

ISSUE 19  
12th July 2024



HOLCOMBE  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

# MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our final blog of 23/24. It is incredible to think we are only one week away from the end of another academic year.

It has been a hugely successful year in so many ways. Some of the many highlights of this year include:

- We are now a Gold UNICEF accredited Rights Respecting School. Only 3 schools in all of South-East England have this award
- We are now a Silver Artsmark school in recognition of all of work that we do in the Arts
- Our Team won the 'Big Quiz' – a knowledge-bank based competition of all 26 TSAT schools
- The number of trips we have offered this year has increased exponentially, as has the number of students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- Our student leadership teams have grown in confidence and experience, helping us to shape how Holcombe is run
- Our Key Stage 3 Celebration Evening we held last month was a huge success, as was the Carol Concert and as will be our Founders Day concert next week
- Our Art and DT exhibition held this week showcased the incredible work that our Art and DT departments do
- And of course it was lovely to have all of our hard work recognised by Ofsted when they visited in March and confirmed that we are a 'Good' school and that 'The school's motto of 'Transforming Life Chances' is reflected in all that the school does'.

I am hugely proud of all of our achievements here, as I hope you are too. 24/25 will be another hugely successful year and I will look forward to sharing lots more good news in our new look Blog which we will launch in September.

At this time of year we always have to say goodbye to some colleagues. I would like to thank Mr Claessens, Mrs Obee, Miss Cheung, Mr Milne, Miss Malt, Mrs Thompson, Miss Grant, Mr Donnan, Miss Peres, Mrs Manning, Mr McIntyre and Mrs Brown for all they have given us in their time here and wish each of them every success in their next ventures.

When we return we will welcome Miss Rose (Business), Mrs Bailey (Geography), Mr Evans (Maths), Mr Menon (Physics), Mrs Knapp (Psychology), Miss Esenwa (Biology), Mr Simmons (MFL) and Miss Stephens (Sociology). We will also see Miss Jhaj, Mr Pringle and Mrs Simkins taking on new teaching roles in the school and we will look forward to welcoming back Miss Geldart, Mrs Mohammed and Mrs Arnold from maternity leave some time in 24/25.

Next week will be another big week as we celebrate our Founders Day on Thursday 18th July and as we wrap up the school year on Friday 19th July. A reminder that school will end at 12:30 on Friday 19th July. We will provide updates on Founders Day and our DT/Art exhibition in our first blog next year.

Finally, just a reminder of some key dates for the new year

- Years 7 and 12 will return on Wednesday 4th September
- All other Year groups will return on Thursday 5th September

We will look forward to welcoming all of our students back in the new academic year but for now please let me wish you all a very happy and healthy summer break with you friends and families.

Mr L Preston  
Headteacher

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## KEY DATES

### *Term 6*

- **Thursday 18th July**
  - Founders Day
- **Friday 19th July**
  - Last Day of Term - students dismissed at 12:30pm

### *Term 1*

- **Tuesday 3rd September**
  - Staff Development Day
- **Wednesday 4th September**
  - First Day Back for Year 7 and 12
- **Thursday 5th September**
  - First Day Back for All School

If you would like to donate any outgrown uniform or any uniform that is no longer required, please could your child deliver them to Student Services. If parents would like to drop the uniform to the school, this can be brought to the main reception.

Thank you

## 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





# **FOUNDERS' DAY**

**2024**

**Theme: 'Looking back, looking forward:  
The Holcombe Houses'**



**Date : Thursday 18th July**

**Years 7 to 10 students are to come to school in their full PE kit.**

**If you choose to wear a tracksuit, it MUST be the HGS tracksuit**

**Year 12 students are to wear comfortable appropriate clothing  
and suitable footwear for the 3G Pitch**

**FUN activities include: Walk the Plank, Sack Race, the Bard and the  
Shard, the siege of Rochester Castle, Table Tennis, Boat Building and lots  
more!**

**Lunch and break will be as normal**

**Lots of extra snacks on sale so bring cash!**



All Tickets £4 via +Pay

# Founders Day Spectacular

Get your  
tickets **NOW**

**18th July, 6-8pm**  
**Holcombe School Hall**





# TRANSITION WORKSHOP



It was a pleasure to host a small group of Year 7's in our final transition and resilience workshop recently. This is a group that has met throughout the school year and worked with Tori Gunstone, an Educational Psychologist who works closely with the school. The boys took part in team building activities and reflected on the progress they have made throughout the school year. It has been wonderful to see them grow in confidence over recent months and their hard work, reflections and efforts set them in good stead for Year 8. Well done to all the students involved and we know that all are very keen to be involved and support our next cohort of Year 7 students as they prepare to join us in September.



