



HeadLines

In watching old movies on TV, one becomes mesmerised by changing fashions of dress. From the elegance of the 1930s to the quirkiness of the 1960s to the eclectic mix which is haute couture today, one can trace the history of a century via its evolving style. Equally well, we can laugh at the different technologies used to communicate with each other: candlestick phones, trimphones, mobile phones of greater and lesser size, computers which filled large rooms and laptops we carry from place to place. When I was young, there were phones, of course, and contrary to what some of my students might think, I didn't have to rely on carrier pigeon or stagecoach mail, but I did often have to trust in the efficiency of the humble telephone box in order to contact my friends. The letters that I wrote from university to my parents and sister were prolific and a very telling diary of those days.

Today it is different, very different. It is difficult to say what has transformed the life of the modern teenager most; the ubiquitous mobile phone or MSN messaging and other features of the internet.

As with so many aspects of progress, there are positives and negatives. We forbid the use of mobile phones in school. We ask you not to allow your sons and daughters to bring them to school at all and if they do, to hand them to Student Services. A mobile phone in the examination room can mean the end to exam success and forms of bullying via mobile phones can bring distress and require to be dealt with in the most severe way. Whilst there are firewalls to prevent inappropriate internet access at school, national evidence indicates that many parents have no idea who their children are talking to on 'My Space' or 'Bebo' or MSN or 'Facebook.' Many young children communicate with strangers online who they claim are friends because of the many conversations that have been conducted and who present real dangers to the safety of the youngsters.

In the e-safety campaign we are pursuing in school, one of the most powerful pieces of advice is regarding where the computer which the child uses is placed in the home and how much safer it is not to have it housed in the child's room. It is a thorny area for parents particularly when they are told by their teenage sons and daughters what other children are allowed to do. However, the distress caused by cyber bullying and the inability to 'get away' from the continual banter and conversation via mobiles and internet is a pressure that can affect young people adversely and, in its worst form, may expose them to moral and physical danger.

Learning in schools has been aided by the computer age, but whether effective personal communication and aspects of family life have been affected for the better is a question on which the jury is still out. I welcome your views!

Sandra Samwell, Headteacher

Dates for Your Diary



Gold Week

- 21st Apr** AS Level Drama Practical
Year 11 Maths Activity in morning (80 students)
- 22nd Apr** Year 8 Hidden Histories Drama and Dance
Workshop (selected students)
Year 11 PE First Aid course (22 students)
- 23rd Apr** Year 12 General Studies Day
Year 10 PE First Aid course (22 students)
- 24th Apr** **School closed to Years 7, 8 and 9** (see letter from Miss Samwell, distributed earlier this week)
HOUSE DANCE

27th Apr D of E Bronze Competency

Blue Week

- 28th Apr** A2 Level Drama Practical
- 1st May** Year 7 Junior Maths Challenge
GCSE Drama Moderation

Year 8 Hidden Histories Trip

On Friday 11th April thirty Year 8 students, who had been selected to participate in the Hidden Histories project, took part in the first part of the programme which was a trip to the County Hall Archives to learn about the Slave Trade. We saw some old documents such as diary extracts and newspaper stories about slaves and the Slave Trade. We also saw some maps and diagrams showing how the slaves were transported and the harsh conditions they had to live in.

We learnt a lot of information about the Slave Trade from these documents. We also learnt about how they store and protect the documents at the Archives. Overall it was a very fun and interesting day and we learnt a lot.

Lillith Hickling 8N



arts colleges

View from the front row: a review of the Spring Concert

The Spring Concert at the end of last term provided a stunning reminder of all that is good about the school. In a sense, it was the icing on the cake following the complimentary Ofsted judgements during a challenging term. As a headteacher, I spend much time analysing results, evaluating the school and listening to people talking about the school or reading what they have written. To sit in the hall and witness the joy and enthusiasm of our young people playing and singing music of such high quality is the reality of what the school is and how effective teaching and learning can be reflected in excellence of performance.

Debbie Bailey and her team produced a fine concert which showcased the talents of many students as soloists and in ensembles. One of the obvious things was the succession planning that was apparent in the programme itself. The youngsters who had grown in confidence over seven years at HHS were playing in their last concert but those who had started out on their musical careers a few years ago were ready to take over the reins, leading us to anticipate the outstanding concerts we will attend in the future.

And yet how poignant it was to hear the saxophone quartet, who have served the school so well, play such a multi-syncopated, rhythmic and contrapuntally elaborate version of Irving Berlin's 'Putting on the Ritz' as their last official performance, followed so fittingly a little later by the exemplary work of Tiago Chan directing the Wind Quintet. Similarly, those who were playing for the last time in the Sinfonia handled adeptly the baroque extravagance of the masters whilst the newly initiated strings in the more junior ensemble indicated that there will be a symphonic continuity in the years to come. The flute trio of Fifi Mills, Lindsey Smith and Jenny Tucker gave yet another totally professional rendition of a highlight of the flautists' repertoire.

Being an emotional old soul, several of the pieces brought a tear to my eye, none more so than Esther Shiels' beautiful vocals on her own composition 'Letting Go.' May I also mention my admiration of another faultless performance on the steel pans by Chris Harbour. That is not to say that there were not other magnificent vocal moments in, for instance, the chamber choir. From sacred music to the Jackson Five, the melodic and harmonic contrasts enabled us to appreciate the mellifluous vocals and the expertise of the choral director, Debbie Bailey. How refreshing to see boys and girls enjoying their singing and providing four distinct lines in the harmonic construction of the pieces.

The various large instrumental ensembles; wind, funk, steel pans and concert, completed an evening of undiluted pleasure, hugely enjoyed by the capacity audience. Music is alive and well at The Hemel Hempstead School and will be for many years to come.

