

NEWSLETTER 30 – 18TH JUNE

Message from Deputy Head Matt Kerr

It was lovely to wave off 35 intrepid Year 9 Duke of Edinburgh explorers on Tuesday morning. The size of the rucksacks was nearly matched by the size of the smiles, as the first trip in over 15 months departed from the School on a glorious summer's day. It is fitting, given the Duke of Edinburgh Award's guiding principles, that it was a DofE trip that was the first to return as we begin to navigate our way out of a global pandemic. The guiding principles of the awards aim to equip young people with necessary life skills for today's society.



The DofE is many things to many people. Since its inception in 1956, it has helped transform the lives of millions of people across the world.

Any young person can participate in DofE, regardless of ability, gender or background. Achieving an award isn't a competition about being first. It's all about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries.

The benefits of participating in the awards are clear and far-reaching: they involve helping the community / environment; becoming fitter; developing new skills; planning, training for and completing an expedition; and working as part of a team. Through the DofE Award scheme, young people have fun, make friends, improve their self-esteem and build confidence. They gain essential skills and attributes for life now and for the future such as resilience, problem-solving, team-working, communication and drive. The award also enhances their CVs and university or job applications and the best employers recognise the skills award holders bring to their business.

I would urge everyone to take the opportunity to participate in the DofE programme at School.

We hear much about the loss of so many aspects of our lives over the last 15 months, and this is, of course, painfully true. But now there is now a real sense of optimism in our community and an eagerness to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. I advise all students to take heed of the principles that underpin the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in their daily lives as we all strive to achieve our very best in everything we do.

I mentioned how rewarding it was to wave the coach off on Tuesday morning. I must say it was even more satisfying to welcome all the students (and staff) back to school in one piece on Wednesday evening! They were thoroughly exhausted but glowing with a sense of accomplishment. Roll on next week when the real expedition takes place.

Duke of Edinburgh Report



The Year 9 students took part in their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition on Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th June 2021, in the Chilterns.

On arrival, the teams met their instructors from A to Z Expeditions and undertook two sessions. One session was a kit check and the other was a route planning session for the day ahead. Having identified a route to get them to the campsite, the groups set off with their instructors. As the day went on the instructors started to give the groups more independence and

instead of walking with the group, they followed behind.

When arriving at the campsite, students were welcomed by Mount House staff and the main instructor from A to Z Expeditions. After a ten-minute rest, students assembled their tents and cooked themselves a meal. A little more planning took place for some and then it was time to sleep.



It was an early start on Wednesday morning with the birds singing in the trees at 04:00. Students knew the plan for the morning: they were to wake up, cook something hot, put their tents away and depart the campsite by 08:00. The groups started the day with independence, setting off on their planned route without an instructor or member of staff.

There are always stories to tell from DofE and this is what usually makes the expedition so exciting.

All students completed the practice expedition and should be proud of the skills they have developed and their achievements.

We look forward to the Qualifying Expedition next week.





Careers

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

For anyone interested in Technology: Young Professionals have an amazing **FREE** Virtual Work Experience event happening on 5th, 6th and 7th July in collaboration with PwC, IBM, HSBC, Sky and many others. Information on how the technology industry is evolving and discussing what life is like working for world-leading international technology firms. This online work experience is open to Years 10, 11, and 12 and a certificate of completion will be given out.

TechTheFuture Virtual Work Experience

- 5th, 6th and 7th July – 9.00 - 4.00 each day
- Hear from over 10+, multinational technology employers
- AI, Virtual Reality, Robotics, Cyber and more! + Interactive Workshops & Live demonstrations
- Opportunity to ask questions and take part in real work projects
- Certificate of attendance to be awarded
- **FREE event** (limited spaces)

<https://www.research.net/r/Tech-Work-Experience>

Springpod are offering a Virtual Work Experience programme that will run from 2nd to 13th August.



There are over 20 programmes which are completely free. They include everything from [politics](#) and [journalism](#), to [sustainability](#) and [engineering](#) and can be completed at times that suit you. You will also be offered a certificate.

You can view all of the August programmes, open to applications from students 14-19.

<https://www.springpod.co.uk/virtual-work-experience>



School Council Meeting: Alex Nicolaides



A special School Council met on Monday June 14th to discuss all matters associated with catering.

The meeting was chaired by our new Head of school Alex Nicolaides and the minutes were taken by Stefano Paternostro.

In attendance were fourteen school representatives from across the year groups, Mrs Nathwani our school Bursar and Gary our Head Cook. The meeting was facilitated by Mr Allman.

The meeting was set up to allow representatives to bring forward any concerns or ideas that they may have about catering at Mount House, some of which were expressed in the school meals survey.

Many reps said their forms and friends were happy with the food and catering within the school. However, a number of positive ideas and recommendations were made to improve the process of queueing and changing some aspects of the food.

Gary our Head Cook was very accommodating and welcomed all the positive contributions made by the representatives and agreed to put these proposed changes into place.

Minutes of this meeting will be circulated on teams from late Friday afternoon.

