

ISSUE 14
26th April 2024



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back for Term 5 of this academic year. I trust you all had a good Easter break.

This week we were delighted to finally receive our final OFSTED report following our inspection that happened back in March. I have written to all parents / carers separately today to share the details of the report. If you have seen that email you will know that it is a very positive report which rightly celebrates so many good things that happen here at Holcombe every day. They recognised most importantly of all that “the schools motto of ‘Transforming Life Chances’ is reflected in all that the school does” and that students “experience an inclusive, welcoming and supportive environment and are proud to attend their Rights Respecting School”. These are only two highlights from the report and I would encourage all of you to read the letter that went out today and/or read the report in full.

The report is available here and I hope you enjoy reading it : <https://www.holcombegrammar.org.uk/our-school/ofsted/>

At the end of next week our Year 13 students will complete their last full day of school before study leave starts and then they will start sitting their final A Level examinations. Year 11 will commence study leave early the following week. We know how hard these students have worked over the past 2 years and we wish them every success in their A level and GCSE examinations. As I have been saying in assemblies this week, here at Holcombe we ‘believe we can’ and I really do urge all of our Year 11 and Year 13 students to ‘believe you can’ in the remaining weeks. Once study leave begins I would encourage all of our Year 11 and 13 students to contact someone here if we can help in any way.

In the spirit of ‘believing we can’, on Monday we celebrated ‘Earth Day’ and some students have completed tasks linked to this. As a society we face some significant challenges to better look after our natural environment and we all need to ‘believe we can’ make a difference. Recycling our glass and paper, for example, may seem a very small gesture but if millions of people do it then it makes a huge difference.

Finally may I ask for your support with 3 things, which I know I have raised previously but unfortunately we are still having some issues here:

1. **Uniform.** The Uniform code is well known and students are familiar with what is and is not acceptable. As summer gets here we start to see more students in trainers and without blazers. If the weather does heat up and if we do get some exceptionally hot days (which seems a long way off at the moment does it not!) then of course we will relax our blazer and tie rules. But for now all students should continue to wear the correct uniform. Parents and carers can help here by ensuring they leave for school with the correct uniform
2. **Behaviour on public transport.** We have enjoyed very positive meetings with staff from local bus and train companies who are increasingly working in partnership with us. We know that the vast majority of our students act responsibly on the way to and from school, but sadly a small minority can at times ruin the schools reputation by acting in unacceptable ways. We will be clamping down on this by working ever more closely with local travel companies so please do ensure you son/daughter is aware of the expectations
3. **Parking.** I met with a group of local residents this week who put up with all sorts of issues living, as they do, so close to a school. They all accept that there will be more traffic at certain times and that sometimes students will drop litter etc, but some of what our residents are having to tolerate is beyond what it is acceptable. Some parents/carers are it seems parking across driveways and even parking on driveways in some cases whilst waiting for their son/daughter to leave school. May I please just ask, again, for all of us to be more considerate of our neighbours when picking up / dropping off children

Finally I wanted to thank those parents who met with us last night re: setting up a new PTA. This group will work in the coming months and years to raise funds for the school which can then be spent on a range of things to improve the daily experiences here for our students. We will be advertising this new PTA in a future blog.

Thank you for your ongoing support. I will provide a further update in 2 weeks time.

Mr L Preston
Headteacher

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Our students have been involved in a number of brilliant activities over the couple of weeks. Please take a moment to read through these fantastic opportunities.

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KEY DATES

Term 5

- **Monday 6th May**
 - Bank Holiday Monday
- **Friday 24th May**
 - Last Day of Term 5

Term 6

- **Monday 3rd June**
 - First Day of Term 6

STAY CONNECTED

Follow Us on Social Media

See all of the enjoyable and engaging activities we get involved in throughout the year.

Follow us on our social media channels.



[@TSAT - Holcombe Grammar School](#)



[@TSATHolcombe](#)



[@tsat_holcombegrammarschool](#)





CAN WE HELP?

What is the Hardship Fund?

The Hardship Fund is a source of financial help available to all registered full time school students. The aim of the fund is to help the students who have difficulties paying for:

1. Curriculum trips, visits and year group residentials
2. Uniform, shoes or sports kit
3. Emergency travel expenses
4. Equipment to access individual studies

Payments from the fund do not need to be repaid

Please scan the QR code below or click this [link](#) to see how we can help:

Scan me



Calling all Performers...

Founders Day Spectacular

*Do you have
Talent?*

Get Involved

come along on Tuesday
afterschool to the Drama
Studio / see Mrs Miles



KENT, SURREY AND SUSSEX AIR AMBULANCE VISIT



Last Friday three Year 12 Students from the Captain's Team accompanied Mr Phillips the Head of Biology to Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance charity based at Rochester Airport. This was to support launch of their competition to 'Name Your Local Air Ambulance'. This is a competition for schools and youth groups as part of the 'KSS Buy it for Life' urgent appeal, which is calling on everyone across Kent, Surrey and Sussex to help raise the final £1M to purchase, instead of lease, its second helicopter by the end of May which would save the charity around £500K a year. This will enable KSS to fly for six more hours a day, meaning its specialist lifesaving crews can reach more patients and save even more lives. This charity has a very personal connection to Mr Phillips as in November 2020 they assisted in attending to a sudden critical illness he suffered which helped save his life. More information about the charity and its appeal can be found [here](#).



