



NEWSLETTER – 24TH MAY

MESSAGE FROM MR McCORMICK, ASSISTANT HEAD (ACADEMIC)

I have a confession, dear reader, and it might not be a pretty one. I quite enjoy ‘Clarkson’s Farm’.

His show highlights the trials and tribulations of farming life. A recurring theme is the dichotomy between national policy, which is pressuring farmers to diversify their livelihoods in the wake of falling food and livestock prices, and our archaic planning system, wielded by local councils, which prevents them from doing so. To add to this situation, I even think he’s a good presenter of ‘Who Wants to be a Millionaire’. When I bought my most recent car, I Googled his view on it. However, I am far from a Jeremy Clarkson fanboy. Posters of him do not adorn my bedroom walls. I find many of his political views unpalatable. He is, for me, an unfortunate part of A Level results day.



Every year he issues a variant of his original post, “If your A Level results aren't joyous, take comfort from the fact I got a C and two Us. And I have a Mercedes Benz.” There is some truth in this statement. He attended a good, independent school; he has a collection of cars; he has enjoyed national prominence for the best part of forty years and has a bank balance akin to someone’s telephone number. My own father, who is the same age as Clarkson, has an even scunter academic record which encouraged him into the RAF at the age of 16. Despite this, he managed to raise a family, and produced career-minded individuals who did ostensibly better at school than him. In the late 1970s, exam results maybe didn’t matter so much. Less than 1 in 7 students attended university. It was possible to leave school on your 16th birthday without qualifications. This is no longer the case.

My own GCSEs, sat in a time period that I now teach about in History classes, taught me a great deal. I still use the powers of analysis and the multi-dimensional thinking that my Humanities GCSEs taught me. The French I took laid the foundation for further study. The Computing Studies course prematurely prepared me for parts of a life we all now live. English Literature instilled a love of reading in me that exists to this day. Those GCSE grades our students will receive in August are the key to the next step, to the A Levels that you want to study. In turn, those A Level grades are currency to gain a cherished university place. In continuation, your degree may be the key to the career you have dreamed about since primary school. Exams, and their results, do matter. University is incredibly competitive. Apprenticeship programmes equally so. The jobs market, in many sectors, is undoubtedly selective. The presence of a good suite of qualifications is not only academically enriching, it

is one of the keys to your future. If I believed otherwise, we might as well just close the school gates and all go home.

They are not, however, the be-all and end-all. This collection of numbers and letters only become a part of you, the part of you which is industrially or economically driven. Your friends are your friends regardless of whether or not you got a 7 in English. Your future wife or husband will not abandon your first date, leaving you bereft under the clock at Waterloo station, when they find out you got a B in A Level History. Your family love you unconditionally. There are now more different routes to career success than there have been in my lifetime. Your personal qualities will remain utterly unchanged if you achieve a 4 in Biology. In the English education system, which is obsessed with testing as opposed to learning, you could be forgiven for thinking your exam results are the be-all and end-all, but as a learned colleague of mine says “the sun will always rise in the morning and you’ll look to a different path”.

You are more than that collection of numbers and letters, but the last two years have been about ensuring these are as high as possible to facilitate the next step in your educational or career path. In those past two years, you have grown in resilience, diligence and acceptance. We are on the home straight and for some of you, the summer starts sooner than it does for the rest of us. We wish you the best of luck and look forward to celebrating your success on Results Day.

BOARD OF GOVERNANCE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Directors of Mount House School Ltd are legally responsible for Mount House School in terms of registration with the Department for Education, compliance, inspection, financial management and educational standards and they meet every two months to discuss all aspects of school life. The Board of Governance for Mount House School, chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, meets termly with the aim of advising the Directors on the effectiveness of the School with regard to meeting its aims and implementing its development plan.

Members of the Board of Governance (who are not referred to as ‘Governors’, but are ‘Members’ of the Board of Governance) help the Directors to support the Head and the School and also advise in holding it to account. The Board of Governance has standing agenda items for academic and pastoral reports, safeguarding and health and safety. The Board of Governance does not discuss finance, nominations, remuneration or any specific or named HR, staff, student, or parent issues.

