A very warm welcome to the very first edition of the Laureate Ledger. This newsletter will provide you with an in-depth look at life at Laureate Academy and will be published every half term. As well as updates from departments and academy leaders, we will bring you news from all aspects of academy life including academic success, sporting achievements and community activities.

We have hugely ambitious plans for the academy, and for every single one of our students. We expect that the academy will very quickly become amongst the best schools in Hertfordshire, and will then go on to become equal to the best schools in the country. We are absolutely unrelenting in our high expectations in order to do this, and it is fantastic to see the immediate results. For example, it is clear the students wear the Laureate Academy uniform with pride. I have enjoyed seeing our students enter and leave the school gates looking smart and confident.

The students have responded incredibly well to our academy expectations – for example, it is clear that the changes we have put in place ensure that lessons now start promptly so that students can learn from the very start of each lesson. The clear and consistent expectations in lessons have ensured that all students can enjoy the high quality curriculum we deliver, without their learning becoming interrupted by others. We have invested in significant amounts of training for all of our staff so that we are able to teach, nurture and develop our students in the very best way possible.

It has been a pleasure to read the letters and emails that the school has received this term that acknowledge and appreciate the progress we have made in our first term as a new academy; thank you so much for these messages, and please do keep them coming. I have also taken great pleasure in conversations with students about their learning, their new opportunities in our Educational Enrichment programme, their successes on the sports pitches and elsewhere, and their delight at their improved experience of school in the new academy.

I would like to thank all of the staff at the academy for their tireless dedication and commitment to upholding the academy standards and expectations, so that we can offer students an education of the very highest quality.

At Laureate Academy we continue with our drive to improve the reading ages of all students. Research has shown that “while good readers gain new skills very
rapidly, and quickly move from learning to read to reading to learn, poor readers become increasingly frustrated with the act of reading, and try to avoid reading where possible"). Consequently, “the word-rich get richer while the word-poor get poorer” in their reading skills. Students who begin with high verbal aptitudes not only do well in exams but tend to find themselves in verbally enriched social environments giving them a double advantage.

Being able to read and being able to access the kind of material required to be academically successful are not identical skills. Most young people would claim that “I can read”; however, the acquisition and use of vocabulary needs constant practice and development. At the age of 7, children have a vocabulary of between 3,000 – 7,100 words; however, by the age of 16, 1 in 12 have a working vocabulary of only 800 words.

Reading, like any skill such as football or playing a musical instrument, requires constant practice to maintain and develop expertise.

Whilst we live in an increasingly technological world, even the digital world is centred on the written word; it is imperative that students develop the best literacy skills possible in order to maximise their opportunities in life. Please can I ask that all parents continue to support the academy by actively promoting reading in the home, discussing new words, and encouraging their child to read every day. I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter and I look forward to continuing our conversations with you all over the coming months.

EXAM SUCCESS
Mr Otulakowski, Deputy Headteacher

The Year 11 results in August showed considerable progress on our journey to becoming an outstanding centre of education. Overall, the results showed an increase of an average of half a grade per student, which is a significant move enjoyed by very few schools nationally. There is still a great deal of work to be done, but the results show that the changes we have made are having real impact.

Whilst the vast majority of our subject areas made progress, there were notable successes in the arts: our Music and Art departments achieved a Progress 8 score of over +1.0, which means students who study these subjects at our school achieve, on average, a grade above other students nationally. This is something we are very proud of and I am certain our other subjects will follow suit this year.

We hope your child is enjoying their time at Laureate and be assured that we are all working incredibly hard to ensure every child can be successful.

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1 The Matthew Effect by Daniel Rigney
2 The Learning Spy by David Didau
3 Literacy and Life Expectancy by the National Literacy Trust
THE LAUREATE WAY – A NEW BEGINNING
Mr Benjamin, Assistant Headteacher

The academic year of 2018/19 has begun with an energetic and disciplined start from the vast majority of our students. Students have come back from their summer holidays and upon their return were inducted into a new beginning at Laureate Academy. The induction week progressed without fault, as students showed their desire to embrace the new and exciting changes. Expectations and routines were clearly demonstrated and explained to students and since that experience, students have continued to show their maturity by displaying the high standards of conduct we expect from everyone at the Academy. Assemblies are calm, littering is virtually non-existent, tutor time is informative and productive and the vast majority of students behave and show each other and members of staff the Academy value of respect. What has been especially pleasing to see are students eager about their learning as morning punctuality has improved, meaning students are within the school gates and engaged in DEAR reading, character development, PSHE and assemblies. Coming to school prepared, or being 'school ready', is another aspect of the student body that has significantly improved meaning students are coming to lessons ready to learn and staff are supporting students with being school ready during tutor time. Students are encouraged over the holidays to replenish their pencil cases as term two will bring with it much to learn during lessons.

Expectations for behaviour at Laureate Academy are high and will always be high as we strive to get the most from our students in every area. We know that if our expectations of conduct and behaviour remain high then our students expectations of themselves will continue to rise. Students are wearing their uniforms with pride and come to school looking smart and proud; behaviour between lessons has improved as students are expected to arrive to lessons on time and with a readiness to learn; when dining, students do so in designated areas which are calm and clean; when sanctioned, students take responsibility for their actions and sit their detentions in silence (there only a very small minority that require following up) and mobile phones are no longer a barrier to learning. Above all teaching staff feel confident and empowered in lessons and students at Laureate feel safe, looked after and supported. The Academy has taken a huge stride in the right direction and we will not allow complacency to hinder our progress. We know that parents share this same belief and are supportive of the high expectations we have of our students. We very much look forward to your support from home as by working together we will only increase the prospects of our students so that all of them are positioned to realise their full potential.

Last term, a letter went out to parents and carers which emphasises the importance of attendance and also detailed the academy’s targets in this crucial area. There is an irrefutable connection between attendance and academic success and support from home in this area is important. With so many lessons to learn in life and in the classroom, I encourage all students to come into school each and every day. Staff at Laureate work hard to ensure lessons are challenging and engaging and all students should benefit from the lessons they deliver, but to do so they must be in school and learning.

I look forward to the weeks and months ahead and know that with hard work and discipline from our students; high expectations and consistency from staff and ongoing support from parents and carers, Laureate Academy will go from strength to strength and continue on its upward trajectory.
HEATHLY EATING
Mr Otulakowski, Deputy Headteacher

A child’s diet is crucial to their overall wellbeing. A healthy, balanced diet enables a child to grow physically, but it also allows them to remain focused throughout the school day, having sufficient energy to face the academic and sporting challenges. The benefits of a good diet are well publicised, as are the dangers of a high sugar, high carbohydrate diet. We would encourage all parents to speak to their children about their diet. As a school, we do not allow energy drinks, but we would also ask that students bringing their own food avoid crisps and sweets as snacks, preferring healthier options such as fruit. We are also working with our catering company to ensure there are more healthy options for students to choose from.

From next half term we will also be implementing a ‘clear fluids only’ policy in the main school. That is, students can only drink water in the outside eating area and in lessons. Unfortunately, too many of our students are bringing fizzy drinks into school, which causes them to experience highs and lows due to sugar intake, which has a significant impact on their ability to focus in class. Also, there is the simple issue of spilling drinks in class. By only having water, we can limit the damage of any accidents to schoolwork.

