



This past week, Burnt Mill has been celebrating 'Our Community' as its special theme of the week. Our plasma screens, assemblies, special events and many areas of the curriculum have focused on this theme with links being drawn to the fact this past week thoughts across all communities have been turning towards remembrance

Remembrance In And For Our Community

The week began with an appearance by our school on the BBC programme 'The Politics show'. The show came live from the school itself.



The Harlow Remembrance parade begins from the campus of our school, as reported on 'The Politics Show'

The school was the starting point for a parade through the local community (above) and was followed by an interview with two of our Year 10 students focusing on what *Remembrance Sunday* meant to them.



Sarah Stevenson and Ben Taylor, pictured above talking on the show, talked eloquently about the importance of remembrance and how being taught about world conflicts in History at Burnt Mill had

helped them understand more about the impact of war on peoples' lives. Congratulations to Ben and Sarah for representing the school so well. Mrs Mills, our incoming Head has written personally to them, presenting them with the prestigious Headteacher's award for their efforts. Well done!



Ben and Sarah with Harlow MP Bill Rammell

Who Do We Think We Are?

This week's production at The Harlow Playhouse has filled the main auditorium on both nights. The following piece of promotional writing by Shauna K. Ogilvie (pictured below) sums up what this special piece of work means to the students of Burnt Mill:

What would it be like if the BNP came in to power? An inspirational written play by John Creswell and performed by the students of Burnt Mill



Performing Arts College, Phoenix Theatre Company & Makin' Steps School of Dance.

Never before have these three talented schools worked together to create such a unique and original play. This play means something; something that makes you

think. A play about what England would be like if the BNP ruled our country. Performed by young students who have opinions and feel very strongly about what's right or wrong, we all believe the BNP is wrong and we feel we need to do something

about it , and what better way to express our feelings by putting on a performance filled with live music, drama and dancing.

We have invited some of the members of the BNP to come and watch... Maybe they might even think twice about what they're doing and why they're doing it ... or then again they may not, but it doesn't stop us from trying to reach out to the people that live in this beautifully cultured country. Maybe this play could be a guide to help everyone stop and think. As well as many I am also involved in the play and I've watched it all come together. It's very exciting and I feel very much a part of it and I would like to think that I have contributed in something that could change peoples' minds. I think this play is going to be spectacular and memorable, one of Burnt Mill's best yet. I also think that working with different students from other performing arts school is an amazing experience; something that's never been done before at this level. It's extremely original and not only does it affect us ... it affects everyone.

Who do we think we are? Is going to be a phenomenal play; play that cannot be missed, held in our very own Playhouse in Harlow.

Shauna's promotional work seems to have paid off this week in terms of box office impact and the response in the audience to the themes explored on stage.

Remembering All Our Community

Over the last week assemblies have focused on drawing together the themes of remembrance and community. Mr. Williams described how, although many brave white people fought and died defending our values and freedoms over time, this side of the story does not always tell the full picture.



The title page of the week's themed assemblies

Often forgotten are the large numbers of non-white people who have acted in the same way representing this and other nations. For example,

the millions who served in The British Army from India during World War Two. Many of these men never even visited or were even invited to visit the UK; many thousands died in the process of defending a land many of them knew very little about. The reaction of many students who listened to the assembly demonstrated the impact of the message. The following are just a sample of comments made by Year 9 students:

"I was shocked that there were other races fighting for Britain, yet people still call them offensive words."

"What surprised me is that people do not believe that black people fought in the wars for Britain."

"I was surprised that many people who had never been to Britain had died fighting for us"

The 'Our Community' week is now a regular on the BMS calendar as a key annual event in our school year.

What does it mean to be British?

The school's curriculum has also supported the 'Our Community' week at Burnt Mill. Students in year 7, for example, have been learning through a module of work called 'What does it mean to be British?' exploring the idea of 'Britishness' and how it reflects a wide range of beliefs and traditions. Jade and Megan (below) give the thumbs up to our wonderfully diverse and colourful country!



The last word on 'Our Community' week should be given to the voice of the students themselves who in 2009 declared loud and clear their view on how the Burnt Mill community works together. When questioned several months ago about how well different groups of people get on within the school only five percent reported that they felt they 'did not get on well'. A more recent survey showed that a majority of students felt they were given opportunities to engage with people from different cultures and countries. Quite a testament to the terrific ethos in our school!