



**ASPIRATION** 



RESPECT



**EXCELLENCE** 

#### w/c 11 December 2023 Week B



It was an absolute joy to attend our Christmas Concert this week! The event featured various group and solo performances, both instrumental and vocal. I am always so impressed with our student's musical talents

and confidence to showcase these in front of large audiences. The hall was also filled with some collective carol singing. Thank you so much to our Performing Arts team and students for giving us a wonderful festive experience, and thank you to families for supporting the evening too.

Also, this week, Year 11 have made a splendid start to their pre-public exams season, and these continue next week. Alongside the logistics of organising a year group for examinations, working in partnership with the NHS, nearly 1000 young people received their flu vaccinations. Year 8 flew to Neverland with a visit to the West End to see 'Peter Pan Goes Wrong', which is a comedy version of the children's story. A great time was had by all and there was much laughter!

Wishing everyone a fantastic weekend.

#### **M A Grantham**

Head of School

#### **HOUSE POINTS**

Mapledurham 63053 Grove 61545 Rosehill 65000 Caversham 62516

#### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Term dates can be found here: 2023/24

Term 2

All Week: Y11 PPEs

Fri 15 Dec: Y12 Brookfield's Party

#### POPPY APPEAL: A message from RBL

Many thanks and well done for helping with our Appeal. Highdown School have raised a total of £219.94.

Without your help, we would be unable to continue our vital welfare and benevolent work.

Debbie Chapman, RBL Poppy Appeal Organiser









Follow us

















#### Information

#### The Health Bus

NHS Berkshire Healthcare have launched their very first <u>Health Bus</u> to bring their services direct to our community.

The bus will be at Tesco Portman Road on Friday 15 December from 9.30-11.30am. Parents need to complete a form to be able to access this clinic and it is appointment only. If you are having any difficulties, please contact:

westschoolimms@berkshire.nhs.uk.

#### **SEND Local Offer Newsletter**

The new look <u>SEND Local Offer newsletter winter</u> <u>edition is here</u>. This edition is packed full of information, blogs, updates from the sector and much more. Please feel free to send any feedback on the latest edition or suggestions for future editions to <u>fis@reading.gov.uk</u>.



#### ParentMail Accounts

We respectfully request all parents and carers regularly check their student's dinner money balances to ensure they are in credit.

At peak times, around mid-morning, it can take up to 2 hours for the monies to show on the account.

Therefore, if you need to top them up, please allow time for these to be processed. We have found topping up in the evenings to be the quickest way to add monies to the account.

#### **Absence Reporting**

Please notify us if your son/daughter is unable to attend either online or onsite lessons due to illness or other reason.

Please report all absences using the Class Charts app rather than by telephone, email or ParentMail. We hope parents will find this route much more straightforward and efficient. You can find out more here:

https://www.highdown.reading.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=1803&type=pdf.

#### **Problems with Class Charts**

If you are experiencing issues with accessing your Class Charts account, please contact office@highdown.reading.sch.uk

#### The Highdown Herald

The latest edition of our student led newspaper, The Highdown Herald is now available to view of our <u>website</u>.

### **Christmas Activities in Reading**

Reading's Family Information Service (FIS) has created a <u>Christmas activities page</u> on its website. The page will be updated regularly and features a wealth of information on events and activities happening in Reading over the festive period.





It's Christmas Time - Parents guide to help keep children safe online

# It's Christmas Time!



A Parent's Guide to Social Media



A Parent's Guide to Sharing Pictures



A Parent's Guide to Gaming



A Parent's Guide to Online Grooming



scan the QR code with your phone's camera to see the guides on our website



A Parent's Guide to Live Streaming



A Parent's Guide to Online Influencers



A Parent's Guide to Fake News



A Parent's Guide to Privacy Settings





# Scan the QR code to find out more.

# Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.

**Parents** please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

Skips Educational Email: info@skipsed.com Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Skips

www.skipssafetynet.org

Developed in partnership with

It's always best to be

prepared

Many parents
may be planning
to give electronic
gadgets to their
children this
festive period.

Our guide is
designed to help

parents take a

realistic approach

to help keep their children safe when using the internet, social media and playing online games.







