

THE HAMLET HERALD



'Outstanding learning, within a glittering curriculum, where everyone matters'

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HEADTEACHER'S NOTE

As we near the end of another busy term, you may be thinking of activities to keep your Hamleteer/s busy over the Easter break. Don't forget that we host *Arty Party* here at school. For details of their forthcoming holiday offer and booking details, please see the flyer further on in the HH.

Our Hamleteers may also like to keep their maths 'ticking over' by signing-up to the [Doodle Maths Spring Challenge!](#) This runs from the 1st-30th of April. The Spring Challenge is designed to encourage a few minutes of 'daily doodling', promoting healthy learning habits and boosting your child's confidence in maths. They can also earn a pin badge and certificate for each challenge they complete! Click [here](#) to find out more.

And finally, good luck to our young musicians all taking ABRSM examinations next week. Have a final 'push' on those scales and pieces this weekend – you will all be great!

USEFUL SIGNPOSTING: 10 TOP TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

Children can often be guarded about their emotions or any difficulties they're experiencing. This reticence can extend to chats with their parents. A study by the Office for National Statistics found that 64% of children reported regularly talking to their mum about "things that matter", and even fewer (45%) held conversations of the same kind with their dad.

It's incredibly important, of course, for our children to have someone to confide in when they're confused, upset or unsure of themselves – and to know that they can do so without fear of being judged or punished. Please read on for a 10 Top Tips Guide, which explores how to encourage open and honest discussions with children, empowering them to open up if they need help.

STAFF UPDATE

We are looking forward to Miss Harris returning from maternity leave after the Easter break. She is going to be replacing Ms Plant, working in 3KS on a Friday through to the end of the summer term. While we will continue to see much of Ms Plant, we want to thank her for all her work with 3KS since September. We are fortunate to have such a committed colleague who provides such expert cover and continuity for our Hamleteers.

KEY DATES

Monday 25th March

ABRSM Music Exams

Wednesday 27th March

Y4 visit to Battle Abbey & ABRSM Music Exams

Thursday 28th March

Annual Reports Part 1 emailed to Y3, 4 and 5 parents

DHJS Easter Egg competition (see flyer further on for details)

Final day of spring term, usual finish time, 3:25pm

PTA UPDATE

Helping with event planning: We are still seeking parents who would like to get involved in helping us to plan and deliver one of our events. It's a great way to get more involved in helping to fundraise for the school without the need to commit to being a member of the PTA, and it is always fun!

Save the dates: Hamlet Disco - Friday 17th May 6 - 8pm (tickets will go on sale after the Easter holidays)

Summer Fair - Saturday 15th June 12.30 - 3pm

Interested in joining the PTA? We are always around for a chat over a coffee if you would like to know more about being involved in the PTA. Please contact us via dulwichhamletpta@gmail.com

'LOTS OF SOCKS' DAY!

It was lovely seeing such a variety of socks on show yesterday, all in support of *Lots of Socks* day. We are delighted to have raised a total of £105.32 for Down Syndrome International.



WEEKLY HOUSE POINTS X 2

Topaz Water	Ruby Fire	Garnet Earth	Sapphire Air
323	399	345	364

EGG DECORATING COMPETITION

We invite all Hamleteers to enter this fun competition.

Bring your entry into school on

Thursday 28th March 2024

Please follow these instructions carefully.



Entries should be:

ONE decorated egg, in a container no larger than 30cm x 30cm

Attractive or witty

Hard boiled or blown eggs

Entered by pupil only, not parents or older siblings

Labelled with pupil's name, class and house.

Display:

Please take entries into class on Thursday 28th March 2024

Class viewing (*timetabled throughout the morning*)

Judged:

Judged after 9:00

2 house points for each entry

1st place 12 house points, 2nd place 10 house points, &

3rd place 8 house points

Winners announced in afternoon assembly

Entries to be collected at the end of the school day and taken home

Easter prizes to be won!

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS

Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS

Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

4 LISTEN ACTIVELY

When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or 'teenage angst' – or to assume that they'll simply 'get over' whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES

If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS

Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

9 PROVIDE RESOURCES

It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Kooth or YoungMinds.

10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday

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