

Links Journal

Spring Term 2023



Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support over the recent months.

The Spring Term has proved to be a very productive one. I am pleased to announce that we successfully installed vehicle charging points across all of our sites and solar panels on our Hatfield and Hixberry Lane sites. Whilst this project was started in an attempt to help the Trust to become carbon neutral, I will not pretend that the savings that we have made with our electricity bills have been useful especially with the rising costs across many areas.

On Friday 31 March 2023 Daisy Cooper MP for St Albans is coming into school to open our 'Wonder Room'. This room contains many items of interest that our parents would recognise from the pre-digital age.

The school will re-open on Wednesday 19 April 2023, Monday the 17 April 2023 being an Inset Day and Tuesday 18 April 2023 being a Student Parent Review Day. I trust by now your son/daughter's form tutor will have been in contact to arrange a meeting on that day.

Advanced Notice:

Many of you will be aware that King Charles III's Coronation is scheduled to take place on Saturday 6 May 2023 and the Government has announced an additional Bank Holiday on Monday 8 May 2023. This means that school will be closed on both Monday 1 May 2023 for the first Spring Bank Holiday and Monday 8 May 2023 for the Coronation celebration.

The Year 11 Leavers Celebration will take place on Friday 12 May 2023 at 11.30 am when Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will finish at 12.30 pm with the BBQ for Year 11 and their parents taking place in the afternoon.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy and quiet Easter/Spring break. I look forward to welcoming you all back at the start of the Summer Term.

Best wishes and kind regards.

David Allen, Headteacher

Links Academy welcomes comments from parents/carers and families about any aspect of school life.

Please contact us via our email admin@linksacademy.herts.sch.uk

www.linksacademy.herts.sch.uk to view Ofsted reports, key dates, journals and school information

School Calendar

Term Ends

Friday 31 March 2023

@ 12.30pm

Easter Break

3 April — 14 April 2023

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INSET DAY

Monday 17 April 2023

No Students in school

Student Parent Review Day

Tuesday 18 April 2023

Form Tutors will arrange a convenient time to meet with Parents & Students

Term Starts

Wednesday 19 April 2023

Half Term

29 May — 2 June 2023

**Happy Easter
Everyone**

Year 11's Creative Writing

Year 11 have been working hard on their creative writing skills. Developing their ability to set a scene and write to captivate the audience. This piece was developed from just the name of the story.

ABANDONED

In 1758 there was a big, beautiful, bright building that was a children's hospital that was a popular place for sick children, because of the staff and the bright colours. Every room has a theme, that was perfectly set for that room, there was a princess room, a jungle room and many more.

The numbers of patients started to drop for some reasons like deaths, leaving to places to get more provided help, but also that the staff numbers began to plummet as well, until there was no one left to take care of the building. It became abandoned, there was no living person there anymore. The abandoned building began to lose its sparkle, the floor lost their sparkle and shiny look, walls lost their colour slowly but surely. The flowers and the plants in the garden also died.

But in 1760 the residents near by started to hear noises coming from inside the building. They heard footsteps, screams and even strong rattles that where deeper than a human can go with their voice. The residents called the police, when they went to check it out they never came out of the building again. People that lived around the hospital all moved away because they were scared and didn't want their kids growing up next to the hospital, except one family who were convinced that they could get rid of whatever was in the abandoned hospital.

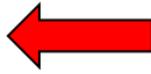
The family had a humongous secret, they were monster hunters. The next morning the family set off to the hospital to vanquish the monster. They entered the building with caution because it could appear out of anywhere and that's exactly what it did. The family ran into a problem this monster has some powers of its own, but they managed to get rid of the monster by trapping it in a metal box covered with chains and placed in a safe in the basement of their home.

Once the news got out that the hospital was safe people started to move back into the housing estate, but the hospital remained abandoned. The bodies of the police officers were recovered and laid to rest, but before they were the bodies were documented. The police were then told that it was a gas explosion, but only the family knew there had really been a monster.

