INTRODUCTION FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL, MR FISHER

I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of the Laureate Ledger. This half-term has been incredibly busy for both students and staff, with a number of trips and enrichment opportunities taking place to develop all students’ cultural capital and life experiences. It was pleasing to hear students coming back from trips to the Tate Modern and St Albans Cathedral public speaking event talking about what they had learnt and experienced. Staff were incredibly positive about how students were seen as ambassadors for the school. A huge thank you to all staff who have run these experiences for the students.

This half term has seen a particular focus on Year 11 and 13. Mock exams and significant intervention has been taking place before, during and after school, to ensure that students stand the very best chance of achieving success in their exams. I have been incredibly impressed by the attitude and commitment of our students and their desire to do well. I would ask all parents to ensure students are using a revision timetable at home and parents are supporting their child to focus on their studies within the home environment through reward, praise, ensuring a calm environment and nagging when needed!

I value a healthy diet and students being school ready because of a healthy breakfast. Research suggests that fourteen percent of UK school children skip breakfast, with this being more likely in the case of secondary school children. The same research suggests that, if children miss breakfast, their performance is most clearly affected when tasks are more mentally demanding, and involve working memory. Breakfast is first and foremost a way of increasing levels of blood glucose, meaning that more energy is available to the energy-hungry brain throughout the morning. Please ensure your child has a varied healthy breakfast or given funds through Wise Pay to ensure they have a good start to the day. We continue to work closely with our catering company to ensure the diet of the students is healthy and varied. However, I would like to ask parents to ensure packed lunches are healthy as I continue to see large family size bags of crisps and fizzy drinks coming into school for lunch. This is not helpful in ensuring the student has enough energy to maintain their concentration during the school day and is extremely poor for their diet and health in the short and long term.

One distraction that we have removed at Laureate Academy has been mobile phones. We are determined to continue to reduce student dependence on social media and technology in their daily lives. Technology can be of significant benefit; however, its use by children must be carefully managed and limited. No child...
should go to bed with a screen in their bedroom. It is important to collect phones, tablets and consoles from children after 8pm; please also ensure that your child’s bedroom is a screen-free zone. Furthermore, there is substantial research to suggest that overuse of technology by adults significantly influences the amount of use by their children. The diagram below provides a useful summary of some of the reasons as to why our bedrooms should be free from screens. I thank you for your continued support with this project.

Christmas holidays are an important time for family and friends to get together and spend time. I hope you have a wonderful Christmas break together.

INSET UPDATES

MRS SHANNON
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

INSET is an important part of our teachers’ ongoing development and helps to drive continual improvements in the quality of teaching and learning at Laureate Academy. You will be aware that we have had INSET days at the start of each short term this academic year and this is the same for both Monday 7th January and Monday 25th February.

The INSET in September was used to train staff on our new behaviour policy as well as improving skills such as questioning; effective starts to lessons; lesson routines that mean no learning time is lost; and quality feedback.

In January, our focus is on how to effectively teach pupils grammar; how to better prepare pupils for the increasing content and demands of the new GCSEs; how to ensure our marking and feedback has maximum impact on pupils’ progress; and how to ensure 100% of our pupils are engaged in their learning. In February, we will be focusing on teaching to the top and developing a culture of high challenge.

YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS

Mr Otulakowski, Deputy Headteacher

The first round of Year 11 mocks has passed and students have received their grades from all subjects. On Tuesday, we held a special assembly for Year 11, reminding them of the importance of how we respond to challenge and adversity, after which they received their grades, just as they will in the summer.

There were mixed emotions with students celebrating and some realising there is still a long journey ahead of them. It is crucial at this stage that students are proactive in their response. All Year 11 students should be attending any extra support sessions they have been offered and should be establishing routines at home for completing revision in all their subjects.

Many students aren’t sure exactly how they should revise and what they should be revising. If this is the case, I would ask that students ask their class teachers for a breakdown of the key topics they need to learn and any revision techniques they would be able to suggest. We are currently looking at how we can support parents in supporting their children during this all important stage of their education.
LAUREATE AWARDS
Mr Benjamin, Assistant Headteacher

1. Year 10 student Charlie Hyder stands proudly with his Laureate Award. This is his second award and was presented to him in an awards assembly for consistently demonstrating the school value of respect.

