Telephone: 01376 321813 | admin@alechunter.com | www.alechunter.com

April 2023 | Issue 93

### Welcome Back!

Welcome back to a new term, with the promise of warmer weather and brighter days ahead. The Spring Term was somewhat extraordinary, with the ongoing industrial action creating some unusual circumstances for us to manage, so it has been a while since we published a copy of the Herald. However, I am keen to celebrate a number of great achievements and events, even though some took place a little while ago, so you will find details of them in this edition. We will then aim to publish a further issue in the near future, covering some more recent activities.

I often draw attention to Year 11 in my editorial, since they frequently dominate our thoughts, especially at this point. This year is no different, and we will shortly be sharing our plans with parents, highlighting the pre-exam sessions and revision inputs which we trust will ensure that they are fully briefed and well prepared for all the challenges that lie ahead. With Art exams, MFL speaking tests and PE practicals taking place in the next few weeks, there is no escaping the fact that the exam season is effectively already under way, so I'm sure you would join me in wishing all our youngsters the very best of luck.

But on this occasion, I also wanted to give a special mention to Year 7. I am hearing so many positive comments from colleagues about their excellent attitude to learning and their compliant behaviour both in and out of the classroom, evidenced by the very low number of incidents involving Year 7 students. My own visits to lessons completely endorse this view. Not every cohort embraces our ethos and expectations quite as readily, so I wanted to publicly recognise their efforts and send a message of thanks to the whole year group for making such an impressive start to their Alec Hunter journey.

Best wishes to everyone for the term ahead,

Mr Lawn (Headteacher)

# **Diary Dates**

#### April 2023

3<sup>rd</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> April – Easter Holidays

17<sup>th</sup> April – Year 10 Music National Youth Orchestra performance at Saffron Hall 19<sup>th</sup> April – Jack Petchey Awards Evening 20<sup>th</sup> April – 4.30pm-7.30pm Year 8 Parents' Evening

24<sup>th</sup> April-5<sup>th</sup> May – Year 10 Formal Exams 24<sup>th</sup> April – Year 9 HPV 2 vaccinations

25<sup>th</sup> April – Year 9 HPV 2 vaccinations

25<sup>th</sup> April – GCSE PE Moderation Day

27th April – NEU Industrial Action Day

29<sup>th</sup> April – England v France Women's Rugby Twickenham Stadium trip

#### May 2023

1<sup>st</sup> May – Bank Holiday

2<sup>nd</sup> May – NEU Industrial Action Day

4<sup>th</sup> May – 4.30pm-7.30pm Year 7 Parents' Evening

8th May - Bank Holiday

9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> May – Year 11 MFL Speaking Exams 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May – Year 8 In-Class Exam Week **29<sup>th</sup> May-2<sup>nd</sup> June – Half Term** 

#### June 2023

5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June – Year 7 In-Class Exam Week 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> June – Year 9 Paris Residential trip 14<sup>th</sup> June – Year 10 Parents' Information

Evening: Further/Higher Education

15<sup>th</sup> June – District Athletics Event

19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> – Year 9 Exam Week

20<sup>th</sup> June – Year 8 HPV 1 vaccinations

21st June – Mid Essex Schools Council 'United

in Diversity' Event

22<sup>nd</sup> June – Year 8 HPV 1 vaccinations

24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June – Year 9 Duke of Edinburgh

expedition

28<sup>th</sup> June – Year 11 Exam Contingency Day

29th June - Year 6 Parents' Meeting

## **New Term, New Book!**

Some new titles have appeared in the Library following some great suggestions from students. The English department asked students which books they would like to see added to the shelves of the library – and these are just some of the most popular ones.





## **Year 7 Castle Competition**

In December, Year 7 students were challenged to get creative whilst also showing off what they have been learning in History about the purpose and development of castles in England. Students were invited to design a historically accurate castle and were encouraged to use reusable and recyclable materials within their design. There were a great variety of entries that included

castles made from boxes, Lego, food containers and even built with games such as Minecraft. On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January, Humanities teachers as well as previous winners of the competition all voted for their favourite and the results were as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Isabelle McNamara (Hawking House) 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Alfie Hudson (Curie House) 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Joshua Lawrence (Hawking House)



Congratulations to **Isabelle**, the judges said her design was not only historically accurate but that she also put great emphasis on using reused and recycled materials. Isabelle received 100 House Points and a family ticket to Hedingham Castle, which the museum kindly donated.





