Dear Parents / Carers
As we come towards the end of a rewarding and challenging term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for their ongoing support and to thank the staff who have worked incredibly hard as we continue to drive the Academy forward.

I was delighted to see that our school choir recently received commendation from the local MP for Harpenden, Mr Bim Afolani, who commented on how mature and talented our students were. He praised our students for their exemplary demeanour, indicating they were a credit to the school.

Continuing with good news, this week has seen our students rewarded for excellent behaviour, attendance and hard work with a series of certificates and prizes and even a fully paid trip to.............Gravity! Well done to all our winners and keep up the hard work, further information can be viewed in this newsletter.

In staffing news, we say goodbye to Mrs West, Humanities teacher and Miss Scott, Head of Maths. Both have served the school well and we wish them every success in their new roles. We welcome the following staff who join us in January;

- Ms Stepney as teacher of English and whole school Literacy lead.
- Mr Caraca as teacher of Humanities
- Mr Dagnon as teacher of Modern Foreign Languages
- Mr Granby as Behaviour Mentor
- Mrs Lowe, Mrs Brennan and Ms Burnett as Teaching Assistants

We also congratulate Miss Hughes and Miss Palmer who move into cover supervisor roles.

At this time of year, it is wise to remind parents of the arrangements in place in the case of bad weather. If we ever decide to close (and we will try very hard not to) we will inform parents via text alert in addition to the school’s website and social media pages. Closures will also be notified via Three counties radio and the Central Bedfordshire website. Please do check that you have updated the school with your current email address and mobile phone numbers.

Can I remind all parents and carers that the Academy will close at 1pm on Friday 20\textsuperscript{th} December. We look forward to welcoming our students back on Monday January 6\textsuperscript{th} at 8.40am.

Wishing you all a wonderful and safe holiday

Mr S. White
Principal
Teaching and Learning

There have been a range of teaching and learning activities across the school this term. It has been great to see the students participating in a range of activities in their lessons. At Key Stage 3 students have participated in practical lessons in food cooking a range of food including pizza and biscuits! Year 8 have enjoyed involving themselves doing exercise using Just Dance sessions in PE lessons. At Key Stage 4 it has been lovely to see students preparing for their GCSE exams. In English year 10 students have been studying ‘A Christmas Carol’ for English Literature and learning about the characters and context of the text. Year 11 students have had masterclasses and intervention sessions in Science, History and Maths delivered by Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE’S) to provide students top tips from outstanding teachers to help them prepare for their exams.

Year 11 Mock Results Assembly

Year 11 students sat formal mock exams across their subjects in November and received their results in assembly. Teachers used past papers and mark schemes set by the exam boards. The students were given their results in an envelope as they would experience in results day in August. Students have been provided feedback from their teachers on their next steps for learning.

Year 11 Revision Sessions

Please encourage your child to attend the revision sessions each week. The timetable for the sessions for each subject is as follows: Mrs Sidhu—Vice Principal

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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Year 11 GCSE Art Exam</td>
<td>Week beginning 20th January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performing Art</td>
<td>Year 11 Drama Exam</td>
<td>23rd March</td>
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<td>Year 11 PPE Exams (mocks)</td>
<td>All Subjects</td>
<td>Week Beginning 9th March</td>
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General Information

**Year 11 GCSE Revision Timetable**

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<th>Monday</th>
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<td>Lunchtime</td>
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<td>Health &amp; Social</td>
<td>Drama</td>
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<td>After School</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Catering</td>
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<td>History</td>
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*Every session is another step towards success!*
The choir have been busy recently entertaining the masses, we visited Batford Memorial Hall and sang to their guests, the children were simply fantastic, they charmed the pensioners with their beautiful voices, and charismatic conversations. The 12 days of Christmas went down particularly well as the children moved around the venue singing their own parts, encouraging the audience to participate. The MP for Harpenden and Hitchin, Bim Afolami was particularly taken with the children and told me that the children were some of the politest he had met.

The choir’s next adventure was to perform at Bedfordshire Age Concern’s Christmas party, we were a very small choir as most of key stage 4 were on another trip, however once again they did the school proud and affirmed the importance of recognising the amazing children we have at the school.

On Monday the 16th December we were invited to Luton Airport as part of their Chaplaincy event, the choir performed for two hours in which passengers donated money to Macmillan, this is the second year we have been part of this event and have already been asked back for next year!
Pensioner’s Christmas Party

Miss Sheppard and a team of year ten students, with the choir, and some year 11 drama students entertained the audience.

The party was a huge success, our guests enjoyed their food, and loved the presents that were given to them by our students. The Mayor of Houghton Regis was our honoured guest, he was delighted with the afternoon and once again I was told how wonderful our young people are. On a Personal note I want to thank of all the children who have been involved in the four events over the last two weeks, the children were a credit to the school, and I am immensely proud of them.

Miss Bowen - Assistant Principal
11th December 2019

Dear Mr White,

On behalf of the Committee and Trustees of Batford Memorial Hall, I am writing to express my sincere thanks to Miss Bowen and the students for their brilliant contribution yesterday at our Pensioners Christmas Party.

The choir sang beautifully. During the lunch they actively assisted elderly and frail guests, ensuring that they had a great time. Their demeanour was exemplary and they are a credit to your school and Miss Bowen.

