



Highdown Bulletin

w/c 20 January 2025 Week B



Follow us

A MESSAGE FROM MS. MATHEWS



“Time is water in the desert, a teacher’s most precious resource: to be husbanded, guarded, and conserved. Every minute matters.” Doug Lemov

Time has flown and I cannot believe that I have already been at Highdown School for two weeks: every day I am greeted by hoards of smiling faces as students navigate their way between lessons.

Year 13 have diligently been completing their PPEs in the main hall and Year 11 are gearing up for their results afternoon next week. I’ve seen some fantastic Year 9 art lessons focussing on use of colour, and Year 7 completing work inspired by Indian culture. In Spanish this week, Year 8 have been discussing their hobbies using mini whiteboards to check understanding and in the Mandarin Excellence Programme lessons students are confidently translating chunks of text about their families. Two of our Year 11 students have also been working with our Early Career Teachers this term to explain how supporting them has transformed their attitude to school and to learning. Year 7 are looking forward to their first County Cup Match against Reading Blue Coats at home this afternoon.

As you may have already seen, our Apprenticeship Awareness Evening is fast approaching and we are on the lookout for businesses who take on apprentices to come and support the event on Tuesday 04 February. If you or a representative for your business would be happy to speak to students in Year 10—13 about apprenticeships at your place of work, please contact Mrs Robinson: careers@highdown.reading.sch.uk.

As you’ll know from my video message last Friday, the past two weeks have been focussing on punctuality. Students know that being just 5 minutes late each day to a lesson can translate into missing 3 days of school over the course of the academic year and punctuality to school is imperative: mentor time sets students up for the day, sharing key messages, checking students are ready for the day with equipment and uniform. The back and Sixth Form gates are now locked at 8.37am and after this point all students will have to sign in at the front gate.

Next week we welcome our school governors who will be dropping into lessons and immersing themselves in Highdown life before feeding back their findings and I am proud to showcase what a fantastic school we have!

As ever, please do get in touch with feedback so we can continue to work together to give our children the best possible education and experience: head@highdown.reading.sch.uk

Ms. L Mathews
Headteacher



HOUSE POINTS

Mapledurham	84,345
Grove	90,924
Rosehill	90,317
Caversham	89,513





THIS WEEK

Mon 20 Jan	Year 13 PPEs all week
Weds 22 Jan	Year 11 Review Evening Booking System Opens
Weds 22 Jan	Y9 MMR Vaccinations
Terms 3 & 4	Year 11 incentive scheme begins



School Assemblies

Assemblies for the Week in the Main Hall with Mrs Flynn

Theme: Myths and Legends

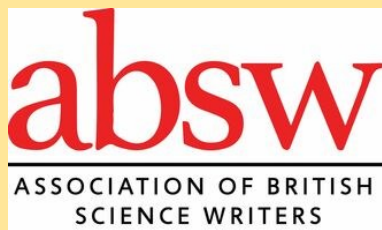
Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
Year 12 / 13	Year 11	Year 9 / 10	Year 7 / 8

COMING UP

Tues 28 Jan	Y11 D&T Practical Assessment
Wed 29 Jan	Y9-11 Intermediate Maths Challenge
Tues 04 Feb	Y9 Boxclever Romeo and Juliet Performance/Workshop
Tues 04 Feb	Apprenticeship Awareness Evening for Year 10, 11, 12 & 13
Thur 13 Feb	Trip leaves for Isla of Arran
Mon 17 Feb	Trip returns from Isla of Arran
Fri 14 Feb	Last Day of Half Term
Mon 24 Feb	First Day of Term 4



YOUNG SCIENCE WRITER COMP



We are excited to invite you to take part in the 2025 Young Science Writer Award (YSWA), organised by the Association of British Science Writers (ABSW). This prestigious national competition offers students the opportunity to showcase their science writing talent and gain recognition for their work.

You may have heard from a recent BBC news article, that we are soon open for submissions to our Young Science Writer Award, one of the most prestigious events in our calendar. The aim of the competition is to encourage talented 14-16yo students with a passion for STEM and writing to submit an 800-word essay on the topic of their choice. We work with schools across the UK to help their pupils submit an essay to our award.