Mrs Natalie Radmore—Teacher of English



Last term we asked what this structure could be, and the answer is our eagerly anticipated, new WONDER ROOM!



What is a Wonder Room?

The Wonder Room is a unique space within the school which is designed to feel like another world, where students always have somewhere exciting to visit. It contains all manner of interesting, unusual and wondrous objects: from old toys to optical illusions. From huge sea shells to mind-bending puzzles. From prehistoric fossils to inflatable Daleks.

It offers the opportunity to explore items of interest, rather than being asked to focus on something specific or to study it. It can promote discussions and stimulate the imagination.

Originally we were looking at developing a 'Cabinet of Curiosities', but Mr Allen encouraged us to think BIG and now we have a spacious outdoor facility!



Why Wonder?

We aim to harness children's inherent sense of wonder, to empower them to learn at their own pace and discover the wider, more mysterious world at their leisure. Academic research has demonstrated that the power of awe, wonder and curiosity can excite and engage even some of our most hard-to-reach children and young people.

We adults should remember that *'to the digital native, the analogue becomes wondrous'*. In other words, our children are growing up in a fast-paced world of rapidly developing technology and they may be unaware of all the fascinating gadgets which have preceded the tech which they take for granted.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Today's young people are used to immediate gratification – having everything instantly at their fingertips whenever they want it – and constant 24/7 communication. The effect this is having on their (and our) collective mental health is not generally a positive one.

So, we are reminding children that phones were not always carried in the pocket, but were actually huge, clunky things involving dialing and waiting - imagine that!



[Above] An IBM Hard Drive - 5 megabytes of data - being loaded onto a plane in 1956.

Calculators were once abacuses.
Computers were once enormous devices.
For example, computers from the 1950s were the size of a car, and the Apollo computers which ultimately put humans on the Moon were 32,600x slower than the clock in an i-phone 6.



[Right] Our clever student Mason, with the *Wonder Room* sign he designed and hand-crafted in Miss Heagren's Construction class. Next step: Affixing it to the building.

Our next steps are to open the room with an 'official' launch at the end of March, and we're hoping to invite some special guests to celebrate along with our students. As time goes on, we ideally aim for the students to take more control of the room and curate it themselves.

The range of wondrous items on display are entirely reliant upon donations and contributions. So far, a few of the teaching staff have stepped up and kindly loaned some of their personal possessions for the room.

So, if you have anything wondrous at home that you could offer to loan us, then please get in touch with me directly. We cannot take everything, but the criteria would be:

- It needs to be interesting /awesome / quirky / unusual / or just plain strange.
- It needs to be something which the young people can touch, handle or otherwise interact with if they choose to.
- It needs to be something that you can bear to part with temporarily, and without any heart-ache.

Help us to cultivate wonderment!

Mr Richard Boxer, Healthy Lifestyles Lead



Flowers around school



Just over a year ago we decided to do something about the lack of flowers and nice things that grew around the school.

We had some very old and unloved brick planters around the building that had definitely seen better days, so we decided to ask the students what they thought should happen to them. Some of our now Year 11's thought that they should be split between flowers and vegetables. So started some serious work!

Digging out the rubbish that had accumulated over the years from inside the planters was the first and hardest job. It was a bit like archaeology as some of the stuff left in them went back a long time!!! Followed by carrying in bag after bag of soil and filling up the planters! I am so glad that the boys were strong and willing as doing it myself would have been an impossible task!

Eventually we got around to planting them up and put a mixture of bulbs and shrubs in the planter nearest the Staffroom, where although it gets some sunshine, it is mainly in the shade. Then the larger planters near to Mr Baileys room were planted up with vegetables (mainly potatoes) and a mix of spring bulbs.



