



■ **DIGGING IN:** Rachel Bernard, Year 11, Osei Acheampong, Year 11, Callan Knight, Year 7, and Kajal Bains, Year 12, from the student council help Paul Mains plant the plum tree.

Organic garden makes a plum job of it

A RARE plum tree is the centre-piece of a new organic garden in Langley.

The Langley Academy opened its Organic Garden on Tuesday last week, with guest of honour Paul Mains, school governor, trustee and chief executive of the River and Rowing Museum.

He was joined by staff and members of the student council to plant the first tree, a Langley Bullace, donated to take pride of place in the orchard.

The Langley Bullace is a rare plum variety created and originally grown in Langley in 1902,

by famous horticulturalist Henry Veitch, who founded the Chelsea Flower Show. It received two awards from the Royal Horticultural Society, in 1902 and again in 1904. The fruit is renowned for its richness of flavour in jams and cooking.

Connor Newman, Year 10, who was heavily involved with the ground work preparation said: "I think it's brilliant because all the students can get involved and actually run the garden, not the teachers. It's also great to see things grow outside and not just in the classroom."

The organic garden has been designed by landscape architect Mike Shadbolt and will be a fully operational mini arable 'farm' with a huge 36 by 18 polytunnel nursery, a garden split into six sections for vegetables and herbs, a small orchard, a large wildlife pond, a willow and hazelnut hedgerow, its own composting area, native wildflowers and an open air teaching arena.

When completed, the garden will play a key role across the entire curriculum and will be fully maintained by the school's students and staff.