Our competition is highly publicised and the 2024 winner was recently featured by the BBC <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c75nq69yy22o>

The BBC, The Royal Institution and Science Museum are our key strategic partners supporting us and the winner of the competition.

The winner will receive £1000, a 1-year Young Royal Institution membership, and the chance to meet BBC science journalists among other prizes. Their essay is also published nationally in the media which attracts highly positive press coverage for the school. The runners-up each get £250 with ten students who are highly commended receiving £100 each.

Competition Opens 17 January 2025
Competition Closes 07 March 2025

Please speak to your science teacher if you have any questions.

HIGHDOWN ALUMNI RETURN TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES SO FAR OF THE UK'S TOP UNIVERSITIES



On 18 December, Highdown hosted a pre-celebration evening event with Mr Dineley heading up a panel of Highdown alumni **Harriet Ranson, Aisha Saidykhan, Bethan Soanes and Mo Cook** who are studying at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial London.

They regaled the eager crowd with their first term experiences of learning at these elite institutions, sharing their top tips of getting into competitive courses, including Medicine, and even what the social scene is like in these cities (great fun apparently). We are so grateful for them giving up their time to come and inspire our current Year 10, 11 and 12s and we hope this will become a regular event on the school calendar to showcase our incredible students.





FILM CLUB
[SNACKS PROVIDED]

03 OCT 3:15 PM



SPIRITED AWAY

E6 Thursday after school with Miss Baker and Mr Hutchinson. This week we will be showing Spirited Away. Open to years 10/11/12/13

SHUFFLE LUNCH TIME CLUBS

WHEN
12.25PM - 1.00PM
YEAR 7+8
TUESDAYS
YEAR 9
WEDNESDAYS

WHERE
H18

ICEBREAKER CHALLENGES - FUN
DISCUSSIONS - SAFE SPACE TO HANG OUT - ALL WELCOME



Highdown Quiz Club

Starting Friday 11th October at LUNCHTIME in M3

Year 7 - 10

This year we will start competing against other schools so will be selecting a Year 9/10 mixed team.

Laptops are useful. Wikipedia is king.

Mr Hutchinson and Mr Fasham

HUTCHINSON

FASHAM

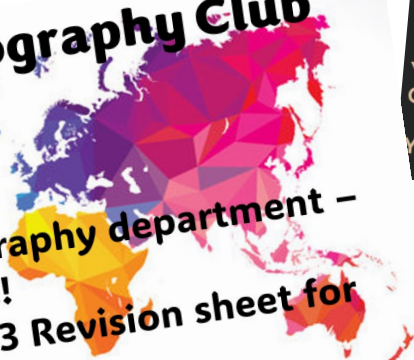
MEDICAL SOCIETY
WEDNESDAY
Room: S5

MATHS SUPPORT

- Spark Club**
Tuesday After School
All Years - Room M5
- Yr 11 Revision**
Wednesday After School
Year 11 - Room M3/M4
- A-Level Help Session**
Thursday Lunchtime
Years 12 & 13 - Room M7

GCSE Geography Club

Day: Tuesday
Time: 3.10pm
Location: Geography department - check schedule!
Take away - A3 Revision sheet for each topic!



ASTROPHYSICS CLUB

Starting: Thursday 17th October and running for five weeks

Room: M5

Years: 9, 10 & 12

In a galaxy far far away, in the not too distant future, Mr Hutchinson & Mr Verebelyi are launching Astrophysics Club.

