

ISSUE 4

3rd November 2023



HOLCOMBE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Term 2.

We hope that all of you enjoyed the half-term break with your families, and welcome to Term 2. In some ways this is a challenging term with the darkness and cold but in other ways this is a really important term too. On Thursday 16th November we have our 6th Form Open Evening where the school is open from 6pm to 9pm for prospective 6th form students to come in and look around to decide if this is where they would like to complete their A levels starting in September 2024. Last year we had over 600 applications for our 6th form so we are expecting another busy but very successful evening, just as our Open Day was a huge success last month. Can I thank in advance all our 6th form students who will be supporting on the evening.

This is an opportune moment to remind you all that school is shut to all students on Friday 17th November in lieu of this and our recent Saturday Open Day.

In just over 2 weeks time our Year 13 students will be completing their first Prelims of 23/24 – the first opportunity for them to practise their exam technique before the main event in summer 2024. Good luck to all our Year 13s as they make these final preparations. Year 11 will soon be receiving the results of their recent prelims and we hope there will be some cause for celebration in those envelopes, in addition of course to some pointers of where further work is needed before summer 24.

Whilst exams such as these are important, we always say there is much more to school than just preparing for exams. This blog is full of updates about recent trips, careers events and other interesting aspects of life here at Holcombe. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Can I take this opportunity to remind all parents and carers that our Classcharts App is the main way for you to stay in touch with how your son or daughter is progressing here. A reminder also that all h/w is now being set on Classcharts so parents and carers can also monitor that through this App. If anyone needs further advice on opening or using their Classcharts App please do contact the main office who will be pleased to support you.

I will provide further updates in two 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 2*

- **Thursday 16th November**
  - Year 11 into 12 Open Evening
- **Friday 17th November**
  - School Closed in Lieu for Open Morning
- **Friday 15th December**
  - Last Day of Term 2

### *Term 3*

- **Tuesday 2nd January**
  - Staff Development Day
- **Wednesday 3rd January**
  - First Day of Term 3

## 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](#)



# YEAR 8 ARTIFICIAL CREATIONS



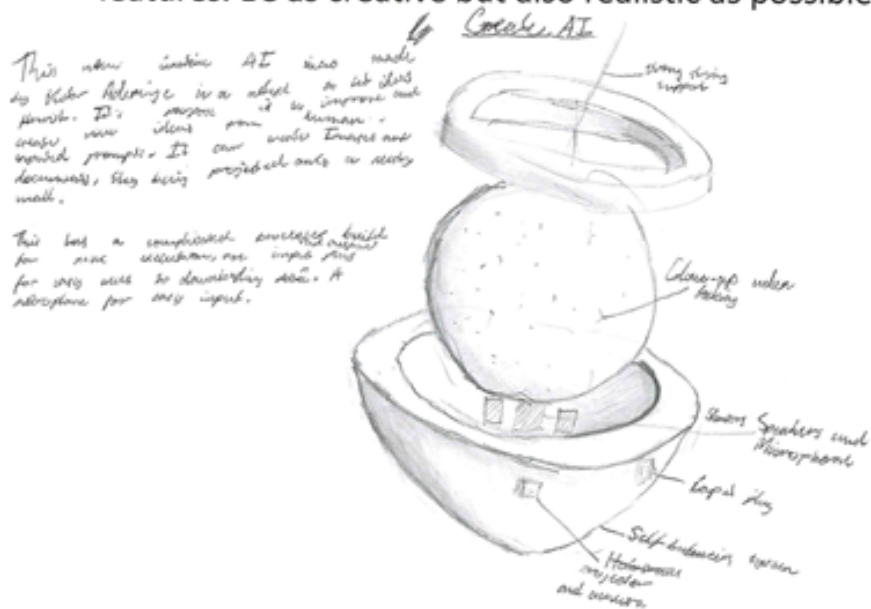
Written by Miss Lee

8 Ardent were challenged at the end of this term to create a new form of AI that embodied some of the features and ideas we have spoken about during this academic term. Over the course of term 1, students have been pushing the boundaries in relation to input and output devices, machine learning, logical operations and the work of George Boole.

