

NEWSLETTER

NEW HORIZONS

DECEMBER 2018

ASPIRE
ACADEMY
BEXLEY



»» FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHER

Firstly I wanted to say how much I have enjoyed spending time in Aspire this term. Although I come into the school regularly, the recent absence of Mr Collins has meant that I have been in the school a lot more and really got to know many of the pupils. It has been great to see them making progress and, for the vast majority, applying themselves with pride to their work in class. I also enjoyed the recent Rock Concert which showcased all of the pupils' talents. It was particularly lovely to watch those pupils who were reluctant to join in overcome their shyness and take the stage. Well done to all the pupils and the staff who were involved!



Unfortunately, Mr Collins has been unwell for much of the term which has meant that Mrs Hopkins is working alongside other senior staff from the New Horizons Federation in running the school. On a day to day basis, Mrs Hopkins is the point of contact for parents, other visitors and the staff team. However, in the majority of instances, any queries or concerns can be answered by your child's teacher who is at the classroom door now every morning to welcome your child to school.

You may be aware that we are making some changes to improve the building and create more space. This is so intervention work can go on within the main classroom and become part of the daily offer of support. We have also increased our Higher Level Teaching Support and Behaviour Support through "borrowing" Mrs Onedeko (HLTA) from Horizons for the foreseeable future and using the skills of Mr Adogun in working with children who are leaving the classroom and need help to settle back to work.

The school is full and we are now having to repeatedly turn away pupils who are in need of places. You will be aware that we increased our numbers in February 2018 with the introduction of Purple Class and an extra eight places. We are aware of the growing need for more places but hindered currently by the size of our building which cannot accommodate any more pupils. Much as we would love to expand, this is not something we can achieve at the present time.

Finally, thank you to all those parents who have worked with us to communicate a consistent message around behaviour and expectations. This is key in helping our children make the right choices and understand what is acceptable behaviour not just in school but in later life. We know that our pupils have challenges, but our aim is to help them overcome those barriers by working together with home to allow them to experience success and gain the skills needed for secondary school and beyond.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year! **Jo Southby**

»» ABSENCE

If your child is absent please call 020 8304 1320.

»» TERM DATES 18/19

Term 1:	03/09/2018 - 19/10/2018
Term 2:	05/11/2018 - 21/12/2018
Term 3:	07/01/2019 - 15/02/2019
Term 4:	25/02/2019 - 05/04/2019
Term 5:	23/04/2019 - 24/05/2019
Term 6:	03/06/2019 - 19/07/2019
Closures:	03/09/2018 (Training) 04/09/2018 (Training) 07/01/2019 (Training) 06/05/2019 (B Holiday) 07/05/2019 (Training)

»» DINNER MONEY

Please note that school meals are:

£2.35 per day

or

£11.75 per week.

School meals should be paid for in advance.

If your child's meal arrangements change please notify the office as soon as possible.

»» DIARY DATES

Monday 7th January

INSET day

Friday 11th January

Behaviour reward day for pupils

Tuesday 29th January

young voices at the O2

Friday 1st February

Zoo lab visiting Aspire

Tuesday 2nd April

CRIBS Easter Play

»» MINIBUS

We are very pleased to announce that Aspire now have a brand new minibus.

We are very much looking forward to using it for many activities in the new year



»» CURRICULUM

Next term classes across the school will be focusing on different periods of history. Orange red and blue classes will be learning about the Mayans and yellow and green classes the Anglo Saxons.

They will be finding out about who they were, how they lived and their religious beliefs. Pupils will be learning through various means including video's, art and DT work and practical hands on tasks.

Purple class will be going on a safari to Africa, learning about where the country is, the culture and some African tradition's

In science orange, blue and red class will be learning about evolution looking at how humans and animals have evolved over time. Yellow and green classes will

be learning about famous scientists and inventors including Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison. Purple class will be learning about Animals and their off spring.

All pupils work with a PE coach once a week and next term they will be focusing on basketball and hockey skills. Blue and yellow class will be swimming each Thursday morning.

KS2 pupils learn a modern foreign language of Spanish.

