

HYDESVILLE TOWER SCHOOL

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Headmaster: Mr. Warren Honey BSc (Hons), MEd



Dear Parents and Pupils

4th September 2018

Welcome to the new academic year at Hydesville Tower School!

I hope that you and your family have been able to enjoy a lovely summer, and that the start of the first term brings a sense of excitement and anticipation to all. I am looking forward to seeing all the pupils in the days ahead, and feeling the school regaining that excited and happy buzz that exists when filled with positive children.

As well as welcoming new pupils and parents to Hydesville, it is my pleasure to introduce some new staff members:

Mr Staffiere will be a Year 2 teacher, having had experience as a PE/Sports Co-ordinator and EYFS Co-ordinator at Wood End Primary School.

Mrs Burton joins us from Radleys Primary School to provide maternity cover for Mrs Taylor in Year 2. Many parents will recall her as Miss Bayliss in former years, and it is lovely to welcome her back.

Mr Burnham joins us as a Year 5 teacher and as Science Co-ordinator, having had the same role previously (and Maths Co-ordinator) at the British International School of Moscow.

Mrs Jones will be teaching GCSE classes in Business Studies and Computer Sciences, joining us from RSA Academy in Tipton with experience in GCSE and A level teaching to ensure our pupils are excellently prepared for our exams and beyond.

Mrs Khan is our newly appointed Learning Support Assistant, providing in-class direction to pupils with a special educational need to help them fulfil their potential, with prior experience in international settings including the Bangkok Patana School.

Mr Dutton joined us as one of our minibus drivers at the end of last term, and will have started to meet his pupils on the route in July.

It is also a pleasure to welcome back Miss Vas to the Office/Reception, following last year's maternity leave. She has already spent some weeks in school during the summer, reacquainting herself with all the aspects of the busy Hydesville existence!

The school site has been incredibly busy during the summer, with various works being tackled as part of the continual improvements. Most significant has been the redevelopment of the Office/Reception space and Staff Room, which will provide for a much improved experience for all concerned when visiting the school. There has also been redecoration of the foyer and the stairs up to my office in keeping with the styles of the earlier rooms. A Prep classroom has been refurbished, and air conditioning has been installed in two Prep classrooms. We have also continued the decoration of the main corridor that had been started last summer. I'm sorry if the summer works provided any inconvenience for parents visiting the site and struggling to park due to the contractors' vehicles or

their skips. We have a new off-site parking location for the minibuses but they have also been housed at school during the summer transition, which has added to the full feeling.

Parents and visitors are asked to access the new Reception Office by the glass door entrance close to the main playground gate, rather than the old front door previously used.

Metacognition, More Able and Talented, and Mental Health form a triumvirate of “M”s that will be an important focus for us at Hydesville Tower School this year.

Metacognition involves the principles of helping people to become better as learners, understanding their own needs and how they learn, as well as developing self-regulation in their approaches. If metacognition is successfully incorporated into the teaching and learning within a school, pupils become better able to independently develop their thinking and understanding. Long-term, this helps a person in all facets of life requiring them to plan activities, evaluate their outcomes and modify their behaviours for subsequent actions.

‘More Able and Talented’ is a term used about stretching and challenging the highest performers so they can fulfil and exceed their potential. This has been an important part of Hydesville for the last few years, as is true for most schools. However, we are looking at how we can extend its potential to have the greatest impact. I am a firm believer that no one’s ability is set in stone, and especially in children, advances can occur that result in sudden developmental improvements. Thus our MAT provision will be designed for the high performers but will often allow other children the chance to take on the challenges and be pulled upwards to greater success. Every child matters at Hydesville, and every child has a potential that we wish to nurture.

Mental Health is an important focus in the UK currently, as we are starting to see the impact of social and emotional pressures in an environment of decreasing funding and provision. I want every member of the Hydesville community – pupil, staff and families – to enjoy strong mental health, but it cannot be assumed or expected to occur without activity that protects and nurtures the individual. You may recall that Miss Kingston is our Mental Health Champion, working across the Cognita group to ensure we are doing the very best by each person in the Hydesville family.

More will be heard on all three of these areas in the weeks and months ahead, but I am excited that if we get these areas right, we can look forward to a wonderful year to come.

