they were able to explore shape, space and measure, using mathematical language whilst building.

Learning About Different Types of Transport

In the two year old Provision, our youngest learners, enjoyed exploring different types of transport through creative printing activities. They looked closely at a variety of vehicles, learning their names before choosing their own paints and transport toys to create colourful prints. As they rolled the vehicles through the paint, the children explored the different patterns made by the wheels and began to compare their sizes, using mathematical language such as big and small.

The children also enjoyed exploring clay using their senses, rolling, pinching, squeezing and squashing it to discover how it could be manipulated. These open-ended experiences helped to develop their hand strength, fine motor skills and curiosity.

The children also got to learning about road safety and how to stay safe when travelling. Through role play and practical activities, the children explored how to stop, look and listen before crossing the road and talked about different vehicles they might see, including cars, bicycles and scooters. The children also learnt about traffic lights and simple road safety signs, using games to practise waiting until it was safe to cross or ride. These experiences helped to develop their understanding of keeping safe while travelling and encouraged them to make safe choices during everyday journeys.

BOAT TRIP TO VICTORIA PARK

As part of our Journeys topic, the children in main building and their parents enjoyed a special visit to Victoria Park, where they took part in a boating experience. Families worked together to row their own boats around the lake, giving the children a fun, hands-on opportunity to experience travelling by water. The children were excited to explore a different form of transport and enjoyed talking about what they could see during the journey. When the children returned to nursery, they were excited to talk about their boating experience with their friends. They shared their favourite parts of the trip and enjoyed remembering the exciting experiences they had

NURSERY VISIT MUDCHUTE FARM

Our two year olds also got to enjoy a trip to Mudchute Farm with their families. They were excited to explore the farm and meet a variety of animals, including baby ducklings, chicks, lambs and goats. The children enjoyed looking closely at the animals, listening to the different sounds they made and talking about what they could see. After exploring the farm together, the children and their families shared food at a picnic. It was a lovely opportunity to talk and share memories of the day.

YEAR 3 VISIT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

This half-term, Year 3 visited the British Museum to bring their topic on Ancient Egypt to life. The children marvelled at an array of incredible artifacts, including statues of powerful pharaohs, eye-catching sarcophaguses, and the famous Rosetta Stone. The absolute highlight of the trip was seeing the Egyptian mummies, beautifully preserved alongside their ancient treasures and riches.

YEAR 5 CAREERS FAIR

Our Year 5 pupils had a fantastic time at our Careers Fair

on Friday 17th July. The atmosphere in the main hall was electric as students moved from table to table, eager to discover where their interests and talents might take them in the future. Throughout the event, the hall was buzzing with curiosity, lively discussion, and thoughtful questions. Our Year 5 pupils participated in small-group rotations, giving them a unique, hands-on look at what different jobs involve day-to-day. From exploring technology and healthcare to learning about creative industries, public services, and local businesses, the children received a wide-reaching snapshot of the possibilities ahead of them. We extend a huge **thank you** to all of our wonderful volunteers who gave up their time, brought engaging materials, and shared their passion with our pupils.

Reminder: Wednesday will be the last day to check our lost property boxes. Items not claimed by the end of the day will be donated to charity

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Both school's follow DfE and Tower Hamlets guidance regarding attendance and extended leave. For children of statutory school age the following apply:

- A fine to parents must be considered if a child misses 5 days (10 sessions) of school due to unauthorised absence.
- Costs for a penalty notice (fine) are £160 (per parent per child), which will be reduced to £80 (per parent per child), if paid within 21 days.
- If within 3 years, a child misses school a second time for more than 5 days of unauthorised leave, the parents will be automatically fined the higher rate of £160 (per parent per child),

- If any additional unauthorised absences occur within 3 years, the family will be referred to the courts. This could result in a fine of £2500 or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will also receive a criminal conviction.
- If a child missies 20 consecutives day of school, they will be taken off roll on the 21st day and will need to reply for a school place

The schools do not receive the money from Penalty Fines. The m*oney raised is used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.*

Please avoid taking any extended leave during term time, however in extenuating circumstances please ensure you inform the office and complete and extended leave form. Term dates are displayed on the federation webpage—please not dates change annually based on the timing of the Easter festival.

YEAR 6 VISIT EAST LONDON UNIVERSITY

Year 6 had an amazing opportunity to visit the University of East London's Sports Dock to try out a wide range of sports, including dance, skateboarding, basketball and gymnastics. It was a brilliant chance to get some insight into life at university and all the extra curricular activities that are on offer.

I tried skateboarding for the first time. It really tested balance skills and has made me interested in other outdoor activities .