



NEWSLETTER – 19TH NOVEMBER

Message from Mr Phillips, Assistant Head

RACISM AND THE DANGER OF ‘BANTER’

I happen to be passionate about the game of cricket and I am eagerly awaiting the start of the Ashes test match series against the Australians this winter. Growing up, legends such as Colin Cowdrey, Clive Lloyd, Alan Border, Sunil Gavaskar, Gundappa Viswanath, Zaheer Abbas, Kapil Dev, Michael Holding, Gordon Greenidge and the mighty Vivian Richards were all my heroes. Once on a cricket tour to Barbados, I had the privilege of having a conversation with one of the greats of West Indies cricket, Desmond Haynes.



You will appreciate, then, that I was very upset and angry by the recent events at Yorkshire County Cricket Club and the racism that was directed against one of its south Asian players, Azeem Rafiq. Born in Karachi, Pakistan in 1991, Rafiq played for Yorkshire between 2008 and 2014 and again between 2016 and 2018. Having moved to Britain he qualified to play for the English national team.

It should be pointed out, however, that Rafiq himself has had to apologise for using antisemitic language in Facebook messages when he was a young man. Quite rightly he has said that he is ‘deeply ashamed’ by the exchanges and leading members of the British Jewish community have been prepared to accept Rafiq’s apology, which they regard as sincere. Mrs Richardson has previously recommended David Baddiel’s book *Jews Don’t Count* to parents, and she has asked me to do so again. It is completely unacceptable that antisemitism is seen by some as a ‘lesser’ form of racism and Baddiel’s book, as well as Julia Neuberger’s *Antisemitism. What it is. What it isn’t. Why it matters* both provide clear explanations and guidance in this area.

Those who were responsible for the racist taunts directed at Azeem Rafiq, among them former England test cricketers, have tried to suggest it was nothing more than harmless banter. However, there is no such thing as ‘harmless banter’ especially in the context of racism. I believe that banter has no place in a civilised society and certainly not in a school.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines banter as “to make fun of (a person); to hold up to ridicule...” The word was first used in street slang in London in the 17th Century and playwright Thomas D’Urfey used the term in *Madam Fickle* in 1677: ‘Banter him, banter him Toby. ‘Tis a conceited old Scarab, and will yield us excellent sport.’ Banter, therefore, deserves to remain in the squalor of the 17th Century.

The problem with ‘banter’ is, and has always been, that some people use it as an excuse to say something unpleasant and then distance themselves from it – ‘it was only banter!’ There is a big difference between friendly teasing and bullying and for this reason, banter will have its defenders. However, for others, banter has become associated with the latter rather than the former.

Unfortunately, through social media, banter seems to have become an acceptable, friendlier-sounding term for bullying. It attempts to hide inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour under the guise of some sort of British tradition. The truth of the matter, however, is that banter is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of young people. The ability to make fun of others through banter should not be more important than the right of others to feel safe. Bantering is therefore irresponsible and contrary to the values of a civilised society.

Therefore, let us be in no doubt the use of banter as a cover for harassment and bullying is simply not, and never will be, acceptable.

Unfortunately, banter is not restricted to Yorkshire County Cricket Club. When former Australian cricket captain, Michael Clarke, used an obscenity while warning an opposing player to expect a broken arm, he insisted it was only banter. Fortunately, cricket’s authorities saw things differently and Clarke was found guilty of breaching the International Cricket Council code of conduct.

Let us hope that cricket learns the lessons of the Azeem Rafiq affair and that banter and bullying and racism will finally come to an end in all sport. I hope, also, that the students of Mount House School, with their natural instincts for kindness and respect for others, will reject bantering and the harm to health and wellbeing it has the potential to cause.

I look forward to an Ashes series with the absence of banter. My love for the game of cricket hangs precariously in the balance.

Sport

This week students in Years 7 – 9 have continued to take part in health-related exercise lessons, with the focus being linked to agility, speed and balance. Students completed and now have individual results for the Illinois agility test, the 30m sprint test and the stork stand test (balance).

