

Newsletter

October 2024



Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the first edition of our school newsletter for this academic year. It's been a lively and eventful autumn term, with learners settling into their new classes and bringing plenty of smiles to our campuses.

Recently, Ofsted conducted a two-day inspection of our employability programmes, which we offer in partnership with Enfield Council. A big thank you to the learners, interns, parents, and staff who shared feedback on the impact of our Pre-internship and Supported Internship programmes. We're pleased to report the inspection went well, and we'll share the results with you in the coming weeks.

With this in mind, we're focusing on our path to employment in this edition, and highlighting one of our valued employer partners, Rapport Guest Services. Together with our partners, we are breaking down barriers and creating meaningful opportunities for learners ready to step into the workplace.

It's also been a busy term at our new Ponders End site, which we'll officially open on 28th November. We'll share more about this exciting milestone in our Christmas newsletter.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Christmas shows and events, and getting to know our new parents and carers as the year progresses.

Best wishes,



Paul Quinn
CEO



Renee Flourentzou
Director of Education



Melanie Bignold
Director of Education

community
kindness
learning for life
innovation inclusion

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Supporting learners on the path to employment

Our Life & Work curriculum ties together all our campuses - from early years to Horizon - and extends to local employers.

Focusing on life skills, travel training, careers education, and work experience, it helps students

gain the confidence and independence to flourish beyond school.

With employment key to long-term wellbeing, we're proud to support our young people in taking these vital steps towards fulfilling careers.

MERIDIAN CAMPUS

At Dyson's Road, children explore jobs like hairdressers, shopkeepers, and doctors through imaginative play; and visits from professionals, like the local fire brigade, give them hands-on experience. At Springfield, talks from local employers inspire career conversations, and pupils run Westco - a 'play' business where they create and sell items like iced biscuits and bookmarks, building valuable business skills.



HASELBURY CAMPUS

Visits to employers like Krispy Kreme and Greggs are always a hit, helping learners explore the world of work. A visiting chef comes in to share insights about the industry and helps students prepare and serve meals to other year groups. Learners also practice writing CVs and use their Independence Passports to capture their growing skill set.



LEARNING FOR LIFE CAMPUS

Learners discover jobs that match their strengths and interests and tap into their entrepreneurial spirit by planning and running a business. They also gain hands-on experience through work placements, giving them a real-life glimpse of the future.



HORIZON CAMPUS

Through partnerships with local colleges and employers, Horizon learners enjoy talks, workplace visits, taster sessions, and work experience. They develop catering skills in our professional kitchen and enhance their digital abilities in the media suite. Tailored careers advice helps each student plan their unique path beyond West Lea.



WORKPLACE

Thanks to our strong employer partnerships, we're proud to offer Supported Internships for young people aged 16-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

These internships combine classroom learning with work placements, helping interns build the skills they need for paid employment. Our goal is to match each intern's talents to the right job opportunities so they can thrive.



Employer partner spotlight

RAPPORT GUEST SERVICES: EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

Rapport Guest Services, an award-winning provider, has partnered with us since 2019, offering Supported Internships to help young people gain valuable work experience.

Over the years, they've hired six former West Lea students, with three others working at their sister company, Restaurant Associates. One of our interns has even joined their wellbeing staff network and the Rapport Choir!

Rapport's involvement goes beyond employment. They've hosted fundraising events, participated in a charity cycle ride to Ireland, donated office furniture,

and taken part in disability awareness training, which we delivered. Their teams also collaborate closely with our job coaches to create inclusive, communication-friendly environments.

By recognising the talents of young people with special needs, Rapport is not only supporting our students but also leading the way toward a more inclusive workforce.

If you're a local employer interested in fostering a more inclusive workplace, we'd love to hear from you.

Email us at sip@westleaschool.co.uk to find out more.



"I can't praise Rapport enough for their dedication and support. We know we can trust them to help our graduate interns flourish."

Jack Kelley, Independence, Business and Partnerships Manager, West Lea



"I would recommend any organisation that is looking to create a more inclusive and diverse workforce to work with West Lea. We really value the partnership and love to offer opportunities for young people to work and grow."