2. An example of the Laureate Awards staff are presenting to students.

Introduced this term to Laureate Academy was the school-wide awards policy. The policy is designed so that students are awarded (not rewarded) with a certificate for any outstanding demonstration of any one of the three school values of knowledge, aspiration or respect. All staff at Laureate Academy from the administration team to teaching and support staff have been issued with awards certificates which they are encouraged to present to students. To nullify the awards becoming tokenistic each staff member must think carefully about their selection and may nominate just one student per week. If students are awarded a certificate then the certificate may be used as a pass to the front of the canteen queue and parents are notified of the good news. Students are also presented with their certificate formally in their lessons and many are given a round of applause by their peers.

So far this year there have been some outstanding demonstrations of the school values and one such example is Charlie Hyder who was awarded for his consistent manners and work ethic in PE lessons. Charlie was presented with his award in a Year 10 assembly and was delighted to be one of the first students in his year group to be bestowed with such an honor. Presented with an award for respect was Year 7 student Callum Humphrey as he led by example by offering support and encouragement to others in lessons.

Staff at Laureate Academy recognise the importance of positive acknowledgment and have also issued their own department awards for outstanding work and effort. Further to this students have also been acknowledged for their positive actions in front of their peers through the end of term Awards Assemblies. Students are encouraged to strive for a Laureate Award as it is our hope that many more are acknowledged for their outward displays of our values in lessons, around the school and in the wider community.

SHOEBOX APPEAL
BETHAN ROADES
YEAR 13 STUDENT

During October and November of this year, the Sixth Form Charity Committee organised the Shoebox Appeal within our Sixth Form. We collected shoe boxes, toys, and wrapping paper from students and as a team we put together 16 full boxes. Some students also did this all themselves, making a box between two or three people, a few of these even had personal messages to the future receiver of the gifts.

Once we labelled all the boxes, we took the 21 boxes down to our local collection point. Operation Christmas Child was a success within our Sixth Form and I think that it showed what we can do as a Sixth Form.
ATTENDANCE
Mr Benjamin, Assistant Headteacher

The connection between attendance and success, during and after school, is supported by a large volume of research and in the experience of Laureate Academy cannot be denied. In analysing the academic results from last year is was found that students with strong attendance (above 95%) achieved higher overall grades. To go one step further, research suggests that encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful and effective ways parents and carers can prepare their child for success—both in school and in life. When school attendance is a priority, students will achieve better grades; avoid dangerous choices and make better life decisions, as they are empowered by knowledge to do so.

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. It is also vital that they encourage their child’s regular and punctual attendance at school.

It is important that everyone works together to help children obtain the best possible start in life with a good education behind them. Parents are encouraged to work in partnership with the school, notifying the school of the reason for any of their child’s absences and highlighting any areas of concern they may have so they can be addressed promptly.

At Laureate Academy we want our students in school where they are learning and achieving. It is vital that all students access a knowledge-rich curriculum and grow up to be well-informed citizens with choices in front of them. This can only be realised when everyone is on board and supporting our students with their regular attendance to school each and every day.

Next term tutors will be setting students attendance targets which we are confident they will strive to achieve. Once again, your support from home with getting students into school, even when they are a little under the weather will be vital.

NEW REPORTS
Mr Otulakowski, Deputy Headteacher

This term, we have sent out school reports to parents of students in Years 9 and 11. These are the first school reports to be sent out by Laureate and we would appreciate your feedback on the format and content.

The intention of the new report is to simplify the content, so parents have exactly what they need to know, and guidance on what grades and ‘attitude to learning’ scores mean.

If you would like to pass your feedback to us, we would welcome it at enquiries@laureateacademy.org.uk

BOOK CHOICE
Where the World Ends by Geraldine McCaughrean

Every time a lad came fowling on the St Kilda stacs, he went home less of a boy and more of a man. If he went home at all, that is...

In the summer of 1727, a group of men and boys are put ashore on a remote sea stac to harvest birds for food. No one returns to collect them. Why? Surely nothing but the end of the world can explain why they have been abandoned to endure storms, starvation and terror. And how can they survive, housed in stone and imprisoned on every side by the ocean?

Based on a true story, this book takes the reader on a dark, atmospheric and incredibly gripping journey. As you explore the relationships between the characters you will be horrified by the realisation that the events that inspired this book really did happen; a haunting, immersive and unforgettable reading experience!
Each student in the academy are placed into 1 of the 4 houses, named after the Greek Gods: Zeus, Athena, Apollo and Hera. Each house will be linked to a nominated charity, which includes those of Teenage Cancer Charity Trust, as well as DENS (a Dacorum based Food bank and night shelter); students will work throughout the year to raise funds to support these charities.

