



BASTON HOUSE NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

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Another half-term flashes by and at long last we can enjoy our new science and technology facilities. I have been meeting with the contractors and they promise the next phase will see a completion of works. The old portakabins will be removed: ideas are welcome as to best use this space. This means that by the beginning of the summer term, we should have our next set of classrooms which will provide an excellent Food and Nutrition suite, designed by our very own Ms Coley.

The staff have been working very hard to maintain our improvements since Ofsted last November. They have been attending many training events to keep their subject knowledge and skills up to date. All staff are having refresher training in Autism: this course is designed by the National Autistic Society and delivered by our own staff who attended advance training to become officially accredited SPELL Trainers. SPELL stands for **Structure, Positive** approaches and expectations, **Empathy, Low arousal** and **Links**.

We will be in contact with you about our upcoming exciting residential visits to Paris, Poland, Hindleap Warren and the Manor House activity centre in Cornwall. There may still be a few spaces, so listen out!

If your children are in Year 11 and above, they will have been provided with revision materials for use at home. These resources are designed to assist your child and not to increase the stress that exams bring.

If your child is in Year 10, we need a response from you about work experience when we re-start on February 24th.

Wishing you all a restful half-term break!

Greg Sorrell

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

17th—21st February—Half Term

Thursday 26th March—Options Evening

11th May—18th June—GCSE Examinations

STAFF NEWS

Some of you will remember the early days of Baston House School when there were only a handful of staff and half a dozen children. Today, we have 87 pupils and as we have grown the roll, so too, have the accommodation and staffing which now numbers 85. Inevitably, there will always be staff turnover.

Some of the factors that challenge us include, illness, internal promotion, external promotion, relocation, maternity leave, compassionate leave and staff attending training courses. You will also be aware of news coverage about teacher shortages on a national scale. We are no different: retention and recruitment are a regular part of senior managers' roles.

We recognise the importance of continuity in staffing and always work to minimise change whenever the need arises. We rarely use agency and we try to find the balance between giving plenty of notice and causing unnecessary anxiety about proposed changes in staff. If there are changes, please accept that they are made in good faith and designed to minimise any adverse impact. As ever, with any concerns, just get in touch.

Many of you will remember Maria Christoforatu, a very popular teacher, she worked in Ash class before relocating to China to teach art. She tells us of the extremely difficult conditions faced by the Chinese people. She reports that very few shops are open, transport is closed down, wearing a mask is compulsory and schools are closed to children. She tells us that a few days ago, schools re-opened but for only for teachers so that they could send work on-line to students who have been unable to attend for many weeks. We send her our best wishes to her to stay safe and hope the coronavirus is controlled as soon as possible over there and doesn't establish itself here in the UK.

We are delighted to welcome our first parent to our Governance Board. Mr Robin Dunne has a son in Year 8 and has a four year association with the school. He is a practising barrister at chambers in Lincoln's Inn, London where he acts in civil litigation disputes. He is also a fee paid judge of the First Tier Tribunal (allocated to the Mental Health and SEND Tribunals).

He believes, as we do, that a voice for parents is integral to the running of a successful school and the achievement of the best outcomes for the students at its heart.

We welcome our newest Teaching Assistant Mr Simon Lloyd to replace Ms Shakera Rattray who left at the end of January.

WHAT A PERFORMANCE!

The students that take performing arts, as one of their subjects, have chosen a song and its choreography. We expect them to be involved in their learning, not just as active autonomous students but also as co-Leaders of the learning process, making choices and self-assessing their progress.

Therefore we held discussions and voted on their involvement in the curriculum.

The winning song and short choreography is: Earth, Wind & Fire's "Let's Groove" by Phil Wright https://youtu.be/_zdv23bAINM

The idea is for all students and members of staff to take part in a video in which we will dance, show our moves and mainly have fun, while demonstrating what an amazing community of learning we are.

So don't be shy and enjoy dancing with your son or daughter during the half term or at least listen to the song a couple of times.

This will help us to break some shyness /embarrassment and stimulate the participation in the video.

The choreography is just some scaffolding to inspire us nevertheless everyone can be creative and introduce their own freestyle movements !!

CAREERS

Apprenticeship Week at Baston House School was a huge success, we invited three speakers who discussed the different career pathways for our Year 10 and above students. There were some fantastic presentations from some admirable colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

We welcomed a speaker from London South East College, Mr Damian Molyneaux, who discussed the courses available at his college and the qualifications required to enrol.

We also had Mr Andrew Cruickshank and Ms Ebony Alabi from ASK Apprenticeships, explaining the apprenticeship routes and how to follow one when pupils are ready to leave Baston House School.

