

18th February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you well and that you have enjoyed the half term break with your families. I know that many of you will still have been working even though the children have been on holiday, but despite this I hope that you were able to gain some opportunities to enjoy extra family time together without the usual term time routines.

Relationships and Respect Policy (currently known as Behaviour Policy)

We will be creating a new Relationships and Respect Policy over the summer term to replace our existing Behaviour Policy. As you can probably gather from the name, we are changing the policy to reflect the evolving new emphasis of our approach on promoting The Highgate Wood Way and the 4Cs. Rewards and sanctions will always have a part to play, but we are clear that our approach needs to be underpinned by the developing and nurturing of positive relationships between staff and students and between students. The policy development is being led by Ms. Burniston Deputy Head. If you wish to share any thoughts with her you can do so on jbu@hws.haringey.sch.uk. She will read every message, but I cannot promise that she will have the time to respond in detail as that is unhelpfully time consuming given her significant other responsibilities, so please do bear that in mind.

Year 11 Pre-Public Exam (PPE) Results Assembly

On the afternoon of the last Thursday of the half term (8th February) we held our Year 11 PPE results assembly. This is a very important event in the year 11 calendar each year as it provides our students with a clear indication of how well they are doing and what they need to work harder on. It also provides a highly emotional atmosphere that seeks to replicate the emotion felt in August after the public exams in the summer. We do this as we think it is important for the students to get a sense of the joy or the disappointment that results from working hard and putting in maximum effort (or not, as the case might be for some).

We have been so impressed this year with how well our year 11s have approached their studies, and consequently the vast majority of them had a very positive and happy experience on that afternoon. The year 11 reports featuring the PPE results and the updated forecast grades can be accessed on Satchel One.

Take care on the way home!

We have seen a few incidents of students being mugged on the way home in and around the vicinity of the school. We do what we can to have a presence at the end of the school day to supervise our students. We are supported by our Safer Schools' Police Officer in doing so too – however, there is only so much ground that we can cover. To support with maintaining personal safety, we ask that you encourage your child(ren) to be extra vigilant on the way home. We would advise that expensive

CONSIDERATION • COOPERATION • COURTESY • CONTRIBUTION

Highgate Wood School supports individual actions to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations



5-Minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Refill and reuse



Meat-free meals



Zero waste fashion



Bring your own bag



Recycle



Unplug

mobile phones, headphones and other items are not openly on show as these inevitably attract the interest of people who are on the lookout for things to take.

A message from Ms. Ereira (Learning Resource Centre Manager)

HWS families are invited to use special discount codes to book tickets for the North London Book Festival: a brand-new festival for all ages at Alexandra Palace, with events from 21st - 24th March 2024.

Tickets went on sale from Friday 15th February via the Alexandra Palace website.

- For 50% off book fest events in the Theatre please use NLBFCLOFF50
- For 20% off book fest events in the other spaces please use NLBFCLOFF20

It's a lively and diverse programme of events including big names like Lemony Snicket, Natalie Haines, Robin Ince, Michael Rosen, Costa-winner Stuart Turton, and Peter Hain - but also some exciting debut writers including Leo Vardiashvili who featured on Front Row recently, and Nadeine Asbali who will talk about her book *Veiled Threat*, a sharp and illuminating examination of what it is to be a visibly Muslim woman in modern Britain.

There will be panels ranging from conversations with parenting experts, to an exploration of creativity and AI with Robin Ince and Andy Stanton, to Kevin Morosky's conversation with Kelechi Okafor and other contributors to his book *Black Women Always*, plus a special Night of Crime and Thrillers. There will be children's workshops and talks from some of the very best children's writers.

Tickets can be booked on the Alexandra Palace website:

<https://www.alexandrapalace.com/whats-on/north-london-book-festival/>

Vaping concerns

You may recall in my letters dated 15th October and 12th November I raised the issue of vaping, with reference to the dangers involved. This continues to be a problem that we are tackling as best we can. However, it's a real challenge and you may have seen reports in the news talking about how much of a concern this is nationally. With that in mind, I think it is worth clarifying the school's stance on this issue.

Vaping poses significant health risks and is strictly prohibited within our school premises. Unfortunately, despite our efforts to educate students about the dangers of vaping, we have had several instances where students have been found with vaping devices. We kindly request your assistance in reinforcing the message about the dangers of vaping with your child. It is crucial that they understand the serious health consequences associated with vaping and the importance of respecting our school rules.

