





XIONS

MEET THE COLLEGE LEADERSHIP TEAM

We meet the girls helping to lead the School into the future.

AUTUMN DAYS

We find out more about Outdoor education and how girls of all ages have explored the great outdoors this Autumn.

FANTASY, SPELLS, ADVENTURE & ENCHANTMENT

We spend the day in The Mount Pre-School.

www.mountschoolyork.co.uk

Welcome to The Mount's new termly magazine, *Reflections*

The Mount is a very busy school, and sometimes it's helpful to take a step back from the busyness and the bustle and use a different view point to consider what it is we have achieved, or what impels us.

Autumn is generally the most energetic term of the school year. With all year groups settling into their new curriculum, new pupils joining, Open Days, concerts, auditions, trips, sports fixtures and traditions like Games in the Dark or the Christmas Fayre, dull moments are ever scarce at this time of year.

This issue reflects on our new College Leadership Team, who are pioneering a new age for College which sees a balance of responsibilities that is more equitable than the demands placed on previous Head Girls during their final year of A Levels. In the spirit of living adventurously, we reflect on the impact of outdoor learning on our pupils' development, from Junior School through to the Duke of Edinburgh awards. We also take a look at our Pre-School provision and consider a typical week in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Further up the School, we meet our new Head of College, also Head of History, Michael Spiers and hear his thoughts on how our College helps girls get ready for life after The Mount. We also look at why it is that The Mount gets girls into such a broad range of universities and further education destinations.



Adrienne Richmond Principal

Emma Howell, our new Head of PE, shares her views on the importance of sports for young women. We also feature an article about one of our more recent Old Scholars, Bryony Perks, who reflects on her time at The Mount and the impact being here had on her life.

I hope you enjoy reading this first edition of *Reflections*.







AUTUMN 2018 Reflections









The College Leadership team is a new concept introduced to The Mount in September. It divides the responsibilities, traditionally held by the Head Girl assisted by her deputies, equally between four College II girls. The revamped arrangement reduces the pressure on individuals, while giving a more equitable recognition to each girl. Taking this exciting new step in Mount history this academic year are: Kelly Chu, Amy Foster, Grace Stanley Davy and Isobel Wragg.

You don't have to talk to the girls for long to gain a sense of the honour they feel to be part of the first College Leadership Team. Talk a bit longer and a maturity beyond their years becomes increasingly apparent as we discuss the qualities required to be a good leader.

"Compassion and understanding," comments Amy. "Knowing the girls and remembering what it's like to be in their position, particularly those in the lower years."

"It's important to get everyone's opinions," adds Grace. "We are all Peer Mentors and Form Seniors, so we do talk with younger girls and try to help them."

"Courage and kindness are important qualities," chips in Isobel. "It's having the courage to make decisions, but at the same time not making anyone feel left out while listening to their ideas."

The girls' responsibilities are varied. From meeting guest speakers, planning Student Council and liaising with Mr Spiers, to reading the text at Morning Meeting. "We can't always pronounce the name of the quote!" smiles Amy. "I always get the longest names," giggles Isobel.

Each girl stresses the importance of being organised and working as a team. "You have to be organised, because you have to co-ordinate people efficiently," states Kelly. "The day-to-day tasks are delegated to whoever has the least amount of work at that time."

All four girls joined the School at various stages of their life, but the end of their Mount journey is looming. Whilst there is sadness at the thought of leaving, it is evident The Mount will always be special to them.

Meet the College Leadership Team



"You're really not going to find anywhere else like The Mount. It's certainly niche!" grins Amy, "You have space to explore who you are and really grow into someone with strong morals. I think that's something you really don't get anywhere else.

"It's the most unique place I've ever been to" says Isobel, who joined The Mount for College; "The biggest difference for me is the amount of support you get. There is an infinite number of people, members of staff or students, who you can go to talk to if you are ever anxious or stressed. We're pushed to do what you really want to do. I think this is really special to The Mount, they encourage you to be you. There is definitely a strong message that girls can do anything, nothing can stand in a girl's way. That has really stuck with me having come here from a co-ed environment."

We wish the best of luck to the team as they progress through their final year at The Mount.