COMMUNAL DINING

As we all know, exam grades are crucial to unlocking future potential, but we know education is much more than academic success alone.

At Laureate, we want our children to become confident, happy, self-disciplined young people who are ready to embark on a successful life in whatever path they choose. It is for this reason that we hold the highest expectations of our students in terms of behaviour, punctuality and attitude to learning. We have seen a dramatic shift in our students’ mindset across the school. Lessons are focused on learning, students enjoy enrichment activities at break and lunch, and most notably, we have created a culture of communal dining, with nearly all our students choosing to spend their lunchtimes together in the Laureate Dining Hall.

These social experiences are essential in embedding a sense of community in our school. Students and staff dine together every day, whilst listening to their peers showcasing their musical talent on stage. It’s a wonderful experience and something very few schools get to experience. This is also a chance for our staff to ensure our children are enjoying a quality diet.

HOMEWORK
Miss Shannon, Assistant Headteacher

Homework is an important part of school life in that it teaches students to work independently and develop self-discipline. It also encourages students to take initiative and responsibility for completing a task. Homework can also help parents to have an active role in their child’s education and to monitor their child’s progress.

Homework is set regularly via our online platform, Show My Homework. We send our sincere apologies for the many glitches that you may have experienced with the system this term. The change of school name had caused several issues but these now seem to have been resolved. All students and parents were issued with a PIN at the start of the year which then allows a password to be set. This can only be used once and has an expiry date for GDPR reasons. Should you require a new PIN please contact your child’s form tutor in the first instance.

Homework club is open every day to allow students a space to complete work in a calm, quiet environment, where there are staff on hand to support and where they also have access to computers. This take place in the library from 3:15pm – 4.00pm. We also encourage students to attempt work the night it is set so that they have the opportunity to see their teacher for any help they may need with it before the deadline for completion. Students can also message teachers through Show My Homework.
TEACHING AND LEARNING
Mrs Hill, Principal Assistant Headteacher

We have the highest expectations for all of our students and staff at Laureate Academy and the quality of teaching and learning will always be at the heart of everything we do. We are working hard to ensure all lessons at Laureate Academy are outstanding so that your child is taught to the highest of standards and can make maximum progress.

In term one we had a strong focus on the starts of lessons. Students are greeted at the classroom door by their teacher who welcomes them to the lesson. Students then enter the classroom in silence to get out their equipment, write their date and title plus complete a short ‘Do Now’ activity which is waiting for them on the board. During this time the register is taken and the class are ready to start the lesson. All of this happens within just four minutes from the start of the lesson to maximise lesson time and ensure learning starts from the second your child enters every lesson. If your child is early, they do not have to wait for others in their class to start learning as they can enter and begin the ‘do now’ task as soon as they arrive. A challenge task is also available at the start of every lesson to increase thinking and ensure all pupils are having to grapple with content from the very start of every lesson. This change has been a huge success and pupils, staff and visitors have commented on the productive starts to lessons and the positive impact this has on learning in every single lesson.

Teachers have been developing new ways to question pupils to ensure all pupils are engaged in questioning and have the opportunity to participate. Your child may have mentioned ‘cold calling’ to you which is a strategy whereby a teacher asks a question to the whole class and then calls on a pupil to answer, without necessarily asking those with their hands up. This ensures that all pupils are having to think and are given the opportunity to share their ideas. The teacher can also better assess the understanding of the class this way and can offer additional support or challenge to individuals who need it. Pupils know it is okay to get questions wrong but their participation and having a go is what is expected of them. Pupils have responded very positively to this questioning style.

Teachers are also improving the way that they feedback to pupils. Key pieces of work, usually extended pieces of writing or topic tests, are marked deeply with written Strength (S) and Improvement (I) comments. Pupils are then given time in their books/folders is continually assessed through teachers scanning pupils’ books as they work and taking in samples of pupils work to note any common misconceptions that they then address with the whole class the next lesson. Work is also ‘live’ marked during lessons so that pupils receive regular, instant feedback on their work and can improve it there and then rather than waiting for written comments.

Pupils now all bring the correct equipment to every lesson, ensuring no learning time is lost distributing equipment to pupils and collecting this back in. Pupils have stepped up to this responsibility and, thanks to the support from parents and carers with this, detentions for lack of equipment are now rare. Thank you for all the feedback we have received so far regarding the quality of teaching and learning at our Academy. I look forward to updating you on our next key areas of focus, writing and homework, at the end of this term.

INNOVATE LUNCHES

Over the summer our food development team worked hard to re-develop and improve our menu.

We spoke to students, toured inspiring street food markets, and visited high street restaurants with exciting healthy options and vegetarian ranges to help us develop a variety of new products. It wasn’t simply a case of out with the old and in with the new though as we kept plenty of firm favourites and best-sellers from the outgoing menu; redeveloping many of these to make them healthier and more nutritious.

Any new menu needs to be tested so we’ve been listening to you and analysing the sales data over the last few weeks to gauge your reactions. We’re delighted to see students and staff heartily embracing the new, healthier options. But there are a few tweaks we are going to make at half-term based on the feedback we received.

By popular demand we are bringing back the ham and cheese baguette and mini-baguette. Simple, timeless, and good value for money options, you will see them back on the shelves from the start of next half-term. We have also reduced the price of the Falafel market wrap, bringing it back down to last year’s price of £1.75 making it a great healthy option at a great price.

You mentioned the need for some lower priced savoury and hot items, particularly at first break, so bacon mini-baguette and sausage mini-baguettes will be available after half term (continued overleaf).
ATTENDANCE MATTERS
Mr Benjamin, Assistant Headteacher

Overall attendance is important towards the academic success and social development of all students. The benefits of having outstanding attendance cannot be stressed enough as being in school maximises life opportunities by providing them with education and support networks. Students with attendance of above 96% will also have better health outcomes, employment and higher incomes across their lives. Being in school also helps children to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community. At Laureate Academy we want the best for each and every student and our belief is that every student should have the opportunity to succeed in life and this is made all the more possible when students are in school learning.

SCHOOL TRIPS
Mr Tizard, Assistant Headteacher

At Laureate Academy we believe that school trips provide unique opportunities for learning, and encourage students to engage with people, places and buildings in new ways. School trips are powerful, positive teaching tools that help enhance the social, personal and emotional development of all students. The benefits of educational visits are many:

- Trips also enhance cultural awareness and understanding of values, beliefs and perceptions;
- They can increase the student’s motivation for a subject;
- It can develop a student’s independence, confidence, self-esteem, personal effectiveness and coping strategies;
- Trips can provide information and experiences that improve knowledge and understanding;
- Students benefit from enhances relationships with their peers, and also their teachers that accompany the trip.

At Laureate Academy we offer a wide range of trips and educational visits which range from overseas visits to Europe, and beyond. This year the academy ski trip will be to USA, with an overnight stay in New York. We have our annual team building trip for new Year 7 students to Hillingdon, where they will all work together to develop their team-building skills and encounter a range of problem-solving tasks that will challenge them both physically and mentally.

