

15 February 2023

Dear families

Half term newsletter from the Headteacher

Firstly, our thoughts and condolences continue go to all our Turkish and Syrian families, following the devastating earthquake in the region. I know this will still be a very worrying time for many of you as you await news of relatives and friends. Thank you to everyone who responded so generously to our appeal to send aid.

Strength to strength

Since the return from the Christmas holiday break, we have enjoyed a lot of significant achievements and student successes at Heron Hall. I am delighted to be able to say that our school goes from strength to strength.

Our students have excelled in a variety of areas, from academic study to sporting activities, and it continues to be a privilege for me to watch them grow and develop. Whether it's through their hard work in the classroom or their contributions to our school community, their efforts are a credit to you, our families.

In addition to our students' individual successes, the school as a whole has made significant strides. Our dedicated teaching and learning teams have worked tirelessly to provide a supportive and engaging learning environment, and the results of their efforts are evident in the achievements of our students. We care about the children and we are determined to help every child in our care succeed.

The photograph below shows some of our students, for example, who successfully completed the demanding 10-week Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) course. We are very proud of them.



Sixth Form - Overwhelming response

We are very pleased that so many of our Year 11s are choosing to continue their success with us by applying to our new Sixth Form. Our school is in the top 10% in the whole of the UK in terms of the progress students make after they join us. This record of success will continue in our Sixth Form and help prepare your child for the next stage of their education or for employment.

If your child hasn't applied for a place with us yet, please don't delay. *Don't miss out on place at Heron Hall.* We are also accepting some students from other schools, so please recommend us if you can. You can find out more information [here](#).

National award nomination

We are delighted to be able to announce that David Jablonka, who is the Head of English at the school, has been nominated by North Star Community Trust - who manage our school - for a top national award. David (pictured, below) has been nominated for the prestigious Times Education Awards and will compete in the category: 'Subject Lead of the Year'. We wish David well!



Thank you to our Governors

Great schools need great governors.

We are fortunate that we have a fantastic team who are dedicated to helping us improve every part of the school. Most of the work of the governing body is 'behind the scenes' and is done quietly and very professionally, without any desire for recognition.

Our governors deserve a huge 'Thank you!'

Learning beyond the classroom

Our Year 10 Media Studies class took a behind-the-scenes tour of the Warner Bros. set recently, where the renowned Harry Potter movies are made.



We had the good fortune to see the original sets, costumes, and special effects that were utilised in the movies.

Students also saw an demonstration from professionals at the studio who showed how to create many of the special effects you see in the films.

Through the power of green screen technology, everyone on the trip also had the opportunity to ascend a broom and catch the golden snitch!

The day ended with an insiders' discussion giving away production-related secrets which really helped to provide additional context for how Harry Potter came to be the global phenomenon that it is to this day.

Student ECO committee relaunches

A new student ECO Committee has been set up. It has started with a focus on making sure that a range of new bird homes are built and placed through the school grounds. The committee also plan to have 3 plants in all teaching classrooms by the April Half-Term.

Earthquake appeal

After the original 7.8-magnitude earthquake on the Monday morning and the several aftershocks that followed, sadly more than 41,000 people have now perished. As we know, there are a lot of people that are homeless and without housing. At Heron Hall Academy, we urged the local community, families, and students to provide supplies for those in need. The photo shows how deeply our community has responded and with such so generosity.



Reading at home – please help us

Every study and research survey shows that children who read regularly outside of the classroom will do better in all their subjects, including maths. We are very proud of having a dedicated library and library team at the school. Reading is at the heart of what we do as a school.

We ask all our parents to encourage their children to read for 30 minutes each day. Reading around 30 minutes a day allows children's vocabulary to grow and expand, exposing them to as many as 2 million vocabulary words a year.

School meal debts

We are aware that this is a challenging time for many of our families but the amount of money owed to the school is now very significant. This is all money we need for teaching and learning. Can you please clear any debts as soon as possible and make sure your child's account is kept topped up. Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide a hot meal in future if your child's account is in debit.

We also urge all our families to check to see if they are eligible for free school meals which could save you around £500 per year. Please check [here](#).

Key dates for your Diary

• Return to school - Monday, 20 February
• Sixth Form applications - As soon as possible. See website or contact Mr Molokwu
• Year 8 Parents Evening 2 March 2023
• Year 7 Parents Evening 30 March 2023

Finally, we are proud of all that has been accomplished this half term, and we are eager to continue building on this momentum in the months ahead. Our school has a bright future, and we are confident that, with the support of our families and the hard work of our students and staff, we will continue to achieve great things.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our school, and I look forward to sharing more news of our achievements in the near future.

Yours sincerely



Mr Arthur Barzey
Headteacher