



Principal's Reflection



We have had a very busy last couple of weeks and it's great to see the students really enjoying themselves as we near the festive break. Thank you to all parents/carers who were able to attend the Celebration Assemblies that took place throughout last week, it was a lovely opportunity not only to celebrate each year group as a whole, but also those individual performances rightly recognised by Subject and House leaders. Once again, many congratulations to all students who picked up an award, it was thoroughly deserved. See the Celebration Assemblies—December 2024 page for photos.

The Christmas Concert was an absolute joy with so many outstanding performances, a special thanks must of course go to our Performing Arts Department colleagues for freely giving up their time to work with the performers to ensure that everything runs smoothly and to plan. Please see the Performing Arts page with the photos of the event.

This year we had a record turnout for the Y7 & Y8 Snowball with just over 200 students in attendance. What an amazing time we all had dancing and running around to the beats of our very own DJ AKA Mr Mitchell. Many thanks to the Sixth Form Committee for providing refreshments and games for students throughout the evening and hopefully they raised significant funds for their Sixth Form Ball in the process! See the Rewards page for photos.

Well done to all our Y12/Y13 students this week who have been off timetable over the last two days as part of the Hellesdon Community Project. The students and staff have very much enjoyed seeing them out and about around school, supporting in class, selling cakes at break, washing staff cars and many other fund-raising activities all in aid of raising money for their chosen charity.

Message from Mr Earl

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all my colleagues at Hellesdon High to wish our esteemed colleague Mr Tom Rolfe all the very best as he leaves to take up the position as Secondary Strategic Lead for the Wensum Trust full-time. It's been an absolute pleasure to work with him over the past 22 years in various capacities and whilst he will be sadly missed at school level we are delighted to be able to continue to work with him as part of the wider Trust.

Our Prefects

We would like to thank our wonderful Prefects who have helped out at multiple school events in their own time, are completing litter picking each morning, and are starting to support lower school students on a 1 to 1 basis through a buddying system. Thank you for all for your continued help and support we really appreciate your hard work and commitment to HHS.

Thank you to

Amelia R, Ben R, Masie D-C, Malachi B, Mia T, Mia H, Michelle M, Oliva P, Rebecca B, Amelia P, Ben H, Charlotte C, Declan B, Ella C, Ella R, Grace B, Grace H, Gracious A, Ingrid H, Jayden A, Jamie B, Laila G, Laruen W, Libby T, Mercedes D, Musti H, Oluwademilade O, Peter K, Rosie S, Sara C, Shona H, Sophia G, Violet M, Zach D and Ziad A.

And Finally

We would like to wish all our students and staff a very restful Christmas holiday, we hope you get the chance spend time with your families and friends and to relax and recharge — Happy Christmas!

We look forward to seeing you all back in school on Tuesday, 7 January 2025

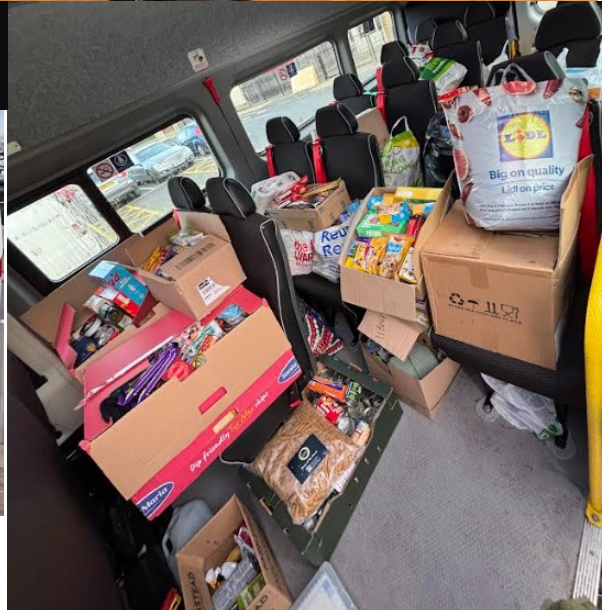


CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year for our Christmas Appeal for Anon Street Team we requested donations from our students in exchange for non-uniform on the last day of term.

