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**TEACHER
SHORTLISTED
FOR
EDUCATION'S
OSCARS**

**FIND OUT MORE
ON PAGE 11**

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Dear Families,

The end of every term is a time when we have the opportunity to celebrate the wonderful achievements of our students and staff, both in and out of school. However, the end of this term has been like no other and whilst there is still much to celebrate, I write this introduction with mixed emotions. We have all found ourselves in an extraordinary position and there has been much to work through these past few weeks.

As always, I know you will enjoy reading about the many events the students have taken part in since January and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teaching staff, the support staff and the Governing Body for their hard work, on-going support and commitment to Raynes Park High School, particularly in these unprecedented times.

Whilst we knew that the closure of schools was inevitable, we had not expected it to happen almost overnight and we were all left reeling. We didn't get to say goodbye to our students properly and could give no reassurances as to when we would re-open. It was particularly difficult for Year 11 and Year 13. The shock cancellation of the examinations aside, there are some traditions around leaving these year groups that we had to rush through in an afternoon; farewell assemblies, shirt signing, photos with friends, etc. The students were absolutely fantastic though, such a credit to you all.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and support as we put together a remote learning package for the students. We are very aware that you have not chosen to home school your children, particularly those of you that are working from home yourselves. Whilst I know the vast majority of students have adapted as well as possible to home learning, if the work is causing unnecessary pressure, please urge your son/daughter to feed this back to their teachers and we will be sending out a survey to families to help us plan for next term.

You will be aware that schools have been asked to remain open for specific groups of students and I'm pleased to report that we have had a productive time doing the tasks on 'Show My Homework' in addition to other activities to keep the students active and motivated. My thanks go to the staff that volunteered to lead these sessions and to those who will be here as we remain open over Easter for these students.

I am fortunate to be receiving a daily update from the Local Authority and ASCL (Association of School and College Leaders), providing reassurance and support during a time of such uncertainty. Geoff Barton, the ASCL General Secretary and former Headteacher, has also provided timely

quotes, one of which I'd like to share with you. On Wednesday he wrote:

'Finally, as these strange days go on, I don't know about you but I find the rollercoaster of emotions is one of the most surprising aspects. This morning I happened to stumble upon this quote from *Winnie the Pooh*, capturing that sense we've all rediscovered of how important the people in our lives are':

'Pooh!' he whispered.

'Yes, Piglet?'

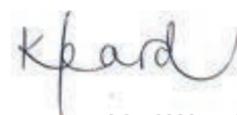
'Nothing,' said Piglet, taking Pooh's paw.

'I just wanted to be sure of you.'

As we all adjust to our new routines, we are still very much here for our students and their families, playing our part in a crisis that will one-day pass (you will also be aware that there is a lack of PPE equipment available and we are pleased to have been able to send over 400 pairs of goggles to local nursing homes in Merton).

I would like to finish by sharing some wonderful news. Richard Harris, Head of our DT department, is one of 87 extraordinary teachers, lecturers and school staff who have been entered for the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards, Education's Oscars. Mr Harris, who joined the school in January 2019, is in the running to be one of the Silver Award winners. These will then compete to win one of just 14 Gold Awards which will be announced at the televised UK ceremony later in the year, broadcast on the BBC as 'Britain's Classroom Heroes'. I'm sure you will agree that this is fantastic news and we wish Richard well for the next stage in the competition.

I wish you and your family as enjoyable an Easter as possible and we look forward to working with you again next term.



Mrs K Heard
Headteacher

WORKING FROM HOME



We were delighted to receive this picture from a parent showing six of our Year 7 students tackling their Catering work together from their separate homes.

Well done to Evie, Issy, Fearne, Amy, Maisie and Chloe for using the internet to work together on their latest bakes despite school being closed.

DANIEL SPARGO-MABBS PERFORMANCE

This term Year 9s had a Drama performance by the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation on a very important theme of substance and drug misuse. The Foundation was started by Dan's parents, Tim and Fiona Spargo-Mabbs, to try and prevent other families from having to go through the pain of losing a child, and to stop the damage done by drugs to young lives. The Foundation aims to do as much as it can to make young people aware of the risks of substance misuse and experimentation. They are working with young people, their teachers and their parents and carers, and with other professionals working with young people, in schools and colleges and through Theatre in Education. Year 9s undoubtedly benefited from this performance and we would like to thank the production team for their emotive performance.

