



19<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of the Autumn term, I write to express my thanks for your continued support in all we do at school.

We have had a full calendar of events this half term. Opportunities to broaden students curriculum experience through trips continues to grow. It was a busy term with a total of 24 trips or visits going to many different venues. There were trips to see live music, theatre, and art as well as ones to support students development, such as the one to the Ben Kinsella Trust and the sessions with the Horses Trust. Pupils were also given the opportunity to inspire their wider world engagement at the Model UN, as well as STEM visits to experience how AI can aid design.

### **Sporting Events**

By far, the highest number of trips were run by the PE department, with 53 fixtures this term. This generated many successes, including those for the netball, basketball, table tennis, girls football and badminton teams. We celebrated with a successful Sports Awards evening and the distribution of 13 Borough championship trophies. These were presented by ex-Middlesex and England cricketer Angus Fraser. Thanks to those of you able to attend our celebrations, an event which truly reflected our character virtue of Teamwork. Individual Sports Performer of the Year Awards were presented to Jasmin and Ved in Year 10. Jasmin won the award for her performances in Netball, Football and Athletics, where she was pivotal to the success of not only her own age group, but also the age group above. Ved was male Sports Performer of the Year for his contributions, as captain, to our U15 Cricket team as he led them to borough success and some notable scalps in the Middlesex competition.

Boys football: all teams safely went through to the quarter finals. Our U15s progressed to the third round of the Middlesex Competition, albeit they were unlucky to be beaten by Chiswick.

Girls football: some outstanding results and performances, included a win over NLCS.

Girls netball: our students were twice borough champions already having won the U16 and Year 7 tournaments. Whilst our Year 8 and Year 9 teams progressed to the semi-finals from their leagues.

Girls badminton and Volleyball: the inaugural tournaments for these events were held this term and we finished at a respectable fourth place in Badminton and we won the Volleyball.

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Boys badminton, volleyball and table tennis: the boys are through to the finals in all competitions held so far, winning the preliminary rounds in a number of age groups.

Boys basketball – U13 through to the semi-finals, U14, U15 and U16 in the quarter-final draws after the group stages.

### **Charity**

The charity events held this year have been phenomenal and we started the last half term with staff wearing pink to raise money for Breast Cancer Research.

Charity work continued with Children in Need 2023. Students sold Pudsey Bear props and donuts. Staff supported the event by wearing an item of spotted clothing.

Macmillan Coffee Morning was celebrated by staff who made home-made cakes to sell, raising a grand total of £171.

In collaboration with The Colindale Foodbank, we held a Staff Christmas Jumper Day and proceeds for this were donated to the food bank. Different student leadership groups were responsible for organising the Food Bank collection. Our work for charity reflects another of our character virtues; 'Compassion' which our students and staff demonstrate on a daily basis, and which has formed the focus of awards issued to individual students during the celebration assemblies this term.

Thank you for the support you have given to our charity events this term.

### **Rewards**

In creating the right culture, we are recognising student achievements across the school. To date, over 150 students have received letters home, congratulating them on their achievements in school. The 150 students represent the top 10% in each year group, who have been awarded the most achievement points in the first half term. During the ACE walks, (Achievement, Character, and Engagement), staff nominate the students at their best in lessons, and put them forward for nominations for weekly ACE Awards. It is great to see so many students nominated each week. From the nominations, two student's names are drawn at random each week and awarded an Amazon Voucher each. I have very much enjoyed meeting the students to award the voucher and hear from them about their learning experiences.

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### Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG)

We have a nationally recognised excellence careers programme that is embedded in our offer from Year 7 to Year 13. This half term our big careers event on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 for Year 10 students proved successful from the complementary feedback students gave. This was held in our Learning Resources Centre.

In November, Year 10 were able to have mock interviews with an employer. 221 students provided feedback that was overwhelmingly positive. It was great to see and hear the students talking about their experience. 38 external visitors attended the event, and all were extremely complimentary about how respectful the students were and how welcome the school made them feel. The company representatives present were very complimentary about our student's attitude to work, commitment to their studies and confidence in being interviewed.

### Year 11 and 13 Practice Exams

Year 11 and Year 13 have completed the practice exams in time for a rest over Christmas before they apply themselves once again to their studies. Year 11 have had the opportunity to taste how life might be in Sixth Form or College and most have realised how close they are now to those final exams.

### Policies

A quick reference to our school policies can be found here: [Behaviour Policy](#) [Mobile Phone Policy](#) [Uniform Policy](#) These policies are available on our school website too.

### Student Wellbeing During the Christmas Holidays

We understand that young people may need to access some support for their wellbeing and there are a number of organisations signposted on our school website [here](#). In particular we would like to draw your attention to [Kooth](#), which is a free, safe, and anonymous online mental health service commissioned across the UK by the NHS, Local Authorities and Charities to provide free online mental health support. If you are worried about your child and would like further support, please contact your Pastoral Team when we return in January.

### Vaping

Vaping seems to be an increasing problem amongst young people nationally and sadly we have noticed that trend at Park High, most worryingly amongst some of the younger children. As parents are probably aware, the legal minimum age to purchase vapes is 18. Unfortunately, we have become aware that some shops are willing to sell vapes to younger children. The Safer Schools Officers have been made aware. The BBC have picked up on this current social problem and this article on the BBC website will provide you with more information:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-62052286>

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School reopens to students on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024. In the event that we have severe weather conditions in the new year, please check the school website for all the details relevant to your child's year group. We have taken into consideration the temperatures in school this month and students have, where appropriate, been wearing coats. This will continue to be reviewed, the school has had a new heating system installed throughout, reducing the need for coats to be worn once indoors.

I wish all our families a restful, peaceful holiday season and a happy, healthy new year.

Stay safe and well.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Colette O'Dwyer  
**(Headteacher)**

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