



Headteacher's Half Term Round-Up

As we approach the end of this whirlwind of a half-term, I wanted to take a moment to express my appreciation for the collective efforts of our students, parents, and staff. This short but intense period has seen everyone working diligently to navigate through a myriad of tasks and responsibilities.

To our Year 11 students, completing your mock exams is a significant achievement, and I commend each of you for your hard work and dedication. These mock exams are not just assessments; they are crucial steps in your preparation for the final exams ahead. Take a moment to reflect on what you've learned about your strengths and areas for improvement during this process.

After half term we welcome a new member of staff to our team, Ms MacDonald, she will be teaching English to our Key Stage 3 classes and running literacy interventions across the school.

To everyone in our school community, I want to express gratitude for your commitment and hard work during this busy half-term. We are a team, and together, we continue to create an environment that nurtures growth and opportunity.

Wishing all our students and families a restful half term break.

Hamilton School re-opens to all students on Monday 19 February.

Physical Education

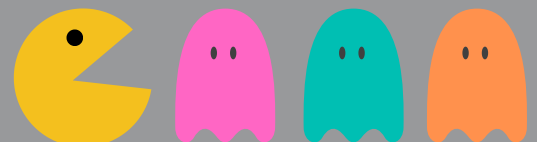
Mrs Burford

PE this year has started off very well. We are playing badminton, indoor tennis and dodgeball with all classes. All classes are working well and developing their skills through each sport.

Year 7 sometimes play 'Pacman' to warm up: walking along the lines in the sports hall, one pupil named Pacman, all others named as ghosts. The ghosts need to tag Pacman. Cones are used for power-ups - if Pacman grabs a cone he can tag the ghosts. Power ups only last for 10 seconds though! The game ends either when Pacman is tagged or all ghosts are tagged. The Year 7s are enjoying this game and it contributes to tactics and communication.

Dodgeball is also developing well, with some smaller groups using points if they hit an opponent rather than being 'out' of the game. This keeps the game moving constantly.

KS4 pupils are focusing on their BTEC Sport, and using lessons to practice their individual and team sports.



Food Technology

Mr Bartenbach

Food Tech has been full on this term. Year 11 have been continuing with their BTEC coursework. This has been tricky at times but they have really persevered and I am very proud of them.

Years 8,9 and 10 have been creating the original and famous street food, Bang-Bang Chicken, originating in Szeuchan. Spicy, spicy!! Year 10 have also thrown themselves into making cakes for our Lakeside visitors.

Year 7 have been continuing with basic cooking skills, focusing on knife safety. They have also made some delicious sponge cakes.

Forest School

Mr Russell

This half term we are looking at ways we can improve our Forest School area. Together with the students, we have been researching elements such as permanent shelters and handmade furniture, all of which the students could make themselves with tools and guidance. Our next stage is compiling student drawings of what they would like the area to look like and come up with a final design incorporating their ideas. The plan is then to start sourcing materials and working on making this a reality!

We also practiced some more fire building, reviewing and incorporating some of the designs students have previously learnt, reinforcing the learning with designs such as the Swedish Torch and Upside-Down fire, using a ferro rod and cotton to get the fires started.

Maths

Mr Ramsamy

Year 11 have sat their Mock Exams this week, demonstraing fantastic maturity and resilience.

Year 10 were introduced to trigonometry this term. A tricky subject to get to grips with, but they have taken to it well knowing that it was not something that they have encountered before.

KS3 have also been introduced to a new topic this term: algebra. They have engaged very well and some of them have actually enjoyed it, dare I say!

English

Mr Woolford

In English this term, our KS3 students have been studying poetry: what it is; techniques used; and, in particular, how it relates to music lyrics. We have been studying poems by James Kirkup, Kate Tempest, Benjamin Zephaniah and the lyrics by Michael Jackson.

Oak Class have been working hard on their reading skills for Functional Skills. They have also produced some brilliant creative writing and have written extended stories titled *The Weather Tree* and *The Protector of The Forest*.

Year 10 have also been working on their Functional Skills and creative writing, alongside preparing for their Speaking and Listening assessment for GCSE English.

Alongside continued focus on Functional Skills, Year 11 have been working on their exam techniques for their upcoming GCSE exams.