Parent members are not parent representatives but have collective responsibility as Members of the Board of Governance. Staff members are invited by the Head to join the Board of Governance because of their particular senior role at the School.

The Board of Governance aims to have equal numbers of staff and parents to reflect the importance of the partnership between school and parents. There will normally be seven staff members, including the Head, Bursar, Deputy Head and members of the senior leadership team. They are joined by seven parent members who serve on the Board for up to four years from the time of their appointment.

All parents are invited by the Head to volunteer for a parent vacancy. In selecting members, the Board aims to have at least one parent with a son or daughter in years 7, 8 or 9; a parent with a son or daughter in years 10 or 11, and another parent with a son or daughter in the sixth form. However, it is recognised that it may not always be possible to cover the whole range, in which case the seven parents are selected to give as wide a representation as possible.

Expressions of interest invited

One or two places on the Board of Governance may be available in September and any interested parents should email clerk@mounthouse.org.uk before Monday 10th June.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

As this academic year nears its end, some of our students have successfully completed challenging independent research projects. Here, they share their thoughts after working hard on their research and presentations. Students who will be in years 9, 10 and 12 in September are encouraged to consider undertaking a research project as these students have done.



Topics have ranged widely from nuclear war, macroeconomics and COVID, the factors driving media coverage, ethical and legal issues in the gaming community, the criminal justice system, and diversity in the workplace. Future projects planned include classical literature, mythology, robotics, and more. The personal development and practical skills you learn are clear from our students' thoughts below!

"It was a really good learning experience and I feel like it's taught me how to research and plan projects better in the future. With the courses I am taking for GCSE next year, the skills I have learnt will help me a lot when it comes to studying and revising for those subjects."

Thomas, year 9



"I got to explore my research topic and delve deeper into the inequalities in the criminal justice system. This knowledge will help me pursue a career in law, which is what I want to do. Also, being aware of these inequalities would help me to better advocate for change, and advocate for new policies!"

Freya, year 12

"I really enjoyed doing my HPQ because it was a chance to study something that I was really interested in, in depth".

Esme, year 9

"I found it interesting, it was a learning experience; I was working with a lot of tools such as the word counter, and how to format a bibliography. These will be useful in future."

"It was a great experience and I learnt a lot during the process. In the future it will help me on my CV and will help me in future professional work."

Hari, year 9

"I learned about a really interesting topic, the history of feminism, which is important to me. I learned a lot about how to research a topic and write about it and present it."

Sofie, year 10

"I chose this topic because I wanted to know what my future will look like after school and how will I be accepted as a diverse person in the 'real world'. Treating people fairly and equally is important to me no matter how different you are. Diversity and true inclusion (including disability) is very important to me."

Olivia, year 13

SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning is an integral part of our students' sixth-form experience. Through being involved in service learning projects, our students gain skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership and problem-solving.

Students are encouraged to reach out to local community organisations related to their chosen area of service and aim to establish important links. These include helping out at an old people's day centre, working with children in a primary school setting or working within the school helping out with clubs and faculties, through helping younger students with homework or taking part in lesson activities.



Mount House's service learning programme was set up in the school in 2023, and Mrs Allman started her involvement because she felt it was important for young people to involve themselves in helping grow a strong community and links both within school and the wider community. The Heads of Faculty and staff leading clubs are all involved, as well as year 12 leaders and the whole school. Students in year 12 are allocated to faculties and given options of various outside projects to join.

Recent service learning projects have included:

- creating bug hotels in year 7 which ultimately raise funds for charity.
- helping out at a local old people's day centre.
- maths experts helping our younger students with maths activities and gamers helping out with retro gaming.



"As part of our service learning, Aoife and I had the opportunity to visit Barnet Chipping Day Centre. We were able to get to know all of the ladies at the centre and we even picked up new skills such as learning how to play Rumi Kub and Scrabble with the residents. We enjoyed our time visiting the ladies and we loved getting to know about everyone's interesting past."