### Chef of the Month

January's Chef of the Month award has been presented to two Year 10 students, **Ben**Vanstone and Lewis Gostling. Both students made a delicious Vanilla Gateau, adorned with chocolate decorations. They made their cakes using the creaming method, then decorated it with fresh whipped cream. As well as applying the cream round the edge of the cake and rolling it in their chosen decoration, the students practiced their piping skills when finishing the top of the cakes. Both students worked efficiently and willingly helped other students with their clearing up, so are very deserving of the Chef of the Month award!





## **Young Carers Bronze Award**

In January, Alec Hunter Academy was proud to receive the Bronze Young Carers Award from the Children's Society. This is in recognition of the work we do to raise the profile of Young Carers and acknowledge the challenges



they face. Our long-term goal is to be fully aware of all Young Carers at the academy and to offer them the support they need in order to thrive in their education.

The Young Carers Bronze Award endorses our work, as well as helping Young Carers and their parents to recognise their own role and the support that is available to them. We are proud to work alongside Essex Youth Services in seeking to provide the best for all of our young people.

#### What is a Young Carer?

Young Carers can have many demands on their time so at Alec Hunter we seek to minimise the impact this might have on their education and in their wider life.

Young Carers might include those who fulfil some of the following:

- Sorting out medication or treatment.
- Looking after brothers or sisters.
- Supporting someone physically, like helping them get out of bed.
- Supporting someone emotionally, like listening to someone who is upset.
- Helping someone to communicate.

If you feel that you need support please contact **Mr Doolan, Associate Assistant Headteacher**, on the dedicated Young Carers email: youngcarers@alechunter.com

Any information you give will be treated sensitively and will not be shared without your knowledge.

# **Year 10 Food Preparation & Nutrition Workshop**

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December, our Year 10 Food Preparation & Nutrition students made alternative Christmas cakes as part of an online workshop led by Nanny Dawn, a celebrity baker with whom the students had worked previously. Students made various frosted firs, leaves and edible berries as well as piped chocolate words such as 'Christmas', 'Winter' and 'Joy. They then used buttercream to cover a Madeira cake.









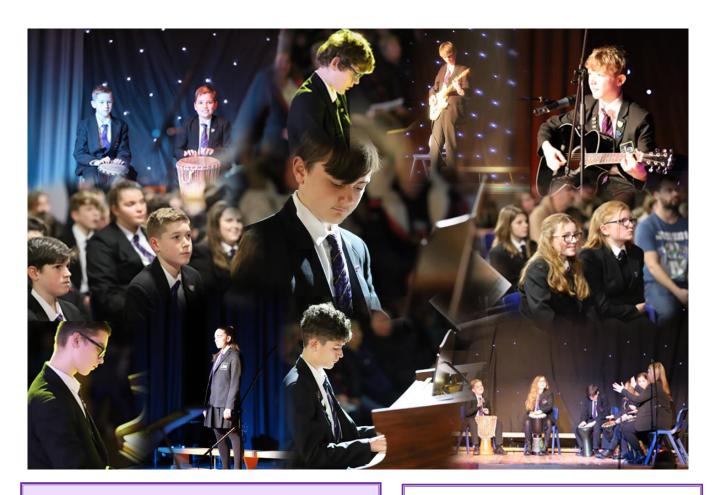






### **Winter Concert**

On 15<sup>th</sup> December, the Winter Concert took place in the Main Hall, showcasing our students' vocal and musical talents. Well done to all the students who took part in this wonderful evening: Harry Stiff, Jack Stiff, Oliver Prendi, Xanthe Hopkins, Thomas King, Max Sweeting, Henry Greatbatch, George Thomason, Poppy Smith, Rose Handrea, Oliver Phillips, Sydnie Garforth, Amelia McKenzie-Carter, Zane Miller, Leo Babet, Tia Love, Jake Sulman, Robert Badea, Poppy Harris, Sofia Minervini, Abigail Hodgson, Katie Morris, Sophia Tyler-Holman, Ellie-Mae Watts, Ellie Smith, Lucy Jenkins, Leah Rushworth, Demi Digby, Ruby Baker, Maisey Cooper, Jersey Callcut-Hannaford, Heather Hart, Jodie Shipton, Leland Osborne, Maisie Baker, Hanna Radomska, Lily Ager, Dylan Pritchard and Charley Marriott.