In addition, students will take part in a wide variety of competitions throughout the spring and summer terms, to try to gain reward tokens to put into their house tube. The competitions will range from sport, spelling bees, articulate challenge, mental maths, general knowledge, history, geography, debating, designing and building rockets, STEM challenges, to name just a few.

Students can also achieve reward tokens through their work in and around school linked to academy’s core principles: knowledge, aspiration and respect. All subject staff will nominate one student per week to receive an award based on one of the three key principles. Students receiving these awards, will get a signed certificate, house tokens, and a fast track canteen pass for the week. In addition to this, students that strive to meet these principles outside of school, in the various activities that they participate in, can also achieve reward tokens for their house. We know that some of our students participate in a variety of community groups and organisations, making a valuable contribution to our society; this can also be acknowledged in the academy. Parents are encouraged to contact the academy to inform us of these type of achievements for their children, or any significant recognition that a child might receive.

At the end of the year, that house that has the most reward tokens in their tube, will receive the Laureate House trophy.

SAFE DRIVE, STAY ALIVE
LUCY LIGHTFOOT
YEAR 12 STUDENT

Safe Drive, Stay Alive was both an informative and impactful experience for everyone who attended. It largely focused on the importance of wearing a seatbelt, not drink driving, avoiding phone use and not speeding whilst driving. Each message was conveyed in a touching, but also powerful manner, providing the young people, which unfortunately these tragedies most oftentimes affect, with the meaningful and vital information which everyone should be aware of before they enter a vehicle, and in most of our cases, begin learning to drive. It was an unforgettable experience, which personally will resonate with me forever, and we all sincerely thank everyone who spoke for sharing their very personal stories with us, and providing us with an opportunity for such valuable education.

Last year in Thames Valley and Hampshire an average of 4 young people per week were killed or seriously injured. Young drivers are much more likely to be involved in a crash on the roads, often due to inexperience and a lack of knowledge of the risks. Safe Drive Stay Alive is produced by a road safety partnership including Thames Valley and Hampshire Police, local councils and emergency services
**PSHE AND ASSEMBLIES**  
Mr Benjamin, Assistant Headteacher

Integral to any responsible school is the delivery of quality PSHE lessons to all students. At Laureate Academy, PSHE sessions form part of the weekly diet of our students and are delivered by tutors during tutor time. So far this year, all year groups have learnt more about the dangers of bullying and cyberbullying as well as the importance of upholding the British values of democracy, rule of law, Individual liberty and the tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (including those without faith). With so much negativity around them, it is vital that students are present and engaged for tutor time PSHE sessions as the knowledge they acquire will ensure the future choices they make are responsible and well informed.

Complementing PSHE are regular assemblies that also aim to inspire and inform our students. Staff at Laureate should be commended on the quality of their assemblies and the expert way in which they are delivered. Some examples of assembly themes this year have been human rights, armistice, respect, anti-bullying and mental health. When observing assemblies, it is pleasing to see how respectful and engaged students are and how heightened their understanding of the world and their empathy becomes. Assemblies at Laureate Academy are a formal occasion and students are expected to listen and show guest speakers the utmost respect, which they do so on a weekly basis. With weeks ahead of us, it is encouraging to know that our students will only grow in their awareness of themselves and the world around them as a result of planned, professionally presented and engaging PSHE and assemblies. PSHE and assembly themes for next term will centre on healthy habits, internet safety, resilience and Memorial Day.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENTS**  
Ms Hill, Assistant Headteacher

This term we have continued to improve the quality of teaching and learning in our classrooms and this will always be a key focus at Laureate Academy.

Our lessons continue to start with a four minute, silent ‘Do Now’ task to settle pupils quickly and ensure maximum use is made of lesson time. Cognitive psychology and educational research (including Bjork, 2015) continuously reiterate the importance of regular recap to aid knowledge retention and to free up space in the working memory in order to grapple with more difficult content: the more automatic and effortless knowledge is, the easier it is for us to stretch and challenge pupils. Our teachers therefore often plan their ‘Do Now’ activity as a quick recap quiz to help pupils to recall their prior learning before moving on to new content.

