

SUNNYDOWN SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mr Paul Jensen B.Ed Grad Dip (SEBD) NPQH



Friday 7th March 2025

Dear all who are associated with Sunnydown,

Year 11 in the life of a young person can be a challenge. At Sunnydown, we recognise this and proactively put in place measures to support our students to manage the challenges that come their way. For example, we often help with college applications and associated references. We rehearse exam conditions so that the young men understand what they will encounter during the GCSE exam series. We allow time for our young men to work with their allocated scribe or reader so that an appropriately supportive relationship is established. From a curriculum perspective we provide a broad opportunity, with access to all major GCSEs (as outlined on our website) with additional non-GCSE options such as DIY and even college. In addition, for those students seeking further support with their studies, or wish to explore GCSEs not available at Sunnydown, Friday morning is an opportunity to engage in these experiences as well.

The progress made over five years at Sunnydown is quantifiably impressive. All young men should be proud of their achievements. On occasion, a young man will use this support to launch to yet uncharted waters. I am so proud to announce that Andrew Hendry Smith has done just that. Through his own resilience and determination, perseverance and education, as well as natural talent and immense family support, Andrew has successfully navigated a place in Sunnydown history. Andrew is the first student to be awarded a place at The Brit School to study Musical Theatre.

As a student of The Brit School, Andrew will receive the same quality support that was afforded globally recognised alumni including Adele, Katy B, Tom Holland, Jessie J and Leona Lewis, among many others. On behalf of the entire school community, I extend my most sincere congratulations to Andrew and his family. It will be with huge personal and professional pride that we follow the career of this extraordinary young man.

Fasting as part of my personal attempts to better understand Ramadan and the Islamic faith has had a very interesting outcome so far. At sunset, when I have a glass of water followed by a date, the water has never tasted so sweet. I can feel every mouthful as it rests in my stomach. I am conscious that as part of the Catholic faith, Lent is also upon us as we approach Easter. During this time, Christians commit to giving up something as well. To people of all faiths, I wish you well in all of your peaceful endeavours.

Parking and traffic continues to create a cause for concern for me from a Health and Safety perspective. I am in the process of developing correspondence to all families by way of an update as we explore options to ease the congestion, but suffice to say, there is no single nor easy solution. Thank you for your ongoing patience.

At Sunnydown, we are always striving to ensure that your sons receive the very best education possible. A key part of this is making sure our teaching is not just effective but also engaging, inspiring and tailored to meet their needs. That's why we are currently reviewing how we monitor and develop the Quality of Education, ensuring that our approach is both efficient and impactful.

I had the privilege of working with a small group of parents on Friday morning, exploring the strengths and weaknesses of Sunnydown from a parent perspective, as well as exploring strategic opportunities for the future. I took so much energy from this experience that these sessions will become a regular feature here at Sunnydown. To the

families who were able to attend, a huge thank you for your honesty, commitment and insight. I will communicate directly with this team with a summary of our conversation points, before sharing the outcome more widely with the school community. One thing that was suggested was a slight remodelling of the newsletter - the impact of this will be seen before Easter.

Deserved recognition to Louise Thomson for her efforts in ensuring the student entries for the Poetry by Heart competition were completed this week. I have watched the recordings and to say that I was impressed, not only with the behaviour of Bertie and Jemima, but of the quality of the poetry performed by our students, your sons. Many thanks to Miss Thomson and a huge congratulations to the young performers.

Tom Moody and his DT students have upcycled a cabinet and transformed it into a new trophy display cabinet. The cabinet itself is a testimony to Mr Moody's skills, and the way he engages with your sons to achieve incredible outcomes. In addition, we now have a visual reminder of the array of achievements and celebrations of success that reminds us that working together leads to great outcomes. Thank you Mr Moody.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

Paul Jensen
Headteacher

A summary of the week - Mrs Jensen

As part of this, this week our teaching staff took part in a CPD session focused on refining our classroom practice. We explored what highly effective teaching looks like, shared best practices and reflected on how we can continue to create the best possible learning experiences for your sons. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn from each other, reinforcing what makes Sunnydown such a special place to learn - not just for our students, but for our staff too. This commitment to professional growth is what keeps Sunnydown at the forefront of specialist education, ensuring that every lesson counts.

During this sunny week, Sean the chef offered pancakes with fruit and honey on Tuesday, and there was a successful KS3 Basketball trip. Mr Jensen met with interested staff on Tuesday after school for a discussion about resource development and we also had some parents coming into school on Friday to discuss the findings from the recent SWOT analysis - many thanks to them for their time. I had the opportunity to go to East Surrey College this morning to visit with the Y10 students who do Friday College Skills - it was very impressive; students were fixing the exhaust on a car engine and were keen to show me how to use the torque wrench to ensure screws are on tightly. To say they had more skills than me is an understatement! We are exploring ways for our college students to achieve AQA awards within the options at college this term.

