

Term 2 is well underway here at Holcombe.

Year 11s are reviewing their prelim examinations that they sat before half term and Year 13 are finalising their preparations for their prelims which will start in just over a week from now. However our focus is never solely on our examination year groups; next week our Year 7s will have 'thinking' lessons during their P1 lessons each day where we will teach them specifically how they can use a range of thinking tools to support their learning. As you all know, we are proud to be a Thinking School and we were delighted to hear recently that The University of Exeter has now accredited us as an [Advanced Thinking School](#). Here is a quote from the conclusion of their report:

*The substantive evidence provided by HGS creates a very clear picture of a Thinking School in which Thinking Skills are at the heart of school life. Thinking Skills are fully embedded in the culture of the school such that HGS is a collaborative educational community. The dissemination of best practice across the school and beyond positions HGS as a beacon of metacognitive excellence where best practice is nurtured so that children develop as holistic lifelong learners. The focus on the professional growth of staff is exceptional. In conclusion, the application has provided compelling and comprehensive evidence for accreditation, and I therefore recommend that accreditation as an Advanced Thinking School be awarded until September 2025. Congratulations to Holcombe Grammar School for an exceptional achievement!*

This achievement has resulted from years of hard work by our amazing staff – congratulations to all concerned.

Whilst examination results and thinking skills are important, far more importantly today is Remembrance Day and as a school we have been pausing to consider this. Assemblies this week have been held by Mr Wrigley (Head of History) and have encouraged students to consider the impact of all recent conflicts on our local community, as well as remembering that we should honour the deaths of all those who sacrificed their life for our country, from all over the world. It has been great today to see some of our students in their cadets and other military uniforms and as a school we observed the 2 minutes of silence at 11:00 in honour of our fallen heroes.

#### Holcombe Association

The Holcombe Association met on Monday evening and it was lovely to see some new parents joining the team – thank you very much to those of you have volunteered your time. If anyone else is willing to support our parents in raising funds which can then be spent on improving the school experience for our students, please do contact David Edser on [chair@holcombe.org.uk](mailto:chair@holcombe.org.uk) to discuss how you can help.

#### Classcharts

We now have over 70% of parents signed up to Classcharts. In the coming weeks and months we will be using this system more and more (phasing out other systems) so please do sign up to get an account so you can better monitor your son's or daughters achievements at school.

#### +Pay

A gentle reminder please to ensure your child's +Pay account is up to date so that they can easily access food each day at school. As a country we are living through ever-more challenging times so if your circumstances have changed and you need any support then please do contact us.

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Form Open Evening – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November

Next week is our 6<sup>th</sup> Form Open Evening. The 6<sup>th</sup> Form has increased from approximately 160 students 3 years ago to over 350 students to date. Local 16 year olds clearly know that they will get a high quality education here and are joining us in ever increasing numbers. The demand for places looks like being as high as ever next year so all Year 11 students are encouraged to attend next week to find out how to apply and how we can support them with their applications. We look forward to seeing many of you at this event.

Enjoy the blog and I will look forward to providing further updates in two weeks time

Mr L. Preston, Principal

#### Key Dates 2022 -

- W/C 14th November - Year 13 Language Oral Prelims
- Thursday 17th November - Sixth Form Open Evening 6pm-9pm
- Friday 18th November - Day off in lieu of Open Morning
- W/C 21st November - Year 13 Prelims
- Thursday 1st December - Year 11 Parents Evening
- Friday 17th December - Last Day of Term 2

#### Key Dates 2023 -

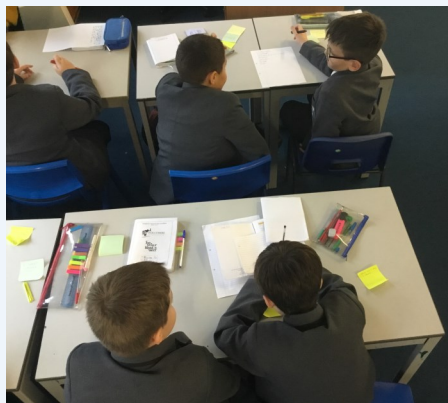
- Monday 2nd January - Bank Holiday
- Tuesday 3rd January - First Day of Term 3

## KS3 Student Workshops

Over Term 2 and Term 3, we will be leading a series of workshops for KS3 students. There will be 6 sessions in total, the first of which was held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November. Our SEN team, in conjunction with our Educational Psychologist, will work with a small group of students to help develop a range of skills and strategies based around developing resilience, confidence and transition skills.