So far we have had some excellent results. The summer shrubs were outstanding! The dahlias had to be protected from the slug invasion by bran (which was eco-friendly but also slug friendly!) and then sadly, slug pellets, which left us with flowers and a slimy mess when the slugs attacked. The lavender bushes are fragrant even when they have no flowers and we often notice people walking past and rubbing the leaves to get the glorious, and calming, scent of lavender. The spring bulbs



have so far all come into bloom and are really making a difference to the general appearance of the areas we all pass daily. Many of our visitors have commented on the outstanding job the students have done and the difference it has made to what was a dull area. The veg patch, having delivered a large amount of well grown, cleaned and prepared chips to all of

those who contributed to their development, is now being readied for its next batch of summer veg – salads and new potatoes – that may even be ready for our celebration in May?!



Mrs Jane Heagren, Teacher of D&T

Y11 Careers and Apprenticeships



We have been busy this term with everything careers! The Department for Work and Pensions came into school to work with Year 11 on mock interviews. Even though it was a bit scary, Year 11 got a great insight into what an interview looks like and the types of questions they will be asked. They all found it very helpful and were given some great tips on how to impress at their next interviews.

We also had a visit from ASK to talk about apprenticeships. The students were informed on what apprenticeships are, the benefits they offer and what sort of apprenticeships are available to them.



The Spring term has also seen the beginning of **WoW (World of Work)** Wednesdays where the students have the opportunity to explore a job, the qualifications needed, the average wage and the responsibilities involved. Everyone at Links Academy is preparing for the world of work!



Mr Martin Broadbridge, Teacher of PE

A visit to Oaklands College

Mr Fuller and I took four Hospitality students to Oaklands College to see their catering and hospitality facilities. We were treated to a first-hand catering lesson on how to dismantle and prepare a whole lobster! We had a tour of the professional catering kitchen, complete with huge fryers and ovens all over. The lecturers talked to us about the courses that they offer, and the types of careers and achievements that they can lead to, they



currently have one former student from last year working in a Michelin star restaurant in London. The students were able to ask questions and really get a feel for the professional and adult environment they have at college.

We then stayed in their restaurant and had a delicious meal cooked by their professional chef.

A brilliant experience all around!

Mrs Stevie Abraham, Teacher of Food & Hospitality



British Science Week



This term we had our annual British Science Week. The theme being CONNECTIONS so we thought what better way to be connected than to have a whole school assembly, not in the hall but in the Science lab. We had been building up the expectations of the assembly all week so the pressure was on to deliver. And we did! We had eight different demonstrations to fit in the short time we had, from exploding and collapsing cans to elephant's tooth paste, from volcanos to snakes appearing from sand. Screaming jelly babies to the whoosh bottle but what made the whole experience worth it was setting fire to Mrs Trotman to which a student exclaimed "this is the best day of my life". Hmm, should I be worried?

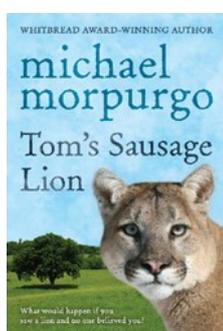


Mrs Gina Trotman, Teacher of Science

Cedars News

It has been a busy but exciting term at Cedars. This term, we have welcomed two new members to our class, who have been fantastic additions to our already incredible group. Children have been working hard in all areas of their learning, however we have also managed to find time to fit in a range of fun activities.

Throughout the week, children engage in a range of different lessons, completing lessons in the core subjects of Maths and English and a range of exciting topic lessons.



Each term, our English lessons are based around a book. This exposes children to a range of different texts and authors and focuses our writing around a theme. During the first half of the term, our lessons were based around Charlotte's Web. Children thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the different characters of the book and produced fantastic pieces of written work inspired by the book including a diary entry and newspaper report. During the second part of the term, lessons focused around Michael Morpurgo's book Tom's Sausage Lion. Once again, children engaged eagerly and offered their thoughts and perspectives around the text with insight. Children increased the quantity and quality of their written work producing texts such as friendly letters and play

scripts.



