



NEWSLETTER – 3RD DECEMBER

Message from Assistant Head Craig McCormick

In my early childhood, I lived in Glasgow and this was the time of year when the standard topic of conversation was that the “nights were fair drawing in”. Many years on, I still cannot get through a December day without commenting to my family about it and then promptly putting the “big light” on in the living room. Although London nights are slightly longer, the physical darkness is descending earlier, and the craving for light becomes far stronger. In complete contrast to the meteorological gloominess around us, December is a time of positivity, rejoicing and of light.



Advent gets its name from adventus, the Latin word for “arrival.” As the Christian church solidified in the fifth century A.D., so did traditions around December 25th. Historians have tracked the first formal Advent celebrations to northern Italy, where churchgoers observed a weeks-long preparation for Christmas that involved fasting, prayer, and reflection on Christian values. Eventually, that preparation became known as Advent. By the sixth century, Christians in France celebrated a five-week “St. Martin’s Lent” that included fasts.

In 21st Century Britain, for Christians, it’s a season of candlelight, reflection, and expectation—a chance to get ready for Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. For many, Advent is the perfect excuse to eat chocolate for breakfast as the doors of advent calendars are torn open before we leave for school or work.

The significance of light is also celebrated at this time of year in our Jewish communities. Hanukkah, which began last Sunday night and runs through until the evening of Monday, December 6th, is known otherwise as the “festival of lights”. It commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Greek army, and the subsequent miracle of rededicating the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and restoring its menorah, or lamp. For our Jewish communities, it is a period of gift-giving, candle lighting and a timely reminder that there is no such thing as too many sufganiyot.

While Christians are preparing for Midnight Mass and Jews are offloading the rest of the rugelach, our Sikh community will be preparing to celebrate the martyrdom of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh with services in gurdwaras up and down the land.

At Mount House, we are also celebrating and we have a list of activities in the run-up to Christmas and the eventual end of term on December 15th. However, celebration and light do not exist solely in December, regardless of if you are of religious faith or not. We celebrate the achievements of our students every day they are here throughout the year and we will continue to do so. We shine light on those who achieve academically, who step up for our community, who achieve on the sports field and those who support their friends.

Stand Up! Education Against Discrimination

Today we welcomed Stand Up! Education to deliver a workshop/presentation to our Year 9 students on Anti-Semitism.

Through interactive workshops and drawing on the unique knowledge of many partners in the hate crime field, Stand Up! empowers young people to act against all forms of discrimination, racism, antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred, while developing their sense of social responsibility in their local communities and British society as a whole.

The workshop's specific aims were to:

- Emphasise British values and educate students about the Equality Act (2010) and different protected characteristics in the UK
- Provide a safe, informal space for young people to explore historical and current issues that affect their lives
- Define racism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hate and other forms of discrimination
- Introduce the basic tenets of Judaism and Islam
- Discuss and break down stereotypes
- Present verified and reliable hate crime statistics
- Sensitively explore young people's experiences through case studies and real-life incidents
- Analysing what constitutes antisemitic and anti-Muslim rhetoric within the context of conversations surrounding the conflict in the Middle East
- Provide young people with skills and tools to responsibly challenge hate crime, empowering them to become 'Upstanders' in society



Celebrating our Year 11 Students

Last Friday, a special assembly was held for the Year 11 students to celebrate their achievement this term. Firstly, the students who recently celebrated their 16th birthday were acknowledged. Then, each student was also handed a personal postcard for their hard work this term. Lastly, students were asked to read out comments made by their teachers and support teachers. Below are some extracts from the teachers' comments.

'I think it would be nice to recognise the new students that have joined Year 11 at a difficult time because they have managed to settle well and work hard. This is also partly due to the whole year group for being kind and welcoming!'

Mrs Colebrook


'I have taught the Year 11 Physics/Chemistry group just for the first half term so far, but I am so impressed by their maturity and attitude to learning. We have covered a very difficult topic and the test results were excellent.'