Mr Glen Roberts from Wates Construction delivered a presentation about apprenticeship courses within his company and the opportunity for pupils to undertake work experience at Wates Construction.

ENGLISH TEAM

Christmas seems like a distant memory as we swiftly move through the first months of 2020, recently aided by the tempestuous winds of Storm Ciara. Spring is just around the corner and that always reminds me that GCSE, Functional Skills and Entry Level exam season isn't far away. If your child is preparing for exams (either this year or next year) I strongly recommend they create a free account at BBC GCSE Bitesize. There are lots of really useful activities and revision tools on there which can help sharpen their skills. On the subject of key skills, I'm not afraid to repeat how important reading is to students of all ages. Fiction, short stories, non-fiction, magazines, e-books – all of these can help flex and strengthen those reading muscles and stop them getting flabby. On that note, we will once again be celebrating World Book Day at Baston House. More news on this to come! Finally, Media students preparing for summer exams should be spending lots of time revising their knowledge of the set texts and reminding themselves of the wonderful world of Taylor Swift and Bruno Mars.

This summer will see our first students sit the GCSE English Literature exam. Along the way we have debated, analysed and asked countless questions. We have delved into the darker side of life while following the footsteps of Gabriel Utterson as he unravels the mystery of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde in the classic Gothic novella. The idealism of socialism versus capitalism has been hotly debated while looking into our own individual responsibilities in society whilst reading An Inspector Calls. As the debate rages on as to who the Inspector really is we think of how stage settings point to the clues and provoke thought.

The poetry has challenged our thinking on the realities of war and conflict. At times the picture painted by those wonderful and moving poems is hard to digest and provokes heart-breaking glimpses into the challenges so many face.

Of course, no literature course would be complete without the Bard. Romeo and Juliet has led us on a journey through the Middle Ages and watched as fate has unfolded in front of our eyes as the "pair of star-crossed lovers take their life, whose misadventured piteous overthrows doth with their death bury their parents' strife." The play that teaches us the timeless lessons of love and tragedy has enriched our sense of how literature touches all aspects of our lives.

Revise well, book lovers!

I N D E P E N D E N T L I V I N G

On the 30th of January 2020, Churchill Class visited the state-of-the-art cinema, Vue in Bromley. This was part of independent living – access to facilities in the community. They saw the very interesting and entertaining movie, ‘Spies in Disguise’ (PG 2019)

We travelled to Bromley by bus from Hayes. Students were extremely well behaved and also showed immense confidence while they were out. It was an opportunity to improve ‘team bonding’ and such a pleasure to watch the group talk (with happy faces) about their favourite scenes and characters. ‘An amazing day out with the group.’

M A T H S D E P A R T M E N T

Statistics-Survey

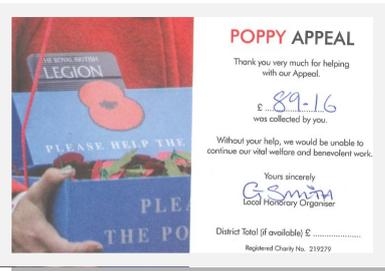
Our post 16 students that are currently studying Statistics carried out a local community survey as part of their curriculum. Well done to our Statistics' students for interacting with our local community! We look forward to carry out similar activities in the near future.

NSPCC Number Day (07.02.2020)

We were delighted to be supporting NSPCC by celebrating Number Day on Friday 7 February. Number Day was a great way to make Maths fun and bring a positive attitude towards it. To raise money for the NSPCC, students and staff took part in *Dress Up For Digits*. We ran our first Digit Cafe. The cupcakes and shortbread were baked by one of our excellent Food Technology students. I would like to thank everyone that helped in making this event a success. Thank to all the parents that joined us on this event as well. We managed to raise £80 for the NSPCC which will make a difference to children today and help change the lives of children tomorrow.



Our Annual ‘Poppy Appeal’ raised £89.16. Thank you to all the pupils and staff for taking part.



BASTON HOUSE IN THE KENT FA SCHOOLS TOURNAMENT

Once again, the two Baston House School football teams were in action, pitting themselves against opposition from across Kent.

Under 14's

This time round the KS3 teams were divided into 2 sections, an A and a B league and due to their successes in the last tournament, Baston House School were placed in the A league. All the games were close and the team acquitted itself well, playing some good football and showing a 'never say die' spirit, in fact, in some games they didn't necessarily get the results that their football deserved. Special mentions need to go to Daniel Leplar as top goal scorer with 6 goals and Josh Lamina who, as goalkeeper, only conceded 4 goals throughout the tournament. In fact, Baston House School had the joint best defensive record in their division.