Following our first workshop, we were delighted to welcome a group of parents and carers to school. This provided an opportunity to outline the structure of the workshops but also to highlight the work of our SEN Department ('The Haven') and staff in supporting their children. We were able to discuss strategies used in school and share some strategies which could also be used at home. We were then able to host a short Q+A session and introduce key members of the SEN Team who support students throughout the school day in The Haven.

The students were complimented by our Educational Psychologist, for their engagement and efforts throughout the workshop and it was a pleasure to be able to share stories of their endeavours and successes with their families. For many of the parents present, it was their first opportunity to engage directly with the school and we remain grateful to those who found the time to join us to support the students.



## Exam Information

Exam Boards have now published their final exam timetables for GCSE and A Level exams next Summer, which are available to view on their websites:

AQA: [AQA | Exams admin | Dates and timetables](#)

Pearson: [Exam timetables | Pearson qualifications](#)

OCR: [Key dates and timetables \(ocr.org.uk\)](#)

WJEC: [Key Dates & Timetables \(wjec.co.uk\)](#)

Eduqas: [Key Dates and Timetables \(eduqas.co.uk\)](#)

If your child needs to know the exam board for a particular subject, please ask them to confirm it with their teacher.

Please be aware that the following dates have been designated as 'contingency days' by the awarding bodies. These are additional exam dates which will be used in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations:

8<sup>th</sup> June (pm)

15<sup>th</sup> June (pm)

28<sup>th</sup> June

All examination students should therefore ensure that they are available until 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 should there be exceptional circumstances that require an awarding body to reschedule an examination.

### Results Days 2023:

Results will be available to exam students to collect on the following dates:

A Levels: 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023

GCSEs: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Please note that we are unable to email results to students. If a student is unable to collect their results on the day, they can nominate someone to collect them on their behalf and further details will be provided nearer the time.

If you have any questions regarding the examinations process, please view our examinations page on our website or contact the exams officer on [exams@holcombegrammar.org.uk](mailto:exams@holcombegrammar.org.uk).

## Thinking Ambassadors



Hello, we are your Holcombe Thinking Ambassadors and our role is to promote Thinking Tools and support our fellow students in using them effectively to progress in their learning and revision. We are involved in lots of different events and activities such as:

- Assisting with Thinking Weeks for different year groups
- Updating displays around the school
- Open mornings and welcome evenings
- Assemblies

Here's what some of our team have to say about being a Thinking Ambassador:

"Thinking is a way of understanding about the way people learn and how you can learn better. Last year, we did a Thinking Week to help different year groups with their learning through the variety of thinking tools that we use here at Holcombe. We did sessions on habits, growth mindsets, hats, maps and even the science of learning. These topics are especially useful for progression."

"I became a Thinking Ambassador last year, and I am in Year 9 at HGS. I assisted in last year's Year 8 Thinking Day, where I supported in lessons using my own knowledge of the techniques. In the near future, we will be hosting a Year 7 Thinking Week event, which will increase their understanding of the various thinking skills which we use at Holcombe. The open morning for Year 6s included a stand displaying some past examples of our techniques and information about those for students and parents to look at and talk about."

"I can say personally that being a part of the Thinking Ambassadors student drive team has increased my own understanding and ability to use thinking tools in my own life and schoolwork, and I am sure this applies the same to my peers. This year we are revamping the system and icons for the thinking tools; you may have already noticed the change in thinking hats to resemble fedoras even more."

The Ambassadors meet every Wednesday lunchtime in M14, pop in if you need any support with Thinking Tools!