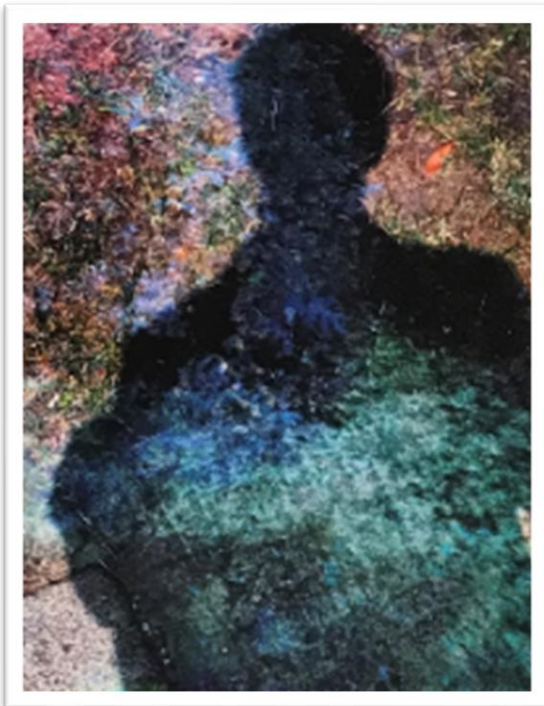
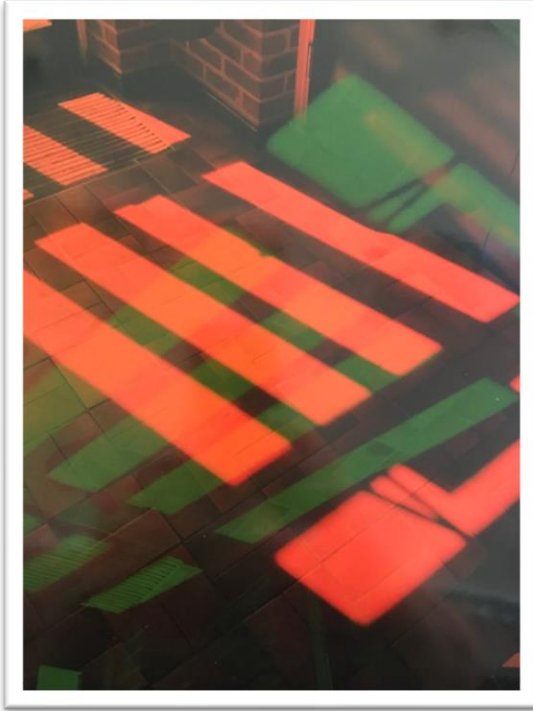
The lilies in the pond gave us a lovely display this week.





Art

Those Y9s who didn't go on the DofE trip spent the day in the art room. They produced paintings, photographs and collages exploring the theme of shadows. They all worked very hard! (Violet, Archie, Amelia, Isabella, Stefan and Tomi).





Friends of Mount House

Dear parents, carers and friends of Mount House,

By now you will have read that the FoMH sports day after-party has been cancelled due to the government extending restrictions for a further four weeks.

During the past months, the team at Friends of Mount House, including senior Mount House staff, have worked incredibly hard to organise some fabulous and fun events for the Sports Day Event. Julie Westmore & Catherine Cooper have dedicated many hours of their own time to organise donations, food and events. I'm sure I speak for all students, parents, carers and staff in extending our warm thanks to both for their support.



I would like to extend FoMH thanks to Donna Pickup (for preparing amazing brochures), and Sage Bishop & Jemila Yusuff for their support and donations as members of our team.

Our appreciation also goes to the staff of Mount House, in particular Mr Kerr and Mrs Richardson for providing FoMH with their unwavering support, even though their own work schedules are hectic. Our thanks to the many other staff at Mount House, who offered help and support.

We have agreed that all donations to the raffle (with a Macbook Air M1 top prize), food and beverages and other events will be carried over to the FoMH Christmas Event, which promises to be a fun-filled day to remember.

I am aware that all students have missed out on our events over the past year, indeed some will have moved on to continue their lives and studies elsewhere. To all Mount House students, especially leavers of 2020 & 2021, I would like to send out an Invitation to attend the FoMH Christmas Fair. Dates will be announced in due course on the FoMH page on the School website.

I am pleased to announce that FoMH have agreed to part fund and sponsor a new Robotix Club, with an initial investment of circa £3000. Members of the club will build and code their own robots, which will take part in national and global competitions with other clubs. Good luck from all of us!

Finally I would like to offer a huge Thank You to Catherine Cooper, a much valued member of FoMH, who will be stepping down at the end of this term.

Keith Brueton
Acting Chair - FoMH

Parent Business Directory on the website



www.mounthouse.org.uk/parents-business-directory

The Business Directory is for parents who would like to browse through the companies of other parents.

We have seven business currently advertising, but there is space for more. Any other parents who would like to advertise their business free of charge can do so by sending Fiona marketing@mounthouse.org.uk an email with a short blurb, logo and link to their own website.

Events this term

Please note: these external events have been cancelled:

- **Open Day** on Saturday 26th June
- the **FoMH after-party** on Thursday 1st July.

The **Leavers' Garden party** will only be attended by current staff and current Year 11 and Year 13. We hope to be able to have a celebration with parents at another time, but sadly they may not attend this event. We will arrange for 2020 leavers to return later in the afternoon for a staggered event which is compliant with government guidance.

Sports Day is going ahead as usual, but parents are requested not to attend.

MacBeth will go ahead, with the audience in socially distanced areas of the well-ventilated hall. If you have booked a ticket via the google form, please ensure you have taken a lateral flow test before you come, and wear a mask during the performance.

The **Year 7 induction day** will go ahead, with only one parent in attendance.