Emily Abbam, Head of Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion, Rapport



The team from Rapport was honoured to win the West Lea 'values' award at last year's Supported Internship Gala Awards Night.



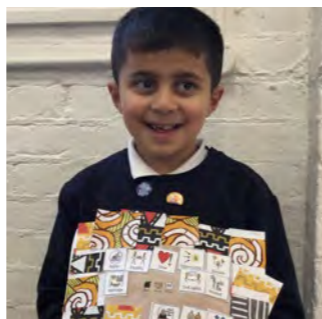
We'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our parents, carers, and families for your continued support as we kick off the academic year. It's been a fantastic start!

The introduction of PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display) is going really well. We're thrilled to see learners in every class responding positively to communication with staff.

If you missed the first meeting, don't worry - we're hosting another one on Monday, 11th November at 6pm on Teams. Even if you attended the last session, feel free to join us again, as this time we'll be sharing real-life examples of how we're using PODD to communicate with the children.



The learners are really enjoying their new class names. Many have already learned their classroom and teachers' names, and we've been using Makaton, sound buttons, and visuals to help with this. The 'dual coding approach' - where images and words are shown together - is helping learners to quickly pick up new words.



Looking ahead to the new half term, we'll be focusing on how to stay safe during the winter months, celebrating various festivals, and taking trips around the local area and London. We can't wait to share these experiences with you in our next newsletter.

EMMA DRIVER
Head of School



Our Family Tuesday autumn fair was a big success. We hope everyone who came enjoyed the activities. We'll continue hosting family events every half term, so please join us for the next one. We'd love to see you here at school.

We're also happy to share that our new Reception Class at Dysons Road has

settled in wonderfully. They already feel part of our community, and it's been heartwarming to see the older learners helping them during playtimes and encouraging them to join in the activities.



As we settle into the rhythm of a new school year, I wanted to take a moment to share some updates from our busy and vibrant Haselbury Campus.

It's been a joy to welcome our new Year 7 learners, who have brought so much excitement and energy. We're also thrilled to have some fantastic new staff members joining our team.

It's heartening to see how quickly the students have settled into their new classes and routines. Friendships are already blossoming, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere across the school. Our Year 7s have jumped right into food education this half-term, learning to follow recipes and create some delicious dishes.

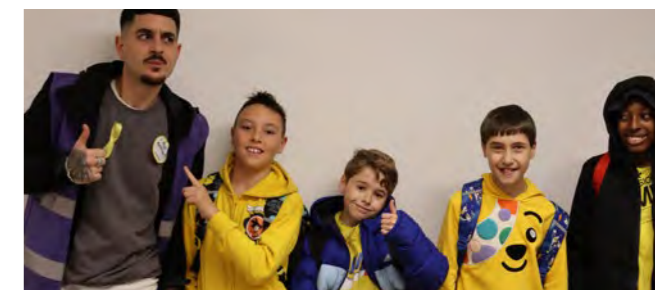


Our older learners have been making the most of opportunities outside the classroom. Year 8 enjoyed a fun and educational trip to the Natural History Museum, while Year 9 were inspired by the incredible art at the Tate Modern in London. These trips really help to bring learning to life in exciting new ways.

We are also incredibly proud of our students who took part in the Panathlon, a sports competition for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their enthusiasm and teamwork were inspiring.



Our lunchtime and after-school clubs are off to a great start, with something for everyone. From singing on Tuesdays to dancing on Fridays, there's plenty to keep everyone active and engaged. Our Tuesday multi-sports club and Thursday football club are also proving to be big hits after school.



October was a busy month full of important celebrations. We marked World Mental Health Day on October 10th, celebrated Black History Day on October 17th, and enjoyed Scary Fancy Dress Day on October 25th. These events help us raise awareness, celebrate our diverse community, and have a bit of fun together too.

Looking ahead, we will soon be introducing even more lunchtime clubs, including arts and crafts, media, and games like chess and draughts.

It's been a fantastic start to the year, and we're excited to see what more our students will achieve and experience in the coming weeks.

DARIA KOHLS
Head of School





It's been a wonderful first half term at Learning for Life Campus, filled with activities, fun, and plenty of laughter.

Our Year 10 learners had an incredible start to their journey with time spent at the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London (CONEL). The college gives students the chance to explore a variety of vocational subjects.