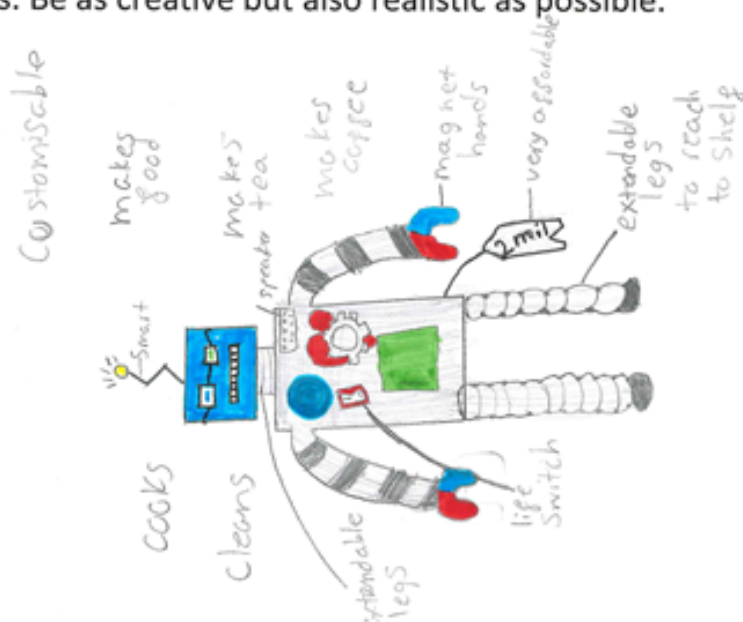
Below is just a small selection of the AI work displayed (there was too many fantastic pieces to pick from!), please [click here](#) to see more.

I cannot wait to continue the adventure into our technological world with 8 Ardent this academic year.

Design a new AI robot. Ensure you annotate it with its functions and features. Be as creative but also realistic as possible.



Design a new AI robot. Ensure you annotate it with its functions and features. Be as creative but also realistic as possible.





# SIXTH FORM YOUTH PARLIAMENT



On the 5th of October Oliver Tomlin Year 13, attended the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as a Member of Youth Parliament for Medway. Oliver was on the panel to discuss a space for Medway Youth Councillors to take part in scrutinising the Children and Young People services.

Oliver said of the whole experience, "It was amazing to meet councillors and hear from staff who've accomplished so much." Oliver asked about whether there were degree apprenticeships available for students. Oliver was informed that not only was there an opportunity for this, but there were five graduates of a degree apprenticeship scheme from this summer past.

On summing up being part of such a fantastic experience Oliver said, "I felt that my voice really mattered on the committee, and I was able to ask questions which would make sure that standards are being met in Medway and that there is potential for growing our own local talent through a degree apprenticeship programme".

Oliver was in company of Cllr Howcroft-Scott, Cllr Gulvin, Cllr Mrs Turpin, and Cllr Crozer as well as Ex Holcombe pupil Cllr Robbie Lammas.

To read more, please [click here](#).



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS x CITY CENTURY LEGAL WORK EXPERIENCE



Young Professionals x City Century Legal Work Experience was offered to our Year 12 and Year 13 Law cohort. We had 13 students from Holcombe Grammar School attend. This was a calling all aspiring legal professionals, solicitor apprentices and anyone who's considering a career in Law. Students were able to experience panel discussions, hear some inspiring keynote presenters, as well as have plenty of opportunities to network and build up their personal legal connections.

This was an in-person Work Experience Day which took place on Wednesday 25th October at the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Centre in the heart of London!

Young Professionals teamed up with City Century which is a collaboration of over 50 leading London law firms which all came together to provide invaluable insight events, work experiences and solicitor apprenticeship opportunities for students.