Mrs Kazim

'My Year 11 Classics class are FAB-U-LOUS! I tell them as often as possible how much I enjoy teaching them, due to their exemplary behaviour, dedication to study, enthusiasm of the content and generally loveliness! They impress me daily with the extra information they have learnt, and I love speaking with them outside of lessons about books they have read or documentaries they have watched. The revision they completed for their November exams reflects the Greek proverb "whatever is good to know is difficult to learn."

Mrs Fallon

'I love my Year 11 group. They make me smile and I would love to sit down and have a good old gossip with them!!!! They are working so hard in French and even though we have a lot to get through each lesson, they never moan really. Occasionally maybe, but they understand they are working towards a goal and I will try my very best to help them get the grades they deserve this summer. They are all lovely girls, polite (but sassy!) and a credit to their parents.'

Love them 

Mrs Lazouras

'It has been wonderful to be part of the Year 11 team this year and be able to work with such a lovely group of students who also have a great sense of fun! You all definitely know how to keep us on our toes. A special mention to those of you who have taken on the role of leaders for the House of Equality club, you have been inspiring and your enthusiasm has been a joy to see! Choosing the leadership roles for our form has also been one of my highlights!'

Mrs Allman

What can I say? You are my children. You bring me so much joy and having known you individually, I see each one of you as special and unique. To me, no one is more special than the other. You are all equal and loving. I am proud to say if there is a prize for the happiest

Head of Year, it would surely go to me because you bring a smile to my face every day and a fantastic reason to come to work.

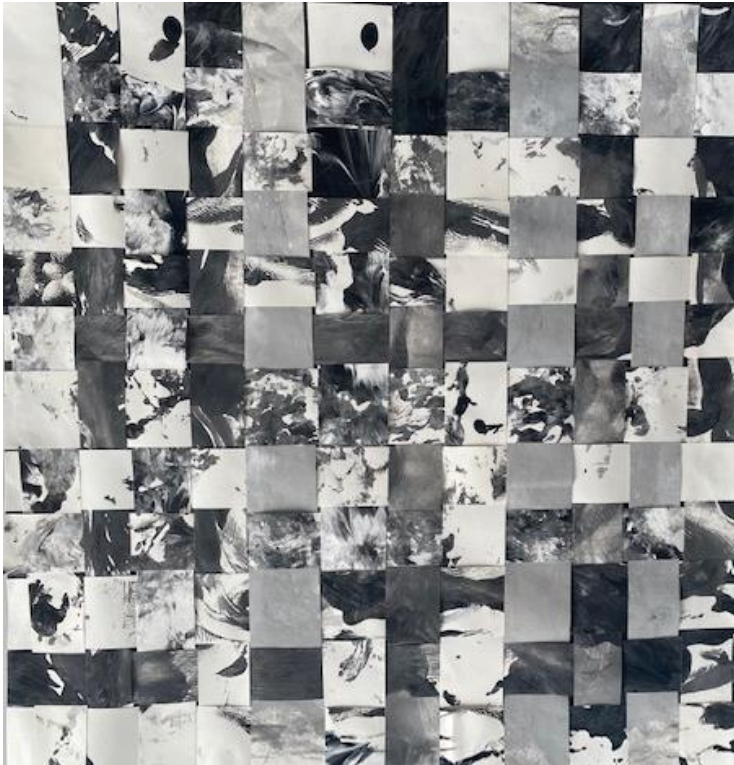
Keep up the good work and let us perfect the behaviour aspect and soon you will be the envy of all the other years. Love you all mucho.'

Mrs Da Rocha

Thank you, parents, for your lovely children, Mrs Da Rocha

Art

A fantastic piece of artwork was created by Mikey (Year 7) using a 'weaving' method.



Careers

The London School of Economics are running [Discovery Sessions](#) for prospective undergraduate students on a fortnightly basis and operate a [Live Chat](#) service Monday-Friday. Their [Virtual Undergraduate Open Day](#) enables prospective students to access a number of resources and materials, including videos recorded by academic departments, current students and support services.

Please click on the links for further information.



