



THE HOLMEWOOD  
SCHOOL



National  
Autistic  
Society

Accredited  
Advanced  
2020



## Newsletter

# Friday 18th March 2022

Dear Families,

This week has been very exciting with a range of science activities arranged in both schools by Mr Podichetty. Students had the opportunity to come off curriculum and explore new concepts and theories that intrigued and motivated them. Older students participated in some A Level biology work around the pond at the Upper School site. Younger students had a fantastic time at the Science Vs Magic workshops at the Lower School site. Below you will see lots of photos of what they have been up to. Special thanks to Mr Podichetty for a very special week.

I'd also like to say a big well done to Clara, Livia and Arlo who all presented brilliant TED Talks this week at the Upper school....with a science link/theme of course. I continue to be very proud and overwhelmed by the level of confidence in our young people.

Best wishes to you all. Have a fun weekend.

**Ms Camilleri**

Executive Head Teacher

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## Dates For Your Diary

- **Mon 21st - Fri 25th Mar** - World Autism Awareness Week (WAAW)
- **Tues 22nd Mar** - Speaker Ros Blackburn delivering a parent talk at 6pm
- **Weds 23rd Mar** - Speaker Ros Blackburn delivering the staff CPD 3:45 - 5pm
- **Thurs 24th Mar** - Sarah Wall (Sophia's mum) delivering a parent talk at 6pm
- **Fri 25th Mar** - End of spring term
- **Mon 18th Apr** - Bank holiday
- **Tues 19 Apr** - Inset day
- **Wed 20th Apr** - Summer term (1st half) starts

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## I'm Walking On Sunshine

It never ceases to amaze me how much of an impact the weather has on our general wellbeing in this country.

Of course, back in Australia the weather has its impacts, but these are more literal. As the famous poem goes; I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains, Of ragged mountain ranges, of droughts and flooding rains. Over the past month, some of the areas that are dearest to me in Queensland and Northern New South Wales have embodied the 'flooding rains' characteristic, and I have watched on from afar as the weather has caused mass devastation to communities.

Sometimes the news feels like it's one horrible thing after another and if you're not careful, these things start to add up and we can feel a sense of foreboding. This is particularly relevant for our young people, who, due to difficulties with theory of mind, may struggle to visualise a preferred future. When they are already worried about what might happen in their own future, thinking about the threat of war and climate change makes the whole thing just seem scary. This anxiety can impact the present, because it takes away the excitement and promise of what the future might bring when we achieve our goals.

In our briefing this morning, one of our lovely teachers explained that a student had been becoming increasingly worried about her future. In order to best support her, the teacher suggested that we focus with her on the positives in the present, in order to avoid her ruminating about the future.

I'd be happy if we rolled out this suggestion across the board. Really, all we ever have is now. And the now I am currently experiencing is full of beautiful greenery, freshly budding flowers and sunshine. This weekend I plan to make the most of this weather by allowing it to be a reminder to enjoy now.

Wishing you all the same.

**Ms B Young**

Head of Upper School

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# World Autism Awareness Week: 21-25 March

So the final themed / celebration week is upon us - it's World Autism Acceptance Week!

All of the staff have worked hard to plan some exciting events for the students to enjoy, celebrating their autistic identity! In multiple lessons throughout the week, students will have the opportunity to access activities on the topic, as well as attend talks delivered by others with autism, sharing their journey!



## For parents, there are 2 talks:

One on **Tuesday 22nd March 2022** that will run from **6pm - 7.30pm** (to include the opportunity to ask questions) from Ros Blackburn. Ros Blackburn is an adult with autism who lives in the UK. At three months old she appeared withdrawn, isolated and very much in a world of her own. At eighteen months she was diagnosed very severely autistic but with average intellectual ability. Now at 52 Ros lectures nationally and internationally giving insight into her own experiences and the care and education practices she has observed. In spite of the severe limitations imposed by her condition, Ros displays great courage (and a strong sense of humour) in facing her fears and tackling life's challenges. Ros worked with the Oscar-winning actress Sigourney Weaver in preparing for her role as an autistic woman in the film "Snowflake". She also presented with Barry Prizant and Carol Gray in a workshop tour in the US, and her influence on Barry is mentioned in his book "Uniquely Human". It is Ros' wish that all those who attend her talks find them helpful and informative but above all that the experience is entertaining and full of fun. Here is the link to join [meet.google.com/ovh-kdmx-ejj](https://meet.google.com/ovh-kdmx-ejj). Ros asks that as much as possible, cameras are kept on and that microphones are muted.

