



Dear parents and carers,

As we inch toward the end of January I hope you are all well. I am not a fan of January and am looking forward to the temperature soon rising (hopefully!) and to being able to drive to and from work in sunlight.

Despite the January gloom and cold, we remain very busy here. One priority in the past few weeks has been in supporting our Year 13 students in completing their UCAS applications. The vast majority of our 6th formers have completed these now and we now look forward to celebrating with them once those offers start coming in. Congratulations to Lily Wilkinson who has already secured an offer to study at Kings College, Cambridge.

Year 11 have been completing their 2nd (and last) prelim examinations before their GCSEs start this summer. These examinations will give them one final practice before the real thing and the feedback that staff provide will be very useful as final preparations are made. Good luck to everyone involved.

In the last blog we explained that we are having a push on punctuality at the moment; both to school in the morning but also to lessons during the day. This is continuing so please can we ask for your support to discuss this at home. We expect students to be on time for school and on time for lessons throughout the day and we will sanction accordingly where students are late.

We have also been having a push to increase the amount of school trips that we are offering. This week we have had a theatre visit and a field trip; next week our Year 11s have the 'Poetry Live' event in London which they will hopefully all attend as it will be very useful in their preparation for GCSE English. School trips are one of the aspects of school life that we remember long after we leave school and we are working hard to reintroduce as many of these opportunities as we can.

We have also been reviewing our communication channels with parents and in the blog you will see information about the MyEd app which I believe some of you already use. This will hopefully help make it even easier for you to keep up to date with messages we are sending home.

Finally, can I draw your attention to the letter sent home on Wednesday 25th January detailing our response to the NEU strike which will be happening on Wednesday 1st February. That letter explains what will be happening on that day so please do ensure you have read it. Please contact the main school office if you have any questions about the plans for the day and we will get back to you.

Best wishes for the rest of the month. I will update you all again in 2 weeks, at the end of this term.

Mr L. Preston
Principal
Holcombe Grammar School

Key Dates -

- WC 30th January - Year 11 Prelims
- WC 30th January - Year 10 Work Experience
- Friday 3rd February - Year 11 Poetry Live Trip
- Friday 10th February - Sixth Form Art and Design Trip
- Friday 10th February - Last Day of Term 3
- Monday 20th February - First Day of Term 4
- WC 20th February - Year 13 Language Orals
- Thursday 23rd February - Year 9 Options Evening
- WC 27th February - WC 6th March - Year 13 Prelims

Personal Development

To continue supporting our students' confidence and resilience to be ready for the workplace, all year groups have been studying employability skills in their PD lessons. We know conversations about jobs and aspirations often happen at home, and through lessons on CV writing, formal behaviour and online behaviour we will work together to enable students to be their best selves outside of school. Parents and carers are encouraged to visit thegrownupschool.com/career to find out more about professional expectations, career pathways and life skills we are teaching in PD.



Year 12 Mentoring

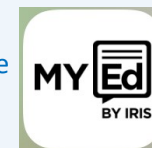


Year 12 Mentors are in full swing supporting our younger year students feel valued and heard. The Mentors work with Year 7, Year 10, Year 11 and also Literacy in all years. In the future they will venture into our neighbours New Horizons and help encourage and promote a good attitude to learning from a young age.

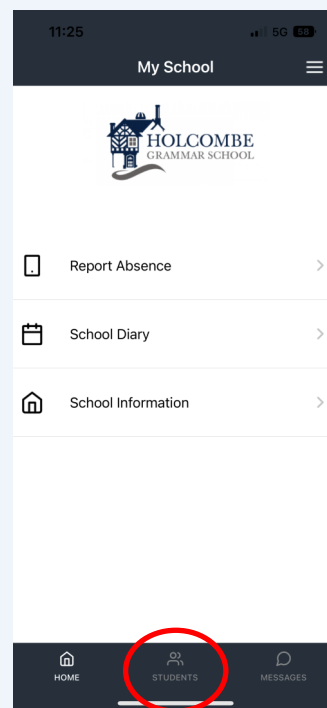
Here is the Year 10 Mentor group working with some of the students, working through their Mentor pack which encourages students to grow as a whole, including self confidence, wellbeing as well as academic guidance.

MyEd—Access to Emails

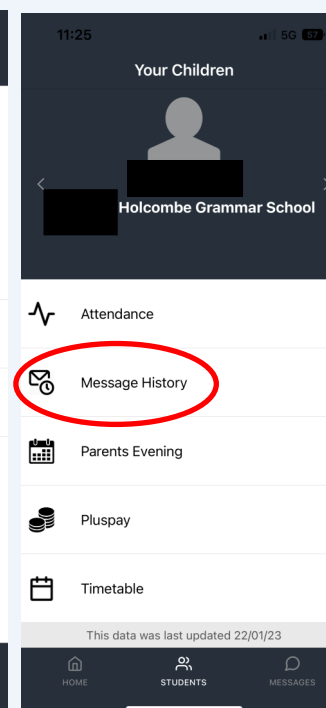
It is now possible to access emails that are sent to you using the MyEd app. These emails will be accessible both from the email address the office holds and this location.



If you wish to view your emails using the app, please follow the instructions below:



Click onto students at bottom of page



Click on message history



At top right hand side click messages

Message history is displayed

Young Reporters

Year 12 Students have been successful in enrolling on an external Young Reporters Course and have started their creative writing with gusto. Mentored by Miss Bloomfield, their first assignment has been tasked, and our aspiring journalists have been sent into the local community to find their first news article to write about. The articles that they write will be uploaded and available to 39 million readers every month, with the students having four separate articles to produce, we are sure they will be learning valuable skills to take further. The course, once completed, will be a great addition to their UCAS application or CV.



Angus Bean, Kelly Oppong, Thierry Buliza and Tabitha Wimble

Christmas Jumper Day 2022

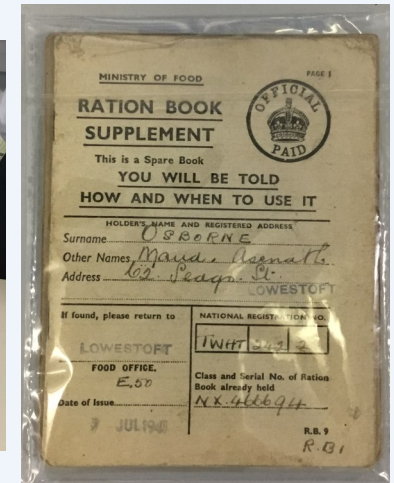
We are very proud to announce that we raised £273 for Save the Children with our students and staff wearing Christmas Jumpers before the holidays!



CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

Year 9 History

During History lessons, Year 9 have been learning about WW2, specifically evacuees and the blitz. After Mr Wrigley showed the class photos of what gas masks and ration books would've looked like, Tom Milton brought in a genuine gas mask and ration book.



Revision Workshop

The British Psychological Society are offering a free to access workshop to support students in the build up to their summer exams. This would be of particular interest to Y11 and Y13 students. Full details and a link to register are available below. The workshop will be held on 30th March 2023 at 4.00pm

https://www.bps.org.uk/event/revision-strategies-and-coping-examination-stress?dm_i=6MRE,PT3A,3OHV37,3719H,1

International Chemistry Olympiad 2023

It is with great excitement that we announce that twenty-five students from our school have been entered into round one of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) International Chemistry Olympiad 2023. This is an incredible opportunity for our students to engage with chemistry beyond the A-Level specification and to gain international recognition for their achievements.

The RSC International Chemistry Olympiad is an annual competition for 16 to 19 year olds and provides an exciting challenge to the brightest and most talented young chemists around the world. Our school is proud to support our students and to provide them with the chance to demonstrate their talents at the highest level of chemistry. We encourage our students to take on the challenge and to strive for excellence.

Our school has had great success over the years in this competition, with students in both Years 12 and 13 achieving Bronze and Silver certificates, and we are confident that this year's cohort will achieve even better results. We are proud to give our students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and to provide them with the experience of competing against the best young chemists in the world.

We are confident that this year's cohort of students will do us proud and we look forward to seeing the results of their hard work. Good luck to all our students and we wish them the best of luck in the competition.



ROYAL SOCIETY
OF CHEMISTRY



**55th INTERNATIONAL
CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD
2023**

Wicked Trip

On Wednesday the 18th January we were delighted to have taken 35 of our years 9 – 13 students to watch a matinee performance of Wicked the musical. For our GCSE music students, it was an opportunity for them to see one of their exam pieces performed live, in order to grasp the true potential of the music, understand the wider context of the piece (Defying Gravity) and indulge in the magic of musical theatre. The students thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the Apollo Victoria theatre in London, remaining well behaved throughout the entire performance - even sharing a song or two on the way home.

Year 11 Geography Field Trips

On Friday 6th January and Friday 20th January, Year 11 Geography students went to Ashford and Minster-on-Sea to complete their field work for their GCSE examinations.