We have had several visits to leading universities, including Cambridge, for our Key Stage 4 and 5 students where they have experienced what university life is actually like, and heard from a wide range of academic professors about the challenges that various courses bring to test students’ knowledge, understanding, and application. In addition to this we have had a range of STEM visits, to inform students about the range of science, technology and mathematics opportunities that are available to young people.

As the year develops we are actively looking to further develop the Education Enrichment Programme, and we look forward to bringing you more news on the exciting trips that students will be taking part of throughout the next term.

INNOVATE LUNCHES
(CONTINUED)

We will also review our hot products more widely with a view to introducing some new options at lower price points from January onwards.

We also heard what you said about offering a cold alternative to the hot meal option and have introduced a cold meal deal comprising any mini-baguette, any fruit pot and a bottle of water, all for the FSM price.

MEAL DEALS

We had previously run meal deals at a variety of price points which, in our opinion, offered a balanced nutritional profile and good value for money. However, when we analysed our sales data the meal deals were not as popular with our students and staff as we had expected. We therefore temporarily withdrew our meal deals whilst extensively redeveloping and improving our menu, in terms of the quality of ingredients we use, the variety of products we offer and the nutritional value of the overall menu.

We continue to believe that the right meal deals offer the opportunity to encourage students to make healthy choices, consume a nutritionally balanced meal and stay well hydrated. We will therefore review our meal deal offers over the remainder of the academic year.

Meal deals or not, we are committed to offering the highest quality food at a variety of price points to suit the widest possible range of tastes and budgets. In redeveloping our menu we were conscious of those students with more limited budgets and have included (continued overleaf)
HOUSE REWARD PROGRAMME
Mr Tizard, Assistant Headteacher

From next term we shall be introducing a new reward system for all students, based around our 4 new houses which are named after Greek Gods: Zeus, Athena, Apollo and Hera. Each house will be supporting a nominated charity, which will be linked to young people and local causes, as students strive to raise funds to support the various programmes that these charities offer.

The academy award structure for students will be based around the three key pillars that define the ethos and values that we prioritise at Laureate, namely those of: knowledge, aspiration and respect. Where students demonstrate these qualities, and are seen to go above and beyond the expected level, they will be acknowledged by staff, and they will receive reward points, also accompanied by a certificate of achievement. The points that students receive contribute towards their house in the Inter-House Competition that runs throughout the year. The house that receives the most reward points at the end of the year, will receive the opportunity to participate in a series of exciting trips.

Students can receive reward points for the work and attitude that they display in lessons, positive contributions that they complete during the school day, and also for participation in various Inter-House competitions that will run throughout the year.

KEY STAGE 3
Mr Ede, Director of Learning KS3

What a phenomenal start to the year! Over the past seven weeks I have been immensely proud of all students that have contributed to such a positive start to the life of Laureate Academy.

We have some key areas of focus that we have been looking at during the initial half term. All students have been inducted into the school, the rules and the high expectations that we have. Students have responded to this exceptionally well – they are prepared for school, they are working hard and the school is focused on learning. Over the coming weeks students will be sitting their first assessments/end of topic tests of the year.

Attendance is key for success, and whilst illness does occur, we have a target of 96% for your child to attend school. Please encourage them to work through minor ailments; often once in school they feel better. Please ensure that any time absent from school is communicated to us on each day of the illness. During Tutor time students have been completing work on their literacy skills, a PSHE programme looking at how they learn and character virtues of resilience, empathy and self-regulation. These have been the focus of assemblies too. Observations at tutor time have seen students engaged, communicating openly with each other and broadening their horizons.

It has been pleasing to see so many parents supporting the extra-curricular life of the school. Please continue to do so - the support you provide really makes a difference. Over the coming months all of Key Stage 3 will have information given to them on their next steps following school, trying to broaden their horizons and letting them know where their education can get them.

MEAL DEALS
(CONTINUED)

We have also added a few premium products to the new menu following feedback from students over the summer term requesting this addition to our range. These allow us to showcase the best the high street and food markets have to offer and to introduce students to products or ingredients they might not otherwise experience.

Finally, some students have told us that it isn’t clear what some products are from the names on the labels, so we have had a look at those too and tried to make them simpler and clearer.

Never ones to rest on their laurels, our food development team are constantly thinking of ways to improve our menu to enable, educate and encourage students to eat more healthily. They are now working on a termly cycle, looking at changes for the next term from week one of the current term.
KEY STAGE 4
Miss Sutton, Director of Learning KS4

The start of a new academic year always brings many challenges. There have been many new changes and all students have demonstrated determination and resilience in adapting to our new academy. For the Year 10 students, they have started their journey; the journey that will lead them through their GCSE examinations; the journey that will lay the foundations to allow them to enter Post 16 education with choices. The freedom to decide which option best enables them to achieve excellence and therefore success.

Year 11 students have returned, demonstrating dedication and commitment to strive for excellence. The focus in all classrooms has been outstanding and their work ethic has been commended by all staff that have had the pleasure of teaching them. I am very proud of how the students have adapted and feedback from both students and parents recognises the many positive changes too.

Myself and the pastoral team are here to support all students through one of the most challenging periods of their lives so far. As we approach the end of the first half term I am excited at how far we have come but, more importantly, for the journey ahead.

KEY STAGE 5
Miss Saggese, Head of Sixth Form

It has been an exceptionally busy six weeks and there is a palpable ‘buzz’ amongst our Sixth Form students who are excited and keen to learn. It is a privilege to lead the Laureate Sixth Form in its first term. The start of term is about setting the foundations for success. We have launched into a programme of events covering teambuilding, time management and goal setting. On 10th September, we organised a teambuilding day where both year groups worked together to complete a range of challenging tasks, both physical (for example, a teamwork based race: ‘the floor is lava’) and mental (a crime solving task).

The competitive aspect helped the teams to bond and encouraged them to work hard in order to succeed in the set of tasks which were both difficult and also entertaining. The desire to complete tasks and frustrations that came with lowering a pole to the ground without holding it brought the team members together through shared exasperation.

The team building day was a ‘good ice breaking start to the half term’. Students felt that the day provided a ‘unique experience of being out of your comfort zone and connecting to overcome challenges' and they 'loved the fact that (they) all applied (themselves)'.

SIXTH FORM GUEST SPEAKERS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

National Citizenship Service delivered an assembly to Year 12 students

Hertfordshire University delivered an informative talk to students and parents on UCAS and Student Finance

Trisha Seecharran, from Education and Employers gave an insightful presentation into the real alternative of Degree Apprenticeships

Atlas Copco ran an interactive session to Year 12 students on the art of CV writing

St Albans Abbey Public Speaking Workshop

Charity Events – Macmillan Coffee Morning and World Mental Health Day
WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY
Miss Saggese, Head of Sixth Form

Laureate Sixth Form students took part in #HelloYellow on World Mental Health Day (10th October) to show young people they’re not alone with their mental health.

Year 12 and Year 13 students wore something yellow and donated £1 to YoungMinds – a children and young people’s mental health charity. Jade Zelkowicz, Community Fundraising Manager for YoungMinds, said: “We know that young people face a huge range of pressures, including exam stress, bullying and concerns about body image. When these pressures become overwhelming, it can be an incredibly isolating experience, and the smallest gesture of support can make a huge difference. By wearing yellow, thousands of children and teachers across the country are showing their support. We’re extremely grateful to everyone who took part.” To find out more about #HelloYellow or to make a donation, go to www.youngminds.org.uk

The assembly shared important information on how to ask for help and strategies for good mental health; such as making time to relax, exercise and having people to talk to. The assembly focused on another campaign #AskTwice from Time to Change whose simple message is to show any one you are concerned about that you care, by simply asking twice about their feeling.