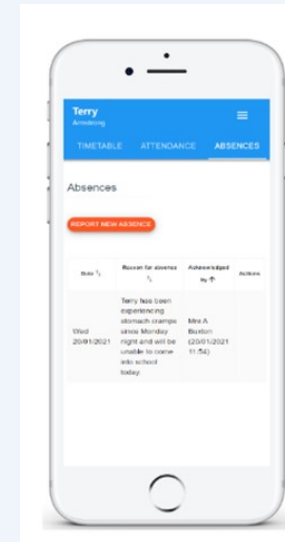
## Class Charts Reminder

Many thanks to all parents who are able to let us know in detail why students are late or absent from school, please continue to do so by 8am on each day of absence. We have made some changes to our absence reporting. We now expect all lateness and absence to be reported through our classcharts software, this is to enable swift and accurate processing of this information, as well as removing the need for you to confirm voice messages with written evidence. Through classcharts, written reasons can be sent directly to our attendance office, and medical evidence can be attached directly where appropriate.

If you access your child's profile on classcharts, you will see the Absences. Selecting this tab will display a list of absences that you have reported, once you have reported them. This includes when the absence took place, the reason for the absence and who acknowledged your absence report.

To report an absence, click on the Report new absence button. Next, enter the details of the reported absence into the form provided. You can also include up to 5 files in your absence report as supporting evidence. To do this, click on the Attach supporting evidence button and select the files of your choice. Click on the Submit button to send your pupil's absence report to their school. The absence can be edited and deleted until it has been acknowledged by a member of school staff.

This can also be used to report lateness too.





## Personal Development

For their Personal Development lesson this week, Year 9 were treated to a Financial Wellness Power Session from Gospel Eadwardfilia, from [myfinancialfixer.com](http://myfinancialfixer.com). Her 10 years' experience in helping young people and their parents has helped them eliminate debt so they can save, invest and change their financial wellness, and Year 9 students were given an overview of the strategies needed to put this into place.

Gospel's presentation was supported by David Agbogo, the director of [Double Two financial Planning](#) and Partner within St. James's Place, Wealth Management. He has worked in the financial services for the 15 years and shared some of his own knowledge and understanding with the students.

Our Personal Development curriculum this term is focusing on Life Skills across all year groups in order to help our students move a step from “living an unhealthy and financially disorganised life” to “healthier and wealthier lifestyle”.



## Job Opportunity

Are you looking for a part-time job that fits around school hours or other commitments?

If yes, then please visit our Trust careers page where you will find details of lunchtime support roles across our local schools.

For more details visit [www.tsatrust.org.uk/careers/](http://www.tsatrust.org.uk/careers/)

## Shoebbox Appeal

Thank you for all the OCC shoebbox donations so far! Please remember to bring in hygiene items such as a hairbrush, toothbrush, flannel, bar of soap, nail clippers, chapstick and maybe even a wash bag for these gifts to be sent to Ukrainian refugees by Samaritan's Purse, UK. [All gift suggestions can be found here.](#)



## National Schools Air Pistol Championship

Boris Beier, 8 Guardian, qualified for the National Schools Air Pistol Championships. He came 3rd in the South East representing Holcombe. Congratulations!

If any students are interested in forming a team for next year, there I training every Saturday by Team GB's coach. He provides the pistols if needed and it is £4 per session.



## Young Carers

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition or misuses drugs or alcohol.

If your child is a young carer then could you please email [studentservices@holcombegrammar.org.uk](mailto:studentservices@holcombegrammar.org.uk) to let us know so we can offer support to them if they need it.

We also have a young carers club that is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each week at lunchtime. This is a chance for all young carers to get together along with our Young Carers Support Advisor who runs the club. They can play games, talk and learn about events that Carers First organise. If you require any further information on this then please contact Student Services.



## BRITISH SHOOTING SCHOOLS PISTOL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022/23

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

# CONGRATULATIONS

3<sup>rd</sup> Boris Beier

Junior Individual

South East Regional Qualifier



# HANDBALL TRIALS

The MSG handball competition takes place on *Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November*. This is an all day event with only a limited number of students selected. To be considered for selection you must attend the trial on:

**Year 7 & 8 - THURSDAY 10<sup>th</sup>  
NOVEMBER**

**Year 9 & 10 - THURSDAY 17<sup>th</sup>  
NOVEMBER**

*Any problems or questions please speak to a member of PE staff or e-mail [a.nanson@tsatrust.org.uk](mailto:a.nanson@tsatrust.org.uk)*