## DISTRICT ATHLETICS – THURSDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE



**RUDI (Year 7) – Javelin**

**MAXIME (Year 10) – 800m**



**EMODIAGA (Year 10) – Shot Put**

**JASON (Year 10) – Discus & 400m**

**NEO (Year 10) – 100m**



**JOSEPH (Year 7) – Long Jump**

**DYLAN (Year 8) – Long Jump**

**ADEBOLA (Year 9) – Discus**

**HARRY (Year 9) – Javelin**



# DISTRICT ATHLETICS PHOTOS



Harry – Bronze medal - Javelin



Maxime – Gold medal – 800m



Jason – Silver medal – Discus & 400m



Emodiaga – Silver medal – Shot Put



# YEAR 9 COMPUTER SCIENCE RAPS



Students in Year 9 were challenged to summarise their learning from this term into the form of a performance rap.

Students in 9Sh and 9Ar were treated to an exemplar before splitting into small groups to draw up their own Ethical, Legal, Environmental and Cultural influences in Computing Rap.

Mixing a variety of styles and writing techniques students across these class groups rose to the challenge and showcased some fantastic knowledge surrounding an emotive topic area at the same time.

Well done Year 9!

## CS Rap

By Abdulazeez, Praise and Jack (9Sh)

Times have changed and technology is the new big thing,  
People jump out of their seats as soon as their phone ring,  
Every year social media takes over the lives of people,  
There is no way to judge what is legal,  
Privacy may as well not exist in today's day and age.

Ethics in the code, it's a vital part,  
Fairness and justice, what were all about,  
Environmental impact, we've got to reduce,  
Energy efficient code is what we produce,  
Law and ethics need to start being revised.

Protecting users data, that's how we roll,  
Stay within the law, that's how we roll,  
Data privacy laws, they are a war,  
We need to stay vigilant,  
Privacy is a right, not a reward,  
If we had figured out sooner than we would have scared.

Rules are constantly changing like the weather,  
And they cut sharp like a dagger,  
Always make sure your intentions are right,  
Before you go adventure.

## CS Rap

By Max, Aaron, Josh C, Samuel and Harry (9Sh)

Defending viruses everyday,  
Dangerous malware keeping you astray,  
Little kids on the web,  
Be careful you might lose your head,  
Bad people surfing the net,  
Tryin' to steal your data and then.

Cookies tracking your data,  
Be careful what you accept,  
Not yummy and could put you in debt,  
Always talking about copyright,  
Stealing ideas could cause a fight,  
Do not mess with copyright,  
They might take away the rights.

Owning a computer is a price,  
Messing around it could take your life,  
Think your hidden,  
Not very bright,  
Breaking computer laws is not right.

## CS Rap

By Mughrni, Barak, Michael A, Tomiwa and Micah (9Sh)

From environmental to ethical to cultural to legal,  
The issues surrounding technology are lethal,  
Don't give your data to the wrong people,  
Or it might leave your bank account feeble,  
Viruses may leave your computer damaged.

So make sure you keep your details managed,  
Watch out for viruses that can catch you on the lack,  
So remember the Data Protection Act,  
The Data Protection Act, keep it in mind,  
Don't fall for viruses, don't be blind.

Respect technology, you ain't got a choice,  
Law and ethics have a very loud voice,  
Info's valuable keep it in sight,  
Data Protection Act, keep it in mind,  
Respect the code, don't be blind.

The digital divide, we have to mend,  
Keeping the internet safe, that's the trend,  
Data Protection Act, keep it in mind,  
Respect the code, don't be blind,  
All these scammers can get fined.

Don't cross the digital divide, keep it under control,  
Be smart on the net, that's the goal,  
Keep your ethics on the grind,  
In this digital world, you must stay kind,  
Respect the code, don't be blind.

In this tech game, play it fair,  
Follow the rules, don't be unaware,  
Data Protection Act – read it right,  
Stay with it, keep it tight,  
Stay with it, keep it tight!

Don't leave your good ethics behind,  
Data Protection Act – keep it in mind,  
Respect the code, don't be blind,  
Keep it safe don't be neglecting,  
Put your head in the right direction.

Law and ethics, put it in the frame,  
Ethics and law, they're close to the same,  
Respect the law, don't play no games,  
Don't be evil and don't be lame,  
If you get hacked, that's a great shame.

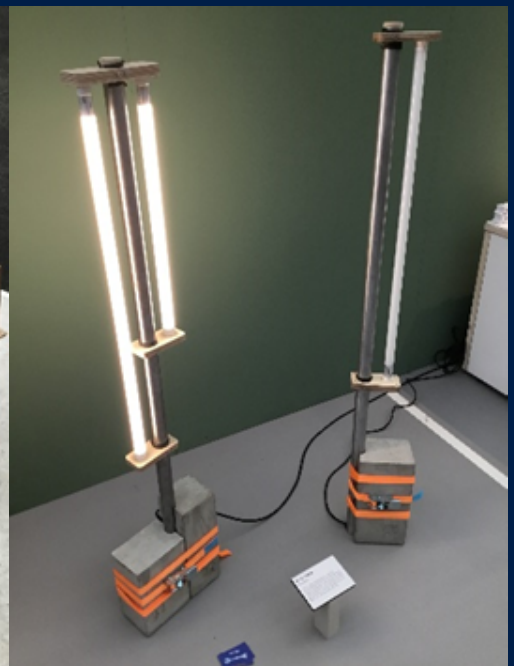
The internet is a very dangerous place,  
So make sure you keep yourself in a brace,  
The ethics and law of Computing are here to stay,  
So keep safe on computers and have a good day!