#### **Courses for Parents**

World of Emotions (WoE)
12 January 2024, 9.30-12.30pm

Free online session via MS Teams. Anyone who is closely involved in a child who attends an MHST school, is welcome to attend. See list here.

World of Emotions is not a parenting course, but rather an opportunity for parents/carers to gain more skills to understand and support their child/young person's wellbeing. It will cover a range of emotions and difficulties (e.g., low mood/depression, anxiety, self-harm, disordered eating, challenging behaviour towards others etc).

Complete the <u>MHST Referral Form</u>, saying you would like to attend.

Raising your child's self-esteem 23 January 2024, 9.30-11am.

**Free online session via MS Teams.** For any Reading parent/carer of a child aged 5-18.

Is your child struggling with feelings of low self-worth? Do they not recognise their strengths? compare themselves to others? lack self-confidence? This 90 minute MHST workshop is aimed at parents, carers and professionals. We will explore the causes of low self-esteem and discuss strategies to raise self-esteem and build positive self-worth.

**To book complete this form:** <a href="https://forms.office.com/">https://forms.office.com/</a> e/izupGmac24

Understanding and supporting attention for learning 25 January 2024, 9:30am – 12:30pm. Free in person

Venue: St Johns Primary School, 121-147 Orts Rd, Reading RG1 3JN. For parents/carers with children of school age in a Reading school.

This workshop is targeted towards parents/carers whose children struggle with attention. This may include children who have a diagnosis of ADHD / ADD but is also open to parents of children who struggle with attention but do not have a diagnosis. The workshop explores how attention difficulties may present, support strategies and how SEN support may look in school.

To book or for more information email Wilma.Williams@brighterfuturesforchildren.org Helping your child with fears and worries 31 January 2024, 9.30- 12.00pm.

**Free online session via MS Teams.** For parents/carers of a child attending any Reading School that is aged 5-12 years.

Teachers, parents and carers. Cognitive Behavioural Strategies to help children to overcome their anxiety. The approaches in the workshop are designed to help with "irrational" fears, for example, specific phobias, separation anxiety or generalised anxiety. Not intended for children and young people with an autism diagnosis or are pre verbal.

To book or for more information email Wilma. Williams@brighterfuturesforchildren.org.

#### **Courses for Parents**



## January 2024

## Newsletter

## LET'S FACE THE NEW YEAR!

Tuesday 16th Jan 19:00 -20:00 FREE



#### **FREE SESSION**

#### Cannabis Awareness

Get the facts so you can have the conversation

Thursday 4th Jan 19:00 - 21:00

£24



#### Supporting a Child with ADHD

Challenging stereotypes, explaining what ADHD is and offering a range of interventions that can make lasting differences.

Monday 8th Jan 19:00 - 21:00 £24



# Autism: Improving Communication

Small changes in how you communicate, lead to huge improvements with your ability to communicate with someone on the spectrum.

Tuesday 9th Jan 19:00 - 21:00

£24



#### Getting a Good Night

Screen Addiction, insomnia, energy drinks and more. Get a range of extreely useful ideas on how to get quality sleep.

facefamilyadvice.co.uk.

info@facefamilyadvice.co.uk

# Supporting a Child with ADHD The extra session you asked for!



Challenge the stereotypes and get the facts with Jane Keyworth

Monday 18th December (7pm to 9pm) £24

Available to book now via the website

facefamilyadvice.co.uk

#### **The Christmas Fayre**

On Friday, 1 December Highdown's Houses (Rosehill, Caversham, Grove Mapledurham) hosted a Christmas Fayre, alongside the PTA, in the Walled Garden. It was an incredibly successful event with each House selling Christmas decorations and food. All money raised will be given to the Houses' chosen charities. The total raised has not yet been confirmed but several hundred pounds was raised! It was wonderful to see students mixing across year groups with all involved enjoying the carol singing, led by Miss Jefferies, and the photobooth provided by Miss Woronkowicz, with our Santa for the day Matthew Callow from Year 12.

Mr Lester



#### A Message From The PTA

The PTA had a lovely time at the Christmas Fayre last Friday. There was a great atmosphere and the children enjoyed themselves at the various stalls. A huge thank you to all our volunteers and Elaine Robinson from the library and Lisa Jackson who helped on the PTA refreshment stall.

