



NEWSLETTER 14 – 15th January

Message from Head Mrs Richardson

Dear Parents

This has been another busy week at school; we are pleased to have some critical worker children on site, and have this week begun our lateral flow testing. I am pleased to report that thus far all results have been negative! We are aware that this is a very unsettling time for students in Year 11 and the Upper Sixth, and we await the announcement of the processes which will be put in place for the assessment of students due to sit public exams. Well-being is at the front of our minds, and we are thinking of all our students and their families and wishing you all well.



Thank you to those of you who responded to the parent survey, 80 families in total. We have spent this morning reviewing all the comments, and you will find feedback on the key points which were raised below. On behalf of all the staff here can I thank you for the kind and supportive comments; teachers are working enormously hard to deliver stimulating and enjoyable live lessons and this is no easy task. For those of you who made comments which were specific to your child, I have asked the relevant staff to make contact with you early next week.

Regarding morning registration, Sheila is working hard to try and contact parents where students do not register or turn up to virtual lessons. It would be really helpful if parents could ensure their children register at 8.25 am with their tutor. If your child is unable to attend lessons for any reason do please let Sheila know at the earliest possible opportunity.

Do please continue to send in your feedback and we will follow up as quickly as we can. In the meantime I wish you all a relaxing and - with any luck – relatively screen free weekend.

Sarah Richardson





VLP Survey Feedback

Pastoral

A few parents have noted that the phone calls which Mount House tutors made during the first Lockdown have not been happening, and that they would welcome them back. I have not asked tutors to make those calls as I am aware that I am asking a great deal more of teachers in terms of delivering live lessons. Senior teachers have been making some calls, and I have noted from the feedback who specifically requested a tutor call for their child and I will ask the tutors concerned to make those calls in this coming week. If you would like us to make a call to your child, do please let us know and we will do that.

Cameras

Teaching staff are doing what they can to encourage students to turn cameras on for all the reasons previously identified. A number of parents have raised the point that their children would be happy to have cameras on but don't because no-one else does. As a school we cannot force this, but we will continue to do what we can to encourage.

Homework

Survey responses demonstrate that there is no easy solution to this. Some parents have requested no homework at all, and the majority felt that on balance there was too much. Other parents would like more homework. As a result we will continue with the current homework which is:

- As 'normal' but lighter where possible for Years 10 and above
- Light touch but still regular homework for Years 7, 8 and 9

Can I please remind parents, especially of children in Years 7, 8 and 9, that we will work with you to support your children in managing a sensible workload: if the homework is too much, please do let their tutors know and tutors can let subject teachers know. We are very happy for parents to 'excuse' their children from homework if you feel that is the best solution for your child. For those who would like more homework, we will be putting together some additional homework opportunities which we will share with parents and students next week.

Screen Time

We understand that a number of you are worried about the amount of time your child is spending on a screen, however we are also trying to ensure that (especially for working parents) children are being offered as full a timetable as possible. As with homework, we urge any of you with concerns to contact tutors and also if you feel your child needs a break from lessons do please just let us know.

Exercise

Many of you have commented that you are worried that your child is not doing enough exercise. Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde has reviewed the PE programme and over the next couple of weeks we will have a big push on encouraging students to engage with this. There are some suggestions, such as Strava Art, that the whole family could enjoy so please do get involved.

IT support - Please contact us if you need IT support – one person asked for more of this but it was an anonymous request!



PSHE Program with Miss Gillett



Our PSHE program continues to run alongside our virtual learning program this term. The Pastoral team has created a workbook for students to engage with which can be found in the *Mount House Whole School Team* files on Microsoft Teams.

This term Year 7-9 are exploring wellbeing topics such as body image and mental health, with tips on how to improve self-image. Year 10 and 11 are investigating careers, with activities centred around aspirations for the future and techniques for interviews. Our 6th Form are learning about adult health topics such as organ donation, health checks and healthy relationships.

