



Highdown Newsletter

October 2024



Follow us

HEAD OF SCHOOL ROUND UP

Despite being in our eighth week of term, energies have not waned! We have had a number of trips and visits this week, including Year 10s visiting the London Portrait Gallery yesterday, gaining inspiration for their work. Year 12 Geographers completed their local place fieldwork, which will help them prepare for their A-Level examinations, as well as putting theory and concepts into practice in a familiar geographical location. Also, thank you to all who attended the theatre visit on Tuesday evening to watch a production of *Guys and Dolls*.

We have again welcomed many prospective students and families into the school for tours this week. These have been a fantastic opportunity to show off our amazing facilities and grounds, our positive culture for learning, and our outstanding pastoral care and support for our young people. We have also been able to share information about our broad, innovative and inclusive academic curriculum and our impressive personal development curriculum. It is our facilities, subject expertise and breadth of curriculum, alongside the opportunities for personal development and provision of pastoral care and inclusive practices in addition to the successful student outcomes, exceeding local and national averages, that make Highdown the number one choice for local families! A reminder that the secondary school application deadline is 31st October and applications are submitted through Brighter Futures for Children.

A reminder to parents that early next term we have our Sixth Form Subject Fair on 7th November. An important event for Year 11 students to help them make decisions about which courses to pursue in our Sixth Form from September 2025. As I mentioned in last week's update, we will be dismissing students slightly earlier than normal, at 2.50pm, on 11th November to facilitate staff training in an international programme run by the SSAT. Next term we will also be asking parents, students and our staff to complete surveys on behalf of our Trust, GLF, to inform future planning. More details on this next term!

This week's Student of the Week goes to Aaryan Desour in Year 10 in recognition of the fantastic start he has made to his GCSE courses this term. He has demonstrated high levels of aspiration and excellence in his studies. Well done Aaryan!

As we draw to the end of our first term of the academic year, I would like to thank families for your continued support of the school.

Wishing everyone a fantastic break next week.

Matthew Grantham
Headteacher (Acting)



STUDENT
OF THE
WEEK



Congratulations to Caversham House for clinching the House Cup for a second year running, here are the House Representatives ready to hoist the flag!!



POPPY APPEAL

Next term, students will be able to purchase poppy appeal wrist bands, snap bands and reflective poppies either when visited during mentor time by student sellers or by visiting Student Reception at break times or before or after school. Don't forget to send students in with change!



KS3 ARTWORK SLIDESHOW






Please click on the link below to enjoy a slideshow put together in the Summer by our current Year 8, 9 & 10.

You may need to ask the file to reload several times before it will play as it is a very large file. Enjoy the show as it is beautiful!

BREAKFAST CLUB

Research shows that the benefits of breakfast include **positive impacts on students' nutrition, overall well-being, and academic performance.** That is why we have started a Breakfast Club at Highdown.

Breakfast Club will provide a breakfast for free to any student that needs it in The Gallery every day, 8:15-8:40am. No need to register, just turn up!

-  The Gallery: every day 
8.15 – 8.40
-  **Your fuel for school: cereal,**
-  **toast, juice and more.** 

Breakfast Club 



KS3 students have been 'digital curators' of this exhibition, selecting their work, photographing it, and designing their slides ☺

KS3 Digital Art Exhibition 2024

 KS3 student's sketchbooks, collaborations and other Arty stuff that has been happening this year in Art. Please enjoy the work and the wonderful pages from our student's sketchbooks, here are just a few pages from the many, many wonderful books.
Thank you, The Art department



Caversham	42,778
Grove	44,256
Rosehill	42,501
Mapledurham	41,296



MATHS Year 11, 12 & 13

SENIOR MATHS CHALLENGE

This October we saw 47 of our 6th Form Mathematicians compete in the UK Mathematics Trust Senior Maths Challenge. This is the largest number of entries we have seen at Highdown with a correspondingly impressive set of results: 5 Gold, 16 Silver and 20 Bronze Certificates were awarded.



Noah Mitchell, Miles Escott, Will Casey, Thomas Busby and Amir Karimi all achieved Gold Certificates and qualified for the follow-on round of the competition - the Senior Maths Kangaroo - which they will be sitting in November.

Congratulations go to Noah Mitchell for achieving the best result in school and Amir Karimi who achieved an outstanding result despite being the first Year 11 student to take part in the Senior Maths Challenge here at Highdown. We are so proud of everyone who has volunteered to take part in the SMC!

Every year, all students at Highdown have the opportunity to take part in UKMT Maths Challenges. Further details will be shared by class teachers nearer the time but some dates for your diaries are:

- Intermediate Maths Challenge (Years 9, 10 and 11) - 29th January 2025
- Junior Maths Challenge (Years 7 and 8) - 1st May 2025

MATHS SUPPORT TUTORS



We are extremely lucky to have had 18 of our Year 12 Mathematicians volunteer to support the Highdown Maths Community as Support Tutors. We're planning out their timetables at the moment but you can expect to see them in some of your maths lessons and after-school clubs from November providing one-to-one and small group support. Huge thanks go to our Year 13s who ran this scheme for its successful launch last year. Thanks also to our wonderful PTA who helped fund the badges that identify our Maths Support Tutors and the amazing work that they do.

