



## Headteacher's Newsletter - 2024/5 Spring term 1

### Dear Parents and Carers

The nights are slowly getting longer—we've made it to the end of January folks!

I want to start this newsletter with an update: this will be the final edition in its current format. There are several reasons for this change, but primarily, we will be retiring Weduc at HCJS in the coming months. We'll provide more details about its replacement soon.

One of our key aims moving forward is to share school news more regularly. To that end, from February half-term onwards, we will introduce a fortnightly newsletter. Whilst, I will of course still contribute, the goal is for it to be a true *School* Newsletter, reflecting voices from across our HCJS community. Look out for it shortly after half term.

### Staffing News

Many of you will remember Mrs Sally Lee, who left us at Easter last year. As a valued member of our pastoral team based in The Nest, she was dedicated to supporting families. Unfortunately, due to a variety of complex reasons, we were unable to replace Mrs Lee at the time, making it difficult to continue her vital work in strengthening the home-school connection. This challenge has been felt even more keenly since Mrs Hunt also left HCJS at Christmas.

I am delighted to share that we now have a fantastic and very fitting solution. Mrs Emily Scott, currently our School Administrator, will be taking over this important role. Many of you already know Emily well - not least because, alongside Mrs Holmes, she plays a key role in supporting families through her work in the school reception.

Mrs Scott will transition gradually into her new role over the coming months, and I will update you on her replacement in the school office in due course.

## Year 4 residential trip

I want to inform you of a change that, (based on conversations at the school gate), some of you may have already anticipated.

The Year 4 residential trip to Woodrow High House, which we have run in previous years, will no longer take place. Due to rising costs, staff availability, and a decline in uptake, we have made the difficult decision to discontinue this trip. I understand this may be disappointing, but please be assured that we remain committed to providing valuable outdoor education experiences for our pupils. Research highlights the significant benefits of outdoor learning, including increased confidence, improved social skills, and enhanced well-being. These experiences foster teamwork, resilience, and a deeper connection with nature.

To uphold this commitment, the Year 6 residential trip will continue as planned in this and future years, ensuring our older pupils still benefit from these enriching opportunities. Additionally, we are excited to be organising a fantastic end-of-year **day trip** for Year 4 pupils instead. This trip will provide an adventurous and educational experience outside the classroom. Further details will be shared soon.

## Year 6 End of Year show

I also want to inform you of another slight change; this one relates to the Year 6 end-of-year show. In the last couple of years, we've staged fantastic productions, including shows inspired by The Beatles and *High School Musical*. While these performances are a wonderful experience for our pupils, they require significant curriculum time, staff expertise, and energy to produce.

This year, after careful consideration with the SLT and Governors, we have reassessed our priorities to ensure we deliver the best possible learning experience for our pupils. Unfortunately, we do not have the time or resources within the school day to prepare, rehearse, and stage a high-quality production without negatively impacting valuable learning time.

However, we firmly believe that an end-of-year show is a valuable and enriching experience that brings our school community together. Therefore, I am delighted to announce that Miss Cartwright (currently on maternity leave) will soon be launching the return of her after-school **Performing Arts Club**. The club will focus on producing the 'Upper School' end-of-year show, ensuring this special tradition continues. The club will be open to pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Full details from Miss Cartwright will follow soon. There will be a small participation fee, but we are committed to ensuring no child misses out due to financial constraints. If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium or if you have concerns about the cost, please contact us - we are happy to discuss options to support your child's involvement. We want every upper school pupil to have the chance to shine in this production. If your child would like to be involved in being part of this club please send their 'expression of interest' to Miss Cartwright by Friday 14th February at [tyler.learnandmaster@gmail.com](mailto:tyler.learnandmaster@gmail.com) so she can get an idea of numbers when deciding on a script.

## Young Voices 2025

Congratulations to our pupils who recently took part in the Young Voices concert at the BP Pulse LIVE Arena (NEC Birmingham). Their impeccable behavior and outstanding performance were truly commendable, making them a credit to our school.

This incredible event gave our pupils a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sing as part of the world's largest children's choir concert an unforgettable experience!

A heartfelt thank you to the parents and carers who came along to watch. (Despite our slightly limited view of each other), your support made the evening even more special for the children. A massive thank you also goes to our dedicated staff members who generously gave up their Friday evening to accompany and support the pupils.



## Talented pupils at HCJS

We have some incredible talent here at HCJS and we love to recognise the notable successes of our pupils. As part of our assembly programme, we regularly hear from children who have achieved great things outside school; but sometimes I only learn about it through informal (or overheard!) conversations - This week I can think of a really good example of something I'd love to have shared with the wider school community. Please let us know if your child has been successful outside of school - If we know about it (and they are happy to do so) we'd love to give them an opportunity to share their story.

## Sports Success

(Mr Battersby writes...)

We have had a very busy half term of sport at HCJS. In upper school, our handball team finished a very respectable third in their Aylesbury Vale league. This was full of very competitive matches, which were tight and where the teams were only separated by small margins. Additionally, we took a team to a fun evening of futsal at AGS; considering that they had not played together before, the team put together a string of very commendable performances as well as having a great evening.

In lower School, Mr George took 30 girls to a football skills festival at St Michael's, fun was had by all and a few new skills were learnt along the way.

Looking ahead, we have both boys and girls football matches, our district swimming event (we have won the previous two years) and a skills for life festival.

Well done to all the children who have represented the school with dedication and commitment this half term.

**Once again, and as always:  
Thanks for your continued support.**

Andy Leach  
Headteacher