During games students in Years 7 – 10 have continued with either netball, basketball or badminton (depending on the rotation) and have further developed skills of the various sports. It has been great to watch some of the more experienced players in certain sports share their knowledge and understanding with their peers. Some students have demonstrated excellent leadership skills and there has been fantastic teamwork across the year groups. Students in Year 11 took part in an energetic





netball session where they had the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills and apply these within a match. Sixth Form students enjoyed another afternoon at the Golf Club working on their chipping technique on the chipping green. Our Sixth Form students are very competitive and are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to play golf.

Athletes of the week:

Year 7: Mikey Poulli & Solu Ngoka

Year 8: Harvey Thomas

Year 9: Katherine Casey & Robert Harris

Year 10: Aoife Thompson & Zac Webster

Year 11: Ayomide Soetan & Emmanuela Attakpah

Sixth Form: Sorcha Van Leeven & Vivek Desai

On Thursday 18th November students from Year 10 took part in matches against King's School. The Year 10 boys took part in a football match which saw us win 6 – 2, with Zac Webster scoring four goals. The girls in Year 10 took part in an end-to-end game of netball losing 17 – 16, with King's scoring in the last 30 seconds to take the win. This was a great afternoon of sport for our Year 10s who should be commended for their hard work and commitment.



Art

We wanted to share with you this wonderful final piece of artwork produced by Emily Hooker in Year 9 for a Pop Art project inspired by Pater Blake.



School Council

The School Council met on Monday 14th of November. It was a well-attended meeting chaired by our Head of School Alex Nicolaides, with minutes taken by Stefano Paternostro in Year 13. Representatives from Year 7 to 12 were present.

A number of excellent proposals and issues were discussed and debated. Details of the meeting will be circulated among Council representatives to enable them to feed back to their forms. Details will also be posted on the school notice board.

The next School Council meeting is due to be held in three weeks' time.

Reverse Calendar – starting 22nd November



It is a well-known fact, supported by years of research by psychiatrists, that doing things for others is one of the top three acts which brings you happiness and gives you a strong sense of well-being. Inspired by the Bishop St Nicholas in the 300s, now affectionally known as Santa Claus, Christmas is a time of giving not only to our loved ones but also to those less fortunate than us. One of Mount House' Values is **Support** and we take pride in how we support each other and the community around us.

Mount House has teamed up with Bounds Green Food Bank which is in desperate need of provisions in the lead up to Christmas. Each form will be given a chocolate advent

calendar and each student a selected date on the calendar. In order to open the window, that student needs to bring in two things for the food bank:

- I. an item of non-perishable food or a hygiene product. For example: a tin of food, packet of rice/pasta, box of cereal, UHT milk, flour etc... or toothpaste/ toothbrush, deodorant, sanitary product etc....
- II. a personal item that used to belong to them that they no longer need or want. For example: a scarf, jumper, shoes, reusable water bottle, device, toy, book etc... Please make sure that the item is of decent quality and in working order.

If each student and member of staff brings two items from now until the end of term, it will make such a difference to many people's lives over the Christmas period. Representatives from the Bounds Green Food Bank will come collect the goods on Tuesday 14th December. They are already so grateful for our donations and extend their heartfelt appreciation to our initiative.



If you wish to know about Bounds Green Food Bank, here is their website.

<https://www.boundsgreenfoodbank.org/>

Thank you in advance for your support
Mrs Clarkson and Ms Smyth



MHS Christmas Pantomime - A Christmas Carol

On Wednesday 15th December at 11:00-12:30pm, there will be a performance of *A Christmas Carol*.

Each House has been given a portion of the story to present in their own unique way:



Chimborazo

Act 1 – Scrooge at the Counting House, Mr. Marley



Everest

Act 2 – Ghost of Christmas Past – Scrooges Childhood, Early Work Life and Lost Love



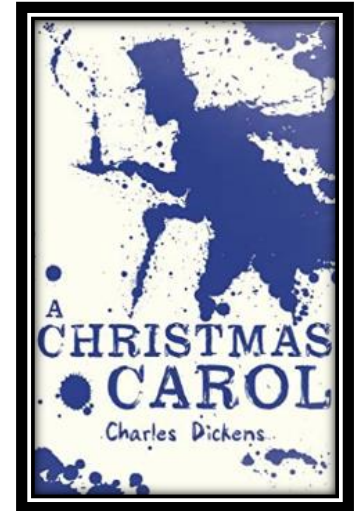
Olympus

Act 3 – Ghost of Christmas Present – Bob Cratchit's Home; Ghost of Christmas Future – Scrooges Tragic End