The second talk is on **Thursday 24th March 2022** and will be delivered by Sarah Wall, a parent of a student in Year 7. It will be from **6pm - 7pm** and based on her personal experience of University as an autistic individual. Here is the link to join [meet.google.com/vog-xqpn-ufj](https://meet.google.com/vog-xqpn-ufj). Again, please keep cameras on and microphones muted and maybe some prepared questions.

In addition to this, a group of staff will be completing the NAS Spectrum Night Walk on Saturday 2nd April 2022. Thank you to all of those who have already donated towards this worthy cause! For those of you who'd still like the chance to contribute, the JustGiving page link is <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/thsl?newPage=True>.

I look forward to celebrating with you all next week!

**Ms Wiltshire**

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# Comic Relief Cake Sale

Well done to Lower School students who put on a spectacular cake sale this afternoon for Comic Relief.

Thank you to everyone who contributed such amazing cakes

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Dear Parents,

It has been a very busy and productive week for Northern Class. Arlo has prepared and delivered our Thursday assembly on the Four Waves of Feminism and has confidently answered student's questions at the end. With Science Week Northern Class took on a variety of activities. Arlo represented our class in Holmewood's TedX style talks giving a fantastic presentation on Space. Their knowledge and eloquence while presenting captured the attention of their audience and we couldn't be more proud.



During our morning form time on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we made Square Bubbles, Lava Lambs, Exploding Rockets, respectively. The experiments were organised and delivered by our Teaching Assistants. Students engaged in the experiments, the results were amazing and we had such a fantastic time!

**Square Bubbles with Ms Fasouli:**



**Exploding Rockets with Ms Johnson:**



With Science Week coming to an end we are looking forward to our Reward Trip on Monday to the Trampoline Park and an afternoon with games and food!

Hope you all have a great Easter.

**Mr Rose and the Northern Teaching Team.**

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## Free Course: Parental Awareness of Self-Harm

Self-harm is really not discussed enough within our society and it affects more young people than we might think. It can be anything from nail biting to hair pulling right through to some more serious actions. This free training course will take a look at some of the triggers, some of the signs to look for and have an open conversation about ways to support young people to break the cycle of self-harm.

For more details and to register click [HERE](#).

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## British Science Week Gallery

This week at both Holmewood's Upper and Lower sites students have been enjoying British Science Week.

We have been running experiments during form times, breaks and lunch times to explore and experiment with all the fun activities we can achieve through science.

We have also been developing our learning during lesson time with a wide variety of exciting lessons co-ordinated by our amazing Science Teacher, Mr.Podichetty.

Lower School students had a fantastic trip to the London Transport Museum and a very dramatic Science vs Magic show that provided scintillating entertainment for both staff and students.

Enjoy our British Science Week gallery below...











## Designated Team For Child Protection And Safeguarding

If you are a student and have been harmed, or are at risk of harm, these are the people who can help. You can also talk to us if you are worried that another student is at risk of harm.

Lower School			
			
Ms D'Silva (Assistant Head and Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer for Lower School, Level 3)	Ms Lempaszek (Head of Welfare & Behaviour, Deputy DSO for Lower School, Level 3)	Mr Gibbs (Humanities & PSHE Teacher, Deputy DSO for Lower School, Level 3)	Ms Camilleri (Executive Head, CEOP Ambassador and Deputy DSO, Level 3)
Upper School			
			
Mr Lamb (Deputy Head and Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer for Upper School, Level 3)	Ms Young (Head of School and Deputy DSO, Level 3)	Ms Young (Assistant Head and Deputy DSO, Level 3)	Ms Camilleri (Executive Head, CEOP Ambassador and Deputy DSO, Level 3)

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