# Scouts Three Tower Hike Won by Year 9 Highdown Trio

On 14 October, three Highdowners from Year 9, Michael P, Zachary D and Samuel B competed in the Scouts' Three Tower Hike event in Pangbourne. The hike is open to 10 - 14 year olds for teams of 3 to 5 scouts and covers approximately 27km starting from Pangbourne to Goring, the Ridgeway and finishing at Compton, walking alone, unaided by adults between checkpoints. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Scouts trio did fantastically well, finishing first with a time of 5h45mins. Well done boys!

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Scout Group (St Peters, Caversham) based at Grove Hill are currently looking for new recruits in the Scouts' Friday nights sessions (7-9pm), so if you're interested and aged between 10.5 to 14 years, look at the website 3rd Reading Scout Group | 100 Years of Scouting in Reading, Berkshire to find out more.

And the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Group are always happy to hear from new adult volunteers as well!



#### Year 12

#### **English Literature**

Students in year 12 English Literature have been working on the gothic genre with Mrs Grantham. This is a superb example of an level introduction for gothic literature, addressing the key points of the question 'Gothic writing frequently explores the battle between good and evil. with reference Discuss Dracula and Frankenstein.' This introduction has clear contextual references and states a key difference which they will later go on to explore further.

Well done to the year 12 English Literature class for making such a great start to their Sixth Form studies! Both 'Draewa' 11897) and 'Frendenthein' (1818)

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#### Year 11 and Year 13: Top Tips For Helping Your Child Succeed In Their Learning

#### Top tips for helping your child succeed in their learning

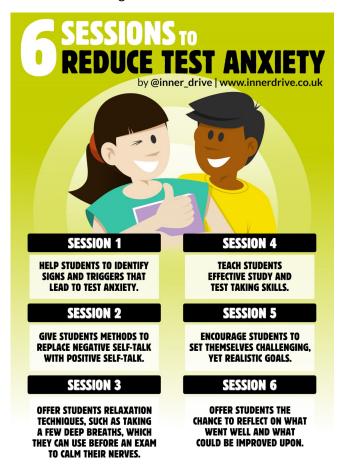
As the winter PPE season has now started and exams are a regular event, you may be wondering what you can do to help your child succeed.

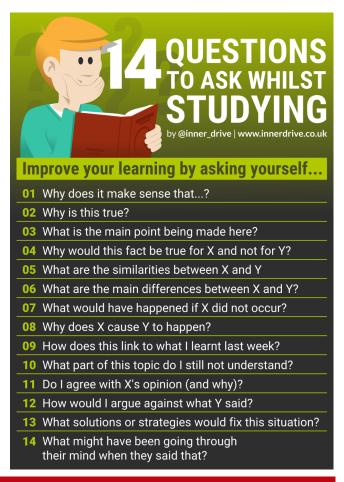
Last week's newsletter had links to advice and guidance about the banana skins of learning and how knowing what NOT to do is just as important as knowing what to do.

This week, as exams are underway, I'd like to look at ways we can work together to **reduce any test anxiety**. We all know the nervous flutter of our stomach when we have an important interview or test, but do our young people realise part of this is a normal response (and sometimes a helpful one) to keep us on our toes, ready for whichever questions pop up. Here are some ways you can help reduce some test anxiety at home.

- One strategy I like is simply <u>lining up pens in height order</u> when you are sat in the exam hall focusing on something small helps distract and calm the brain.
- Another technique is just to <u>lean back in your chair, put your pen down and breathe, be conscious of your breathing</u> and wait 2 mins then, when you are calmer, return to your paper.
- Something else to remember is that whilst this is an exam, in the hall, it is a practice run whatever happens will not be the end of the world, reframe it it is <u>ONLY a piece of paper where we want you to show off everything</u> you know.
- We, parents and teachers, are always there to help and we know our young people, like us, are only human and make mistakes no-one is asking for perfection.

I'd also like to show you **14 questions you could ask your learner** at home, because they will be at a stage in their revision where they could be expanding ideas. If they are – here are some questions to ask – their answers may well be fascinating!





