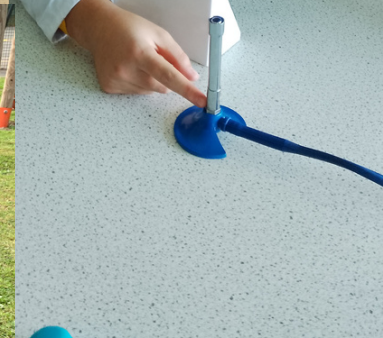




Headteacher's Half Term Round-Up

Miss Concannon

Dear Parents, Carers and School Community
As we approach the end of term and prepare for the festive season, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been another busy and successful term at our school. Christmas is a time for celebration, gratitude, and reflection, and I am proud to share this newsletter with you to highlight this term's achievements.

Christmas is also a time to give back, and this year our school community has shown immense generosity. Our first Christmas Fair was a resounding success, with it raising £412. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Toys and Teens Appeal for their extreme generosity in donating Christmas gifts to our students.

As we take a well-deserved break for the holidays, I encourage everyone to take time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the festive season with friends and family. The new year will bring fresh opportunities, and I am excited to see what the next term holds for our school community.

Science

Ms Anchan

- Year 8 explored the wonders of the Solar System, creating impressive solar system models, conducting volcanic experiments, and building rockets as part of their space exploration unit.
- Year 9 delved into the topic of Earth and Beyond, bringing learning to life with a volcanic eruption practical and taking part in an interactive science quiz challenge.
- Year 10 showcased their creativity and problem-solving skills as they worked on their BTEC Making Chemical Products unit, formulating and testing their own cleaning products.
- Year 11 tackled the topic of Organisation, focusing on digestion and lungs, while balancing their academic studies with the successfully completing their work experience and GCSE Biology mock exams.

These achievements reflect the students' hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm. It has been a productive term filled with hands-on learning and success across all year groups!



Transition at Hamilton

Mr Versace



With a third of the academic year nearing an end, the Autumn term has seen the Year 7 students settling in well to the Hamilton community and structure. The past half-term has also seen one of the Year 7 classes win the weekly points prize three out of six possible times, showing the older year groups how it's done. Year 7 students have also made it onto the points reward trips this term and have enjoyed trips to Thorpe Park, Oxygen Trampoline Park and Wokingham Superbowl. Some of the Year 7 students who are currently on part-time timetables are also developing more positive relationships with key staff to allow them to increase their time in school. We look forward to welcoming the new year and seeing more success with our Year 7 cohort into the Spring term.

Maths

Mr Ramsamy



- Year 9 have continued this term with factors, multiples prime numbers, Venn Diagrams, 2D and 3D shapes.
- Year 10 continued their GCSE course with Trigonometry (a completely new topic to them) and Pythagoras' Theorem. They have done well to persevere and grasp this new concept. Year 10 have also sat an Entry Level Functional Skills exam this term
- The year 11 started off with linear and non linear graphs. They have been working well this term and are making good progress in their GCSE course. Year 11 have also sat a maths mock exam this term.

Outdoor Education

Mr Russell

Another term comes to an end and boy has it been an exciting one! We have continued our work with tools, fire building and outdoor cooking. We've also continued to expand the opportunities in the Outdoor Education area, with poles and a long slackline and climbing ropes being added be added to our climbing area, shelters have been made and hammocks strung up!

Regular trips to the Lookout on Fridays have provided those keen to spend more time outdoors and opportunity to explore the forest, play games, build dens and interact with other young people there. We will be making even more of a push to encourage more teamwork next term but have seen countless examples of students using their time with us to build positive relationships, working together even when their relationships may have become strained elsewhere.



Physical Education

Mrs Burford

Wow! What a half term this has been! Key stage 3 classes have been participating in many different sports including volleyball, dodgeball and benchball. Year 7 students have been discussing the value of physical education lessons and exploring this theme within various sports.

Year 8 students have all developed their knowledge of health and wellbeing through football and developed their skills very well. We have a fab goalkeeper in year 8!