A new curriculum in year 7 History and English ensures that these lessons are even more knowledge-rich than ever before. Pupils are thriving with this new content and rising to the challenge, confidently using new terminology and ideas in their verbal and written answers.
Year 11 pupils are working hard in additional intervention lessons, planned for them by their teachers to help them to recall and retain the vast amounts of content needed to achieve well in their choice of GCSE subjects. Thank you for all of your support with this. Teachers continue to increase their expectations of pupils’ written work, modelling how to write well and supporting pupils with their literacy. Staff themselves have received additional training on how to teach the accurate use of apostrophes, colons and semi-colons to develop the sophistication of pupils’ writing. This is an ongoing area of improvement for us and pupils will complete more regular grammar practice next term during tutor time so that these key skills are embedded.

A new homework policy has been trialed in some subject areas this term with great success in terms of the quality and quantity for homework completed by pupils. More information will be shared with you on this new policy before its whole-school launch in January. You may also have noticed your child bringing their exercise books home more often to complete homework and revise for tests. This is encouraged in many subject areas to increase pupils’ responsibility for their own learning. Please do ask your child about their homework and look through their books with them if they bring them home, asking them to explain what they have been learning in different subject areas and topics. Thank you for continuing to feedback on the quality of lessons at our Academy. Pupils continue to feedback that they are enjoying learning and visitors to the school are continually impressed by our pupils’ attitudes to learning in lessons.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SCHOOL READY

Miss Sutton, KS4 Director of Learning, KS4

At the Laureate Academy we hold the highest expectations for all of our students. By maintaining the highest standard we ensure that all pupils that pass through the Academy are being prepared for the real world, which is the ultimate goal of all educational settings.

The student have heard the term ‘School Ready’ on a daily basis since the re-launch in September. The term ‘school ready’ refers to them being equipped and prepared for the school day. If students can get into the habit and routine of ensuring their equipment and PE kit is ready in their bag the night before they go to bed, the transition at the start of their day will become a positive experience. If a student forgets a pen, a calculator or their PE kit, the staff member has to take time out of their day to provide those students who are not school ready, with equipment. Whilst this is taking place they are wasting valuable time of their own and others education. ‘School Ready’ also refers to wearing your uniform in line with the school policy. When the students leave education and go into a place of employment there will be a uniform policy they will be expected to adhere to. Therefore, it is just as important to ensure the students are in the correct uniform as it is to ensure they are fully equipped for the school day. Organisation is a key component in being ‘School Ready’. It is not a trait you inherit; it is learned behaviour. In many cases, disorganised students achieve lower grades, complete less coursework, become easily frustrated and have lower self-esteem. Reinforcing the importance of organisation will enable students to experience success throughout their lives. That is what we strive for; at Laureate Academy we want our students to have freedom. The freedom from and the freedom too.
VISIT TO THE TATE MODERN
Ms Mayers, Head of Art

Sketchbook work by Greeshma Patel – Year 10

The 8th of November gave Year 10 and 11 students the opportunity to visit the Tate Modern, on the Southbank. For many Year 10 students, this was their first visit to an art gallery and, for some, to London. It was an important excursion, not only for students to gather essential research for their GCSE, but for them to experience independent enjoyment of the gallery and culture. Students’ behaviour was phenomenal. Not only did they enter the gallery with open minds and wide eyes, but they displayed manners in abundance. It was a pleasure to accompany such enthusiastic and polite young artists.

This is what one Year 10 had to say about the trip:

On Thursday 8th of November, I went on a trip with other GCSE students, to the Tate Modern art gallery, in London. I really enjoyed the day and wish that I could have stayed, although I found myself taking the lift more often, as the stairs made my legs ache! When we arrived at the gallery, we were split into groups of 5 or 6, and were allocated a teacher to walk with. We first made our way up to the 10th floor, where we got to see an incredible skyline of London. I could see some amazing, famous, skyscrapers, such as the Shard and St Pauls Cathedral. In the sunlight, all of the glass panels sparkled, which made it look even more spectacular. We were able to take lots of photos to include in our sketchbooks as a record of the visit.

Once we had finished at the top, we were led down to the main gallery, where we got to see some amazing art displays, including some from artists I’d never heard of before. We discussed some of the deeper meanings imbedded in the artwork. Some of the artwork reminded me of work by the artist, Jenny Saville, that we were studying in lessons. One of her quotes was in my mind when looking at the displays, “it’s about the power of the piece, not the beauty.”