We would like to thank you for all your kind donations, which will make such a difference to so many people this Christmas.

A big thank you to Mrs Mascall and Mrs Clabon for arranging this, thank you also to our Prefects for helping collect and sort the donations and thank you to Mr Mullen for delivering the donations with the Prefects!



 Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 



CELEBRATION ASSEMBLIES—DECEMBER 2024



CINEMA EVENT

What a great start to the school year with so many students purchasing so many rewards with their points. So far we have awarded:

Canteen Queue Jump—45

Canteen Vouchers—117

Christmas Cinema Ticket to watch Elf—179

Gaming Room—30

Made in Dagenham Tickets—17

Sticker Sheets—142



This week we have had a Cinema event where students watched the Christmas film 'Elf' in the hall and had drinks and popcorn.

We had a Gaming room at lunch time where students could play Fifa and games on the VR headset.

We also had students invited from Years 7 and 8 for the Snowball, which was a great evening with lots of dancing!



GAMING ROOM



YEAR 7 & 8 SNOWBALL—SIXTH FORM STUDENTS THAT SOLD THE REFRESHMENTS



HELLESDON HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS...

made in Dagenham

THE MUSICAL

5TH, 6TH, 7TH
FEB '25
7PM

GET YOUR TICKETS HERE!

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/HHS-DAG](https://tinyurl.com/HHS-DAG)

WRITTEN BY: ALEXANDER THORNTON | MUSIC BY: PAUL MCELROY | BASED ON: MADE IN DAGENHAM | BASED ON: THE LONDON THEATRE PRODUCTION BY THEATRE COMPANY

PHOTOGRAPHY GCSE TAKES OFF THANKS TO PTA FUNDING

Aspiring photographers are being given the chance to kick-start their career thanks to a new GCSE subject at Hellesdon High School.

With a successful A-Level photography course running at the school's Sixth Form, teacher Miss Mason identified a gap in learning at GCSE level and introduced the new course. Miss Mason said: "I recognised that there was an opportunity to introduce a course which is relevant to students in the modern world and provides transferable skills relevant to future careers".

"The careers supported by photography are wide ranging due to the skills involved. It's not just about taking pictures but also knowing how to work to a brief, being IT literate, using interpersonal skills, and seeing a project through from start to finish".

However, in order to get the course up and running, Miss Mason turned to the school's Parent and Teacher Association for help. After a successful bid, the PTA provided the money to buy the cameras and equipment needed. Miss Mason said: "The PTA have been incredibly supportive. We are so lucky to have this team of volunteers who raise funds for our school, as well as a wonderful community who support their fundraising. I would like to thank everyone who has been involved".

Now, three months into the new course, Miss Mason says it's having a significant impact: "The students have been phenomenal. They are completely engaged in their learning and are really motivated to come into school. It is wonderful to see how much they are enjoying the subject".

There will be an exhibition at the end of the school year for the students to showcase their work.



Miss Baker and Mr Tabram took two students to Norwich Theatre Royal for an all day workshop with other schools in the Trust. The students were representing our Shakespeare Ambassadors for Hellesdon High School, which is part of a partnership The Wensum Trust has with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Students learnt leadership and confidence-building skills, in preparation for further Shakespeare Ambassador events. These included student-led initiatives to promote Shakespeare's works to our school community and ideas for marketing the Shakespeare Play-making performances, which the Trust schools will perform together later in the academic year.

What did you learn today?