We've also kicked off our 'World of Work' days, offering Year 10 learners some real insights into different industries. A recent visit to a factory helped them learn about logistics and the importance of health and safety in the workplace.



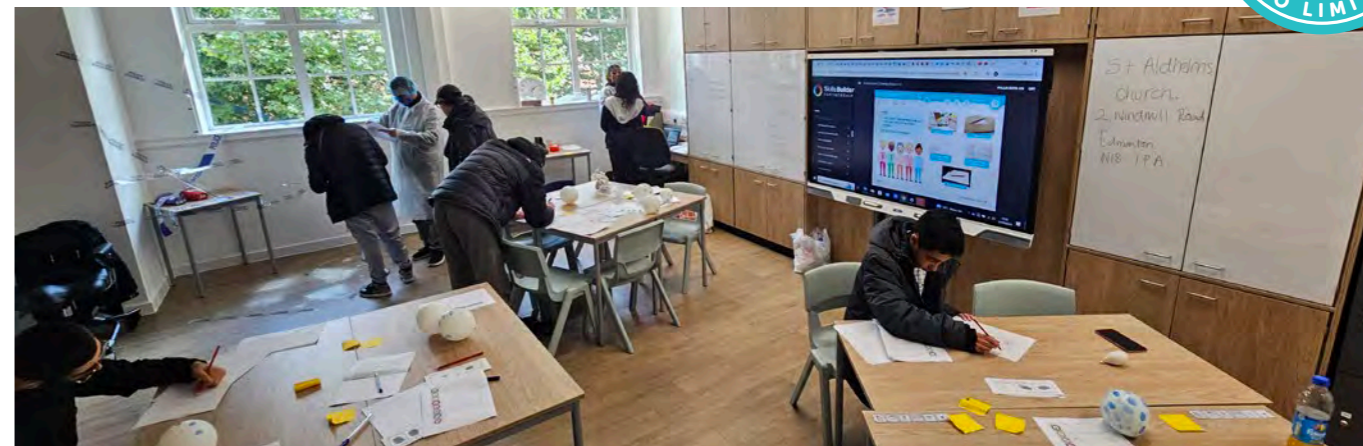
Your children have settled into their classes beautifully, building strong connections with their teachers and reuniting with old friends. Wright Class particularly enjoyed a day at Horizon Campus, and they've shared how inspiring it was to see the learners there growing through their college experience.

Looking ahead, we're gearing up for an exciting year. Letters have gone out for our Year 10 residential to the Isle of Wight, planned for the start of the summer term. Meanwhile, our Year 11 learners are excitedly preparing for their trip to Paris at the end of the school year.

We'll be sharing our enrichment timetable for the year ahead, so look out for this. We'll be sure to keep you updated on any new opportunities as they come up.



THESPINA SKARPELLIS
Head of School



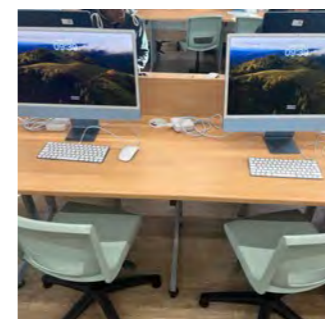
We've had a busy start to the new school year at Horizon Campus.

It's been a pleasure getting to know the new learners joining us for the first time. Some are just beginning their post-16 education journey, while others are navigating the exciting transition from education into the world of work.

We've also welcomed back many familiar faces. Learners in their second year of Sixth Form have returned ready to continue their studies, and last year's pre-interns have come back with even more confidence as they join us for a Supported Internship.



Our new Sixth Form and Pre-internship classes have settled in well at the newly refurbished Ponders End site. We've had the pleasure of hosting several tours for parents, carers, and visitors, and it's been great hearing such positive feedback about the new facilities. The vocational lessons, such as Catering & Hospitality and Computing & Creative Media, are now being taught in our brand-new training kitchen and media suite, which have really enhanced the learning experience.



Did you know that our St Mary's site also received a makeover before we reopened in September? The classrooms have been adapted to reflect real working environments, and our #NoLimits vision has come to life with inspiring posters of graduate interns at work and motivational quotes.