Ms S Audley
Head of Social Sciences

STUDENT VOICE WEEK

This term students had the chance to take part in Student Voice Week. All students could share their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions on key themes across the school with the aim of driving student led school improvement. Each House will now take these ideas further and lead on a particular area of school improvement such as Mental Health Awareness (Newsoms), Equality Awareness (Miltons), Community and Social Spaces (Gibbs) and the Environment (Halliwells). Students at Raynes Park High School have raised some brilliant ideas that we will be discussing further!

Ms S Audley
Head of Social Sciences



YEAR 10 APPLE TRIP



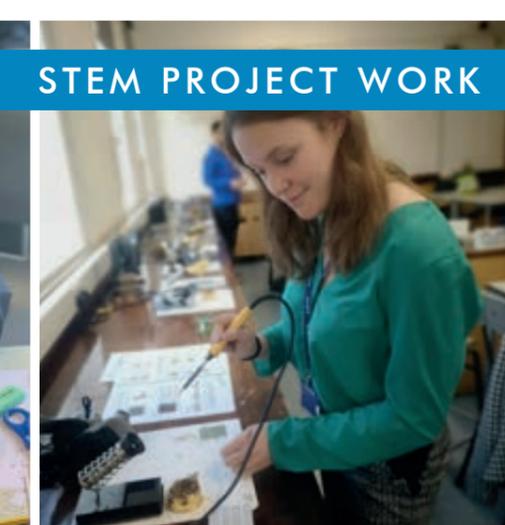
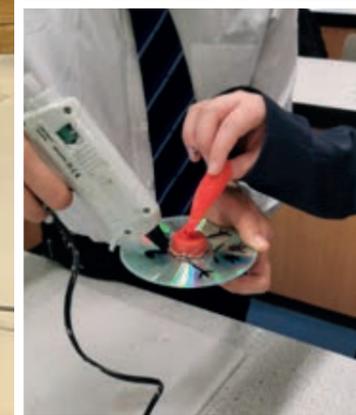
The Year 10 Design & Technology Students had the chance to experience what it would be like to be a real product designer. The class were given iPad Pros and Apple pencils and with the guidance of the Apple designers asked to create and present an idea for a sustainable product that would help change the world.

Apple were so impressed with our students that they have asked them back. The students themselves certainly benefited with another certificate to add to their CVs. Impressive results from all the students who attended.

Another bonus is that Apple have said they would be happy to supply the D&T staff with FREE CPD whenever Raynes Park High School request it. A great connection made with a big name in the design world.

Mr R Harris
Head of Design Technology





STEM PROJECT WORK

This year, Raynes Park High School have collaborated with BECSLink and the Tim Henman Foundation to provide workshops for students with opportunities to develop their skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

In our previous newsletter we reported on the first of these events which started in November with a series of workshops run by the Smallpeice Trust with all Year 9 students. In groups the students had the morning to create a brand, calculate the costings and design an aerodynamic plane. Once their plans had been finalised, the students then built their planes based on their earlier designs, which included putting together their very own motor. The students then had to pitch their concept and sell their ideas to the rest of the year before the main event... the test flights!

In January, BECSLink funded a staff training session for the Science department to develop knowledge and understanding of how we can deliver engaging STEM activities throughout the curriculum. All of the team found the event useful and developed a range of skills to teach to our students.

In February the best Scientists from Years 9 and 10 took part in a STEM event that involved construction of a working prototype speaker and presentation of their product. The teamwork involved in the construction included soldering of a circuit board as well as aesthetic design of their

speaker exterior. The students who participated enjoyed the experience and developed a range of new skills.

'It was a good experience that helped build my leadership skills.'

'It was good because when we made them even though some failed we sought solutions which could improve our design.'

'It was fun and informative as we thought about the techniques we needed to use.'