MUSIC CORNER



Upcoming music events that might interest you:



Victory Academy Chatham Turaka have workshops to put on an African Dance and Drum performance Friday 26th, 30th April and 4th May 2024 6-8pm If you are interested in being a part of Medway festival history. For more information Contact hello@turaka.co.uk, call 0757040 409 or visit [Rochester Sweeps 2024 — TURAKA](#)

Central Theatre Chatham Legend the music of Bob Marley Thursday 9th May 2024 7:30pm (the show can also be seen at The Woodville Theatre Gravesend in October). Ticket Band A £28.50 Band B £27.50. For more information contact phone: 01634 338 338, you can email: boxoffice@medway.gov.uk or visit <https://www.medwayticketslive.co.uk/whats-on>



Rochester Cathedral - Elvis by Candlelight Friday 24th May 2024 at 7:30pm Ticket prices vary between £15-£30 for more information visit <https://www.rochestercathedral.org/new-events/2024/elvisbycandlelight>

The Orchard Theatre Dartford – Northern Soul Live The signature Thursday 30th May 7:30pm Tickets £31.50 For more information contact Box Office: 0343 310 0033 or visit <https://trafalgartickets.com/orchard-theatre-dartford/en-GB/whats-on>



Peacock Theatre London Yamoto: The Drummers of Japan Hinotori The Wing of Phoenix 4th-22nd June. Tickets price varies between £18-£65 depending on location of seats. Expect remarkable athleticism, high energy spectacle and drums that explode with energy. Passion meets tradition in a show which drums up the spirit of Japan. For more information contact visit [YAMATO The Drummers of Japan / Hinotori – The Wings of Phoenix - Peacock Theatre - Sadler's Wells \(sadlerswells.com\)](#)

SILVER DofE AWARD UPDATE

Written by Mr Phillips



Well done to the 11 students from Year 10 who successfully completed their Silver Practice Expedition over the last weekend of the Easter Break. The two teams completed the venture in and around Cobham and Wrotham area where the groups demonstrated excellent teamwork and navigation skills over the weekend. This strong performance will hopefully stand the teams in a good position to cope with the challenges of the Qualifying Expedition in the Ashdown Forest during the October Half Term.