We're delighted to have welcomed three new Supported Internship classes, who have been participating in a 7-week induction. This has included SkillsBuilder activities, work tasters, and visits to employers, giving our learners valuable insights into the working world.



Last month, we had a two-day visit from Ofsted inspectors who came to review our employability programmes that we offer in partnership with Enfield Council. They visited lessons, spoke to learners on work placements, and met with staff, interns, and parents, to discuss the impact of our Pre-internship and Supported Internship programmes. We're expecting their full report in the coming weeks.

It's been a successful and busy start to the year, and I look forward to sharing more updates with you as the year progresses.



KIKA CHARALAMBOUS
Head of School

School Council Update

The School Council is a meaningful way for students to have their voices heard and their opinions considered in decisions that affect their education.

It gives learners the chance to actively shape their school experience while developing important life skills like communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and responsibility.

By taking part in leadership activities, students not only grow as individuals but also serve as role models for their peers, helping to create a positive and supportive school culture.

Student leaders on the School Council play an essential role in making decisions that enhance school life for everyone. They help organise

enrichment activities, projects, events, theme days, and learner wellbeing initiatives. They work closely with senior leaders to ensure their ideas are brought to life.

To make sure the process is fair, council members are elected by their peers through a secret ballot. Each year, more learners are given the opportunity to step into leadership roles, ensuring that a wide range of voices and ideas are represented.

Recently elected student leaders from each campus have shared their aims for the year ahead.

We are proud of our student leaders and their commitment to making our school an even better place to learn and grow.



Meridian Campus, Dysons Road: Learners here would like to be recognised and rewarded with stickers for being "ready, safe, and kind" at school.



Meridian Campus, Springfield Road: Learners suggested more outdoor activities in the playground.



Haselbury Campus: Students expressed a desire for more trips to be included in the curriculum.



L4L Campus: Learners said that they'd love to be recognised for their hard work and kindness by receiving postcards.



Horizon Campus: Students suggested having more lunchtime activities, such as a table tennis table.

Pastoral update

CELEBRATING WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

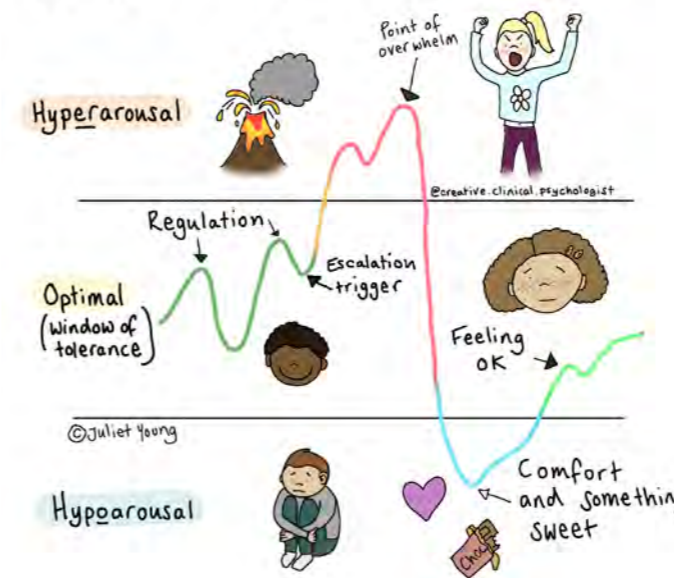
Helping learners understand and manage their emotions is a big part of the support we provide. It's an important skill that helps them navigate the ups and downs of daily life.

While "mental health" often gets linked to serious conditions, it's really just a part of everyone's overall wellbeing. It's helpful to think of mental health on a sliding scale - sometimes we feel great, other times less so, and there's a wide range in between.



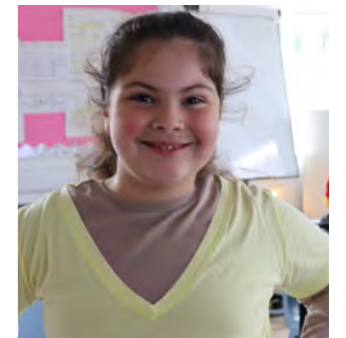
Every day brings its own challenges, and our mental health shifts up and down the scale accordingly. What matters is how we cope with those ups and downs, which can depend on things like how well-rested we are, the stress we're under, and whether we're able to relax and recharge, maybe through exercise or talking to someone we trust.

