



Newstead News

Friday 17 November 2023

Literacy Support Update

I am delighted to be writing the newsletter this week. I am the English teacher who runs the literacy support at Newstead, which offers targeted support for students who struggle with any aspect of their literacy skills. Having excellent literacy skills matters now - without a high level of literacy, students cannot access the curriculum. It is the key to unlocking all subjects as they all require subject specific vocabulary as well as a deep understanding of the English language which students can use confidently to communicate their knowledge. My role is to empower students so that if they are struggling with their reading, writing or verbal expression, I can help build their confidence so that they go away with the understanding that literacy is not something you either do or don't have – it is a set of skills that can be learned and mastered but it takes time.

This year, we have had the fantastic opportunity to trial Sparx Reader with Years 7 to 9. This is an online reading platform where students gain points for reading accurately and answering a range of questions on the texts they are reading. They are given a wide range of texts to choose from which help support their current reading level while also challenging them. Many of our students are going above and beyond the expected 30 minutes of reading a week and are now Gold Readers on Sparx, reading their own texts and demonstrating great independence in their learning. Students are flourishing on Sparx – Newstead are currently the top performing school in terms of completing their Sparx homework across all United Learning schools. I hope to see Newstead stay at the top every week and even more students cross the threshold into Gold Readership.

Literacy is essential to our teaching at Newstead – we embed it in everything we do. In form time, students engage in the reading programme each week, choosing from a selection of texts across the curriculum to explore with their form tutors. Reading is fundamental to excellence in literacy. However, according to the National Literacy Trust, fewer than 3 in 10 (28.0%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 said that they read daily in 2023. The Reading Agency, a UK charity, also reports that 'reading for pleasure is more important for children's cognitive development than their parents' level of education and is a more powerful factor in life achievement than socio-economic background'. At Newstead, we encourage students to read not only for academic benefit but above all for the fun of it, which will encourage more and more students to read beyond form time. Our library is central here and is a fantastic space for students to grow and nourish their love of books. Teachers regularly run clubs and writing competitions to inspire students and put their reading and writing skills to the test. I really enjoy running the Public Speaking Competition which takes place each year with students from Years 7 to 10 competing for the position of Public Speaking Champion. Reading, writing and speaking skills are all prized at the school, and we will continue to show students how important it is to become masters of each.

One of the questions I often receive from parents is 'how can I support my child in developing their literacy skills?' There are a range of practical steps you can take. One of the simplest is to encourage your child to read by talking

to them about the books they are reading. Asking questions which challenge them to think deeply about their reading can allow them to practise their skills in analysis and oracy. If they are not reading, ask them why. Maybe they prefer audio books? Maybe they need to explore different genres? Explore nonfiction as well as fiction – just talking about the news after listening to the radio is another great way to practise expressing opinions after reflecting on different viewpoints. Have they spoken to any friends or siblings for book recommendations? They may need to build on the concentration levels required to read – this is where Sparx comes in, as they can read for short periods and gradually build it up from there. These are only a few tips, but I hope they prove useful as a starting point.

Wishing you a restful weekend,

Rebecca Cottle

Literacy Support

Dates for your diary

Thursday 23 November Sixth Form Open Evening for current Newstead Wood students

Thursday 30 November Year 13 Parents'/Carers' Evening

Tuesday 5 December Year 8 Curriculum Evening – Studying for Success in Year 8

Thursday 7 December Christmas Concert

Wednesday 13 December Christmas Dinner

Friday 15 December Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Fair

21 December-2 January Christmas Holiday

Wednesday 3 January CPD Day – School Closed to Students

4-19 January Year 13 Mock Exams

Wednesday 10 January Learning Together Forum

Thursday 11 January Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Evening

Tuesday 16 January Year 9 GCSE Options Evening

Wednesday 24 January School Photos

24-26 January School Production – Oliver!

Wednesday 31 January Year 9 Parents'/Carers' Evening

Term dates for 2023-4 and 2024-5 can be found on our website [here](#).



guest
speaker



We have some fantastic speakers for you in our Autumn Term Guest Speaker Programme. These talks are open to students and parents. To book a place, click on the name of the speaker.