SIXTH FORM THORPE PARK TRIP

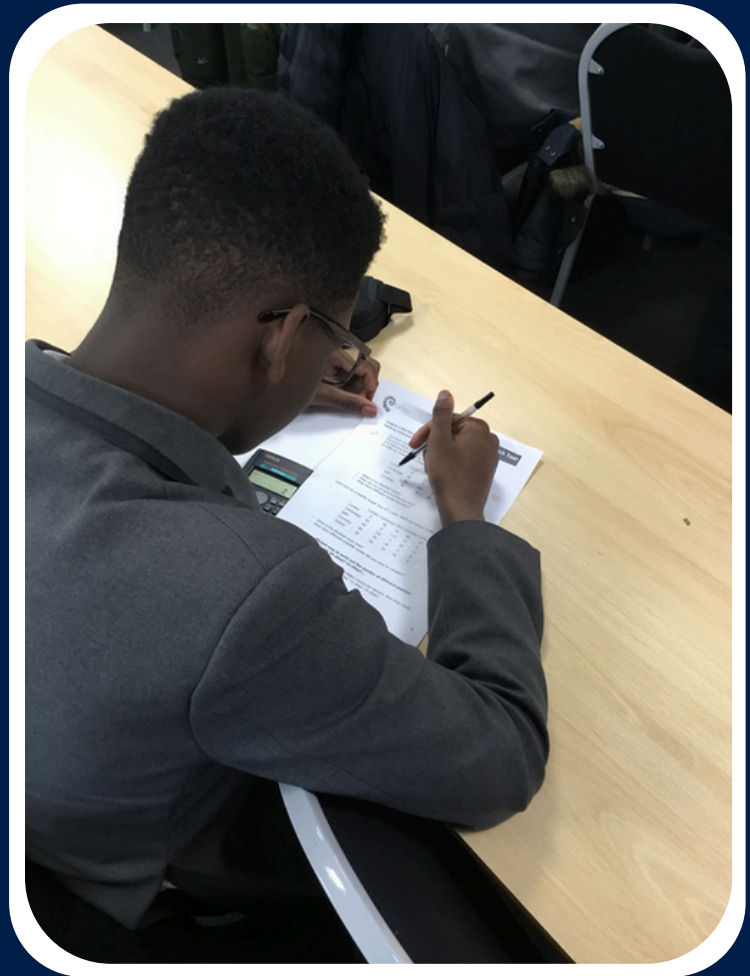
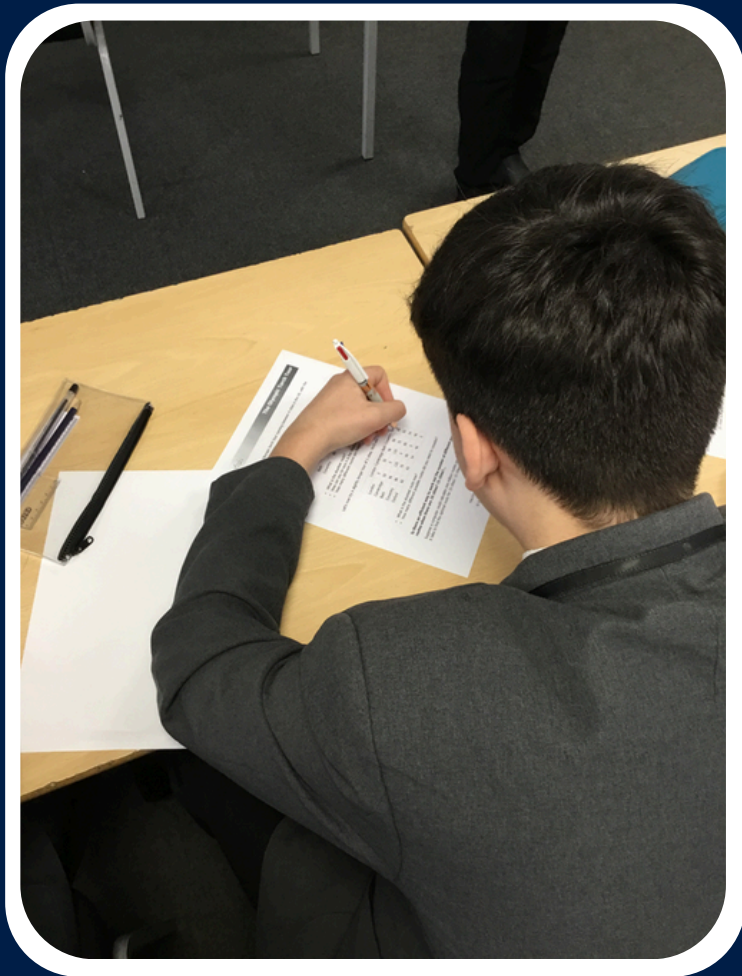


After a stellar start to the Year for our Year 12's, and a great effort by our Year 13's, they were rewarded with a trip to Thorpe Park. However, in true British style, the weather turned up too! With relentless rain and a wonderful storm bringing high winds, most of the rides were closed for the majority of the trip, with some students managing to get to the front, even in the seats and strapped in, when the wind alarms went off and the rides stopped. Obviously, where much rather safety was there than not, the students although a bit deflated, took the day in their stride and managed to have a nice time on the younger rides and in the shops. Absolutely soaked through, they presented themselves impeccably and were a delight to take. As the rides were closed, a return trip is being planned for those students to enjoy the rides as they should have. Information will be sent out shortly.

MATHS CLUB



This week in Maths Club, students were introduced to an application of the Travelling Salesman Problem. In the problem, the mathematicians were given the distances between 4 major cities in the UK and were tasked with finding the shortest route that visited each city once, starting and ending at London. The mathematicians set about solving this by listing the different combinations and sure enough several of them were in fact able to find the shortest route through applying logical reasoning and problem solving, but is there a more efficient and certain way, guaranteed to not miss any routes? To find the answer to this, over the next week or two, students will have to develop their knowledge of graph theory. In particular, students will be looking into Hamiltonian circuits... Interestingly, mathematicians have not yet found any sort of criterion for determining whether a graph contains a Hamiltonian circuit or not. If there were criterion, it would help substantially with many other mathematical problems. Maybe there are criterion for proving this, and maybe it will be a student from Holcombe Grammar School who will find them?



SUPPORTING A CHILD WITH ADHD POSTER



Supporting a Child with ADHD Thursday 25th April



Join Jane Keyworth, Lead Facilitator at FACE for an online session that explores this topic and challenges stereotypes.

facefamilyadvice.co.uk

(7pm to 9pm) £24

Book now via the website

ANXIETY EXPLAINED POSTER



Anxiety Explained

Do you, or your children (especially your teens) suffer from anxiety?
Would you like to know what anxiety is and gain some
understanding on how to manage it?



A two-hour online talk delivered by
Jane Keyworth, Lead Facilitator at **FACE**
THURSDAY 2nd MAY 7-9PM £24
Available to book now [facefamilyadvice.co.uk](https://www.facefamilyadvice.co.uk)