

## L.E.A.P. Update – Autumn Term 2021

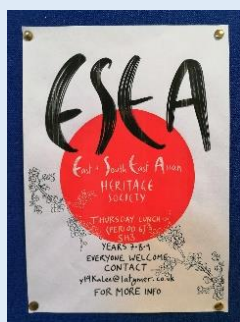
L.E.A.P. (Latymer Equalities Action Project) got off to a flying start with a range of activities in its first term. We would like to thank all students, staff and Latymer community members who have contributed so far and have worked hard to make Latymer an inclusive and safe environment for all young people. Here is a snapshot of our first term:

### Student Societies and Equalities Forum

Following the relaxation of some Covid restrictions, student societies have been able to get started again. Student leaders across the school have re-started or newly founded: Afro-Caribbean Society, LGBTQ+ Society, East and SouthEast Asian Heritage Society, Jewish Society, Feminist Society, Islamic Society, Asian Society and the Anti-Racism Committee (formerly BLM Committee). Students run sessions in KS3 and KS4/5 lunch times, acting as a supportive community



and open space to learn about different cultures and identities. Ms Kaymer has met with all the societies individually to discuss their needs and work collaboratively to ensure these are met.



As well as individual meetings, October saw the inaugural Equalities Forum, which brought representatives from all groups together and provided a space for updates, feedback, and student testing of new initiatives. It was also a valuable learning opportunity for student leaders to discuss and share tips on working as different societies. The next meeting will be in February.

### Calendar of Celebration

Each week in form time, Latymer students have been learning about national/international events affecting the school community. This has been an opportunity to celebrate, discuss and learn about diversity of identities both in the Latymer community and more widely. Calendar events marked so far have included Diwali, Rosh Hashanah and the Mid-Autumn Festivals.

### LEAP Mentoring Scheme

A mentoring scheme developed in partnership with the Anti-Racism Committee began in November. The programme will see Latymer students visiting local primary schools to deliver engaging educational sessions to small groups of Year 5 and 6 students, allowing sixth-formers to give back to the community, build relationships and act as role models for local children.



More than 30 pupils attended the training sessions in November and December, taking part in interactive workshops covering mentoring and leadership skills, creating a mentoring toolkit, and reflecting on their own personal development. The mentoring sessions themselves will begin next term at three local primary schools, and our sixth-formers are looking forward to getting started.

## **Black History Month**

Student leaders created and ran an extremely impressive range of activities for Black History Month this year, ranging from interactive form time activities, to reading lists, to a powerful video interviewing members of the school community about what Black History Month means to them, which will be posted on the school website. Black History Month was also an opportunity to review the school's display boards and add prominent posters in recognition of the contribution people of colour have made to both the school community and wider society.

## **Website and communications update**

The school website and publicity materials have been updated to accurately reflect the diverse community that Latymer serves. The new virtual tour can be viewed [here](#).

## **Uniform Policy**

After consultation with student representatives the Latymer uniform policy is now completely gender-neutral, allowing all students to wear the uniform of their choice. The new policy is printed in student planners and can be found on the website.

## **Library Displays**

Our new librarian Ms Bugg will be curating a cycle of temporary displays in the library to draw attention to different themes. The first of these was a 'We Need Diverse Books' display, highlighting black and minority ethnic authors.



## **Staff training on sexual harassment and Autism Spectrum Conditions**

In September, all staff took part in an INSET session on sexual harassment in schools, covering how to respond to disclosures and how to recognise and challenge incidents of sexism, sexual harassment, and harmful stereotypes. All teaching staff are due to take part in further training before Christmas (UK Feminista: Tackling Sexism in Schools).

Staff also attended an INSET session on Autism Spectrum Conditions and how to best support neurodiverse students.

## **Mental Health App launched**

A recurring topic in the initial L.E.A.P consultation across students, staff and parents and carers, was mental health. This term, Latymer launched the [EduKit Wellbeing App](#) for students of all ages to use to support their mental health. Whilst this is not a replacement for the in-person services the school also provides, it is intended to empower students to take control of their wellbeing. The app signposts students to useful resources, both on and offline, and sends support to students based on their specific emotional needs.

## **Yes Matters**

Latymer began its ['Yes Matters'](#) Commitment journey with a school visit from the organisation's consultants. Yes Matters are a charity working to end rape culture and everyday sexism in schools.

Their baseline assessment was very positive and they will be working with the school to provide further resources and support on how to ensure that, in their words, Latymer is 'an environment where pupils can thrive - but sexism doesn't'.

### **Surveys and student voice**

Students have been consulted on several different projects including:

- Sixth form students were surveyed about their opinions and experience of sexual image sharing, to inform future education
- Female students have been asked about their experiences of studying STEM subjects at Latymer, as part of a project led by Anita Harris, Year 13
- Student council and student society leaders have offered feedback on the behaviour policy and the Whisper anonymous reporting system

### **Elsewhere in the school...**

Equality, diversity and inclusion has been championed across the school within specific subjects, with just a few examples including:

- A drama trip to 'East is East' at the National Theatre
- Lectures for the sixth form on Decolonising Africa (Tomiwa Owolade, writer and critic) and the law around image-based sexual abuse (Frances Ridout, barrister)
- A sixth form assembly from the School of Sexuality Education focussing on consent
- The Whisper anonymous reporting system has been updated, and younger students have been given training on how and when to use it.