### **House Stars of the Week**

<b>7C</b>	Finley Sprackling	8C	Rhiannon Evans	9C	Juho Rajantie
7D	Greta Nagy	8D	Sreeya Kurup	9D	Maverick Chiu
7E	Beatrice Arman	8E	Holly Sarjeant	9E	Dmytro Novytskyi
7F	Lily Hallett	8F	Skye Grant	9F	Sam Smith
7G	Jessica Loveridge	8G	Giselle Kwok	9G	Adam Watts
7H	Jake Staples	8Н	Leo Scanlan	9Н	Bailey Lamden
<b>7</b> J	Lizzie Veal	8J	Lewis Bridge	91	Kirstin Hogg
7K	Ella Hemsworth-Fowler	8K	Ellie Naylor	9К	Joseph Roberts
7L	Edward Sampson	8L	Darcey Denovan	9L	Jacob Pottage
10C	Griffin Barnett-Ward	11C	lwan Lukes	Miss Robinson's Bonus:	
10D	Holly Zhang	11D	Serene Wong	9D	Amy Churchard
10E	Rhys Stark	11E	James Mee		
10F	Amy Williams	11F	Noah Greenfield		
10G	Harry Jenkins	11G	Xavier Nath		
10H	Lilac Ivey-Michie	11H	Thomas Busby		
10J	Louie Baldwin	<b>11</b> J	Koustubh Manchili		
10K	Finn Emmett	11K	Holly Traynor		

11L

Ariseen Miah

**11M** Madison Folley

## **Numeracy Puzzle**

10L Juniper King

A few puzzles, careful, they are meant to trick you out!:

- A pen and a pencil together cost £1.10. The pen costs £1 more than the pencil. How much is the pencil?
- If it takes 5 people 5 minutes to wrap 5 presents, then how long will it take 50 people to wrap 50 presents?
- If you flip a coin 3 times, what is the chance you will get at least 2 Heads?

The answer can be found on the back page.

# Cosy up with a good winter story.... These books are all avail to borrow from the Hive

These books are all available

#### The Girl Who Saved Christmas - Matt Haig

What does it take to believe in magic? It is Christmas Eve and all is not well. Amelia Wishart is trapped in Mr Creeper's workhouse and Christmas is in jeopardy. Magic is fading. If Christmas is to happen, Father Christmas knows he must find her. With the help of some elves, eight reindeer, the Queen and a man called Charles Dickens, the search for Amelia - and the secret of Christmas - begins ...

#### Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Meltdown - Jeff Kinney

When snow shuts down Greg Heffley's middle school, his neighbourhood transforms into a wintry battlefield. Rival groups fight over territory, build massive snow forts, and stage epic snowball fights. It's a fight for survival as Greg and Rowley navigate alliances, betrayals, and warring gangs in a neighbourhood meltdown. When the snow clears, will Greg and Rowley emerge as heroes? Or will they even survive to see another day?

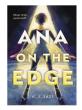
#### Frost Hollow Hall - Emma Carroll

The gates to Frost Hollow Hall loomed before us. They were great tall things, the ironwork all twisted leaves and queer-looking flowers. And they were very definitely shut. Tilly's heart sinks. Will's at the door of their cottage, daring her to come ice-skating up at Frost Hollow Hall. No one goes near the place these days. Rumour has it that the house is haunted... It's all about the dead here, she's told, and in the heart of the house she soon discovers all manner of dark secrets...



#### Ana On the Edge - AJ Sass

Twelve-year-old figure skater Ana strives to win competitions while learning about gender identity--Ana's own and that of a new friend--and how to navigate the best path forward.



#### Skating to Antarctica - Jenny Diski

A level English non-fiction text. This strange and brilliant book recounts Jenny Diski's journey to Antarctica last year, intercut with another journey into her own heart and soul...a book of dazzling variety, which weaves disquisitions on indolence, truth, inconsistency, ambiguousness, the elephant seal, Shackleton, boredom and over and over again memory, into a sparse narrative, caustic observation and vivid description of the natural



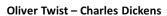


#### A Christmas Carol - Charles Dickens

A miser learns the true meaning of Christmas when three ghostly visitors review his past and foretell his future. A true Christmas classic.