PUBLIC SPEAKING
Lewis Maines, Year 12

On Friday 12th October, a group of Year 12 and Year 13 students visited St Albans Abbey to partake in a public speaking workshop with the University of Hertfordshire. We had the opportunity to take part in several short workshops that would provide us with the necessary skills needed to argue in a public debate or speaking publicly generally.

The first workshop that we took part in was the “public speaking technique” class. We looked at different attributes of public speaking and ways to improve our own public speaking. We looked at projection and were given advice on how to project our voices to allow all members of an audience to hear us when speaking. We focused on pace and speaking at an engaging speed to keep an audience interested, and we also looked at noticing when an audience were engaged or uninterested and how to combat the latter. We then put the techniques we had learnt into practice at the end of the day. The next class we looked at was a “speech writing” workshop in which a member of the University of Hertfordshire delivered a presentation on how to write an effective speech.

LAUREATE SIXTH FORM CHARITY COMMITTEE

As a charity committee at the Laureate Academy Sixth Form, we organised a Macmillan Coffee morning for the main school. This took place at a lunch time where we sold a mixture of cakes and hot drinks to the students and staff members.

To our delight, we raised over £100 from this event, allowing us to offer this as a donation for Macmillan Cancer Support.
PUBLIC SPEAKING (Continued)

He went into detail about a variety of topics, such as: using credible sources, introducing and concluding your speech, doing appropriate research and anticipating an audience’s questions. All of the points he made allowed to understand how to write an effective and memorable speech and gave us a structure that we would be able to use in the future.

After we had completed the second workshop, we then proceeded with the main debates that were held at the end of the day. Each of the debates had a member of the audience picked at random to argue for, and a member to argue against. This allowed us to have an insight into a public debate, appreciate the difficulties involved and the work that goes into public speaking.

Overall, the experience allowed us to gain knowledge and skills into public speaking and how to write an effective speech. We had the opportunity to ask questions to both sides of the debate and some of us were able to argue for or against some of the debates that took place. I recommend anyone who is not confident with public speaking to attend this workshop as it will boost confidence in the delivery of a speech as well as refine the content.

MIDDLE-EAST PRESENTATION
Lewis Maines, Year 12

On Monday 24th October, an expert on the Middle-East delivered a presentation to Year 12 students. The speaker covered topics such as the geological, mineral and economic benefits of the Middle East as well as the innovative technological advancements that have emerged from that part of the World. He also touched on the rising tension in areas such as Libya and Syria, and how the conflict there affects us in the UK.

The speaker was extremely engaging and kept the audience interested throughout the presentation, his candid knowledge of the Middle-East was delivered in an impromptu manner, which allowed for a conversational feel to the experience. He didn’t throw a flashy presentation in our faces or try too hard to be funny and “relatable” but rather regurgitated his prior knowledge, meaning we actually took some information away from the hour we had with him.

The way he related the conflicting, economic and technological aspects of the Middle-East to the UK, allowed us as an audience to put into perspective the importance of the Western World’s relationship with that part of the world and how a shift in leadership or status can affect us here.
LITERACY AT LAUREATE
Mrs Turton, Literacy Coordinator


Whilst we don’t face the same obstacles as youngsters in South Africa, where Nelson Mandela’s charity seeks to “give each child the tools to help themselves”, the importance of literacy cannot be expressed more clearly. A lack of vital literacy skills impacts on every stage of our life: a child needs literacy to succeed at school, without these skills young adults find themselves locked out of the job market, and parents struggle to support their own child’s learning. In the same way that the ‘rich get richer and the poor get poorer’ the same applies to words; those with a wide vocabulary and literacy skills are able to access more complex material which in turn enriches their vocabulary, and ultimately their life choices.

What have we done?

Research by The National Literacy Trust found that 1 in 11 children and young people said they do not have a book of their own at home; children who do are 15 times more likely to read above the level expected for their age than their peers who say they don’t own a book. At Laureate Academy we are determined to give students the very best opportunity to develop a love of reading and the cultural capital that goes with it. All Year 7 students have chosen a book from a selection of 12 and been given a copy free of charge, as our welcome gift to them.

In addition to timetabled reading lessons in Year 7, every Monday morning the whole school community (staff included) Drop Everything And Read for 20 minutes (DEAR).

We hope you will support your child by encouraging them to read as much as possible, be it books, newspapers or even match day programmes! Together, let’s ensure our young people have the very best chances in life!

BOOK CHOICE

After the Fire, by Will Hill

Deep in the Texas desert, Moonbeam lives with her Brothers and Sisters. They’re safe, protected by the Fence and Father John. Father John controls everything inside The Fence. And Father John likes rules. Especially about never talking to Outsiders. Because Father John knows the truth. He knows what is right, and what is wrong. But then Nate arrives from Outside, stirring doubt... and suddenly Moonbeam is starting to see the lies behind Father John’s words. She wants him to be found out. What if the only way out of the darkness is to light a fire?

Inspired by the true events of the 1993 Waco Siege, when 82 members of the Branch Davidian religious sect and four US government agents died, this work of fiction makes a gripping read. Chapters alternate between the story of Moonbeam’s recovery, therapy and interrogation, interspersed with the back story of her life under Father John’s control.
SCIENCE CHALLENGE
Mr Wright, Teacher of Science

On Friday 5th October, eight students from Year 10 accompanied by Mr Wright and Mr Bennett travelled to the RAF Museum Hendon to participate in the MBDS Missile Systems Aircraft Reconnaissance Challenge. The students were required to design and build a glider, plan a mission over enemy territory, conduct the mission and present their project to a panel of judges. The students also visited the museum which is celebrating 100 years of the formation of the RAF. Students also heard from senior managers of MBDA about employment within their international group (who employ over 10,000 staff) and about STEM opportunities.

The following students attended as two teams of 4: Georgina Pearce, Mia Atkins, Ned Sanders, Sonny Evans, Jasmin Coles, Charlie Hyder, William Tuff, and Tallulah Brown. Fantastically, reflecting their hard work and enthusiasm, one of the teams won the title of Winning Overall Team. Well done to them all.

MUSIC
Mrs Droskie, Head of Music

The first term of music at Laureate Academy has been filled with successes and new challenges. We celebrated 81% 5-9 grades with the past Year 11 music students and welcomed our first joint A Level class with Kings Langley. The first group of Year 7 – 9 students started studying music in a carousel and completed their 6 week courses with successful recordings of their first performances. We look forward to meeting the new groups and discovering more new musicians.

The enrichment programme this term has been very busy with old favourites such as Senior Choir, Junior Choir, Acapella, Orchestra and Theory Club continuing and new clubs added such as Drumline, Strings, Jazz Band and Rock band. Special thanks to Mr Fawbus, Ms Speirs, Drew Edwards and Phoebe Woodham for making this possible.