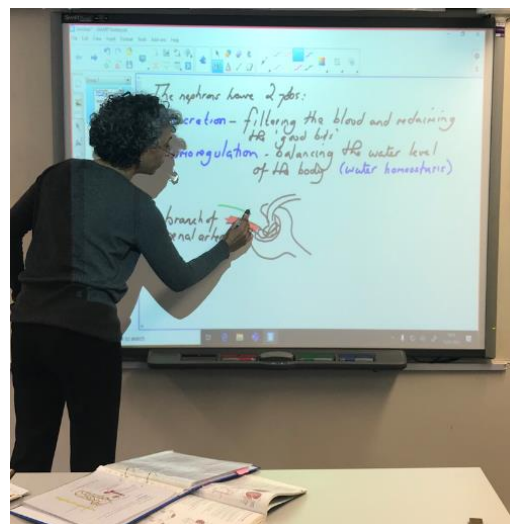
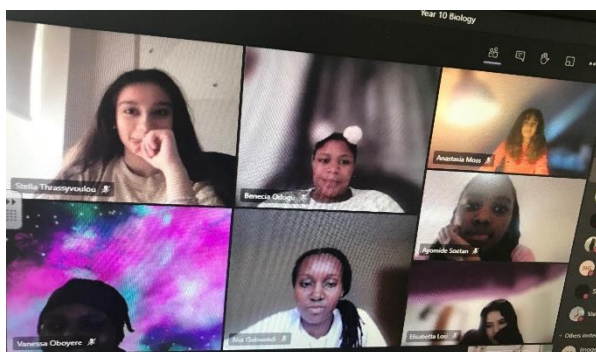
PHYSICS with Mr Conyers



We are constantly developing ways of working in online lessons. During the Upper 6th Physics lesson on Electromagnetism Mr. Conyers used a webcam to show a demonstration of the magnetic field generated by a coil.

BIOLOGY with Miss Sidhu

Miss Sidhu was using the white board shared on Teams teaching Year 10 about the vital functions the kidneys perform in the body, testing their knowledge at the start of the lesson with a quick quiz.





SPORT with Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde

Dance Project

Students in Key Stage 3 are currently completing a Dance Project which is extending their knowledge of a variety of Dance styles and techniques across different cultures.

The first challenge was to identify as many dance styles as possible, followed by selecting four of the styles identified and carrying out research based on the four styles. Research included identifying which country the dance originated from, how long the style has been used, how/why the style of dancing started, the traditional costume and how this costume may have changed over the years, the type of music that is used alongside the dance, whether the dance is performed individually or in a group and who take part in the dance.

Findings have been shared through producing posters. Well done to everyone who has completed their Dance project and here is a great example of the work being produced from Darcie Dudding.

Chinese Dragon Dancing

Dragon dance (simplified Chinese: 舞龙; traditional Chinese: 舞龍; pinyin: wǔ lóng) is a form of traditional dance and performance in Chinese culture. Like the lion dance, it is most often seen in festive celebrations. The dance is performed by a team of experienced dancers who manipulate a long flexible figure of a dragon made of fabric and paper using poles positioned at regular intervals along the length of the dragon. The dance team re-creates the imagined movements of this spirit in a flowing, undulating manner.



Games Programme

Students in Years 7 – 10 must register at the start of the Games sessions. As a reminder this is Tuesday at 14:00 for Years 7 & 8 and Thursday at 14:00 for Years 9 & 10. Failure to register at the start of each session will result in students being marked as absent for the afternoon.




The PE Department will start each session by carrying out a warm-up, followed by the 'Take on a Teacher' challenge and the Circuit of the Week. Following this, students will have the opportunity to select their chosen options and work independently.

The Games Programme has seen students take part in a selection of fitness-based and sports-based activities, followed by a 'Circuit of the Week' and the opportunity to 'Take on the Teacher' which this week involved students taking on Mr Mather with his 5-day fitness challenge.



Over the next two weeks this will also form part of our Extra-Curricular programme where we will host a LIVE head-to-head challenge with a teacher. Details regarding the Extra-Curricular Sports opportunities are located on the Extra-Curricular Letter which is attached.