After looking around at all the artwork, and popping into the gift shop, it was time to get back to school. For me, this was one of the most inspirtional trips I’ve ever been on, and it has helped me to broaden my mind and ambition. I will, hopefully, be using some of the artists’ techniques in my own work to help me improve and move on with my own work. Samuel Allen Chapman - Year 10

PARENT ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
HCC PUBLIC HEALTH TEAM

Calling all parents!

If you’re the parent of a child or young person aged 18 or under, we want your views.

Hertfordshire County Council’s Public Health team can provide advice and information to support you with your child’s health and wellbeing. We would like to better understand your needs and how we can reach you so that it helps us improve the information we provide.

We'd be very grateful if you could let us know your thoughts by completing a short survey, which should take no more than a couple of minutes of your time.

The survey is available at: https://surveys.hertfordshire.aov.uk/s/11XAJ

Follow us on Twitter @AcademyLaureate
**CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION WINNER**  
Ms Mayers, Head of Art

Congratulations to the first Laureate Academy Christmas card competition winner, George Jackson, from 7P. George's design was selected, from over 40 fantastic entries, by Head of School, Mr. Fisher, who was really impressed by the standard of artwork. Congratulations George!

**STEM CLUB**  
Mr Wright, Science Teacher

A small but enthusiastic club of budding scientists widening their knowledge and experiences in an after-school club. Throughout the year the club members design, build and race/test/operate (sometimes destroy!) various projects. Recent projects include: electronic keyboards, rampaging chariots, rocket cars, K'NEX kits, aero-engines, eco projects, drones and gliders.

The projects are built in the DT department, supervised by both Design & Technology, Science & Learning Support Staff. The club gets involved in as many external projects as it can and typically these have included: Girls into Engineering at Warwick University; Glider Challenge run by MDBA; Engineering Course at the Paper Mill; a visit to the RAF Museum and a K'nex Engineering challenge run by Thermo Fisher on Maylands industrial estate. The latter included a tour of their laboratories.

The club is open to all age groups; students can get more information from the Prep Room in the Science Faculty.

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**NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING**  
KATIE BALLESTER  
YEAR 12 STUDENT

When we eat, we are often oblivious to what we are actually consuming and we are unaware as to why our mood and energy levels suffer throughout the day. It is not uncommon to find yourself struggling to concentrate and we assume that what we eat would help. But we should be considering how certain foods help or hinder our performance.

Some people are careful with what they eat, however the steps they take to try and eat healthily may lead them to be deprived of specific nutrients that are needed in order to concentrate. This could be just as damaging as a diet that consists of unhealthy foods.

On Wednesday, a nutritionist visited the sixth form and gave an interesting and informative talk on nutrition and how important it is, especially when revising and studying all day! During the talk, we learned about the importance of each food group, even the ones that we have learned to look at in a bad light, like fats and carbohydrates. This causes people to forget why our bodies need them and that they all have crucial purposes to (continued on next page)
MENTAL WELLBEING LINKED TO READING AND WRITING

Mrs Turton, Literacy Coordinator and Learning Resources Manager

Recent research by the National Literacy Trust explored the relationship between children’s mental wellbeing and their attitudes and behaviours towards reading and writing. The Annual Literacy survey of over 49,000 children was adapted to include a measure of each child’s mental wellbeing as well as quantifying their enjoyment of, and attitudes towards, reading and writing.

The main findings were that:

- Children who are the most engaged with literacy, and those with above expected reading age, are three times more likely to have higher levels of mental wellbeing than children who are the least engaged or have below expected reading ages.
- Conversely, children who are the least engaged with literacy are twice as likely to have low levels of mental wellbeing as their peers who are the most engaged.
- As children transition from primary to secondary school, their levels of literacy engagement and mental wellbeing begin and continue to decline.
- Boys who are the most engaged with literacy have higher levels of mental wellbeing than girls who are equally engaged.
- There was a similar correlation between mental health and verbal ability.

At Laureate Academy, in addition to a whole-school focus on developing writing, we engage students with a number of entertaining activities that help develop these important skills:

- Dedicated reading lessons for all Year 7 students to improve reading.
- Whole school reading during tutor time once a week - DEAR time.
- Lunchtime storytelling develops both a love of reading, so encourages students to read for themselves, and exposes them to expressive reading and accurate pronunciation of new vocabulary.
- Writing competitions to develop creative writing e.g. Mission Catastrophe (100 words) and, after Christmas, BBC Radio2 500 Words Competition.
- Articulate competition within form groups, a fun way to practice verbal skills.