The A Level music students hosted an outstanding concert showcasing their talent on Friday 19th October, when they collaborated with musicians and sound technicians from Herts College and BIM University. The concert was a resounding success and the proceeds have been donated to charity.

Looking ahead to the new term we look forward to more students attending our enrichment programme and coming to rehearse with us for the upcoming Christmas concert on Wednesday 19th December. Hope to see you all there!
## Music Enrichment Timetable Autumn 2018

### DACORUM MUSIC SCHOOL

**Weekly Songwriting Club**  
**Wednesday 7:00PM – 8:00PM**  
- Learn how to write and perform your own songs and meet other young songwriters  
- Develop skills to support your GCSE music compositions  
- Possibility of taking the Bronze Level Arts Award  
- Open to all ages and skill levels  
- Cost £42 per term

For more information contact: camille.maalawy@hertsmusicservice.org.uk

### Weekly Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>During Lessons</strong></td>
<td><strong>Break Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lunch Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>After School</strong></td>
<td><strong>After School</strong></td>
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| Drum Lessons  
Piano Lessons | Drum Line  
Mr Fawbush  
Acoustic Club  
Mrs Droskie | Jazz Band  
Drew Edwards  
Orchestra  
Mrs Droskie | Orchestra  
Mrs Droskie  
ABRSM Theory Classes  
Grade 1-6  
Mrs Droskie | Year 11 Intervention  
Mrs Droskie  
Acapella  
Mrs Droskie |
| **WEDNESDAY** | **THURSDAY** | **FRIDAY** | **ACROSS LESSONS** | **ACROSS LESSONS** |
| Brass Lessons  
Singing Lessons | Drum Line  
Mr Fawbush  
String Ensemble  
Mrs Droskie | Senior Choir  
Mrs Droskie  
Junior Choir  
Ms Speirs | Year 11 Intervention  
Mrs Droskie  
Staff Band | Year 11 Intervention  
Mrs Droskie |

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DRAMA: EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES
Mr Flowers, Head of Drama

We are pleased to announce a number of new projects and activities for students at the Laureate Academy and we’re excited about the variety available to all students. The extra-curricular timetable is laid out below, please take a moment to look through it and discuss with your child, in the Drama Enrichment section of the newsletter, you’ll find a short paragraph with information about each activity. There’s something for everyone - from film making to acting to backstage work so please encourage your son/daughter come to come and explore the drama block.

DRAMA ENRICHMENT TIMETABLE AUTUMN 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAK TIME 10:45 - 11:10</td>
<td>Key Stage 4 Drop in Drama</td>
<td>5 Minute Mayhem!</td>
<td>Key Stage 4 Drop in Drama</td>
<td>Key Stage 4 Drop in Drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUNCH TIME 12:50 – 13:35</td>
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<td>Year 7 Drama Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFTER SCHOOL 15:20 – 16:20</td>
<td>Year 8 &amp; 9 Drama Club</td>
<td>Filmmakers Club</td>
<td>Technical Theatre Club</td>
<td>Film Club or PROJECT</td>
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UPSTAGED AT THE OLD HALL
Sixth Form drama students recently signed up for the “Upstaged” programmed run by the local professional theatre venue The Old Town Hall. This Arts Council sponsored scheme sees young people from the ages of 16 to 25 receive heavily subsidised theatre tickets to encourage them to broaden their horizons and cultural experiences. On Friday 26th November, students will be taking themselves to the theatre to watch the Edgar Allan Poe classic “The Black Cat”. At the end of November members of the education team from The Old Town Hall will be delivering an assembly to all Year 12 and Year 13 students encouraging them to sign up too.

POP-UP ART GALLERY
For the final week of this half term we will be converting one of the Drama rooms into a pop up art gallery for students to enjoy. Local screenwriter Sharon Axcell, graphic illustrator Stephen Hill and the Old Town Hall Hemel Hempstead have teamed up to create a graphic novel experience set in a dystopian 2131. Students from the Laureate Academy will move around our gallery exploring the narrative and artwork of the graphic novel before producing their own piece inspired by the work they have seen.

DRAMA ENRICHMENT

KEY STAGE 4 DROP IN DRAMA
Are you a Key Stage 4 drama student? Do you need help with Component 1, 2 or 3 of the GCSE course or are you finding a piece of drama homework particularly challenging? Staff from the department will be on hand Monday, Wednesday and Friday at break time to support you with any question you have. Please fill in the whiteboard by the Drama Department door to book a slot with a member of staff.

WHEN: Monday, Wednesday and Friday break time
WHERE: Drama 1
WHO FOR: KS4 drama students

5 MINUTE MAYHEM!
You may have heard of ‘Escape Rooms’ where people have to work together to solve clues and escape from a room in a certain amount of time. In our version, students are given a scenario and five minutes to practice before they have to perform and record their work using our I-Pads and escape from Drama 1! This project runs Tuesday and Thursday at break time, come on your own or bring a team. Numbers are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

WHEN: Tuesday, Thursday break time
WHERE: Drama 1
WHO FOR: All students welcome
THE WITCHES
AT THE WATFORD PALACE THEATRE

This half term ex-Year 11 Laureate student Andrew Powell will be appearing at the prestigious Watford Palace Theatre in the Herts County Youth Theatre production of The Witches by Roald Dahl. Last year, artistic directors from The Watford Palace Theatre were invited to the school to audition a number of our Key Stage 4 drama students for the production and Andrew was successful in securing a place.

Places are limited to around 30 young people per play and students are selected through an intensive audition process. We wish Andrew the very best of luck and look forward to welcoming Watford Palace Theatre back to the Laureate Academy later this year.

WHEN: Friday 2nd November to Sunday 4th November 2018
WHERE: The Watford Palace Theatre

SCHOOL PRODUCTION 2018-19

Final provisions are being made for the school show for this year, we can’t reveal the title just yet but can you unscramble the anagram below to work out the name of the play? JAPANESE CHATTING AHMED

PROJECT

PROJECT stands for Performance Related Opportunities, Just Everyone Creating Together. Many various professional organisations contact the Laureate Academy offering enrichment and extension activities – groups such as The National Theatre, Glyndebourne Opera Company and The Globe have recently contacted the school. This group will choose a project for the half term and complete it, this group is selected by invite only but different students will be chosen depending on the activity selected. PROJECT for this half term sees students completing their own films to enter the Watford Film Festival which will be judged by professionals from Leavesden Studios.

WHEN: The first, second and third Friday of each month
WHERE: Various locations
WHO FOR: This group is targeted as those with a keen interest in the arts

DRAMA ENRICHMENT

YEAR 7 DRAMA CLUB

Are you interested in drama and performance? Do you want to make new friends? Every Wednesday lunchtime the Year 7 Drama Club will take place in the Drama 2, The Studio Theatre. The sessions will be led by Mr Flowers and upper school drama students, you’ll develop and improve your skills and techniques in drama, learn to problem solve, share your creativity and have fun! At the end of the term you’ll take part in a scripted presentation of scenes, duologues and monologues to an invited audience.

WHEN: Wednesday lunchtime
WHERE: Drama 2, The Studio Theatre
WHO FOR: Year 7 students

YEAR 8 AND 9 DRAMA CLUB

Did you attend the very popular drama club last year? Are you looking to enhance and improve your drama skills in preparation for GCSE or are you interested in drama as an option but don’t know if it’s for you? Come and take part in drama games, improvisations and script work in preparation for the end of term performance to an invited audience!