Sport

This week students in Years 7 – 9 have continued to take part in flag football. They have further developed their knowledge of quarterback throwing and wide receiving and have demonstrated an understanding of the basic rules of the game.

Students in Years 7 – 10 have taken part in their rotation of activities during Games this week (basketball, netball and badminton) and it has been great to see many of the students apply skills learnt in lessons at clubs this week.

Year 11 students took part in netball with the GCSE PE group preparing for their practical moderation and Sixth Form students had a double session at Old Fold Manor Golf Club whilst on the course.

Athletes of the Week are:

Year 7	Keensa Hatch
Year 8	Zachary Hodgins
Year 9	Meric Duymaz
Year 10	Olivia Gray & Isabella O’Sullivan
Year 11	Aimee Isaacs
Sixth Form	Jackey Ke

COVID

Please note that due to recent changes with regards to COVID we have made the decision that students should wear their PE kit to school on the day in which they have ‘Games afternoons’ in order to prevent close contact in the changing rooms. Students must please wear tracksuit bottoms or leggings with shorts underneath if they wish. The school building is ventilated where possible and can be cold.

Year 7 – Monday
 Year 8 – Tuesday
 Year 9 – Thursday
 Year 10 – Friday
 Sixth Form - Wednesday

Students should come in to school wearing their school uniform on the days in which they have ‘PE lessons’ and change at school as normal (the class sizes are smaller for PE lessons and therefore there is more space within the changing rooms).

U13 A & B Boys Football vs Aldenham

The boys travelled away to Aldenham on Wednesday 1/12/21. They went in to both games very positive and ready to give their all. Unfortunately both results didn’t go our way but star performances must go to SoluChukwu Ngoka and Enis Mehmet.



Mount House School B Team 0-6

Mount House A Team 1-4

U16 Girls Football vs Ashmole

On Thursday 2/12/21 we took a team over to Ashmole to play in the League. The opposition were a very strong outfit and seemed very confident. However, our girls were having none of it and put up a very good fight. Unfortunately, the result also didn't go our way but well done to Lillie Hiscock for a fantastic goal and 'Girl of the Game' goes to Isabella O'Sullivan.



Events

Christmas Jumper Day - Wednesday, December 15th.

All staff and students are encouraged to wear their normal school uniform with a special Christmas twist on Wednesday, December 15th.

Please come in a Christmas Jumper as opposed to your normal school jumper (the rest of your uniform must be as a normal school day). You are also welcome to wear some festive headgear as well (for example a Christmas hat).

We are asking for a £1 charitable donation from all staff and students who wish to take part.



Reverse Calendar

Mount House has teamed up with Bounds Green Food Bank which is in desperate need of provisions in the lead up to Christmas. Each was given a chocolate advent calendar and each student a selected date on the calendar.



Thank you to all the students and staff members who have been bringing in lots of items which 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 for your support
Mrs Clarkson and Ms Smyth



Christmas Film – A Boy Called Christmas



There's nothing like a family Christmas film to get both children and adults into the spirit of Christmas. The new film 'A Boy Called Christmas' is both magical and enchanting and has an all-star cast, including one of our Mount House students, Isabella O'Sullivan in Year 10. The film is about an ordinary young boy called Nikolas who sets out on an extraordinary adventure into the snowy north in search of his father who is on a

quest to discover the fabled village of the elves, Elfhelm. Taking with him a headstrong reindeer called Blitzen and a loyal pet mouse, Nikolas soon meets his destiny in this magical, comic and endearing story that proves nothing is impossible. Adapted from the bestselling book by Matt Haig. The film is currently available on Sky and is showing at cinema chains including Showcase, Everyman and Empire throughout the festive season.

Christmas Cards

Don't forget to order your Christmas Cards. All proceeds will go towards the charity 'Noah's Ark Children's Hospice'. <https://www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk/contact-us/>

You can purchase a mixed pack of 8 cards at £5 each or a mixed pack of 20 cards at £10 each. If you would like to -pre-order please email Fiona Coope on schooladminofficer@mounthouse.org.uk and you or your child can collect them from reception. Please send the correct money in an envelope. They will also be on sale at the Christmas Fair on the 8th December from 4pm to 6pm.

