

NEWSLETTER – 24TH MARCH

MESSAGE FROM MR JON COOPER, SENIOR DEPUTY HEAD

We often hear about the negative impact of social media, and about how our young people (and let's face it lots of us older people too!) are becoming addicted to mobile phones. In line with all the research about the impact of mobiles on students' wellbeing and learning during school time, we remain a mobile-free school during school hours.

However, social media is a massive part of our world and the use of technology and virtual worlds continues to increase. Parents and schools are naturally cautious about this fast-paced change and how best to support our children to use social media for good. Questions I often get asked are, Don't they stop talking to their friends because they're so involved with the apps on their phones? And, How can we help children be "real" rather than "filtered"? These are difficult problems for us all to tackle, and it is important for us to give children the tools to use mobiles and social media healthily, scaffolding their use and being open about what is accessed and when.

This week there was a workshop for parents and all our students enjoyed workshops called "Healthy Selfie" from PAPAYA (Parents Against Phone Addiction in Young Adults). This organisation was set up by parents who were entering the world of mobile phones as their children transitioned to secondary school. A number of years on, many of their children have been through secondary school and they are experts in advising children and parents about how best to harness a positive relationship with mobile phones. PAPAYA promotes wellness and improved mental health in adolescents by **helping young people get a better balance with technology.**

So, what about the positive side of social media? One that you might not consider is that it can build self-confidence. It can provide a source of support and an ability to communicate with people who are important to us who we might otherwise not have such access to. For anyone involved in healthy relationships with friends or family, online communication tends to be positive and supportive. For our children often the content posted is of a visual nature and this is what we see them most engaged with – it is also therefore something they can choose to project to the world. They post selfies, TikToks, and YouTube videos of themselves singing or talking, but do these reflect their realities, and what do these posts reveal about their self-esteem? They learn about feelings—their own and their friends' and





this can be hugely positive. The important thing however is to be real, truthful, kind and helpful. If a post is not (be that a selfie or a reply), then why post it at all?

In this sense, social media has the potential to complement the normal growth and development of adolescents. It is easy for us to assume that using social media means we disengage from in-person communication, and this is of course a risk. But equally it is there and we need to scaffold social media use and understanding for our children so they can move past that. Some social media interactions can benefit youth struggling with identity, helping them find others with similar experiences and reducing feelings of loneliness or discomfort. Group members frequently compliment and encourage each other. Since comments are visible to everyone in their social groups, those who post and those who comment feel supported. This of course is where the risks also come.

Because social media, by its very nature, can eliminate face-to-face interaction, it sometimes offers a sense of power through anonymity. When used with ignorance or malice this can give a sense to feel empowered to say whatever they want, regardless of how their messaging might affect others. Sometimes they do it to hurt or shame classmates, friends, or to make someone jealous. And sometimes they do it just because they can. Indeed, even the realisation of how many people see their posts is something that some children do not always grasp when posting negative things.

It is therefore the role of parents and school to help give the tools to use mobile phones in a controlled manner and to teach about the power of social media. If we expect children to show respect and kindness in person, they should expect the same behaviour online. Even though monitoring social media usage might seem to violate our children's privacy, parents need to remember that adolescents don't always make the best decisions. Key advice PAPAYA gave was to talk to our children about how the anonymity of social media might make them feel powerful and willing to hurt others or feel hurt by someone else. It is about online etiquette (netiquette apparently!) and being proactive before they hurt themselves or others. As part of this PAPAYA advise that parents should educate themselves and their children on how to safely navigate social media sites. Their webpage has many useful tips and updates <https://www.papayaparents.com/solutions>

Some ideas worth reflecting on are: Have you ever noticed your teenager change or hide their screens when an adult is in the room? Find out why. Pay attention to any unexplained changes in who your child has been contacting. Those changes might be clues that problems are brewing. If you wonder about changes in your child's behaviour after spending time online or an increase in time spent on social media, don't ignore it. Be proactive and arm yourself with knowledge using groups such as PAPAYA to aid that.