WHEN: Monday 3:15pm-4:15pm
WHERE: Drama 2, The Studio Theatre
WHO FOR: Year 8 and 9 students
GEOGRAPHY TRIP TO JURASSIC COAST
Mr Easthorpe, Head of Geography

This year’s annual Year 13 fieldwork trip took our pupils to Lulworth Cove on the Jurassic Coast, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The purpose of this trip is two-fold; for the pupils to apply and observe processes that they have been learning in the classroom and then use this to form a 4000 word report on an investigation title of their own choosing. Staying less than 200 yards from the Cove itself meant our pupils were in an ideally located for the demands of the trip.

Upon arrival in Lulworth Cove we began the learning almost straight away with a four and half hour guided tour of the Cove and Durdle Door. Conducted by a local ranger the pupils were taken on a journey stretching 251 million years in the making via a baby Adder and Coastguard rescue. After this it was back to the cottage to plan for the individual projects. Just as important was the first group to kickstart the ‘Come Dine With Me’ element to each night’s dinner; Ella and Lewis stepped up to the plate (excuse the phrase) and produced a rich and flavoursome meal of Swedish meatballs and creamy mash potato. Exquisite!

On Wednesday morning we went to Studland Bay, where we were taught how to measure the amount of sediment found on a beach. This was valuable to gather information on how coastal processes effect the geomorphology of the bay. To do so we had to employ the use of ranging poles, measuring tapes and a clinometer whilst simultaneously fielding questions, happily from every second person who passed us on the beach. From here it was onto Swanage, to investigate the impacts of exogenous and endogenous factors on the characteristics of the town. We did this by quizzing the public, collating land use maps, measured foot fall, completing a number of Environmental Quality Indexes and shopping surveys. Before returning home we popped into Gee Whites, a popular café/bar, and sat on the stone quay and befriended an injured sea gull we named Derek. Then it was back to the cottage and for an evening of data analysis. This night it was Kayleigh and I’s turn to do the cooking. We made Hunters Chicken with jacket potato and green beans. This went down well.

Rebecca Stone (Year 13)

On Thursday, after yet another wonderful breakfast cooked up by Mrs Fricker, we took a short walk to the world famous Lulworth Cove. Here we set about recording

DRAMA ENRICHMENT

TECHNICAL THEATRE CLUB
Are you interested in the backstage area of the theatre, want to learn about lights, sound, costume or set design? Next half term we will be running a Technical Theatre Club for all you budding backstage “techies”. Each week you’ll learn about a different element of technical theatre and go on to use your new found skills in our end of term performances. Please note numbers are limited to 8 per half term, if you are not successful this time please apply again in January.

WHEN: Thursday 3:15pm-4:00pm
WHERE: Drama 2 The Studio Theatre
WHO FOR: All years but priority will be given to Upper School students

FILMMAKING CLUB
Are you interested in films? Would you like to storyboard, act, direct or edit your own films and enter them in competitions? On a Wednesday evening each week you have the opportunity! All years are welcome.

WHEN: Wednesday 3:15pm-4:15pm
WHERE: Drama 1, various locations
WHO FOR: All year groups welcome
GEOGRAPHY TRIP TO JURASSIC COAST
(Continued)

data that measured wave frequency, sediment sorting and longshore drift (this included taking it in turn to throw an orange into the water and record the time it took to pass one metre in either direction, unfortunately three oranges were harmed/lost in the process). The weather was not the blistering sun we had come to expect over the previous two days, instead light mist was clearing the way for overcast conditions. Once finished we stopped for some well-earned ‘luxury’ hot chocolate before making our way to Weymouth, a coastal town nearby. Here, we completed clone town surveys and trawled shops to find pre-determined products within a set amount of time. When complete, it was off for a quick snack before bowling (for some it would be their first attempt), yet it was the admiration of the venues amazing animations that made the greatest impression. Back at the cottage, we had a curry cooked by Mr. Easthorpe, continued our write-up that needed to be done on the trip, before watching Koi Fish and going to bed - ready for home. Kayleigh Taylor (Year 13)

On the final day of the Geography trip, as a group we travelled to Durdle Door, one of the most well-known landmarks along the Jurassic Coastline. It was upon this stretch of coast where I carried out an investigation with two main objectives; to understand how a difference in coastal processes affected the profile of the beach and how the same processes influenced sediment sorting along it. The initial step was to mark out where we felt the centre of the beach was and from that point onwards we would mark out with ranging poles the breaking points of the beach all the way to the back. We would then measure out the length between the shore and the back of the beach, and every metre along the measuring tape, a random sampling of sediment would be measured, giving insight to the trends and patterns along the beach. After briefly stopping for a celebratory ice cream, we were on the bus home... via a traffic jam on the M3. Ella Bunting (Year 13).

All in all a successful trip, the students will use this experience as the basis of submitted report that will count towards 20% of their final A Level grade and more importantly will give them the skills necessary for similar write-ups if they choose to continue their education into university, regardless of the courses they choose. After Christmas it is the turn of our GCSE cohort to spend a couple of days away from school. Keep those eyes peeled!

DRAMA ENRICHMENT

FILMCLUB

Do you like going to the cinema? Do you enjoy watching and talking about films? If you do then come and join our Filmclub. On the last Friday of each month we convert Drama 2, The Studio Theatre, into a cinema and watch films on our big screen! Our film for December will be the classic Christmas hit “Elf”. Drinks and snacks will be available to purchase on the day.

Each film will be introduced by Year 13 student Lucy Mowat who will give a short talk on various elements of the film. Everyone is welcome to this inaugural event where you can sign up and become a member of our Filmclub committee, voting for the films you want to see (age restrictions apply to film choices).

WHEN: The last Friday of each month (30th Nov for Elf) 3:30pm-5:00pm
WHERE: Drama 2, The Studio Theatre

WHO FOR: All years but priority will be given to Lower School students
Our sports teams have had a very busy start to the school year with numerous fixtures already played in football, netball and rugby. As part of our whole school literacy focus, each team is encouraged to write a report following their matches and these are shared with staff during weekly briefing. We would like to share with you a few of our recent matches in the words of our students.

YEAR 9 BOYS FOOTBALL v DAME ALICE OWENS (COUNTY CUP)
Thursday 18th October 2018

It was a great result for Laureate Academy, with the game finishing 3-2. Goal scorers Alex Middleton 2 (4 for the season) and Josh Maddison sealed the win in an intense game. Laureate showed great resilience and passion to win the game especially when Tyriq was injured and had to finish the game playing ‘walking’ football. On to the next round!

Man of the Match - Niall Dowling.