Monday, 20 November, 4pm:

[Farooq Ullah](#), Senior Sustainability Development Advisor at the International Institute for Sustainable Development: *Sustainable Solutions*

Farooq Ullah is a senior Sustainability Development Advisor at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, having previously led on sustainable development for The B Team, and having held the positions of Executive Director for the Centre for Development Results and Chair of the Engagement Committee for Future Earth, among other significant roles in this area.

For anyone interested in the history of sustainable development and contemporary sustainability challenges, this talk is essential!

Wednesday, 29 November, 4pm:

[Zara Loughridge](#), Senior Economist at Oxford Economics: *Economics improving lives*

Zara Loughridge is a Senior Economist in Oxford Economics' Economic Impact Consulting team. Recently, she has worked with Amazon and the US Department of Labor. Prior to joining Oxford Economics, Zara spent three years as a Government Economist, working at the Department for Education and Department for Work and Pensions. She is passionate about economics that is accessible and improves lives. For anyone studying Economics or looking to study it in the future, this is a must!

Wednesday, 13 December, 4pm:

[Dr Emily Emmott](#), Lecturer and Teaching Fellow in Biological Anthropology, University College London: *Adolescent Sociality across Cultures & Academic Career Advice*

Dr Emily Emmott is a Human Behavioural Ecologist at one of the leading universities in the world, who studies how the social and physical environment influences human development and behaviour. Her academic interests focus on child-rearing systems and their implications for health and wellbeing. She will be talking on her research into fascinating areas of biological anthropology, as well as giving academic career advice. Anyone interested in attending a top university, establishing an academic career, or who is interested in Dr Emmott's areas of study should absolutely attend!

Around Newstead

Year 7 Singing Showcase

We enjoyed a fantastic evening of joyful music-making yesterday at the Year 7 Singing Showcase. Year 7 did an amazing job of performing to a packed hall of parents. Well done to everyone who took part!



Chess Club

The new president of the chess club Benjamin E (12P) has revitalised the club, and we are looking forward to seeing it grow it even more with new chess sets. Chess Club is in room 603 every Wednesday lunchtime.



Sparks Update

Well done to this week's top 10 Sparx Readers:

- Muna O in 8G
- Hannah F R in 8P
- Aleeza R in 9W
- Zainab R in 8F
- Shanuja J in 7W
- Lilly-Rose S in 9N
- April B-T in 7F
- Kinjal K in 7G
- Shivya M in 7F
- Sia B in 8W

KS3 English Club – Riddle Competition Results

Champion Riddle Solver – Rebecca, 8P

Champion Riddler – Iris, 7N

The students, in the KS3 club, voted these as their favourite riddles - can you solve them?

1. A man gets ready for bed at 9:45 pm. He makes himself a drink, then turns off the TV and the lights. The night was windy and there was a major storm. The next day he discovers he was the cause of seven deaths. How is this possible?
2. Only 20 people jump into an empty pool filled with water and nothing else. The lifeguard counts 24 heads. How is this possible?
3. A father and son were in a car accident. They are taken by ambulance to different hospitals. The son needs immediate surgery. In the operating room, the surgeon comes in and looks at the little boy and says I can't operate on him he is my son. Who is the surgeon?

Medical, University and Finance Society

Yesterday the Medical, University and Finance Society welcomed Lisa Saldanha and Naomi Seekings from Cue+Empathy to share some of their knowledge about medicine. They revealed to the society members 'what it takes to become a doctor?', as well as sharing a 'day in the life' of a doctor. Then in a workshop after school, they gave students the opportunity to take part in mock medicine interviews, increasing their understanding of what is required in this process.



Sixth Form Debating Society

Not to be outdone by the younger years, the sixth formers now have their own Debating Society!



Partnership with Groupe Scolaire Essalam

During her recent visit to our sister school, Essalam School in Oujda, Morocco, Mrs Bongout presented our vision and curriculum, participated in friendly learning walks, and reviewed books and students' work. She also conducted a quick risk assessment of various places in the city that we could take our students to visit, such as the local mosque, the mosque Hassan II in Casablanca (please see attached pictures), the local museum, the souk, the theatre, hotels, restaurants, and the aqua park.