The main part of the STEM calendar took place in March with STEM week activities being the focus of lessons for our KS3 students. This range of fun and exciting activities allowed KS3 students to study and design different methods of flight. The engineering project has allowed students to design gliders, hover craft and helicopters, construct their designs and test for improvements. A group of keen Year 6 students visited us from West Wimbledon

Primary School to also participate in the events. Other year groups have attended assemblies on STEM related careers and options post GCSE. This work has developed students understanding of the fundamental principles and skills of STEM subjects.

Students reached the end of this action packed week with a better understanding of STEM;

'This week in STEM week, I've learnt how to use engineering skills to build aircraft. My favourite thing to build was the glider. It had a successful flight and was fun to build.'

'The reason why I enjoyed STEM week was because of the creativity in it and how we got to race each other's models.'

Ms K Burkin
Head of Science



LAND ROVER 4x4 IN SCHOOL CHALLENGE

A talented group of six D&T students completed in the STEM Land Rover 4x4 in School Challenge which required the team to work together to design and build a radio controlled four-wheel drive (4x4) vehicle, to set specifications.

The vehicle had to be able to successfully negotiate a specially designed test track emulating real life and must perform as a full scale 4x4 vehicle would do in an off-road situation. On Raynes Park High School first showing the team, they impressively finished in the top ten for their entry class. Raynes Park High School seeks to build on the success and looks forward to returning to the competition in the 2020-2021 season.

The students had an amazing time with opportunities to talk with engineers, have design critique sessions, track runs and a science research session with knowledge test (high five for the Science teachers).

The students set an amazing track time but unfortunately gained penalty points on the design aspect of their model. Raynes Park certainly has a talented driver in Amber. And most impressively was when other schools wanted to do video logs of the Raynes Park stand!

A top 10 finish in the Regional Finals in the first year was quite the achievement especially as the students were competing against high performing private schools and grammar schools. Hopefully the return of the Raynes Park team next year will bring home some trophies.

Students awarded certificates by OCR/Land Rover	
Year 10	Sam
Year 9	Prathaum Jack Amber
Year 7	Timmy

Mr R Harris
Head of Design Technology





PEARSON NATIONAL TEACHING AWARDS

At a time when schools are doing more than ever to support their communities, teachers across the country have discovered they have been shortlisted for Education's Oscars.

Selected from thousands of nominations, Richard Harris is one of 87 extraordinary teachers, lecturers and school staff who have been entered for the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards.

Richard was nominated for a Silver Award in the Teacher of the Year in a Secondary School category. He has achieved phenomenal results, most recently seeing 100% of students score 100% A-A*, and uses technology to inspire and assess his students in equal measure. Aside from his work in the classroom, Richard has represented Kent as a 5K runner, won the British National Jujitsu title, coached for Fulham Football Club and featured in publications as a star teacher for the most prestigious educational academy in South Korea.

'Congratulations to every one of our teachers, lecturers and school staff who have been shortlisted for a Silver Award. At a time of unprecedented challenge, schools across the country are stepping up and playing a vital role for the wellbeing of our pupils and their families, and it is only right that we take this opportunity to say thank you. At Pearson we are delighted to support these Awards every year and to recognise and celebrate teachers for their commitment, dedication and passion.'

Rod Bristow
President of Pearson UK



Richard Harris of Raynes Park High School is in the running to be one of the Silver Award winners. These will then compete to win one of just 14 Gold Awards which will be announced at the televised UK ceremony later in the year, broadcast on the BBC as 'Britain's Classroom Heroes'.

'Congratulations to all of the amazing staff in the running to win a Silver Award. This is fair recognition of the outstanding job they are doing and their efforts in going well beyond their role to make sure their students get every chance in life.'

The Pearson National Teaching Awards is an annual celebration of exceptional teachers, founded in 1998 by Lord David Puttnam to recognise the life-changing impact an inspirational teacher can have on the lives of the young people they teach.

'Now more than ever is the time to appreciate our teachers and the fantastic work they are doing. I am honoured to be part of these Awards and to play my part in acknowledging teachers for the incredible job they do.'