We are looking forward to welcoming Miss MacDonald as our new literacy lead teacher after half term.

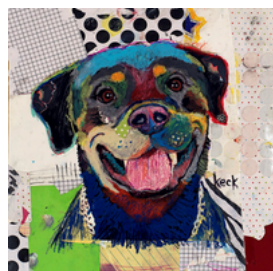
Art

Mr Woolford

This term in Art, students have been studying the mark making of Van Gogh and have had great fun experimenting with oil pastels.

We are now looking at the work of Michel Keck and students are working on their own collage pictures based on her work.

Year 10 and 11 have began work on their Arts Award. It has been fantastic to see some of our students get to grips with how to create their own lino prints.



Year 11 - Mock Exams

Mrs Wilson

The Mock Exams that have just been sat by our Year 11s are the first formal exams many of our Year 11s have sat, and I have been very impressed with them.

Students have been prepped in tutor time regarding the dos and don'ts of sitting formal exams and parents should also have received a copy of the Candidate Handbook via email with more information.

I would encourage you talk with your child about their Mock Exams and how they feel they went. If there are specific concerns, please raise them with your child's tutor in the first instance.

These exams have been vital preparation for the Summer Exams which will be upon our students soon, with exams starting in May. More information will be sent out to you regarding exam timetables and expectations and how to prepare your child for these exams in due course.

Reward Trip

Mr Versace

What a way to end the first Spring half-term... by springing into the cool waters of Coral Reef!

The top 10 points earners who had showed positive and safe behaviours throughout the term had the opportunity to join three keen staff at Coral Reef Waterworld in Bracknell on Thursday 8 February.

Slipping down slides, fighting against strong currents and avoiding being caught in hide-n-seek tag kept the group busy for the 1.5hr swim session.

We then enjoyed a dine-in McDonalds where the group sat together and socialised respectfully with each other and had a few giggles as well.

All-in-all a fun-packed reward trip with students who did themselves proud. Bring on Spring half-term 2!

Lakeside Care Home

Miss Bourke

Over this academic year, we have been developing our links with the residents at the local care home, Lakeside.

Some of our students go on weekly visits, which are thoroughly enjoyed by both the students and residents. Together, they engage in various activities such as word games, board games, craft activities or simply tea and a chat.

Sometimes our students bake cakes in Food Technology to take over for the residents to enjoy with their afternoon cup of tea.

All of this is great to help teach our students to be considerate of others - listening and understanding.

We have also started inviting Lakeside residents over to Hamilton for some after school activities. It's fantastic to see some of our students volunteer to stay and help! Lots of fun is had with board games, crafts, and of course, lots of tea and cake!



Attendance & Absence

We continue to focus on attendance and absence.

Overall attendance this term has been **67.96%**. During this time, a total of **233** days of learning have been lost to unauthorised absence: absence that has not been agreed by the school and is not related to illness or alternative educational activities. In addition to this, we have seen **22** instances of late arrivals by students, impacting on learning time*.

If you provide transport for your child, or they make their own way to school, please ensure that they arrive between 8.30am and 8.45am.

If your child is unwell, please email hamadmin@maidenerlegustrust.org by **9am**.

**Figures as of 9 February 2024*

Support and Information

Information of local services and events that may be of help or interest

Places Kids Eat Free in School Half Terms & Holidays 2024:

<https://moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free>

Family Activities:

<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/family-activities/>

Early Help:

<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/early-help/>

Reading Food Banks:

<https://readifood.org.uk/>

Uniform Expectations

A reminder that students in all years at Hamilton School are expected to wear a school uniform, as follows:

- Plain white polo shirt (i.e. with collar)
- Black/dark trousers – not jeans
- Dark shoes/trainers
- Burgundy sweatshirt/hoodie with school logo (students have been supplied with these)
- Black coat

Non uniform hoodies are not be worn under school jumpers.

Dates for next Half Term:

19 February 2024	All students return to school
23 February 2024	Inset Day - school closed to all students
6 March 2024	World Book Day
21 March 2024	Parent Tutor Meetings (details to follow)
27 March 2024	Reward Trip (selected students)
29 March 2024 - 14 April 2024	Easter Holidays



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