Window of Tolerance



Psychologists use the term "window of tolerance" to describe that sweet spot where we're feeling our best - ready to tackle whatever the day throws at us. This doesn't necessarily mean being calm but having the right amount of energy for the tasks ahead.

Sometimes we fall out of that window. When we're low on energy - maybe due to tiredness, sadness, or illness - we might need to "up-regulate" and boost our mood with something simple like fresh air, a walk, or listening to music. On the flip side, when we're feeling overwhelmed or stressed (which can trigger our "fight or flight" response), we may need to "down-regulate" by finding ways to calm down, such as deep breathing, or moving to a quiet space.



To raise awareness of these issues, we celebrated World Mental Health Day on 10th October across all our campuses. It was a wonderful opportunity to focus on student wellbeing with activities that put these ideas into practice. Learners and staff enjoyed yoga, meditation, arts and crafts, physical exercises, and breathing techniques. These activities provided everyone with a chance to relax, express themselves, and learn new ways to manage stress.

Throughout the year, we'll continue to focus on mental health and wellbeing in our lessons. Celebrating World Mental Health Day was a great reminder of how important it is to take care of ourselves. It was heartwarming to see our learners come together, establish new friendships, and make the day truly meaningful.

CATH GOODWIN
Head of Pastoral Development



Enterprise Cooperative Trust

We're excited to share that Enfield County School for Girls has officially joined the Enterprise Cooperative Trust (ECT); our local network dedicated to creating opportunities for young people in Enfield.

Since its launch in 2019, ECT has grown to include a diverse range of members, including schools, local organisations, and businesses.

By joining the Trust, Enfield County remains an autonomous school but now has access to the wide range of opportunities ECT offers.

The partnership will strengthen Enfield County's ties with the community and offer even more enriching experiences for the school's learners and staff.

Learners will benefit from local collaborations, work experience programmes, skills-building workshops, and immersive theatre experiences.

Staff will gain access to enhanced learning and development opportunities, as well as the chance to collaborate and share best practices across Trust members.



"We are delighted to have Enfield County School for Girls on board, as their values align perfectly with those of the Trust. Our growing partnerships continue to benefit the young people of Enfield."
Janet Leach, ECT Chair

"Joining the Trust is an exciting step in our journey of working more closely with the wider Enfield community to provide even more opportunities for our learners."

Jennifer Gumbrell,
Headteacher, Enfield County



Learning for Life Charity

MEET OLIVIA WITTICH

We're excited to introduce Olivia Wittich, our new Operations Director at Learning for Life Charity (LFLC).

Olivia grew up in Enfield and has spent the past 12 years working in secondary education within the borough. Her extensive experience gives her a



deep understanding of the needs of young people in our community, and she's excited to bring her passion and knowledge to the LFLC team.

Since joining, Olivia has loved getting to know everyone and is inspired by the team's dedication to supporting young people with Special Educational Needs

and Disabilities (SEND). LFLC focuses on creating 'chances to work' for young people with SEND, aged 14 to 25, who live or learn in the borough of Enfield. Additionally, it supports disadvantaged youth who are connected to the Enfield Enterprise Cooperative Trust.

Olivia invites you to visit our two charity shops, which play a key role in funding our projects and offer work experience for young people. The shops are welcoming spaces run by dedicated teams who help young people build important skills for their futures.

You can find us at:

Life in the Town: Market Place, 1 Burleigh Way, Enfield, EN2 6AE

Life in the Green: 6 North Mall, Edmonton Green, London, N9 0EH

Olivia is looking forward to meeting more of our community at upcoming events. She is often found visiting our shops, so please stop by and say hello.



West Lea in the news

STRONGER TOGETHER: CYCLE TO INSPIRE

In September, 13 determined cyclists embarked on the Cycle to Inspire challenge - a nearly 600km journey from London to Dublin in support of West Lea School and Down Syndrome Ireland.