Meghan year 12



"Helping the year 11s film their football game for their GCSEs was a lot of fun. I played a big role in setting up the camera and making sure we got all the best shots. I helped them plan out where to place the camera for the best angles and even showed them some tips on how to use the equipment. The students were excited and thankful, which made it enjoyable. Watching their teamwork and skills was great. I felt proud to help with their project and knowing that my help would contribute to their grades made it even more rewarding. Overall, it was a good and fulfilling experience."

Pedro year 12

PAUL NANCARROW, SCHOOL LITERACY CO-ORDINATOR, WRITES ABOUT HIS ROLE

Literacy is central to all learning. Whilst in recent years there have been many definitions of literacy, it is essentially the ability to read and write. Literacy is always about language – words on a page or, increasingly, a screen. I have taught English in secondary schools since 1999 and see my role as teaching and developing students' ability to read and write well. As school Literacy Coordinator I oversee the provision of literacy across the school. This involves supporting subject specialist teachers to teach the literacy of their subject, overseeing the school library, literacy enrichment and providing specialist literacy and EAL (English as an Additional Language) one-to-one support.

One of the biggest challenges that all teachers face is teaching their students the reading and writing requirements of their subject. This year we have made great strides in maths and art – two subjects not traditionally thought of as being literacy based. However, in maths, students have to read questions and learn a number of terms in order to follow mathematical processes. In art, students have to annotate their sketchbooks and also learn a number of terms that denote certain artistic techniques and movements. The Art Department has worked on creating homework booklets for year 7 and 8 which develop students' writing about art skills. Miss Gregoriou in the Maths Department has created laminated sheets and posters with terms for quadrilaterals to develop students' understanding and identification of key concepts.

Also this year, with a generous donation from Mount House PTA, we have bought the long and short lists of the Yoto Carnegie medal so that students can shadow the judging process. The Carnegie medal is awarded each year to a picture book and fiction text for older children. It is the latter that we are shadowing. This work is part of another aspect of my role in overseeing the school library which involves maintaining the cataloguing of books and managing our team of student librarians who staff the library at lunchtimes and after school.

Another initiative we have introduced this year is reading weeks. Every half-term, form tutors have one-to-one catch-up meetings with their tutees. Whilst tutors conduct these meetings, the rest of the form read. Years 7 and 8 read their own books, whilst year 9 to 13 have bespoke readers produced in-house which include a range of short pieces of writing from newspaper articles to short stories. These readers aim to encourage students to read more widely by introducing them to different texts covering a range of topics and themes.

The last aspect of my role is one-to-one teaching of literacy and EAL. Some students require additional support with reading and writing. These one-to-one sessions target the specific aspects of reading and writing that a student may find challenging. Likewise, EAL students, on entering the school, take an English assessment, from which I produce a bespoke programme of study delivered in one-to-one sessions to meet their English language needs so that they can access the secondary school curriculum.



In the coming year, I aim to develop more literacy enrichment activities, including book groups and literary based trips. One major project will be an advanced readers' group whereby each week students will be given a text to read at home and will then meet with me and their fellow students to discuss the text. My aim is to introduce students to important, influential pieces of writing, such as Shakespeare's sonnets, extracts from classic novels as well as important non-fiction texts, such as George Orwell's essays. If you are interested in your son or daughter being involved in the advanced readers' group or if they are interested in becoming a student librarian, please contact me at the school via email or tell them to speak to me at school.

A Magical Forest of My Mind by Isobel (year 8)

The moon was a silvery beacon, shining its light on the eerie forest path beneath. The towering, colossal trees were shades of hunter-green, swaying gracefully to the rhythm of the breezing wind, and the pitter-patter of the occasional wandering animal. Majestic owls swooped by, dominating their presence among the unassuming prey as they commit the deadly pounce; then modestly return to their nest, as if nothing had happened and all was well.

The sky was a deep, menacing yet refined and introverted blue, serving its duty as a blanket to the glistening, bright and beautiful stars up above. The indigo and sapphire variations of mystical flowers emitted undeniable beauty from the roots to the tips of the petals - each holding a power which was so mighty yet frail, that even the bravest should resist meddling with them.

