



THE HOLMEWOOD
SCHOOL



National
Autistic
Society

Accredited
Advanced
2020



Newsletter

Friday 30th April 2021

Dear Families,

For various reasons I've not felt myself this week so it has been a joy to spend time with the students outside. I've had some lovely conversations with young people at both sites, and have spent a fair bit of time playing with the younger children at the Lower School. It's a welcome reminder that children do really make everything worthwhile. Thank you to all of them for cheering me up and making my week enjoyable.

This week I'm also pleased to see that the Upper School students have started to help clear and structure the forest at Muswell Hill so that all students will soon be able to use this for our Forest School education. Mental Health Awareness Week is scheduled for mid May and suitably, the theme this year is 'nature'. Being able to use our forest to link this the planned activities will be a wonderful opportunity for students to begin to enjoy Forest School again after a year of disruption.

I wish you all a happy and restful weekend.

Ms Camilleri

Executive Head Teacher

- **Mon 3rd May** - Bank Holiday (School closed)
- **Mon 31st May to Fri 4th June** - Half term holiday
- **Mon 7th June** - Inset day
- **Tues 8th June** - Summer term (2nd half) starts
- **Wed 14th July** - End of term
- **Thurs 15th July** - Inset day

Working At The Mall

The biggest news on Bribie Island in the late nineties was that a small shopping mall was being built. The first of its kind on the island, it was full of chain stores looking for cheap teenage labour. An older friend of mine told me that she was going to the local youth centre for an interview to work in the new bakery. I went along with her and got the job.

We hit a roadblock when the owners realised I was only 13 years old. Labour laws stated that you had to be 14 and nine months to gain employment in Australia at the time. They must have found a way around it because I worked at that bakery from then until the end of secondary school.

The teenage years are a time for absorbing knowledge and skills. High expectations are placed on bright young people to study and perform academically because the accepted trajectory is that after they pass their GCSEs they go to college and then university. After that it is assumed everything just works out.

However, for a teenager there is something really meaningful about getting a regular job in the community. For young people who struggle with executive function and taking on responsibility, these sorts of jobs provide a platform of experience in new social competencies, such as meeting expectations in the workplace and relating to others. Earning money is also very meaningful for a young person, as is learning what an hour's work feels like.

Working in the mall gave me a community of peers with something in common. I made friends and I had spare cash to do things with them. It obviously didn't turn out to be my career path, but it did help me lay the first bricks in the road.

As the world begins to open up again, I look forward to seeing some of our young people gaining meaningful experiences outside of their academic studies.

Ms Young

Head of Upper School

NEW Girls Camp

Spring seems to have sprung over Easter and I am now also looking forward to summer! Following on from the success of Girls Club which we launched at the beginning of January 2020, I am planning to run a summer camp for girls in August 2021. Ms Wiltshire and I continued to run Girls Club every Friday throughout lockdown at both upper and lower school which was a highlight of our weeks! It was great that Ms Camilleri was also able to join some sessions too and she is also looking forward to coming to the new girls summer camp. Our lower school camp will run on 9th August and her upper school on the 10th August. Our main objective would be to have a lot of fun together but also to develop self-esteem, independence and social skills, explore new opportunities and experiences in a safe environment supported by specialised Holmewood staff.

I have had some brilliant ideas for activities already from the girls including: a visit to the cat cafe, sushi, Highgate cemetery, afternoon tea and a pedalo trip at the Serpentine in Hyde Park. All parents should now have received a letter. Thanks to everyone who has signed up already! The girls also told me they would love to do an overnight girls camp so I am hoping to run this in the 2021-2022 Autumn term. I will send out more updates about that adventure very soon!

Here is Liv, one of our most loyal members of Girls Club who is very, very excited about our new summer camp!



Footprints Life Camp

Footprints will be returning in August 2021 after a little Covid break in 2020!



If you are new to Holmewood, I started Footprints in 2014 and we run specialised day and residential camps for young people on the autistic spectrum. Our aims are to reduce social exclusion and increase independence. I am very lucky that Mr Rose, our PE teacher, and Mr Liston, our Behaviour for learning mentor, are also in the Footprints team so the students have a familiar and very experienced staff.

Our provisional dates for 2021 are 2nd - 6th August 2021 but I will be sending out information soon. We usually run a day camp at Easter and a residential camp in the summer but the August camp this year will be a day camp only. Unfortunately we only have 10 places available per camp but I do now allocate 80% of places to Holmewood students in the fairest way I can.

If you are interested in Footprints the website is www.footprintslifecamp.co.uk or you can

Best Wishes,

Ms D'Silva

Assistant Head

'5K in May' Challenge

Some Holmewood staff are going to be undertaking the '5K in May' challenge to raise money for the British Dyslexia Association. We would welcome students and family members to join us too.

