



Heathermount School – Newsletter

October 2024

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2024-2025 School Year!

After another busy and action packed term, I am delighted to share with you some of the amazing learning experiences that our young people have been involved in, trips, visits and sports fixtures. Do look at our [Highlights of Term 1](#) News Article and [Photo Gallery](#) for more information and lots of pictures.

Ofsted visit

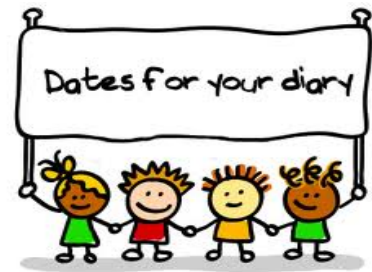
Well, after a long wait, it was great to be able to welcome two HMI Ofsted inspectors to the school at the start of October, and show them what a wonderful school we have filled with great staff and students. Thank you for completing the parental questionnaire and to those of you who spoke with the inspectors. It was a very thorough inspection (lasted over 4 days) where they spent a lot of time in lessons, talking to the children and staff, as well as several discussions with school leaders.

At this point in time, I am waiting for the final report to be sent to me and as soon as I have it, I will share it with parents before it goes “live” on the Ofsted website.

After a very robust process, I believe they have come to a fair result and one that aligns to our own self evaluation of where the school is currently. As we are an independent school, we will have a “one word judgement” for overall effectiveness as well as grades for the four key areas that were inspected.

Autism Accreditation

As if Ofsted wasn't enough, we had our Autism Accreditation visit the following week and this consisted of an assessor from the National Autistic Society and a moderator, who was a serving



Monday - Friday 28 Oct-1 Nov
October Half-Term

Monday 4 November
Start of Term 2 for students

Thursday 7 November
Parents coffee morning
(9:15am to 10:15am)

Monday 11 to Friday 15 November
Anti-bullying Week

Tuesday 12 November
Odd sock day

Thursday 14 November
Parents evening (4pm to 7:30pm)

Friday 15 November
Children in Need - Dress up

Thursday 12 December
Primary Nativity to parents

Friday 13 December
Dress rehearsal to Secondary
- A Christmas Carol

Monday 16 December
Secondary performance to parents - A
Christmas Carol

Headteacher in another special school. Thank you to Priya for leading on this. We hope to get our re-accreditation news in the coming weeks, once the report has been discussed at Board level and a decision is reached.

Wear it pink day

Thank you all for your generous donations! We raised an amazing **£403.60** for Breast Cancer Now! This is an amazing amount of money for such a small school.

Halloween

Another great dress up today! Please enjoy looking at the [Halloween Photo Gallery](#) on the website and thank you all for supporting your children with their wonderful outfits.

Rap workshop

Always a highlight of the term! It was wonderful to see our students engaging and showing off their creative side in a fun and exciting way. Thank you to Laura for organising the workshops.

Reward trips

The students have had some fantastic reward trips this term to places such as Chessington, Thorpe park and AirHop. Thank you to the staff for the hard work you put in to make these trips possible and for the students engaging well with the reward system in school and showing expected behaviours.

Duke of Edinburgh

It's great to be able to offer the [D of E bronze award](#) to some of our older students again this year. They've already had two offsite trips. These will continue throughout the year culminating in a camping trip during the summer term. Thank you to Dani and Richard for organising this and for the partnership work with the area D of E co-ordinator.

Cowshed work experience

All throughout this term our secondary students have been going to [The Cowshed](#) to volunteer and gain some very valuable work experience outside of school. Thank you to Ros for organising the visits and all the paperwork that goes along with it.

Football tournament

Congratulations to all of our footballers who have represented the school this term and displayed many of our core values in the way they have conducted themselves.

Fire brigade visit - 25 October

There was a lot of excitement today when a fire engine came into school to see the foundation children and there was some valuable learning about what the firefighters do every day.

Tuesday 17 December

Students Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day
Foundation parents in for Christmas crafts and songs

Thursday 19 & Friday 20 December INSET Days - Staff training

Monday 23 Dec - Friday 3 Jan Christmas holidays

Monday 6 January Start of Term 3 for students



Congratulations to all our stars of the week his term:

- o Dexter
- o Cohen
- o Taim
- o Alex
- o Bailey
- o Benjamin
- o Amaan

Wow Moments

Well done to all our students who had wow moments:

Foundation:

- o Zachary
- o Rayan
- o Jasper
- o Max
- o Gianfranco
- o Marco
- o Christopher

Primary:

- o Arthur
- o Billy-Joe
- o Alice
- o Joshua
- o Harry
- o Mylo
- o Joseph
- o Lamine

Wow Moments

Primary cont:

- o Lauren
- o Nathaniel
- o Bradley
- o Robin

Secondary:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| o Jacob | o Kady |
| o Tom | o Jack |
| o Isaac M | o Alex S |
| o Lowen | o Finley |
| o Sam | o Colbie |
| o Erin | o Alex G |
| o Bradley | o Isla |
| o Henry | o Charlie E |
| o Ryan | o Isaac A |
| o Taim | o Benjamin |
| o Amaan | o Erin |
| o Tobias | o Cian |
| o Abdul-Rahim | o Lily |
| o Traivys | o Alessandro |
| o Charlie D | o Leo |
| o Henry | |

School Lunches

The [menu](#) for the Autumn term are on our website – please remember to pay for your child’s lunches via the Arbor parent portal or Arbor App. Any top up amount can be added to your child’s account.

Anti bullying week - 11-15 November 2024

Priya has put some exciting and informative activities together for staff to deliver to the children during Anti-Bullying week and to talk about how to “**choose respect**” to stop bullying. We will be having an “odd sock”day on 12 November to link in with our theme.

The Trussell Trust

The school council has chosen The [Trussell Trust](#) to support once again for our Christmas charity this year - please look out for details of how to contribute to their foodbank after Half Term.

Parents coffee morning

We will be starting up our coffee mornings again next term, with the first being a face to face meeting at the school just after drop off on Thursday 7 November. We shall then rotate the timings to include a virtual one in the evening and an afternoon session before pick up to allow as many parents as possible to attend. Please keep your eyes open for the invite from Cathy.

Staffing

Sadly, this term we are saying goodbye to Carly (Occupational Therapy Assistant), and Kirsty (Teaching Assistant) but are happy to welcome Raul to the TA team.

Also, at the end of the Autumn term, Rebecca, (KS3/4 Science teacher), will be moving on to join a mainstream school as a senior leader and SENCO. Over the coming weeks, we will be working to ensure a smooth transition and making plans to welcome a new Science teacher in the Spring term. We will keep you updated as plans progress and wish Rebecca every success in her new role.

After an 8 week term, both the children and staff are pretty exhausted and we all need a break. I hope that whatever you do during the half term, that you have a restful and enjoyable time. We look forward to seeing the children return to school on Monday 4 November.

David Stewart
Headteacher

Key Safety Tips for Halloween, Diwali & Bonfire Night



With Halloween, Diwali and Bonfire Night all quickly approaching this is one of the most exciting times of the year for children. But it can also bring additional safety challenges. To help keep children safe this season we are sharing some [key safety tips and free resources](#) that have been provided by GEMS the Autism and ADHD Support Service for East Berkshire.

**** Every Day Matters ****

Whole school attendance 91.6%

Thank you to everyone for contributing to the fantastic overall attendance figures this academic year. Please continue to keep us informed of your child's absences. It is important to notify us of each day your child is not in school.

The greater the attendance in school = the greater the achievement

Is my child too ill for school? Please follow the NHS guidance on when to send your child to school
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

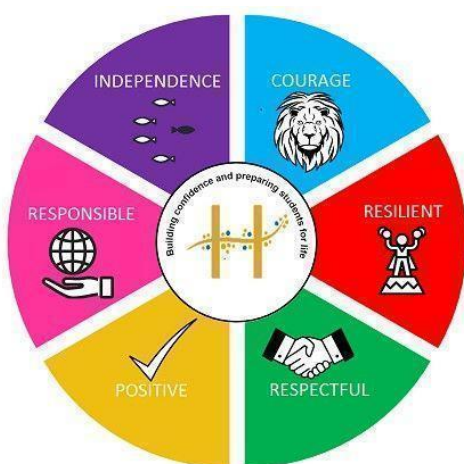
“Leading Parent Partnership” and “Wellbeing in schools” achievements.



We have strived over the last 3 years, to continue working within both of these accreditations and believe that we have developed our engagement with parents further, as well as improving our approaches and support for students, staff and families regarding wellbeing and mental health. Recent and previous questionnaires are showing us that this is the case and we thank all those who have taken the time to complete these to help us with honest reflection.

The time has now come for us to renew our two awards for a further 3 years and in the coming weeks some of you may be asked to participate in dialogue with our external verifier to validate that we still are maintaining our high standards. Verification will take place on 17th December 2024.

For anyone interested in participating in this and anyone who wishes to know more about the awards, please do contact Julie: julie.swann@heathermount.co.uk.



Core Values

Each term, the whole school focuses on one of Heathermount's core values. At the end of term, staff nominate students who they feel have demonstrated the core value really well. An overall winner is then decided for foundation, primary and secondary. This term we have focused on **Responsible** and our cup winners are:

- **Foundation - Max**
- **Primary - Stanley C**
- **Secondary - Traivys**