As the night turned to dawn and the dawn turned to day, the celestial moon changed to the ablaze golden sun, who had merely begun its duties in the forest. The light reached down, touching the trees, giving them a satisfactory feeling of warmth. The wind calmed, and the trees and bushes were now swaying ever so slightly and hardly seemed ominous anymore, merely graceful. It would not be until the night, after all, that the magic would rise again...



PE

Athletes of the week:

Year 7: Daniela and Will

Year 8: Abi

Year 9: Talia

Year 10: Rosie

ISA athletics meet:

On Thursday, students from years 7 to 10 gathered at Bedford athletics track to participate in the ISA London North Athletics Competition. The day was filled with excitement as students competed in a wide range of track and field events.

Throughout the event, the students' enthusiasm was evident in their spirited performances and support for one another. A special mention goes to Will and Daniela, who were outstanding in their respective events: Will secured second place in the 800m race, while Daniela sprinted to a well-deserved second-place finish in the 200m race. Well done to both of you!

In addition to these individual successes, the overall atmosphere of the competition was one of mutual respect and sportsmanship. Each student who attended contributed to the day's success, whether by competing, supporting teammates, or simply enjoying the experience.

SIXTH FORM CLASSICS TRIP TO OXFORD

Mrs Fallon arranged a classics trip to Oxford to visit the Ashmolean Museum, the University of Oxford's museum of art and archaeology. The museum was established in 1683 with a collection that spans over 5,000 years of human history.



Upon walking through the grand entrance, the first thing I noticed was a mammoth statue of an archaic koros. It forced me to instantaneously comprehend the sheer size of the statues I had so far only studied in textbooks. We were then introduced to a postgraduate classics student who guided us around the collection, cultivated of re-creations of ancient artefacts. This meant that I could stand a hair-breadth away from statues, analysing new details that I could not previously discern from textbook pages.



Next, we were taken to the vase gallery, consisting of both black and red figure vase paintings. Although many of those on exhibit were not prescribed sources from my A Level course, they did however aid in expanding my knowledge of external sources. I was also impressed to see, up close, the skill of ancient craftsmen, as I understood from my studies the methodical, time-consuming process through which they were made.

By the time we had finished exploring the museum it was lunch time, during which we visited the covered market in Oxford. There was so much variety in the food stalls, from pizza to sushi! After lunch we were guided through key Oxford sites like the Bodleian Library, where we discussed Oxford University and the application process. Finally, we visited Lincoln College, and its beautiful internal gardens. We learnt a lot from our guide, who explained what it was like to attend the prestigious university and the academic dress many of the exam students around us wore.



Darcie year 12

INTER-HOUSE CLASSICS COMPETITION

Last Friday saw the students competing in the inter-house classics competition. Each House created a metope depicting one of Herakles' labours. The criteria for judging were that the scene needed to be recognisable, realistic and fill the space. The results are as follows:



1st Holly – Apples of the Hesperides



2nd Ash – Hydra of Lerna



3rd Oak – Cretan Bull



4th Cedar – Golden Hind

**PTA SUMMER FAIR:
FRIDAY 28TH JUNE 14.15 – 16.15**

Just a quick reminder about the Mount House PTA summer fair on Friday 28th June after sports day from 2.15pm. We hope to see you all there. After half term, please bring into reception the following donated items:

- A glass jar filled with sweets - remember no nuts and the sweets should be wrapped. The jar can be as big or as small as you wish and if you'd prefer not to fill the jar with sweets, some small toys or craft items are equally welcome (although sweets tend to be an easier option).
- A bottle – alcohol of course very welcome, but if you'd prefer a soft drink (for example if your child takes public transport/the school bus to school) then please ensure that the bottle is within date and less than a year old. Equally acceptable are bottles of perfume/aftershave etc or other toiletry items - as long as it's a bottle!
- Any second-hand books which you no longer want to keep.

We will also be contacting you directly through WhatsApp about hamper donations, which were such a success last year.

Thanks for all your help in making this event fun and successful.



If you are unable to donate any of the items listed above but would still like to give something back to the school, you can always donate by using the QR code to pay Mount House PTA securely from your bank. Thank you.