How to take part:

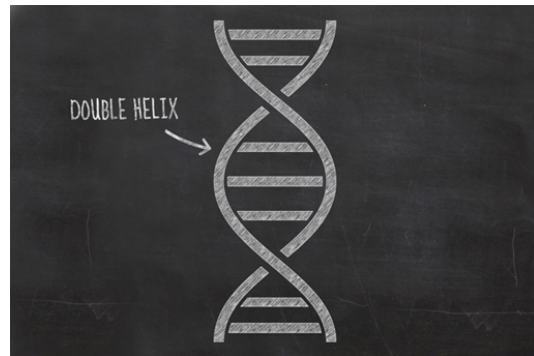
- Participate in a 5K of any kind, between the 1 and 31 May. You could run, walk, roll, cycle, swim, ride, row or choose your own way. You can even split your challenge over multiple dates if you want
- Make your donation of £5 to the British Dyslexia Association and help provide advice and support to dyslexic people. To sign up and donate see:
<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/support-us/challenges/5kmay>
- Don't forget to email your #5KMay selfie to us at:
enquiries@thsl.org.uk



The Appliance of Science - DNA

Our Bakerloo and Northern classes this week were looking at the structure of DNA and its properties. For this topic they also had to extract DNA from a Kiwi Fruit using several processes.

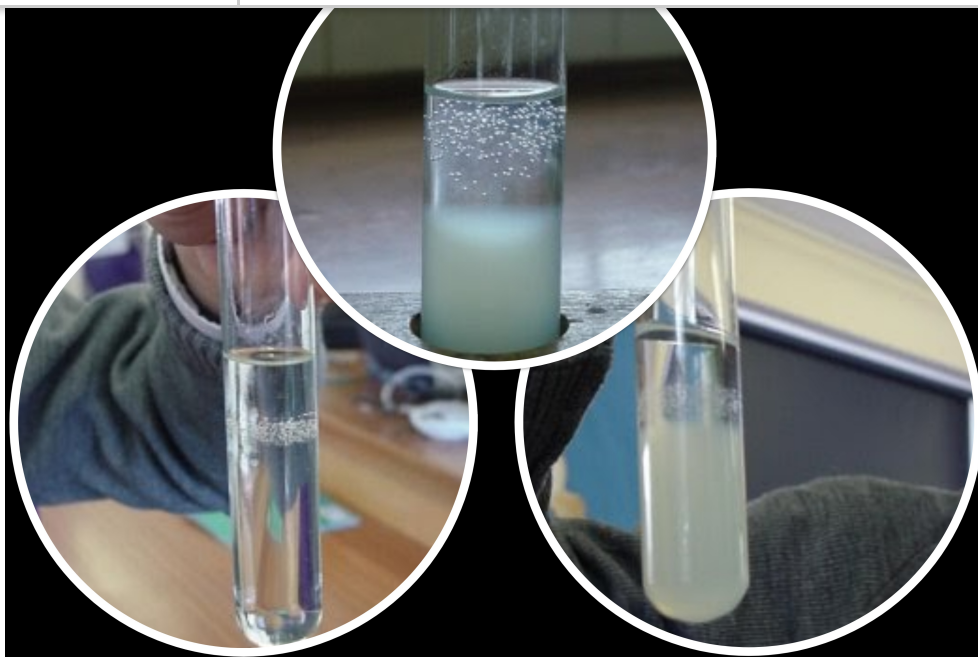
They used the following equipment:

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

As the experiment was undertaken, the students could observe each of the above stages taking place. The mashing and heating of the kiwi mixture represents the mechanical and thermal disruption of the cells. The washing-up liquid and salt water mixture forms the extraction buffer and both work to liberate the DNA, in other words remove it from the cells. The detergent works just like it does on your dishes and dissolves the lipids (fats) in the cell membranes and nucleus where the DNA currently resides.

DNA is highly soluble in water but not soluble in ethanol (alcohol). When you add the alcohol to the top of your kiwi mixture, the DNA precipitates (or deposits in a solid form) at the interface between the water and the alcohol. The salt that you added earlier helps encourage the DNA to clump together by neutralising the negatively charged phosphate groups that exist within the DNA structure.

Each glob of the white 'goo' in the tubes shown below (just below the clear layer) contains millions of DNA strands, clumped together. If you had your own research laboratory, you would be able to analyse the 'goo' and show that this is in fact DNA. Unfortunately, research laboratories are not commonly found at home so you will just have to take our word for it!



Many other types of scientific research revolve around the use of DNA. These include:

- Forensic Science, where the identification and analysis of DNA from crime scenes is used to identify and exclude suspects.
- The genetic modification of organisms, most commonly in agriculture where the goal is to improve yields.
- Paternity testing, where DNA is used to identify the real father or exclude other possible fathers.
- Food safety, in relation to the correct labelling of meat products.
- Artificial cloning, most famously Dolly the sheep, but many other mammals and amphibians have been cloned.