Y9 and Y10: Junior Astrophysics Challenge preparation
Yr 12: Astrophysics Challenge





Time/Period	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
KS3 Break	Year 9 Book Club Mrs Robinson HIVE			Year 8 Book Club Mrs Robinson HIVE	Year 7 Book Club Mrs Robinson HIVE
Lunch	Barbershop Group Mr Santer Mu3	Reptile Club - Dr Love, S7	Funk & Soul Group Mr Santer Mu3		KS3 Women in Stem DT8 Maddie (From Oct)
	Ukulele Club Mr Parker Mu2		KS4 Photography GCSE Drop in Miss Woronkowicz A4	KS4 Photography GCSE Drop in Miss Woronkowicz A4	Reptile Club - Dr Love, S7
	Computing Club with Maddie and Beni CR4		String Ensemble - all years Mrs Reid MU1	Reptile Club - Dr Love, S7	Quiz Club, Mr Hutchinson and Mr Fasham, M3
			Drama Club Y8 Week A Y7 Week B Dr1 Miss Holmes		Junior Choir - KS3 Mrs Lester MU1
		Shuffle Club with Miss Druce, H18, safe space for Years 7 & 8 to hang out and play games	Shuffle Club with Miss Druce, H18, safe space for Year 9 to hang out and play games	Senior Choir - Mrs Reid MU1	
	KS4 Art & Graphics GCSE Drop-in	KS4 Art & Graphics GCSE Drop-in	KS4 Art & Graphics GCSE Drop-in	KS4 Art & Graphics GCSE Drop-in	KS4 Art & Graphics GCSE Drop-in
			Medical Society in S5 everyone welcome		
After School - 4:14pm		KS4 GCSE Photography Drop-in Miss Woron- kowicz A4	KS4 GCSE Photog- raphy Drop-in Miss Woronkowicz A4	KS4 GCSE Photog- raphy Drop-in Miss Woronkowicz A4	
		Whole School Produc- tion Mrs Lake - DR2	KS3 Art Club - (A3/A2)	KS4/KS5 Film Club Miss Baker Mr Hutchinson E6	
		Physics A Level Revi- sion and homework - S5	Orchestra - all years 3.10-3.50pm Mrs Reid MU1	Knit and Natter - (Miss Lobo - DT3)	
		Excellence Club - (CR1) Lisa Pattison	Excellence Club - (CR1) Lisa Pattison	Excellence Club - (CR1) Lisa Pattison	
		Sparx Club - (M5) Miss McDowell and Mr Hutchinson	Y12 Music Technology coursework session Mr Santer Mu3	History Club H16 Mr Scobey, all KS3 welcome - starting after Oct half term	
			KS3 Textiles Club Miss Brown DT4 Runs No- vember and Decem- ber only	Highdown Dance Company DR1 Mrs Hawkins (Jan-July)	
				Y13 Music Technol- ogy coursework session Mr Santer Mu3	



NEW PE TIMETABLE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before School				7.45am – Running Club with Mr Colvin	
Lunch Time	Y9 FITNESS CLUB with Mr Patten (Fitness Suite) Y7, 8 & 9 BOYS BASKETBALL CLUB with Mr Thompson (Gym)	Y 9, 10 & 11 GIRLS BADMINTON CLUB with Mrs Sadler (Gym) NETBALL SHOOTING CLUB with Miss Clark (Netball Courts)	Y10 & 11 FITNESS CLUB with Mr Colvin (Fitness Suite) Yr 10 & 11 Basketball Club with Miss Warne (Gym)	Y9, 10 & 11 GIRLS FITNESS CLUB with Miss Clark (Fitness Suite) Yr 7, 8 & 9 Girls Basketball Club with Miss Boswell (Gym)	BADMINTON CLUB with Mr Colvin (Gym)
After School		Y11 GIRLS NETBALL CLUB with Miss Clark Y9 GIRLS NETBALL with Miss Boswell Y10 BOYS FOOTBALL with Mr Thompson	Y8 GIRLS NETBALL with Miss Clark	Y10 GIRLS NETBALL with Mrs Sadler Y7 GIRLS NETBALL with Miss Warne Y9 BOYS FOOTBALL with Mr Patten Y7 BOYS FOOTBALL with Mr Gordon	
League Fixture Nights		Y10 GIRLS NETBALL (Before Half Term) Y7 GIRLS NETBALL (After Half Term) Y7 BOYS FOOTBALL (After Half Term) Y9 BOYS FOOTBALL (After Half Term)	Y8 GIRLS NETBALL (After Half Term) Y10 BOYS FOOTBALL (After Half Term)	Y11 GIRLS NETBALL (Before Half Term) Y9 GIRLS NETBALL (After Half Term) Y8 BOYS FOOTBALL (After Half Term) Y11 BOYS FOOTBALL (After Half Term)	