»» TRANSITION



»» PUPIL PROFILE - KENZO

I have been at aspire academy/Westbrooke for about five years and at first I didn't like it But as I grew I liked it more and more.

There was one teacher who moved called Miss petty, she moved from England to Australia a few years ago and visited us for Christmas one time it was fun. We also had Mrs bishop and some more teachers that are not here anymore but it was fun when they were here, my previous schools were the North Heath School and the link near abbey wood those schools weren't very nice but this school is fun.

We have fun trips, rewards and golden time and lots more. If you get eight or more gold certificates at the end of the term, you go on a trip if you get a silver you go to the park and more, if you get bronze you stay at school and play games.

We have Mr Collins ,Mrs Harrington ,Miss Michelle, Mrs Hopkins and more teachers it's a nice school I recommend visiting if you have spare time.

By Kenzo Year 6



»» FRANCESCA CHRISTMAS - GOVERNOR



I used to be a secondary school teacher in East London. I was a music teacher, and I spent quite a lot of my timetable teaching qualifications designed to provide a pathway to working in the creative industries – it was brilliant to be able to work alongside talented young people, helping them realise their dreams and ambitions. It's a real privilege to have been invited to be a Governor at New Horizons Federation, as it gives me the same opportunities again to see so many pupils work towards achieving their full potential across all three schools, every time I visit. I worked for a while in

Teacher Education too, mentoring and tutoring teachers at the beginning of their careers as they qualified to teach in schools, and I still really enjoy working alongside and supporting brilliant teachers – something that I think is a really important part of the Governor role. My job now is in Education Research and I spend my time thinking about and finding out about ways in which we can, as a society, ensure equitable provision in education for young people, so that that every single pupil has the opportunity to be the best they can be. That's what attracted me to New Horizons Federation – a group of teachers with high expectations for all young people and the belief that everyone can aim high and achieve their goals.

I'm looking forward to joining the Governing Body, and meeting many of the students across the New Horizons Schools.

This term we saw the current Year 6's visit Endeavour as part of their Secondary Transition programme. They all took part in a trampolining session and enjoyed learning new skills.

The Transition programme will last all academic year and will include a different event at Endeavour, per term where the students will get to meet a variety of different staff members and find out about the school.

» CHRISTMAS AT ASPIRE



Christmas at Aspire has been very busy this year and both pupils and staff have enjoyed the festivities. We started with decorating our Christmas tree. Every pupil made their own Christmas decoration to place on the tree.

All pupils and staff enjoyed Christmas dinner together.

Pupils and staff worked hard to produce this year's Christmas Play which focused on the story of Babushka. The pupils acting and singing skills were amazing and they made the staff and their families very proud.

Other Christmas activities included the choir carol singing at Bexleyheath clock tower, the Aspire Christingle service and the school Christmas Party.



» PUPIL PROFILE - RYAN

I have been at aspire for 3 or 4 years and the whole atmosphere of the school is encouraging, supportive, and since I have been here my whole personality is changing since day 1.

My previous teachers: Miss Arkwright, Miss Holman, Miss McGuinness and Mrs Harrington and all of them have been supportive throughout my whole time at aspire.

I like aspire because of its happy and surprising atmosphere.

When I started I thought I could do what I wanted and I hated everyone, I was an annoying, hyper, bad behaved kid, but since I knew that I was getting to know the environment, my behaviour changed completely, the only time I have had bad behaviour is when I change classes, but I am already year six so, I have the biggest change just around the corner, changing schools, everything will change, I won't see no-one I know here there, I barely see my friends at my previous school, Peareswood primary school.



But here I don't care how many friends I have one close friend. He is funny, nice, happy and always up for a challenge.

Every teacher here is not really worried about their safety, they are worried for our safety, but the things they do to keep us safe also make the school a safe environment, and practically, they get hurt to keep us safe.

» BADMINTON FESTIVAL



This term the children from Aspire have taken part in the School Games badminton festival. This was a fun non-competitive festival which included participating in a range of pre requisite activities to enable the children to have the chance to compete in a badminton competition next year.

