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THE HOLMEWOOD
SCHOOL



National
Autistic
Society

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2020



Newsletter

Friday 11th December 2020

Dear Families,

What a week this has been! I'd like to start by saying thank you to each of you for being so understanding, flexible and supportive to me and my staff this week.

As you know, Covid hit us quite badly. There is no point in not being transparent about this as I currently have almost all my staff in isolation along with the vast majority of students. I have been talking with Public Health England daily (in fact, several times a day!), and have become rather friendly with the Directors of Public Health for both Barnet and Haringey. The decision to close the buildings and switch to remote learning for both Lower and Upper School was not an easy one and I am greatly appreciative of your support so this could be set up again so quickly.

I'd also like to thank our brilliant team of teachers and therapists who have switched all their lessons to remote at the drop of a hat. The Teaching Assistants have been superb in supporting teachers and students and many of them are covering lessons, running clubs and other activities to keep things going.

Finally, thank you to my admin team, particularly Simon Hardwick who has been my

So here we are at the end of term in a very unusual situation. Although we have been ready for this for the last ten months, it's not quite in line with our usual festivities. Remote learning is going well so far and it's been a joy to see so many smiling students on screen. I ask that parents and carers continue to bear with us as my staff rest and recover and gradually return to work.

Fortunately, although many students are having to isolate, they are very well and able to continue their learning. It's wonderful to see how keen they are to get online and engage in their lessons and I'm sure they will make the most of the last few days of term.

In lieu of our usual Winter Show and social events, I will be hosting a social online coffee morning on Monday 14th December at 10am. I invite you to bring your favourite mug of hot beverage and a mince pie and join me for a chance to catch up with friends and wish each other a Merry Christmas and a Happy Hanukkah. Please join us at <https://meet.google.com/yqi-nudr-mqq>

Wishing you all health and happiness over the holiday. Enjoy the 'togetherness' and we will see everyone again in January.

Best wishes

Ms Camilleri

Executive Head Teacher

Dates For Your Diary

- **Wed 16th Dec** - Last day of Autumn term
- **Tues 5th & Wed 6th Jan** - Inset days
- **Thurs 7th Jan** - Spring term (1st half) starts

2020

A widely acknowledged human trait is to have a tendency to focus on the negative. Our bad memories might be more vivid than the nice ones and we might focus more on one piece of 'even better if' feedback than up to four 'what went wells'.

has been touched by the virus.

However, we have to acknowledge that despite being in a pandemic and working through a second lockdown, The Holmewood School has had a wonderful first term back. We opened our beautiful new site at Muswell Hill, and by splitting the school into Upper and Lower, we have been able to further specify our offer and create more meaningful experiences for our young people. I know in the Upper School this has given the students a greater sense of maturity.

School staff are frontline workers, who have willingly taken the risk to attend work during this pandemic because they know that by doing so they are making a difference in the lives of vulnerable young people. And despite the context, we have provided a place for young people to be themselves and express themselves, while educating them in a unique and bespoke manner. This has given young people who have been failed by mainstream education a second chance.

It's totally understandable if the end of 2020 comes with a sense of relief. And while it may be a difficult time for many of us, we should look to 2021 with optimism, as we see our combined efforts result in confident and self-assured young autistic people, who are becoming more and more ready to share their unique gifts with the world. I'm looking forward to celebrating their many future achievements.

Ms Young

Head of Upper School

10th Birthday Merchandise Available

All items can be purchased via ParentMail

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|--|-------------|---|---|
|  | | t-shirt; 15cm | |
|  | | Hanging Calendar - A3; featuring student's art pieces from both Lower and Upper school | £7 each |
|  | | Celebratory Enamel Pin - 30mm diameter featuring the 10th Anniversary logo | £2.50 each |
|  | | Holmewood Pale Ale - 500ml bottle; 3.8% abv; vegan friendly; Produced by the IVO Brewery; Winning a silver award for Premium Pale Ale East 2020 and regional award winners in the Siba Digital beer awards and Gold for their dark beers | £5 each (or 4 bottles for £18) |



Piccadilly class have had an amazing first term back - far too many to mention in our tiny space in the newsletter! Our class has grown from two original members to 5 students who each bring something special to the class.

Although it is not the way we wanted to see out the year, our warmest seasonal wishes go out to you all.

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Best wishes,

Ms Gardner, Ms Dixon and Ms Motlagh
Piccadilly Class



Circle class has had a busy few weeks! They've shown such resilience in completing their SATs in English, Maths and Science; had some incredible mindfulness sessions, working on being in the present (which is so important, particularly in this current climate); engaged independently with our wellness sessions and enjoyed independent reading time.



Together as a team, Circle made a fantastic cake to celebrate THSL's 10th birthday and drew lovely pictures of Holmewood for the competition. We also enjoyed using the photo booth to create memories, all taken by our very own budding photographer, Eytan.

