

Dear Parents,

Despite being a shorter term, pupils have still been involved with so many activities. Some of our older pupils attended a session with Sally Green who is the Kent Prevent Education Officer and supported pupils understanding around staying safe online. I am sure pupils will enjoy talking through with you their new knowledge and show you how you can keep safe online. The school sends out weekly information to parents to support with online safety, but if you feel you would like further advice in this area, please don't hesitate to contact the school and the appropriate Designated Safeguard Lead will assist with any questions you have.

Many of our pupils also took part in a first aid session, learning how to treat people during minor incidents which is a great life skill to have. Over the last year, we have been working with the 'Art of Brilliance' to help students develop the skills needed to create positive attitudes and habits, both at home and at school. This project has been a key focus during Children's Mental Health Week, with the students completing a variety of activities, some of which being presented to parents. Although the project has finished this term, our aim is to create a cohesive approach that everyone can join in with and provide a long-term commitment to the well-being and happiness of our students.

Pupils have been involved in so many other activities to enhance their learning, including; trampolining, bowling and a gaming workshop, where many of our pupils had to plan for the day, gaining a greater understanding of being independent.

Have a wonderful Half Term break and we look forward to welcoming our pupils back on Monday 19th February.

Kind regards

*Adam*

Principal



### British Values

The various activities highlighted in this newsletter are an example of just some of the diverse learning opportunities that are undertaken by our students. Many of these activities take place within the local community as well as at school for real opportunities to explore these values in order to support students to understand the needs of others in a wider context. Helen Allison School teaches students by planning and delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. British values embedded within this curriculum and these values are defined as: Democracy, Rule of law, Individual liberty, Mutual respect, Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

If you have any comments on the Newsletter we would like to hear from you. If you would like to contribute to the next Newsletter, please let Francesca Shaxted have your article.

## Camber Class

Camber have begun a new topic this term, called Puppets and Pop-ups. Their sensory story time has included the Julia Donaldson books *The Gruffalo*, *The Gruffalo's Child* and *Room on the Broom*. They have used puppets and toys to represent characters, along with props and sound effects to immerse the children in the stories. In art they created the witch from *Room on the Broom*. The children coloured in the witch, cut her out, then stuck her and brown wool onto a pencil to create the broom.

All of the children have continued to work hard on their attention skills and turn-taking. Bucket Time is a great example of this, showing focus and attention to detail when objects are revealed and experiments are carried out for them to watch. We have seen them all progress in waiting their turn and handing things on to the next person when asked.

Carousel play has given them lots of opportunities to get messy, interact with others and follow their interests. They have had chances to investigate slime, jelly and dough; seeing how it feels, smells and moves. They have used their problem-solving skills and creativity to build things and play games with equipment such as ping-pong balls, big foam blocks, magnetic shapes and puzzles. The language skills of all the children have improved by including adults in their play, describing what they are doing and what they need.

Camber have also had their first trip off-site. They all went to a local park and had a great time. We are so proud of everything they are achieving. Well done Camber class!



In their art lessons this term. Hever class have been exploring shading techniques with a focus on shapes, lights, shadows and angles of light.



This term, some of our pupils attended an indoor cricket festival in Tonbridge. It was a fun day of skills, drills and games and all of our students enjoyed being able to try indoor cricket.

## Rufus Class



It has been another exciting term in Rufus class with lots of fun learning taking place. In Science, they have been exploring objects and the materials that they are made from. They have also been describing their features and sorting them between natural and man-made materials. The class have also been enjoying their English book this term, about what Humpty Dumpty did after his fall. They followed instructions to make a paper aeroplane and have also been working hard on their phonics. As well as this, the class have been developing their turn taking skills in their Attention Autism sessions and have used these skills to play games.

## Guildhall Museum



This term, Group 4 took a visit to the Guildhall Museum in Rochester. This was an activity chosen after researching local things to do in the community. Some of the students took part in a task of excavating ancient objects from sand. They also did some wax rubbings of ancient coins and were able to feel the weight of chainmail which surprised them. The students really enjoyed learning about the Hulus and exploring the prisoner ship - seeing how the prisoners had to live.

## Warwick Class



This term Warwick class have been going out in the community for their Wheel of Independence lessons. They have visited bowling and a game café. Their objectives included participating in simple leisure activities, interacting appropriately with peers, joining in with their peers in a group situation and to be able to follow rules correctly in a game. The students went on these leisure activities and had to reflect on whether they enjoyed the activity using reflection sheets. As a class we have had the opportunity to plan ideas and activities that we think would be interesting to the students.

This term, Scotney Class have been working on their independence and functional life skills in Wheel of Independence sessions. They have also been participating in leisure activities such as bowling which has helped with them in learning to interact appropriately with peers, following rules of a game and joining in with others as a group.



In Creative Media this term, Thursday's group have been working independently to produce their own film pitches – including writing up a treatment, storyboarding the important scenes, and beginning to write them up as screenplays. Going into the future, we're hoping to shoot some "proof-of-concept" scenes from these film ideas and bring them to life!

Archie George from Group One at the Hub, brought in some historical information about his Great, great, great Grandad, William Nicholson.

William joined the army in 1848 when he was 19 years old. Six years later, William took part in what is considered as one of the bloodiest battles in history, known as "The Charge or the Light Brigade" on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1854, where only 600 men fought against the Russians.