# DT - NEW DESIGNERS TRIP



On 5th July, Year 12 Product Designers went on a trip to the New Designers Exhibition at the Business Design Centre in London. This Exhibition is an annual event that sees all of the top design-based University courses coming together to showcase the best work from graduates this year. The Year 12's were able to gain inspirations for their own NEA coursework portfolios, were able to research and explore state of the art and up to date Degree Level Product, Furniture and Engineering designs. But they also had the opportunity to discuss with university lecturers and students about the courses that they potentially will embark on in the not-too-distant future.



# DT - TRIP TO BROOKLANDS MOTOR MUSEUM



On Monday 1st July, twenty-nine Y10 students went with three staff members to Brooklands Aviation and Motoring Museum in Surrey. We had the opportunity to discover the original home of British Motorsport and Aviation as part of the GCSE Design and Technology course, helping them with their NEA work.

Students were able to tour the different displays of early aeroplanes and cars and discuss the materials, design and engineering features of different modes of transport from the early 20th Century. Students had the opportunity to test their own design skills making a battery powered racer, competing in small teams against each other to see who could make the fastest and most cost-effective product from a limited set of resources.

Students were able to observe and have a walkthrough of Concorde 002, one of twenty supersonic planes that were manufactured between 1965 and 1979 in cooperation between France and UK and flew up until 2003.

Certainly, it was a great learning experience for both students and staff, with students gaining useful information for their coursework projects.



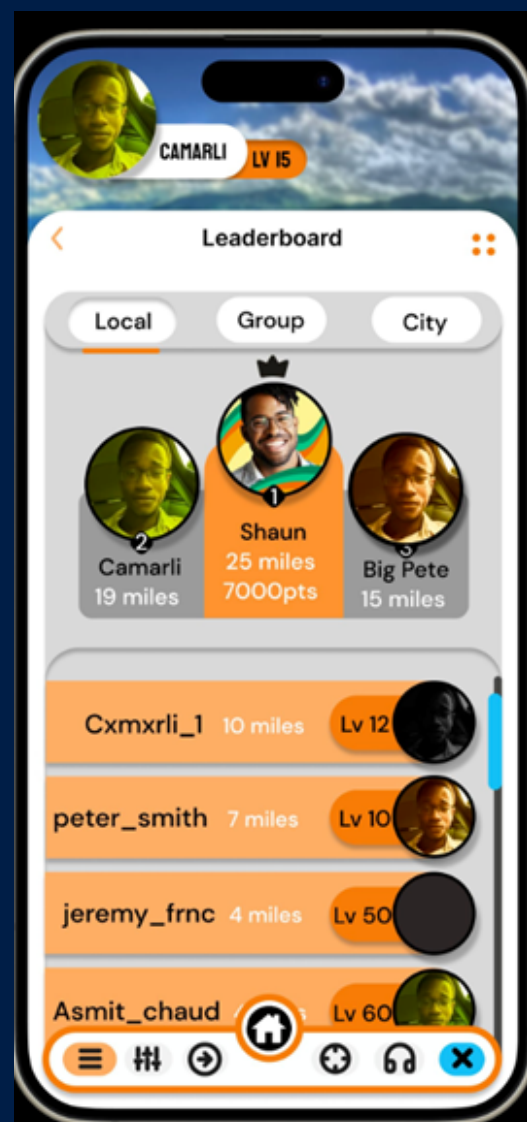


# A LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES - WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK



For Year 12 Work Experience week, 5 A-level Media Studies students took part in Ravensbourne University's Summer School for a 4-day hands-on creative workshop. Students worked in groups to design a product or service that acts as a solution to an everyday problem and were then asked to present that solution to a panel at the end of the week. The Summer School project allowed students to explore career opportunities within a range of media and creative industries, such as a designer, producer, creative strategist, project manager or future entrepreneur. The project allowed students to explore roles within Digital Content Creation, Creative Media, Film, TV, Product Design, 3D Design, Marketing, Advertising, Photography and Graphic Design.

The students decided to design AR running goggles as they wanted to combine their interests of gaming and fitness to develop a new product. Students were assigned different roles such as creative strategist, product designer, content creator and project manager and then had to develop a prototype for their product using creative and design-based software. At the end of the week, students had to present to their idea to a Dragon's Den style board of staff from Ravensbourne University and our students won Best Presentation for the week! Below are the prototype designs they developed for the app which would work alongside the AR goggles.



# TSARTS WEEK



The Art and Design department celebrated arts week by taking materials out of the classroom, asking staff and students to create and play. Lunch time saw students from across the years together with staff playing with a range of materials and media. The atmosphere was joyful as members of the Holcombe community scribbled, jotted, doodled and just made marks with everything from inks, crayons, different types of paint.