Mr Wright has coordinated Careers Week this week with a range of activities designed to help your sons to prepare for the next stage in their education. National Careers Week is a celebration and exploration of the myriad of career opportunities available and aims to empower students to make informed career decisions

I hope the sun is here to stay and that you all have a lovely weekend.

Andrea Jensen
Assistant Headteacher

Our Year 10 students at their car mechanics option at East Surrey College



Whole School Literacy at Sunnydown School

At Sunnydown, we love giving our students the chance to get creative with poetry! Throughout the year we run different competitions to encourage them to express themselves and build confidence.

Poetry by Heart Competition

Our students are hard at work preparing for the *Poetry by Heart* competition and we're so proud of their dedication! With the deadline coming up, they're putting in lots of effort to perfect their performances. I believe participation is key. While some competitions might not always cater to SEND needs, we won't let that stop us. Every student at Sunnydown has their own unique talents, and we encourage them to take part. For us, it's not about winning - it's about having fun, giving opportunities, building confidence and making great memories along the way.

Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award 2025

Exciting news! *The Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award 2025* has been announced and this year, we'd love to get families involved too. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to explore their creativity and write their own poems at home.

We'd love your help in encouraging your son to take part. If he's interested, please email: l.thomson@sunnydown.surrey.sch.uk to register. If he has already written a poem, he can hand it in to me at school or email it over. There's no limit to the number of entries, so let's get as many students involved as possible!

We're really looking forward to reading their amazing poetry.

Submission Deadline: **Friday 18 July 2025**

More Information: [Poetry Society - Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award](#)

Thank you for your support in encouraging our students to get creative with poetry!

Louise Thomson
TA & Poetry Competition Co-Ordinator

YMCA Easter Activities



Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health YMCA EAST SURREY

Easter Activity Programme

Free activities for 11-18 year olds (Year 7+)

Tuesday 8 April 11:00-15:30 The Old Pheasantry Wellbeing Walk & Chocolate Slab making	Tuesday 15 April 13:00-16:00 The Old Pheasantry Fun & Games afternoon
Wednesday 9 April 11:00-13:30 Priory Park Orienteering Challenge	Wednesday 16 April 13:00-16:00 Nonsuch Park Wellbeing Walk & Problem solving challenge
Thursday 10 April 15:00-17:00 Horley Express yourself Arts & Crafts	Thursday 17 April 15:00-17:00 Horley Come Dine With Me activity

For more information, please email waves@ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk

YMCA | Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

Part of the group of **Mindworks Surrey**
The children's and young people's mental health charity for Surrey

To book please scan the QR code



Cycling

This week two new students learnt to cycle. Alexander and Luke have been developing their skills and it is great to see them reach full independence on a bicycle. It is a great reward for their hard work and determination.

Well done, both of you!



Mr Cassim and Gabe

KS3 Basketball Report

On Tuesday, 15 of our finest KS3 basketball players took part in the SSSSA tournament at the Bridge Leisure Centre in Horsham. Representing Sunnydown, our students were divided into two teams, each demonstrating outstanding effort, teamwork, and sportsmanship throughout the day.

Team 2 - Showed tremendous growth as the tournament progressed, competing with determination and improving with every game. Their hard work paid off with a hard-fought victory against a strong unified school team, finishing their campaign on a high.

Team 1 - Faced a tough group stage, securing one win and three draws in closely contested matches. Their consistent scoring saw them qualify for the final on basket difference. In the championship match they faced a talented Bensham Manor side and played brilliantly, leading into the final seconds before Bensham equalised to force a tiebreaker. With the title on the line, each team selected three players for free throws. Bensham converted two of their three shots, putting pressure on the Sunnydown shooters. Jack Bristow stepped up first, calmly sinking his shot, followed by Thomas Emms who delivered under immense pressure. With the final attempt and the crowd watching in anticipation, Frankie McSorley confidently swished his shot, securing a dramatic and well-earned victory for Sunnydown!

Congratulations to both teams for their hard work, resilience and excellent basketball throughout the tournament. Every player should be proud of their contributions on the day.

The Teams

🏆 Champions 2025 – Team 1

Freddie Collins (Co-Captain), Thomas Emms (Co-Captain), Jack Bristow, Ethan Lyons, Jacob Ryan, Matthew Marenga & Frankie McSorley.

Players Player of the Day: Frankie McSorley

👊 Team 2

Harrison Williams (Captain), Robert Hall, Callum Truttero, Milo Baker, Zack Harrison, Eddie Smith, George McGookin & Daniel Leonard.

Players Player of the Day: Harrison Williams

Mr Wright

Pancake Day



Shrove Tuesday was a big hit for everyone who enjoyed tucking into these delicious pancakes served with a variety of toppings to choose from. Thank you again to all the kitchen staff for marking this event.