Because if we can guide our young people properly then all those positive aspects of social media are there for the taking. The ability to talk to a best friend who has moved away; to chat to an unwell relative; to hear inspirational stories; and to get positive support and advice. But it is all too easy to move down the self-destruct route. Structured time when phones are used and when phones are put away is a simple tip that helps this, but open and

honest access to our children's phones is the more difficult but powerful support you can have for your children. I have not done full justice to the advice we all received from PAPAYA this week but equally these were some of the key take-aways. One tip I liked was to download Forest App where if a phone is left for a given amount of time without being checked, a tree is planted. Given mobiles remain untouched at school for 7 hours a day we can both help our balance with technology whilst helping the environment – a win/win! For further advise please do explore <https://www.papayaparents.com>

HEAD OF SCHOOL ELECTIONS

Last week students and staff voted to elect a new Head of School and Deputy Head of School. The three candidates gave speeches at a whole school assembly on Monday and we would like to congratulate them on their presentations. They also had to undergo a rigorous interview with Miss Smyth and Mrs MacDonald!

We are delighted to announce that for the school year 2023 – 2024, the new Head of School will be **Rosa Scott Tatam** and **Katie Gallagher** will be Deputy Head of School. We wish them every success in the coming year.

We would also like to take this opportunity to record our thanks to the outgoing team of **Mara McNally** and **Sorcha Van Leeven** for all their efforts during the past year.

HOUSE FOCUS

We've been hearing from all our School Houses this month and this week, last but not least, it's Rushmore.



My name is Abi da Rocha. I have been working at Mount House for the past six years. I became the Head of Rushmore House in September. I wear many hats at Mount House. I am a French and Spanish teacher, the cookery teacher, the Head of Year 11, and Head of House.

You may wonder why I decided to go for the Head of Rushmore House post. My eldest daughter was the student Head of House of Lisieux when the school used to be St. Martha's School and my second daughter was also a member after it became Rushmore. As a family, we were very competitive and I remember how I used to run around with my daughters, helping with the various competitions. We had lots of fun with the activities.



When the Head of House post became vacant, I just had to go for it. And here am I. To me Rushmore House reminds me of a family community. That was and still is today my vision of what a House should be. We strive hard together and work towards a common goal to win by supporting each other through participation.

I have a fantastic community in Rushmore with multi-talented students ranging from year 7 to year 13 and staff which make us unique. I am very privileged to have staff who are so supportive to me. They include Mr. Peara who is like my deputy, Mr Nancarrow, Mrs Dawson, Miss Dio, Miss Wong and Mrs Kazim. To top it off, my student Head of House, Imogen Moore, is amazing and always at hand to help the younger ones. To the parents of the House community, thank you for your wonderful children and your support.

We are currently looking to move away from the name Rushmore as it is linked with racism which does not denote a feeling of togetherness. Although it seems it is taking a long time to rename the House, I believe that when we do, it will be the perfect name for our House.

My name is Imogen Moore and I have attended Mount House School for four years as I joined in Year 9. I am currently in Year 12, studying History, PE and Textiles - three very different subjects, however I am enjoying them all equally.

My family and I take yearly ski trips to France and from this I have developed a great passion for skiing, which has led me to join the Hemel Hempstead Race Club, where I train weekly.

The future visions I have for Rushmore House are to be extremely supportive to each other, something I feel very strongly about as it helps each student to reach their full potential. Showing kindness towards one another contributes to a positive learning environment. From this I hope that students across all year groups can be friends with one another.





PE REPORT

Core

In tennis this week our students have focused on improving rally duration and game play, as well as the difficult skill of overarm serving with consistent results. Despite some challenging wind to contend with, they all showed brilliant progression.

U13 Tournament report by Santino Vazquez Williams Year 8

On Tuesday 27th March, Mount House Year 7 and 8 played at Ascot in an U13 football tournament. Despite multiple games we did not win it, but the team did its best.