Jurassic Park brought the subject of artificial cloning to attention of the population at large through Lord Richard Attenborough's character who created a dinosaur theme park. It turns out that the story contained a certain amount of 'poetic license'; DNA simply doesn't survive that long. In fact, even under ideal preservation conditions, it has been calculated that the absolute maximum time after death that DNA can be successfully extracted from a deceased organism is about a million years. Jurassic Park may be a fantasy but there is a very remote possibility that woolly mammoths could be brought back to life through the process of cloning as the last of these died out only a few thousand years ago.

Mr Podichetty

Science Teacher



Piccadilly class have returned from the Easter break full of enthusiasm and ready to learn!

In PE, Piccadilly have been showing their creative side by choreographing a dance to 'The Circle of Life' from the Lion King. Kevin said he enjoyed doing rhino running as part of this.



In Maths, Piccadilly have been looking at division. All the adults working with Piccadilly have been so impressed with how quickly they have moved onto formal, written methods. Piccadilly having been using the chunking method which allows you to use multiplication facts you know to answer division questions. Mitchell said he can't wait to teach his family this method.



Our art topic this term is 'Africa'. So far Piccadilly have looked at natural patterns. They used a range of materials such as pencil, chalk, paint and oil pastels to copy animal patterns. The results were impressive!



Have a lovely bank holiday weekend.

Ms Gardner

Piccadilly Class Teacher



Hello Parents,

Welcome back and I hope you all had a nice and restful Easter break.

The students in Northern Class have all come back and settled back into school really well. They seem to be in good spirits and have continued their efforts in class. Here are a few things that the students in Northern class have been working on since returning to school after the Easter break.

- The students had an apprenticeship talk where they learn about how to apply for an apprenticeship and the expectations around this.
- Lula planted some seeds near our pond area with the help of her lovely assistant Henry who was in charge of watering them.
- They participated really well in various group-building workshops in Drama to re-bond after a long easter break.
- Participated in lengthy conversations about racism and sexism while reading Othello in English. They all took on different roles in the play and enjoyed making these links from Shakespeare period to the modern day.
- Have started to use the computing program 'Maya' to create designs which will later be 3D printed.

Have a great long weekend!

Therapy News

Last week, Ms Wallis-Jones found out that she'd achieved her certificate to practice in Solution Focused Brief Therapy with a distinction! SFBT is a therapeutic approach defined by "the firm belief in the possibilities of every human being".

The central tenets of this approach are:

1. If it isn't broken, don't fix it;
2. If it works, do more of it;
3. If it's not working, do something different;
4. Small steps can lead to big changes;
5. The solution is not necessarily related to the problem;
6. The language for solution development is different from the language needed to describe a problem;
7. No problems happen all the time; there are always exceptions that can be utilised;
8. The future is both created and negotiable.



Working in this way provides our students with self-efficacy; a belief that they are ok as they are. While not undermining any challenges, it also allows them to imagine different future possibilities for themselves; where a positive path is at least one option.

Ms Wallis-Jones and Ms Nash attended a virtual Social Thinking™ course with Ms Bridget Young on Tuesday 20th April. Social Thinking promotes social competency (made up of four key areas: social attention, social interpretation/inference, social decision making/problem solving and social response). Students are encouraged to use their whole body when listening and attending; not only being 'physically' present but also 'mentally' present by 'scanning the social landscape' and using their observation skills to decode social situations.



Social Thinking prompts students to be a 'social detective' and look for social clues: facial expressions, context, setting, conversational content etc. The aim is to strengthen situational understanding, leading to more successful and effective social interactions. These are crucial life skills. Our aim is to continue to embed the strategies not only within speech and language therapy sessions but also as a whole school approach where tools are used on a day-to-day basis within the classroom. It is hoped that, in time, these skills will 'travel' with each individual and be generalised or applied across multiple settings and situations, strengthening friendships and boosting the confidence and self-esteem of our students.

Ms Wallis-Jones

Senior Speech & Language Therapist

The Holmewood Gallery



















[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

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.

Lower School			
			
Ms D'Silva (Assistant Head and Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer for Lower School, Level 3)	Ms Lemposzek (Head of Welfare & Behaviour, Deputy DSO for Lower School, Level 3)	Mr Gibbs (Humanities & PSHE Teacher, Deputy DSO for Lower School, Level 3)	Ms Camilleri (Executive Head, CEOP Ambassador and Deputy DSO, Level 3)
Upper School			
			
Mr Lamb (Deputy Head and Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer for Upper School, Level 3)	Ms Young (Head of School and Deputy DSO, Level 3)	Ms Young (Assistant Head and Deputy DSO, Level 3)	Ms Camilleri (Executive Head, CEOP Ambassador and Deputy DSO, Level 3)

Copyright © 2020 The Holmewood School London, All rights reserved.
You are receiving this email as you are part of The Holmewood School community

The Holmewood School London
88 Woodside Park Road,
Woodside Park,
Barnet,
London
N12 8SH

Phone: 020 8920 0660
E-mail: enquiries@thsl.org.uk

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

This email was sent to allstaff1@ths1.org.uk

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

The Holmewood School London · The Holmewood School London · 88 Woodside Park Road · London, Bne N12 8SH · United Kingdom

