



9 February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is hard to believe that as half term arrives, we have reached the halfway point in the academic year. I have great pleasure in sharing our weekly Student Bulletin [here](#) where you will find more details on our various activities this week.

It has been an action packed few weeks with Years 11, 12 and 13 all having their parents' evenings since January. Thank you for your attendance at these meetings, our students tell us that they value the opportunity to talk with their subject teachers with their parents. Thank you also for encouraging your child's attendance at school, the government is concerned about school attendance nationally, it is pleasing to note that our attendance remains high and that our students tell us they want to be in school.

It may have been a short half term, but we have packed a lot of events into it. Many of you will have enjoyed our school performance 'The Little Shop of Horrors', another successful performance by our Performing Arts department and our multi-talented students! Thanks to your support we were sold out for all performances. I look forward to announcing our next production.

In other events, Year 10 were involved in in Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge, a great opportunity for our students to learn the skills of public speaking.

Year 11 artists and photographers enjoyed a trip to the Tate Modern Gallery to help them complete research for their final exam pieces. Many of the students expressed their intention to return with family over half term they enjoyed it so much.

Currently our Sixth Form Politics students are in New York and Washington where they will have the opportunity to visit an American university, as well as a wide range of other cultural experiences. We wish them a safe trip and look forward to hearing of their experiences when they return home.

Our Year 11 students also had the opportunity to take part in a workshop lead by an examiner in Philosophy and Ethics. Students appreciated the opportunity to learn how to develop fuller answers to questions as well as how to use their time effectively in the summer examination.

National Apprenticeship Week this week, provides an opportunity for all students to learn about and explore apprenticeships. It aims to raise awareness of the many benefits apprenticeships can offer. During the week there have been presentations, competitions, and a chance to hear apprentices' stories. Apprenticeships are a pathway that can be studied after Year 11 and Year 13. They combine on the job training in an organisation and study for a qualification, whilst receiving a salary. Apprentices provide employers with an effective way of growing their skills base.

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Congratulations to our Year 13 students who have submitted their UCAS applications. Offers of places are already being received by our students to attend universities up and down the country as well as in London. This should be a good incentive to keep focussed on their studies to secure the university of their choice in August.

Our sporting success continue with our U14, U15 and U16 Basketball teams winning their quarterfinals in the Harrow Borough competitions. The U15 and U16 teams went on this week to compete in both finals, they were narrowly beaten with both teams giving sterling competition to teams with a longer history of the sport in Harrow, I am extremely proud of determination of both teams and have no doubt that we will soon claiming a Basketball trophy to add to our growing cache of sporting achievements.

### **Governor Recruitment**

The governing body is seeking two parents to join them. There is a time commitment: two evening meetings a term and the opportunity, one day a term, to be part of governor visits to see the work of the school. The Chair of Governors wrote to you before Christmas, and I attach her letter [here](#). If you have been thinking about it but just aren't sure, please simply send a note of enquiry via email to [g.kassir@parkhighstanmore.org.uk](mailto:g.kassir@parkhighstanmore.org.uk)

### **Policies**

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

### **Student Wellbeing During the 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 to school.

### **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>

School reopens to students on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. In the meantime, have a restful half term break.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Colette O'Dwyer  
**Headteacher**