



Normanhurst School

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HEADMISTRESS

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2 October 2023

Dear Parents

Re: **October 2023 Headmistress's Letter**

I hope your children have enjoyed the first half term as much as we have, particularly if you have recently joined the Normanhurst community this September. Pupils have quickly settled into their routines and it has been wonderful to see them starting this academic year so positively.

We have already been able to invite parents to a number of events such as:

- Year 11 Sixth Form Information Evening
- Year 10 'Being Successful at GCSE'
- Year 7 Information Evening
- Junior 'Drop-In' Morning
- EYFS Read, Write, Inc & Maths Information Meeting
- Year 1 Read, Write, Inc Information Meeting
- Juniors Maths Information Meeting
- Macmillan Coffee Morning

It has been superb to see so many parents taking an active part in their children's education.

Harvest Festival Tuesday 3 October

Our Harvest Festival will take place at the Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul in Chingford, with the whole school attending. A number of pupils from Kindergarten up to Year 11 will help to lead the celebrations. This year's theme will be 'Harvest around the World'.

Parents are invited to attend, although places are limited to two per family. Parents will be seated at the back of the church and in the balcony above. This is an opportunity for us to join together as a community and to make a donation at the end of the service to support the work of the Highams Park Food Aid and the Trussell Trust Epping Forest Food Bank, should you wish to.

Open Evening Wednesday 4 October EYFS & Juniors at 9.15am and Seniors at 6.00pm

Open Evening is a highlight in the school calendar when we open our doors to prospective parents. Pupils will be conducting tours and talking about life at Normanhurst School. I am very proud of their efforts and how they are preparing for this event. They have been good ambassadors for the school, demonstrating our school values. Their enthusiasm for school life, their friendliness and good manners are among the best expressions of what Normanhurst School is all about.

Parent Talk – How to help your child revise or form positive study habits

We will be hosting a parent talk for parents of pupils in Years 7-11 on how to help your child revise or form positive study habits. This will be online on Thursday 11 January at 5pm, run by the company 'Positively You' and a Zoom link will be sent to you shortly. There will be limited spaces available, with one place per family. These will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Year 3 Camp and Year Group Residential Trips

It was amazing to have all of the Year 3 pupils attend the annual Oak-Tree overnight camp. Miss Varley, Miss Stone and Mr Clair were so impressed with the pupils. They demonstrated that they were independent, kind, thoughtful and they engaged with all of the team building activities. I was delighted to see them enjoying themselves and developing their skills beyond the classroom. A great start to Year 3!

This year, each year group from Year 3 to Year 9 will attend a school residential trip:

- Year 3 have been on their annual camping trip this term
- Year 4 will be going to Danbury Activity Centre 29-30 April 2024
- Year 5 and 6 will be going to PGL Marchants Hill 15-17 May 2024
- Year 7 and 8 will be going to Skreens Activity Centre 13-15 May 2024
- Year 9 will be going to Danbury Activity Centre 12-14 June 2024

Young Writers Competition

Last term, the current Year 9s took part in a short story competition, where they had to write a mini saga of no more than 100 words, inspired by the crime and mystery genre. We are delighted that the following students' stories have been chosen for publication in a book showcasing young adults' writing, called *Unsolved – Escape the Chains*.

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Bobby-Patrick | Nathaniel | Dylan | Callan |
| Armaan | Sayfullah | Shlok | James |
| Saif | Ashton | Zachary | Ayaan |
| Matias | Tiago | Kaylan | Zara |
| Dhru | Amar | Ryan | Boaz |
| John | Laila | Eloise | Imogen |

We are very proud and would like to congratulate all of the students for their hard work. This is a wonderful example of excellence and Normanhurst values.

Oak-Tree Fireworks Display

The Oak-Tree Fireworks Display is back this year and will take place on Sunday 5 November at 4.30pm. It is an opportunity to bring families together across the group and will be a fantastic event with an amazing firework display. Please order your tickets as soon as possible to avoid disappointment, further details to follow.

