

Hurstmere News

27th January 2023

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Our Core Values
Assembly Theme
next week is
Resilience

*"The oak fought the
wind and was broken;
the willow bent when it
must and survived."*

Robert Jordan

Bending does not
mean you are weak; it
shows your resilience
and will to succeed.

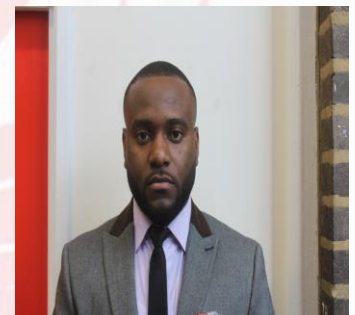
Welcome to the first edition of Hurstmere News, a fortnightly newsletter to provide you with information and to foster a connection between the classroom and the home. I am immensely proud of our pupils who continue to impress us with their energy and enthusiasm, which has been captured in their English, Maths and Science lessons for this edition. For our next edition, we will be capturing the buzz of learning in the Humanities subjects to share with you.

I would like to highlight the 'Information for Parents' pages in the newsletter to share top tips and upcoming events. My intention for this newsletter is to continue to open the lines of communication with parents and to showcase some of the wonderful learning taking place in the school.

We warmly welcome Mr Robinson (Teacher of Maths) and Ms Yearsley (Curriculum Leader of Religious Studies) to the Hurstmere community, who joined at the start of this term. I hope they both have an enjoyable time here at Hurstmere.

Enjoy the newsletter!
Lynn Bennett, Principal

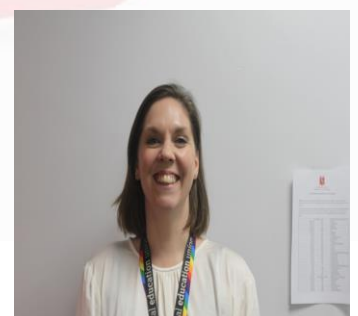
Mr Robinson – I am delighted to join the Maths Department at Hurstmere School. As a passionate Maths teacher, I have been fortunate to have had a positive impact on pupils in my previous school, and I look forward to the opportunity to do the same for the pupils at Hurstmere. My philosophy is that every child can learn, and every child must learn. Education is a changing profession to which I keep abreast with by undertaking CPD to ensure that I am upscaling.



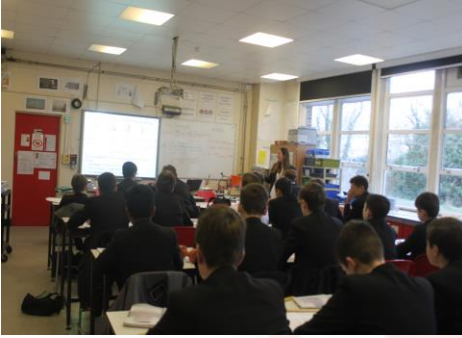
Ms Yearsley – I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and say how excited I am to become part of the Hurstmere team!

I have been teaching Religious Studies for the past 12 or so years and am delighted to say that I have now started at Hurstmere School as Curriculum Leader for Religious Studies.

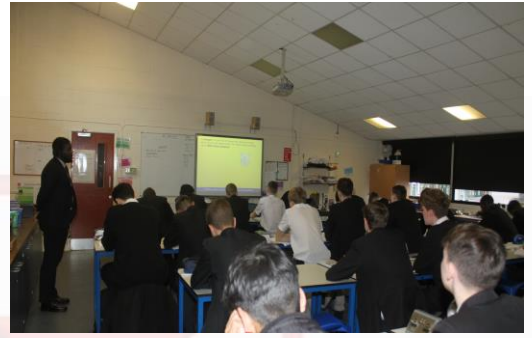
Alongside the study of religion, I will be introducing brand new topics with roots in ethics and philosophy, such as 'Crime and Punishment', 'Peace and Conflict' and 'Ethical Dilemmas'.



Take a sneak peek into our classrooms...



Year 9 Science – pupils busy working on their gravitational potential energy calculations and how this is used in the design of rollercoasters.



Year 11 Science – pupils learning about the nervous system and how it responds to external changes.



Year 11 English – pupils are actively polishing their exam techniques in preparation for their GCSE English Language PPE exam.



Year 9 English – pupils working to identify implicit vs explicit information from a non-fiction text.



Year 10 English – pupils studying the social and historical context of 'An Inspector Calls'.



Year 9 Maths – pupils engaged in a whiteboard quiz to calculate missing angles, which supports the next topic 'construction'.



Year 7 Maths – pupils interchanging between expanding and factorising expressions in their Algebra lesson.



Year 8 Maths – pupils working on all the different number rounding techniques to carry out estimations and finding ranges.



A packed-out classroom for an after-school Year 11 revision session in Maths

This is just one example of the numerous after-school sessions being offered through the 'Raising Aspirations Programme' for Year 11s. Pupils have been working extremely hard in order to prepare for their upcoming PPE examinations in readiness for their final exams in the summer. Through identified topics for development, pupils are working to address their misconceptions and to improve on their exam skills and techniques on a weekly basis.