To catch up on all sporting news, please see Sporting Spotlight on the website school

[HERE](#)



Highdown Bulletin



Year 7

- 7C Ellie Gorey
- 7D Benjamin Loar
- 7E Jack Somenthal
- 7F Jessica Reynolds
- 7G William Hook
- 7H Ryan Elias
- 7J Hailey Kwok
- 7K Bay Hackney
- 7L Sophia Reynaert

Year 8

- 8C Barney Grace
- 8D Charlie Herbert
- 8E Alex Schofield
- 8F Denzel Kejang
- 8G William Foulkes
- 8H Jaide Thompson
- 8J Lottie Keleman
- 8K Jody Johnson
- 8L Lara Newton



Year 10

- 10C Kobe Pattison
- 10D Anna Young
- 10E Stella Steinfeld
- 10F Ranveer Verma
- 10G Joyce Okyere
- 10H Erin King
- 10I Tom Wilder-Linthwaite

Year 9

- 9C Will Evans
- 9D Alex De Lima
- 9E Ralph Mackereth
- 9F Aarav Aravind
- 9G Conor Allen
- 9H Finn Hemmant
- 9J Max Parr
- 9K Milo Jones
- 9L Harrison Sturk

Year 11

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New Year New Books!

<https://www.highdown.reading.sch.uk/library>

The Boy Who Saved a Bear - Nizrana Farook

An exciting story about Nuwan who becomes friends with a bear.



When I See Blue – Lily Bailey

A sensitive story about a boy called Ben and his OCD.

There are 4 things you should know about Ben:

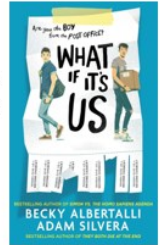
1. He's 12 years old
2. He's the new kid at school
3. His special number is 4
4. He has a bully in his brain



Young Adult Read 9+

What If It's Us – Becky Albertalli & Adam Silvera

A delightful romcom story. If you love Nick and Charlie you are going to love Arthur and Ben!



The Bone Spindle – Leslie Vedder

A fractured twist on the classic fairy tale Sleeping Beauty!



How Not To Be A Vampire Slayer – Katy Birchall

A highly recommended, humorous read for all goths whatever your age!



Young Adult Read

Unraveller – Frances Hardinge

A gripping read with twists! Another brilliant book for all goths.



Highdowner Book Recommendations

Highdowner: Miss Edmunds – DT Technician

What books did you enjoy reading when you were a teenager?

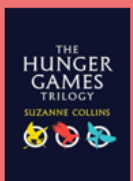
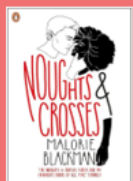
Anything by Terry Pratchett. I started with Mort, then read all of the preceding novels, and then continued with the Discworld series as they were released. I also loved anything by Margaret Mahy and Lois Duncan.

What books/genre do you like reading now?

I still love Terry Pratchett and am sad that I will never have the excitement of a new Discworld novel, but I do go back and reread them. I like a good crime fiction novel and read a lot of women's fiction. I'm also a fan of speculative fiction and a collector of graphic novels/comic books. I also enjoy young adult fiction - series like Noughts and Crosses by Malorie Blackman, The Hunger Games series, and Neal Schusterman's Unwind series are well written and thought provoking.

Who is your favourite author or what is your all time favourite book?

Apart from Terry Pratchett, I have read everything by Lisa Jewell - I love her writing and the way she has developed as an author. I enjoy Gail Carriger's speculative fiction - even her young adult series. One of my all time favourite books is 'The Night Circus' by Erin Morgenstern which blends history, fantasy, magic and a bit of romance.



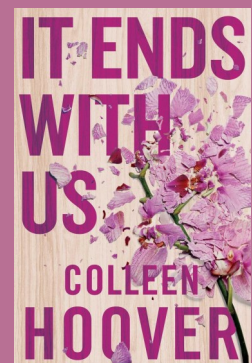


Student Book Recommendation

Chosen for you, by you!