Never before has the legal industry seen so many law firms all coming together with a mutual goal - to help students find out how to secure their dream jobs within a City law firm! This was our students' chance to be in the same room as some of the senior leaders at each of these incredible law firms to learn from their experiences, ask questions, network and ultimately take the first step to secure their dream profession.

Below are some statements from a few of our student's who attended the event:

**Adam Fletcher – Year 12** - The whole event was very well organised, especially with over 3000 students attending in 1 day. We were all provided with pens, paper, a list of 40+ law firms who attended the event. The event was very heavily focused on promoting the route of a solicitor apprenticeship as an alternative route to university, which was not something I wanted to do however, now I would definitely consider it as a plan B for my future. They gave lots of information on the benefits of this route, such as the fully funded degree, and the guaranteed 2-year training course. Every speaker who was on a panel at the event had a great reason to be there and had clearly earned their position which was inspiring, especially since some of them were part of the very first cohort of Solicitor apprenticeships, such as Holly Moore. I would recommend the event to anyone considering this career path.

**Naomi Omisore – Year 12** - I found the experience at the city century law event to be helpful because it gave me knowledge about degree apprenticeships as an alternative to just doing a university degree. I was able to meet new people at the event who were really friendly and kind. There were law firms, and Solicitor Apprentice's I was able to talk to and hear from. I even managed to add one of them on LinkedIn and ask follow up questions

To read more, please [click here](#).

# SIXTH FORM ASPIRING PILOTS



On the 17th of October, 3 of our A-Level students aspiring to pursue careers as potential pilots had the opportunity to speak to ex-student, Sam Barnard, who is now a pilot himself, working for easyJet. Thomas and Peter (in year 13) are currently mid-way through their application process with British Airways Speedbird Pilot Academy. After sitting an assessment day at Heathrow last week, speaking with someone who has gone through the process made the students feel this time was very valuable in gaining the right information about the sort of training involved, how they can best prepare for the upcoming assessments, as well as the day-to-day responsibilities of flying commercially. At the same time, Hayden (also in year 13) aspires to join the RAF, this was insightful for him to see that in the future, there is the possibility of going from military to civilian flying. Thomas, Peter and Hayden would like to thank Sam for his time and knowledge and spoke of how useful it was to speak to someone in the profession.





# E-scooters – are you breaking the law?



**Can I ride my e-scooter to school or work?**

**No, it's Illegal...**

E-scooters are classed as motor vehicles and are required to be taxed and insured. It's not possible to get insurance for privately owned e-scooters, which means it's illegal to use them.

**Can I ride my e-scooter on the pavement?**

**No, it's Illegal...**

You cannot use e-scooters on public footpaths, cycle lanes or roads.

**What happens if I'm caught using my e-scooter in public spaces?**

**The scooter may be seized and as a result, destroyed.**

If stopped by an officer, you may be asked to complete a breath and drugs test. You also risk a £300 fine and six penalty points on your licence for no insurance.



**Kent  
Police**

## **Think before you buy:**

The number of electrical scooters being used on our streets has risen, as well as reports of serious injury and fatalities.

For more information and advice on the use of e-scooters visit [www.kent.police.uk/road-safety](http://www.kent.police.uk/road-safety)

# READING AT HOLCOMBE



## Reading at Holcombe



As the nights draw in and winter beckons, ensure you have a captivating book on the go.

Have a look at the English Department's recommendations this month:



### KS3

*Tyger* by SF Said. Inspired by the famous poem by William Blake, this is a compelling story of a world on the brink of destruction and a magical animal, discovered in a London rubbish dump, that might just be able to save it.



### KS4

*Channel Fear* by Lisa Richardson. With echoes of The Blair Witch Project, this horror novel follows two Youtube ghost hunters and brims with tales of danger, love triangles and fatal obsessions. Perfect for Halloween!



