



Dear all,

This update includes a look back to key highlights of last half term and looks ahead to the new one – we really hope the students and all our colleagues have enjoyed a much-needed breather, and I also extend thanks to those who worked last week, whose important efforts on all things finance, HR and premises do not go unseen.

Just a few of the highlights of last half term:

This is in no way an exhaustive list, but a good way to start a new half term is just to call to mind a few of the many positive times we had together in the last one.

Seeing Year 9 at work in their new classes: Year 9 can be a challenging year to be a young person – not new anymore, and not yet in the full throes of the world of GCSEs and BTECs either. And, as some of you know, we had to work through some challenges to get the combinations right across this year group working as well as the many superb people within it. Mr Wilkinson, their Year Leader, and Mr Hewitt, Deputy Headteacher and senior link to the year group, are tireless in their support and challenge of everyone to be the best they can be and they were thrilled to see such hard work and settled efforts in learning walks they carried out, as was I when I also visited them in Science. Mrs Rees also invited us in to one of her Music lessons just before the break because the performers were, in her words, smashing it. Well done, Year 9 and all the adults working with them.

Year 7 settled in incredibly well: As a large year group of 240 or so young people, this year group made an early impact in the best of ways. For me personally, I can't wait to start our Choir rehearsals this week, ready for a performance in the end of term concert – bravo to Miss Hickman's tutor group for having the most volunteers for our choir 😊.

Our incredible students' support of our school at all our Open Events: From our Head Students to our Senior Prefects, our Prefects, our Junior Prefects to everyone who pitched in and helped in individual departments to our top notch Y8s who spoke alongside me at Open Evening, every single young person was knock out. And colleagues valued each one of them such a lot, too. Not to mention the vibe created by the students with their staff in each lesson everyone visited on some nine Open Mornings, seeing the school as it typically is.




235 young people have now decided they will be putting their trust in us, joining Y7 in September 2024, and it's your children and their example who have done so much to give them the instinct, the feel that this is the right thing to do. I couldn't be prouder of them all. 😊 😊

Noadswood

North Road, Dibden Purlieu
Southampton, Hampshire SO45 4ZF

Tel 023 8084 0025

Email info@noadswood.hants.sch.uk

 @Noadswood_Sch
 @Noadswood_Sch
 @Noadswood_Sch



Noadswood

It has been brilliant to spend time with the new Headteacher at Applemore, Clare Williams, and to continue to work closely with all the schools in the New Forest and across our wider region in Hampshire: At get togethers in our school, at Applemore and at meetings at two of our local colleges, Brockenhurst and Barton Peveril, we continued to plan shared projects and to consider how to respond together to local challenges; we also made plans to run good strong professional development for us together as colleagues, responding to shared issues across the schools in the Waterside, in order to promote ambition for all our local young people to the max.

As many of you know, Noadswood had been working towards joining the Inspire Learning Partnership because of the belief we have in collaboration in the interests of our local young people and all our colleagues.

In the end, the Boards of Trustees and Leaders of both Inspire Learning Partnership and Noadswood determined that now isn't the right time to go ahead with Noadswood's transfer into ILP. That said, our learning, our strategic thinking and our vision for collaboration across the Waterside and the wider local area have been enhanced by our recent joint working and experiences. We look forward to ongoing professional friendships and collaborations together in the interests of all the young people we serve.

Noadswood sport got back underway in its usual fine fashion: As I jogged (using the term fairly loosely) our Race for Life course, it was superb to see so many students enjoying their sports clubs and just being out in the fresh air together, just the best. Lots of teams had success, including our Under 14 netballers in the Hampshire Tournament with Miss King – lots of our players were younger than many of their opponents and they stepped up superbly well. Just one team of many I am saluting in this letter – well done y'all!

Our Lovely Library continues to thrive under the creative leadership of Mrs Eldridge, including our recent Bookmark Competition that had a mahoosive 115 entrants! Winning entries below, congrats to one and all!





Colleague and student illness in the last couple of weeks of the half term took a real surge upwards, and we hope everyone is feeling better having had the break to rest up, too. The students really did us proud in the huge majority of cases when we were light on the ground. I have worked in schools where this would not be the case, and some youngsters would notice and take a bit of advantage. Here, we continued to have visitors in, going on tours at all kinds of random points of the day, and still all things were good. When we needed to deal with difficulties, the students worked with us to do so. I don't take this for granted.