Year 9 students have discussed leadership skills and demonstrated some of these during lessons whilst playing sports including badminton and tennis.

Year 10 students are working well on their BTEC Sport coursework and are starting to finish their assignments within unit 2: Practical sports.

Year 11 students are finishing off their final unit for coursework and working on the information for their exam.



Food Technology

Mr Bartenbach

This term, our Food Technology students have been busy honing their culinary skills and creating a range of delicious dishes. Here's a taste of what they've been cooking up:

 **Pizza:** Students learned how to prepare a perfect pizza dough from scratch and explored creative toppings to suit every taste.

 **Lemon Shortbread:** A sweet treat with a zesty twist, students practiced precision and patience to create these buttery delights.

 **Chicken Noodles:** Exploring global flavours, this dish introduced key techniques in stir-frying and seasoning for a balanced, flavourful meal.

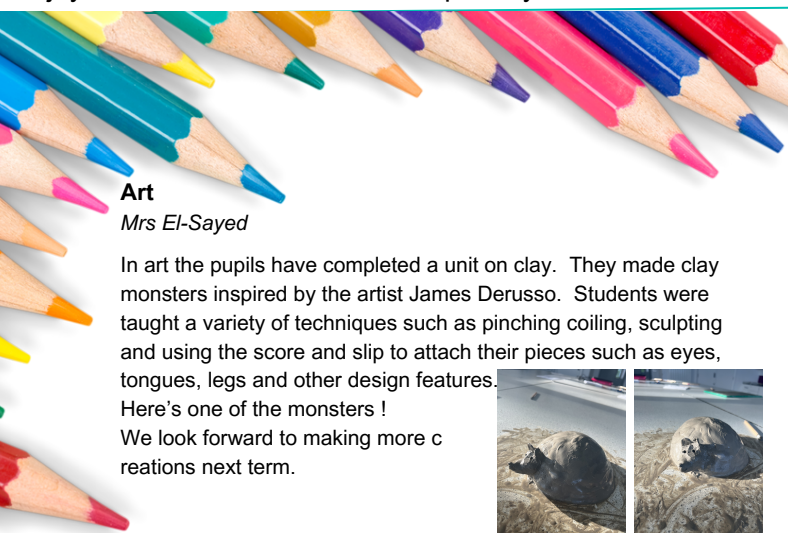
 **Brownies:** Mastering the art of the ultimate gooey dessert, students baked rich, chocolatey brownies that were a class favourite.

 **Lasagne:** Layers of pasta, rich sauce, and creamy béchamel came together as students tackled this classic comfort food.

 **Christmas Cake:** Rounding off the term, students embraced the festive spirit, learning to bake and decorate traditional Christmas cakes, perfect for the holiday season.



Each dish allowed students to develop their culinary confidence, learn essential kitchen skills, and, most importantly, enjoy the fruits of their labour. Keep an eye out for more exciting recipes next term!



Art

Mrs El-Sayed

In art the pupils have completed a unit on clay. They made clay monsters inspired by the artist James Derusso. Students were taught a variety of techniques such as pinching coiling, sculpting and using the score and slip to attach their pieces such as eyes, tongues, legs and other design features.

Here's one of the monsters!

We look forward to making more creations next term.



Enrichment Afternoons

Miss Millward

This half term, students have had a range of enrichment activities on offer and students with the most points over the week get their first choice of activity. Activities were climbing, swimming at London valley, playing pool at the crucible, outdoor Ed at Bracknell forest or onsite activities : sport, art, board games or Warhammer. All students took part in these activities on Friday afternoons and enjoyed themselves. Some students decided to choose the same activity every week whereas others changed each time and did well in their lessons to get their points for this.



English

Mr Woolford



This term, the English department focused on enhancing students' reading, writing, and communication skills through a range of engaging activities. We explored diverse topics such as crime, hobbies, food, and animals, using extracts like Shocking Sugar Levels, reports on gun laws, and accounts of unusual hobbies, including ghost hunting and snail collecting. These sparked lively discussions and helped students improve vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and their ability to identify and extract key information, meeting key Functional Skills descriptors.

