



# HENLEY BANK HIGH SCHOOL

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27 April 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

This week started with 5 new students joining our school across Key Stage 3. Termed in-year admissions, this is a great indication of the positive word that is being spread throughout the county and it was an absolute pleasure to welcome them into our community.

On Wednesday we opened our doors to 200+ primary school students and their parents as they took part in the final of the Knex Challenge. The young students were tasked to build exercise equipment using the Knex kits. They were given free rein to unleash their creative skills and it was amazing to watch as they built models from the designs that were evolving continuously in their minds. Hosted by our onsite STEM-Works team and judged by sponsors GE Aviation the day was a roaring success with the winning builds resembling something similar to those seen on Ninja Warrior. The event strengthened the notion that the best way to solve some of life's greatest challenges could possibly be to fill a room full of children armed with nothing more than a few simple resources and an unrivalled ability to think outside of the box and create without limits.

I am currently working with members of the team to explore how STEM-Works can be incorporated into our curriculum and culture so that our students can benefit from their fantastic events that will promote the development of their skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – critical skills that are so relevant in modern society. I will keep you posted as this develops.

On the subject of creativity and engineering skill, it was a pleasure to receive a magazine article from one of our year 10 students, Codey Howell. Codey recently featured in the well-known Classic Car Weekly publication as one of Britain's youngest classic car restorers. His passion and skill for rescuing classic Austin cars from the scrapyard has been recognised by both specialist professional restorers and classic car fans alike. His contributions to the Austin A30 and A35 Owners' Club helped his team win Best Club Stand at this year's National Car Club Awards at the NEC in Birmingham. Well done Codey! If there are more Henley Bank students out there that deserve a 'shout out' for their achievements outside of school please do get in touch.

You may be aware that, during Easter, I put an advert out for an Assistant Head of School to join us in September. This advert was responded to by 16 candidates of seriously high quality. From this I shortlisted 5 to join us for interview last Thursday. Each of the 5 candidates taught seriously impressive lessons, were interviewed in depth by our student panel and were then put through their paces by my Senior Leadership Team. From the feedback of my staff and students I shortlisted 2 candidates for final interview and it is with delight that I welcome Hayley Benfield to our school in September. Hayley's boundless energy, wonderful charisma and seriously high expectations will be an absolute asset to our journey.

This week we also appointed a new Director of Science to our Trust's School Improvement Team who will be based at our school. Graham Dakin comes with an impressive track record in science teaching and leadership. We are privileged to welcome him to the Henley Bank High School team and look forward to his vast subject, curriculum and teaching and learning knowledge accelerating our journey to greatness.

I must admit that the past two weeks have been among the most exciting in Henley Bank High Schools brief but exceptional history.

On that note I wish you all a fantastic weekend wherever and with whoever it is spent.

Mr B. Nash  
Head of School