In lesson we continued to play with shapes and colour taking the work of Beatriz Milhazes as our inspiration. Our Year 7 students worked in groups making decisions together to create collages.



# GCSE AND A LEVEL ART/DESIGN EXHIBITION



Our annual GCSE and A level exhibition once again showcased the depth of talent at Holcombe Grammar. Together with the Design and Technology department we took over the Hive to stage an event where students and parents could celebrate their hard work. Photography grows in strength with a number of images that are creative and which demonstrate an exceptional ability to develop original ideas while the Fine art students used a variety of sources to explore their creativity in depth. We would like to thank all the staff who came to the exhibition along with the parents who have supported us, some even taking a starring role in photoshoots. We also wanted to wish all our students the very best for the next stages in their lives.



# YEAR 10 ART TRIP



Our school trip started with The Tate Britain with its grand architecture and classic works by Turner and Constable, which were mesmerizing. The Pre-Raphaelite collection was a highlight, showcasing intricate details and vibrant colours that told powerful stories.

We took a river boat to the Tate Modern which was an unforgettable experience. At the Tate Modern, the sheer size of the Turbine Hall took my breath away, and I loved exploring contemporary pieces although Miss Laming and Mrs Mourino played Art Bingo with which one of us would be the first to say "Why is that Art?" and "My younger sister could do that". The installations were especially engaging, making contemporary art feel accessible and exciting.

Both galleries deepen our understanding of the artworks and their historical contexts. The trip not only enriched our appreciation of art but also inspired many of us to think creatively. It was a day well spent however we all agree walking around art galleries can be more tiring than a DofE walk.





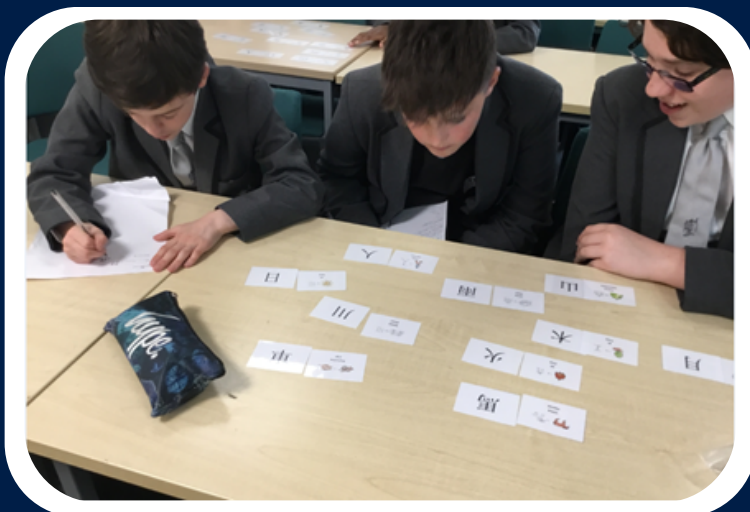
# WORLD LANGUAGE DAY



Year 8 students took part on The World Languages Day at the University of Kent, in Canterbury on the 3rd July. The University is the UK's European University and is proud to be outward facing and international. We value intellectual and cultural diversity and the benefits that brings to the University and wider society which the World Languages Day brings together.

Our students had the opportunity to learn new languages such as Romanian, Japanese, Norwegian and took part in Bollywood dancing. Furthermore, they had the chance to take part in creating a song and singing it in the Caribbean and Calypso Songwriting Workshop and participate in the language quizzes. They also won some prizes for the games at lunchtime as they excelled due to their passion and eagerness to learn. Students were also complimented for the eagerness and enthusiasm in the workshops.

Congratulations to Demi and Ola for winning the Global Linguist Challenge: A Quiz on World Languages.



# KS3 PRIZEGIVING



It was delightful to have around 100 KS3 students and their parents, carers and loved ones in the school hall on a Thursday evening to celebrate Academic Mastery, Endeavour and Community Spirit.

Despite the heat, it was a fabulous evening of positivity and music. Our School Captains Team supported staff, leading the event, which was also attended by our newly formed PTA.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Mr Zygmant who made the 120 awards for students to keep as a reminder of their successes.

We look forward to similar events in the future, celebrating other Key Stages' successes too.



Please see below some of the feedback from parents who joined us:

*"I would just like to say a massive thank you to all the staff and pupils who were involved in arranging such a wonderful awards ceremony. From the professional delivery of the evening to the generosity in certificates, trophies and vouchers."*

*"As a parent I just wanted to let you know what an enjoyable experience this was and thank you for sharing this evening."*

*"I wanted to say how lovely the prize giving evening was and how I could see how much effort was made into making it a special evening. We really got a sense of each pupil through the messages, and it made the awards more personal and meaningful. It is so lovely to see how you value the whole person at the school and all the qualities they bring to their learning and how this is valued. I also noticed that the endeavour awards were awarded before the mastery. This is so refreshing and gives such an important message. Thank you for a lovely evening."*

We would also like to proudly share our 3 winners of the KS3 Sportsperson of the Year, Musician of the Year and Performing Arts Student of the Year (The Michael Bailey Award) - Jack Robins, Dylan Drabble, Promise Okunrunkoya.



