

**Read our latest press releases here:**

**[ascendlearningtrust.org.uk/news-and-press-releases](https://ascendlearningtrust.org.uk/news-and-press-releases)**



# **PRESS RELEASE**

**01793 781485 | [MARKETING@ASCENDLEARNINGTRUST.ORG.UK](mailto:MARKETING@ASCENDLEARNINGTRUST.ORG.UK)**

**[ASCENDLEARNINGTRUST.ORG.UK](https://ascendlearningtrust.org.uk)**



## Wiltshire Secondary Welcome Celebrities to Mark Holocaust Memorial Week and National Project

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy welcomed some very exciting guests as part of their Holocaust Memorial Week. The guests from the BBC docuseries 'My Family, The Holocaust and Me' included Robert 'Judge' Rinder MBE, Actress Louisa Clein, and Bernie Graham - second and third generation whose families were impacted by the Holocaust, and have inspired a school project called 'The Holocaust, Their Family, Me and Us' now reaching some 240+ secondary schools across England and with 10,000+ students. Dr Nic Wetherall, Teacher from the school organised the gripping and emotional week and designed, curated and led this innovative national project.

In the week leading up to Wednesday, students had been partaking in music, drama and art activities in theme with the events of the Holocaust, including making memory boxes in honour of Louisa's family. Students from Highfields School, Trinity Catholic School, Hanham Woods Academy along with The Wellington Academy joined students at RWBA for the day.



Dominic from RWBA's project partner school Nottingham University Academy asked the students to partake in their British Sign Language Choir, which was recorded and will be shared online. Robert, Louisa and Bernie shared their bio poems they had written prior to the day, along with delivering heartfelt and inspiring speeches, with students in return gifting them with their reflections of the day for them to take home.

**This Academy is proud to be a part of the Ascend Learning Trust.**

Bernie Graham, Psychologist and Director of Mental Health Support Training and Consultancy said “This is an incredible day. I would like to give thanks to all the students for honouring my family and the film. I have got so much gratitude towards Nicola Wetherall, she’s an incredible woman but also to Charlotte and Royal Wootton Bassett Academy for hosting this. This is all about the past, but it’s also about the future, in all its forms different types of racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, discrimination against disabled people, whoever it’s about, choose love over hate.”

Robert Rinder, British Barrister and Television Personality went on to say “It was so often told that in the darkness, people are forgetting that the number of survivors dwindle. That’s a particular problem, but this program demonstrates what is possible, and the light that when you have a group of committed teachers and educators that come together through the powerful, prism of stories and enable and help young learners, peace them back together it has the most extraordinary impact on every aspect of learning from heart in Literature, History to going into the world as more courageous citizens, who have the limitless power to change their communities, and if ever there was an example of a program that best delivers that, it is this. This is what education should be about. At it’s very best it questions how we can enable our citizens to go into our communities with more courage to stand up to hate, in all of its forms, and this program best empowers young learners to do that, and that’s what makes me so proud to be alongside it.”



Dr Nic Wetherall commented “I want to especially thank Charlotte for all of her hard work behind the scenes along with BBC, UCL and Pears Foundation for allowing us this opportunity. A massive thank you to Robert, Louisa and Bernie for their time and for sharing their stories with us. It is important to me that these stories are highlighted as I came into teaching to inspire and empower younger people.”

Mrs Anita Ellis, Headteacher said “We’ve been learning all about the six million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust, our students do this as part of their wider curriculum in History and in EP, it is also covered in other subject areas such as English and that is because at RWBA we try to do a really good job of not seeing things in isolation. As educators and as adults, it is our job and role to help guide you to the right knowledge. Nic Wetherall has done a remarkable job in leading this national project and we are proud as a school to have her here with us here at RWBA, making an incredible impact on us all. A massive thank you also to our visitors for sharing their stories with us but also to the BBC, Pears Foundation and UCL for enabling this remarkable opportunity to take place at our school.”