Children have demonstrated their rhythm and incredible musical ability during our music lessons. This term, we started by looking at the genre of Rap music, looking at the history of rap music in hip hop culture and discussing various British rap musicians such as Tinie Tempah. We ended the unit with children performing their own rap songs to a laid down beat. In the second half of the term, children learnt to play various notes on the glockenspiel, demonstrating real musical talent when playing a reggae song in an ensemble.



 Geography proved to be a strength for many of the children, who impressed staff with their incredible knowledge on flag identification. Geography focused on map work where children learnt to name and locate the continents of the world, locate countries in Europe and recognise their corresponding flags, identify the position and significance of seven divisions of the earth and use compasses, keys, symbols and 4-figure grid references to read a map. Children ended the unit by applying their new knowledge to read a map to complete an exciting treasure hunt.

In History, children have been learning about the Stone Age and the discovery of Skara Brae. Children have completed a range of exciting activities including creating their own Stone Age cave art, creating Stone Age jewellery and making their own Mammoth. They showed keen interest and curiosity while conducting an archaeological dig to find an artefact from Skara Brae.



During RE lessons, children have looked closely at Hinduism and Christianity, discussing the various components and beliefs of both religions. Children retold the story of Rama and Sita, created an information leaflet on a chosen Mandir, discussed the various ways in which Shrove Tuesday is celebrated across the UK, before indulging in a chocolate crepe for Pancake day.

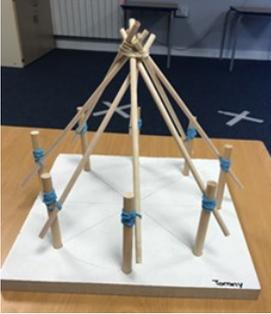


The children have also created some impressive art pieces this term. Our focus has been on exploring Street Art, focusing particularly on Graffiti and looking closely at the work of Banksy. Children debated whether graffiti should be considered art or vandalism, created their own tag, created a piece of graffiti art and used stencils to create a piece of art inspired by Banksy.

In Science, we looked at two units. In the first half of the term we focused on animals including humans where children investigated the importance of healthy eating and hygiene. Children also identified and discussed the different types of skeletons and recreated examples of endo and exoskeletons. During the second half of the term, we looked at living things and their habitats. Children identified and named a variety of plants and animals in British habitats and learnt to group vertebrates by observing their similarities and differences.



CEDARS NEWS



The children have shown incredible skill during our Design and Technology lessons, where they designed and built their own Stone Age roundhouses. Children showed patience and determination towards the small detail and difficult steps of the project. Children demonstrated their precision and fine motor skills while weaving and tying raffia ribbon bundles to create the thatched roof of their houses along with coordination while moulding the clay to construct the wall to produce their impressive Stone Age roundhouses.



With so much learning taking place, we have also managed to squeeze in a range of fun activities. We have had Mr Bunn lead weekly Mini Police sessions where the children were given their own Mini Police uniforms to wear and participated in a range of educational activities including going out onto the road to learn about road safety, attempting the 'Bleep Test' and learning about a range of legal and illegal activities. At the end of the eight sessions, the children were awarded with a certificate of achievement for their completion of the course.



Mrs Smith, from the Hair and Beauty Department, helped the children celebrate World Book day by transforming them into their favourite book characters. We also received a visit from Mrs Porritt and Daisy (the dog) so the children could receive their awards for their impressive attendance this term. We are so proud of all

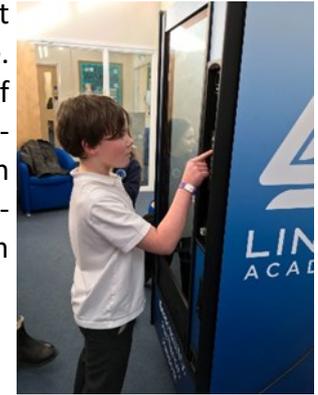


the children for their attendance and would like to thank all the parents and carers for their support with this.