Some important issues raised with us last half term:

One of the key issues brought to us by parents, carers, colleagues, residents and students alike was the ongoing congestion in the roads around our school and our friends at Orchard Infant and Junior Schools. We wonder if there is anything any of you can do regarding your own arrangements to alleviate this at all, whilst we continue to campaign and work for change? Could you park further away and ask your child to walk to your car? Could more car shares be sorted? We are not trying to dictate your logistics and goodness knows we appreciate with our own families' how hard logistics can be. But if even a few families made a change, it would help relieve the pressure on space and the risk of accidents a little.

In terms of the work that we are doing ourselves, we were delighted to welcome back Mrs Rollett, Assistant Headteacher, throughout last half term, and she and Miss Mabey, one of our admin officers for premises and health and safety, have been working together on this all-important topic, and have these words for us all:

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude for your ongoing support and valuable suggestions regarding road safety in our school community. We appreciate your involvement and dedication to ensuring the safety of our students and one another.

As you may already know, Noadswood is proud to be a part of the Modeshift programme, which aims to promote sustainable transportation options for students and staff. This programme encourages us to actively engage in initiatives that prioritise walking, cycling, and public transportation, ultimately reducing our reliance on cars. By participating in Modeshift, we not only contribute to a healthier environment but also foster a sense of community and responsibility among our school members.



I am delighted to inform you that we have made good progress in promoting road safety within our school. Below is a brief overview of the actions we have taken so far:

- 1. Walk to School Month: We actively participated in "Walk to School Month" by encouraging students to walk to school during October. This initiative aimed to promote physical activity, reduce traffic congestion, and enhance road safety awareness.*
- 2. 5/10 Walking Zone: We have created a 5/10 minute walking zone around our school premises. A map outlining this zone has been shared with all new students and each new year 7 cohort, ensuring they are aware of the safest routes to take when walking to school.*
- 3. Staff Cycling: To encourage sustainable transportation among our staff, we have implemented various cycle schemes. These initiatives provide our staff members with the necessary resources and support to engage in cycling as a means of commuting.*
- 4. Ongoing Fundraisers for a New Bike Shed: Following the kick start to this by students' and parents' sponsored event, the money from which is safely saved away, we have organised further fundraisers to support the establishment of a new bike shed on our school grounds. This initiative aims to provide a new secure and convenient space for students and staff to store their bicycles, further promoting cycling as a viable transportation option.*
- 5. Bicycle Security Marking Event: On the 20th of October, we held an event dedicated to bicycle security marking. This event raised awareness about bicycle theft prevention and provided students with the opportunity to mark their bikes with a unique identification code for added security.*
- 6. In addition to these initiatives, we continuously re-emphasise responsible behaviour and road safety awareness through assemblies and other whole school and specific messaging. It is our firm belief that promoting road safety goes hand in hand with fostering a safe and inclusive school environment, all told.*

Though this work has been important and will be ongoing, we understand that more can be done to enhance road safety in and around the school. We have met with local councillors to request the installation of traffic calming measures, safer crossing facilities, and a 20-mph limit zone outside of the school. Unfortunately, these measures have not been approved. Nevertheless, we remain committed to exploring further opportunities for collaboration with our school community, other local schools we work closely with, residents, and local councillors in order to make our roads safer for everyone. More to follow this half term on this – we'd welcome your support and attendance at planned discussion forums we will be holding.



Another not unrelated issue you rightly raised was the fact that our school gates, off the car park and at Redwood, continue to be held open. This is not good enough and I apologise unreservedly to the community for this, as other members of the team have already conveyed to you. Without going too deeply into the intricacies, it is an issue that has frustrated and upset me on behalf of students and staff, and one that I, along with our Premises Manager and other key staff, have worked hard on with the companies concerned. Logjams have been broken, and we will be able to provide you with an approximate timeline for the safety measures needed to be implemented very soon.

In the meantime, to remind you, our Reception team, as part of their role, inform a team of us on our all day long on call rota of any activity coming in and exiting the school, as do colleagues in Redwood itself; all instances are then followed up by someone on that rota, which was precisely what we did well, up until we received the Conditions Improvement Fund for the gates, and we will do it again, tirelessly, until the issues with the gates are finally put right. If you'd like to speak to me or one of the team about this matter, don't hesitate to drop us a line at info@noadswood.hants.sch.uk.

A third type of issue rightly raised has been instances of unkindness between some students at social times. Before digging into this a little, I think we first need to pay tribute to the vast majority of our students who conduct themselves superbly well in our social times, come rain or shine. Schools aren't easy places for everyone because of the sheer variety of encounters that the young people have to grapple with all the time – that is one thing that has always been the same. And so many of your children do you proud every day.

When they do not, we understand that emotions run high for you as well as for children, and we thank you for your work with us, your openness, your challenge when it is needed and the stickability between us all to keep going until situations are made better in which ever way is required, through sanctions, mending relationships, contracts, whole year group or school messaging or a combination of all of the above.