In the second half of the term, students enjoyed exploring *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. The novella provided a platform to discuss its timeless messages of kindness, generosity, and the importance of supporting the less fortunate in society.

It has been rewarding to see students engage enthusiastically with these topics and make noticeable progress in their skills. We look forward to continuing their learning journey next term.



Careers at Hamilton

Mr Versace

This half-term has been a busy one for Careers at Hamilton School, with Year 11 participating in week-long work experience placements, Year 10 completing their applications for their work experience in March, and the whole school getting involved in our inaugural Careers Day. The day saw students accessing the Unifrog online platform and having the opportunity to talk about college life with a representative from Activate Learning, who run Reading and Bracknell & Wokingham Colleges. College applications have also been completed by our Year 11 students as they look ahead to their post-16 possibilities with hope and anticipation. For any Careers enquiries, please feel free to email me directly at s.versace@maidenerlegthrust.org or contact me through the school office during school hours



Attendance & Absence

Miss Rixson

Reducing Absence at Hamilton is our priority. Missing school damages a pupils attainment and disrupts school routines. Attending Hamilton helps students to develop their social skills, helps them to learn and grow, and gives our students a sense of belonging.

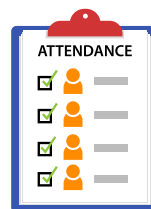
As parents and carers, we would like to encourage you to work together with us, as part of a team, to reduce absence and encourage attendance.

Overall attendance this term has been **64.8%**. During this time, a total of **265** 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.

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 to prevent a late mark.

For medical or dental appointments, please note that we will require proof of appointments.

If your child is unwell, please email hamadmin@maidenerlegghtrust.org before 9am.



Gold Award Trip

Mrs Burford

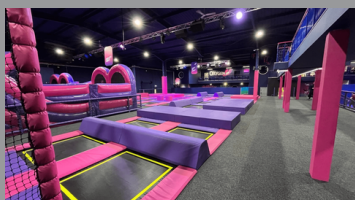


This half term, the gold reward trip was to Oxygen Trampoline Park and McDonalds Lunch.

Students try their best to receive points from their lessons and the top 10 point-earners receive a spot on the gold reward trip.

The students had lots of fun bouncing around and enjoying the newly refurbished trampoline park.

Next term, the points start from zero again meaning anyone could be in for a chance to go on the next gold reward trip.



Behaviour

Miss Rixson

Here at Hamilton, we pride ourselves on helping students get from red to green zones. This is done by:

- Setting clear goals
- Reinforcing positive behaviours
- Being consistent
- Helping to change the environment around the student when needed
- Encourage learning
- Helping make positive choices
- Supporting when needed
- Giving chances to turn behaviour around



If you would like to know more about we support your child, or would like advice about supporting your child at home, please do not hesitate to contact me via the School Office.

Christmas Fair

On 6th December, we held our first ever Christmas fair. There was a range of stalls - gifts, sweets and chocolate, jewellery, food, and drink. It was a successful event, and it was lovely to see so many parents come along. We appreciate your support and hope you had a lovely time.

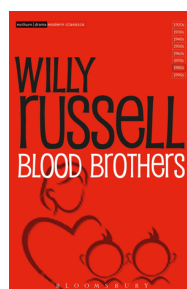
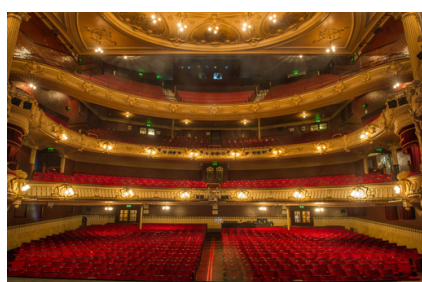


Blood Brothers Theatre Trip



An enthusiastic group of YR8 and YR9 students enjoyed a performance of Blood Brothers which they had been studying before half-term. The story is set in 1970s Liverpool and explores themes such as poverty and opportunity. Twins are separated at birth and have two very different upbringings and yet fate brings them back together with tragic consequences. Students had completed various activities whilst studying the play as well as taking parts and reading through it in class. Most students had not been to a theatre before and so were unsure what to expect and there was much excitement as we departed for Portsmouth Guildhall Theatre. One student said that the biggest surprise was that there were "real people and not a screen"! The students were fantastically well behaved and were even complimented by members of the public also there to enjoy the show.