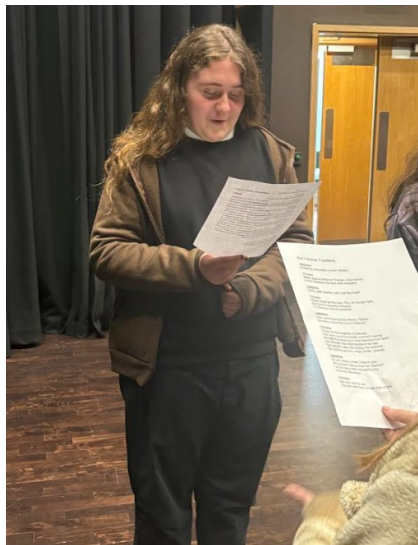
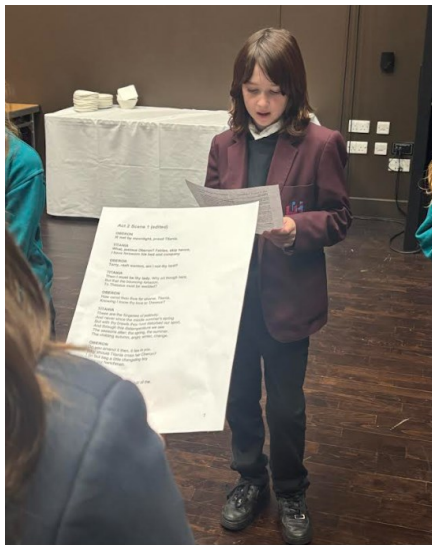
Kyle: "I learnt what the plot of A Midsummer Nights Dream is about and we got an introduction to the themes and watched the trailer of the new RSC production starring Matthew Baynton from Ghosts. I learnt about being collaborative with people I don't know from other schools. It may seem scary at first but once you get to know them it isn't that scary. I can't wait to put our plans to promote the RSC screening of A Midsummer Night's Dream at Hellesdon into action!"

Scarlett: "I learnt a bunch: I learnt how to communicate and act with people I haven't talked to before or seen before. Now I want to know all about A Midsummer Nights Dream and I'm going to research it right now!"

What was the best bit about today?

Kyle: "The best bit was making friends and sharing ideas, collaborating as a team together, no matter how little you know each other. Being able to do anything without feeling a fear of embarrassment."

Scarlett: "The best bit was talking to new people and acting lines from the play with them. I normally have stage fright, but I felt the people there today were just like me and wouldn't laugh at me".



KS3 AUTOR TALK

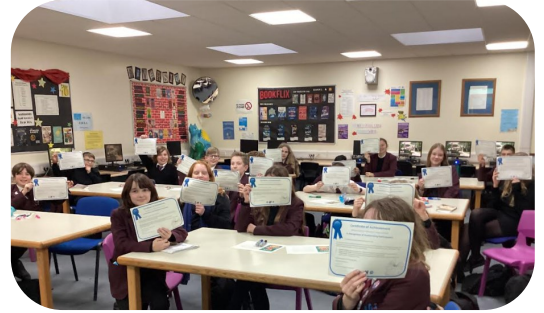
Some of our KS3 students attended an Author Talk via Zoom in the library on 20 November, this was part of a 'Stretch and Challenge' Initiative in which some of our most able readers are reading a book each half-term that gives new ideas on classic literature.

This half-term they have been reading 'Jane Eyre' abridged by Patrice Lawrence outside of school and will now have the opportunity to discuss this with published authors and likeminded readers across the country in a National Teen Book Club.

It was a credit to our students that Hellesdon High School had the most comments read aloud and questions asked by the presenters than any other school across the country. Their contributions were insightful, empathetic and inquisitive and they were fantastic ambassadors for our school.

Students received a Certificate of Achievement in Recognition of Outstanding Participation

Thank you to Miss Beardmore, English Teacher and Mrs Oz, Librarian for the organisation of this successful event.



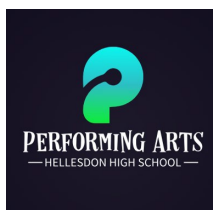
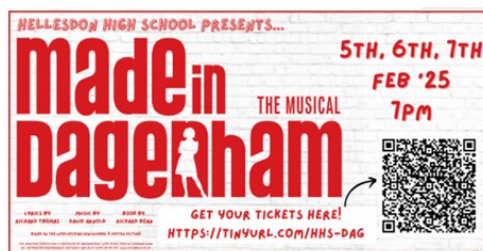
PERFORMING ARTS

Our Performing Arts Department have had another busy term with Sixth form preparing to cover an Eminem song in 6 different genres which were performed at the Christmas concert, Year 7 have been playing Ukulele, Year 8 have been learning 3 Little Birds by Bob Marley and Year 9 returned to the 80's with a Synth Pop unit.