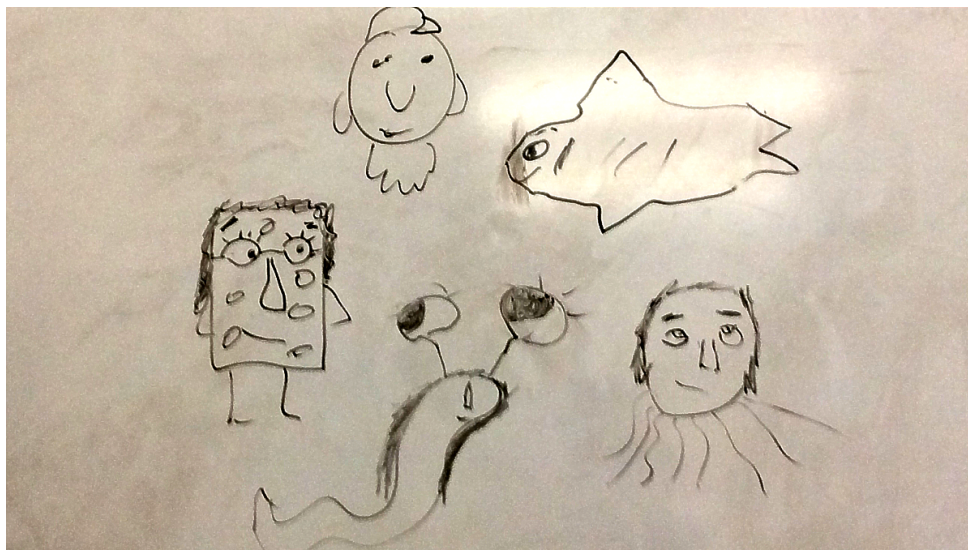


Prior to that, we had anti-bullying week and participated in different events - Circle asked great questions and role played different situations during specific workshops. They also created a wall hanging to express their views on bullying which is currently hanging in our classroom. We were extremely proud when Luca came second in the art competition - amazing work!

Our very own Dylan ran for student council chairperson, and after a wonderful campaign, won! Her classmates were behind her every step of the way.

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caricatures. Can you guess who is whom?



Circle class have done amazingly well adapting to online learning and have all engaged so well. We're all so proud of you!



From all of us in Circle class, we wish you a restful holiday and hope that you still manage to see your family and friends over the upcoming weeks.

See you all again in the new year!

Ms Wiltshire

Circle Class



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well and keeping safe.

WOW! What a term it has been.

Due to the recent positive testings, we have switched back to remote learning for the last week and a half of school. The Metropolitan team and I are very proud of how all the students have accepted the change in such a short space of time. They have shown maturity and flexibility which has not gone unnoticed.

This term we started our tuck shop which has been going off with a BANG! As the cold weather approached us, we decided to start selling meat and vegetarian hot dogs with hot chocolates. It became so popular that we continued selling them the following week. Nothing like hot chocolate and hot dogs to warm you up on those cold mornings. I just want to take this time to thank the Metropolitan class for all of their help and support with running the tuck shop!



We also started the Duke Of Edinburgh this term with Ms Mansfield. Our first session involved us following a map to Alexandra Palace and exploring the area. The students learnt how to make popcorn using a portable gas stove. This was very exciting and a fantastic experience for us all.



Although it has been a fantastic term, we sadly say goodbye to Jamie M. Jamie has been attending college and will now be exploring different opportunities out there for him. Jamie has been a huge character in Metropolitan and he will be greatly missed, not just in the classroom but around the school.

I would like to wish Jamie every success for the future and hope that he achieves great things in the upcoming year.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the parents and carers for their continued support throughout the last term. Your patience and understanding has been phenomenal. You are all amazing!

On behalf of myself and the Metropolitan team, we would like to wish you all a wonderful winter break and a very happy new year.

Please stay safe!

Ms Perera

Metropolitan Class





The feedback has been nothing but positive and I hope that next term we will carry on cooking more challenging and exciting dishes.

Well done DLR!

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ms Gunning

DLR Class

The Appliance Of Science - The Great Salt March

Last week Bakerloo Class followed Mahatma Gandhi on his Great Salt March. As part of their work on

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challenge of using their scientific knowledge to obtain pure salt from a mixture of sand and sea water that could have been collected from a beach.



They used filtration to remove the sand from the sea water and then heated the remaining sea water, which caused the water to evaporate leaving the salt behind through the process of crystallisation. This is similar to the technique Gandhi and his supporters used in April 1930 when they made salt from sea water in protest of a salt tax that had been imposed on people in India during the British Raj.

Mr Podichetty

Science Teacher

Drama News

As you are all aware this year the Holmewood online winter show has unfortunately had to be cancelled. I would like to say thank you and congratulations to all the students who have worked hard on the preparation of their work for the show. I thoroughly enjoyed working with all the classes and feel extremely proud of each student's achievement. All their hard work will not be wasted because I will be using the majority of the performances as part of their arts award portfolios. In the new year I will look for an opportunity to share with you their work.