Squad: Dan Leplar, Joshua Lamina, Callum Kirrage, Mason Gayle, Zakk Allen, Ibrahim Jah

	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
Broomhill Bank (North)	4	3	0	1	6	6	0	10
Baston House School	4	1	2	1	6	4	2	8
Rivermead	4	2	0	2	6	5	1	8
Grange Park	4	1	2	1	4	4	0	8
Broomhill Bank (West)	4	0	2	2	4	7	-3	6

Key: WIN = 3 points, DRAW = 2 points, LOSS = 1 point.

Under 16's

The Key Stage 4 had a tougher time of things and came across some very tough opposition but acquitted themselves well. The boys worked together as a team and even took in turns to go in goal with minimum fuss. The boys worked hard throughout and saved their best performance for the last against a team that was part of the Gillingham Football Club's community project. Up until they had played Baston House School they had won all their games and had drew one, scoring 3 or more in each game. But the Baston team worked hard, played well and very nearly kept a clean sheet, only conceding a goal towards the end. Particular praise should go to Sam Riley who had put in a Man of the Match performance by man marking the opposition's danger man and virtually nullifying his influence on the game. Throughout the tournament the goals came from Greg Cole (3), Alex Hackett (3) and Sam Riley (1).

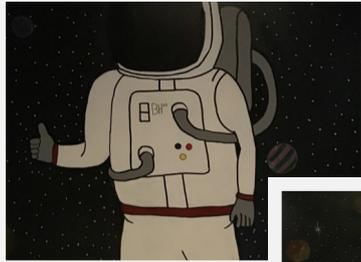
Squad; Greg Cole, Alex Hackett, Kai Rogers, Shay Scott-Zakora, Sam Riley, Mason Bailey and Marlon Edouard.

	Plyd	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Points
GFC	5	4	1	0	15	4	11	14
Alchemy	5	4	0	1	17	7	10	13
Broomhill Bank (North)	5	2	2	1	8	7	1	11
Baston House School	5	1	2	1	7	8	-1	9
Broomhill Bank (West)	5	1	1	3	5	11	-6	8
Goldwyn	5	0	0	5	1	16	-15	5

Key: WIN = 3 points, DRAW = 2 points, LOSS = 1 point.

ART

Talented art student Zoe Read was given a project to create two themed rooms. Zoe has worked very hard to transform the two spaces. She created a Lego room as well as turning a therapy room into a space themed room which the students love!



EAGLE HEIGHTS

Increasingly we arrange activities involving Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 students and teachers working together: this is designed to make the transition from primary to secondary schooling as smooth as possible. This week we arranged a visit to Eagle Heights in support of our science studies, 'Predators and Birds Of Prey.' We took 25 students for the day and it was a huge success. The students enjoyed working closely with animals, a wide range of birds and their keepers at the sanctuary. We were enthralled by the superb aerobatic skills of the beautiful birds of prey. Many of our staff would like to return, perhaps, when the weather is a little warmer.

BASTON'S CHRISTMAS MARKET 2019

We were very impressed by the outstanding demonstration of entrepreneurial skills demonstrated by our students during the Christmas Market. Each class were given the challenge of coming up with a stall idea. The students had to decide on what to sell, budget the costs vs. the potential profits, pitch the idea to a panel of investors and then set up a stall and sell their product at the Christmas Market.

There was a fantastic range of ideas, from the incredibly popular tombola table, to the delicious hot chocolate stand and some fantastic ornaments and candle stalls.

The afternoon itself was a great success and bundles of joy! There was a (badly) dancing Santa, lots of students giving parents the hard sell and we were even visited by a troop of Storm Troopers.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for such a fantastic event- we all had a blast!



POLICY FOCUS—SAFEGUARDING

Baston House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment.

We have a number of policies and procedures that contribute to our safeguarding commitment, including our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which can be viewed in the Policies section of our website.

We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us. All school staff are trained in Child Protection, and children are made aware of the adults they can talk to if they have any concerns. Staff are trained to look out for signs of abuse or neglect and are required to report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Sometimes we may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a pupil's welfare. We will ensure that our concerns about our pupils are discussed with parents/carers first unless we have reason to believe that doing so would be contrary to the pupil's welfare.

We also know that, very occasionally, parents do not appreciate the work we do on their child's behalf and may even resent us or external agencies getting involved. Whilst we understand that emotion, we will always carry out our duty to safeguard children without fear or favour.

We actively support the Government's Prevent Agenda to counter radicalism and extremism.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Greg Sorrell, Headteacher. Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are Lauren Gibbs, Inclusion Manager, and Adam De Vecchi, Deputy Headteacher. The School Governor with safeguarding responsibility is Sophie Garner, Head of Service for Greater London.

All members of the safeguarding team can be contacted via the school office on 0208 462 1010.