They took the Sixth Form music and drama students to see Come From Away at the Theatre Royal on 17 October. A variety of students performed at the PTA Christmas Fayre to entertain the shoppers. This included piano solos, vocalists and guitar and a vocal duo. The performances were well received by all in attendance (photos below).

They had a very successful evening at our annual Christmas Concert (photos below). Thank you to all our staff and students who were involved in this lovely event.

They are looking forward for all the preparations for our School Production, Made In Dagenham!



Follow us on Instagram too! To keep up to date with all our latest Performing Arts News and Events!



♥ EVEREST UPDATE ♥

Hello From Everest House.

Autumn is always an emotional time in high school.

With the new Year 7's finding their way around, to the Year 11's realising that this is their final year, we are never too far away from a child in need.

However, in Everest we have seen just how resilient our students are and no more so than in our new Year 7 intake. They have hit the ground running, adapting to their new school surrounding and throwing themselves into extra-curricular clubs, joining school teams and generally being a really positive addition to the school.

Our annual Year 7 visit to Eaton Vale showed this "house spirit" with everyone encouraging and supporting each other to go higher and throw further. Miss Ford, Miss Ewing, Mr Berry and I had a great time watching the group get stuck in and make the most of the activities.

Special thanks to Miss Ford for organising this annual event on top of all her other roles within Everest House.

Throughout the higher years, we have seen some great examples of school spirit with the Year 11's coming to terms with this being their final year, preparing for their GCSE's and still making time to help out around school as prefects and mentors.

As Everest Head of House, I feel really proud that we have a really strong bunch of students who try to keep positive (even on their worst days), work hard and to do their best for both themselves and each other.

So I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the students of Everest (and their parents and carers) a very restful, stress-free and relaxing Christmas and New Year.

All the very best and here's to a magnificent 2025 for all of us.

Mr King – Head of House



♥ OLYMPUS UPDATE ♥



Hello from Olympus House,

As Christmas approaches, it is a good time to reflect on what is often a challenging term for our students. Our Year 11's have successfully completed another round of PPE's and our Year 7's have found their feet and settled into their new school. Mr Chapman and I had a brilliant day with the Year 7's and their tutors at Eaton Vale in late September.

With the introduction of Pupil of the Month for Olympus, the following students were selected for their outstanding achievement, attendance and attitudes:

September – Ruby S (Y8)

October – Edvinas S (Y9)

November – Cameron B (Y10)

There are so many fantastic individuals in Olympus, it was a difficult choice to choose just one pupil from each month. We have a large number of Olympus pupils who had been nominated for awards. They collected these during the celebration's assemblies in the penultimate week of term.

Olympus pupils have made a big push on winning the inter-House Competitions, most recently coming first in the last two Classroom Cup challenges, putting us in a strong position to claim this cup at the end of the school year. Hopefully we can add this to our trophy haul from last year, where we won the Charity Cup and the House Shield.

Well done on the hard work that you have put in this term. I hope that everyone has a well-rested Christmas break and is ready to return back to school in the New Year!

Mr Reid – Head of Olympus



HOUSE UPDATES



Hello from Fuji House,

It has been a good start for Fuji House this year. We have welcomed two new Year 7 tutor groups that have settled in really well. It has been a pleasure to see these students grow, including seeing them overcome some real challenges. I had the pleasure of spending a day with them on the Eaton Vale trips where great resilience was shown. My personal favourite was the axe throwing... leaving me worrying whether some of our Year 7s were actually secret spies.

Last year we missed out on the House Shield, determined to prove this must only have been due to an administrative error, we are hoping to win it back! As always Fuji students are leading the way with the extra-curricular cup. It brings me great joy seeing so many of our students contributing to our lovely school community. Well done to all those participating in lunchtime and after school clubs.

Attendance has been a great focus of this term for Fuji students. It has been wonderful to see lots of students giving themselves the best possible chances of taking advantage of all the opportunities available to them. On top of our recent award winners, some students who have shown great resilience and attitude to school this year are: Summer G, Alex M-L, AJ S, Mellieha N-W and Sarah G.

I hope all Fuji students (and everyone else of course) have a wonderful Christmas and come back well rested for the Spring Term.

Mr Cole— Head of Fuji House



Hello from Nevis House,

Wow it's been a long first term which has seen a few changes, with new tutors for some, a new Head of House partnership for students/parents/carers to adjust to, but with a lovely shiny Sports Day Cup from last Summer sitting pride of place on our House shelves.

The newly formed Head of House job sharing partnership between myself and Mrs Nickerson is going well and as we know all our students and parents/carers well so it helps iron out any concerns anyone has very quickly. For us both it is lovely to see some of last years Year 11 students now at Sixth Form (they grow up fast) but also welcoming in the new Year 7 students. As we now look forward to the Christmas break it seems a long time ago since we took Year 7 to Eaton Vale for the day back in September, although the weather is probably better now than it was then! Every year we look to have team building, confidence building, friendship making Year 7 trip, and it's always a fun packed day. This year we can honestly say it was the best ever as our new Year 7's made the transition into mainstream secondary education superbly well.

The year 10s have just taken their PPE (mock exams) and it was interesting as always to see how students prepare for them. Hopefully most did as expected or better but now they all have the first experiences of exams in a large hall and of the revision they did to make personal adjustments for the next time and eventually the GCSEs exams in their final year.

The big push this term has been on attendance and we are very proud of the Nevis House pupils with our House constantly at the top of the attendance figures. So when we return in 2025 we hope to go from strength to strength with your support as always so that 2025 can be a happy and healthy one for all. Happy Christmas from Mrs Nickerson and myself.

Mr Bailey and Mrs Nickerson—Head of Nevis House



♥ SNOWDON ♥



Hello from Snowdon House,

The following Snowdon students performed at our Christmas Concert on 12 December: Dan H, Phoebe M, Josh C, Malachi B and Mia T—the photo (right is Dan H and Mia T rehearsing).

Year 11 have been revising hard for their PPEs, making flashcards etc. Special mention to Megan P and Ruby A for their positive outlook and excellent effort.

We have also had a few new students join Snowdon this term. Our students have made them feel welcome, and we are especially grateful to buddies such as Lily S, Mia L and Alex JM, who have helped them get to their classes and learn their way around the school site.

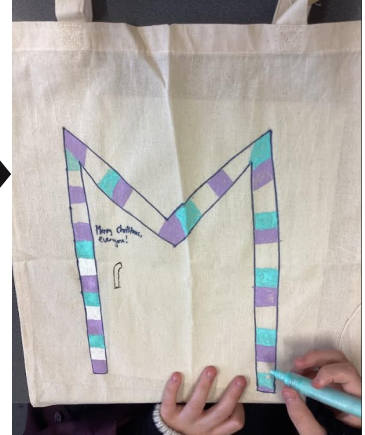
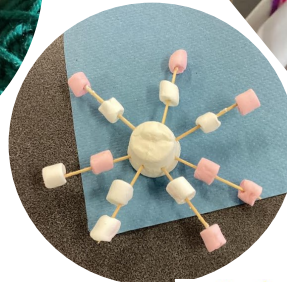
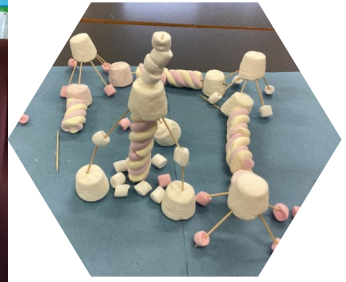
I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year for another great term.

Ms Kemp— Head of Snowdon House



Young Carers

We have lots of groups in school that our students attend, below are some photos of the lovely creations our Young Carers have made during their group since September. These have included Winter tote bags, spooky lollipop ghosts, marshmallow snowflakes and sculptures.



Library

Our inaugural chess tournament took place this half term with 30 players from all year groups taking part in intense games during lunchtimes in the library.

Over 4 rounds and 33 games in total it came down to four finalists - Daniel H and Leo S from year 11 and Ethan B and Seth C from year 8 with Leo S ultimately victorious to be crowned our HHS Chess Champion of 2024.

Such was the enthusiasm and skill demonstrated, we are already planning our next chess tournament which will start in February 2025. Watch this space!

Message from the Library for the Christmas Break...

'Tis the Season to be Reading - Happy Christmas!