*Reading for pleasure is more important for children's cognitive development than their parents' level of education and is a more powerful factor in life achievement than socio-economic background. 16-year-olds who choose to read books for pleasure outside of school are more likely to secure managerial or professional jobs in later life.* From The Reading Agency.

To celebrate World Book Day on the 2nd March 2023, Thinking Schools Academy Trust ran a competition for students throughout our primary and secondary schools to write and illustrate their own short story reflecting their individual school values.

We were very proud to see Noah Heyworth's (10Ar) work produced in the winner's booklet.

Noah worked hard on this piece which was a re-creative piece inspired by *October October* by Katya Balen.



Re-creatively written from *October, October* by Katya Balen

As we finished transporting the wood, we walk onwards through the forest again trying to scavenge for berries. Suddenly, an ear-splitting roar fly's out from above us. Collectively we instantly look up scared of an eagle about to dive on us, but we see these weird things that look like silver clouds. Gradually we hear steps behind, and I realise who it is, the person I loathe, My mother.

I dash over to the nearest tree and dart up it. Five seconds later my dad speeds up and tells me, "we have to leave, fast!" I ignore him until I hear a whoosh and then an orange light knocks us five feet back. One of those silver things had crashed and knocked mother back splitting the two of us up. I dash over to dad and I see his legs have been crushed by a falling tree. I have to pick him up and I ran from my mother and the evil that she brought with her.

A sound barrier demolishing scream rings out behind me and I see a sight which truly made me sad. My mother being crushed by a silver thing, a beak protruding at the end with her bones snapping and then they both are evaporated by the orange light again. I rush back to the hut hoping that those grey eagles with their wings spread had stopped dive bombing us and that they were finally gone.

# HOLCOMBE'S LIBRARY



Whilst Black History Month concluded at the end of this October, Holcombe persists to celebrate this aspect of our culture and identity across the school. The Holcombe Library is featuring a great range of titles, both fiction and non-fiction, that celebrate black authors and stories. Come through to the Library at lunch time to browse and borrow these titles. As ever, if there is a title you'd like to see on our shelves, don't hesitate to let our Librarians know and we will order it in!



# DofE NOVEMBER UPDATE



Written by Mr Phillips

Well done to the 7 students from Year 12 who successfully completed their Silver Qualifying Expedition over the first weekend of the half term. The group completed the venture in the Ashdown Forest where the group demonstrated excellent teamwork and navigation skills over the course of the weekend. The students now just need to ensure that their other sections of the Award are complete so that they can be rewarded for their efforts. This is the first cohort of students that we have had completing this level of the Award in recent years at Holcombe which is pleasing and is a clear indication of the popularity and expansion of the Award at the school.



DofE enrolments for this year's Year 9 cohorts is nearly complete with the deadline for enrolment forms being Monday 6 November 2023. Once this deadline has passed student enrolment into the silver and gold levels of the Award will become a focus for Year 10 and 12 respectfully!

# BREAKFAST PRICE LIST



Toast .....	£0.55
Pancake .....	£0.50
Hash Brown .....	£0.50
Waffle .....	£1.30
Solo Bacon/Sausage Roll .....	£1.20
Pretzel .....	£1.40
Breakfast Muffin .....	£2.25
Double Bacon/Sausage Roll .....	£2.20
Filled Breakfast Croissant .....	£2.00
(cheese and bacon)	
Friday Full Breakfast .....	£2.55
(choice of 2x meat and 3x other from the following choices: bacon, sausage, hash brown, beans, toast, egg)	
Pain Au Chocolat .....	£1.20
Bacon/Sausage .....	£0.70



# Upon the High Street

Photographs by Joshua Atkins and Daniel Loveday

27 October 2023 > 13 January 2024



**Rochester**  
art gallery

*Medway*  
Serving You

*Upon the High Street* is a photography project shot in collaboration by award-winning Medway-raised artists Joshua Atkins and Daniel Loveday.