If you feel that your child would benefit from one-to-one support regarding their use of vapes, we can assist by making a referral to a charity called INSIGHT that we work with in school. Please contact Ms Burniston Deputy Head to request this. In addition, I have again included a link to FRANK below, which is a website that can help parents to spot the signs of vape usage and some explanation as to the various trends occurring and the associated risks.

<https://www.talktofrank.com/drug/vapes>

Finally, I want to be clear that possession of vapes within school premises breaches our behaviour policy. In the UK it is illegal to sell nicotine vaping products to someone under the age of 18, or for adults to buy these products for them. Any student found with a vaping device will face disciplinary action, which will almost certainly include suspension from school. Thank you for your cooperation and support in this matter.

Different entrances/exits for each year group – A reminder

At Highgate Wood we have separate entrances and exits for different year groups. The reason for this is that it helps regulate the flow of students in the morning and the afternoon. With nearly 1600 students you can imagine how congested it could potentially be if left unmanaged. Towards the end of last half term, we had several students attempting to enter the school in the morning at the wrong entrance. As a reminder, the different entrance/exits are:

- Year 7 and Year 8: Park Road/Back gate
- Year 9 and Year 10: Tennis Courts
- Year 11 and Post 16: Montenotte Road/Top Gate

I have asked staff on the gates in the morning to enforce this consistently, so if students arrive at the wrong entrance, they will be redirected to the correct one. Your support in helping us to manage this is hugely appreciated.

Discriminatory Behaviours

In my last assembly of the half term on Friday 9th February, I shared the following messages with students regarding discriminatory incidents.



We are aware of the recent and ongoing situation in the Israel/Gaza region
We are against all violence and loss of life and hope that one day peace can emerge

We are aware that this situation will be having an impact on some members of our school community and we urge sympathy, care and understanding at this time

We also know that sometimes these situations can give rise to hate feelings and increase incidence of discrimination. **We have seen a rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.** This is unacceptable to our school and is contrary to The Highgate Wood Way

If anyone is feeling sad, upset or feels that anyone is showing discriminatory behaviour towards them they should tell a member of staff so that it can be dealt with seriously

Never have the 4Cs been more important - these are the values of HWS and we expect all students to show them at all times so that everyone can come to HWS and feel happy, confident, respected and valued

HWS FAMILY in and out of school





HWS FAMILY in and out of school
We do not accept any form of discrimination

In the past few weeks we have had to deal with some instances of discrimination, including racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, sexism, homophobia and ableism. This is not a complete surprise as I am realistic enough to understand and appreciate that schools are a microcosm of wider society - and we know how prevalent these attitudes and behaviours are generally.

However, at HWS we are determined to create a safe haven where students know that these things will not be tolerated and dealt with properly when they occur. I reiterated these messages to students in the assembly and made it clear that those guilty of such behaviours would almost certainly be suspended from school, and in extreme cases could face permanent exclusion.

The Highgate Wood Way is all about respect and making sure that everyone who comes to our school (students and staff) feels respected, valued, comfortable and safe to be themselves and to belong to the HWS family.

A few dates for your diary...

- Monday 19th February 2024 – **Second Half of Spring Term begins at 8.35am [Week One]**
- Monday 19th February to Tuesday 20th February 2024 – **Year 8 HPV Vaccinations**
- Wednesday 21st February 2024 – **INSET DAY – School Closed to All Students**
- Tuesday 27th February 2024 – **Year 13 Parent/Carers Evening (3.30pm to 7pm)**
- Tuesday 12th March 2024 – **Year 12 Parent/Carers Evening (3.30pm to 7pm)**
- Tuesday 19th March 2024 – **Global Majority Parents' Forum (5pm to 7pm)**
- Tuesday 26th March 2024 – **Year 8 Parent/Carers Evening (3.30pm to 7pm)**
- Thursday 28th March 2024 – **Last Day of the Spring Term (2.25pm finish)**
- Monday 15th April 2024 – **First Day of the Summer Term (10.55am Start)**

... And Finally

Thank you again for reading this all the way to the end! As ever, I will end with a quote.



This quote sums up so much about our HWS family. The ability to make a positive difference to someone else, especially when they are in need is such a wonderful privilege. With 150 members of staff and over 1500 students the opportunities are plentiful. I ask my staff to keep on being that rainbow for someone else's cloud!

I will write to you again soon. Thank you for your continued support!

Regards

Patrick Cozier
Headteacher