



Welcome to the first edition of

CHAT News

Issue 1 Winter 2019



Welcome

I am very proud to lead the Trust that runs our 5 schools. We have the most wonderful parents and children. Every parent I meet wants their child to do the very best that they can.

As a parent myself, I am passionate about ensuring my children have every chance to do well in life. At CHAT I want us to do everything possible to help you support your children at home with their learning.

Studies show that learning at home, as well as in the classroom, leads to much better outcomes in all subjects for children.

Each edition of this new newsletter will celebrate achievement in our schools and also provide you with guidance, hints and tips on how you

can help your children at home in key areas such as English (including reading), Maths and Science (see page 4). You can make a huge difference! Research shows that a strong parent, child and teacher relationship helps boost student achievement and outcomes.

You can find out more about my plans for our school by listening to a short interview ▶

If listening on mobile, play in the browser

Marino Charalambous
Chief Executive Officer

TOP 3 in the borough

The GCSE results from our Secondary Academy Heron Hall – top 3 in the Borough for Maths and English and in the top 10% for the whole country for Maths – shows that the potential of our children does not need to be restricted by our postcode.

Social media – stay in contact

All our schools have active websites and social media channels. Go to your school website, then click on Contact and then click on Social media. To find your website go to www.chat-edu.org.uk/our-web-sites

Reading Aloud

There is an easy way to improve your child's chances at school. It will entertain and delight them. It will strengthen the bonds between you both. And it is virtually free. Sound too good to be true? Actually, it isn't.

The magical method: taking time to read aloud to your child. Children that are read to daily will hear 30 million more words than their counterparts. Reading aloud for just 15 minutes a day, every day, makes a huge difference. Reading aloud builds literacy skills. It improves vocabulary, phonics, familiarity with the printed word, storytelling and comprehension.



Reading with Myleene at Cuckoo Hall

Musician, actress, presenter and model, Myleene Klass visited the school just before Christmas and was very impressed with our Read Aloud campaign.

Myleene spent three hours with children, parents and teachers to see how the school was supporting parents with its Community Outreach programmes and

gave a master class in singing to a very lucky group of children.

She also took part in an exercise designed to get parents and children thinking about stories and language. Watch out for our school Read Aloud events – including the new, very popular ‘make a story box’ sessions.



Myleene & Marino with the Read Aloud Book Club bags

Thumbs up from Ofsted for Cuckoo



We are pleased that the Ofsted team has highlighted, in their latest inspection of the school, a number of very positive findings, as the school continues to make progress. While Ofsted says we have achieved a lot in a short space of time, there is still a lot that we need to do to make Cuckoo Hall a great school again.

Highlights from the report included: leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures; leaders are focusing on the right areas; the Headteacher has a clear strategy to improve the school; leaders evaluate accurately the quality of teaching and learning; tailored programmes of professional development are improving teaching; and the school governing body provides robust challenge and support.

School improvement at Woodpecker

New Headteacher, Sharon Parson, has been very busy introducing a dynamic new action plan to improve the results and standards across the whole school. Under the improvement plan, significant changes to the leadership of the school have been made, bringing in new senior staff who have delivered impressive exam results and outcomes for children at the different key stages in other schools.

Sharon also persuaded the Trust to provide additional investment in the children's future, with more staff, bringing in expert support from outside the school (including a Maths consultant), establishing smaller class groups for our year 6 cohort, and having

various, targeted interventions to get the children to where they need to be. Sharon is giving greater emphasis to Maths and English, through programmes such as 'Inspire Maths' and a new dedicated English Language and Literacy scheme for the whole

school. There is more specialised homework covering reading, writing, spelling and grammar and she has asked parents to support her by getting the children to complete their homework.

Our Trust

Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust – often now referred to as CHAT Academies – was set up in 2010. CHAT currently runs 5 schools, educating some 2,600 pupils. This will increase to around 3,000. We get our funding directly from government and are able to provide our families with an all through education from nursery to year 11.

Being part of a group of schools has enormous benefits. We are able to save money by having

centralised functions, such as administration, HR and IT, and to put these savings back into the classroom. We are able to reduce costs through our much bigger purchasing power. There is also scope to generate additional income from commercial activities across several schools.

Working in a Trust makes it easier for teachers to support each other across a group of schools by sharing and learning from good practice, taking on increased

responsibility for specialist subjects and acting as a coach and “critical friend”.

Our Trust is managed by a Board of Trustees. We have been able to attract some extra-ordinarily high calibre people, including: a former education advisor to two Prime Ministers, the head of primary education at a world-class university, and the Chief Executive of a local authority. They are all dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for our children.

The power of reading at Kingfisher Hall

A new literacy scheme called 'Power of Reading' has been introduced for reception classes. This proven scheme enables schools to raise engagement and attainment in both reading and writing for all pupils. It is known to achieve impressive results.

Every 3-4 weeks, children will gradually be introduced to

a new book and all areas of learning and activities will focus on aspects of the story being read. This will include a number of underlying themes in each text, such as feelings and other emotions. Children will engage with various texts throughout the year to encourage a love of reading and writing, along with all other areas of learning, in fun and engaging ways.



Kingfisher children enjoy the power of reading!