Next year, we are hoping to compete in several different competitions including the Basketball league, change for life festival and are hoping to set up a football tournament with other local schools. We will also be choosing children, who have a particular interest in sport, to have specialised training to become sports leaders for the school. This will involve the children setting up play time sporting activities, blogging about competitive events using our School Games website and having meetings to discuss future sporting activities at the school such as after school and lunchtime clubs.



» THE SENCO ROLE - MRS HEAD

This term I started my new role as Senco (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) at both Aspire and Endeavour Academies. I am thoroughly enjoying all the new aspects and challenges of this position and my work with both the students and parents.

I am currently working on a transition programme for our year 6's, which will see them attend Endeavour to take part in a range of activities from trampolining to a DT and construction workshop. The Year 6's will have a tour of the school, meet a variety of different staff members to find out about their roles and the running of the school. They will have the opportunity to ask questions and find out everything they need to know. Parents have also been involved through visits to Endeavour, advice on Secondary schools and will be invited into their Child's new school once confirmed – hopefully you will hear from Bexley by March 2019.

I am also thinking ahead to our current Year 5 students and their school choices. I have met with many of our parents to discuss and answer their questions on which schools to view. I will be holding tours of Endeavour and coffee mornings for Year 5 parents in the Summer Term, before they are sent their Secondary Transfer forms from Bexley SEN. In the meantime, I would advise parents and carers of Year 5 students to have a look at the Bexley Local Offer online and arrange to visit any Secondary schools that you are interested in to find out about their suitability for your child for year 7.

Part of my role is conducting the annual reviews, and it has been amazing hearing the student feedback, and the positive comments about Aspire that our parents have made. The annual review process has changed this year with the EHCP outcomes becoming as centred on health and care as they are on Education. Thank you to all the parents so far that have taken part in discussions around setting new outcomes for their children. I also liaise with our Speech and Language Team to ensure that all students have been assessed and reviews and that appropriate individual or group work is put into place. I look forward to meeting you all throughout the year,

Mrs Head



» STAFF PROFILE - PAUL HINMAN

I am a new teacher at Aspire Academy, I have only been here for about 3 weeks but it feels like 3 months! I feel proud to be part of such a dedicated and hard-working team. I have been made most welcome by a force to be reckoned with that is devoted to the well being of our young people, which is why we do the job we do: to try and make a positive difference to the lives of these very special individuals.

When I was at school, I was what you would call an average pupil academically, I had to work hard at learning compared to those that seemed to understand everything. I liked going to school, I always had the greatest respect and admiration for my teachers which I guess is the reason why I am at Aspire now after 21 years of being in the profession.

Sport has always been an important part of my life and school provided a platform for me to excel in developing my physical well-being.

Music is in my soul, I had about five guitar lessons in primary school and gave it up to play the piano for 9 years. When I was 15, I picked up the guitar again and taught myself to play because I wanted to be a rock star which nearly happened when I was 19 when Virgin Records nearly signed up the band I was in.

So, as you can see, I had my fingers in different pies, I was in with the sporty, musical and studious crowds at school. I look back at those times with fond memories. In secondary school I was in the rugby team, the drama society, the orchestra, the choir, the literary and debating society as well as the first rock band to perform at the sixth form social event.

Being half Polish means a great deal to me, my mother came to this country just after WWII and quickly learned how to fit in and become English. I grew up with some confusion about my identity, feeling slightly embarrassed about my grand parents not being able to speak English properly with very heavy accents, but luckily my friends found it "cool" so it all added to me being different in a good way.

If I could give the pupils at Aspire advice, I would say never be ashamed of who you are, communicate with us no matter what it is, we are here to listen, it is our duty of care to make you feel as safe as possible, we are always here for you.



» ROCK FESTIVAL



In November we held our first ever Rock Festival at Aspire. The pupils worked with Rachel from Rock Steady music over two days and their hard work culminated in a concert for the parents to attend. Each class chose a band name and produced merchandise for the concert. This included posters, VIP passes and headbands to wear for the performance. The pupils produced incredible results and parents were very proud to see their child performing in front of them. We are hoping to carry on working with Rock Steady Music in the future.