Mrs Bongout will invite our Year 7 French students to participate in upcoming projects with Essalam and we hope to arrange for students to visit them in 2025.



Politics Conference



Sixth Form students had a fascinating afternoon attending Oxford High School's online politics conference this week. Phenomenal speakers made for a really insightful experience for our students.

HAYES COMMUNITY FOODBANK'S REQUEST FOR ADVENT CALENDARS

If you would like to put a smile on the faces of the children that are supported by this food bank, please bring an advent calendar into the main school office by Thursday 23rd November.



Many thanks in advance for your donation

Achievement Points

Here are this week's Achievement Point totals. Congratulations to the following students and tutor groups.

 House Totals for the Week 		
Phoenix		239
Griffin		219
Falcon		195
Swift		163
Nightingale		159
Wren		115
Top Tutor Groups of the Week		
Year 7: 7G Year 8: 8F Year 9: 9P Year 10: 10G		
Top Students of the Week		
★ Year 7 ★		
Elizabeth B 7P	Siddhi I 7W	Tara G 7G
Ann F 7P	Hannah D 7W	
★ Year 8 ★		
Athishayaa I 8F	Ming Hui L 8P	Zyena H 8F
Ashna S 8F	Olivia D 8F	Tammy A 8F
	Zofia G 8G	
★ Year 9 ★		
Amelia S 9P	Olivia T 9P	
★ Year 10 ★		
Pavela D 10F	Tanisha A 10N	Sophia W 10G
Isabelle E 10P	Lauren A 10F	Ivanya G 10S
	Holly M 10G	



Languages News

Word of the week

Answers to this week's words of the week:

French: des viennoiseries - pastries

German: unentschieden - undecided

Spanish: floristería - florist

Chinese: 买东西 - shopping

Japanese: 難しい (むずかしい) - difficult

Latin: fidelis - faithful, loyal

The words for next week are:

French: le verre

German: die Mannschaft

Spanish: lirio

Chinese: 听音乐

Japanese: わるい

Latin: felix



Newstead Wood School Parents' Association News



The NWPA would like to update that £1,360 was raised from the Year 7 & 8 Disco last Thursday. It was a huge success and very well received by our students. Parents sent in their thanks and appreciation and we would like to thank our Year 7 and 8 students and parents for their support. Thank you to Mr Lewis for giving up his time to support us and to all the volunteers that were involved. Thank you to NW office staff for your assistance as well. Watch this space for more exciting events from NWPA.

We're currently looking for **helpers for the uniform sale** on Tuesday 5th December at 3.15pm. If you can't make that but would like to do some sorting before then, please get in touch and just suggest a date and time that suits you.

We are also looking for **volunteers to organise a quiz** in Feb/March, and to help with the **familiarisation tests** on some May/June Saturdays next year.

If you have any questions about the Parents' Association, would like to know how to join your class parents' WhatsApp group, need information on uniform, or would like to volunteer to join one of our teams, **please get in touch** at pa@newsteadwood.co.uk Thanks!

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50 Stikins (White Labels) - 5000	£7.20
100 Stikins (White Labels) - 10000	£14.40
100 Stikins (White Labels) - 10000	£14.40

The PA are excited to announce that we have teamed up with Stikins to offer parents the opportunity to purchase quality labels for your children's school uniform, whilst earning the school commission at the same time! This money can then be used to continue to help purchase some of the fantastic resources that benefit our children's learning.

As we all know, lost property is a problem in all schools and I am sure we are all familiar with our child, at some point, coming home from school with a missing item. As parents, we are aware that time is precious, which is why we think these labels are such a great idea; they simply stick onto the wash-care label of clothing. They can even be used in shoes! Naming of clothing is a school requirement and we are hoping that with this opportunity we can start to eliminate some of parents' frustrations that surround these issues.

How it works:

Each order placed quoting the school reference number **14318** will provide the school with 30% commission. If you use the link on our school website's [Uniform Page](#) to order your labels online, the number is filled in automatically for you!