CEDARS NEWS



Children were also presented with a Character School book where they are given the opportunity to earn respect, resilience and responsibility stickers and collect these to earn their bronze, silver and gold rewards. These rewards earn the children tokens which can be used at the book vending machine. At the end of the first half of the term, children received tokens in recognition of their hard work and thor-



oughly enjoyed spending these by picking their books and watching them fall from the vending machine.



Children ended the term with a visit to Standalone Farm. During the visit, children were able to meet a variety of different animals, including Peppa and her 1 month old piglets, Polo the alpaca and Tot the Shetland pony, among many other favourites. Children were lucky enough to be able to feed the pigs, stroke and meet the donkeys and see the newly born lambs in the sheep pens. Chil-



dren enjoyed their picnic lunches before having some free time to play on the mini tractors and then boarding the minibus, where we took six very tired children back to Cedars.

We have had an incredible term filled with learning, fun and laughter and look forward to another exciting term ahead.

Miss Rachel Gray, PSB Teacher

The staff postcard competition!

Thank you to all the staff who sent postcards in from their travels last summer and for all staff who voted. Miss Coulson's postcard was voted the winner and I am sure she will enjoy her prize!



Book Vending Machine



This term to promote reading we have had two vending machines installed, one at the Hixberry Lane Site and one at our Woollam Crescent Site. The vending machines have been filled with books which are age appropriate and hopefully of interest to the students. We are delighted that we have already rewarded some students with a book for their attendance and completion of their School of Character Award. We look forward to rewarding more students in the future. Any book suggestions would be welcomed.



Advanced Notice:

Community event coming soon, **Saturday 10 June 2023 from 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**, more details to follow. Everyone is welcome. Save the date!



Community Event



Mrs Charlotte Brown, Head of School

Geography Field Trip

This year saw the first time we took two students for a Geography Field Trip to Epping Forest. It was a cold wet day but they both survived climbing in and out of the river measuring the flow of the water, depth of the river and the width of the river. We had a lovely walk through the forest and both have increased their knowledge ready for their up and coming GCSE exams in the summer.

Mrs Charlotte Brown, Head of School



Trip to Trampoline Park



We arrived at the park all pumped and ready to show each other our moves. After the safety brief we hit the trampolines with huge excitement and vigour ready to make the most of our hour jump session! Ten minutes later we were sweating and exhausted. I guess we did not account for the fact that trampolining is a sport and requires a certain level of fitness. Eventually we went for a jump-rest-jump approach that seemed to work. With only 7 minutes left of our session Mrs Trotman decided now would be a good time to jump off the high jump into the foam pit. Deeper than she thought it would be, it took the students to rescue her as it became quickly apparent she was not going to get out anytime soon on her own. Would we go back? You bet!

Mrs Gina Trotman, Teacher of Science

Public Services Trip

On Wednesday 29 March 2023 our Public Services students went on a visit to 'The Bunker' at Hatfield police station. The Bunker is a converted air raid shelter from when Hatfield police station use to be British Aero Space. The museum has lots of information about the history of the site and the planes that were built there.

Our students were enthusiastic about the trip and asked many questions. After the bunker visit, we spoke to a PCSO about the history of the police as well as the skills and requirements needed to join. This was a successful trip and the students were a credit to the school.



Mr Sam Bailey, Teacher of Business/Geography/Leisure and Tourism

Rewards Trip—Go Karting



End of term rewards trip—Rye House Kart Raceway, in Hoddesdon.

With grey skies and a rain-soaked surface our five students took to the track.

Steady at first, but a few laps in saw them accelerating and spinning around the corners. Tension built as they under and over took each other, with a nod and a thumbs up. There were a few scary moments as students didn't quite make the turns and a collision or two, but overall, a safe and rewarding activity. The hour flew by, as did the students over and over again. They managed both themselves and the track with maturity and mutual respect. It was a trip well deserved and pleasure to watch.