The project focuses on Chatham High Street and the surrounding area, capturing the essence of the people and landscape whilst celebrating the town's history and its diverse residents. The photographs reflect a continually adapting environment, especially as online shopping and next-day delivery changed the shopping experience, with this alongside an influx of diversity reshaping these spaces across the UK.

The two photographers made frequent trips to the area, where they engaged with, photographed, and ultimately became intertwined with the lives of shoppers, workers, and residents. Through the repetition of these visits, a profound sense of shared experience emerged, solidifying their integration into the very heart of this ever-changing community.

*"When you walk the same streets back and forth, you notice things you may not have picked up on before, like the historic building fronts or how the High Street spaces are made of pockets of different communities. It's fascinating to both observe and document these changes from two viewpoints, especially as the High Streets across the UK rapidly evolve and adapt."*

**Joshua Atkins and Daniel Loveday**

### **Invitation - Preview evening**

You are invited to attend the exhibition preview evening on **Thursday, 26 October, 6.30-8.30pm**. Free all welcome

### **Talks and workshops**

#### **FREE Photography workshops**

*Saturday, 4 November and  
Saturday, 2 December, 11am-1pm*

Join photographers Joshua Atkins and Daniel Loveday as they talk and walk through their long-term project *Upon the High Street*.


Each workshop will consist of a talk with the photographers, followed by a photo walk around Chatham where you have the opportunity to make your own photos documenting the historic town.

These workshops are open to all abilities, so bring your camera or phone to capture the streets alongside the photographers. Suitable for adults and young people aged over 15.

Spaces are limited so must be booked online at [medway.gov.uk/libraries](http://medway.gov.uk/libraries), phone 01634 337799 or visit any Medway Library.

### **Rochester Art Gallery**

Medway Visitor Information Centre, Ground floor,  
95 High Street, Rochester, Kent ME1 1LX



 Suitable for wheelchairs

### **Opening hours\***

Tue to Sat: 10am-5pm  
(closed Sunday and Monday)

**FREE** admission

For information about exhibitions and events visit: [medway.gov.uk/arts](http://medway.gov.uk/arts)

  **RochesterArtGallery**

Contact Medway Council's Culture Team: [arts@medway.gov.uk](mailto:arts@medway.gov.uk) or **01634 338319**

\*Opening times may vary during bank holidays, please check in advance.

# COMPETITION TIME

## Día de los Muertos

As the Day of The Dead is this month (1st and 2nd November), it is the best time for a creative competition!

### TASK:

- Create an altar for a famous dead Hispanic person. You can use any materials that you like. It does not have to be a poster.
- You need to include the traditional items of El Día de los Muertos altar and any other you think appropriate (You will need to research on this)
- **Deadline:** 17<sup>th</sup> November 15.10 p.m.

### PRIZES:

Winner: £10 Amazon Voucher

Runner Up: £5 amazon Voucher

3rd Place: A present from Mrs Ortega surprise's box.





# Cutting the cost of keeping warm

We understand how difficult it can be when energy bills start to rise. By making some small, simple changes we can all save money while staying safe and well.

## Save money when cooking

When cooking, put a lid on your pan as this can save you money on your energy bill. Putting a lid on your pan allows water to boil faster and the lid keeps the heat in the pan, rather than letting it escape, speeding up cooking time and helping you use less energy.

Slow cookers save money! Slow cookers are an extremely efficient way to cook, you can batch cook meals. Likewise, microwaves and air fryers are also great alternatives to using ovens.

## Switch off your appliances

Turning off lights and switching appliances off standby when not in use can save **£85<sup>1</sup>** a year on energy bills.



## Do not over fill

Only boil as much as you need, overfilling your kettle wastes energy.



## Turn down your thermostat



By turning down your thermostat from 22°C to 21°C, you could save **£115<sup>2</sup>** on your energy bills.