Pupils and parents can show their appreciation for their amazing teachers, who are supporting children across the country in incredibly challenging conditions, by sending them a Thank You card for free via the Thank a Teacher campaign at <https://thankateacher.co.uk>.

Steve Munby
Chair of the Teaching Awards Trust



NATIONAL CAREERS WEEK

2ND – 6TH MARCH

National Careers Week was a great opportunity for students to focus on what careers they are interested in and to develop some skills in school to further their employability in the future.

A number of different activities took place during this week as well as extra attention given to relevant careers and skills in Maths, Science, English, D&T and Media Studies lessons.

UCA - Creative Careers presentation
Students studying Art or Photography in Years 10 and 12 listened to a presentation on Creative Careers by the University for the Creative Arts. Students learnt about the different creative careers, pathway options, courses and qualifications on offer as well as advice on developing a portfolio.

BAE Systems Roadshow - with the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy
Year 8 students were treated to an interactive presentation learning all about different sources of energy and careers in the growing energy sector. Well done to those students who took part in this very enjoyable presentation.

National Apprenticeship Show - Sandown Racecourse
Students in Years 12 and 13 were taken to the National Apprenticeship Show where they met with employers and current apprentices from construction, finance, retail, technology, property and uniformed services. Students were able to find out about the alternatives to university and hear first-hand from apprentices about their experiences.

Year 10 Enterprise Day
Thank you to Innovative Enterprise who delivered two workshops to our students; one looking at preparing a marketing package for a product and the other at designing a community space to generate profit and help others. In the afternoon, we were very grateful to David Boadu, Metta Francis, Anthony Mitson and Jason Grant who gave the students an insight into setting up and developing your own business. We were particularly pleased to see David and Anthony who attended Raynes Park High School as students themselves! The students asked interesting

questions and many were left inspired to start their own business in the future.

Staff drop-ins
Many of our teaching and non-teaching members of staff have had interesting career journeys before now. Students were invited to speak to them during special lunchtime slots and could find out about social work, hairdressing, international volunteering, the legal sector and counseling to name a few. Thank you to the staff and students who took part.

Learning about careers in subjects
Students learnt about how their different subjects can lead to a range of different careers by carrying out research or practical tasks in their lessons. Particular thanks goes to the Science, Maths, English, D&T and Media Studies departments for their efforts in promoting career learning.

Ms B Brake
Careers Leader



SPORTS UPDATES



SPORTS UPDATES



Tennis

Our partnership with Performance Plus continues to flourish with regular numbers turning up to our Thursday sessions with Coach Josh. Braving the cold winter, students are working hard to develop their skills and become better players. A special mention should be given to Ege in Year 8, who was awarded with an all expenses paid slot on a Tennis camp during February Half Term. He had an amazing time and felt the additional coaching has really developed his skills and most importantly, his passion for tennis. Well done Ege!

Netball

Ms McCourt took a squad of Year 9 girls to a borough competition at Wimbledon High School on Thursday 6th February. It was a fiercely competitive affair with some high quality action throughout. The girls played exceptionally well, playing four straight matches and were given the opportunity to play against schools they wouldn't normally play against. After a win, two draws and a loss they came 4th overall. All the girls were amazing but a particular mention to Ziah, who was the team captain, and Holly, who scored lots of successful shots for the team as Goal Attack.

The U13 girl's Netball team took part in their borough competition the following week and were

amazing! They managed to clinch the silver medal, which is an absolutely amazing achievement considering the quality of schools within the borough. Next year, we go for gold!

Girls Football

The U12 and U14 squads have had very successful seasons this year. Competing in the Kingston Town Cup for the first time, the girls pitted their wits against some very talented schools including Surbiton High School, Tolworth Girls and Kingston Grammar School to name but a few. Despite the challenge, both squads qualified from their pools to make the Semi Finals with the U12s losing just one game! Regretfully, the girls will have to wait until September to play it due to early school closures. The girls cannot wait to get back to the action and qualify for the finals!