Revision books, uniform, PE kit: for sale from the PA Hut on

Tuesday 5 December 3.15 - 4pm

Volunteers are needed from 2.30pm to 4pm

Great condition... great prices... great for the environment...and great for the school!

Jumpers (£3 each/2 for £5), 6th form blazers (£5), Skirts (£3/£4), shirts (£2 each, 3 for £5), trainers and astroturfs (£3), umbrellas (£1) and other items are also available, plus textbooks and revision books (£2 each, 3 for £5) in many subjects. Payment by cash or card.

VOLUNTEERS to help for an hour or so occasionally would be very welcome, please email pauniform@newsteadwood.co.uk for more information. No special skills needed, all training given!

DONATIONS of uniform, PE kit, coats etc. all welcome and can be left at reception anytime. Please remove or cross out names if possible and label the bag 'donations'. Thanks very much for all the donations we've had so far; keep them coming!

Thank you for your support as we help the school, help the environment and help you with your shopping!



Cadets on Parade.

Aspire to be different. Join the Volunteer Police Cadets at Bromley. Meet with like minded young people with shared interests. Have fun, learn, develop and help in your local community. Check out "met volunteer police Cadets, part 1" on YOUTUBE for a 2 min video.

Weekly meetings

Our current Units are as follows:

Senior Cadets

Orpington - Mondays 6.45pm to 8:45pm

Hayes - Wednesday 7pm to 9pm

Junior Cadets

Penge - Tuesdays 4:30-5:30pm

Mottingham - Tuesday 4:30-5:30pm

Bickley - Wednesday 3:30pm-4:30pm

Hayes - Wednesdays 4:45pm-5:45pm

Orpington - Thursdays 4:30-5:30pm

The units meet during **term time only**.



Cadets Completing Gold DofE Expedition in Snowdonia



Greater Youth, Greater London



The Annual Cadet Competition

What is the Volunteer Police Cadets?

We are a Volunteer Uniform Youth group that is supported and run by the Metropolitan Police. We aim to have 160 Volunteer Police Cadets in Bromley by 2021.

Junior Police Cadets

Junior Police Cadets are from School Years 6-8. It was developed after recognising a vulnerability gap between primary and secondary school. It aims to teach young people life skills and social responsibility in a fun and engaging environment. These units are led by Senior Cadets supported by VPC staff, allowing them to be positive role models to their younger peers.

Senior Police Cadets

The Cadets meet once a week and often perform duties in support of local policing. They also take part in large public events like Trooping the Colour, Remembrance Day Parades, London Marathon and Notting Hill Carnival. There are also various cadet competitions held throughout the year where units compete against each other. All of these activities can be used to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Bromley Borough Weekly Meetings

At weekly meetings Cadets have a variety of inputs on aspects of policing and citizenship. They also take part in sporting activities and are taught Drill and Marching.

★ Subs (Seniors Cadets only)

£30 per term. 3 cadet terms a year.

★ Uniform:

Free, after a 10 Week Probation period. Senior Cadets (Yr9 and above) will need black boots.

★ Opportunity

Meet new people from your borough. Camps and trips away. Learn new skills.

Trips and Camps

During School holidays many of our Cadets go on camps and trips. Some of these are day events like trips to visit the crime museum or take part in white water rafting, some are week long camps, taking part in many different outdoor activities like Mountain biking, Ghyll Scrambling, Climbing and caving. We also offer leadership training days.



Cadets take part in competitions including First Aid

Volunteering

Cadets are expected to volunteer some of their time to help out in their local community giving Crime prevention advice, stewarding local events and test purchasing of Alcohol, fireworks and knives. They will also get the opportunity to join officers and help with the policing of big events such as London Marathon, Ride London, Trooping the Colour and the Notting Hill Carnival.