Report by Ben Manley

FITNESS
Mrs Town, Senior Sports Technician

Are you part of a Netball, Football, Rugby or Basketball team? Come along to the Fitness Suite on the following days:

Please could we remind parents to label all items of PE Kit. We currently have a large amount of unclaimed kit which has been left behind in the PE Department.
LAUREATE SPORTS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
Miss Crossland, Director of Learning

Laureate Sports Leadership Academy has had a busy start to the year, having already assisted Miss McCawley and the DSSN (Dacorum School Sports Network) with 5 primary school festivals which were all hosted at Laureate Academy. The first 3 events were Mini Olympics, Year 5 being the first one with 150 students from 6 local primary schools, followed by a similar number of students and schools for Year 4 and then Year 3. For each event, between 22 and 26 Year 8/9 students lead the following activities: Boccia, Table Tennis, Tennis, Basketball, High-Five Netball and Athletics. Leaders also assisted with the organisation of the primary school cross country event, again hosted at Laureate, which saw over 1000 primary school children take part in one day. Leaders had roles that varied from the pace maker of the race to the support team and marshals. It was a little cold and wet outside but the leaders were again, fantastic ambassadors for our school and demonstrated excellent organisational skills as well as care and compassion for the younger students they were leading, really supporting them to do their best.

The final event our leaders will be involved in this half term is the ‘Change for Life’ Festival. The aim of this is to enable primary school children to develop healthy hearts, happy hearts, social hearts and successful hearts by increasing participation levels in sporting activities. A really worthwhile event, which our leaders will be privileged to support and will be leading by example.

The academy currently has 50 students, with numbers increasing after half term as applications have closed recently. The successful applicants will be informed shortly after half term and will receive a certificate of membership. Students will receive training from DSSN in November to help develop their leadership and communication skills further. Events next half term will include DSSN Inter-School competitions and Laureate Academy Inter-House competitions.

Thank you to Miss McCawley for giving our students the opportunity to develop their leadership skills at the primary school events and also to the leaders themselves who have been fantastic ambassadors for our academy and have really helped making the events, a huge success.

MATCH REPORT
YEAR 7 NETBALL V ABBOT’S HILL
Monday 15th October 2018

Yesterday, Year 7 played a netball match against Abbot’s Hill. We got off to a good start but in the first quarter we lost 2 goals.

In our second quarter Grace scored 2 powerful goals which made our scores shoot up. In our third quarter both Laureate and Abbot’s scored another four goals altogether, ending the third quarter 4-4. Grace scored both Laureate’s goals.

In the last quarter sadly we lost as they scored 2 more good goals. The end score was 4-6 to them.

We all tried our very best and we’ll hope for better luck next time. Abbot’s Hill chose our Girl of the Game and they gave it to our goal defence, Alicja.

Report by Grace Young.

YEAR 7 RUGBY TOURNAMENT
Tuesday 16th October 2018

Yesterday we had a rugby tournament at Camelot. We played Longdean and drew 2-2, Hemel and lost 5-1 and Astley Cooper who we beat 5-2. We came fifth out of 6 teams. All the boys did well and should be proud. Our Man of the Tournament was Kodi Hill.

Well done everyone.
EXTRA-CURRICULAR SPORTS  
Miss Harris, Head of Core PE and Extra-Curricular

We have had an amazing start to our sporting extra-curricular programme this year with netball, football, rugby and basketball already playing in competitive matches throughout the term.

Girl’s netball has made big strides with all teams from Years 7-11 playing matches every week, with 14 matches played so far this year. The Year 7 team has bonded together very well in a short amount of time, with most of their games having a very small goal margin between teams. The Year 8 team are producing strong numbers each week while the 9’s and 10’s are always working hard and have a very high possession rate. After a long summer break, the Year 11 team merged back into their strengths and dominated their match.

Boy’s football has also taken off with the new Year 7’s building a very strong team while training with one of the Sixth Formers, Callum. The boys have developed immensel y over the last 6 weeks but unfortunately lost to an even better Roundwood Park in the County Cup match. The boys will have more chances to succeed in the Dacorum district league. The Year 9 football team had great success in their county cup match, winning their match 3-2 against tough competition and moving on to the next round. All football teams will be participating in the Dacorum district league and we wish them the very best of luck throughout the year.

Girl’s football has been a great hit this year with Mr Fawbush having 25+ girls attend training every Tuesday after school. They will also be entering in the Girl’s Football District League where we will strive for progression and success.

The Year 7 and 8 boy’s rugby teams have been very busy this term with a number of tournaments and matches being played, with some excellent results. A big thank you to Mr Ede who has successfully coached the Year 8 rugby team to win their district tournament.

Next term we will be continuing to compete in netball, football and rugby. Basketball will be starting their league games after the Christmas break. Trampolinists will be back in action after half term on a Monday after school. Dance will also be taking off next term in preparation for our big dance evening event in February. Any girls or boys who would like to be a part of this amazing evening should speak with Miss Sutton and attend dance classes on Wednesday’s after school.

Thank you to all of the PE staff who put in extra hours at lunch and after school to ensure our students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities. All students can see the extra-curricular timetable on the white board down stairs in the sports hall. We encourage all students to take part in activities to enhance their physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

DACORUM SCHOOLS SPORTS NETWORK  
MISS MCCAWLEY, DSSN MANAGER

It’s been a busy half term for DSSN and its member schools. Several events have taken place over the 8 weeks including Year 3, 4 and 5 Mini Olympics, Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 cross country competitions and teacher training events. This week has seen a Year 5 Tag Rugby Festival run with 26 teams entered, and a Change 4 Life event for Year 3 and 4 pupils – developing skills and challenging them to be the best they can be. Year 6 pupils from 24 of our member schools attended a Bronze Ambassador and Health Activity Leader Training day held at Laureate Academy on Friday 5th October where they learnt new skills to support them in their leadership roles back in their primary schools.

I would like to say a special thank you to Laureate Academy and especially Miss Crosland for all of their support with venues and leaders this half term – The leaders have been fantastic and have really enabled the events to run smoothly.

All member primary schools have signed up to be part of the Football and Netball leagues which will run through to the spring term. Various Year 1 and 2 events will run over the forthcoming half term at the Sports Centres – supported and sponsored by Everyone Active.

School Games Competitions have taken place including U11 Table Tennis for boys and girls, and U13 and (continued overleaf)
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY & LEARNING SUPPORT
Mrs Carter, SEN(D) Coordinator

At Laureate Academy, we believe that all students should expect to receive an education that enables them to achieve the best possible educational and wider outcomes, and become confident, able to communicate their own views and ready to make a successful transition into adulthood. Every student brings a unique pattern of strengths and areas of need to our community and the Academy aims to fulfil the potential of all students. With this in mind, the Learning Support Team have worked hard to develop a new model and vision of SEND provision offered this academic year. Within Laureate Academy’s Learning Support Department, we now support students across three new Centres:

Centre for Cognition and Learning Support – for students who experience challenges in literacy and numeracy. This includes specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, or moderate learning difficulties that affect students in a range of cognitive areas.

Centre for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support – for students who struggle to engage in the social aspects of school, or who find it hard to cope with challenging emotions. This will range from students needing short-term assistance during a turbulent time in their life, to students with a recognised condition such as AD(H)D.

Centre for Language and Communication Support – for students who have speech, language and communication needs, a specific language impairment or a range of communication difficulties. Conditions include: Specific Language Disorder, ASD/ASC (Autism), Asperger Syndrome, speech sound disorders/delay. This centre also provides support to pupils with sensory and physical needs such as vision, hearing, gross and fine motor-control.