Student Leadership Team

Congratulations to the following pupils who have been appointed to their new roles. Our Student Leadership Team has already made a great start by leading by example and students have shown maturity and enthusiasm in carrying out their roles around the school and in assemblies.

| | Seniors | Juniors |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Head Prefects | Jordan & Darcey | |
| Head of Houses | Kian (Forest), Shaunella (Ridgeway), Finley (Rangers), Ella (Buxton) | Anaya (Forest), Ethan (Ridgeway), Freddie (Rangers), Erdogan (Buxton) |
| Head of Sport | Timothy (Buxton), Ethan (Forest), Kiran (Rangers), Luke D (Ridgeway) | Romy (Buxton), Lily (Forest), Ronnie (Ridgeway), Francesco (Rangers) |
| Charities & Community | Sophie & Farrell | Mason (Buxton), Erin (Forest), Farah (Ridgeway), James (Rangers) |
| Head of Student leaders | Edward | |
| Head of Arts | Chioke | |
| Head of Eco & Sustainability | Ayaan | Poppy |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Head of Academics | Hudson & Krish | |
| Prefects | Atilla, Zidaan, Margarida | Nina (Buxton), Kuzey (Forest), Leah (Ridgeway), Korai (Rangers) |
| Eco and School Council Representatives | <p>Junior Eco Council: Year 1 – Hashim, Year 2 – Ali Can, Year 3 – Khalifa, Year 4 – Victor, Year 5 – Eva, Year 6D – Lily Rose, Year 6R – Korai</p> <p>Juniors School Council: Reception – Issaiah & Konur, Year 1 – Lilia & Isla , Year 2 – Inayah & Liana, Year 3 – Nehanda & Henry, Year 4 – Lucia & James, Year 5 – Caitlin & Enis, Year 6D – Tommy & Romy, Year 6R – Francesco & Sienna</p> | |

Macmillan Coffee Morning and Pupil Cake Sale

On Friday 29 September our pupils hosted our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning. This was organised by our Student Leadership Team and Charity Committee. Once again, this was really well attended and lovely to see so many parents from all years attending while raising money for such a good cause. I am pleased to say that the coffee morning was followed by a cake sale organised by the Charity Committee to raise funds for those who have recently been impacted by the recent earthquakes. These were both heart-warming events and clear examples of pupils in school thinking of others.

Gift a Book

This term we relaunch with our 'gift a birthday book' scheme, where pupils on their birthday can gift one of their favourite books to the school. A certificate is placed inside the cover of the book explaining who has gifted the book and photos will be placed in the newsletter. Thank you for supporting this; pupils are very proud to donate their books in assembly and explain their choice of book.

Diversity Black History Month, Dyslexia Awareness Month and Diwali

In October we begin to celebrate Black History Month and pupils will have a variety of lessons across the school learning about some of the many significant black people in history and in modern day. Pupils will also celebrate Dyslexia Awareness Day on Monday 2 October by wearing something red with their uniform and donating money to the British Dyslexia Association. The pupils will learn about the many attributes of dyslexia and participate in circle times, poetry readings, role play and solving riddles. The newsletter and our social media pages will celebrate the pupils' learning as part of their understanding of diversity and inclusion. Pupils will also be learning about Diwali this month in preparation the Festival of Light celebrations on Sunday 12 November. Pupils will be participating in a number of activities to celebrate the event.

Revision and Positive Study Habit Workshops

We are pleased to host study and revision workshops for the senior pupils. This has been supported by the NSPA, who have subsidised the costs per pupil. On Thursday 11 January, there will be a series of workshops.

Years 7 and 8 - Exam Busters Workshop aims to empower pupils with exam preparation tips, revision tools and stress management techniques. It includes:

- Stimulating a positive attitude towards learning, revision and exams
- Upskilling pupils with effective memory techniques
- Providing a comprehensive exam tool kit

Years 9 and 10 - The Super Speed Study Skills workshop is an effective, immersive workshop that aims to inspire pupils to take control of their studying. It includes:

- How to maintain motivation when studying
- To raise standards of learning and cognition
- To encourage the adoption of a range of learning techniques

Year 11 – Mind Mapping which is designed to help pupils better organise their thoughts, allowing pupils:

- To show them how to make and take mind mapped notes
- To boost understanding and recall
- To encourage creativity and build excellent planning skills

These workshops will provide some excellent additional tools to their skillset and revision techniques to add to our pupils' exam repertoires. Further details will be shared shortly.

