

HOUSTONE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Friday 8 March 2024

Dear Families,

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter where we celebrate the opportunities and successes at Houston School. As we transition into spring, we have exciting updates and important information to share with you. I am proud of the progress that our pupils have made so far and I want to express my gratitude to our dedicated pupils, parents and staff for all their hard work and commitment. Our school community continues to thrive and I am proud of the accomplishments we have achieved together. Pupils are working hard in their classes, participating in their electives, and making a positive contribution to our school community.

Visit from Whipsnade Zoo

We were fortunate enough to have professionals visit us from Whipsnade Zoo this morning, delivering careers assemblies to all pupils. During the assembly, representatives engaged our pupils with fascinating insights into various careers related to zoology, animal care, conservation as well as learning about the diverse world of wildlife and the different paths they can explore in the future. The importance of work experience and networking were highlighted as key areas to focus on to be successful in any career.



Year 11 Exam Preparation

This week our Head of English- Mr Hetherington delivered exam preparation sessions to Year 11's. The sessions focused on key content, tips and strategies to effectively approach exam questions, independent practice, feedback and reflection. If your child has any specific concerns or questions, please encourage them to talk to the Head of English or their English teacher.



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World Book Day

We are thrilled to announce that in celebration of World Book Day, each pupil at Houstone School received a book voucher to purchase a book from one of the participating retailers to further encourage a love for reading and exploration of new literary adventures. Evidence suggests that not only does reading novels and stories for pleasure lead to increased academic attainment and success, but also develops pupils' vocabulary, general knowledge, understanding of other cultures, and supports a greater insight into human nature and decision making. We continue to promote reading at Houstone School through our DEAR programme where the whole school reads a classic work of literature for half an hour everyday.

Parent Survey

Thank you to all of our families that responded to the latest parent survey. Your insights help shape the direction of our school community.

Here are three key findings from the survey and how we are responding to them:

- 1. Enhanced Communication Channels:** We have heard your feedback loud and clear - parents want more communication about day-to-day activities at the school. In response, we have ramped up our efforts to keep you informed. You can now find regular updates and announcements posted on our official Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages. We encourage you to follow us on these platforms to stay connected with the latest news and events.
- 2. Improved Correction Text Messages:** Another important aspect highlighted in the survey is the need for better correction text notifications. We understand the importance of clear and timely communication regarding pupil behaviour. Therefore, we are excited to announce that we have invested in a new texting system called Teachers2Parents. This system will allow us to send more effective and informative correction texts. Look out for updates on the rollout of this new system this half-term.
- 3. Clarification of Communication Expectations:** Lastly, we recognise the importance of establishing clear communication expectations between the school and parents. We want to assure you that we are committed to responding to emails within two working days. Additionally, we understand that meetings are essential for addressing specific concerns or queries. To ensure efficiency and respect for everyone's time, we kindly request that meetings be pre-booked. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate unscheduled meetings due to our teaching and duty timetables. For urgent matters requiring a meeting, please email us at info@houstoneschool.co.uk to schedule an appointment.

Dates for your Diary

Year 8 Parents Evening - Tuesday 12 March

Year 9 Options Form Submission Deadline - Thursday 14 March

SEND Coffee Morning - Tuesday 19th March (further information to be communicated.)

Easter Break - Friday 29th March

Staff INSET Day - Monday 15th April

Start of Summer Term (pupils return to school) - Tuesday 16th April

Best Wishes

Ms English | Principal