We were delighted with the engagement the students showed with the play and incredibly proud to be complimented about students' behaviour when out in the community.





Brighter Futures for Children have created a **December Half Term holiday activities** page on the Family Information Service (FIS) website. Please use the following link to view [Holiday Activities](#)

General Holiday Activities can be found on the following search list: [Search Results | Reading Services Guide](#)

Childcare: for parent carers who need information on childcare, holiday clubs, childminders etc for the school holiday – www.readingfis.org/childcare

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



*A new type of Food
Bank in your area!*

When you become a member of a Pantry, in exchange for a small weekly subscription (£5) you will have access to food that you choose, including fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and store cupboard favourites, which will be worth on average £21 more than your 'pay as you shop' membership payment.

There are several pantries in the Reading area. Membership is open to those on benefits or low incomes who live in each catchment area. Proof of benefits / income is required to become a member, along with proof of address. For a Pantry in your area, please click on the areas below:

- [Reading Coley Park](#)
- [Reading Norcot](#)
- [Reading Pavilion](#)
- [Reading Southcote](#)
- [Reading Wesley](#)
- [Reading Whitley Wood](#)



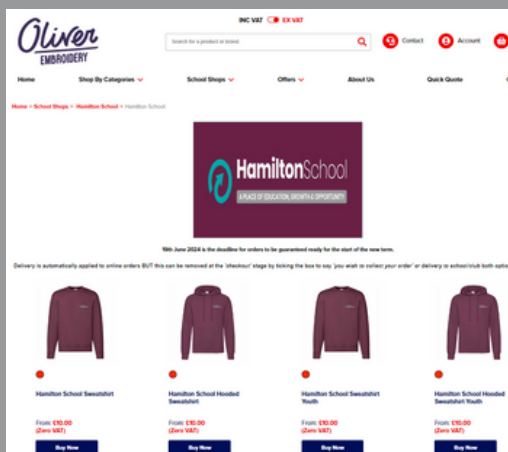
School Uniform

Every child was supplied with a new school jumper in September.

If your child has lost their jumper, or would like a hoody instead, these may be purchased at a heavily subsidised rate of £10 per item, including delivery either directly to school or to your home address.

If your child arrives at school without the correct uniform, they will be loaned a jumper for the day. These jumpers are 'pre-loved' from our store and are not brand new.

We will expect these to be returned to school and only used until a student's own jumper is found or purchased.



Please click [here](#) to access the online shop. If you have any issues with this, please contact the school office.

Dates for Next Half Term:

Monday 23 December - Sunday 5 January 2025	Half Term - school closed to all students
Monday 6 January	All students return to school
Week commencing 27 January	Year 11 Mock Exams
Week commencing 3 February	Year 9, 10 & 11 Functional Skills Exams
Friday 14 February	Last day of Term
Monday 17 February - Sunday 23 February	February Half Term



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Term Dates: [Hamilton School Term Dates](#)

School Timings: [Our School Day](#)

Parent Help & Support: [Information](#)

Class Timetables: [Timetables](#)

Letters for Parents: [Letters](#)

Maiden Erlegh Trust Vacancies: [Vacancies](#)

About Hamilton School: [About Us](#)

We would love to hear your views on Hamilton School. Please click below to highlight anything you feel our school has done particularly well recently, or areas you feel we need to improve, as well as a chance to nominate a member of staff you feel has exceeded your expectations. Click on the links below to submit your feedback:

