Haseltine Newsletter 9th January 2026

Dear Families & Friends,

Welcome back to the new school term (Spring Term, although it may not feel like it!), and if I haven't spoken to you already… Happy New Year! I hope that you all had a relaxing & fun break and batteries have been re-charged. It has been a good first week back from the children, I have seen excellent learning behaviours as I travelled around the school, I wonder if lots of new year resolutions have been made 😉🤣

## Keeping children safe online…

An amazing resource has come through to me, please take a look at it. Just click on the link and it will take you to the website…

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am writing to inform you that I have recently published a new guide, What I wish my parents or carers knew: A guide for parents on managing children's digital lives.

Supporting children's safety is a shared responsibility between families, schools and wider society. For parents and carers, this responsibility has become increasingly complex as children's lives are now deeply intertwined with the digital world. Many parents face difficult decisions about how to balance protecting children from online harm with enabling access to spaces that are now central to learning, socialising and play.

The last time I published a guide like this, The things I wish my parents had known: Young people's advice on talking to your child about online sexual harassment, in December 2021, it was to help parents and carers navigate difficult conversations about sexual harassment online. This guide is different in scope, in recognition of the complex, rapidly evolving landscape in which children – and parents – are navigating. It focuses on the challenge of managing children's everyday online habits.

This guide was written with the direct involvement of children in England. It is a reflection of their views. My office visited schools to speak to teenagers, and spoke

to my Youth Ambassadors and Youth Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Panel to get their expertise on what works and what doesn't work between parents or carers and children in the 21st Century.

When I speak to children about what they would do differently when it comes to being online, with the benefit of hindsight, I ask them: would they give a smartphone to their own teenager? Almost unanimously, they tell me no. They want to be protected from it as long as possible.

As educators and leaders, you play a vital role in supporting parents and carers to navigate these challenges. Responses to my recent school survey show just how concerned school leaders are about their children's safety online, despite most already taking steps to limit or ban devices from the classroom. Children are clear that they value firm, informed and protective boundaries when adults have concerns about the content they are accessing online.

As parents, carers, and educators, our job must begin and end with our children's care and safety. It's what they expect and what they want from you.

As one young person told me: "Don't be afraid to be firm… If you are worried [that] your child is seeing harmful content and you don't know what they're watching and it's affecting the behaviour, just take it that you know best – they don't."

I hope this guide will be a useful resource for your school community, and I encourage you to share it with staff and parents where appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

**Dame Rachel de Souza**

**Children's Commissioner**

Also…

I would also like to let you know about a session we are running for parents & carers later next term run by the **Breck Foundation**. This is also about online safety & protecting children. We had it a couple of years ago and the parents who attended found it incredibly insightful & useful. It will be online via Zoom and will take place on Monday 20th April between 6 and 7pm. I will

send further details nearer the time. This is the link to their website: https://www.breckfoundation.org/

**A plea about mobile phones…**

Please do not buy your children a new smartphone over the next year or so. We are currently working on a policy that will only allow children to bring in a 'brick' phone to school from next year. More on this to follow.

**Explorer Ambassadors:**

This week, children in years 4, 5 & 6 have had the opportunity of applying to become an Explorer Ambassador for TfL. 5 children will be chosen to help support me & the school to reaching Gold Accreditation for the Transport for London's scheme to create more sustainable travel opportunities for children living in London.

Throughout the year, the children will then be delivering assemblies for children, producing pieces for this newsletter and be organising events across the school to try to encourage road safety, bike/scooter safety and people leaving their cars at home more. Watch this space!!!

**The Photographer…**

…Will be coming into Haseltine on Wednesday 21st and Thursday 22nd January, he will be taking individual photos.

At this stage, we aren't sure which classes will be on which days so your child will need to be smart for 2 days running! If your child normally has PE on one of those days – we will make sure that their photo is on the other.

Details to follow ASAP.

**Uniform:**

All children at Haseltine should wear uniform to school every day unless it is their PE day. We are increasingly seeing more and more children wearing their own clothes to school, and this should not be happening.
Don't forget that we have the Uniform Bank in the Hub that you can go to at any time to get free uniform too.

Please also make sure that all coats & sweatshirts especially have names clearly written/sewn into them, so that they can easily be returned to rightful owners.

Our uniform policy can be found on our website:

https://haseltine.lewisham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/School-uniform-policy.pdf

# Haseltine needs YOU!...

**The Annual Haseltine Careers Fair…**

…is one date that I would love you to all have in your diaries. It is happening on Friday 20th March between 9am & 12pm. Many of you will have taken part in this over the years so will know what I am talking about but please read the information below and volunteer your services if you can, in order to make this THE best Careers Fair EVER!

This event has been hugely successful over the last few years and to make it just as good I need your help!
If you, or someone you know, has a job that you think our children would like to know about then please **come and have a chat with me**. If you aren't sure, please come and chat with me anyway so I can persuade you, sometimes people say that their job isn't exciting enough, but I can guarantee that our children love hearing about a whole range of jobs!
We need representatives from any type of job or career; from plasterers and surgeons to plumbers and astronauts!
Please don't be nervous about doing this – everyone who has done it previously has absolutely loved doing it. Our children really, really love hearing about all the different careers available to them and this event really does help to open up their choices.
I set the hall up with each adult at their own table and the children come in a few classes at time to talk to who they are interested in – you will be asked an amazing range of questions and it really is a lot of fun ☺
Please speak to me or email me on s.anderman@haseltine.lewisham.sch.uk if you can help. I'd be so, so grateful to you if you can.

**And finally…**

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**Did you know that 2026 is the National Year of Reading?**

Reading for pleasure is so crucial in so many ways, not least in terms of improving the academic outcomes for our children and also for improving wellbeing.

You may well be aware that 2026 has been designated as a National Year of Reading. If you have not yet made a new year's resolution then you could do far worse than to commit to giving yourself more time for reading, and also encourage your children to read more for pleasure. Reading together is also so much fun!

Check out these websites for more details, plus keep an eye out in these newsletters for more information & top tips over this year…

https://goallin.org.uk/

https://literacytrust.org.uk/about-us/national-year-of-reading-2026/

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-urged-to-read-more-to-boost-childrens-life-chances

https://www.booktrust.org.uk/about-us/news-updates/supporting-the-national-year-of-reading-2026/

**Have a really lovely weekend everyone – it's great to have you all back ☺**