



NEWSLETTER 6 - October 9th

Message from Head Mrs. Richardson

Even though I have been teaching History for 25 years, I still find the teaching of the Holocaust deeply challenging. It is essential that young people understand what happened in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, but deciding at what age that is most appropriate, and how as well as how much of the horror of those events should be 'taught' is not straightforward. When I first started teaching in 1995, I organised the annual visit of a Holocaust survivor to my school to give a talk. Leon Greenman, prisoner 98288, told his remarkable, and tragic, story to school students, and although he died aged 97 in 2008, his story will never leave me. In 1998 Mr Greenman was still keen to keep giving his talks, and I used to pick him up from his London home and drive him to my school in Kent, and then home again afterwards. On those journeys we talked about what he was experiencing living in 1990s London – and he had to have metal grilles on the windows of his house as in 1990s Britain he was still being subjected to anti-semitic persecution. Mr Greenman died in Barnet hospital, and the Jewish Museum in Finchley (although currently closed) tells his story.



The horrors of the Holocaust are increasingly incomprehensible to many of our children; it is very much 'History' in a way that is perhaps not the case for many of our parent body – on the assumption that many of you are a similar age to me, the Second World War was something our parents and grandparents had a real experience of. Closer to home, however, is something which is very much NOT history, and that is racism. Many of you will have been aware of the British historian David Olusoga's book *Black and British* which has recently been serialised in *The Times*, and the accompanying BBC series which was originally broadcast in 2016 but which is available on iPlayer. At the start of programme 4, Olusoga movingly describes his experience as a 14 year old, being driven out of his home by National Front activists. That was in 1984, and Olusoga describes lying in his bed as bricks were thrown through his window, and he and his family lived in fear of what might happen next.

As part of our Black History month activities, I am proud of the determination of the House of Equality club members to keep these matters on our School agenda. All students will learn about topics related to black history in next week's history lessons, and on Monday 19th the House of Equality will be speaking to Form groups about their plans for raising awareness of racism this term, moving onto different areas of inequality in the Lent and Summer terms.



PASTORAL UPDATE from Mr Kerr

Alcohol, drugs and legal highs

I would like to draw your attention to the Information sheet from the Metropolitan police which is attached to this newsletter. Cannabis laced sweets are clearly extremely dangerous so I would urge our school community to be extremely vigilant. If you have any questions or are concerned about this issue please do let me know. If you see these “sweets” or any similar products please contact the police immediately.

Alcohol, drugs and legal highs are toxic and psychoactive substances with dependence producing properties. In today’s society they are a routine part of the social landscape for many in the population. In this context it is easy to overlook or discount the health and social damage caused or contributed by alcohol, drugs and legal highs.

Research carried out by ‘Drinkaware’ indicates that the average age a person tries alcohol is 13.3. Drinking alcohol is seen as something teenagers are expected to do as part of growing up, but starting to drink so young is more damaging than many teenagers realise.

Drugs can happen in any family and to think that it will never happen to ‘us’ can be perceived as naïve. The happiest, strongest, most connected and loving families can find themselves having to deal with teenage drug use.

Many people think that because a drug is legal, it is safe to take. However, this is not true. There are many substances available on the market that are legal to buy and use but that are not safe to use. These substances are made to replicate the effects of many illegal substances and formulas are continuously changing. Many young people take legal highs because they are cheap, readily available and because there are no penalties if caught in possession. However, what many young people do not realise is that they can be just as dangerous as their illegal counterparts and just as addictive.

As a school we continue to educate students through our PSHE and SMSC Programmes around the damages and dangers linked to alcohol, drugs and legal highs and encourage you to talk to and educate your children alongside the work we carry out. As a parent you have more influence over your child than you may realise. Evidence shows that meaningful conversations between parents and their children can be very helpful as teenagers navigate their way through a period of difficult decision making.

If you are worried about your child's use of drugs or alcohol, the following website is an excellent resource containing advice and information on where you can get help:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-drugs-and-alcohol/>



SCMC UPDATE with Miss Gillett

The Year 9 students have been working hard in form time over the last few weeks to create virtual assemblies for Year 7 and 8 form groups to help the students understand bullying and how to respond to or prevent bullying inside and outside of school.

Here are some of the key messages shared by our students:

"Bullying is hurting another person, or group, on purpose, more than once."

"Bullying can happen face to face or over the internet. Both are unacceptable and have no place at Mount House School."

"You never know what's happening to an individual outside of school, whether in their home life, or their mental health, therefore adding on to that stress could cause serious problems for them mentally and physically."

"Bullying is a behaviour that can be changed. We are never too old or too young to learn about to treat people with more respect."

"If you feel like you are facing a bullying situation at school, speak with your support network- which includes Guardian Angels, Form Tutor and your classroom teachers."