Miss Joanne Coulson/ Teacher of Maths/Science/Child Care

Staff Easter Tea

Spring has definitely sprung at Links Academy and staff were treated to an afternoon of Easter activities.

As the Spring sunshine shone through the windows, staff enjoyed buttered hot cross buns, chocolate brownies and mugs of hot tea.



The hall was beautifully decorated with pastel coloured bunting and tables were filled with Spring chicks, bunnies and mini trees filled with baby pink, soft lemon, mint green and sky blue eggs and twinkling lights.



The staff quiz took on the theme of Easter and gathered individually and in small groups to enjoy some friendly competition!!! Ms Coulson and Ms Malpas came 3rd and 2nd retrospectively, with Mr Fuller heading up the leadership board!!!

Test your Easter knowledge! (Answers below)

1. How many Easter eggs are sold in the UK every year?
2. Which country started the tradition of the Easter bunny?
3. How many marzipan balls are traditionally on a simnel cake?
4. The first Easter Eggs were dyed what colour?
5. What is the tradition behind the hot cross bun?
6. In Switzerland, what animal delivers Easter eggs to children?
7. What is the Sunday before Easter Sunday called?
8. What is the official flower of Easter?
9. Besides bunnies, what animal is considered an Easter symbol?
10. What popular game is traditionally played at Easter?
11. Where is Easter Island located?
12. When was the first recorded use of decorated Easter eggs?
13. What meat is traditionally consumed on Easter Sunday?
14. Where did the Easter bonnet originate from?
15. In the Bible, who betrayed Jesus just before his crucifixion?
16. When do Easter egg hunts traditionally take place?
17. What happens on Maundy Thursday?
18. Why is it called Palm Sunday?
19. What dance traditionally takes place at Easter?
20. What do the marzipan balls on simnel cake represent?
21. Which country first introduced an Easter tree?
22. In eastern Christianity, the end of Lent is called what?
23. Easter Sunday is also called what?



Staff Easter Tea

Answers:

1. 80 million
2. Germany
3. 11
4. Red
5. The bun represents the cross on which Jesus Christ died
6. The Easter Cuckoo (bird)
7. Palm Sunday
8. White Lilies
9. A lamb
10. An Easter egg hunt
11. The Southeast Pacific
12. In the 13th century
13. Lamb
14. Europe
15. Judas
16. On Easter Sunday morning
17. Maundy Thursday marks the night of the Last Supper as told in the Bible. Christians often partake in a simple meal of bread and wine — commonly known as the Lord's Supper or Communion
18. Palm Sunday was when Jesus entered into Jerusalem greeted by the people waving palm branches
19. Morris dancing
20. Jesus's 11 disciples (excluding Judas)
21. Germany
22. Lazarus Saturday
23. Resurrection Day



Mrs Tracy Mehmet, Pastoral Leader

A note from the Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carers



It has come to our attention that a number of young people are purchasing vapes in the St Albans and Harpenden area that contain THC. This has led to a number of serious incidents in various schools resulting in students being permanently excluded.

I would ask you to obviously discourage your children from vaping. However, if they are going to continue to vape I would ask you to ensure that the vapes do not contain drugs.

Inclusion

What a busy term we have experienced here in the Inclusion Unit. We have welcomed many new students to Links and supported them in settling into the Links way of life, as well as assisting in their transition to our Hixberry site. For our longer term students here in the Inclusion Unit, we have continued working hard to build on their learning and capabilities in English and Maths, which we have seen great progress from the students. In addition to this, our students have had opportunities to engage in activities to commemorate special events such as Chinese New Year,



St David's Day, St Patrick's Day and Easter. It was great to see our Year 11 students undertaking their mock exams recently in preparation to sit their GCSE's in the Summer term with such commitment and focus. As a result, we have seen some fantastic results return because of their efforts. Very well done!

