

# *Season's Greetings from Highgrove House!*

*End of Term Newsletter*

*December 2021*

Dear Parents & Guardians,

I hope our newsletter finds you all well and looking forward to the festive season.

What an amazingly busy half term it has been in Highgrove, from examinations to performances, it has been non-stop since the start of November, so I would like to take this opportunity to praise all the girls for the devotion and dedication they have shown this term!



What we've been getting up to in Highgrove House ...

Our year 13 activity programme has been a great success so far, with our focus being centred on wellbeing, personal development and preparation for life after school.

The first week back after Half Term both Highgrove & Hutton 6<sup>th</sup> form boarder's enjoyed a 'Marshmallow & Mindfulness' evening, toasting marshmallows and playing mindful fortune teller games...there was also a lot of music and dancing to lift the spirits. The intention of the evening was to engage students about positive outcomes they have experienced and how they could be mindful towards themselves and others around them.



The following week we enjoyed an evening at LUSH Taunton, where our focus was on personal care and how engaging in a self-care routine can be clinically proven to reduce or eliminate anxiety & depression, reduce stress, improve concentration, minimize frustration and anger, increase happiness, improve energy and much more. A very relaxed time was had by all!



Of course, one of this terms biggest events was the school production of the Broadway musical Shrek in which many of our boarders took part! We were all captivated within the tale of the green ogre Shrek and his trusty sidekick Donkey. Shrek and Donkey being sent on a mission by Lord Farquaad to rescue the beautiful Princess Fiona, along the way finding friendship, fun and a fearsome, funky dragon!

Well done to all those from Highgrove House who took part, you worked ever so hard and gave it your all! A fantastic performance that was enjoyed by everyone!



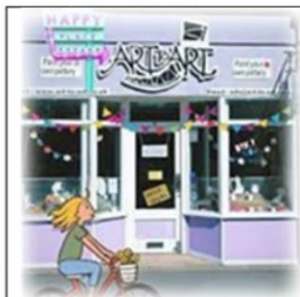
We finished up this terms activities with a talk on wellbeing and resilience followed up with a meditation session from Tim Kerslake - Student Support at Bristol University. This gave the boarders an opportunity to discuss the theory of self-acceptance and understanding of the importance of one's own needs.

Our penultimate event for this term was of course the Christmas meal at Pitcher & Piano followed up with fun and games at the after-party hosted by Miss Johnson & Miss Allport in Highgrove House. Boarder's enjoyed fun and games, mince pies, mulled wine and even a surprise visit from Santa!

Lots of merriment was shared by all, welcoming in the festive season.



### Next Term Year 13 Activity Programme...



15/01/22

#### **Pottery Painting at Art to Art, Taunton.**

- Practicing the benefits of mindful crafting to reduce stress levels and nurture confidence with moving into the start of a new term.
- Losing oneself in "the of working with your hands and how this can inspire focusing the mind"



21/01/22

#### **Boarding in Bloom**

- Context of theory / nature nurture/ planting things and watching them grow. Relating to self-care and personal development.
- Activity Make up planters with succulents



29/01/22

#### **Christingle Making & Service**

Making Christingle's with the Junior Boarders and Christingle Service Wyvern Hall for SMSC Calendar 3:30pm 5:30pm



11/02/22

#### **Mindfulness & Macramé Evening**

- Engaging students imagination with specially designed meditative crafting incorporating elements of mindful practice, including concentration, repetition and creativity

I want the shiny thing

At the end of the party,  
When our mothers came to take us home,  
They said we could all have a present off the Christmas tree.

They said I could choose first because I was the smallest.  
I said I wanted that shiny thing on top of the Christmas tree,  
That shiny thing!

I'd been looking at it all through the party,  
All through the hard white coconut cake that had taken me all tea time to eat;  
All through the games that I didn't know how to play;  
And all through the funny man with the rubber nose who'd made me cry.

I said I wanted the shiny thing at the top of the Christmas tree,  
That shiny thing!

'Ah no', they said I didn't want that.  
It wasn't a present it was just to make the tree look pretty,  
Wouldn't you like this grand blue motor car filled with sweets?

I said I wanted the shiny thing at the top of the Christmas tree,  
That shiny thing!

But I wouldn't be able to play with it or anything, they said.  
It was made of very thin stuff that broke as soon as you touched it.  
Wouldn't you like these pretty pink beads to put around your neck?

I said I wanted the shiny thing at the top of the tree,  
'But what would you do with it?' they said.  
'Now what about these nice red gloves to keep my hands warm on cold days?'  
'What would you do with that thing on top of the tree?'

I said I'd put it in a box and look at it, then someone said 'Oh, give it to her'.  
When it breaks, she'll be sorry she didn't have the blue car,  
Or the pink beads,  
Or the red gloves.

So they put the shiny thing in a box and I carried it home and I looked at it.  
It was like having a star in a box, a star of my own.

Next day I lifted the thing out of the box and it broke into a thousand pieces.  
But every piece was shiny, so I put them all back in the box again.  
Now I had a box full of stars.

That was forty years ago, but some people never learn.  
Every time they ask me to choose I say I want that thing on top of the tree,  
That shiny thing.

So I've never had a grand blue motor car,  
Or pretty pink beads to put around my neck,  
Or nice red gloves to keep my hands warm on cold days,

But I've got hundreds and hundreds of cardboard boxes,  
And every box is full of a thousand stars.

Read by a student from Notre Dame RC School for girls, circa 1996.  
Author Unknown.

*Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!  
Best wishes from Miss Johnson & the Highgrove Boarding Team*