## KS3 Geography Lessons – Bringing Together Our Years of Learning.

As a department, the geography team are proud of how connected and broad our curriculum is in Key Stage 3. Over 3 years of study our students work hard on a variety of topics including Weather and Climate, Water on the Land, Global Development and Population Change. They link these issues and more to real world examples and our topics are not isolated, with knowledge being revisited in a variety of contexts.

Whilst our Year 7 and 8 students continue to develop and refine their skills of writing effective answers and applying their taught content. Our Year 9 are at the end of their KS3 journey and ready to begin GCSE Geography, and others at the end of their academic geography journey overall, it is a perfect time for year 9 to reflect on their learning and how it has interlinked and interconnected in the way that these complex issues do in the real world. By becoming more informed on these important issues and thinking critically about how they link together the students can demonstrate their growth in geography over the past 3 years.

The students produced connection diagrams outlining how concepts relate which centred on the most contemporary and pressing challenge facing our world today, Climate Change. Pictured are just a few of the many outstanding examples of the outcomes submitted by the students of year 9.

We, as a department, could not be prouder of the progress they have made over the past 3 years.

## Year 10

The recent prelim completed by our Year 10 GCSE cohort demonstrated that we have some excellent Geographers who take diligent notes, revise effectively and are making strives to apply that knowledge efficiently in their GCSE exams next year. As a department we will share again a Guide to Revision for the cohort to make use of and hope that they take the time to not only relax, but get themselves ready for the big GCSE final push from September.

## Year 12

Over the summer our Year 12 cohort will be putting together their NEA coursework focusing on either Coastal management or regeneration in locations of their choosing. The department look forward to reading their research, hard work and analysis of problems and scenarios that they felt were pertinent to explore and write about.



[illegible]

The image shows a student's handwritten notes on a grid-lined notebook page. The notes are organized into several sections with headings like 'Regulation Change', 'Climate Change', 'Technology', 'Population Change', 'Energy', 'Health Change', 'Economic Change', 'Social Change', 'Environmental Change', 'Political Change', 'Cultural Change'. The notes are written in black ink, with some sections highlighted in yellow and others in green. There are also some red markings and a small drawing of a person in the bottom right corner.



# IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE - FROM MRS OBEE



Ladies and gentlemen, parents, carers and students,

If I could offer you only one tip for the future, sunscreen would be it. No, not just sunscreen for your skin, but a metaphorical sunscreen to shield you from the unpredictable rays of life. As my eight years at Holcombe come to an end, I'd like to share some reflections and nuggets of wisdom, much like Baz Luhrmann did in his timeless advice.

Firstly, cherish your time in this remarkable institution. During my time here I have witnessed the growth, the challenges, and the triumphs of our young students. Remember that the lessons learned within these walls go far beyond geography and textbooks. The friendships formed, the challenges faced, and the victories celebrated have sculpted you into the individuals you are today.

As the head of the Geography department, I've had the privilege of guiding you through the diverse landscapes of our world. But remember, life is an adventure, and the maps we follow aren't always etched on paper. Embrace the uncertainty, the detours, and the unexplored territories. You may not always find your destination on the first try, but the journey is where the real learning happens. As you step out into the vast terrain of life beyond these school gates, don't forget the importance of empathy. In geography, we learn about different cultures, ecosystems, and climates. Apply that same curiosity and understanding to the people you encounter. Everyone has their unique story, and it's the variety of perspectives that makes our world rich and beautiful.

Let me impart this crucial piece of advice: be kind to your fellow travellers. In the grand scheme of things, kindness is a compass that will always guide you in the right direction. It costs nothing but has immeasurable value, making the journey more enjoyable for yourself and those around you. Finally, don't be afraid to take risks. Life, much like geography, is an exploration. Venture into the unknown, push your boundaries, and don't let fear hold you back. The most rewarding experiences often lie just beyond the edges of your comfort zone.

As I bid adieu to this chapter of my life as your Head of Department and Geography teacher, I leave you with a sense of gratitude and optimism. The world is vast, and your potential is boundless. Remember the lessons learned here, and don't forget your metaphorical sunscreen as you embark on the journey ahead.

# MATHS CLUB



Over the course of the year, several students at Holcombe Grammar School have been engaging with a weekly maths club each Tuesday lunchtime. In the club, students have solved a huge variety of problems, including the “Seven Bridges of Konisberg”, “The travelling salesman” and “Nim”, along with many others. This week, students were given a range of problems from the Junior Mathematical Olympiad with the theme of Spatial Reasoning. Students spent some time considering two networks, each consisting of nine edges and six nodes, but with some slightly different configurations. The task was to place the numbers 1 to 6 at each of the nodes such that the sum of each edge is unique within the network. The first configuration was solved quickly through some trial and improvement, but the second had the students trialling many combinations to try and identify a suitable strategy. None of the students were able to find a suitable solution, and some conjectured that it may not be possible. Afterschool, following a Duke of Edinburgh expedition, one of the Year 9 students also concluded that the puzzle was impossible and began to formulate a proof by drawing on some algebraic methods of proof that he had encountered in class.