NSPA Events

The Normanhurst Schools Parents Association is very much part of our school community. The committee are always looking for parents to join and support events. To join the NSPA please email: normanhurstschoolpa@gmail.com. The next event will be the NSPA Music Bingo Night on Friday 6 October 6.30-9.30pm

- Thursday 5 October 3-4pm - Preloved uniform sale
- Friday 6 October 6.30-9.30pm – Family Music Bingo Night
- Sunday 5 November – Oak-Tree Group Fireworks at Oaklands School
- Monday 20 November 7pm - NSPA Meeting AGM in school hall. Cheese and wine evening – all welcome
- Monday 11 December 4-6.30pm - Winter Fayre
- Thursday 25 January 3-4pm - Preloved uniform sale
- Friday 2 February 5-6.30pm – Mini Disco
- Sunday 12 May 11am-1pm - NSPA Summer Walk
- Saturday 22 June Midday-5pm - Summer BBQ

If you are able to donate a prize for the raffle for the Winter Fayre, please make contact with Miss Reid in the school office by email treid@normanhurstschool.co.uk

Online Safety

Each year we continue our partnership and commitment with parents to safeguard our pupils and children online.

Each term through the curriculum and engagement in activities and discussion, we will refresh and upskill our pupils knowledge and behaviour of being online and engaging in social media. Recently, friend-finding and social networking apps Wizz and HiPal Walkie Talkie have become increasingly popular amongst young people.

Wizz tries to encourage a positive environment and claims anyone violating their guidelines will be banned. But unfortunately, harmful content can easily be found. Users can expect content including profanity, sexual content, violence, substance content, and much more.

HiPal Walkie Talkie is a free online social networking app that allows users to talk to others using their phone as a 'walkie talkie' style device. It works even when a user's phone is locked and not in use.

Upon sign-up, users indicate whether they are either 12 or over, or under 12-years-old. The features do change slightly depending on which of these age categories a user falls into.

These apps are 'dating apps' for young people as young as 12 and 13, but it is a known that adults are able to register and are using this platform to make contact with children. There are some helpful links below.

[wizz Online Safety Card 2022.pdf \(oursafetycentre.co.uk\)](#)

[HiPal Online Safety Card 2022.pdf \(oursafetycentre.co.uk\)](#)

[Wizz and HiPal Walkie Talkie: The Safeguarding Risks of Social Networking Apps - Safer Schools \(oursaferschools.co.uk\)](#)

Annual Parent Coffee Mornings

Every year we invite parents to a coffee morning to discuss school life and for you to share your experiences with me and either Mr Hagger, the Group Managing Principal, or Mrs Osborn, the Group Education Principal. The office will send an invitation the week before. Coffee mornings will take place on a Friday morning from 8.45 – 9.45am on the following days:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Friday 7 November | Y10&11 Coffee Morning |
| Friday 24 November | Y7-Y9 Coffee morning |
| Friday 1 December | Y3-Y6 Coffee Morning |
| Friday 12 January | Year 1 & 2 Coffee morning |
| Friday 19 January | EYFS Coffee morning |

Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal

Every year as a school we make an amazing effort to support the work of Operation Christmas Child by filling shoe boxes with gifts to send to children overseas in need of support. The charity brings joy to many children and young people in significant need. This year we are having a Shoe Box House Challenge once again to see which house can donate the most boxes in the juniors and seniors. The deadline for these boxes is Friday 17 November, We aim to send at least 75 boxes and your help will be much appreciated. Please look out for the information leaflets when they come home. Half term is a good time to collect items for a shoebox, ready to bring into school after the holiday.

Last year we were fortunate enough to be able to volunteer to pack the shoe boxes in the warehouse. I know that the year 7 pupils really enjoyed doing so and developed a better understanding of the process from creating a box, checking each box to packing these for shipping. This year, Year 9 will have the opportunity to do this in the second half of the Autumn term in Tonbridge.

Access to Portals

As requested at the start of term, please access your Parent Portal for ongoing information and to update any details that may have changed. This includes contact details (we need at least two current emergency contacts) and medical information. We upload key information to the Portal so that it can be accessed at your convenience.

Please contact the school office if you have misplaced your login details.

Uniform Reminders

Please remember that pupils come back to school in winter uniform after the half term break. I would like to provide some important clarity regarding socks and tights.