Exam results from this past summer were a tremendous reflection on what goes on within the school. The Key Stage 2 assessments at the end of Year 6 were superb, with indications of outstanding practice in numeracy and literacy. Although local statistics have been slow to emerge, our comparison to the national picture puts our children significantly ahead in their outcomes. In August, we were delighted to see the GCSE results, with significant individual and collective success. Our results eclipse the national and Walsall standards by a huge margin, with nearly half of all grades being 7 (or A) and above.

The attainments of all pupils illustrate that the quality of teaching throughout Hydesville is very strong indeed. Combining this with the excellent relationships that exist to support children, it is quite evident that the model within our school is working to provide huge gains for each child.

I am committed to us delivering an excellent experience for parents, and outstanding communication is a valuable element of how we can work together for the benefit of your child. We launched the Hydesville Communication Charter last year, and this can be accessed via the website [here](#). Traditional methods such as homework diaries, letters and telephone remain, but I am aware that for many people, emails are increasingly convenient. If you are unsure of the email address for a particular

member of staff, please address your email to info@hydesville.com and include the name of the relevant staff member in the subject bar. This will be passed on to the correct individual rapidly. Under most circumstances, the first staff member to address questions to will be your child's tutor.

Our school calendar for the Autumn Term will be reaching you shortly, and the website will be similarly updated at this time. Ms Archer will also keep followers of the Hydesville Tower School Facebook and Twitter pages informed with up-to-the-minute details about forthcoming events. All letters we send home are also able to be accessed via the school website. Next week, we will have our Meet the Teacher event for the Prep School on **Monday 10th September**, starting in the Hall at **3.15 p.m** and finishing by **4.00 p.m.** and the Year 7 Welcome Evening will be on **Wednesday 12th September**, from **6.00 – 7.00 p.m.**. It will also be the official 66th birthday celebrations of the school on **Friday 14th September**. More details of all of these occasions will come out in the next few days.

An important event in the life of any school is its Open Morning. We will be having a whole school Open Morning on **Saturday 29th September**, with the session running from 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.. Having the chance to show potential children and parents what occurs within our school is a vital part of how it can grow and thrive, so we do ask for the support of as many pupils as possible on the morning. Contact will be made for those children who may be required, and I would appreciate your encouragement and support in allowing them to be present and be ambassadors for Hydesville.

It is customary to include a reminder of the School Aims and Ethos in start of year letters such as these. These are available on the school website and are included below:

Our aims....

To provide a first-rate independent education for boys and girls aged three to 16.

Giving every child the chance to develop their full potential in all areas; supporting them to become confident and caring individuals, who are proactive and independent; providing enriching opportunities, so they gain greater awareness of themselves, their community and the wider world.

Our ethos...

Our school is a place where the sense of a community is key, and a family-feel characterises daily life.

Providing an environment where children feel safe and cared for is of paramount importance, since this gives the child the best opportunity to be a happy learner. We appreciate everyone's individuality, and cater to support their needs so they can thrive and be successful. Offering a broad curricular and co-curricular experience allows breadth and depth to develop in the pupils. Lifelong memories are formed through the time at the school, and a love of learning is instilled that will be key throughout a person's life.

Governance for Hydesville Tower School is carried out through Cognita. Our previous Assistant Director of Education (Chair of Governors), John Coleman, retired at the end of last year after a very distinguished career as a Head, Inspector and ADE. I am delighted to inform you that our new ADE is Mrs Danuta Tomasz, who will be spending time at Hydesville soon to fully appreciate all that it has to offer, as well as lend her critical eye and support. Any correspondence for her attention or Cognita generally can be addressed to

5 & 7 Diamond Court, Opal Drive, Eastlake Park, Fox Milne, Milton Keynes MK15 0DU

The start of a new school year is always an exciting time: a chance to make a wonderful impression, to develop one's capabilities and to learn in an environment with friendly, positive people. This does not happen by fluke or accident, but through the dedication and diligence of the adults and children within the Hydesville community. I am sure that this will be another great year for the school, and look forward to working with you to make that happen.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Warren Honey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned centrally below the "Yours sincerely" text.

Warren Honey

Headmaster