Rushmore

Act 4 – Scrooge's Transformation



Music

We have a team of peripatetic music teachers who have spaces at lunchtimes and after school to teach the following instruments:

- Piano
- Double Bass
- Woodwind (flute, saxophone, clarinet)
- Guitar
- Cello

There's information (and a booking form) on the [website here](#) and in school on the music lessons board near The Hive about all of these teachers. Please ask Mr Whitehouse if there is another instrument you would like to learn that's not on the list.



Friends of
MOUNT HOUSE

Quiz Night

Thanks again to all the parents, teachers and Sixth formers who came to our Quiz Night on 11th November. A good time was had by all and we look forward to holding another one in the Spring Term.

Our **Christmas Fair** is on **December 8th 2021** from 4 - 6pm (following the Carol Service).

There will be a raffle with fabulous prizes, mulled wine and mince pies, a Christmas stall, bottle & chocolate tombola, hoopla and more

****We are asking each family to donate a bottle and some chocolate towards the tombola. Please give to your children to bring in to school reception.***

*****We will be sending raffle books home on Monday and hope you will support us by buying the tickets. Below is a list of the amazing prizes.***



Christmas Raffle Prizes

*To be drawn at the Christmas Fair
on December 8th at 5:30 at Mount House School
£2 a ticket*

1. Macbook Air M1 13"
2. Apple Airpods with charging case
3. Gourmet dining Experience for 2
4. Bed and Breakfast Getaway for 2
5. Sculpd Pottery Starter Kit
6. JWesty Design Gift Set including Mug, Coaster and Notebook
7. £50 Amazon Gift Card
8. £35 Amazon Gift Card
9. £25 Amazon Gift Card
10. A Mixed Case of Italian Wine/Prosecco (6 bottles)
11. £25 Gift Certificate to Legends Kitchen of Cockfosters
12. £25 Gift Certificate to Barnet Art Gallery
13. £20 Costa Gift Card
14. Kew Candle



Thank you for your support



Careers

LinkedIn Masterclass with LinkedIn experts.

Turning a LinkedIn profile into an engaging reflection of your achievements and ambitions is an invaluable skill to pick up on your way to becoming highly employable.

Bian Salins

Leading LinkedIn EMEA and LATAM for Content Marketing Consulting

KL Daly

LinkedIn Agency Partner Lead | Social Impact - UK Lead

You will be hearing from Bian and KL on the 22nd November where you will be given all sorts of valuable advice like:

- Learning about the LinkedIn professional mindset.
- Why a strong and active LinkedIn profile is a valuable asset.
- How to build professional networks early.
- Why establish your before the graduate rush?
- How to interact with startups and industry leaders.
- Why display all your career achievements in one profile?

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DAYS HOURS MINUTES SECONDS

Spaces are limited so please apply now with the link below to secure your spot [↓](#)

[Apply now](#)


 EST 1892
LSBU

We wanted to spotlight three events at London South Bank University in the coming weeks. Don't miss out - book your place now!



**Higher and Degree
Apprenticeships**

20 Nov 11am-12pm

Online

[Register](#)

**Social Justice: Law and
Social Sciences
Subject Conference**

25 Nov 10-3.30pm

Southwark Campus

[Register](#)

**Student Finance and
Budgeting**

2 Dec 5-6pm

Online

[Register](#)

We can't wait to see you and your learners there!

For a full listing of our events please visit our webpage.

[Events](#)

Upcoming Events

- Wednesday 8th December** Carol Service at St Mary the Virgin Church
- Wednesday 8th December** MHS Christmas Fair 4pm to 6pm
- Monday 13th December** Sixth Form Open Morning (External) 11am to 1pm
- Wednesday 15th December** MHS Pantomime – A Christmas Carol
- Saturday 8th January 2022** Assessment Day for Year 7 entry in 2022
- Thursday 20th January 2022** Sixth Form Transition Evening 4pm – 6.30pm
(for internal Year 11s and external applicants)
- Friday 4th March 2022** General Open Day