Read the full interview with the College Leadership Team at www.mountschoolyork.co.uk

Name: Isobel Joined The Mount: College	Name: Amy Joined The Mount: Year 7
Favourite Mount thing: Relaxing in the common room	Favourite Mount thing: The library and the Quaker ethos
Future plans: To study Geography	Future plans: To study History
Name: Grace Joined The Mount: Year 5	Name: Kelly Joined The Mount: Year 9
Favourite Mount thing: Small class sizes	Favourite Mount thing: The Chemistry labs!
Future plans: Gap year and then maybe study Business	Future plans: To study Biochemistry



Emma Howell, The Mount's new Head of Physical Education (PE) talks to us about the importance of fun in sport and PE lessons:

My dissertation was about adolescent girls and PE. My research found that girls who don't willingly take part in PE say this is because they feel pressured into competing against their friends and being 'judged'. The commonly used model of splitting a cohort into teams to train in opposition creates, for these girls, an anathema. This is why I believe small class sizes help girls to gain self-confidence. They are encouraged to work together as a team and develop a love for sports.

I want Mount girls to enjoy PE and sport, so we've taken a fun approach. This term we've introduced dance lessons, and fitness based activities outdoors and in the swimming pool. The Senior girls have really loved our fun fitness including dancing along to dance skill games projected onto a large screen.

I have been so impressed with all the girls this term. Their team spirit, determination and resilinece is fantastic. The girls are so encouraging to one another and it is lovely to see support across the year groups.

There is a lot of talent at The Mount, many girls play at 'county' and 'regional' level in both team and individual sports. Throughout their time at School all of our girls will be picked to represent The Mount allowing them to experience 'outside' competition. It is important for growing girls to feel a sense of achievement in what they do. Each achievement builds their confidence and with that, comes increased competence. I want to make sure that our girls, feel strongly that sport can be "their thing". It's very important to encourage children who don't see themselves as "being sporty" to get involved and be part of a team. Research shows that women who regularly played team sports during adolescence are found to enjoy many benefits into adulthood, they are more likely to still play sport in their mid-twenties.

We've got plenty more fun to come this year. Year 7 to 9 girls are going on a Netball Tour to Shropshire. Some girls attending had never even played a game before this term, what fantastic enthusiasm! They will come away knowing that they have tried their best, had fun, developed friendships and gained self-confidence and a sense of achievement.



Mount School Sport @mountschoolsport . Nov 14

A lovely U12 & U13 fixture v Bootham School both teams played extremely well & WON!! Well done girls #welovenetball #thesegirlscan



Mount School Sport @mountschoolsport . Nov 14 Mount girls competed in the York School cross country run. The girls did themselves & the school proud with Libby, Rosie and Sorcha all making it through to the next stage. Well done to everyone involved!! #keeprunning



Mount Junior School @mountoutdoor . Oct 19 Congratulations to Fry's who were the winners of our J5&6 inter-house 5 a side hockey competition @mountyorksport #thesegirlscan



Mount School Sport @mountschoolsport . Sep 27 Well done to the U19 girls who took part in the National School Netball Games yesterday. A very tough competition but the girls never gave up and worked hard as a team! #motivationiskey



Piece of cake for Charity Committee

In September, Senior and Junior School girls collectively decided that our Charity of the Year 2018-19 would be Pancreatic Cancer UK. The decision was made after Morgan in Year 8 made a passionate presentation in aid of "Personally speaking, I find the role challenging when the charity.

A collection of girls from aross the School make up the Charity Commmittee, who each year drive forward the organisation of deciding on the School Charity and organising and promoting fundraising events. This year, College II students Niamh and Francesca have taken up the mantle for College.

"We have a calendar of all charity activities, that we coordinate with Mrs Smart (Head of Charities). When an event is approaching, we help with the organisation, allocating roles, delegating tasks and following up with Reps," explains Francesca.

"The best event so far has been the Great Mountie Bake-Off. There was so much enthusiasm throughout the School from Reception to College; so many people created some amazing festive cakes and biscuits," says Niamh, who commanded an excited Dining Room full of bidders for the charity auction of the large cakes.

Their role involves learning on the job. Francesca reflects, asking for donations. So I am sometimes out of my comfort zone, but in a good way, because Pancreatic Cancer UK is such a worthwhile cause."

The Charity Reps have great plans for future events. "In our meeting at the start of the year with Mrs Smart, everyone had such brilliant ideas for raising money. It's great to be able to have that influence and for the School to entrust us with that responsibility," says Niamh with a smile.