How can you help your child? Please encourage your child to converse / discuss / debate issues, read newspapers etc. and play word-based games. Interaction with older people, which brings with it a wider vocabulary, is an excellent way to start the journey to improved literacy and, according to research, good mental wellbeing.

Look out for reports of some of these events in this and future editions of our newsletter.

NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING

(Continued)

help us function. Eating a balanced diet that consists of fats and carbohydrates as well as protein, dairy and fruits helps to:

- Keep us healthy
- Provide energy throughout the day
- Allow for better sleep
- Help digestion
- Improve brain function

These are all vital in everyday life, but as sixth formers, we must know how to stay healthy and keep our bodies functioning at its best. This way, when exams start approaching we can revise and study feeling awake and determined. So when exams finally start, we can get through them with a positive mindset and feeling ready.
BOOK BITES
Mrs Turton, Literacy Coordinator and Learning Resources Manager

Everybody loves a story, especially when someone else is reading it to you!

The reintroduction of our lunchtime story sessions was well-received by students with over 30 students dropping in to hear Miss Surridge read an extract from *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. In fact, there was so much enthusiasm for the event, both from students and staff, that we decided to hold a session once a fortnight, rather than every month.

Our second session was even more popular as around 50 students crowded in to hear Mr Flowers read *George's Marvellous Medicine*. His past acting experience was invaluable as the range of voices he attributed to each character kept students engrossed in the story.

Students clearly find this a relaxing and entertaining way to spend their lunch break - all part of our drive to nurture a love of reading for pleasure.

Our thanks go to the staff who have given up their lunchbreak to take part, and to the students for joining in.

SIXTH FORM DEBATE:
SPEAK YOUR MIND
SERENA KERRIDGE
YEAR 12 STUDENT

On Thursday the 8th November, years twelve and thirteen sociology classes, visited St Albans Cathedral to witness an awe inspiring debate. However Laureate Academy was not the only school to attend this event, many schools from across Hertfordshire and around London were also present. We sat down in the large Cathedral area, there was a buzz of what seemed to be excitement in the air, whether that was due to the upcoming debate or the fact that we were getting what you could call a 'temporary vacation', I guess we'll never know. I must admit that the excitement was contagious and caused a pleasant atmosphere to linger in the prestigious hall. The commotion of the hall was soon hushed to a halt as the debate was set into motion. It was quite frosty in the cathedral, albeit the heated debate soon chase the unwanted chill away.

There were four experienced political members on the debating panel. The panel debated topics from 'we should take in as many refugees as we can' to 'is there ever an excuse to exhibit racist behaviour' even 'are restrictions put on LGBT content reasonable' and most appallingly 'dating apps for thirteen year olds'. The panel all expressed their own views and beliefs and argue for and against these and many other statements, however the 'dating apps for thirteen year olds' topic, (continued on the next page).
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SIXTH FORM DEBATE:
SPEAK YOUR MIND
(CONTINUED)

to caused quite bit of disturbance within
the audience. Comments shot back
and forth between the audience and
the panel members, each in turn
inciting wild claps from the stirred
audience. However the audience
concluded that they did not agree

with this statement and the panel
swiftly moved on.

The next topic was about cultural
appropriation versus cultural
appreciation, which I believe to be
one of the most important topics
argued by the panel, alongside
Euthanasia of course. The panel
discussed their beliefs on cultural
appropriation and how it can be seen
as offensive and in some cases just
misunderstood appreciation, it was
nice to see the audience also getting
involved and discussing their opinions
and beliefs.

All in all the outing was a great success
despite of course the ‘thirteen year
olds dating websites’ suggestion, I and
many others enjoyed it fully.
GOODBYE FROM DSSN
Clare McCawley, DSSN/SGO

After 11 wonderful years being hosted by Cavendish, and now Laureate Academy, DSSN and the School Games will be moving to Longdean as of January. We have loved being part of the team, and supporting the school to develop leadership, coaching, community links and much more. I send a special thanks to everyone in the PE department, past and present for their continuous support of many events, competitions and new initiatives driven by Youth Sport Trust. We look forward to continuing to work with Laureate Academy delivering competitions and festivals for both primary and secondary schools in the district.

What have we been up to this half term?