Mr Dineley

Curriculum Lead for Maths





YEAR 11 & 12



Stars of the Week

SINGER...SONGWRITER...WINNER

Congratulations to Bethia in Year 12 (pictured right) who entered a song writing competition earlier this year which was sponsored by Hickies Music.



On Sunday, Bethia performed her song in the final...and won!

As part of the prize, she won a £500 voucher to spend at Hickies Music and will be performing at the Purple Turtle in November and The Butler in December.

We are so proud of Bethia who is active in the music and drama scene at Highdown and was voted most likely student to become a pop star at the end of year 11!

- 11C Isaac Ford
- 11D Amir Karimi
- 11E Ashlynn Kingshott
- 11F Gabe Bell
- 11G Harley Bell
- 11H Evelyn Hunt
- 11J Romy Partington
- 11K Aleksander Cvetkov
- 11L Juniper King



SCIENCE OUTREACH TO PRIMARY STUDENTS

We are very proud that we have built a team of young educators who will inspire primary aged students in science and further STEM subjects over the coming academic year.

This group of sixth form scientist volunteers are undertaking a programme to develop their teaching and learning skills with plans to support Highdown's links with our primary school colleagues and the wider North Reading community. Their infectious enthusiasm and curiosity for learning will inspire all who work with them! We are so proud of these impressive young science teachers!





YEAR 10

GHOULISH TALE IS A WINNER



Congratulations to Zach in Year 10 who has had a piece of work chosen to be published in a book showcasing young writer's stories in a publication called "Fright Club—Ghoulis Chronicles"

We are very proud that Zach's story "A Shadow in the Night" is to be published and that a copy of the book will remain in the National Archives of the British Library forever.

Mrs Springer
Mentor, 10J

PATHOGENS, POOPS & CHEEK CELL

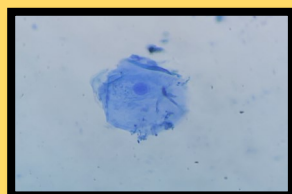


These Year 10 students were awarded certificates for producing exceptional work on pathogens in Dr Love's class. They were tasked with creating flash cards suitable for revision and there were some very inventive and informative pieces produced.

The most impressive pieces of work were rewarded with squashy poos and cuddly pathogens as you can see in the photo below.

Ethan in this same class captured this fantastic image of one of his own cheek cells through the microscope.

Every day at Highdown is a chance to experience the wonderful and the unexpected!



ESWATINI FUNDRAISER



Lily and Ruby in 10J, are taking part in the school's World Challenge trip to Eswatini in 2026 and are currently trying to raise money for the trip by selling homemade dog treats.

They will have a stall at a Christmas Market in Caversham on Sunday 17 November. Pop along and pick up a treat for your pooch and support these enterprising Highdown students.

10C Abigail Mann

10D Maverick Chiu

10E Ethan James

10F Sam Smith

10G Thomas Talbot

10H Bailey Lamden

10J Ben Gibson

10K Febe Towers

10L Jannath Khan

Stars of the Week





Year 9

SWIMMING ACHEIVEMENT

Congratulations are due to Finn who trains regularly with Reading Swimming Club both before and after school. Swim training at a competitive level requires long hours of consistent training, his training sessions are usually 2 hours long and often require getting up at 4.40am!

Finn qualified for the Swim England National Summer Meet to race the 1500 metre freestyle in his age group. On Monday 29th July Finn raced at the Ponds Forge International Sports Centre in Sheffield. Finn won his heat, taking a massive 35 seconds off his previous personal best, finishing in a time of 18 minutes and 22.47 seconds. He finished 6th in his age group overall, a wonderful end to his swimming season. Congratulations Finn!

Click on the link below to watch Finn's race. Finn's race starts 3mins 30 seconds into the video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXtAgtWriCs>



Oliver Bennett	19:15.13	7
Harry Bennett	19:27.07	8
Joshua Hutchinson	19:13.71	5
Lorcan Walton	18:52.49	4
Jacob Irving	18:36.77	2
Finn Hemmatt	18:22.47	1
Joshua Kicks	19:15.12	6
Thomas Radford	18:50.02	3

- 9C Belle Grant
- 9D Aya Charfi
- 9E Ranith Liyanage
- 9F Oscar Williams
- 9G Ava Piercy
- 9H Jan Pallasigue
- 9J Lewis Bridge
- 9K Lara Giboire-Snell
- 9L Jagoda Brzezianska

Stars of the Week



THANK YOU TO THE PTA AND ALL ATTENDEES AT THE PTA QUIZ. A FANTASTIC NIGHT OF TRIVIA AND ENTERTAINMENT.

SEE YOU ALL IN SPRING!

MR HUTCHINSON AND MR FASHAM



STEAM SEE-SAW



During their STEAM lesson this week, Eason, Thomas, Ethan, William and Fejiro built a fully functioning see-saw.