The School Charity Reps have held many events this term to raise funds including: cake and biscuit stalls, selling glowsticks at Bonfire Night, carol singing outside The Ivy in York, and of course the The Great Mountie Bake Off. In October the English department also held their annual enjoyable Macmillan Coffee morning. Junior School pupils have also raised money for Children in Need and the NSPCC. Cupcake Artwork - Year 8



AUTUMN REFLECTIONS

"The Just Dance sessions are fun, because we get to listen to the kind of music that we like. It's very good, very energetic but afterwards it's very relaxing too."

"Earlier this term, I competed in the U12 biathlon finals, which involves a 50m swim and an 800m run. I did well enough to qualify for the national finals, which will be in London next March. I enjoy biathlon because it has an array of sports that I like, rather than just one event. For swimming, I've been training five times a week plus twice a week with school."

AUTUMN DAYS . . .

Nestled at the side of the playing fields on New, The Mount's on-site Forest School is a wonderland, firing children's imaginations. Here they learn skills and apply and create theories about the miraculous world around them.

Outdoor learning at The Mount starts all the way from the Pre-School continuing in the Junior School. Children take part in Forest School sessions in all weathers! This term, the children have been enjoying Autumnal visits to the woods. They've gathered fallen leaves, seeds and conkers. Comparing the multi-coloured

leaves helps them identify colours and shapes. Alongside topic work in the classroom, children begin to develop an understanding of seasons, the concept of change and the passage of time. Girls in Year 1 designed and built shelters or habitats for creatures. In subsequent visits, they looked for signs to deduce whether their design was a success.

Outdoor learning means taking on the conditions, whatever they may be. Junior School pupils know, "There is no

such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes." Taking part in Forest School-type activities, girls begin to learn rudimentary skills which, over the years, advance and develop in complexity. For instance, girls in Year 1 learn how to whittle, using branches they find in the woods and wielding potato peelers and essential safety equipment. They also begin learning about fire and fire safety. By the time girls reach Year 6, they can build and safely ignite a fire. Jill Harvey, PE Teacher who conducts many of the Outdoor Learning sessions for the children, says, "Learning outdoors helps children's development including problem solving, teamwork, independence, perseverance, empathy and creativity."

"Outdoor education gives children an additional means to access learning," adds Rachel Capper, Head of the Junior School. "Children might struggle with understanding a concept in a classroom setting," she explains, "but they might be able to better understand a version of that concept in the outdoor learning environment."

environment."

When Junior School children enter the Forest School to create a shelter and meal for, say, a unicorn, they are using their creativity and imagination but their brains are also accessing neural pathways for maths and engineering (construction), language (terminology) and biology (synthesising the dietary habits of another species).

Outdoor learning experiences in the Junior School continue beyond the School grounds. This term Years 1 to 4 visited The Moorlands. In the Spring and Summer terms, Junior School's annual residentials are largely comprised of outdoor learning experiences.

Jill Harvey adds, "The outdoors, of course, also provide great fun! It's fantastic to see the girls exploring outside, just being able to have fun being a kid playing in the woods."





The great outdoors not only provides an environment to stimulate girls' learning, but also a great space to explore. At The Mount, we believe adventures, travelling and new experiences expand minds. Throughout their time in Senior School, girls have many opportunities to travel further afield.

"Walk cheerfully, over the world, answering that of God in everyone." George Fox

This term, Year 8 and 9 girls enjoyed an action-packed residential stay at Bewerley Park, in the heart of Nidderdale's area of outstanding natural beauty. The girls' schedule included: ghyll scrambling, zip wires, kayaking, night orienteering, climbing and perfecting their teamwork skills (especially in banter).... Once settled in to Senior School life, Year 7 also took advantage of some team building opportunities at Carlton Lodge. They had a plethora of action activities including: canoeing, a high ropes course and archery. Adventure trips early on in the academic year provide the perfect time to develop friendships, whilst gaining independence and self-confidence.

The opportunities for challenges and adventures continue for girls into Year 10 and above as they begin or continue their work in The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (DofE). The DofE Award provides girls with an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding programme; it is a personal challenge available to all, not a competition against others. Girls participate in either of three progressive Award levels (Bronze, Silver, Gold) which differ in how challenging they are. Each level is comprised of four sections: volunteering; physical; skills and an expedition. The Gold Award also requires a residential experience, where participants undertake a shared activity away from home for five days.