I have received many compliments from the guests about the students who continue to impress us all as ambassadors of Houghton Regis Academy.

Many of the guests at the party took it upon themselves to speak to Miss Bowen personally about her obvious commitment to the students and wished there were more teachers like her locally.

Indeed the local MP for Harpenden, Mr Bim Afolami (our guest of honour), made a point of speaking to all the students, and told them how thrilled he was to have witnessed a group of enthusiastic young people sharing their musical talents. He spoke at length with Miss Bowen and expressed his delight with both her commitment, and the students’ contribution, which enriched the afternoon for everyone there.

These young people demonstrated maturity beyond their years and should be commended.

Please pass on our thanks and congratulations to all the students and to Miss Bowen whose commitment to the students is clear for all to see.

yours sincerely,

The Chair, Trustees and Committee of Batford Memorial Hall

Batford Memorial Hall
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This year we have focused on the positive areas within the school, we have awarded children for attendance, as well as subject awards. Across all of the awards that we have been presenting around 70% of each year group received a prize!

**Student of the week**

As part of our new rewards scheme, that was introduced this half term, we brought in the Student of the Week award in recognition of the continual efforts and hard work our students put in on a day to day basis. Staff, each week, nominated who they felt deserves the recognition and the winners are invited by the Principal to enjoy a Hot Chocolate and a cookie every Friday morning. This has had an amazing impact on the learning environment that we are trying to create in school and the students really feel proud to be selected by their teachers for their hard work and commitment.

Miss Bowen - Assistant Principal
Leadership and Mathematical Problem with Santander Bank UK

On the 17th of December, 24 Key stage 4 students had the opportunity to experience a day at Santander Bank UK Ltd in Milton Keynes. The day was part of The LEAD Curriculum programme which builds leadership skills among young people by investing in their soft-skills for the world of work; encouraging community action and a sense of purpose. The students had to solve a real life problem and come up with solutions — this task did not only enhance the student confidence and communication skills but also allowed them to gain invaluable teamworking, leadership and problem solving skills. Throughout the day the students were mentored in teams by at least 12 bankers from different sections of Santander. The students had a fantastic time, congratulations to team "The Lads" who won the overall Financial Crime challenge and £120 Nando’s vouchers between them, a massive well done to all the students, the staff at Santander only had praises for them all. Mrs Williams—Maths
Wrest Park Art Trip Year 11

Students are currently working on their coursework project ‘Growth and Decay’. To support students’ ideas a visit to ‘Wrest Park’ in Silsoe in the summer took place. Students sketched drawings and took photographs in and around the house and gardens, a well known stately home owned by English Heritage. This gave students a wealth of ideas for their project and over the summer holiday students were asked to complete a number of tasks in their sketchbooks from the trip linked to their project. The coursework they are currently undertaking is 60% of their final mark. Miss Dilley - Art
A group of students went to Paris in France to partake in a cultural and Modern Foreign Language experience. They were there for four days and took part in many exciting and brilliant activities and experiences. The first day was really taken up with travelling on the coach from the school to the accommodation in Paris. For some of the students this was the first time they had been abroad, and the ferry crossing was the first of many new experiences for them. The second day was spent in Disney Land. This was incredible and the students had a brilliant time represented the school excellently. Many rides were concord, much food and drink was consumed and many soft toys were purchased. It was an amazing experience that both staff and student enjoyed. The third and final full day in Paris was a full, but exhilarating day. The students visited the Louvre art gallery, the home of the ‘Mona Lisa’, in the morning. Elevated to the top of the ‘Tour Montparnasse’. From the observation deck a vast panoramic view of the great city of Paris can be seen. It was a brilliantly crisp and clear day and the views were spectacular.

The day was brought to a thrilling end with a boat trip up the river ‘Seine’. Many stunning monuments and building were seen on the cruise including the ‘Eiffel Tower’, ‘Notre-Dame’ which is still being refurbished after the devastating fire, and many of the famous bridges that cross the Seine. On the return journey the students watched the sun set below the skyline of the famous city. On the last day, despite the long coach journey and ferry crossing home, a last visit was squeezed in. Before Paris was departed the student visited ‘Montmartre’ and all managed to climb the hundreds of steps to see the ‘Sacre-Coeur Basilica’, the famous Roman Catholic church at the top of the hill. The students behaved themselves and represented the school brilliantly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who came to Paris with me. With particular thanks to Mrs Pinelli, Miss Sheppard and Miss Yates, without whom I would have never managed.

Mr Brockett - Design and Technology
15 Year 11’s attended the LETS Apprenticeships and Career Fair to discover possible career paths for them when they leave HRA led by Mrs Dilley.
University of Bedfordshire

Stem Arts and Media
Day for Year 8 at the
University of Bedfordshire
HRA participated in National Christmas Jumper Day raising money for the local charity Dunstable Food Bank. It was amazing to see the students embracing the festive season by wearing their Jumpers with pride. There were baubles, Christmas trees and even Santa’s elves on parade. In addition to this we also had a festive bake sale. Collectively we raised £100 for the local charity.

**Art Department**  Key Stage 4 Art Workshop at University of Bedfordshire.