Mrs Gee, who leads our Learning Reset base, has led a competition with tutor groups to up the strength of messaging we are giving about the impact of unkindness and bullying, and a presentation on this including a film that we made was shown to all the students last half term – an idea that came from a parent.



One example of students' successful work is here:



A further example of parental influence came in the form of ideas for an assembly which Mrs Loveday delivered shortly before the half term, around the notion of the diversity or our school family being its strength, focusing on the empathy and understanding needed (not a desirable thing, a necessity, now in this world more than ever) between faiths, for instance, those who do not have a faith, and also the wide range of nationalities represented in our school:



What makes you an individual?





We look forward to working with a parent/carer working party this half term on how best to represent our values of respect and empathy in branded posters as teaching tools across the school to keep these notions live all the time. We also have a new group of diversity student and colleague reps, helping us progress these issues in the way they believe is right, with sensitivity to everyone in our school community. You might have a view to share or you may be worried about your child and you haven't yet told anyone – if so, please contact your child's tutor, year leader or any one of us to discuss what is on your mind or your ideas you think could help.

Coming up in the first few weeks of this half term:

Our Parent Staff Association Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Tuesday, 7th November, from 6 to 7 pm. The AGM will be held in our school conference room, just through the door from Reception. The PSA is a fantastic way to get involved in the school community, meet other parents, carers and some of us staff in a different sort of context from the usual, and actively contribute to the well-being of our students. If you are unable to attend the meeting in person, there is also an option to join online.

We would value your participation very much, and welcome any support you can provide – our recent Y7 welcome disco was such a highlight of last half term, thanks to the work of the committee, and it's that kind of lovely atmosphere to raise money for the best of causes, our students, that you'd be a part of.

Maybe you'd like to know more before the meeting? If so, drop us an email at psa@noadswood.hants.sch.uk and one of the team will be happy to hear from you. Else join us at the meeting – I will be incredibly personally grateful to whoever joins us there.

Our first 'Wear Something Different Day' is coming up on Thursday, 9th November. On this day, students have the option to wear entirely non-school uniform or their regular uniform with something 'different' of their choice. We kindly request that participating students contribute £1.00 on Arbor or by handing in £1 to the PSA (Parent Staff Association) members who will be on the gates with buckets to collect cash on the day. We greatly appreciate yours and the students' support in making this event a success. We know that not all students find these days easy so we really want to emphasise: wearing school uniform with a little personal touch of something different is more than fine, or maybe a different top beneath the blazer or jumper, what every makes it easy, right through to full non-school uniform is more than fine. It being November, and not the summer term, we'd be thankful for the students wearing clothing that will keep them warm and dry, too.



Noadswood

Bags2school collection scheduled for Monday, 20th November is another initiative organised by the PSA. This initiative aims to raise funds for various school projects and activities through families contributing unwanted clothes, shoes, and household textiles which are then converted to funds for the school's students, as well as contributing to local sustainability efforts. If you have any items you would like to donate, **you can drop off bags after school on Friday 17th November or up until 9 am on Monday, 20th November.** Any donations will be gratefully received.

The Noadswood Family Festive Extravaganza will be launched in the next couple of weeks – there will be an opportunity for every student to receive a little festive treat to eat, whilst others will be drawn out of our whole school tombola to win prizes galore to perk up the festivities. We're going to encourage colleagues and parents/carers to pop donations in for the tombola, perhaps spending a little bit on what they might normally pay towards cards to one another – we'll provide those to them so they can still write special notes to their special people. All will be revealed in the next couple of weeks, as will other festive bits and pieces to cheer up cold and challenging times.

Mrs Rollett and Mrs Hindson in our Admin team are busy co-ordinating our next newsletter, which will come in the main from our departments who have been sending in their highlights and key news so do look out for that soon.

For now, all our best for a good half term ahead for all at and around Noadswood – if you need to let us know something, you know where we are at info@noadswood.hants.sch.uk.

Huge thanks for your continued support,

Kathryn Marshall and the Noadswood Leadership Team



Important Dates

- Thursday 2nd November – Awards Evening
- Tuesday 7th November – Work Experience Parent / Carer Briefing
- Thursday 9th November – Year 11 Leavers 2022/2023 Presentation Evening
- Thursday 9th November – Wear Something Different Day
- Monday 13th November – Year 11 Mocks Begin
- Thursday 16th November – Year 10 Subject Progress Event
- Friday 1st December – INSET Day
- Week beginning 11th December – Reports Published
- Friday 15th December – Final Day
- Wednesday 3rd January – Return for Spring Term I