‘e2e’ are a professional TV Production Company based at Hurstmere School. Their aim is to upskill the pupils through a hands-on approach to enable them to take on roles as TV programme makers and film makers. The pupils use specialist broadcasting equipment to create digital content in a multi-camera green screen studio; they have access to a production control room, as well as opportunities to go out on location to capture new material.

‘e2e’ are at Hurstmere School for two days a week, working within the curriculum and enabling pupils to gain a practical understanding of the processes involved in TV & Film Production. This improves technical, communication and digital literacy skills, as well as gaining confidence whilst working as a team. ‘end2end TV’ is also an Arts Award centre and are able to mentor and assess all 5 levels of nationally recognised qualifications. Every pupil at Hurstmere School has the opportunity to take part in a Monday lunchtime News Club, as well as a Monday after-school TV Club. The after-school club runs in four weekly blocks every half term. Everyone is welcome!

Pupil Champions League Scorecard					
Name:	Week:		Score:		
	Punctuality / Equipment	Engagement	Completion	Staff Signature	Total
Lesson 1					
Lesson 2					
Lesson 3					
Lesson 4					
Lesson 5					



Mrs Bennett and Mrs Davis ready to undertake the Teams Draw



The Champions League comes to Hurstmere!

12 Pupils in Years 7, 8 & 9 (selected by their respective Raising Standards Leader) are currently taking part in a Champions League Competition, representing a European Football Team to compete against each other in all their lessons.

This term, the boys go head-to-head against another pupil from their year group, scoring a goal for every lesson they are properly equipped and punctual for, and when they demonstrate active engagement and completion of the work set. At the end of each day, pupils hand in their score card and the results are processed. On a weekly basis, the pupil who finishes 1st, 2nd and 3rd position will receive a certificate, with the winner claiming a priority canteen queue pass, which allows them to go straight to the front of the queue for a week! The boys have really engaged positively with this initiative and have enjoyed the daily matches, whilst keeping an eye on the league table. The overall winner will receive a £40 Amazon Voucher...watch this space!





Visitors News



Year 7s recently had a visit during their PSHE lesson from Anton Ferdinand, who shared with them how he disciplined himself to work hard to make his ambition a reality. He also shared his life experiences as a professional footballer, and how he built his resilience through the support of his friends and family whenever he experienced difficult times. His talk encapsulated all our core values of: Respect, Teamwork, Resilience, Ambition, Integrity, Leadership and Self Belief. There was also an opportunity for the Year 7s to ask their well thought out questions for our esteemed guest via Mr Dye. What an excellent opportunity for our boys!



Featuring in our next edition... Extra-curricular activities

Table Tennis Club – Friday 1.10pm
Harmony Army – Weds 1.10pm
*Football Squad Training Yr 7 – Weds. 2.50pm
*Football Squad Training Yr 8 & 9 – Tues 2.50pm
Rugby Training Yr 7, 8 & 10 – Thurs 2.50pm
Rugby Training Yr 9 – Wednesday 2.50pm
Beginners Keyboard Club – Thursday 1.10pm
Hurstmere Debate Club – Thurs (Week B) 1.10pm
Library Breakfast Club – Daily 8am
Write Club – Friday (Week B) 1.10pm
News Club – Monday 1.10pm
TV Club – Monday 2.50pm

History Movie Club – Tuesday 2.50pm
Science (STEM) Club – Weds 3.05pm
Spanish Club – Tuesday 2.50pm
Beginners Guitar Club – Weds 3pm
Bananagrams Club – Monday 1.10pm
Harmony Army – Weds 1.10pm
Basketball Club – Everyday 1.10pm
Restaurant Breakfast Club – 8am Daily
Lego & Comic Club – Daily 1.10pm
Warhammer Club – Friday 2.50pm
Thr-H-ive Club – Weds 1.10pm

* Football Squad Training is invite only.

Information for Parents



Academic Review Day – 19th January 2023

It was great to see so many of you at our first Academic Review day last week. We hope you enjoyed the opportunity to have a focused discussion with your son's form tutor about their progress and achievements. Thank you to all who completed the feedback questionnaire, the results of which are shown below.

My son feels safe at the school.

92% Strongly Agree & Agree

The school ensures pupils are well behaved.

72% Strongly Agree & Agree

My son has been bullied & it has been with effectively.

72% Strongly Agree & Agree

I am made aware of what my son will be learning.

64% Strongly Agree & Agree

When I have raised concerns, they have been dealt with properly.

75% Strongly Agree & Agree

My son has SEND and is given the support needed to succeed.

45% Strongly Agree & Agree

The school has high expectations for my son.

75% Strongly Agree & Agree

My son does well at this school.

79% Strongly Agree & Agree

The school lets me know how my son is doing.

80% Strongly Agree & Agree

There is a good range of subjects at this school.

89% Strongly Agree & Agree

My son can take part in clubs and activities at this school.