"You should aim to treat others the way you want to be treated- show respect and be kind!"



Next week, our focus will be on creating time capsules. Students are encouraged to think about what items they could bring in to contribute a time capsule for 2020 for future generations to remember this unprecedented year. Each form group will be creating a time capsule, to be buried in the school grounds at the end of half term. For more information, speak with your Form tutor.

CO-CURRICULAR and ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT CLUB NEWS

THE HEAD'S ENDEAVOUR AWARD

The first of five Head's Endeavour challenges, the Book Challenge, took place on October 1st.



Oscar Michaels reviewed 'Good Omens' by Terry Pratchett, **Luke Webster** reviewed 'How to train your Dragon' by Cressida Cowell and **Temidayo Yussuff-Shittu** reviewed 'A Series of Unfortunate Events - the Hostile Hospital' by Lemony Snicket.



Mr Phillips and Mr. Boonzaier were thrilled at the quality of the reviews and the excellent understanding of the intentions of the authors displayed by all three students. We look forward to seeing what they all achieve in next challenge, 'Presentation Skills' which will take place in November.

BOOKWORMS & SCRIBES – NEW CLUB

Held in Room 22 from 4.00 to 4.50 from Tuesday 13th October with Mr Nancarrow

All year groups are invited to this new club for readers and writers. The club will focus on writing styles, extracts from books, exploring how good writers are good readers, and how different books and texts inspire writers.

This term we will write poetry inspired by the beautiful building and grounds of Mount House School Campus and work alongside a group of Year 8 Art students to create multi-media displays. Next week students will meet Mr Nancarrow and Mrs Somerville to discuss the locations they would like to include in the project, and assign these locations to students as poets and artists.

UKULELE CLUB MOVED TO THURSDAY

Ukulele Club will now take place on **Thursday in Room 22 from 4.00 to 4.50** with Mr Nancarrow. All students are welcome. If you do not have a ukulele then please see Mr Nancarrow.

Please can we take this opportunity to remind you that students should sign-up to clubs using SOCS (Schools Online Communication Service). If you have any questions, please contact;

Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde (Co-Curricular Programme): hillcoat-hyden@mounthouse.org.uk

Mr Phillips (Academic Enrichment Programme): phillipst@mounthouse.org.uk

SPORTS AT MOUNT HOUSE from Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde

This week has seen the start of House Sports Competitions across Key Stages 3 and 4.



Year 7 & 8 started the week off with modified cricket activities and matches within their year groups which will be resumed on Tuesday 13th October.

This is the first sporting competition that Year 7 have taken part in within their houses and it was fantastic to watch the competitive spirit across Year 7 and Year 8.

On Thursday afternoon, the weather held out permitting play to go ahead, allowing Years 9 & 10 to take part in House Cricket. Students became super competitive which made the games exciting to watch and umpire. Students and staff are looking forward to resuming play and completing competitions next week.



Year 11 had the opportunity to take part in a 'kwik cricket' competition in pairs as part of their warm-up and then competed against each other in a game of 'diamond cricket' which will go towards their overall House score.

Well done to everyone that has taken part in Sporting House Competitions this week!

Special mention to the following students who played very well within the competitions:

Year 7 - Anna Ranger and Junior Gyami Junior

Year 8 - Reuben Ward, Krrish Patel and Amelie Hilton

Year 9 - Eashen Patel, Ava Athwal, Timayo Ladipo and Sara Pakoglu

Year 10 - Olivia Richardson, Aine Smith, Lily O'Callaghan and Libby Richards

Year 11 - Charlotte Wheatley and Katrina Taylor

CAREERS AT MOUNT HOUSE from Mrs Christou

NCS PRESENTATION – 8.30 am THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER

NCS will be delivering their autumn programme to our Year 11 and 12 in the main hall. All our Year 11 and 12 students have been given the opportunity to attend a FREE NCS programme during half term from Monday 26th October-30th October. Students will take part in activities and workshops to develop key skills such as teamwork, public speaking, debating, CV writing and interview techniques.





Please encourage your children to take part in this great opportunity. For more information see www.wearencs.com

NCS will align with all Health & Safety recommendations provided by the Department of Education and Public Health Education on implementing protective measures in education settings.

VIRTUAL FAIR AND APPRENTICESHIP SEARCH – WEDNESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER – 12-6PM

Visit stands for different universities, colleges and apprenticeship providers. Download documents, view videos, visit their website and chat to representatives live with any questions you may have.

UCAS VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS

Biological and physical sciences	16th October
Social Sciences, humanities and teaching	23-24 October
Maths, engineering and computing	2-3 November
Creative Subjects	13-14 November

USEFUL CAREER WEBSITE www.targetcareers.co.uk

The TARGET careers website has lots of information and free resources available.