EASYFUNDRAISING



So far, through the Easyfundraising scheme, we have raised £179 with 33 supporters. We would love more supporters. It is an easy setup and online shopping raises money for the Mount House PTA charity. You shop and brands donate to us with no extra cost to you. Literally free money! Click here and start spending and raising money for the school: <http://efraising.org/RnHilwg0Vb>

MOUNT HOUSE SCHOOL PARENT STUDENT GOLF COMPETITION

THURSDAY 27TH JUNE, TEE OFF FROM 5PM
£40 PER PLAYING PAIR (9 HOLES EACH, FOOD AND DRINK ON ARRIVAL)

TO TAKE PART YOU WILL NEED TO CREATE A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN YOUR CHILD AND YOURSELF.

IN YOUR PAIR, YOU WILL BE PLAYING A SHAMBLE FORMAT. THIS MEANS BOTH OF YOU WILL TEE OFF, YOU WILL THEN SELECT WHICH BALL WAS BETTER AND BOTH PLAY YOUR NEXT SHOT FROM THERE. THIS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL ONE BALL HAS BEEN PUTTED.

THE COMPETITION WILL BE PLAYED OVER 9 HOLES, WITH THE WINNING PAIR EARNING A TROPHY AND MEDALS.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE LINK BELOW, TO SIGN UP YOUR ADULT AND STUDENT PAIR.

[HTTPS://FORMS.OFFICE.COM/E/PDQTAJJHQ3](https://forms.office.com/E/PDQTAJJHQ3)

IF YOU HAVE A STUDENT WHO DOES NOT HAVE AN ADULT TO PLAY WITH, PLEASE EMAIL MR MATHER



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Mount House students enjoying their RTSY workshop in spring half term





Weekly Menu

Week 1

MENUS IN THE WEEK AFTER HALF TERM

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread</p> <p>Pasta Bar Rich Beef bolognaise With spaghetti and crispy garlic bread</p> <p>Vegetarian option Pumpkin and crispy Kale risotto With Parmesan and cannellini beans Vegan Friendly</p> <p>Snack Option Baked Potatoes Or Fresh Pasta</p> <p>Served With Steamed broccoli Garden Salad</p> <p>Dessert Winter Bramley Apple Crumble With Double Cream</p>	<p>Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread</p> <p>Dish of the day BBQ Chicken Drumsticks With Garlic and Parsley Rice</p> <p>Vegetarian Option Sundried tomato and Feta Deep Filled Quiche Vegan Friendly</p> <p>Snack Option Baked Potato with Various Fillings Or Fresh Pasta</p> <p>Served With Fresh Green Beans Roasted fennel cauliflower</p> <p>Dessert Banana and cinnamon Cake</p>	<p>Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread</p> <p>Dish of the day Mount House Hot Dog With Fried onions and a Mustard Mayo</p> <p>Vegetarian Option Chinese Stir-fry with Quorn Garlic, soy and Vegetable Noodles Vegan Friendly</p> <p>Snack Option Baked Potatoes Or Fresh Pasta</p> <p>Served With Spiced Roasted Carrots Fennel coleslaw Paprika sweetcorn</p> <p>Dessert Mount House 3 Berry Mess</p>	<p>Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread</p> <p>PUPILS Choice Mexican chicken Fajitas With Guacamole, sour cream, and fresh salsa</p> <p>VEGETARIAN OPTION Mexican Fresh Vegetable Fajitas With Kidney Beans, Guacamole, sour cream and fresh Salsa</p> <p>SNACK OPTION Baked Potatoes Or Fresh Pasta</p> <p>Served with Steamed Rice Roasted Aubergine and Courgettes Carrots</p> <p>Dessert Chocolate Mousse</p>	<p>Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread</p> <p>Dish of the day Breaded cod With Tartar sauce Or Salmon and dill fish cakes with tartar sauce and Lemon</p> <p>Vegetarian Option Tandoori Quorn and Vegetable Indian Wrap</p> <p>Snack Option Jacket Potatoes Or Fresh Pasta</p> <p>Served With Crispy Potato Wedges Garden Peas Crunchy Salad</p> <p>Dessert Carrot cake with cream cheese frosting</p>