Your support is appreciated for this worthy cause.



Reindeer and Robins by Evie



Christmas Bauble by Emily



Pride, Hope and Joy by Roshan



Merry Christmas by Nancy



Covid Update from Matt Kerr

With the news that the Omicron COVID variant has arrived in the UK, I am writing to update you on the precautionary steps we are taking in school. As ever, our approach is to maximise the number of students that can safely learn in the building with their teachers.

- 1) As you know, the Department for Education have recommended that pupils wear masks in communal areas in school – please reinforce this message at home. Should your child wish to wear a mask in lessons then they are very welcome to do so. We will continue to leave doors and windows open to maximise ventilation within the school building. Please ensure that your child brings a mask to school every day. Masks are available from reception priced at £1 should anyone forget their mask; proceeds will go to charity. If your child is exempt from wearing a mask, please ensure you have contacted your child’s Form Tutor to let them know.
- 2) In addition, please continue to complete your twice weekly lateral flow tests on a Sunday and Wednesday evening. As a community, we have a number of individuals with underlying health conditions so it is important that we look after each other by completing this testing. New test kits can be obtained from reception.
- 3) The government have also changed the guidance regarding public transport. It is now mandatory for face masks to be worn on buses and trains and this change is likely to be followed by a greater enforcement including fines for non-compliance. With this in mind, I would be grateful if you could speak to your child about the importance of wearing a mask whilst travelling to school.
- 4) The Department for Education has asked secondary schools to be ready for return to school testing on site in January 2022. After this “test on return”, students should continue to test in line with government guidelines. We are preparing for this and will send out more details when they are available.

Finally, if your child is 12 or over and has yet to receive their COVID vaccination, you can book this using the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

School Bus

Please remind your children that they need to wear their mask (unless exempt) for the entire bus journey to and from school. They should not move about the bus during the journey, as this distracts the driver. Please be aware that students from Mount House who take the bus are to behave as they would do in school and are to be polite and considerate to the bus driver.



Just under a week to go until the Christmas Mini Fair and Grand Raffle!! Please bring your facemask!

Thank you to all the families who supported us by sending in their raffle tickets and bottles and chocolates for the tombolas. All sold Raffle tickets must be returned to the school by December 7th in order to be included in the draw. There are additional tickets available and they can be bought at the Christmas Fair at 4pm after the Carol Service

For those who are still considering it, you need only buy what you can and return the unsold books to Reception in an envelope so that we may keep selling. We have lots of wonderful prizes.

We are still collecting Chocolate and Bottles for the Tombolas and would like to thank all those who have already sent in their contributions.

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. Mixed Case of Italian Wine/Prosecco (6 bottles)
11. Family pass for 4 at Aldenham Country Park
12. £40 Gift Card at Everyman Cinemas Barnet
13. £25 Gift Certificate to Legends Kitchen of Cockfosters
14. £25 Gift Certificate to Barnet Art Gallery
15. £25 Costa Gift Card
16. Gift Voucher for 6 weeks class for 2 at Footworks Dance Academy
17. Gift Voucher for 1 Class at North London Yoga Centre
18. Gift Voucher for 1 Class at North London Yoga Centre
19. Kew Candle





Upcoming Events

- Wednesday 8th December** Carol Service at St Mary the Virgin Church (students only)
- Wednesday 8th December** MHS Christmas Fair 4pm to 6pm
- Wednesday 15th December** MHS Pantomime – A Christmas Carol (students only)
- Wednesday 15th December** Christmas Jumper Day – Please bring £1
- Saturday 8th January 2022** Assessment Day for Year 7 entry in 2022
- Thursday 20th January 2022** Sixth Form Transition Evening 4pm – 6.30pm
(for all current Sixth Formers, internal Year 11s and external applicants)
- Friday 4th March 2022** Open Day for prospective students