OUR HEADS OF CENTRE:
Sam Carter – SEN(D)Co/Head of Language and Communication
Nicky Barnes – Deputy SENCo/Head of Social and Emotional Support
Janice Hill – Specialist teacher/Head of Cognition and Learning

Our new centres run a range of interventions to support students, as well as offering a range of training to support classroom teachers. The intervention provided takes a three-tiered approach to supporting your child’s learning:

Universal - this is the teaching your child will receive from his/her class teacher and may include some very minor adaptations to match learning needs. It also includes ensuring that all teachers are aware of how to match these learning needs, through good communication and training systems.

Targeted - it may be appropriate to consider making additional short-term special educational provision to remove or reduce any obstacles to your child’s learning. This takes the form of a graduated four-part approach of:

A. assessing your child’s needs;
B. planning the most effective and appropriate intervention;
C. providing this intervention;
D. reviewing the impact on your child’s progress towards individual learning outcomes.

DACORUM SCHOOLS SPORTS NETWORK (CONTINUED)

U15 table tennis – All 3 events hosted by Laureate Academy – Next half term Badminton and Mini Basketball will run, all leading to the County Finals in December. We have appointed 10 new apprentices this year on top of the 2 that have continued in their schools from last year – They are working in their schools to support the delivery of PE and School Sport – and upskilling themselves to eventually be TA’s or Sports Teachers.

To keep up to date with DSSN news or to see our calendar of events please visit our website:
dacorumschoolsportsnetwork.co.uk
This year, interventions have been specifically chosen and developed to help support children with SEND even more. Many of these are taking place outside the classroom, as a 1-to-1 or as a small group of students. They are also limited to a number of weeks to minimise disruption to our regular curriculum. Examples of some of the new interventions offered this year are:

- **Literacy**: Lexia Phonics Programme, Accelerated Reader, 1-1 Word Shark, Spell Zone, 1-1 Specialist Teacher sessions, small group KS4 close the gap
- **Numeracy**: 1-1 Catch-up Numeracy sessions, small group KS4 close the gap
- **SEMH Centre**: Mentoring and Zones of Regulation
- **Language and Communication Centre**: Social Skills group
- **Home Learning**: daily homework club with LSA support

**Specialist** - it may also be necessary to seek specialist advice and regular long-term support from a specialist professional within the school. Such specialists may include Speech Therapists or Educational Psychologists.

Combined with this, our new Student Development Centre (SDC) has begun providing students with a place to work when they are not managing in the classroom. The SDC is one aspect of the work of the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support Centre within the Learning Support team. At Laureate Academy, we are dedicated to ensuring that your child’s learning needs are first met through the high quality teaching delivered by his/her class teacher. Therefore, this year we have been working hard to ensure staff are appropriately trained to support our students with special educational needs. Professional development from the start of this academic year has ensured that all our staff are now fully aware of how to cater for a range of SEN. One whole day during the initial 5 day INSETs was dedicated to SEND. This included training from all of our new Heads of Centre, specialist SEND guest speakers David Bartram (OBE) and Gary Aubin (Future Academies), and training for supporting ADHD/ASD from Add-ance.

We are also very pleased with how our Year 7 students with SEND have settled into the Academy. We liaised closely with the local primary schools to ensure we knew as much as possible about the support needs of our new students. We also discussed with the relevant teachers any individual needs, and met all new parents and students in the summer term before students began Year 7. All our Year 6 students visited Laureate Academy three times – for baseline testing, for a Taster Day and for an interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team; but additional to this our Learning Support Team undertook three extra visits offered for those pupils with already identified special educational needs. This helped to ease anxiety about being in a school that was significantly bigger than their primary school. We took care to ensure that all staff were aware of individual pupils’ needs, learning progress and the best strategies to support their learning. Our students with SEND in Year 7 have shown real resilience and transitioned smoothly into life at Laureate Academy. We are especially proud of one of our students who has a diagnosis of ASD, as he was selected to be a guest speaker at the Academy’s Open Day and spoke in front of a large number of prospective parents about his experiences of joining our school.

This year we have also focused a great deal on encouraging parental involvement in any support we provide. We believe that it is essential for us to understand your views, as well as the views of your child, in any difficulties they may experience with their learning. You are now able to share your views and ask questions over email, by phoning the Learning Support Department, or by arranging a meeting with your child’s Head of Centre. We are also holding coffee mornings throughout the year, where you will have the opportunity to meet other parents and the Learning Support Team. Our first coffee morning has already taken place consisting of parents and carers of students with ASD. Feedback from parents who attended was really positive, with one concluding that, “it was good to hear about other people’s experiences, and not feel as if you are on your own”.

At Laureate Academy, we are very happy to speak to you about any aspects of your child’s education. It is best to speak to one of the following in this order:

1. The tutor or subject teacher
2. The Head of Key Stage or LWO
3. Head of Centre
4. The SEN(D)Co
5. The Headteacher
FOOD ALLERGIES
MESSAGE FROM INNOVATE, OUR SCHOOL CATERERS

Following the news regarding a young lady who sadly died from an allergic reaction to a baguette at Pret, I thought I would write to you so you are aware of Innovate’s position on such matters.

As we prepared for the new Food Information Regulations (FIR) which came out on 13th December 2014 we consulted with Buckinghamshire & Surrey Trading Standards and Woking Environmental Health who both advised on how best to comply with the new Regulations.

We are in a 'Primary Authority Partnership' with these two services which means we take a very serious approach to compliance. We have received and acted upon what is called ‘authoritative advice’ on this matter, which has legal standing. At present, we are operating within the legal requirements and a change to our labelling is not required. Our products do not currently have allergy advice on labels.

In the dining hall you will find a clearly identifiable poster explaining to all students what to do if they have an allergy or intolerance. Our staff can advise students on what items they can purchase using the allergen matrix found at the service point, and by referring to the in-house compliance book for main meals & specials prepared by the chef. Staff can also arrange for alternative options to be made available. These allergens are documented by the chef/manager using the ingredients databases we have from our suppliers and by checking packaging. Ingredients that are substituted are also managed in this way, but all substitutes go through the Head Office first to ensure suitability. Our suppliers are continuously updating us on changes to recipes during manufacturing and we have recently checked all stock to ensure accuracy.

Once an allergy sufferer has been identified either at the service point or by parent or school notification we have the ability to load onto the student account at pay point any allergies or intolerance they may suffer, so a final check can be made on their purchase before consumption. Our Area Manager will discuss this with you to ensure all data is up to date and that the catering team within your school are aware of all students or staff with allergies or any other type of food intolerance.

To ensure the safe management of allergens in the business and to reduce cross contamination risks, our teams are all trained in food safety which includes allergens management. In addition to this, the Food Standards Agency issued their own course which was originally issued to Environmental Health Officers back in 2014 and which all members of Innovate staff have completed.

As a responsible food business we document all our policies and practices covering food handling and preparation. These are reviewed on a yearly basis and staff are provided with refresher training. These policies are managed by myself in conjunction with our advisors The Shield Safety Group.

We also audit compliance within all regulations and our own policies during senior management visits. We are also subject to EHO visits and, in some of our schools, visits by Trading Standards.

The government announced last week that they will be reviewing labelling requirements of food items for sale. We will obviously be monitoring this closely and will again work with our Primary Partners to ensure that Innovate is fully compliant.