- As part of the summer uniform, pupils are permitted to wear White ankle or knee length socks (White cotton tights permissible in inclement weather).
- The winter uniform for girls states they should wear Navy knee length socks or opaque navy tights.

The full uniform list can be found through the link: www.normanhurstsch.co.uk/parents-pupils/school-uniform/ Junior pupils should all wear the regulation school coat, scarf and winter hat. From Year 7 upwards pupils may wear either the regulation coat, or a plain navy or black coat, without any logos or decoration. Pupils are only allowed to wear plain navy or black scarves, hats and gloves.

Please can I remind parents and pupils that hair should be neatly cut for school, or tied back if long. It isn't suitable to have long hair over the eyes in school. All long hair must be secured in a hair band throughout the day.

Can I also kindly remind parents that earrings are only allowed to be worn by pupils from Year 5 upwards. Earrings should be plain round gold or silver studs, and must not be worn on PE days.

Mild Illness and School Attendance

The Government has published some guidance for parents about school attendance if their children are slightly unwell, which is based on advice from Professor Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer, as well as other eminent medical professionals.

Parents can view the letter here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

The guidance says that it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

The guidance also offers advice for parents whose children may feel anxious about coming to school: guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance.

Important Dates for the Diary

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Mon 2 October | 17:00 – 18:00 | Iceland Trip Meeting |
| Tue 3 October | 09:30 – 10:30 | Harvest Festival |
| Wed 4 October | 09:15 – 11:15 | Open Morning Juniors |
| | 18:00 – 20:00 | Open Day Seniors |
| Thu 5 October | 15:00 – 16:00 | NSPA Pre-loved Uniform Sale |
| Fri 6 October | 18:30 – 21:30 | NSPA Quiz Night |
| Mon 9 October | 16:00 – 18:30 | EYFS/Junior Parents Evening |
| Tue 10 October | 16:00 – 18:30 | EYFS/Junior Parents Evening |
| Wed 11 October | 16:00 – 18:30 | EYFS/Junior Parents Evening |
| Tue 17 October | 17:45 – 19:15 | GCSE Presentation Evening |
| Mon 23 Oct – Fri 3 Nov | | Half Term |
| Sun 5 November | 16:30 – 18:45 | Oak-Tree Fireworks |
| Tue 7 November | 08:30 – 09:00 | KG-Y6 Drop-in Morning |
| Fri 10 – Mon 13 November | | Senior trip to Iceland |
| Fri 17 November | 08:45 – 09:45 | Y10&11 Coffee Morning |
| Mon 20 November | 19:00 – 20:00 | NSPA AGM & Meeting (hall) |
| Tue 21 November | 17:00 – 18:30 | Y9 GCSE Options Evening |
| Fri 24 November | 08:45 – 09:45 | Y7-Y9 Coffee morning |
| Fri 1 December | 08:45 – 09:45 | Y3-Y6 Coffee Morning |
| Tue 5 December | 16:00 – 18:30 | Y9 Parents' Evening |
| Wed 6 December | 09:15 – 10:15 | KG-Y1 Nativity |
| | 14:30 – 15:30 | Y2 Nativity |
| Thu 7 December | 13:00 – 15:30 | Rec-Y8 Pantomime Trip |
| Mon 11 December | 16:00 – 18:30 | Winter Fair |
| Wed 13 December | 14:30 – 15:30 | Carol Service |
| Thu 14 December | | Last Day of Term |

The Leadership Team, your child's form tutor or I are very happy to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise. Please do feel free to email or contact the school office if you would like to meet with us and discuss any issues.

With my very best wishes

Yours sincerely



Jacqueline Job
Headmistress



OAK-TREE SCHOOLS is the group name of:

BRASIDE SCHOOL, BUCKHURST HILL • COOPERSALE HALL SCHOOL, EPPING • NORMANHURST SCHOOL, NORTH CHINGFORD • OAKLANDS SCHOOL, LOUGHTON

HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS: 6 ALBION HILL, LOUGHTON, ESSEX IG10 4RA

GROUP MANAGING PRINCIPAL & DIRECTOR: MR MATTHEW HAGGER B.A. (HONS), M.ED., PGCE CO-DIRECTORS: MR NICHOLAS HAGGER M.A. (OXON), MRS ANN HAGGER CERT. ED.

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