#### Charlie and the Chocolate Factory - Roald Dahl

Charlie Bucket's life is about to change! Willy Wonka, chocolate maker extraordinaire, has hidden five golden tickets in five ordinary bars of chocolate, and any child who finds one will get the chance to visit his incredible factory. Charlie has found one . . . But so have . . . Augustus Gloop - a glutton for chocolate; Veruca Salt - a spoiled and selfish brat; Violet Beauregarde - a repulsive gum-chewer; Mike Teavee - a television fiend. With a chocolate river, delectable confectionery and mysterious Oompa Loompas, Mr Wonka's factory is the most wondrous place Charlie has ever seen.

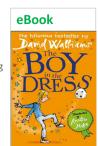


London in the 1830s was no place to be if you were a hungry ten-year-old boy, an orphan without friends or family, with no home to go to, and only a penny in your pocket to buy a piece of bread. But Oliver Twist finds some friends - Fagin, the Artful Dodger, and Charley Bates. They give him food and shelter, and play games with him, but it is not until some days later that Oliver finds out what kind of friends they are and what kind of 'games' they play...



#### The Boy in the Dress - David Walliams

The Boy in the Dress is full of the sharp humour and vivid characters you would expect from the co-creator and costar of Little Britain. It is also a timeless and hilarious fable about what happens when an ordinary boy does something extraordinary - and the way that people, even the petty and cruel, can surprise you in the end.





## Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone -

On Harry's eleventh birthday, a great beetle-eyed giant of a man called Rubeus Hagrid bursts in with some astonishing news: Harry Potter is a wizard, and he has a place at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. An incredible adventure is about to begin! Having become classics of our time, the Harry Potter eBooks never fail to bring comfort and escapism.



# Routes into STEM Virtual Experience 2023/24

Routes into STEM virtual experience provides an exciting opportunity to explore the various routes you can take towards your STEM career. This course is designed to enable young people to work through activities and projects at their own pace, tour a variety of institutions virtually and also have access to live career sessions and mentor panels with STEM employers.

## Who is it for?

- Students in Year 9 or 10 / S3 or S4 / equivalent who are interested in exploring a career in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)
- All you need is an interest in STEM and curiosity about the future. The course is open to all
  academic abilities

## What's involved?

- · Approximately 20 hours of study virtually at a pace that suits you
- Exploring different Routes into a STEM career including College Courses, University Courses, and Apprenticeships and learning from industry what is involved in a STEM career as well as enhancing your skills
- Live interactive sessions over the half-term breaks, school holidays and after school, allowing
  you to listen and ask questions to STEM students and professionals
- Getting to work on a project set by a STEM company to look further at a career area that interests you

## What do you get out of it?

- Find out about different Routes into a STEM career from industry experts, college and university leaders, as well as young people who are currently on that path
- Engage in projects and activities that will enhance your problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity and innovation skills and inspire you to find career motivation. Projects include a Biopharm challenge from GSK, a Design challenge from Balfour Beatty, an RSC Chemistry challenge and many more exciting challenges in all areas of STEM.
- · Create your own personalised action plan to see your own Route into STEM
- Learn about your career skills and how you could write about this in your CV/ Personal Statement or Application form
- Receive an Industrial Cadets Bronze Award showing all that you have achieved on the course



www.etrust.org.uk



















## Insight into University Residential



Insight into University Residential Experience (previously known as Headstart) are summer schools run over 4 or 5 days where students get a taster of university life and an insight into a specific STEM subject. Students will get the opportunity to experience university style lectures and work on activities and group projects with the support of academics and student mentors. Students will stay in halls of residence and will take part in social activities in the evenings.

These courses are for Year 12/S5-6 students and are a great way to try out a STEM subject at university before applying. This allows students to make a better informed decision for their UCAS application, as well as meeting like-minded students from all over the UK.

These summer schools are run for small groups (on average 30 students) and so places are limited.

#### Courses running in summer 2024

Maths at Lancaster Mechanical Engineering at UCL Materials Science at Oxford Broad-based Engineering at Sheffield Materials Science at Cambridge Aerospace Engineering at Liverpool Ocean & Earth Science at Southampton

Find out more and apply on our website here.

#### Statistics from 2023



of participants said they would recommend the course to other students!



of participants said they felt the experience on the course will help them make a better informed decision for their UCAS application.

#### What our students say

"A wonderful experience which a few years ago I wouldn't have dreamed of going on. The staff were so supportive and everything was fascinating. Thank you all so much for this chance, it was something I'll remember and reap the benefits of for the rest of my life!"