Alex Knill, Head of Biology, who co-leads The Mount's DofE programme with Mrs Derbyshire, says, "When I joined The Mount, I was delighted to see how well the girls met the challenges, especially the expeditions, which are intended to be quite trying. Their resilience is strong; it's really very good, perhaps because our girls are generally independent to begin with. Other schools might have four or five large DofE groups out on the same expedition, so the shared workload is less demanding on each individual. Because we have smaller groups, the girls are very much by themselves and learn to rely on their ability to work independently and within their teams. As they progress and have a better idea of what to expect, it's brilliant to see the girls preparing themselves for each challenge."

"The expedition in the Lake District was really tough", College II pupil Charlotte, speaks from experience after completing her Gold expedition earlier this year. "Funnily enough, our practice expedition was actually tougher (but only because it happened over the hottest-ever Bank Holiday weekend; we kept hydrated, of course). Doing the DofE Award taught me perseverance, because it was very hard and there were times that I wanted to give up. It also teaches you excellent team skills. To any younger girls considering taking up DofE, I would say, go for it. It is definitely an opportunity that you won't get again. It's completely different to the rest of school life. Speaking practically, when packing for expeditions, an extra pair of socks is always useful!"









Adventure & Enchantment

"I put feathers," chirps an excited voice. "Yes," nods Lizzy Kendall, "you put the feathers in." It's Potions Lab this particular morning in The Mount Pre-School. A crowd of enthralled children are huddled around a 'cauldron', adding to its contents sticks, eyeballs, coloured glitter, spiders legs (pipe cleaners) and feathers. They take turns stirring the cauldron and checking the make-believe fire beneath it.

The Pre-School's theme this term has been "Fantasy". Busy Bee Room (age 2-3 years) have been exploring Fantasy & Adventure while the Butterfly Room (age 3-4 years) explored Fantasy & Enchantment. In each room, the topic work is guided by what the children themselves are interested in, and what they choose to explore in line with the theme. This approach enables the children to develop the confidence to independently choose an activity, encourages them to think creatively, use their imagination, explore their environment and communicate with others whilst enjoying themselves.

In the Busy Bee Room, they have been reading Julia Donoldson's '*The Gruffalo*'. The story's autumnal visuals reinforce the colours the children have been looking at in the onsite woods, and the seamless mix of mythical creatures and woodland animals supports the Fantasy theme. Story-reading is but one activity; the children have also been exploring creativity, playing music, going outdoors and toasting marshmallows in the woods, exploring Diwali, making Rangoli pictures ... the list goes on.

In the Butterfly Room they have been reading another Julia Donaldson classic, *'Room On The Broom'*. The witch in the story inspired the potions the children made. As well as the Potions Lab, the children made magic wands, devised spells, played Witches & Wizards, carved pumpkins, coloured waters and made googly-eye soup! In the Finger Gym (where children's play encourages the development of all-important muscles and motor skills crucial for when they begin writing), they had squishy jelly with plastic spiders which they had to remove using tweezers.

The Autumn rain presented the perfect opportunity for our Pre-Schoolers to play with colours. Dressed in their rain kit, the children from both rooms went outside and poured different powder paints into hoops, watching them mix in the rain and identifying the colours the mixtures made.

When asked what they have enjoyed most this term we were met with a frenzy of eager answers.

"In the woods, I really like to play hide and seek. My favourite book is The Gruffalo's Child with the big, bad mouse. My favourite animal is a cheetah." Charles

""| liked the fireworks and my favourite colour is pink." |sla

It's evident from their enthusiasm and the great big smiles that the Fantasy topic has raised great excitement. Having the flexibility to create activities based on the children's interests, and drawing out each child's natural curiosity, helps them not to just have fun but to build a life-long love of learning.



There is never a dull moment in the Pre-School, with a wealth of activities and learning opportunities taking place. This term the children have explored the colours of Bonfire Night, learnt how Rongoli patterns and Mendhi hands help celebrate Diwali and learnt about the importance of poppies at Remembrance Day.