MR MATHER'S

5 Day Fitness Challenge

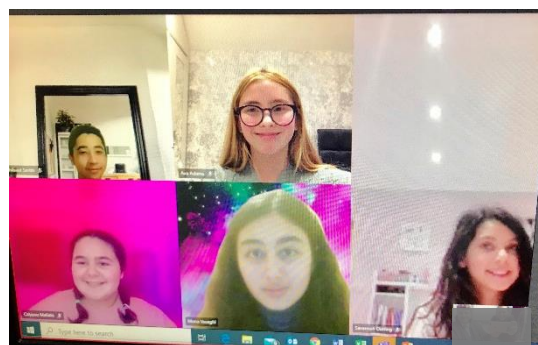
Complete

each challenge as quickly as possible (with good form) – post your time in the box below



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
High Knees x 50 Squats x 20 Straight Leg Raises x 15 Dips x 15 Side to side hops x 20	Burpees x 10 Lunges x 10 Mountain Climbers x 30 Plank Shoulder Taps x 20 Glute Bridges (Hip Lift) x 20	Plank Toe Taps x 20 Russian Twist x 30 Sit Ups x 10 Air Bikes x 30 Flutter Kicks x 20	Press Ups x 15 Squat Jumps x 15 Mountain Climbers x 30 Reverse Lunges x 10 High Knees/Punching x 30	Star Jumps x 50 Dips x 15 Plank Knee Lift x 15 Burpees x 10 Squats x 20
4 rounds!	4 rounds!	4 rounds!	4 rounds!	4 rounds!
				

MUSIC with Mr. Whitehouse



Choir rehearsals are now taking place at 16:10 on Thursdays. We have a great choir that has grown to 21 members. This week the choir met online and worked on some vocal warm-ups with Miss Elkins and then discussed our next project which is the Spring Concert. There is a strong possibility that it will not be a live event, but we can still share performances via a high-quality video production.



The Spring Concert theme is MUSICALS! Working with all interested musicians and singers we would like to program a range of solos, duets and group numbers to perform across a range of top musicals. We are also keen to book instrumental performances solos.

We are working on ideas for the concert and also are keen to have suggestions for pieces – they can be from ANY musical just send the detail of what they would like to perform to Mr Whitehouse, Mrs Billington or Miss Elkins via teams or email.

We will then agree rehearsals for soloists, duets and instrumentalists and work on backing tracks for every performer through the term.



ART with Mrs Somerville and Mrs Baird

Zeyad 	Zac 	Anna
Temidayo 	Grace 	Elizabeth
Paris 	Ava 	Luca
Sophia 	Calypso 	Sofie

This week the Year 7's have been working on colour wheels made from anything they could find around the house – here are some lovely examples.

SPEAKERS' CORNER with Mr. Allman



The last Speakers' Corner of 2020 was a fantastic presentation from Miho Kondo in Year 13. Her speech looked at cultural differences between the United Kingdom and Japan especially in relation to education

Miho spoke clearly and eloquently about the importance in Japanese culture of respect and tidiness as well as the need for politeness all the times

A fantastic speech that was well received by both students and staff.

Well done Miho!

Friends of Mount House update

Virtual session on mobile phones - 28th January at 6 pm

Calling all parents in Year 8! Do you want to want to get a better handle on your child's mobile phone usage? Have you successfully implemented any practices that you would like to share with other parents?



On 28th January at 6 pm there will be a short virtual session hosted by Mr Kerr to chat about concerns and tips on this issue. Please email KerrM@Mounthouse.org.uk to receive a meeting invite with the Zoom details. This is intended to be the first in a series of virtual parent sessions on pastoral topics that will be rolled out to other year groups if successful.

Careers Fair volunteers

Thanks to all the parents who have so far indicated a willingness to talk about their work at the school Careers Fair on 6th May - if you haven't signed up yet and would like to offer your services please do still get in touch.

Mount House business page

The school is looking into the possibility of hosting a new 'family business' page for the Mount House community on its website - if you would like to list your business please send details (name of business, short description contact details, web address) to jwesty@btinternet.com.

Contact us

If you have any other suggestions for activities or want to get more involved in FOMH please don't hesitate to drop a line to us at friendsofmounthouse2020@gmail.com

ADMISSIONS update – Virtual Assessment Day January 23rd



With the current situation we have had to move our Assessment Day online. English, Maths and Non-verbal reasoning tests will be taken in front of cameras for on-line invigilation.

This week all applicants sitting the entrance tests for 23rd January received their pack including lots of information about MHS as well as the 3 sealed exam papers ready to open on the day.

We also host a 'Back up' online assessment day on Thursday 4th February.

LATERAL FLOW COVID-19 Testing

We are working hard to keep our MHS community safe. This week we began testing all staff and pupils on site with the 'rapid result' lateral flow tests.

These tests will continue over the coming weeks.

