

Secondary Newsletter

AUTUMN TERM 2023



Thank you so much everyone for your help and support as parents and carers, in ensuring such a successful term for your children.

It has been great to see so many children throughout the term engaged in their learning and making progress in their outcomes in preparation for adulthood.

We are delighted as a school that we are getting to share more and more about what happens at school through class dojo and really appreciate that you have taken the time to engage with us on this platform to improve communication.

Of course, we are very excited that the new head of school, Grace, has now been working with myself for the past 6 weeks to transition into position and this smooth takeover is supporting the continued journey of the school. Welcome Grace! Alongside this, I am happy to announce that Dawid, our assistant head, has been recently promoted and is now holding the role of Deputy Headteacher in the school. Congratulations Dawid!

We had a quality review this term which was very complementary about the relationships that students and teachers had in the school. The quality reviewer commented that the school felt like a 'kind' place for children to be educated and this is a statement we are all very proud of as the senior team at the secondary site. We, however, are always learning and will be enhancing the curriculum further in the new year for our young people to ensure that it continues to support the social, emotional and educational needs of all our children and ensuring they are preparing for adulthood every step of the way! Watch out for more news on this!

We look forward to seeing everyone in the New Year and from myself, as your outgoing head of school, I would like to take this moment to say thank you for all your comments and messages since the announcement of my leaving. I have enjoyed every minute of working in the school and will very much enjoy hearing how all the young people are doing from Grace when I get my updates 'down under'.

Have a wonderful break and I hope it is filled with good memories and relaxation,

Beckie West, Grace Mullally and the Secondary Team



Message from Lorna:

What an incredible term it has been! As we come to the end of the autumn term at Hillingdon Manor, I would like to say a huge 'thank you' to our exceptional staff. Their dedication has been the driving force behind the positive outcomes achieved by each and every pupil. This term welcomed new faces, both pupils and staff, contributing to the vibrant and supportive community I love.

The school has seen many positive changes, including our first successful Progress Review Day. The feedback from our families has been overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing the impactful strides we've made. Your children continue to thrive, and I know that you have appreciated the regular updates on their progress through Class Dojo.

A special thanks to Jemma Kerr and her team at Upton Grange and Yiewsley Grange, and Beckie West and her team at The Manor. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a dedicated and remarkable group.

As we approach the break, we wish you all a restful holiday season. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on January 4th, 2024, and can't wait to see the continued growth and success of our Hillingdon Manor community.

Warm regards,

Lorna



Highlights for this term!

Forest Schools:

Mick, our Forest Schools Lead, and Forest Schools has been a massive hit with our young people this term. Students supported the build of a polytunnel, learning various skills from using tools to teamwork and communication and learning about natural materials and how we can use them. The therapy team have been supporting with in Forest Schools as part of their work for our Universal and Enhanced offer, whereby they are not only supporting students but supporting staff to implement strategies across their lessons which further enhance the students access to learning and engagement and to generalize their skills.



External Work Experience:

Emma, our EHCP & Transition Coordinator and Careers Lead, has been working hard on sourcing external work experience opportunities for our students and working on getting external companies and small businesses on board. She has established a secure link with Heathrow Special Needs Farm and our student have been in attendance once a week, helping out on the farm. We have also had students attend the London Bus Museum and a company called Walk-in Media, who have been very proactive in supporting our students on placement, as well as coming into school and doing a workshop. A huge thank you Emma but also to all the staff who have supported the students to prepare for their work experience or attending the placement with them.



Shout to Our Christmas Show!

If only we could share a video on here!

The show was fantastic, with great attendance from parents and carers. There were a variety of acts and we must commend Rachael, our performing arts teacher and James, our music teacher, who made the show happen and supported the students to shine!



Message and advice from the Clinical team:

Dear parents—thank you for all your support and collaboration this term. We hope you have a festive holiday season. Please find below a few tips to consider over this Christmas break:

Tips for the holiday season



- Wherever possible, make sure all plans are shared and you know what you will be doing and when, and who else will be there.
- Use visual aids such as calendars, lists and schedules to help plan your Christmas.
 - Think about and plan around sensory differences that could cause you distress or discomfort, consider ear defenders etc for times of potential sensory overload.
- Create or find a quiet space where you can take a break if you get overwhelmed. You may want this to be a completely Christmas-free area, particularly around the main days of Christmas or at key times that there may be additional stress.
- Don't just plan for Christmas Day, plan for the whole festive break and give yourself quiet days to recoup if needed.
- If you're visiting family and friends, tell them about anything that could help make your visit be as stress-free as possible. For instance, turning off Christmas lights, letting you know in advance what the food will be, sharing plans for activities and having a quiet space to escape to.

Schedules:

Daily schedule the same as much as possible
Gradually introduce Christmas activities into daily schedule



Decorations:

Consider decorating gradually
Create Christmas-free areas of the house without decorations



Presents:

Consider whether to wrap presents or not (how does your child cope with surprises?) Presents can be overwhelming - think about how many to give, and when? This can be gradual or all on one day



Have a lovely break and look forward to seeing you in the new year!

Calendar dates for the new year:

We have had lots of information sessions and we aim to try and record or send a TEAMS link for remote access if appropriate for the session.

January:

- 4th – Term Starts for Pupils
- 16th - Coffee morning - Observations (PLIM)
- 22nd – Chinese New Year
- 22nd – Focus Week – Global Perspectives Week
- 30th - Coffee Morning - Routines

February:

- 5th – Pupil Progress Day
- 5th - Focus Week - Children's Mental Health Week
- 6th - Coffee Morning - Outdoor learning
- 6th – Safer Internet Day
- 9th – School Rewards trips

12th – 16th – Half Term

