2026

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HONOURING OUR COMMUNITIES

AT HIGHLANDS SCHOOL

Black History Month at Highlands School

The theme for Black History Month UK 2026 is ***Honouring Our Communities.*** This year's theme is not simply about place or postcode. It is about people. Black people.

It is about recognising individuals whose contributions are part of everyday life, yet too often go unseen.

This year's theme

"Honouring Our Communities"

BHM 2026 HONOURING OUR COMMUNITIES

Key terms

As part of Black History Month, students have been exploring key terms that deepen their understanding of Black heritage, identity and culture. Learning these terms helps us to appreciate the struggles, achievements and lasting impact of Black communities throughout history.

Black History Month isn't just about celebrating famous figures and significant moments from the past. History is being made every day, right here in our communities. Meaningful change comes from consistent actions, and understanding the importance of these actions helps us recognise the role we all play in shaping the future.

Pioneer

A person who is among the first to explore, build or achieve something new.

Civil rights

The basic rights and freedoms every person deserves, regardless of their background.

Jurisdiction

The local area or community that an official, leader or council looks after.

Grassroots

Actions or projects started by ordinary people in local communities rather than top leaders.

Dystopia / Dystopian

A story about a society that is unfair, dangerous or very unhappy.

NHS Trust

National Health Service Trust. An organisation that manages local hospitals and healthcare services in our community.

Black History Month 2026:
Honouring Our Communities

This year's Black History Month theme, ***Honouring Our Communities***, shines a spotlight on the individuals whose everyday actions strengthen our communities, inspire others and create lasting change.

From teachers and volunteers to nurses, carers and local community leaders, countless individuals make a lasting impact through their kindness, dedication and leadership, often without recognition.

The power of community has deep roots in British history. The Windrush generation, who arrived from the Caribbean following the Second World War, played a vital role in rebuilding Britain, contributing to essential services including the NHS, transport and construction. Despite facing discrimination, they built strong communities and helped shape the Britain we know today.

At Highlands, we explored how individuals across the UK have made a difference, often starting within their own local communities, and how their achievements reflect our DARE values of **determination, aspiration, respect and equality**.



Volunteers
Dedicate their time to lift others up.

Teachers
Guide us far beyond the classroom walls.

Local organisers
Bring people together, often behind the scenes.

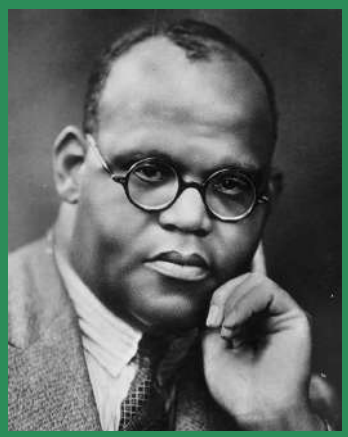
Nurses and carers
Bring kindness and dignity when it is needed.

Championing equality and breaking barriers

From Dr Harold Moody's dedication to supporting his local community to Dame Linda Dobbs' groundbreaking achievements in law, both demonstrate how determination, leadership and a commitment to equality can challenge discrimination, break down barriers and create opportunities for future generations.

Dr Harold Moody

Born in Jamaica, Dr Harold Moody moved to London to study medicine at King's College London, where he graduated at the top of his class. Despite his outstanding achievements, he faced racial discrimination and was refused employment by London hospitals.



Determined to make a difference, he opened his own medical practice in Peckham in 1913, providing essential healthcare to the local community and often treating families who could not afford to pay.

In 1931, he founded the *League of Coloured Peoples* to challenge racial discrimination and promote equality in Britain.

Dr Moody's legacy reflects this year's Black History Month theme, ***Honouring Our Communities,*** demonstrating how determination, compassion and a commitment to equality can create lasting change, beginning within our own communities.

Dame Linda Dobbs

Dame Linda Dobbs made history as Britain's first Black High Court judge, overcoming barriers in a profession traditionally dominated by white men from privileged backgrounds.



After qualifying as a barrister in 1978, she built a successful legal career specialising in criminal law and complex fraud cases. Committed to creating opportunities for others, she has mentored young people from underrepresented backgrounds and supported initiatives to make the legal profession more accessible.

Her legacy reflects the importance of equality, aspiration and leadership, showing how breaking barriers can open doors for future generations.

Inspiring change

Throughout history, individuals have challenged inequality and created opportunities for others. Ignatius Sancho's remarkable story demonstrates how determination, education and community influence can help shape lasting social change.

Ignatius Sancho

Ignatius was a pioneer of Black political representation. Born around 1729 on a slave ship, Ignatius Sancho overcame enslavement and taught himself to read and write, later becoming a respected writer, composer and businessman.