The riders were led by Dirk Talsma, Managing Director of Rapport Guest Services, and began their journey with a warm and emotional send-off from West Lea's Haselbury Campus. Dirk reflected on the moment: "The welcome we received from the students was incredible. It really moved the riders and showed how much this challenge means to us all."

Cycling over 100km a day, the team arrived in Dublin four days later, having overcome tough terrain and unpredictable weather. Their journey highlighted the power of partnerships and the life-changing impact they can have.

Sponsored by Compass Group, TJX, Knight Frank, and Irish Ferries, they're working toward their goal of raising £30,000 - and it's not too late to contribute. If you'd like to support this inspiring cause, visit the Cycle to Inspire JustGiving page (see the URL below).

Conor Bartley, one of the cyclists, shared his thoughts: "At Rapport, we've had the pleasure of hosting intern students from West Lea and Down Syndrome Ireland, and many placements have turned into successful employment. Personally, I take inspiration from everyone involved in both organisations."

A huge well done to everyone who took part in this incredible challenge!

<https://bit.ly/cycletoinspire>



Dirk Talsma, Managing Director, Rapport Guest Services

Conor and Martin from Rapport Guest Services during the Cycle to Inspire challenge



Our campuses



Dysons Road
174 Dysons Road, Edmonton,
London, N18 2DS

Springfield Road
Springfield Road,
New Southgate,
N11 1SP




Haselbury Campus
Haselbury Road, Edmonton,
London, N9 9TU




Laurel Park School
Wilmer Way,
N14 7HY




St Mary's
Lawrence Road, Edmonton,
London, N18 2HN

KS5 Campus
219-221 High Street,
Ponders End, Enfield,
EN3 4DX



Key term dates 2024-25

AUTUMN TERM 2024

Monday 11th November
Remembrance Day

Monday 11th to Friday 15th November
Anti-Bullying Week

Thursday 14th November
Open Morning at Meridian Campus, Dysons Road,
9.30am

Friday 15th November
Open Morning at Meridian Campus,
Springfield Road, 9.30am

Wednesday 27th November
Supported Internship Open Evening, 5-6pm at
Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Thursday 28th November
Official Opening of Horizon Campus, Ponders End,
2pm

Friday 29th to Monday 2nd December
INSET Days – School closed to learners

Friday 6th December
Flu immunisations at Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Monday 9th December
Christmas Concert at Meridian Campus,
Dysons Road, 2pm

Wednesday 11th December
Flu immunisations at Meridian Campus,
Springfield Road

Thursday 12th December
Christmas Show at Haselbury Campus

Friday 13th December
Flu immunisations at Horizon Campus, St Mary's
and Meridian Campus, Dysons Road

Monday 16th December
Christmas Concert at Meridian Campus,
Springfield Road, 2pm

Wednesday 18th December
Supported Internship Open Evening, 5-6pm at
Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Friday 20th December
Last day of Autumn Term

Monday 23rd December to Friday 3rd January 2025
Christmas Break – School closed to learners

SPRING TERM 2025

Monday 6th January
INSET Day – School closed to learners

Tuesday 7th January
First day of Spring Term – Learners return to school

Monday 22nd January
Supported Internship Open Evening, 5-6pm at
Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Monday 27th to Friday 31st January
National Storytelling Week

Wednesday 12th February
Parent and Carer Progress Review Meetings –
School closes at 12.30pm

Monday 17th to Friday 21st February
Half Term – School closed to learners

Monday 24th February
Learners return to school

Wednesday 26th February
Supported Internship Open Evening, 5-6pm at
Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Monday 3rd to Friday 7th March
National Careers Week

Friday 21st March
World Down Syndrome Day – Odd Socks Day!

Monday 24th March
Easter Concert at Meridian Campus, Dysons Road,
2pm

Wednesday 26th March
Supported Internship Open Evening, 5-6pm at
Horizon Campus, Ponders End

Monday 31st March
Easter Concert at Meridian Campus,
Springfield Road, 2pm

Thursday 3rd April
Learning for Life Campus, Duke of Edinburgh
Award, learner volunteering

Friday 4th April
Last day of Spring Term

Monday 7th to Friday 18th April
Easter Break – School closed to learners



community
kindness
learning for life
innovation **inclusion**