Mrs Bonnet

Science Teacher & Head of Achievement, Year 8



Stars of the Week

- 8C Magnus Flynn
- 8D Jerome Jones
- 8E Amelia Hunt
- 8F Tala Istatiah
- 8G Jack Perona
- 8H Freddie Brown
- 8J Max Church
- 8K Evie Webster
- 8L Charlotte Maybury

MANDARIN EXCELLENCE TRIP TO LONDON

Our Year 8 MEP and A-level students embarked on an exciting school trip. We went to the British Museum and explored the fascinating stories behind the artifacts, fully immersing ourselves in the charm of Chinese history. Also, we enjoyed the delicious Chinese food in Chinatown! What an amazing day it was!

Mrs Huang

Mandarin Teacher



ELECTRIC SCOOTERS



Please be aware that that e-scooters are currently illegal and are on the school list of prohibited items, which can be viewed on the school website [HERE](#).

E-scooters are not permitted on the school site and students should not be

bringing them onto the school premises.

This is for the safety of all students and pedestrians. Thank you for your co-operation.



Year 7

The Year 7 cohort has had a fantastic start to their first year of secondary school; making the most of everything Highdown has to offer them.

It has been a real pleasure to see them settling in so well, having their first Learning Conference, attending clubs, volunteering to help at the open evening and trying their best in the classroom.

Mr Gordon

Head of Achievement, Year 7



Stars of the Week

- 7C Ellie Gorey
- 7D Holly Evans
- 7E Amjad Gomma
- 7F Molly Scully
- 7G Arda Baykara
- 7H James Boyd
- 7J Jim Hawkins
- 7K Bay Hackney
- 7L Sophia Reynaert



**Free
School
Meals** 

Are you entitled?



Highdown Newsletter

YOUNG CARERS AT HIGHDOWN

WHO ARE YOUNG CARERS?

- Are you under the age of 18?
- Do you help look after someone?
- They could be ill, elderly, have a learning or physical disability, substance or alcohol misuse or a mental health condition.

WHAT MIGHT A YOUNG CARER DO?

- You may help with:
- Cleaning, cooking, shopping
 - Managing medicines or money
 - Providing personal care
 - Supporting someone emotionally or physically
 - Helping someone communicate

If you help look after someone, you may be a young carer. We are here to help. Please speak with your Head Of Achievement or contact:



JENNAH HOLDER
YOUNG CARERS CHAMPION



MR CLAWSON
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARERS

- One-to-One Mentoring
- Star Centre Drop In at break and lunch times
- Referrals to No.5 Counselling
- Referrals to School Nurse Service
- Referrals to Excellence Club (homework support)
- Young Carers Forum

CONTACT US

From your school email address ONLY, please email:

star@highdown.reading.sch.uk

VISIT US

Visit the Star Centre during break or lunch time for more information about being a young carer.



Reading Families' Forum

Registered charity no 1166585

A voice for families of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities



PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD INFO & FUN DAY

LOTS OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR FAMILIES WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS AGED 13-25 AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE

23RD NOVEMBER 2024
FREE 2.30 PM - 5 PM

AT THE AVENUE SCHOOL, CONWY CLOSE, TILEHURST, RG30 4BZ

CONTACT

07516 185380

WWW.READINGFAMILIESFORUM.CO.UK

FRAN@READINGFAMILIESFORUM.CO.UK

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE CHANGING PLACE

HAIR BRAIDS, AIR TATTOOS FIRE ENGINE, REPTILES REFRESHMENTS



November 2024 Newsletter

If you can't make the date or time all paid for talks are recorded and available for 48 hours afterwards

Monday
25th Nov
19:00 - 20:00
FREE



FREE SESSION Decreasing Depression

A range of steps that can help to reduce the crippling impact of depression.

Thursday
7th Nov
19:00 - 21:00
£24



Supporting a Child with ADHD

Challenging the stereotypes and giving practical interventions. Clear explanation of the condition in all its forms and extremely useful advice.

Tuesday
12th Nov
19:00 - 21:00
£24



Anxiety-Based School Avoidance

Understanding and supporting children who are anxious about school. Steps you can take to help them back into the classroom.

Monday
18th Nov
19:00 - 21:00
£24



Understanding Anger: Yours and Theirs!

What is anger? Why do we have it? How do we manage it in ourselves and in our children?

Thursday
21st Nov
19:00 - 21:00
£24



Supporting Healthy Screen Use

Clarifying the difference between healthy screen use and unhealthy screen use. Addressing concerns about blue light and sedentary behaviour.

facefamilyadvice.co.uk

info@facefamilyadvice.co.uk

DIWALI Light It Up 2024

Exciting Parade in Reading Town Centre
Saturday 9th November 2024 5.00pm



The event is organised by Kala The Arts, a National Dance organisation and partners for Diwali. This is a FREE event for all the family, enjoyable by everyone. Everyone can take part in a parade which goes from Town Hall Square to Broadway.

Expect national organisations and local organisations with amazing Dhol drumming, Lanterns, Diyas, Beautiful Butterfly puppets, large Eagle, Mandir and large installations and locally made 5 headed Hanuman puppet.

Please email office@kalathearts.co.uk if you would like to attend the Parade, and visit the Kala The Arts social media and website www.kalathearts.co.uk for updates.