In 1774, he opened a grocery shop in Westminster, which became a meeting place for artists, politicians and intellectuals. As a financially independent property owner, he became the first known person of African descent to vote in a British parliamentary election.

Through his writing, music and involvement in public life, Sancho challenged racial prejudice and contributed to the growing movement against slavery.

His legacy demonstrates how determination, education and community engagement can challenge barriers and inspire change far beyond one's immediate surroundings.

Living history: honouring our community

From Ignatius Sancho's shop in Westminster to Dr Harold Moody's surgery in Peckham and Dame Linda Dobbs' achievements in law, these remarkable individuals demonstrate how meaningful change can begin within our own communities.

But history is not just something we look back on. It continues to be shaped every day, including here in North London and Enfield.

As part of our Black History Month celebrations, we also recognised two inspiring local figures whose contributions have helped shape our community, demonstrating that lasting change often begins right on our doorstep.



Making history in our local community

Inspiring change in our local communities

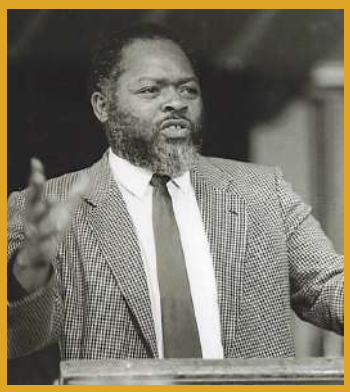
From Bernie Grant's dedication to championing equality and representation across North London to Neomi Bennett's innovative contributions to healthcare, both demonstrate how determination, compassion and a commitment to others can break down barriers, improve lives and create lasting change within our communities and beyond.

Bernie Grant

Born in Guyana, Bernie Grant moved to London in 1963 and went on to become Leader of Haringey Council in 1985, before making history in 1987 as one of the first Black MPs elected to the British Parliament.

Representing Tottenham, he became a powerful advocate for equality, challenging racial discrimination and campaigning for better housing, fair policing and opportunities for young people across North London.

His legacy reflects the importance of unity, equality and community leadership, demonstrating how standing up for local people can create lasting change and give underrepresented communities a stronger voice.



Neomi Bennett

Our communities are also shaped by individuals who use their skills and compassion to improve the lives of others. North London nurse Neomi Bennett BEM demonstrates how recognising a problem and taking action can make a difference far beyond our local area.

While working as an NHS nurse, Neomi noticed that patients struggled to put on the tight compression stockings used to help prevent dangerous blood clots. Determined to find a solution, she used her own savings to invent and patent Neo-Slip, a device designed to make the stockings easier to put on.

Her innovation has since been adopted across UK healthcare settings, earning her the British Empire Medal in recognition of her contribution.

Neomi's achievements reflect the importance of care, determination and innovation, showing how one person's commitment to helping others can improve lives across entire communities.



Inspiring the next generation

Today’s changemakers are shaping the Britain of tomorrow. Through creativity, courage and determination, they are building a fairer, stronger and more inclusive society.

Bukayo Saka

From local football pitches to international success, Bukayo Saka's journey demonstrates how talent, determination and resilience can inspire young people to achieve their ambitions.

Growing up in London, Bukayo joined Arsenal's academy at just seven years old, developing his skills in North London before becoming an international football star.

In 2026, Bukayo also celebrated becoming a Premier League champion with Arsenal, helping the club secure its first league title in 22 years. Beyond his achievements on the pitch, he uses his platform to make a positive difference, helping to fund over 120 life-changing surgeries for children in Nigeria, supporting young people and speaking out against racism.

In October 2026, Bukayo was awarded the prestigious Sócrates Award at the Ballon d'Or ceremony, recognising his outstanding humanitarian and charitable work. The award celebrates footballers who use their influence to make a meaningful difference beyond the sport.

His achievements reflect the importance of aspiration, resilience, compassion and giving back, inspiring the next generation to pursue their dreams while making a positive impact on others.





BHM 2026: Honouring Our Communities

Throughout October, we celebrated Black History Month through assemblies exploring this year's theme, ***Honouring Our Communities,*** recognising the remarkable individuals who have challenged inequality, broken barriers and made lasting contributions to society.

From Dr Harold Moody and Bernie Grant championing equality to Dame Linda Dobbs breaking barriers in law, Neomi Bennett transforming healthcare, Ignatius Sancho pioneering Black representation and Bukayo Saka inspiring future generations, each story demonstrated the power of determination, aspiration, respect and equality - our DARE values.

Our library also featured a dedicated Black History Month book corner, encouraging students to discover inspiring stories, explore Black history and celebrate the achievements and contributions of Black authors and influential figures.

The key message throughout our assemblies was that history is not just something we learn about; it is something we help shape every day. We encouraged students to reflect on how their own actions, however small, can make a positive difference within our school and wider community.