**Headteacher's Surgery:** Mr Lawn will be available from 3:30-4:30pm every Thursday to meet with parents and discuss any issues they may wish to raise. No appointment is required, as parents will be seen in the order they arrive, but if you wish to book a specific time, please contact the school office.

**Student Absence:** Please remember to report any student absence via:

**Tel:** 01376 559356 / **Text:** 07598 393348 / **Email:** <u>JJackson@alechunter.com</u>.

**Contact Details:** Please remember to contact us via Admin@alechunter.com if you change your telephone number or email address to ensure your contact details are kept up to date.

### www.alechunter.org

Our school website is full of lots of useful information. Click the links below to view the following resources:

- <u>Term Dates</u>
- Exam Dates and Timetables
- School Calendar
- Information about our Curriculum
- <u>Suggested Reading Lists and</u> <u>Resources</u>
- Extra-Curricular Activities and Clubs
- <u>Careers Education Information</u>
   Advice & Guidance (CEIAG)
- Safeguarding Resources

# **Skills Day**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> November, it was Skills Day and each of our year groups was involved in exciting activities that took place outside our normal curriculum.

**Year 7 students** all took part in a team-building activity day at Thriftwood Activity Centre in Brentwood. Students were given the opportunity to experience wall climbing, pedal cars and the zip wire.

**Year 8 students** were involved in an educational workshop about Fire Safety as well as taking part in a Debating Class. They also had an introduction to British Sign Language and enjoyed a talk from the Essex Police around safety.







Year 8: Fire Safety Workshop & Debating Class















**Year 9 students** enjoyed a day of Technology, ICT and Science sessions. This included planning healthy dish ideas for the school café, designing a health & fitness app and creating packaging using CAD technology. They also took part in a Science workshop exploring aeroplane design.















Year 9 Technology



















**Year 10 students** took part in maths-based sessions entitled 'Maths In Everyday Life', where they had a chance to enjoy Orienteering, a PE Obstacle course and a PE Heart Rate Activity. They also participated in an Engineering Workshop run by Ford. This involved learning about manufacturing with Stickle Bricks and practical tasks that taught the students about building, quality control and costings.



























**Year 11 students** took part in a workshop hosted by the Guardian newspaper and were taught journalistic skills to help them to write a newspaper report. They were shown how to gather details and background about a news story, as well as working on research skills and taking quotes. Students were put into teams and were tasked with designing a newspaper front cover and writing an article. The workshop was hosted by Gurds Hundal, a former journalist and author. Meanwhile, **Year 11 Art students** visited the Tate Modern in London as part of their GCSE studies.





# theguardian

For more photographs of Skills Day, please visit the News Stories page on our website by clicking **here**.

# **Lille Christmas Market Trip**

On Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December, some Year 8 students travelled to Lille to visit the Christmas Market for the day. Travelling by coach and ferry, students and staff practised their French language buying gifts and food. All the students had a great experience, were very well behaved and were a credit to the school.

















ALEC HUNTER ACADEMY PRESENTS...



The Musical!



Monday 17<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TikTok is a free social media platform that lets users create, share and watch short videos ranging anywhere from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in duration. The app gained notoriety for its viral dances, trends and celebrity cameos and can be a creative, fun platform for teens to enjoy. Now available in 75 languages, it has more than a billion active users worldwide (as of spring 2022) and is most popular with the under-16 age bracket. In fact, a 2022 Ofcom report found TikTok to be the most-used social media platform for posting content, particularly among young people aged 12 to 17.

#### age-inappropriate content

#### IN-APP SPENDING

#### **ADDICTIVE NATURE**

Like all social networking platforms,
TikTok can be addictive: figures show
that young people are investing
increasing amounts of time in it. In the
UK, children with TikTok spend an
average of 102 minutes per day on the
app, versus 53 minutes on YouTube.
This compulsive repeated use can
interfere with their sleep patterns –
leading to irritability – and distract
them from other activities.

Introduced in late 2022, the 'TikTok Now' feature lets users post a daily video or photo at the exact same time as their friends. Users receive a synchronised notification at a random time of day, giving them three minutes to take a video or real-time photo. This addition can not only be a distraction to young people but could lead to them inadvertently sharing private content such as their location.