83% Strongly Agree & Agree

The school supports my son's wider personal development.

75% Strongly Agree & Agree

I would recommend this school to another parent.

76% Strongly Agree & Agree



In response to parents wanting more communication with the school, we brought in 'SIMS Intouch' and are publishing a fortnightly newsletter, 'Hurstmere News'.



In response to parents wanting more in-person contact with the school, we scheduled Parents Coffee Mornings, set up 'The Friends of Hurstmere', introduced the Academic Review Day and we will host the forthcoming Parents Evening as face-to-face appointments.



In response to parents requesting a review of pupils' toilet use during the day, we have built in 'change over time' between Lesson 1&2 and Lesson 3&4 for the pupils to use the toilets, should they need to.

watch
this
space



Upcoming webinar for parents – *How to Help Improve Your Child's Memory*

We are excited to announce that Elevate Education will be hosting a free webinar for our parents on
Tuesday 7th February.

Elevate Education works with our pupils, delivering high impact workshops on study skills, motivation, wellbeing, and exam preparation. By tuning into their webinar series, you will learn how you can help better support your children at home through reinforcing the skills they learn at school:

Tuesday 7th February @ 6:00pm (GMT) - How to Help Improve Your Child's Memory

[Click here to register for free](#)

In this webinar Elevate will be showing parents how to:

- ✓ How memory *actually* works (and how it has nothing to do with brain capacity)
- ✓ The most effective environments to assist in memorisation
- ✓ 3 techniques you can implement overnight to improve revision



**These forthcoming events will be hosted in school with
face-to-face appointments**

Thursday 23rd February 2023: Year 11 Subjects Parents Evening

Thursday 9th March 2023: Year 9 Option Evening

Thursday 16th March 2023: Year 9 Subjects Parents Evening

Thursday 30th March 2023: Year 7 Subjects Parents Evening

7 Top Tips to Support Reading at Home

Shared reading is a great way to develop children's language and communication and to boost their reading skills. Regular reading routines can offer lots of opportunities for learning during school closures.

1 Concentrate on reading quality (it isn't all about reading lots!)



Don't worry too much about the 'what' and 'how' of reading each day. Books are great—but leaflets, comics, recipes and instructions on a webpage can all be great too. Following a recipe to make some cupcakes is valuable reading. Be on the lookout for reading, wherever it is!

2 Ask your child lots of questions



All reading matters. Shared reading is about 'reading with', not just 'reading to' (even for older children). So, ask lots of 'Wh' questions, such as Who? What? When? Where? Why? Try them when talking about books: for example, 'what do you think Harry is feeling?'

3 Ask your child to make predictions about what they have read



If it is a book, look at the front cover—or the last chapter—and talk about what might happen next. Look for clues in the book and be a reading detective! For example, 'can you see the bear on the front cover? Where do you think he will go?'

4 Ask your child to summarise what they have read



When you've finished reading, talk about what happened. Acting out the things that happened in the story or describing the big idea of a chapter is really fun and maximises learning. For example, 'can you remember all the things that happened on the bear hunt?'

5 Ask your child to write about what they have read



Write, or draw pictures, from anything you've read! Big writing and pictures are even more fun. For example, use an old roll of wallpaper to make a treasure map with clues from the stories you've read together.

6 Read and discuss reading with friends or family



Make books a part of the family. Encourage your child to share them with a relative or friend, over a video call. Laugh about them when you are making meals together. For example, 'I hope the tiger doesn't come to tea today!'

7 Maintain the motivation to read



Talk about the joy of reading whenever you can. Your child is on an amazing journey to becoming a reader. Put them in the driving seat and have fun on the way! For example, 'choose your favourite story for bedtime tonight.'

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so entralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM



Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-33204805>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>



Information for Parents

Pre-Loved Uniform

Please do remember that you can donate your unwanted/outgrown, good quality, clean school uniform (Blazers, Jumpers & PE Kit) - just bring the items in a bag and leave at the school office.



A **BIG THANK YOU** to all those who have kindly donated already.

If you would like to know what we have in stock, please contact the school office.

Join 'Friends of Hurstmere School' - together we can make a difference!

Please contact the school office:

- If you feel you could help the school by running events to raise funds which directly benefit the pupils and enrich their school experience;
- If you have the time to support and help out at school functions, events or even volunteer as a reader to help some of our pupils.



School Meals

Our catering company responsible for all school meals is Accent Catering. They have made a number of changes to the dining experience at school, including updating the server facilities, the menu and introducing a new biometric payment system.

<http://www.accentcatering.co.uk/services-secondary-schools/>

Online payments for school meals can be made through Wisepay.

Term Dates

Half Term – Our last day is Thursday 9th February 2023
Back to school on Tuesday 21st February 2023

Last day of Spring Term is Friday 31st March 2023

Summer Term starts Monday 17th April 2023

Bank Holiday – 1st May 2023 & 8th May 2023

Half Term – Our last day is Friday 26th May 2023
Back to school on Monday 5th June 2023

Last day of Summer is Friday 21st July 2023