DSSN and School Games has had another busy half term offering several opportunities to Primary and Secondary schools in the district. DSSN events have included a year 1 inter school competition at Everyone Active – Over 500 year 1 pupils took part in a carousel of activities split over two sessions morning and afternoon.

A year 4 tag ruby festival took place at Kings Langley Secondary school with over 30 teams taking part. The leaders at Kings Langley supported the event, and made it a fun and enjoyable day for the pupils.

Year 2’s in Berkhamsted descended on the sports centre for a morning of taster activities including Archery, Aerobics, Dance, Tri Golf, Multi Skills, Crazy Catch, speed Stacking and skittles/boccia/kurling. 200 pupils from surrounding schools, and some from Hemel attended the event and had a great time.

Our annual Year 2 Target games also enabled schools to visit JFK and Ashlyns to participate in a carousel of target based activities to score as many points as possible. Once again the support of these schools and their leaders is invaluable in providing a fantastic experience for many children who would not normally get to take part. School Games activities this half term have included U14 & U16 Badminton, U19 Boccia, and MU11 Basketball.

The county finals took place from 4-7th December – The Dacorum teams that had won the district rounds attended events at Beechwood School, Wodson Park, Queens School and Edge Grove School. Dacorum successfully achieved 2 golds in table tennis, 1 silver in Boccia and 2 bronze medals also in table tennis.

A wonderful end to a busy term – We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

PE AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR
MISS HARRIS
HEAD OF CORE PE AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR

We have had another busy term in the PE department with many fixtures being played and continuous training for our range of sports.

The Year 8 boys have had great success in the County Cup competition winning their last match with a strong team. They are now through to the fourth round of the cup with the opponents to be decided. All boys should be attending their training sessions on Thursday after school with Mr Rogers.

Although rugby has now come to an end for the year, basketball will be a big focus with the boys after the Christmas break. We are fortunate enough to have our very own American basketballer, Mr Fawbush, to coach our students to be the best they can be. We have already had a few friendly matches; the year 9 boys had been working on their offence and defence in training to successfully defeat Townsend School. All year 7 and 8 boys are welcome to training on a Thursday lunch time, all year 9 and 10 boys are welcome to training on Wednesday lunch times.

All of the girls netball teams have been going strong since September. Their seasons are now coming to an end with most of their matches being played. All of the girls who have been playing and coming to training have shown great improvements. Year 7 and 8 netball training will continue to run through to the Easter break on a Wednesday after school. All girls are welcome to attend (continued on the next page).
THE ACADEMY SITE
Mrs Markley, School Business Manager

Buildings in general
Major refurbishment works were carried out on the buildings over the summer holidays, which included decoration of all corridor areas and a large percentage of the classrooms, with new carpets being purchased for 11 classrooms. The Assembly Hall curtains were replaced and new tables were purchased for main hall to enhance the eating experience at the Academy. New panelling to the buildings was installed, reflecting the new school colours and the road through the school was repaired and re-surfaced. Lights in the car park have been replaced ensuring that adequate lighting exists in the car park during the dark evenings.

Following these major changes the site team are continuing with works and over the past term these a rolling programme of continuation of decoration work during evening and weekends. The Internal Referral room is being refurbished ready for re-opening in January and this will include decoration, new carpet, new screened areas and further storage for student work.

Bike Shed
Over the past academic year the Student Council have organised several fund-raising events to raise money to have a new bike shed built on site. During the summer term some students worked with an external provider on gardened areas of the school, enhancing the site with benches and flower beds. They also laid the foundations for the new bike shed and, with great thanks to Future Academy Trust for their generous donation of the balance of the cost of the new building, construction will start on 17th December. This will mean that the sheds will provide a secure area for the 40 plus students who bring their bikes every day to leave them from the start of the Spring term.

IT Equipment
A programme of replacement has taken place over the past two terms to ensure that IT equipment is as up-to-date as possible. This has included replacement of some projectors in classrooms but also re-siting some equipment to ensure that heavy volume areas have the best equipment possible. 12 new PC’s have been purchased for the library area and will be installed by January 2019 so that students using the library during the day, or for homework club in the evening, have high quality PC’s to use.

Innovate - our Catering Company
I am meeting regularly with Innovate to ensure that the catering provision at the Academy is of the highest standard and they plan to bring further changes to their offer to improve standards even more. As part of this programme, further speciality days will be organised, which we will inform you about closer to the time.