Online Safety

Please see the flier attached to this newsletter regarding '10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators using Technology to Boost Reading Skills.'

Mr Cassim

Thought for the Week
(W/C: 10 March 2025)

Young Carers

Thought for the Week
(W/C: 17 March 2025)

Red Nose Day

The Baton

Antony Harper

For his own personal development but also supporting others with theirs

Employability Award

James Hall

Sportsmanship Award

Harrison Williams

Mathematician of the Week

The recipients of Mathematician of Week, awarded by Mrs Webb are

Leo Ewen

For enthusiasm & effort

Jack McDowell

For enthusiasm & effort

& awarded by Mr Wright is

Noah Atkins

For independence

Scientist of the Week

The recipients of Scientist of the week, awarded by Ms Hristova are

KS3

Zack Harrison

For active participation in class in recent lessons

KS4

Charlie Histed

For academic achievement

Charlie McSorley

For academic achievement

Finley Marley

For academic achievement

Writer of the Week

The recipient of Writer of the Week, awarded by Mrs Gellett is

KS3

	<p>Ethan Lyons <i>For his superb level of effort and engagement with written work</i> & awarded by Mrs Jensen is KS4</p> <p>Jayden Peters <i>For excellent creative writing homework</i></p>
<u>Chef of the Week</u>	<p>The recipient of Chef of the Week, awarded by Mrs Downs is Kamauri Craig <i>For great recall of information & effort</i></p>
<u>Artist of the Week</u>	<p>The recipient of Artist of the Week, awarded by Mrs Ogle is Leo Sumsion <i>For his focus, concentration & effort in the art lesson</i></p>
<u>Musician of the Week</u>	<p>The recipients of Musician of the Week, awarded by Mr Smith are Freddie Ponsford Leo Sumsion</p>
<u>Reader of the Week</u>	<p>The recipient of Writer of the Week, awarded by Miss Adams is Noah Atkins <i>For his continued commitment to reading</i></p>
<u>Computer Scientist of the Week</u>	<p>The recipients of Computer Scientist of the Week, awarded by Mr Amzart are Jonah Mee and Tekai Lewis <i>For putting in an extreme amount of effort in their computer science lessons</i></p> <p>Zack Harrison <i>For answering all questions during the lesson correctly</i></p>

House Points

<u>House Points</u>	
Charlie Histed	950 House Points
Charlie McSorley	900 House Points
Alfie Monk	800 House Points
Dominic Hanley	750 House Points
Alfie Tharle	750 House Points
Luke Dean	650 House Points
Mathew Marenga	450 House Points
Alexander Thompson	350 House Points
Jonah Mee	150 House Points
William Elliot	100 House Points

Forthcoming Events 2025

Spring Term 2025	
Wednesday 12 th March 2025	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Friday 14 th March 2025	Life Skills Science Museum: Power Up Trip
Monday 17 th March 2025	KS3 Fulham football
Wednesday 2 nd April 2025	Year 9 & 10 Curriculum Evening
Thursday 3 rd April 2025	Coltsford Mill Fishing Event
Monday 7 th April - Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	EASTER HOLIDAY (1.20pm finish on 4 th April)
Summer Term 2025	
Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	Start of summer term
Wednesday 30 th April 2025	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 30 th April 2025	SSSSA KS4 Basketball
Tuesday 6 th May 2025	Year 10 Kenley Bike Challenge
Wednesday 7 th May 2025	Year 11 Kenley Bike Challenge
Wednesday 7 th May 2025	Open morning (9.30-11am)
Friday 9 th May 2025	Year 8 Kenley Bike Challenge
Monday 12 th May 2025	KS4 Fulham football Start of GCSE exams
Friday 16 th May 2025	Year 9 Kenley Bike Challenge
Friday 23 rd May 2025	Year 7 Kenley Bike Challenge
Monday 26 th May - Friday 30 th May 2025	HALF TERM
Monday 2 nd - Friday 6 th June 2025	Year 10 Work Experience
Monday 9 th June 2025	KS3 Fulham football
Wednesday 18 th June 2025	Year 10 Parents' Evening Last GCSE exam
Thursday 19 th June 2025	Graduation
Friday 20 th June 2025	Business Breakfast
Friday 20 th June 2025	INSET DAY
Thursday 26 th June 2025	FoS Golf Day
Wednesday 2 nd - Friday 4 th July 2025	Year 9 Residential
Wednesday 9 th July 2025	Presentation event
Friday 11 th July 2025	The Arc - Prospero Drama Group
Thursday 17 th July 2025	Sports Day
Friday 18 th July 2025	END OF TERM (1.20pm finish)
Monday 21 st July 2025 (Was 4 th November 2024)	INSET DAY
Tuesday 22 nd July 2025 (Was 14 th March 2025)	INSET DAY