MUSIC AT MOUNT HOUSE from Mr Whitehouse

We offer the opportunity for students to enjoy a wide range of lessons on instruments and vocal coaching. If you would like your child to sign up to music lessons at Mount House with any of our peripatetic teachers please complete the form on our website that can be found [here](#) and send the completed form to Mr Whitehouse whitehouses@mounthouse.org.uk. Hard copies of the form can also be found in Reception.

This week we feature **Bass player Huw V Williams**, a Londoner by way of Bangor, North Wales who specialises in jazz and improvised music. He attended Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where he achieved BMus (Hons.) in jazz double bass performance.

Huw is a prolific composer and band leader whose recording enjoyed exceptional reviews including Jazzwise, The Telegraph and The Arts Desk, "swaggering, infectious energy" - John Fordham, The Guardian. Huw's next release is a trio with prestigious London saxophonist George Crowley and rising New Yorker Devin Gray on drums. The music is composed specifically for this trio using varied techniques such as collective improvisation.





BLACK HISTORY MONTH

October is Black History Month in the UK, an event that has been celebrated for more than 30 years, and was originally founded to recognise the contribution of African and Caribbean people to the UK over many generations. Now, Black History Month has expanded to include a much wider scope.



"In years gone by, October has been the only time of year when the UK talks about the achievements of Black people in Britain," says Catherine Ross, guest editor of Black History Month 2020.

"Hopefully, the events of 2020 will be a catalyst for Black history to be shared much more widely - in museums, galleries, schools, universities, public spaces and communities."

This year, we are incorporating Black History month into the SMSC program and lessons, such as exploring the diverse population of the UK and the importance of cultural events like the Notting Hill Carnival in Year 7 Geography.

The student leadership team is working together to create a Black History Month board to display significant figures in UK Black history, short stories and poems that highlight aspects of our Black community's culture, and information about events throughout the wider London community, and want to encourage all members of the school community to contribute.

Please forward any literature, artwork or images of people who you find inspiring in your local community to our Head Student Rachael Harper-Wilkinson or Miss Gillett and Miss Smyth.

FOCUS ON ENGLISH from Mrs MacDonald



This half-term students in **Year 7 have been reading and studying Tom's Midnight Garden**. This classic children's novel tells the story of Tom who sent away to his Aunt and Uncle for the summer as his brother has measles where he discovers a magical garden that appears only at night.

This week in students have been producing creative outcomes using collage to illustrate their understanding of passages from the text describing the garden.

They started their work by selecting a passage from the book and then discussing how they could represent the words pictorially.



Year 8 and 9 students are both reading and studying books by Charles Dickens. **Year 8 are reading Great Expectations** and **Year 9 A Christmas Carol**. Both year groups have produced a range of analytical responses to their respective texts.

LITERACY TIP from Mr Nancarrow

Read every day – obvious but worth being reminded!



A very obvious tip this week - simply to encourage your daughter or son to read for at least 20 minutes each day. This is worth remembering when so much research stresses the importance of reading each day for a young person's brain development. This can be reading anything at all - newspapers, comics, articles on the internet or of course a good book.

The important point is that a child should spend at least 20 minutes a day engaged in private continuous reading.

MOBILE PHONES AT SCHOOL - UPDATED POLICY

Please read the updated mobile phone policy that will be enforced from 8.25 am on Monday 12th October.

Mobile phone use and mis-use at School

- Students in Year 7 – 9 are not allowed to use a mobile phone in School from 8.25am – 4.00pm. Mobile phones should be kept in lockers. If a student needs to contact home urgently during the School day then they should go to reception to make the telephone call.
- Students in Year 10 to 13 are permitted to use a mobile phone during morning break and at lunch time in their Form room. Mobile phones should not be used at any other time or in any other location, unless students are explicitly invited to do so by a member of staff.
- If a student is seen using a mobile phone at school at any other times, unless they have been given permission from a member of staff, the device will be confiscated and held in an



envelope at reception. The device will be available for collection at 4pm (or 5pm if a student is taking part in an after-school club).

- A record of students who mis-use their mobile phone will be held and persistent offenders may receive additional punishments in the form of detentions.
- Filming on a mobile device in school is strictly prohibited.

On Monday we will be asking all students to sign an agreement to say that they have read, understand and will abide by this policy and to acknowledge that phones may be confiscated if these rules are contravened. Parental support on this matter would be greatly appreciated.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There is a space available on the school's Governance Committee for a KS5 parent (Sixth Form). If you are interested in this role then please email Mrs Richardson on schooladminofficer@mounthouse.org.uk by Tuesday 20th October.

More information can be found at https://www.mounthouse.org.uk/about_us/governance/

UPCOMING KEY DATES

16.30 – 17.30 October 13th – Friends of Mount House Meeting

17.15 – 19.15 October 15th – Year 11 Parents' Evening