AUTUMN REFLECTIONS

"I've really enjoyed building pictures in the Woods. We collected leaves, twigs and seed pods in different colours to make a rainbow and found some berries to be the blue sky." Kyra, Year 5

"I loved making a den with all of my friends. When it started raining, everyone came to my den. We built it in the furthest point of the Forest School." Amelie, Year 4





Where are they now? We catch up with Mount Old Scholar, **Bryony.**

After leaving The Mount in 2011 Bryony Perks went on to study Linguistics at Homerton College, Cambridge, graduating in 2016 with

double-starred first class honours. She is now working for a Law Firm in London.

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think back to your years at The Mount?

I would never have expected it, but quite a lot of my memories centre around the Hall: my first ever Morning Meeting; being the Caterpillar in *Alice in Wonderland*; bursting through the doors in the Christmas panto as a One Direction heart-throb; and, later, sitting on the stage next to my classmates, laughing and crying as we shared our favourite memories with the rest of the School in our final week.

How important an influence has the Quaker ethos been to you?

Hugely important. The Quaker ethos that defines the School culture really sunk in as I left school, in particular: "Live adventurously" and "There is that of God in everyone you meet". The first one spurs me on to live the fullest life I can - travelling, meeting new people, and always taking the more daunting option when faced with a choice. The second one reminds me that everyone has something to teach you.

What influences from The Mount help you in life?

Being comfortable in silence. I remember when I was at school, hearing old scholars talking to us about how they missed Silent Meeting and wondering whether they meant it. I now know they did! University had its stressful moments, and mindfulness really helped me. The Mount develops a quiet confidence and unselfconsciousness in its girls that really becomes apparent as you leave school. If there's a debate going on, we're right in the middle of it! The Mount also has such a gentle way of teaching (never pushing, but always motivating) that brought the best out of me. In creating my current role, which I love, I'd been offered a place as a trainee lawyer at a London law firm, but I was much more interested in the company's strategy (being very different from most law firms). To the recruiter's horror (and my own disbelief), I plucked up the courage to ask if I could join the Head of Strategy as a Strategy Analyst instead and, after a snap interview, he gave me the job! I'm sure that falls under "independent thinking".

How do you keep in touch with school friends?

I'm lucky enough that a few of my best friends from The Mount live in London. We still do all the same things we did when we were in school (sleepovers, festivals, parties)... it's just the topics of conversation that have changed! Other friends live in different countries, or other parts of the UK so we might not see each other for months. Of course, as soon as we meet up it's like no time has passed. It's amazing what everyone from school is up to now - pursuing PhDs, setting up companies, working with international governments... I can't think of anyone who's not living adventurously!

Looking ahead, what are your hopes for your future?

I love the phrase, "Be micro-ambitious": absolutely throw yourself into whatever you're doing right now, do it to the best of your ability, and stay light on your feet for the next opportunity. I'm excited to see where I end up in business, whether that's working in another industry, or living in a completely different city (New York maybe). Either way, I hope to get to a stage in my career where I can mentor other women in business to give them the confidence to excel.

AUTUMN REFLECTIONS

"My favourite boarding activity this term was Go Karting. I was in a team with girls from Year 9, who were very sweet and it was lots of fun because it was my first ever time driving! We've been working on the College Panto this week, which is really fun. It's exciting to be writing and directing the production ourselves, and performing it is something I'm really looking forward to. For years I've been watching the College Panto and now it's our turn."





After School hours Boarding Activities

It may be a cliché but The Mount's Boarding House prides itself on being the girls' "home away from home", because that's exactly what it is.

"We want the girls to have fun in their free time. We try to accommodate all tastes, which is why we offer a diverse range of different activities," says Laura Rudd, Head of Boarding. "This term there has been shopping, sports, adventure trips, creative crafts and team-building activities. Of course some of the best fun is had in house with a good old-fashioned movie and pizza night."

"My favourite activity was Go Karting, just for the speed

and the adrenalin," says Blake in Year 10.

Grace and Ella, both in Year 9, enjoyed the trip to Light Water Valley. "The big rollercoaster was very steep and thrilling. Even though we have rollercoasters at home, this was bigger than any I've been on before," says Grace. "We also enjoyed the trip to Mindlock, puzzle room. Our group got out with only 3 seconds left! It was very exciting."