The U18s played Kingston Grammar School in the semi-finals of the Surrey Cup. The squad comprised of just two Sixth Form girls, two Year 11s and the rest being in Year 10 against a highly physical and talented KGS. They put together their best performance of the season and should have won the game. A cruel own goal and counterattack when we were chasing an equaliser meant our journey came to an end. The girls conducted themselves superbly and I am

immensely proud of how they have developed this season, having lost their first game of the season 4-0!

Boys Football

The Year 8 boys have continued their unbeaten run with convincing wins over Harris Wimbledon (8-1) and Rutlish (5-0). We have been on course to becoming borough champions but have unfortunately not been able to complete the games due to early school closures. We look forward to picking up again from September.

Sport Relief 2020

During the week beginning 9th March 2020, we embarked on an epic challenge to 'Walk to Africa' to raise money for the many fantastic causes supported by the Sport Relief charity. The target was for everyone to collectively achieve around 14,000 laps of the astro during PE lessons to reach the required 3000 miles shortest distance from London to Sierra Leone (one of the many areas supported by Sport Relief). It was a big ask and one in which we fell short on by achieving 8,590 laps. Most importantly though, we managed to raise £200 in sponsorship so thank you to everyone who took part and donated!

Adidas

Some key events took place this term for the students to take part in towards their twelve Adidas challenges:

In February, the students began their Personal Extended Studies (PeXS). With the theme being Tokyo 2020, the students were to spend the next few weeks planning and creating a project relating to the Olympics in the coming Summer. The students could make something, bake something, paint something, sew something, any something! The purpose was for them to demonstrate their talents in a field of interest to them. With early school closures and the postponement of the Olympics to 2021, the deadline for this will be extended to a date when the students return.

World Book Day was on Thursday 5th March. Students were given additional guidance from the members of staff in the library with some fantastic suggestions to help the students achieve challenge 12: Appreciate the contribution of others, which was to read a book from a different culture.

Students will be given the opportunity to complete their Adidas journey when they return to school. Keep up the good work!

Mr C Wilson-Boyle
Director of Sport



YEAR 10 GEOGRAPHY



In March, Year 10 Geography students completed the first of their two pieces of fieldwork during a visit to the River Tillingbourne in Surrey. Their aim was to identify how a river changes during its journey from source to mouth. This meant collecting data such as width, depth and velocity from a variety of points along the river. It was also an opportunity to view features such as meanders and an ox-bow lake, which previously have only been seen in books and on videos.

Students had an enjoyable day and all were successful in collecting the necessary information. Several claimed that this was the first time they'd set foot in a river. Needless to say, all were grateful for the provision of welly boots and waterproof trousers!

Students are now faced with the task of presenting their data and reaching conclusions about what can be learnt from it. They are already looking forward to their next taste of fieldwork. This will take place in the contrasting, urban environment of Stratford in East London.

Mr G Collman
Head of Humanities



YEAR 7 VALENTINES DISCO



YEAR 7 VALENTINES DISCO

'On 16th February, the penultimate day of half term, Year 7s and teachers gathered in the Main Hall to have a dance, chat and a laugh.

You could buy crisps, chocolate and juice for a very small fee, 50p maximum – the stand was run by the teachers on rotation.

There was a specially hired DJ who played all the best tracks – even one that had all the teachers dancing along! One of the teachers who taught the students a dance was Miss Efford, along with Miss Best, Miss Neale, Mr Hearne, Mr Harris, Mr Robinson and Miss Holland. Miss Leszczyk was there too, snapping photos for the entire evening on request. One of the best liked songs played was the Macarena.

The DJ was soon very popular when he turned on a foam machine! He turned it on at least twice a song, meaning students flocked to the dance floor to get sprayed with it. By the time the event had come to an end it was a night to remember for both students and staff alike.'

Zoe
Year 7 Student



YEAR 7 VALENTINES DISCO



MEETING WITH MP STEPHEN HAMMOND



'Having the opportunity to meet with MP Stephen Hammond in January was a great privilege. We were able to gain an insight into the working life of a current member of the Houses of Parliament, which was a very enlightening experience. We acquired very specific and detailed answers from the political and social questions which we presented him with. This then gave us clarity on the current and potential future status of the economy as well as our community which he deeply believes

in improving. Also touching on factors regarding sensitive topics such as Brexit, Racism and Immigration; his professional nature allowed us to feel comfortable discussing such matters whilst receiving genuine answers. We are again very thankful for this opportunity and are grateful for the knowledge Mr Hammond shared with us.'