A special mention to the students from Northern, Bakerloo and Central who have been working on their silver arts award. Each student chose an art form to learn about and developed their skills independently. I got to watch the students grow in confidence with their new found skills. Here are some of the skills that they chose; how to use devil sticks, sculpting with clay, wood carving, film editing, photography, cutting into a stencil, playing the African drums, writing film scripts, living statue, decorating a cake and learning to read sheet music. Congratulations to all the students for completing Unit 1 Part A-B of the silver arts Award.

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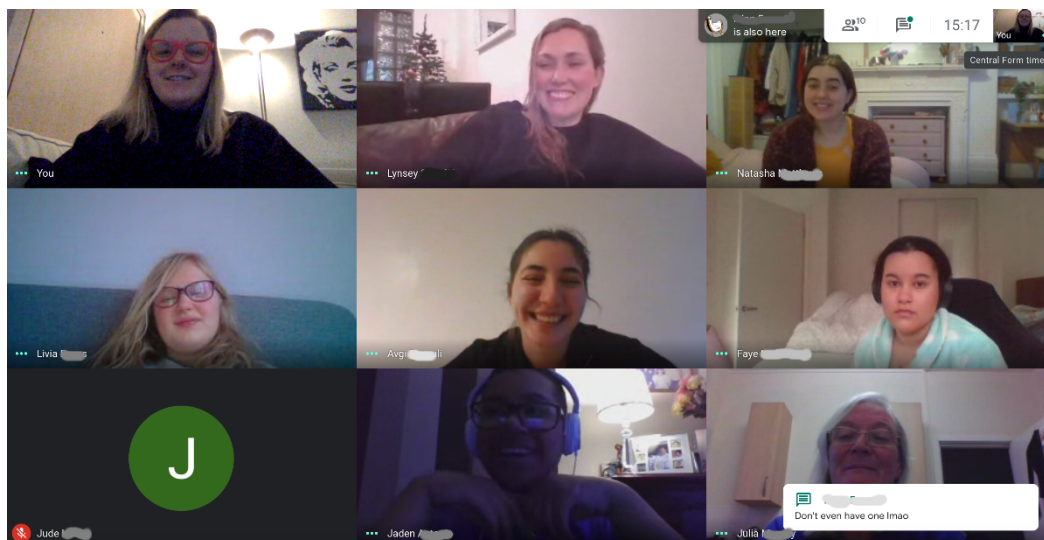
I am looking forward to welcoming the students back to work in January

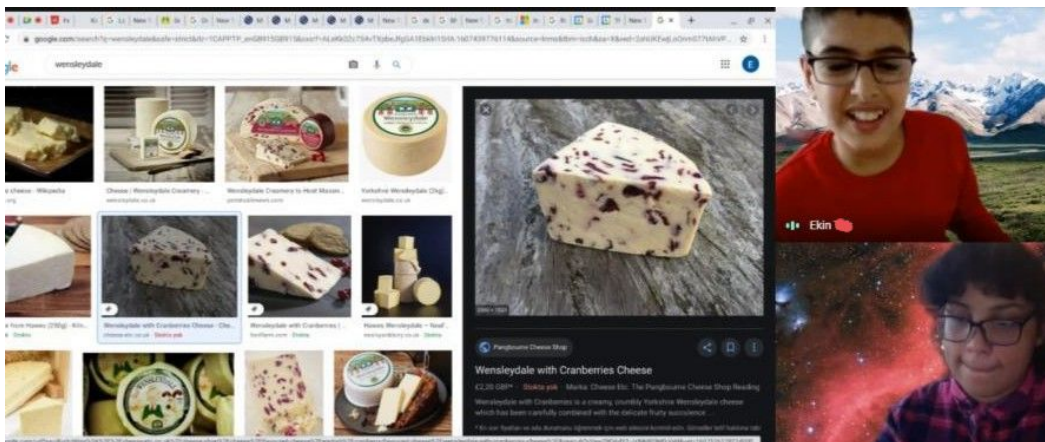
Best wishes for the New Year!

Ms Axetorn

Drama Teacher

The Holmewood Gallery



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Designated Team for Child Protection and Safeguarding

If you are a student and have been harmed, or are at risk of harm, these are the people who can help. You can also talk to us if you are worried that another student is at risk of harm.



Mr Lamb
(Deputy Head and
Lead Designated
Safeguarding
Officer for Upper
School
(DSO, Level 3)



Ms D'Silva
(Assistant Head
and Lead
Designated
Safeguarding
Officer for Lower
School, Level 3)



Ms Camilleri
(Executive Head
Teacher, CEOP
Ambassador and
Deputy DSO,
Level 3)



Ms Young
(Head of School
and Deputy DSO,
Level 3)



Ms Young
(Assistant Head
and Deputy DSO,
Level 3)

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