Wash on eco or 30°C or cooler cycles when you can. Washing at 30°C rather than higher temperatures could save **£15<sup>3</sup>** a year

## LED lights

Switch your lights to energy-friendly LED light bulbs. Replacing all the light bulbs in your home with LEDs can save around **£65<sup>4</sup>** a year, lasting five times longer.



## Full load

Only wash with a full load, cutting back on just one washing cycle a week can save you an additional **£15** a year and further savings on metered water bills.



## Use a washing bowl

Using a bowl to wash up rather than a running tap can save you money on your energy and water bills if you have a water meter. You only need to run a typical tap for 95 seconds before you would have filled a washing up bowl.<sup>5</sup>

## Take shorter showers

Spending just one minute less in the shower can save **£20** a year in a typical household and uses far less energy than taking a bath. Sticking to 4-minute showers could save a typical household **£75** on energy bills and around **£65** on metered water bills every year.<sup>6</sup>

Replacing an inefficient shower head with a water-efficient one can reduce your yearly gas bill by **£45**. If you have a water meter as well, you can save another **£25** – that's a total saving of **£70** each year.<sup>7</sup>



## Maximise your income

Every year, millions of households miss out on thousands of pounds worth of benefits, that they are entitled to. Turn2us's benefit calculator easily and quickly identifies any benefits you are entitled to claim to increase your income: [Turn2us Benefits Calculator](#).

**We're committed to helping our customers keep safe and well. We work with a number of services and organisations that can provide help and support on energy fuel efficiency.**

## Help and support with energy bills



### National Energy Action (NEA)

If you need advice and support on your energy bills, please visit NEA's website via the link for more information: [National Energy Action NEA](#)



### Citizens Advice

If you need information on grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills, please visit: [Citizens Advice](#)



### Groundwork

If you need help with saving money on your energy bills or improving efficiency within your home, please visit: [Groundwork](#)



### The Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register (PSR) is a free service that helps energy companies to look after customers who have extra communication, access, or safety needs. It helps us tailor our services to support households who need extra help with everyday energy matters like bills, and also in the unlikely event of a power cut or gas supply interruption.

Find out if you are eligible and register at: [Priority Service Register](#)



### Safer Homes Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Fitting a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm in your home is a great way of keeping you and your family safe from the dangers of (CO). CO is an odourless, tasteless, and invisible gas that is dangerous, and can be created from faulty gas appliances.

The Safe Homes programmes offers households a free CO alarm (maximum of one per household) - [you can request your free CO alarm here](#).

Please use the below details when requesting your free CO alarm:

Username = coalarms Password = Saferhomes123

1. This saving includes all appliances, consumer electronics, lights and charges that have been left on standby mode or have been left on and not in use.  
2. Based on heating demand in a room that rises from 21 degrees to 22 degrees in the morning peak.  
3. Based on the average energy use of a typical household from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2015. Energy use was measured on an hourly basis.  
4. Based on a typical 10-minute shower with a standard shower head in a typical house in Great Britain with an 80% efficient gas boiler, using a gas tariff of 8p/kWh and a water tariff of 15p/kWh.  
5. Based on fitting a 10 litre washing up liquid dispenser with a 100 litre hot water tank at 60% efficiency.  
6. Based on an average shower of 5 minutes with a standard shower head in a typical household.  
7. Based on a household with a 90 litre water meter and a 77 litre water meter.





Kooth are a confidential wellbeing support service for our young people. To help parents and carers understand their service, they have produced a webinar that explains who they are and how they support mental health. It can be accessed [here](#).

Kooth have also scheduled webinars for staying safe online and dealing with anxiety and stress.

- How Kooth promotes and supports staying safe online: Mon 6 Nov, [12-1pm](#) or [6-7pm](#)
- Support for young people experiencing anxiety or stress this winter: [Thurs 14 Dec, 6-7pm](#)

Please click on the links to register.