Miss S Samwell, Headteacher

Easter Fundraising Event

The Year 9 ASDAN group organised an Easter Fundraising event on the last day of term. It was full of Easter activities, such as the 'Cutting Chocolate Challenge', 'Easter Hoop' and 'How Many Eggs in the Jar?'

This event raised money for Keech Cottage Children's Hospice and we are glad to announce that we raised £125.15.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this good cause.
Year 9 ASDAN Group

House Dance Festival – Thursday 24th April

The House Dance Festival is to be held this Thursday in the School Hall. Doors open at 6.30 pm and the event will begin at 7 pm with an anticipated finish of 9 pm. Tickets are on sale at Student Services from Monday at break and lunch times. They will cost £2 each and are restricted to two tickets per child. Tickets are very popular for this event and I would strongly advise anyone wishing to buy tickets to buy them as early as possible to avoid disappointment.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the evening.
Mr J Mitchell

Sickness/absence line

Please will all parents contact us **daily** if your child is sick, going to be late in due to a medical appointment, or is absent for any other reason. Please call our sickness/absence line on **01442 390103 by 9am if possible.**

Gold Letters issued recently:

Letter 148 Year 9 Mock SATs Results
Letter 149 Voluntary Contribution
Letter 150 Year 10 Work Experience – Webview

There has also been a white letter from Miss Samwell to all parents regarding industrial action on Thursday, 24th April.

Sport



Fixtures

- Mon 21 Apr** Yrs 8/10 County League Athletics
Match 1 @ Jarman Park
Tue 22 Apr Yrs 7/8 Rounders v Kings Langley (A)
Wed 23 Apr Yr 11/Senior Rounders @ HHS
Thu 24 Apr Yrs 9/10 Rounders v Ashlyns (A)

Results

1st XI District Cup Soccer Semi-Final v Longdean won 1-0

SPORTS NEWS

Congratulations to the 1st XI Football team on reaching the District Cup final, where they will play Kings Langley School.

Thank you and well done to all students involved in the external PE Moderation on Tuesday this week. There were some very strong performances which reflected very well on the school.

Sports practices have now started again for the Summer term, with Athletics, Cricket and Rounders. Please check the extra-curricular timetable or see a member of PE staff to make sure you know when your practice is. Athletics fixtures will begin next Monday with the first County League match for Years 8 and 10.

Mr P Bryson, PE Department

Maths Stars of the Month for March are:

Jamie McIvor 7A, Madie Johnson 7L, Kyle Sumner 7C, Nicola Kennett 7N, Courtney Rowe 7N, Alice Stride 7F, Lois Moore 8N, Sophie Hatchet 8L, Brittany Woods 8A, Cale Tilford 8C, Rebecca Martin 8C, Adam King 9C, Daniel Dewhurst 9C, Sam Evans, Spencer Edney-Groves, Naomis Davis 9C, Sarah Kinley 9P, Michael Neale 10A, Elliot Territt 10N, Michael Wadlow, Sehrush Hussain 10F, Brad Walker 10C, Charlotte Fletcher 10N, Ruth Middlebrook 11P, Arfana Saddique, Jasper Rook Williams 11P, Amber Bartlett, Sam Hobbs 11C, Duncan Philpott 11C.

Maths Puzzle of the Month:

Many entries were received for the March puzzle of the month, but there was only one correct solution. The solution involved using **all** the digits 1,3,5 and 7 (**in that order**) to form numbers from 1 to 10. The winning entry was submitted by Tim Moss 7N. Well done, Tim! If you were not successful this time, why not enter the April puzzle of the month competition. This time you will need to fill out a cross number (just a crossword with numbers) based on specific clues. Submit your entry via your Maths teacher.

Mrs Kirby, Maths Department

April's puzzle:

In the clues a, b and c are three prime numbers less than 100. By piecing together the information which is contained within the clues a, b and c can be found and the grid completed. It's easier than it looks!

1		2		3
		4	5	
6			7	

Across

- 1) ab
- 4) $a + b + c$
- 6) $c - b$
- 7) $b - a$

Down

- 1) $a(b - 1)$
- 2) $b + 2$
- 3) $11(b - a)$
- 5) $2b - a$

Reminder to Parents

Please inform the School Office of any changes to your emergency contact details e.g. you have a new mobile phone number. Thank you.

PTA News

Summer Fair - 14 June

We have a Watford Football Club pennant, signed by this season's team, which we wish to auction to raise funds for the Summer Fair. The pennant is on display in the Trophy Cabinet (House Corridor by Student Services). If you would like to place a bid for it, please contact the Chair accordingly - see below.

Flaggs (Estate Agents) will donate funds to us if we will display boards (like 'For Sale' boards) advertising the School Fair and Flaggs. Please let us know if you would be prepared to have a board on your property for approximately two weeks.

Please contact us if you know of a Driving School that would help us on Summer Fair day by bringing one or two cars to school, and providing short driving sessions. This was done at a previous Summer Fair, but we have lost contact with the Driving School that helped us on that occasion.

Please let us know if you would 'Make and Donate' a cake for our cake stall (not fresh cream). Just let us know now, and bring your cake along on the day.

As we no longer have a Learning Review Day / Donation Day, please would you bring along any bottles, perfume, unwanted presents etc. to the Dining Hall during the interval at House Dance on 24 April (free cookies for anyone bringing donations!)

Our Raffle this year will have prizes of £100 cash, a Television, £50 cash, and a DVD player - watch out for tickets shortly.

Our next committee meeting is 12th May at 7pm until approximately 8pm in the Library - please come along as we need your help and ideas.

Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350), email s.stallworthy@sky.com