# YEAR 9 BOWLING TRIPS



During the terms 3 & 4 Mr Potter and Miss Tanti felt that the students who had maintained a high behaviour report deserved to have some sort of reward.

When the students asked what they would like apart from lots of different foods they wanted to go out on a trip of some kind.

During Term 5, I sent 100+ letters out to Year 9 students who had achieved 90% and over behaviour scores during the academic school year. I was thrilled to have so many students that had consistently maintained their high standards.

We decided on something that we could do quickly and cheaply. So, we decided on bowling in Chatham. For four weeks on a Tuesday afternoon we (Mr Potter, Miss Tanti, Miss Lyons and Mrs Morris) frog marched groups of students down the hill to Chatham Bowl.

The students were brilliant walking down the road, mindful of pedestrians and careful of pinch points when crossing the roads.

At the bowling they had a couple of minutes to organise groups and get their names in so that the bowling could commence....

The staff at the bowling were amazed as to how quickly the students organised this.

And so the competitions began, competing within their team, competing within the whole group at the bowl and eventually spilling out into the other groups.

It was great to see so much fun and laughter. The students were the entertainment, it was great to see. We had a large number of students competing for the overall scores, and strikes with the barriers down and up, that was another story, soooo competitive.

The winners for each session were as follows:

## Session 1

1st Chris Bennett  
2nd Callum Tuffield  
3rd Henry Milner

## Session 2

1st Ayobamidele Alawiye  
Joint 2nd position Ellis Arrowsmith / Zachariah Egun-Igbeare  
3rd Erick Nimara

## Session 3

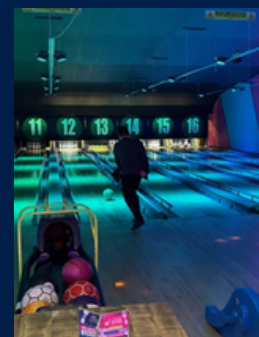
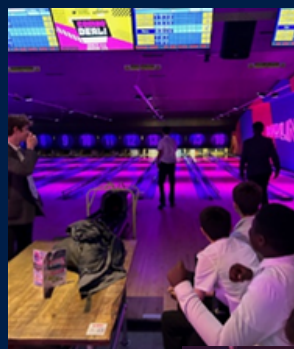
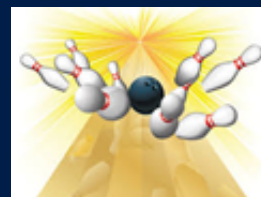
1st Nicholas Bugembe  
2nd Max Thompson  
3rd Harri Loveland

Watch this space for more reward trips next year...

Students were respectful and polite when speaking to the bowling staff. It was so nice to have so many great comments from the staff at bowling and also members of the public that were also there at the same time, saying how great the students were.

Hope the students enjoyed it as much as we did taking them.

Well done and have a great break when it comes, see you in Year 10.



# SWINGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERING/VISIT



On Tuesday 9th July, eight Year 12 PE students led by Mr Nanson, volunteered to help at Swingate Primary School's Healthy Living week. Taking charge of young students in years 3 and 4, our students ran four events including Tug of War, an obstacle course, cricket (involving hitting the ball off a cone) and football rounders. Year 12 students split into pairs and chose an event to set up and encourage the children to participate in. It was extremely enjoyable and beneficial to see the dedication of such young children at sporting events and overall was an extremely entertaining and fun afternoon, for both our Sixth Form helpers and the children from Swingate Primary. HGS Students prioritised making the event fun for the children and even took part and raced against some of the Year 3's and 4's which resulted in improving the overall experience for the children.

Written by Sienna Usher Year 12.

# MESSAGE FROM SOUTH EAST CYBER CRIME UNIT - EDUCATION AND PARTNERSHIP



The Cyber Choices sessions for parents, looking at how we can help to safeguard young people from committing computer misuse offences, and why this needs to happen, can be booked now via this link: [Eventbrite](#)

These sessions last around an hour, are totally FREE to attend, and we had such positive responses when we ran these before. They are aimed at parents/carers of a wide range of children/young people, from KS2 pupils (7-8 year olds) right up to college/uni students (18+) Each webinar covers the same material, so they need only sign up for one of them

My colleagues in Cyber Protect are running separate webinars for parents and carers, with a focus on protecting children from online threats. These sessions – also FREE - can be booked here: [Eventbrite](#)

We hope to echo our prior success, and this is only possible with your support, for which we are very grateful!



# SPORTING SUCCESSES



## Korfball International Tournament

Robbie Hill 10BA, has been selected to play for England Korfball U15's in an International Tournament in Prague on 12th and 13th July. Robbie has been playing Korfball for the South East regional academy and local club Tornadoes over the last year and is excited about the opportunity to play in his first International tournament. Korfball is the only mixed gender sport in the world and keenly played by teams in Europe so the competition in the International tournament will be very tough for the England U15's but an excellent opportunity to play against the world's best junior players. Everyone at Holcombe wishes Robbie the very best of luck!