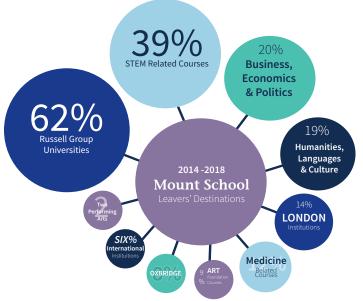
"We were locked in a room and had different clues. You hadto figure them out to calculate the passcode to get to the next puzzle, and then eventually work your way out of the room in 60 minutes," said Ella.

The future's **bright**...

Every year on A Level Results Day, it is satisfying to see the immensely diverse range of university destinations and post School options taken up by College leavers, belying The Mount's bespoke support for Higher Education applications.

Wendy Thompson, Careers and UCAS Leader at The Mount, first got involved in UCAS applications when her own daughter was applying for university. "Having gone through the process with my own daughter, I realised how important research was to make a well-informed decision. The UCAS process continues to evolve, and universities themselves and the world of work are ever changing. The Mount is able to offer bespoke advice, guidance and support to the girls, to help them get to where they want to go."

Where they want to go, is, seemingly, everywhere. A brief look at the School's university destinations of the past few years ticks every box: Oxbridge, Russell Group universities, Ivy League, leading European and Asian destinations and specialist courses at RADA, Norland College and the Northern Academy of Ballet. Courses cover a raft of subjects ranging from Theoretical Physics, Medicine, Engineering and Policing, to Geography, Languages, History, English and Law. Looking back at the statistics it's clear to see the future is bright for Mount Girls.





Michael Spiers, formerly Ripon Grammar's Head of History, joined The Mount in September 2018, as the Head of College, bringing with him a strong message of female empowerment. He studied at Dundee (4-year MA), York (MA) and Oxford (PGCE). His final qualification was taken at St Hugh's, which was originally founded as a college for working-class women.

"I'm very impressed with how the College years really develop our girls to be the leaders of the future. The Mount affords girls a space to discover their own voice and a level of self-confidence they might not otherwise find. We're not just talking about the opportunity for girls to voice their opinions, or to take part in STEM. It's the opportunity that girls have to walk down the corridor and know, in their heart of hearts, that they are among equals.

"I've been hugely impressed since I started at The Mount with the College Leadership Team (*see page 3) and their ability to inspire their cohort to efficiently engage with various enterprises, such as local charities like Foodbank, to how we can encourage diversity and equality in our local community."

Mr Spiers is excited to shape the future of College. Time-honoured traditions, such as College I Christmas Pantomime and the College II Leavers' Play will continue, but he is invigorating other programmes such as College Specials. He cites his heroes as historical figures Margaret Beaufort and Richard, Earl of Warwick a.k.a. "Warwick the Kingmaker", the late Nelson Mandela and former Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev (the first living person of whom he was ever "in awe"). "Gorbachev's downfall came about because he tried to bring about too much change, too quickly. That's why I keep a portrait of him just inside my door," says Mr Spiers, with a wry smile.

Currently reading: A history of Scotland by Neil Oliver Currently watching: Gomorrah (gritty Italian language crime drama) Currently listening to: The Arctic Monkeys and Brahms Favourit Author: Anthony Beevor Favourite Film: Collateral Favourite Quote: Tacitus' The Agricola chapter 21 'They spoke of such things as civilisation when in reality it was part of their servitude.'

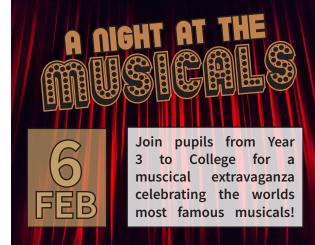
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SPRING 2019

Mon 7 Jan Boarders Return Tues 8 Jan Start of Term Sat 19 Jan Open Doors Tues 22 Jan College Scholarships Fri 25 Jan MSA Coffee & Croissants Fri 1 Feb - Sun 3 Feb Exeat Weekend Tues 12 Feb Year 7 & Year 9 Scholarships Fri 22 Feb MSA Coffee & Croissants

Mon 23 Feb - Fri 1 March Half Term

Tue 12 March Junior School Open Afternoon Tue 12 March Senior School Open Evening Fri 29 March MSA Coffee & Croissants Fri 5 April End of Term



6:00pm. The Mount School. All welcome

For more news, photos and articles please visit www.mountschoolyork.co.uk