"I greatly enjoyed it. This course has given me the opportunity to demystify university life for myself and also interact with those just as enthusiastic as myself. It was a great chance to experience life independent of my family for the first time. I now know how university life will be, and so I feel more comfortable pursuing it."

"I enjoyed the course so much that I didn't want to leave! Meeting students with the same interests from all over the UK was such an incredible experience and I have made friends that I will keep forever. I also found the lectures, practical courses and industrial visit fascinating getting to talk one on one with academics was a unique experience."

#### Follow us on social media











Visit our website www.etrust.org.uk/residential-insight-into-university







# **Exciting opportunity for you!**

## Your Route to Chartership Online Masterclass

When: Tuesday 19th December at 4-5:30pm



Overview: This Masterclass will be run on Zoom by an Industry Professional with over 10 years experience working as a Chartered Mechanical Engineer and will introduce you to the concept of Chartership and how it can help you to stand out from the crowd!

\*\*A Chartered status is considered a mark of professional competency and is awarded mainly by chartered professional bodies and learned societies.

Content: Why become Chartered . Where to start . Gathering the evidence . Filling the gaps . Selling your story . The importance of CPD.

Cost: £20 - This cost includes the Live Zoom session, a copy of the slides used by the presenter and a certificate of attendance for your portfolio.

Important: To take advantage of this opportunity simply click on the link below to create an account and make payment via Paypal,

## Places are limited so act quickly to avoid disappointment!



Don't forget, our student support team is here for you, - please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions

Student Recruitment Team

EDT (Engineering Development Trust) Landline: 01707 906106 Email:studentrecruitment@etrust.org.uk



Visit us online www.etrust.org.uk

#### **Teacher of English**

# Main Scale, Full and Part time positions for September 2024 start

We are looking for an outstanding, passionate and dynamic practitioner to join our highly successful and well-resourced English department of 12 staff. This post would be suitable for either an ECT or an experienced teacher. A willingness to teach across all years and abilities is essential.

You should be a highly motivated and successful individual who is willing to contribute to all aspects of the school vision and the many enrichment activities that the department offers.

Full details and an application form can be accessed via our website

# Teacher of Physical Education

#### Main Scale Full time/part-time.

#### **Required for January 2024**

This is an excellent opportunity for an enthusiastic and well-qualified teacher of Physical Education to join a successful department with excellent resources and facilities. A willingness to teach across all years and abilities is essential. We welcome applications from ECTs, for whom we have a superb induction programme.

The successful candidate should be a highly motivated and successful practitioner who is willing to contribute to all aspects of the school vision and the many extracurricular activities that the department offers.

Full details and an application form can be accessed via our website.

#### **Senior Leisure Attendant**

# Part-time position, evenings and weekends

# Up to £11.50ph dependent on experience and qualifications.

We are seeking to appoint a Senior Leisure Attendant to join our dedicated team. You will have level 2 fitness instructing or preferably level 3 personal training, working mainly weekends and some evenings during the week.

You will have responsibility for supervising the use of the sports centre facilities whilst maintaining high standards of cleanliness and customer service. No previous experience is necessary as training will be provided, but an interest in fitness is an advantage.

Full details can be accessed on our website.

### **Teacher of Maths**

# Main Scale, Full and Part time positions for September 2024 start

We are looking for an outstanding, passionate and dynamic practitioner to join our highly successful and well-resourced Maths department of 12 staff. A willingness to teach across all years and abilities is essential. Maths and Further Maths are very popular subjects at A level. We welcome applications from ECTs, for whom we have a superb induction programme.

Full details and an application form can be accessed via our website

## **Examinations Invigilator**

#### £10.79 per hour, Flexible hours

We are looking to expand our team of invigilators to support the running of internal and external examinations.

You should enjoy working as part of a team and an interest in working in a school is essential. This will ideally suit responsible, punctual, calm, organised and approachable individuals. Full training will be provided.

Full details and an application form can be accessed via our website.

## Community



#### **Answer to the Numeracy Puzzle**

- The pen is £1.05, the pencil is 5p
- It takes 5 minutes
- Half the time there will be more heads than tails. The other time there will be more tails than heads. So the answer is half.