



HOUSTONE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Academic • Disciplined • Extraordinary

Issue 1, October 2021

Dear families and pupils,

Welcome to our first newsletter about Houstone School.

We intend to regularly send you these with updates on our mission to bring the Advantage Schools style of education – Academic, Disciplined and Extraordinary – to Houghton Regis in the form of Houstone School.

We will regularly bring you updates on the building, recruitment of staff, engagement with parents and plans for ensuring that your child's experience is extraordinary, memorable and of the highest quality.

If you haven't yet applied for a school place, please do so NOW – the deadline is 31st October 2021 and if you are late you may not get in.

Please remember that you can always contact us on info@houstoneschool.co.uk and that we will get back to you as soon as you can.

Forward this to your friends who might not have heard of us yet, and get them to sign up via our website: www.houstoneschool.co.uk.

Best wishes,

The Houstone School Team

PRINCIPAL APPOINTED

After an incredibly intense, two-day process, we are so excited to announce that we have appointed the Founding Principal of Houstone School!

We were looking for a very special candidate – someone with the drive and expertise to make Houstone School one of the best in the country, so you can imagine how demanding the person specification and process was! With such high expectations, we must admit we were a little nervous that we would end up compromising. When you make an appointment like this, often you start with the ideal attributes, characteristics, knowledge and skills that are ideal to serve our families, and then you compromise through the interview and get the best mix that you can.

However, we had an excellent field of top educators, four of whom we shortlisted and we are pleased to say that we didn't need to compromise at all. In fact, the successful candidate exceeded the person specification.

We will be able to send you details of who the Principal is in the next fortnight or so, when they have told their colleagues and existing community. As soon as we are able to, we can't wait to introduce you to the Founding Principal of Houstone School.

BUILD UPDATE

It's really exciting now that the building is starting to take shape! You can see the pictures, and we can start to imagine what it will be like with pupils there.

We visit the site with Central Bedfordshire Council every 4-5 weeks, but we cannot help but go and peek at it every time we are in the area!

One of the main questions we are asked is if the build is going to be finished on time. The local authority are responsible for the building and ensuring that it is completed on schedule. We hope that it won't be delayed but we are talking to the local authority about alternative plans if something unexpected happens. If there is a problem, we will work with the local authority to find an alternative temporary site or alternatively, a partial opening of the Houstone site if that is practical. We will keep parents informed about any delays, but to be clear, we remain optimistic!



VISITING HOUGHTON REGIS

Members of the Houstone School Executive Team have spent the past three weeks visiting Houghton Regis, meeting pupils, parents, and members of the community at a range of venues, including a number of the local primary schools.

We are very grateful to the primary schools who invited us in and allowed us to host events for parents as we do not yet have our own building for such events!

We have thoroughly enjoyed meeting pupils, parents and the local community and will continue to visit Houghton Regis between now and our opening in September. Our social media and website will be kept up to date with our planned visits.

ADMISSIONS

The deadline for Year 7 2022 admissions is nearly upon us! Parents of pupils currently in Year 6 have until October 31st to submit their secondary school preferences. You need to apply through the Local Authority Admissions Service. You can access the Central Bedfordshire Council admissions service by [clicking here](#).

If you live outside Central Bedfordshire you can still apply but would do so through your own Local Authority admissions service. See your Local Authority's website for details.

We are aware that some of you may have applied for a school place before you knew much about us – you may want to now put us as your first choice or maybe you didn't list us at all. If this applies to you, you will need to fill in a "change of preference form", which is available on the Admissions area of Central Bedfordshire's website or by

calling 0300 300 8037. If you wish to do this it is important to do so before 31st October, otherwise your application will be classed as a late application and will be processed in the late allocation round. There will be 180 places available in September 2022 in each of years 7, 8, 9 and 10.

If your son or daughter is due to start Year 8, 9 or 10 in September 2022, you can apply for a place at the school in May. We will publish more information on our website following further discussions with the Local Authority Admissions team as soon as we are able to.



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WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN GOING ON AT ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS?

Houstone School pupils are going to enjoy the same superb opportunities for sport and extra-curricular activities as all the other pupils in our Trust, so we thought you'd like know what we've been up to so far this term. One of our Trust's fundamental principles is that every child should be able to represent their school in sporting fixtures if they wish, so in the first 25 days of the current academic year, Bedford Free School pupils competed in no less than 35 sports fixtures, including rugby, football, dodgeball, netball, basketball and table tennis! In the performing arts, Bedford Free School's annual whole school musical of Matilda is now in full swing with a 60 strong cast, pictured at their first rehearsal.

