

Marking Genocide Awareness Day as a UCL Beacon School – and developing genocide awareness and prevention opportunities built on strong foundation of Holocaust teaching and learning.

'Bedminster Down School is taking part in the UCL Beacon School program 2023-2024. However, as an alumni for a previous quality assured school, Holocaust and genocide education and prevention has been at the forefront of my curricular and extra-curricular design for almost a decade.

Our Holocaust education has the story of Leon Greenman running throughout it. This would have been impossible without research and teaching and learning advice from UCL. His story re-humanises the Holocaust whilst allowing for exploration of concepts and skills throughout our scheme of learning. This approach has been adopted across our Trust schools and we feel that thanks to UCL, our Holocaust education certainly goes beyond the national curriculum in terms of breath and depth of this topic. As well as the Holocaust allowing students to challenge and speak out against the atrocities that happened during this period, students make connections to genocides in the past and ongoing genocides and are encouraged to think about what it means to be a 'bystander'. Our pupils lead on Holocaust Memorial Day assemblies and last year, created an assembly which was used by Tutors during the first week of December on genocide awareness and prevention.

Students in KS4 are also invited to join our Genocide Awareness Project Group which meet every Thursday lunchtime. Students have completed projects including writing a newspaper in conjunction with other schools across the country on raising genocide awareness and [The Holocaust, Their Family, Me and Us](#) project through which our students created memorials for the family they researched. Students are currently working on a Kindertransport project specifically looking for local links. The project group gives students some autonomy to research down different paths and requires students to contact external organisations and individuals. For example, some of our Y10 students have found links to the Kindertransport and Knowle in Bristol and are currently trying to contact Radio 1 to help them further their research. Students build on their communication and confidence whether that is tweeting large organisations such as Holocaust Educational Trust or speaking in assemblies whilst also developing their research skills (using google scholar has been eye opening for students this term!)

I was recently asked in a mock Ofsted deep dive, 'why do students study History' and apart from the obvious national curriculum answer I started speaking about cultural capital and sending our students out into the wider community and world who can confidently challenge prejudice, discrimination and hate crime. I have stood in assemblies for the last 12 years and spoken about the rise in anti-Semitism and the ignorance surrounding current genocides. I think we have started to make some inroads at Bedminster Down School. I believe our students leave Y9 with excellent understanding of the Holocaust and a love of History (this is certainly reflected in our current 5 classes of Y10 history which are full!). Students will challenge unkind behaviour and they will certainly report it. Older students make parallels to current wars and genocides and some could tell you where to find the countries currently on high alert

(Genocide Watch). The two schools I have worked at (and their trust schools) whilst working with UCL have absolutely benefitted from quality Holocaust teaching and learning which in turn informs genocide understand and prevention. Most importantly, I firmly believe that UCL Beacon School gives teachers and students the knowledge and skills to critically analyse the past to protect those in our present.'

Caroline West – [Bedminster Down School](#)

*Learn how the school marked Genocide Awareness Day/Week in 2021 here:

<https://bristolparent.co.uk/bedminster-down-students-declare-never-again-during-genocide-awareness-week/>