Despite being injured, William was one of the 278 casualties that survived with 118 men killed.

Archie said "I am proud to know that he was my Grandad as he was injured but carried on, then afterwards he joined the police force."



Some of our students took a trip to Rochester Art Gallery to see the exhibition entitled **Over Lap** by artist Ian Bottle.





This term, some of the hub students visited The Tourist Information Centre at Gravesend to see what activities and attractions are available locally. One of their tasks was to speak to an unfamiliar person which they did with confidence.

## Creative Media

This term, Rochester class have been continuing to visit the Hub for their Creative Media lessons, where they have been experimenting with stop-motion animation methods, exploring techniques and reviewing other works of animation. Here you can see some of Rochester class exploring animation on the Stop-Motion Studio app, and using a wooden artist armature to replicate human movements (such as walking, running, throwing and dancing).



## Curly's Farm

This term, some of the Curly's Farm students have been learning about the different types of eggs that birds lay on the farm below are pictures of a hens egg – the brown one, a duck egg the white one, a quails egg the speckled one, they also looked at how they look once cracked into a bowl.



The students have also been moving pigs from one end of the farm to the other and they have learnt how to use 'pig boards' to move the pigs.

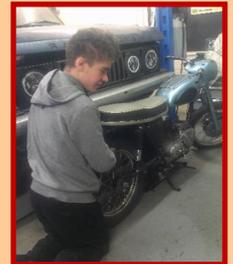
They also moved a large animal hut from one end of the farm to the other. Great team work !!



The Hub Mechanics group have been busy this term working on motorbikes and cars at Rowhill.



They have been sanding down the frames of some bikes to be re-sprayed....



...fitted the rear wheel back onto the vintage motor bike...



...Taken the sump off of a car engine....



...and made sure tyres have been balanced right to be refitted to a car.

Well done boys on a fantastic term of hard work and enthusiasm!

## More Creative Media!

After hearing lots about it from other classes, Warwick class started their Table-Top Gaming topic, where they have been creating unique characters for "Dungeons & Dragons". Using some creative writing skills and 3D modelling software they were then able to bring those characters into their first adventures... Teamwork skills are important!





### Meopham past and present.

This term, Hever class have been looking at old, historic pictures of Meopham and comparing them to now. They have been looking at what has changed and what has remained the same over time.



### Pop Art



During their art sessions this term, some of the students have been looking at Pop Art. They have been looking at the work of the American artist Roy Lichtenstein and students have been making their own artwork based on their own interests but in the style of Pop Art.

### Alpaca Farm

Over the course of two terms, a small group of pupils from primary and secondary have been visiting Lower Bush Alpacas in Cuxton.

Every week the pupils learn new things about these fascinating animals and have had the opportunity to help care for them. The highlight of these visits, for both the staff and pupils, has been taking them for walks around the farm.

Jon, the owner of the farm, has been very impressed with our pupils independence and enthusiasm when caring for the Alpacas.

### Royal Engineer Museum

Group 4 took a trip to the Royal Engineer Museum this term, something the students chose themselves. They were lucky enough to speak to a member of the Armed Forces and he offered some of the students the opportunity to wear his beret and have their photo taken with him. The students also stood in front of a piece of the Berlin Wall and some of the students dressed up in costumes and uniforms throughout the ages.



### Helen Allison FC



During the first term of 2024, our school football team attended their second competition of the academic year. They had 6 matches this time round and had some good wins along the way. Well done team.



12th—16th February 2024  
Half Term

19th February 2024  
Term 4 Begins

7th March 2024  
World Book Day

14th March 2024  
Hub Parents Evening

15th March 2024  
Red Nose Day

## Dates for the diary

25th—29th March 2024  
Autism Awareness Week

27th March 2024  
HAS Got Talent

29th March 2024  
Good Friday—Bank Holiday

1st April 2024  
Easter Monday—Bank Holiday

2nd—12th April 2024  
Half Term



15th April 2024  
Term 5 Begins

6th May 2024  
Bank Holiday

13th—17th May 2024  
STEM Week

27th May 2024  
Bank Holiday

28th—31st May 2024  
Half Term

Keep an eye on the My Child at School app for additional dates.



The school have now moved to a new home/school communication portal called MCAS (My Child At School). This portal should be used for all communication to staff. You can also view your child's attendance, update their records and pay pocket or dinner money via this portal. Please contact Francesca or Lynn if you have any problems with this system as step by step guides can be provided.

### Goodbye and Goodluck

Chelsea, our Positive Behaviour Support Specialist will be leaving us this term. I'm sure you will join us in thanking Chelsea for all of her hard work over the past 2 and a half years at Helen Allison School and wishing her all the best for her new role.



If you have any concerns around your child's computer or internet use please don't hesitate to ask us for help, guidance or support. Contact the school on 01474 814878 and ask to speak to a safeguarding officer. The Helen Allison School website has all of our safeguarding information as well as Internet Safeguarding links you might find useful.

## Safeguarding Team

The following staff are our school safeguarding team. If you have a concern or wish to speak to one of them, please call the school and we will put you in touch.



Adam  
Lead DSL



Luke  
Deputy DSL



Lisa  
Deputy DSL



Francesca  
Attendance and  
Welfare



Ashleigh  
Behaviour and  
Wellbeing



Natasha  
Financial Support