The first match wasn't our best performance, but we fought hard. The result was 1-0 to them. In the second match we played so much better, and we were using the width of the pitch more. Solu made some outstanding saves and well done to the defence. The end score was 0-0 – a clean sheet. In the third game, our last before lunch, Mr Mather came to coach us. We battled hard but unluckily we lost 3-0.

We had lunch for around 45mins and had a kick about. Miss Buckland came back from the officials and told us some good news - we made it to the plate competition and came third in our group.

This was a must win game. Everyone was ready for the match. The match was action-packed and had lots of excitement. It was so unlikely, but they scored it the last kick of the game. Solu had fingertips to the ball, but it bashed into the back of the net.

Player of the tournament: Solu Ngoka

U15 Tournament Report by Emir Yurtseven, Year 10

We arrived at LVS Ascot at approximately 9:30 am, ready for an eventful football tournament. We lined up for our first game as follows:

GK – Emir Yurtseven
CB – Michael Miltiadous and Krrish Patel
CM – Ruzgar Suyur (Captain) and Luke Webster
ST – Leon Gradica
Sub - Junior Gyami

We started our first game against Shoreham College with a 1-0 win with a goal by Leon, assisted by Luke. Going into our second game, confidence was high as we defeated the home team LVS Ascot 1-0 with yet another goal by our star striker Leon, assisted by Luke again. Our final group stage game was against Alton school where we were victorious with a 2-0 win, goals from Leon and Luke, with some brilliant footballing ability by Krrish and Michael to assist the two goals.

Topping our group, with three wins and three clean sheets, we entered our quarter final game against Radnor House School where they edged the game with a 2-0 win, knocking us out of the champions cup.





Overall, a thank you to Mr Mather and Miss Buckland for the opportunity.

Player of the tournament: Leon Gradica.



Athletes of the week:

- Year 7: Nikos Zonias
- Year 8: Peter Maina
- Year 9: George Paschalis
- Year 10: Lillie Hiscock
- Year 11: Oluwajoba Jabaru

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
 Mount House School, U15	3	3	0	0	4	0	4	9
 Shoreham College, U15	3	2	0	1	4	2	2	6
 Alton School	3	0	1	2	0	4	-4	1
 LVS Ascot, U15 B Team	3	0	1	2	1	3	-2	1

Finborough School v Shoreham College / Boys Y8 / 1: 0 21.03.2023 11:40 / F



Upcoming lunchtime clubs:

Mount House Teacher and Student Wimbledon

Welcome to this year's Mount House Teacher and Student Wimbledon competition. This competition is open to all members of Mount House School. It is a knockout doubles tournament taking place on the tennis courts during Wednesday lunch time. All you need is a double partner and a willingness to compete. To sign up please find the sign-up sheet on the front of the staffroom door, you can sign up as either a pair or as a single player and be given a double partner.



Created by Lance Dudding

Mount House School Lord's 5s

This is the inaugural Mount House cricket 5s competition. This is a franchise league where each team will play each other before going into a knockout tournament to crown the winners of MHS Lord's.

The games will take place on a Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime. Each team will have either a teacher or Year 11 students, then one student from each year group. The sign-up sheet will be placed on the staff room door. Each week the league table will be put into the newsletter and onto the PE notice board.

The teams are the following: Team Brathwaite (West Indies), Team Kohli (India), Team Morgan (England), Team Warne (Australia), Team Khan (Pakistan), Team Dhoni (India), Team



Williamson (New Zealand). All the teams have been named after legends of the game from around the world.

The rules are as follows:

- Each innings will be 5 overs long.
- Scoring runs:
 - Runs can be scored by running between the stumps
 - Hitting the back wall with a bounce = 4 runs
 - Hitting the back wall without a bounce = 6 runs and out
 - Hitting the side wall with a bounce = 1 run
 - Hitting the side wall without a bounce = 2 runs
- You can get out in the following ways:
 - Bowled
 - Run out
 - Caught out
 - Caught out off the wall when the ball has not bounced, must be caught one handed.
- Each player can only bowl one over
- Once you are out, you are out. You do not lose 5 runs and stay in.
- If your team is late arriving, then you forfeit batting an over for every minute you are late.