Competitions

There are a number competitions across the Year where cadet units compete against each other

★ The Annual Cadet Competition:

Concentrating on police style scenarios

★ Iron Team:

A bit like I'm a celebrity get me out of here

★ Paintball:

Staff and Cadets against other boroughs

★ Avon Tyrell:

Problem Solving, Team work and Physical Challenge

Contact Us

Name: **PC Coleman Sullivan**

Telephone: **020 8284 8787**

Email:

SNMailbox.VPCBromley@met.police.uk

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MICROTRANSACTIONS

Microtransactions (often abbreviated as "MTX") are digital purchases made within an app or game to unlock extra features or additional content such as new levels. A popular sub-set of these are loot boxes, which contain a selection (usually random) of virtual items: from character skins to game-changing equipment like better weapons. Microtransactions (and loot boxes in particular) are now widespread in apps and games, but concerns persist that they normalise gambling and can foster addictive behaviours – especially among younger players.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GATEWAY TO GAMBLING?

Microtransactions have been criticised for promoting gambling-adjacent behaviour in children. Research has also suggested that exposure to the loot box system could affect the likelihood of a young person suffering gambling harms later in life: children who purchased or used loot boxes in the last 12 months were found to be more likely to have gambled during the same period, as well.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Microtransactions (and loot boxes especially) could lead to young people displaying compulsive behaviours. Loot boxes are designed to be addictive, and the sought-after prizes they contain are dispensed at random. This means that young gamers might not get what they want straight away, causing them to spend more money as well as additional time gaming.

PAYING TO WIN

In many popular games (the FIFA series being a notable example), microtransactions make it far easier to succeed – which is a concern because children can often find it difficult to keep track of their spending. Once a child starts making in-game purchases, they may continue buying to keep up with their friends and other players – sometimes without recognising the mounting real-world cost.

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT

DATA COLLECTION

To allow a young person to complete microtransactions, many apps and game developers collect personal data such as their name, address, email, geolocation information, photos, payment details and so on. Even if this data remains secure (which is by no means guaranteed), there's always the chance that it will be used – and possibly sold on to third parties – for marketing purposes.

AFFECTING DAILY ROUTINE

Online games tend to revolve around repeated loops of activity that can affect purchasing decisions and potentially influence children's spending patterns. This could lead to your child not only handing over more money but also adjusting their daily routine to match the game's schedule – potentially impacting more important elements of their day, such as homework and family time.

SATELLITE SPENDING

If you've linked a payment method like a debit card or a PayPal account to your child's game or app, it's wise to keep a close eye on their microtransactions to ensure they aren't racking up a large bill. Letting a child have access to your card (if they're still too young to have their own) or other means of payment could also lead to them spending beyond the apps and games they normally use.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's important to have a serviceable idea of whether the games your child plays use the loot box system (even if it goes by a different name) or include the option of buying items, equipment and so forth. If so, it's crucial to help your child understand that this costs actual money, and that they shouldn't feel pressured into making any purchases.

CHAT ABOUT 'CHANCE'

It may help to explain to your child that many microtransactions involve an element of chance: they could pay money and still not get what they want in return. Emphasise that – while not usually costing much individually – these in-app and in-game purchases can soon add up. Talk to your child about how spending their money in a game or app means they have less to use in the real world.

(GIFT) CARDS ON THE TABLE

Investing in an in-game currency gift card can be a useful way of helping your child get to grips with budgeting. If you buy, say, a £10 V-bucks Fortnite gift card, monitor how long it takes them to spend it. When they come to you asking for more, you could make it the starting point for a conversation about how quickly that money went and how they could earn their next gift card.

STOP SPENDING AT SOURCE

You might decide that the wisest strategy is to remove the potential for spending money on microtransactions. If so, most games, apps and devices have options in their settings to help you manage what your child can spend – or to disable that function altogether, preventing them from buying additional items for their games or boosted functionality for certain apps.

WATCH FOR THE SIGNS

If you're worried that your child's passion for a particular game or app may tempt them into habitual spending on microtransactions, it's important to remember the indicators of addictive behaviour. Irritability, a lack of concentration and prioritising recreational screen time ahead of homework or mealtimes could all be signs that you need to have a conversation about a more balanced routine.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid *The Inquirer*, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



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Attendance reporting attendance@newsteadwood.co.uk

Need to contact a subject? Email the subject name e.g. science@newsteadwood.co.uk

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Thank you to all of you who are supporting the school through a monthly donation – if you still haven't got round to setting this up, forms can be [found here](#). And thank you to all of you who are supporting the school library through our [Amazon Wishlist](#).