“My favourite books: It ends with us and it starts with us by Colleen Hoover. I read both of these this summer and even got my mum reading them to. Though the author doesn't have the best reputation these two books got me back into reading and are super easy and addicting reads. My friend recommend them to me and I read both of them super quick. The books have a very important message about domestic violence and how the cycle can be broken. It follows the story of Lily and Atlas when they were younger. Atlas, a homeless boy who moved into the abandoned house next to Lily's childhood home. Lily is Atlases only hope, though what Atlas didn't know was that he was helping Lily through her toughest times too. You read their love story through Lily's diary entries when she was younger. As she reads them as an adult, she realises how much she misses him. Lily meets a boy named Ryle who isn't who she thought he was. I don't want to ruin the plot twist so that's all I can say.”

Maisy Hawkins
Year 10



SEND Local Offer Newsletter Winter 2024 - Issue 36



Highdown Bulletin

HIGHDOWN SCHOOL ARE LOOKING FOR LOCAL EMPLOYERS TO ATTEND OUR APPRENTICESHIP EVENING

FOR STUDENTS IN YEAR
10, 11, 12 & 13
TUESDAY 04 FEBRUARY
SET UP FROM 5PM
EVENT 6PM-7:30PM



Register to attend our Apprenticeship Awareness Evening and speak to our students in Years 10, 11, 12 & 13. An opportunity to meet upcoming talent, get your company name out into the community and to give something back!

COME AND BE A PART OF SOMETHING GREAT
AND INSPIRE THE APPRENTICES OF TOMORROW!

REGISTER NOW

THE GALLERY
8.15-8.40 EVERYDAY

Breakfast Club!

School Fuel for Everyone

CEREAL, TOAST, JUICE AND MORE

Mental Health coffee mornings in READING SCHOOLS 2024/25

Come and learn about mental health in a relaxed and informal setting. Understand how mental health might affect your child and learn practical tools to help you support your child through any mental health difficulties they may experience, whether short or long-term.

These informal coffee mornings are run by Amanda Mavunga, Reading MHST CAMHS Senior Clinician at BFIC. Amanda will deliver a presentation followed by an opportunity to ask questions. You can attend any session, even if your child does not attend the hosting school.

***YOU MAY ATTEND ANY OF THESE SESSIONS AT ANY SCHOOL
SPRING TERM**

DATE/TIME	SUBJECT	SCHOOL
13 Jan 2025, 9.15-11.15am	ADHD	Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School
17 Jan 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Managing behaviour (limited to 20 spaces)	E P Collier Primary School (no parking)
22 Jan 2025, 1-3pm	Anxiety	Churchend Primary Academy
30 Jan 2025, 1-3pm	Self-harm and suicidality (limited to 15 spaces)	Geoffrey Field Junior School
3 Feb 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Low mood and depression	St Anne's Catholic Primary School
7 Feb 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Understanding Berkshire CAMHS and neurodiversity service processes (limited to 20 spaces)	Wilson Primary School
CANCELLED		
12 Feb 2025, 1-3pm	Anxiety	The Heights Primary School
24 Feb 2025, 1-3pm	Sleep	Whitley Park Primary and Nursery School
6 March 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Autism and anxiety (limited to 15 spaces)	Oxford Road Community School
12 March 2025, 1-3pm	Body image and eating disorders	New Town Primary School
17 March 2025, 1-3pm	Anxiety (limited to 20 spaces)	Wilson Primary School
28 March 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Low mood and depression	Churchend Primary Academy
2 April 2025, 1-3pm	The impact of social media on mental health	Caversham Park Primary School
4 April 2025, 9.15-11.15am	Managing behaviour (limited to 15 spaces)	Geoffrey Field Junior School

British Cycling Track Cycling Talent Identification

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am getting in touch to make you aware of a Track Cycling Talent Identification Programme we are running this year. Which hopes to identify the cycling potential of talented young people from across England, with those successful going on to join British Cycling's Talent Development and Performance Pathways. Please find more details of this opportunity below and how to get involved.