Created by Anna Collington





BAKING CLUB

This week, students made Easter brownie bites. It was great to see students adapt the recipe, adding their own creative touches to fillings and toppings. There were amazing smells coming from the cookery room and some delicious bakes.

Well done to everyone who has taken part in baking club this term. Those who have attended have developed some key skills that can be used when baking and some overall kitchen skills.

Wellbeing Baking

I have really enjoyed working with students in Years 8 & 11 during Wellbeing Baking Club this term. The club has given our Year 11 students an opportunity to develop baking skills, leadership skills and it has given them a sense of enjoyment during Thursday lunch time. Our Year 8 students have had the opportunity to develop their baking skills, work with a small group of peers in their year group and form a rapport with older members of the school community and - let's not forget - everyone who takes part gets to enjoy the treats they have made, either at the end of the day or sometimes there and then. I look forward to spending more time with this group of students next term.

Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde

NEURODIVERSITY WEEK

This week we celebrated Neurodiversity Week. Across the school students have taken part in activities such as sewing, colouring, board games and visually-impaired sports. Some have taken part in an 'inspirational person activity' which required them to carry out research and five students led assembly with Mrs Hillcoat-Hyde and Mrs Wooldridge.

During the assembly, students shared their knowledge of the concept of the brain and its differences, and they identified six people who are neurodivergent but who have made a great impact in the world and their profession. They celebrated the work of students across the school, including those who attended the Barnet Dance Festival and those who came second in the Panathlon. A certificate was awarded to Hailey Boakye for completing her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The message shared at the end of assembly was that we must celebrate those who think or see differently and that we as individuals we can start by being kind, understanding, inclusive and supportive towards everyone. **We must never forget that we have the power to make a positive difference to someone who may be having a difficult time.**





NEWS FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Charlene recorded the Purcell master piece 'Music for a While' for her GCSE music coursework.



8MU2 performed the jazz classic 'Moondance' for Wednesday's assembly. The audience enjoyed this polished rendition, which included drum solos from Peter, Mikey and Amirali.



EASTER WORK EXPERIENCE



Young Professionals have a fantastic Easter STEM Work Experience taking place on Wednesday 12th April from, 9am-3pm. The event is with 4 FTSE Engineering and Science based firms and is open to all students aged 14-21.

Are you interested in pursuing a career in engineering, science, or anything to do with STEM? Would you like to gain some rare and invaluable work experience with multiple global FTSE companies? If so, we have the perfect opportunity for you!

We are excited to announce that on Wednesday, 12th of April from 9am-3pm, we will be hosting a virtual work experience day with Spectris, Malvern Panalytical, HBK and Servomex! Spectris are a FTSE company and own all the other science and engineering-based companies mentioned above. Collectively they operate in over 30 countries, employ over 7,500 people globally, and have generated a revenue of over a billion pounds as of 2022!

Each of the companies Spectris owns specialises in a very specific areas of science and engineering and during this work experience day you will get the opportunity to take part in workshops and network with each of their companies.

Participating in an event such as this will not only allow you to learn more about industry, but it will also give you a unique opportunity to gain valuable experience that will be beneficial for adding value to your CV and LinkedIn profile. This will show employers (including Spectris) that you are proactive and looking to develop your skillset before entering the workplace, which can help you to be recognised as an ambitious and motivated individual as well as allowing you to stand out from other students.

Please sign up for this incredible opportunity, by using the link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6L87ZZK>



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DATES AND TIMES

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THURSDAY 6TH APRIL - 10AM-2PM

TUESDAY 11TH APRIL - 10AM-2PM

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4-16 YEARS OLD



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**End of Term**

Term ends at 4pm on Wednesday 29th March. Buses will leave at 4.15pm on Monday 27th, Tuesday 28th and Wednesday 29th. There will be no after-school clubs on Tuesday 28th and Wednesday 29th.

We wish all our students, parents, carers and staff a happy and relaxing Easter holidays. We'll see you again in school on Monday 17th April.