Ewan and Marcin
Year 13 Students



GIBBS HOUSE UPDATE

Firstly, I would like to say that I hope each and every one of our students are staying safe and finding new routines to maintain a portion of normality in these unprecedented times.

There are still many activities on 'Show My Homework' to keep you busy and plenty of resources online to fill any gaps in your day. My personal favourite is using the app *HouseParty* to speak to my friends and play general knowledge quizzes against them. Anything that keeps your brains ticking over!

On a more positive note. THANK YOU to all those House Leaders and Gibbs students that helped put on a fun-filled and activity packed Charity Week at the end of February. So far this year we have raised over £250 for Alzheimer's UK and I couldn't have done it without you all and I hope we are not done yet.

Please continue to work hard and stretch yourselves, even from home - remember - academic progress can help us win back that House cup!

Enjoy the Easter period as best you can, stay safe and stay positive!

Mr J Wheel

Head of Gibbs



NEWSOMS HOUSE UPDATE

During our end of 2019 assembly, we were commended for having the best attendance and academic achievement, as well as being awarded the trophy for best overall house and it felt like things couldn't get any better. However, according to our Newsoms ethos statement, we 'push through challenges to be the best versions of ourselves possible' and this has been particularly evident in our House members continuing to push themselves to be their very best.

This term, we welcomed many of your ideas for school improvement, when we completed our student voice week. This was an opportunity for you all to express ideas on how the school can make improvements to offer the best service possible. Your ideas and opinions were mature, sensible and considered. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on the different areas that the House Leaders are working on.

I would like to remind you that this year, Newsoms are focused on making improvements to awareness and initiatives around equality and bullying. Please continue to speak to your House Leaders about any ideas that you may have to promote awareness, or any events that we could run to

highlight these important topics. They already have lots of ideas in development and hopefully at some point in the not so distant future they will be able to share them with you.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for the decorum that you have consistently demonstrated during the recent global events which have resulted in the early closure of our school. I continue to feel immensely proud of you all for acting responsibly and supporting each other during this period of transition and uncertainty. As Michael Phelps once said, 'There are always going to be obstacles that come in your way. Stay positive.' I strongly believe that if we stay positive and are there for each other, we will return to school stronger, more resilient and ready for the next challenge!

Enjoy this break and remember to keep logging on to 'Show My Homework' for messages and activities from your teachers. Take care.

Mr M Malanaphy

Head of Newsoms



Mighty Miltons back on track!!!

As we near the end of our second term, I'd like to congratulate all of our amazing students; I'm sure you have made and will continue to make strong and positive contributions to our House, both academically and socially this year. To date, your contributions to House Points and overall attendance has been fantastic and we are proud to have you all as members of the dynamic community that is Miltons House.

This term, we had an extremely positive start, especially in our sporting pursuits. One word sums up the might that is the Miltons community - Dodgeball. We ensured a roaring success through all categories in KS3 with significant praise being given to our Year 7 team. Despite being low in numbers/quantity - the quality was still evident in our performances. We dominated our matches and were worthy winners in the end.

In Year 9, our students participated in The Robot Challenge. This was created by Northrop Grumman. Students were

asked to create a robot from a pre-cut set within a time limit. The robot had to walk 20cm after the construction period. It was primarily used to help promote STEM and inspire/ensure women get equally treated within the industry. Miltons received a certificate for completing the Robot Challenge and this was proudly presented to our Year 9 House Leader, Daniel Green.

Our House Charity Week was due to commence on 30th of March, however, due to current circumstances, this has been postponed until further notice. When we return, we will be better, stronger and more dominant.

As Head of Miltons House, I would advise the Miltons community to regularly log onto 'Show My Homework' and complete tasks given by teachers. Look after yourselves and those close to you. Above all else - Be Kind.