## London Youth Games - Basketball

On May 25th I participated in the London Youth Games in the sport of basketball as an attempt to win the trophy, have fun and gain recognition. I represented my borough, Bexley, as one of the more experienced players. It was a struggle at first due to playing with new people but in the second game a newfound chemistry was built and we won our game. I think that playing in this tournament was a defining factor for me as a sportsman and as an individual because I was able to learn how to work in a different environment whilst honing my skills. I think more people should be inspired to represent their local community because it's really useful for self-development.

By Lotanna (Year 10)

# GRADUATION NEWS FROM THE CLASS OF 2020



We are always so pleased to hear from our alumni - please see below some of the successes shared in a recent email from Johannes Sadler. If you know of any other alumni who would like to share their achievements after leaving - please ask them to email in to the school office.

I just wanted to send a mini "graduation season" update. Lucca, Tom and Jack had their Cambridge graduations last week. I had my final year marks today and was very pleased to get a first. You obviously gave us everything we needed to succeed at university maths 😊

Next year I am starting a PhD in the Department of Applied Maths at Cambridge. It's a bit sad that I'm going there just as the others are all leaving! But I'm looking forward to it all the same, and I'm sure they'll visit. My project is based at the British Antarctic Survey, which is a research institute in Cambridge. I'll be joining their space weather and atmosphere team:

<https://www.bas.ac.uk/team/science-teams/space-weather/#about>

I suppose you remember a month or two ago when the auroras (Northern lights) were visible all over the UK? That is a manifestation of the geomagnetic storms that will be the focus of my PhD. Specifically, I will be trying to mathematically model such events, and write/adapt a computer code to simulate what is happening. So, looks like I'll still be using maths and physics for the next 3.5 years at least. Maybe this anecdote will come to mind the next time a year 9 is asking how maths could ever be useful outside the classroom...

Tom is also going down the PhD route - he is moving to Glasgow to do cancer research. Lucca is starting a corporate job in London in September and Jack is still deciding what to do - but he smashed his finals and got a 1st so I'm sure he'll do well. I have slightly lost touch with Ryan but the last I heard he had started his own company, "Wardware Ltd." - so maybe we should keep an eye out for that.

Tom and I are going interrailing through Europe in August-September, and there's a good chance Jack or Lucca might join us for the first few legs of the trip. If we see a good patisserie on our travels we will stop and have something in honour of Cake Wednesdays.



# PLACES WHERE KIDS EAT FREE (OR FOR £1) DURING THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS 2024



[moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free](https://moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free)

## LAS IGUANAS

Join 'My Las Iguanas' via the App & Niños eat free with every adult main

## ASDA

Kids eat for £1 All Day, Every Day at Asda cafes, with no adult spend required.

## SAINSBURYS CAFES

Kids eat for £1 with the purchase of an adult hot main. From 11:30am every day.

## PAUSA CAFE @ DUNELM

Kids get 1 mini main, 2 snacks & a drink FREE with every £4 spend after 3pm

## THE REAL GREEK

Kids under 12 eat FREE every Sunday for every £10 spent by an adult

## TGI FRIDAYS

Kids Eat Free When 'Stripes Rewards Members' purchase an adult's main meal (App needed)

## PUREZZA

Children under the age of 10 get free pizza at Purezza with every adult meal purchased

## TRAVELODGE & PREMIER INN

Buy 1 Adult Breakfast from just £8.99 & up to two kids eat breakfast for free

## IKEA

Kids get a meal from 95p daily from 11am

## SIZZLING PUBS

Every Monday to Friday, 3 - 7pm, kids' mains are £1 with every adult meal.

## BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE

Two children under 16 can get a free breakfast every day with one paying adult!

## PRETO

Kids up to age 10 eat free all day, every day with paying adults at Preto in Half Terms

## MORRISONS

Spend £4.49 and get one free kids meal all day, every day.

## TESCO CAFES

1 Free Kids meal with every 60p Spend. Available from July 1st Scotland and NI - from July 22nd England & Wales

## GORDON RAMSEY RESTAURANTS

Kids under 8 eat FREE all day, every day at selected Gordon Ramsay restaurants

## YO! SUSHI

From Monday 1st July - Friday 30th August 2024, kids eat free all day Mondays to Fridays at YO! Sushi (min adult spend £10).

## WHITBREAD INNS

Two kids under 16 eat for FREE with every adult breakfast purchased

## BELLA ITALIA

Children eat for £1 with any adult main. The offer is valid 4-6pm Mon to Thurs.

## COCONUT TREE

One child (aged 10 and under) eats free per paying adult. Valid Daily, 12pm - 6pm from Monday 22nd July to Friday 6th Sept 2024.

## DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRES

At Dobbies, for every adult breakfast or lunch purchase, kids eat for FREE. Every Day!

## TABLE TABLE

Two children under 16 can get a free breakfast every day with one paying adult!

## HUNGRY HORSE

Kids eat for £1 on Mondays

## FUTURE INNS

Under 5s eat for free with any adult meal.