Alongside a lot of revision with our Year 11 students, we have been focusing mainly on shape work with our students in Maths. They have worked with great responsibility towards their learning exploring the properties of both 2D and 3D shapes, including working with various formulae in calculating measurements such as area and volume of different shapes. With a lot of formulas to remember, the students have demonstrated fantastic resilience when trying to apply these within their work. We look forward to what they may achieve in the coming Summer term!

The focus in English this term has been on applying our knowledge of the purpose and audience of different text types in order to create some interesting writing outcomes for our children. Highlights have included creating their own CV's, writing persuasive letters and even trying to understand and create customer reviews, all of which feature within the Functional Skills framework. We look forward to what we can accomplish in the summer term ahead.

The Inclusion Team would also like to thank Mrs Harding for the amazing ongoing support she provides to our team and our students. She has provided great inspiration with her crafting activities to us all and helped us to think a little more creatively. We would also like to thank the additional support of supply staff that have assisted us in the busiest times this term.

Finally, we would like to wish all students and their families a very safe and happy Easter break. May it be a wonderful time to come together and hopefully enjoy a little sweet treat delivered by a fluffy friend!



Mr Tim Holgate, Lead Inclusion Teacher

ATTENDANCE

I think it would be fair to say that attendance and punctuality to school has had a bit of a rollercoaster ride this term. There have been individual successes for some students' attendance to school and these are to be celebrated.



Bruno was rewarded by Mrs Brown with a trip to the book vending machine to choose a book of his choice for over 96% attendance for the first half of the Spring Term – well done Bruno.

At Cedars PSB some amazing attendance rates were achieved for the first half of the Spring Term, which is often a notorious time of year for students missing school through having coughs, colds and sneezes!



An amazing *woof-woof* to these students' resilience and worthy winners of the '**I Love School**' awards were; Olly (80%), Tommy (86%), Frankie (92%), Beatrix (96%) and Lucas (100%), who all received an Attendance HERO plaque and their very own packet of Jammie Dodgers to share with their parents/carers/siblings from Mrs Porritt and Daisy.

The next prizes to bounce their way to Cedars for the end of the Spring Term will be the '**Hop to it Bunny**'.



With some of our Cedars students returning to their schools for the Summer Term, Mrs Porritt and Daisy would like to wish them all well and keep attending school every day.

Remember you are an **Attendance HERO**.



School Refusal or Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) – What do you think?

There is no denying it, the evidence backs it up and undoubtedly, parents/carers and students have probably heard this at secondary schools' numerous times about the importance of school attendance on attainment and grades.

When it comes to attending school, walking through the school door is just the first step. It's what happens with the next steps (going to lessons and engagement with learning), that really counts with a student's attainment.

This term at Links Academy there has been a noticeable shift in student behaviour towards lesson attendance during the school day.

So could this be a form of *School Refusal*, or *Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)*, even though the student may be in the building?

School avoidance may start gradually and as such can be difficult to spot when things are going wrong and being late to school, missing lessons and occasional absences from school can all be early indicators.

So could this be the case for your son or daughter?

Is it *choice* a student is making or *anxiety* preventing a student accessing their lessons?

If you think this may be a possibility, working in close collaboration between school and yourself is likely to lead to the best outcome for your child.

For further information and sources of information and support please go to:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-support/get-help-to-access-learning/if-your-child-is-too-anxious-to-go-to-school.aspx>

Also, speak to your child's form tutor at the upcoming Student Performance Review Day on 18th April 2023, Links Academy would like to know what you think it may be.