This could be the start of a journey that could lead to potentially going to the Olympic games and following in the footsteps of British Olympic medalists Dame Laura Kenny, Emma Finucane, Katie Archibald and Jack Carlin.

If your child would like to get involved in this Talent ID Program and the sport of cycling. Then please complete the below application form which can be opened by scanning the QR code below with your mobile phone camera. Applications will close on **Sunday 30th March 2025**.

Following completing an application your child could be invited to one of our 3 testing days taking place across England throughout April. Each testing day will typically be broken down into 3 parts; a workshop delivered by coaches from the Great Britain Cycling Team explaining the cycling pathway and the exciting journey riders could go on, a number of physical test using Wattbikes and off the bike tests for a chance to show us what you can do!

- Manchester – Thursday 17th April 2025
- London – Saturday 19th April 2025
- Derby – Monday 21st April 2025

You must be born in the years 2010, 2011 or 2012 to apply and be eligible for a British passport, but no prior racing experience is required – just the ability to ride a bike!


Or follow this link: <https://forms.microsoft.com/e/98A9RmYfP>
Instagram – @British_Cycling_Talent_Dev

Thanks
Tiffany Fletcher and Hayley Jones

British Cycling Talent Development Coach – Female Lead and Sprint Lead
Email: tiffanyfletcher@britishcycling.org.uk Hayleyjones@britishcycling.org.uk
Mobile: 07384 214096 07534 281264

GREAT BRITAIN CYCLING TEAM
National Cycling Centre, Stuart Street, Manchester M11 4DQ Tel +44 (0)161 274 2000 BRITISHCYCLING.ORG.UK

#INSPIREANATION


Special United: Reading's SEND Youth Forum run by Me2 Club
Have your say on local services, while having fun and enjoying refreshments



Tell the Local Authority and Health Services what you think & earn a £10 Amazon voucher!

Group open to Reading young people with additional needs aged 8 - 25 years

To find out more and to book email ramona@me2club.org.uk or lisaharry14@aol.com



Me2 Club Group Sessions

8 Jan, 5 Feb, 5 Mar, 2 Apr TeenW&Rd
 6 - 7:20pm in Wokingham
 for Reading & Wokingham teens

29 Jan, 19 Mar Wokingham's SEND Youth Forum
 6 - 7:20pm in Woodley
 for Wokingham young people aged 8 - 25

14 Jan, 25 Feb, 25 Mar Young Mental Health Champions
 5:30 to 6:50 pm in Woodley for Reading & Wokingham young people aged 8 - 25

22 Jan, 26 Mar Reading's SEND Youth Forum
 6:20 - 7:50 in Tilehurst
 for Reading young people aged 8 - 25
 email ramona@me2club.org.uk






Group PPP 

Positive parenting programme

Thursday 16 January - Thursday 20 March 2025 9.30-11.30am
 St Mary & All Saints C of E Primary School, Wensley Rd, Reading, RG1 6DU

- ★ Is your child aged 4-11 years old?
- ★ Do you want to support your child when they show distressing behaviour?
- ★ Do you need some help to manage their behaviour?

Join our evidence-based flexible parenting programme.
 The group aims to strengthen the relationship between you and your child. It will help you to understand your child's development and equip you with strategies to help them.
 The programme is delivered in nine two-hour weekly group sessions on Thursdays, term-time only.



To enquire or book your place, please contact:
parenting.reading@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
 or call 0118 937 4858





Teen PPP 

Positive parenting programme

Tuesday 14 January - Tuesday 18 March 2025 9.30-11.30am
 Fairview Community Centre, 90B Great Knollys Street, Reading RG1 7HL

- ★ Is your child aged 11-19 years old?
- ★ Do you want to support your child when they show distressing behaviour?
- ★ Do you want to help your teenager make positive choices?

Join our evidence-based flexible parenting programme.
 The group aims to strengthen your relationship with your teenager, promote your teen's development and equip you to help them recognise and avoid risky situations.
 The programme is delivered in nine two-hour weekly group sessions on Tuesdays, term-time only.

To enquire or book your place, please contact:
parenting.reading@brighterfuturesforchildren.org
 or call 0118 937 4858