Whatever you're feeling  
this summer...

GO  
SOMEWHERE  
GOOD



Get inspired with simple ideas for good stuff to do  
this summer. Vote for the chance to win prizes!



And if you need a safe space to get support for your  
well-being, [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) is here everyday.

Visit: [kooth.com/GoSomewhereGood](https://www.kooth.com/GoSomewhereGood)  
#GoSomewhereGood



Book from July 1st for activities between 29th July and 23rd August 2024

**MedwayGo**

# HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Sports, dance, arts and crafts, drama and more across Medway for eligible children aged 5-15.

- Activities available at several locations across Medway
- Support with travel for children with additional needs
- SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities) exclusive sessions for children with higher needs
- Nutritious hot meal with every session
- Paid sessions may be available for non-eligible children depending on provider

Free Fun Day:  
Medway Park,  
23 July 2024



Plan your summer of  
fun at [go.medway.gov.uk](https://go.medway.gov.uk)

**A BETTER  
MEDWAY**  
Easier ways to be healthy

**CHILD  
FRIENDLY  
MEDWAY**

**Medway**  
GOV.UK  
Serving You



**SUMMER fun day**

FREE

## Get a sneak peek of **MedwayGo**

Meet providers, enjoy activities like bouncy castles, climbing walls, sports, cooking demos and so much more!

### **All children get a free hot meal!**

Get booking support from the MedwayGo team for summer activities!

Exclusive activities and sections for Children with SEND and Teens!

**Date: Tuesday 23rd July**

**Venue: Medway Park**

**Time:** 11am - 12pm SEND hour  
12pm - 3pm All Welcome

**MedwayGo**

**A BETTER  
MEDWAY**  
Easier ways to be healthy

**CHILD  
FRIENDLY  
MEDWAY**

**Medway**  
Serving You



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

## 1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

## 2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS

Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

## 3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS

Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

## 4 LISTEN ACTIVELY

When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or "teenage angst" – or to assume that they'll simply "get over" whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

## 5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

## 6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES

If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

## 7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

## 8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS

Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

## 9 PROVIDE RESOURCES

It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Koah or YoungMinds.

## 10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

### Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUp  
Wednesday

The  
National  
College



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## PROMOTING PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Physical activity isn't only beneficial for our bodies; it also plays a role in promoting mental wellbeing. With both the Euros and the Olympics this summer, it's an opportunity to engage young people in regular exercise which can reduce stress, improve mood and boost self-esteem. Despite these benefits, many children face barriers to participating in physical activity.

### 1 MAKE IT FUN



Incorporate activities that children enjoy, such as playing games or dancing. Encourage participation in team sports or group activities to foster social connections and a sense of belonging.

### 2 MIX MOVEMENT WITH LEARNING



Educational settings can incorporate movement breaks and physical activities to enhance focus, concentration and cognitive function. Embedding exercise into the curriculum can also reinforce learning and stimulate creativity. 'Revision walks' with podcasts and flashcards can benefit older learners.

### 3 CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

Provide clear chances for physical activity throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors. Schools can encourage active play during breaks and at lunchtimes, while limiting screen time at home can help keep children up and about.

### 4 PROVIDE POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT



Praise and encourage children for their efforts and achievements in physical activity. Recognise their progress and celebrate their successes to reinforce positive behaviours. Educators could do this in several ways, such as applauding their efforts at assemblies or celebrating their accomplishments in newsletters.

### 5 VARIETY IS KEY



Introduce a selection of physical activities to keep children engaged and prevent boredom. From swimming and cycling to yoga and martial arts, trying different types of exercise can help children to discover what they enjoy most.

### 6 ENJOYMENT OVER COMPETITION



Encourage children to focus on the enjoyment of physical activity rather than winning or achieving perfection. Emphasise effort, improvement and having fun rather than outcomes, to minimise the amount of stress that children can sometimes associate with sports and other competitions.

### 7 SET REALISTIC GOALS



Help children set achievable physical activity targets based on their interests, abilities and preferences. Celebrate their progress and successes to maintain motivation and enthusiasm.

### 8 MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE



Ensure that children have access to safe, suitable spaces for exercise at home, at school and in the community. Advocate for inclusive environments which accommodate diverse needs and abilities. Be a change maker in your community if facilities aren't already available.

### 9 LEAD BY EXAMPLE



Parents and carers can be positive role models by prioritising their own exercise and involving children in their fitness routines. Gentle walks, bike rides or sports activities can be wonderful opportunities for bonding and staying active together.

### 10 ENCOURAGE PERSISTENCE



Help children develop resilience and perseverance by encouraging them to overcome challenges and setbacks in physical activity. Teach them the importance of perseverance and the value of effort in achieving their goals.

## Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is a learning and development specialist who, as well as working for Minds Ahead, is associate vice principal for personal development at a large secondary school in Barnsley. He was asked to be part of an expert research group for the Department for Education, one of only three school leaders to be asked to do so.



# #WakeUpWednesday

The National College