Mrs S Porritt, Attendance Officer

GCSE Exams

Summer 2023 Public Examination dates

DAY	DATE	QUALIFICATION	SUBJECT	TITLE	AM/ PM	DURA- TION
Tuesday	16/5/2023	AQA GCSE	Biology	Paper 1	AM	1h 45
Thursday	18/5/2023	Pearson GCSE	History	Crime and Punishment	AM	1h 15
Friday	19/5/2023	AQA GCSE	Maths	Paper 1	PM	1h 45
Monday	22/5/2023	Pearson GCSE	Geography	The Physical Environment	PM	1h 30
Monday	5/6/2023	AQA GCSE	English Language	Paper 1	AM	2h
Wednesday	7/6/2023	AQA GCSE	Maths	Paper 2	AM	1h 30
Wednesday	7/6/2023	Pearson GCSE	History	Superpower Elizabeth	PM	1h 45
Friday	9/6/2023	Pearson GCSE	Geography	The Human Environment	AM	1h30
Friday	9/6/2022	AQA GCSE	Biology	Paper 2	PM	1h 45
Monday	12/6/2023	AQA GCSE	English Language	Paper 2	AM	2h
Wednesday	14/6/2023	AQA GCSE	Maths	Paper 3	AM	1h 30
Thursday	15/6/2023	Pearson GCSE	History	Weimar and Nazi Germany	AM	1h 20
Friday	16/6/2023	Pearson GCSE	Geography	Geography Investigations	PM	1h 30



We hope you enjoy the Easter break but if you require any support during the break please look at the resources below:



Herts Mind Network: online workshops about internet safety and being kind

Hertfordshire Mind Network are running a series of online workshops for children and young people on how to use the internet safely while being kind online. They are running three workshops:

Be Kind Online
Connecting Online
Self-Kindness

For each workshop, there are three sessions: one for children ages 5-10 and parents/carers, one for children and young people ages 11-14, and one for young people ages 15-18. All the details and booking information is here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hertfordshire-mind-network-26443271185>



Managing Worry Webinars for ages 16+

HPFT's Wellbeing (IAPT) Service has updated their 'Managing Worry' webinar. The Service has also developed a brand new short '[Managing Worry](#) animation video'. This video identifies different types of worry and briefly explores what may be maintaining the vicious cycle of worry.

Please help to spread the word and/or join a 'Managing worry' webinar in March.

Support Group for help with Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

ARFID, is a difficult condition for many people, characterised by avoiding certain foods or food groups either entirely or by eating them only in small amounts. It is a problem affecting many people of all ages and has only become a diagnosable disorder in recent years.

First Steps Eating Disorders (ED) are offering a free, four-week ARFID support group for young people, ages 7-14 and a workshop for older people ages 15+, which are running on a monthly basis.

Informed by research, this peer led group has been developed by staff and volunteers with first-hand experience. The group will look at the symptoms and impact, as well as distractions, coping strategies and personal goals setting.

Advice or support on ARFID and other eating disorders is available with or without a diagnosis and referrals can be made by the young person, a parent/ carer, or healthcare professional. Go to the website to [find out more](#) or you can call 01332 367571 or E: info@firststepsed.co.uk .

Free Online Emotional Wellbeing/Mental Health Workshops for Young People

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) Children's Wellbeing Practitioners regularly run a variety of workshops focused on child and adolescent emotional wellbeing and mental health. Some workshops are for the parents/carers of primary school aged children and others are directed at adolescents although parents can also attend these. The workshops aim to provide support, guidance, some strategies and tips to support child and adolescent mental health.

The workshops are free to attend and currently take place on Microsoft Teams. The workshops available can be found on the Children's Wellbeing Practitioners Eventbrite page, where you can also find out more information about what the workshop will cover and book a place. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-school-nursing-service-hertfordshire-33494371787>

The service has also produced a two-part recorded webinar to help with anxiety about going to school. Please take a look at the links below:

[Theory and Psychoeducation](#) (just under 18 minutes long) [Youtube.com/watch?v=RfoKXMNQKNY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfoKXMNQKNY)

[Strategies and Tips](#) (just over 30 minutes long) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZjR-5OpMg>

HAVE A LOVELY EASTER BREAK EVERYONE!!!



Mrs Fiona Haynes/ Outreach Manager