# Advice for Parents & Carers

#### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account with their child's and control their settings remotely. Parents can then, for example, turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content); set screen time limits; and manage their child's ability to send messages (and to whom). Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

#### MAKE ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Although under-16s will have their TikTok account set to private by default, bypassing this setting is relatively easy. However, parents have the ability to manually set their child's account to private – meaning that their videos won't be visible to strangers and they won't be able to exchange messages with people who aren't on their friends list.

#### LIMIT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter the settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend that you enable this feature, as it's quite easy for a young person – without realising what they're doing – to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins so they can unlock more features of the app.

#### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If your child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's crucial to talk about the potential risks in this type of app. For example, ensure they understand not to share any identifying personal information – and that they realise they could be exposed to inappropriate content. Thinking critically about what they see on TikTok can help children become generally more social media savvy.

### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something inappropriate or upsetting that they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the possible signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as are falling to complete homework or regularly not eating meals.

### Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



RAME



#WakeUpWednesday



www.nationalonlinesafety.com







# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

BeReal is the latest trending social media app. The concept is that people see others in their authentic day-to-day lives, sharing candid photos without editing or applying filters. Each day at a random time, users are simultaneously notified to take a picture of what they're doing at that exact moment. The two-minute window to submit an image means there's no time to select a particularly glamorous or exciting activity. BeReal shares two pictures: a selfie, and an image of the immediate surroundings.

Users can only view and react to their friends, photos once they upload their own.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### CONTINUOUS NOTIFICATIONS

Like any social media app,
BeReal's developers want users
to be on it regularly and scrolling for
long periods. BeReal only sends one
notification to post a picture each day,
but there are other alerts for events
such as mentions, comments, friend
requests and reactions to your photo.
This can cause young users to feel
pressure to open the app and respond,
distracting them from other activities.

#### CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

When someone signs up to BeReal, it highlights anyone in their phone's contacts list who already has the apposousers can connect with friends, or invite others from their contacts. The 'Discovery' feed, meanwhile, shows posts from strangers and gives users the option to add them as friends, too. This means your child could potentially connect with – and communicate with – a stranger.

#### **PUBLIC SHARING**

As well as sharing posts with friends in the moment, the app also allows posts to be shared publicly and public content to be viewed. Before a user can see this public content, they must post their own photo first. Unfortunately, there currently seems to be a lack of moderation on the content that's being uploaded, so a young user

#### **EASY LOCATION**

BeReal's default setting is to share the exact location of where a post was sent from. Given that images are usually shared within the two-minute window, anyone your child is friends with on the app will know exactly where they are (or at least, where they were two minutes earlier). As we've noted, this could include strangers who are intending to use this geographical information for malicious purposes.

# VISIBLE PERSONAL DATA

As with any other form of social media, it's important that your child doesn't share too much personal information on their profile. BeReal allows for a photo, full name, approximate location and a short bio. It's safest to make sure that your child's profile doesn't display anything which could identify where they go to school or exactly where they live.

#### REPUTATIONAL DAMAGE

what your child says and does online - their digital footprint - shapes the way that other people see them. It's essential that young people understand that when they post something online, the are giving the app in question the right to do whatever they wish with that image or content, including sharing it elsewhere. This form of permission is explicitly storms of use.

# Advice for Parents & Carers

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#### LIMIT NOTIFICATIONS

BeReal offers the option to turn off individual types of notification.
Doing this will significantly reduce the number of times your child
is tempted to open the app by incoming comments, uploads, friend
requests and so on. Ironically, it will allow them to actually 'be real' by
being present in the moment and their current environment as opposed to
being engrossed on social media.

#### STOP AND THINK

BeReal's goal is for users to be authentic with friends, removing the pressure of that flawless photo or perfectly worded post. It's still vital, though, that children stop and think rather than uploading something risky just to meet the two-minute deadline. Point out to them what kind of information strangers could extract from an image: school crests, street names or local landmarks, for example.

#### KEEP IT AMONG FRIENDS

Time to BeReal

Remind your child why adding strangers to their contacts isn't a good idea, and advise them to decline any friend requests from people they don't know in real life. If something your child sees on BeReal makes them feel uncomfortable, they can report it by clicking on the three dots in the top right. The reporting tool allows them to state the reason that they're flagging up the post.

#### CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Remind your child to use an avatar as their profile pic (as opposed to a photo of themselves) and use a nickname or just their first name, not their full name. Any information they add to their bio (which is optional) should be kept vague, and personal details should remain private. It's also worth turning off the geolocation feature either through the device's settings or in BeReal itself.

#### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and camed out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.





@natonlinesafety





(O) @nationalonlinesafety

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#### **LINE MANAGEMENT FROM SEPTEMBER 2023**

Please find below our line management arrangements for students. The first point of contact for enquiries should be your child's tutor and then their Student Support Leader or Head of Year depending on the nature of your query.

YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11				
	Attendance / V	Vellbeing / Behaviour	/Safeguarding					
		Form Tutor						
Mrs Weaver Student Support Leader	Ms Swindale Student Support Leader	Mrs Johnson/ Mrs Willing (Wed) Student Support Leaders	Mr Cleevely Student Support Leader	Mrs Porter Student Support Leader				
	Mr Booth (Assistant Headteacher) - Designated Safeguarding & Mental Health Lead  Mrs Watson (Assistant Headteacher) - Deputy Safeguarding Lead							
	Learning / Behaviour / Academic Progress / Standards							
		Class Teacher						
	Head of	Curriculum Area *(see	e below)					
Mr Spooner Head of Year 7	Miss Jones / Miss McKinnon (Fri) Head of Year 8	Mr Holland Head of Year 9	Mr Moreno Head of Year 10	Mr Lee Head of Year 11				
Mr Doolan (Associate Assistant Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress  Mrs Watson (Assistant Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress  Mr Birley (Deputy Headteacher) Behaviour & Progress								
N	Irs Gillett		SENCO					
N	1rs Jackson / Mrs Hol	Home-School Attendance Officers						

<sup>\*</sup> Should you have a subject-related query, for example, regarding homework etc., the first point of contact should be the class teacher. Listed below are the Heads of each Curriculum Area, along with the member of the Leadership Group responsible for each Curriculum Area, to help parents in knowing who to approach for assistance.

	Head of Subject/Curriculum Area	Senior Leader
English	Mrs Fennelly	Mrs Harold
Mathematics	Mrs Baird	Mrs Harold
Science	Mr Fernandez	Mr Lawn
Geography	Mr Birch	Mr Doolan
History	Miss Depper	Ms Woolnough
Religion, Philosophy & Ethics	Mr David	Mr Doolan
Technology/Child Development	Mr Todd	Ms Woolnough
French/German/Spanish	Mrs Steward	Ms Woolnough
Vocational Education/Computer Science/ICT	Miss Judson	Mr Jones
Physical Education	Mr Edwards	Ms Woolnough
Performing Arts	Mrs Green	Mrs Watson
Art	Mrs De Kadar	Mrs Harold
Special Educational Needs	Mrs Gillett	Mr Birley
Learning for Life	Mrs Hewes	Mr Booth



#### Academic Year 2022-2023

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	Schooldays / Weekends	,	Bank Holidays
=	School Holidays	=	Non Pupil (INSET) Days

Autumn Term: Thursday 1 September 2022 – Monday 19 December 2022 73 days

Half Term 24 October - 28 October

Spring Term: Wednesday 4 January 2023 – Friday 31 March 2023 58 days

Half Term 13 February - 17 February

Summer Term: Monday 17 April 2023 – Friday 21 July 2023 64 days

Half Term 29 May - 2 June, and May Bank Holiday, 1 May

195 days

**Please note:** The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.



## Academic Year 2023-2024

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13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

= Schooldays	= School holidays	= Bank holidays
= Weekends	= Non-Pupil Days*	

\*NB. One non-pupil day is still to be allocated and will be used for in-year priorities.

Parents will be notified once this is scheduled.

Autumn Term:	Friday 1 September 2023 – Wednesday 20 December 2023 Half Term 23 October – 27 October	74 days
Spring Term:	Thursday 4 January 2024 – Thursday 28 March 2024 Half Term 19 February - 23 February	56 days
Summer Term:	Monday 15 April 2024 – Monday 22 July 2024 Half Term 27 May – 31 May, and May Bank Holiday - 6 May	65 days
	Accepted to the property of the country control of the country of	195 days