Take care.

Ms A Taylor

Head of Miltons

Halliwells left the Autumn End of Term assembly with the Newman's Cup for the best Attitude to Learning, showing that our House members are putting in the most effort in their lessons and I could not be prouder. Again this term, Year 8 have led the way in the number of House Points collected for our House as we see our total climb closer and closer to 1st place. We have also taken part in many competitions including House Dodgeball, Robotics and Business Enterprise Competitions, where the Halliwells teams have always excelled.

Our House Leaders have been busy working away on our House focus of the environment and are keen to improve the environment of the school by creating new initiatives on litter, recycling and protecting our greenery. The students will be leading an assembly and promoting their ideas through posters and competitions.

We also have our Charity Week to look forward to, where we shall be fundraising for the charity, Shelter, as chosen by the students. I am sure there will be many competitions and sweet treats!

Ms M Bowes

Head of Halliwells

Do you shop online?

The school can get a donation when you do, for free!

Raynes Park High School Charitable Trust raises funds to support our students. The Trust has funded several projects including funding equipment for the Duke of Edinburgh Award as well as small grants to individual students. The trustees are keen to do more and need funds to do so.

One way you can donate to the Trust without it costing you anything is to shop online via 'easyfundraising' which turns your everyday online shopping into free donations for the school. There are over 3600 retailers including many big names such as Amazon, M&S, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Tesco, John Lewis, Ebay and Argos and many specialist retailers.

So next time you want to do some online shopping please go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs and click 'support this cause' then register for easyfundraising and find the retailer you want. Once you have chosen your retailer you will go to their website as normal to make your purchase. The retailers then make a small donation to the Trust. The size of the donation varies with the retailer - but every little helps!

It will cost you nothing but will help the school. You will get reminders once registered with easyfundraising.

Please give it a try!



Join



Shop



Raise



easyfundraising feel good shopping

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs

Support this cause

1

Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/raynesparkhs click 'support this cause' and register

2

Choose your retailer and shop as normal

3

Retailers will make a small donation to the Trust at no extra cost to you



NEWS FROM THE Governors

Inevitably, the term has been dominated by the COVID-19 outbreak. Governors are concerned to ensure academic continuity is maintained as far as possible and that steps are in place to provide for our most vulnerable students and those whose parents/carers are keyworkers. We held a Governing Body meeting on 26th March via a telephone conference – a technological first for us – at which we reviewed the school's COVID-19 response arrangements with the Headteacher. We have been impressed by the planning and actions of Mrs Heard and her team and by the attitude and co-operation of students and their parents/carers. We say a heartfelt thank you to you all.

Unhappily, the COVID-19 outbreak has coincided with our Chair, Stephen Benjamin, becoming unavailable for a spell with a non Coronavirus-related illness, which is why Governors have to put up with me again for a while. We all wish Stephen a speedy recovery.

Before the break, Governors were able to review the school's progress towards its academic targets and its budgetary position. We are happy to report good news on both scores. We were also glad to learn of the number of continuing professional development courses now being undertaken by staff with the help of Apprenticeship Levy money – a source we were

very active in promoting with the local authority, who were retaining the funds.

Governors held a successful Strategic Visit centred on careers advice and our Business and Design & Technology Departments. We had informative presentations from the staff involved and enjoyed meeting students – especially those from the successful Land Rover Challenge team – and also toured classrooms. We saw a lot of excellent teaching in progress. We were impressed with the significant improvements we found in all three of the topics we studied.

Finally, on the membership front this term, we said goodbye and thank you as Governors to Professor Graham Orpwood and Olivia Brooks. We also welcome Hannah Davidson, who lives locally and teaches in the independent sector. She will bring a wealth of new perspectives to our work.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael Ross".

Michael Ross
Acting Chair of Governors

Find out more about the work of our School Governors here:
www.rphs.org.uk/31/governors

CONTACT US:

 020 8946 4112

 @officialRPHS

 school@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

Do you have a story you'd like to share in our next newsletter?

Please e-mail newsletter@raynespark.merton.sch.uk