New maths learning investment at Enfield Heights

The school is very excited about its new maths teaching programme called Inspire Maths. This is based on high expectations for all, with challenging mathematical reasoning and mastery tasks. The children are being taught strategies such as Singapore Bar Modelling and we have invested thousands of pounds on new maths resources for all of the classrooms.

You can watch a short film the school has made about Inspire Maths by going to this link: <https://tinyurl.com/mathsinsschool>

INSPIRE MATHS



Simon Lancaster with students

Heron Hall attracts world's top speech writer

Simon Lancaster, who has written speeches for world leaders and who is the author of award winning books on communication, gave a master class at the school recently for our year 10 and 11s. His brilliant masterclass on speech writing and the use of words to communicate was extremely popular.

Simon also had lunch with a group of students and later signed copies of his books in the library. With a serving judge, an Olympic medallist, and a future visit from one of the best chefs in the world we are able to attract people of the highest calibre to Heron to help inspire the students.

Community Outreach – supporting parents

We believe it is vital to support you in developing a range of skills to enhance your parenting skills and skills for life, including: helping you support your child's learning at home; dealing with behaviour, healthy lifestyles, understanding child development and workability skills. This is a free service.

We have formed a national partnership with Save the Children who have now recognized us as being one of the leading organisations in London supporting parents.

All our schools run coffee sessions with guest speakers

and themes. We also put on workshops on a variety of topics that parents have requested. We work with our families to deliver a range of relevant support sessions.

For more information contact: Wendy Bowstead
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Save the Children



Simon's Masterclass at Heron Hall

Resources and tips to help our parents at home

Maths: *Suggestions From Sara Tilley*

Primary: Help your child at home by making sure that they 'know' the multiplication and division tables. The national curriculum expectation is year 2 - 2,5,10, year 3 - 2, 5, 10, 3,4,8. By the end of year 4 it is the expectation that all children 'know' all multiplication and division tables up to 12. 'Knowing' the tables is more than being able to say them out loud, there are lots of things you can do to build their confidence and ensure progress.

Firstly make sure they say the tables out loud like this "One eight is eight, two eights are sixteen, three eights are twenty-four". Research has shown that by doing it this way, when a child is asked "What are three eights?" they will recall the full sentence with the answer. I would advise asking your child to say out loud the tables they are working on at least once a day. This really will make a difference to their memory retrieval.

Once they have said it aloud, ask them quick fire questions eg $8 \times 6 =$, $3 \times 6 =$, then move onto the division facts eg 56 divided by $8 =$, 88 divided by $8 = \dots$ Next move on to related facts eg $80 \times 6 =$, $800 \times 6 =$, $8000 \times 6 = \dots$ Finally get your child to answer a maths problem which requires them to use their tables eg There are 7 days in a week, how many days in 9 weeks?

Here are some related websites you may find useful:

www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/7-11-years/times-tables and www.timestables.co.uk/ and www.maths-games.org/times-tables-games.html

English: *Suggestions from Brittany Wright*

Primary: The Persuasion Game. Choose a household object (this could be anything from a favourite toy to a piece of fruit!) Your child needs to persuade you (or another family member) to 'buy' the item from them. No money needs to change hands!

The idea is that your child will get to practise describing a noun (the chosen object) using adjectives (these words describe nouns) and should give you detailed reasons why you should 'buy' the chosen item from them. You can ask them lots of questions about the object and encourage them to reply with lots of detail.

This is an easy game to play and a great activity for any budding business person! Example: Chosen object: an apple. Your child might say: "This juicy, red apple is delicious." You might say: "Why should I buy your apple?" Your child might reply: "You should buy my apple because it is very healthy and will help you to live a long, happy life!" Extension: If your child finds it easy to persuade you to 'buy' lots of different objects, challenge them to use some of the persuasive devices from the activity for secondary school students.

Secondary: Persuasive Devices Bingo. Whilst watching television or listening to the radio, try to spot the persuasive devices that are used by speakers. Discuss their effects together - what is the speaker aiming to achieve through their use of each particular persuasive device? Are they successful? Why/why not?

This list of persuasive devices will help you. If your child is not familiar with the meaning of any of these terms, encourage them to use a dictionary or the internet in order to define them: Quotations from experts. Rhetorical questions. Facts. Opinions. Repetition. Use of flattery. Direct address. Exaggeration. Emotive language. Rule of three. Superlatives. Alliteration.

This activity helps children to understand that the skills they learn in their English lessons are valuable in the real world! It is also useful to help reinforce their understanding of key techniques regularly by talking about these terms during everyday activities like watching adverts on television.

Science: *Suggestions from Jane Elmer*

Primary: I would suggest a similar activity to the secondary one below; parents to select topics and then test spellings and meanings of key words. Topics for primary can be accessed on Key stage 2 Bitesize science www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/z2pfb9q

Secondary: Key stage 3 - an activity that can be done each week - For the topic you are currently learning about, write a list of between 5 and 10 key words. Using the internet, a science book or your school exercise book, write a definition (a meaning) for each of these words. You could start to build these into your own science dictionary. A website you might find useful to help with this would be www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zng4d2p

Key stage 4: Using your revision guide, make a list of each topic that is covered for GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics. For each topic, pick out the 5 most important key words. For each of these words, make sure you are able to spell it (get someone to help you with this) and then write a definition for this word. You might find the websites for GCSE Bitesize useful; there is one for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects