



## Longbenton High School

In early May, a group of our students had the unique opportunity to visit the historic Houses of Parliament in London – the heart of British democracy. The visit offered an engaging glimpse into the workings of government and the rich history of one of the UK's most iconic landmarks. We squeezed in a quick trip to Trafalgar Square and the British Museum too!

The current building dates mainly from the mid-19th century, following a devastating fire in 1834 that destroyed much of the original medieval structure. During our visit, students toured both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. In the Commons, they saw where elected Members of Parliament debate laws and represent the public. The famous green benches and Speaker's Chair made a strong impression, bringing to life the scenes often seen on television. In contrast, the House of Lords – adorned in red – is a more ornate chamber where appointed members review legislation and offer expert insights. One fascinating fact is that the Lords still use a ceremonial item called the Woolsack, a large cushion symbolizing the historic importance of the wool trade to the British economy.

# LHS does LONDON

We were incredibly lucky to visit the Houses of Parliament in London in early May, just before our very own headteacher was invited to attend a special Department for Education Garden Party at Buckingham Palace the following week! Read on to find out more...



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 26 - 30th May: MAY HALF TERM HOLIDAY
- Monday 2nd June: Start of NEW TERM (HT6)
- Wednesday 4th June: Full study leave starts for Year 11
- Thursday 12th June: RESILIENCE DAY
- Friday 20th June: Year 13 'Prom'
- Monday 30th June: Year 6 Transition Day 1
- Friday 4th July: Year 11 Prom
- Thursday 10th July: Year 6 Transition Day 2
- Friday 19th July: Last day of term (12.15pm finish)

Don't forget! We are changing our mobile phone policy after half term. Students will be required to hand their phones into tutors at the start of every day.



Phones are stored in a locked box, and each student has their own numbered slot. Once phones are collected, the key is safely stored away until the end of the day. The locked cabinets are fixed and can't be moved. No one will be able to access them during the day.

Students will have phones returned to them in afternoon registration. The only exemptions will be for serious medical conditions that require a phone to monitor/administer medication etc.



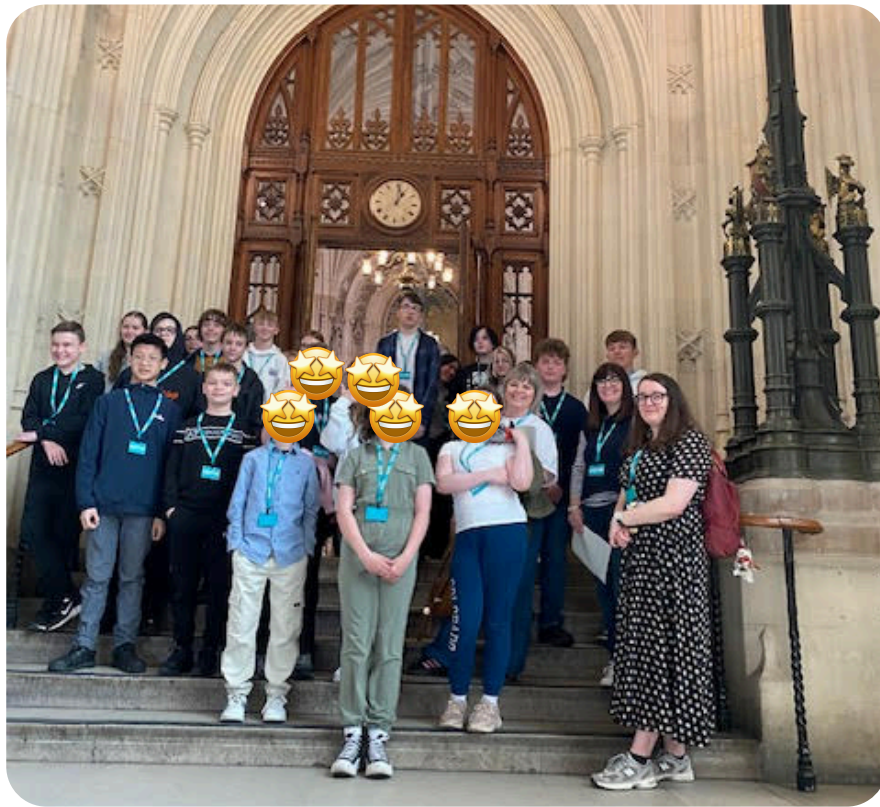
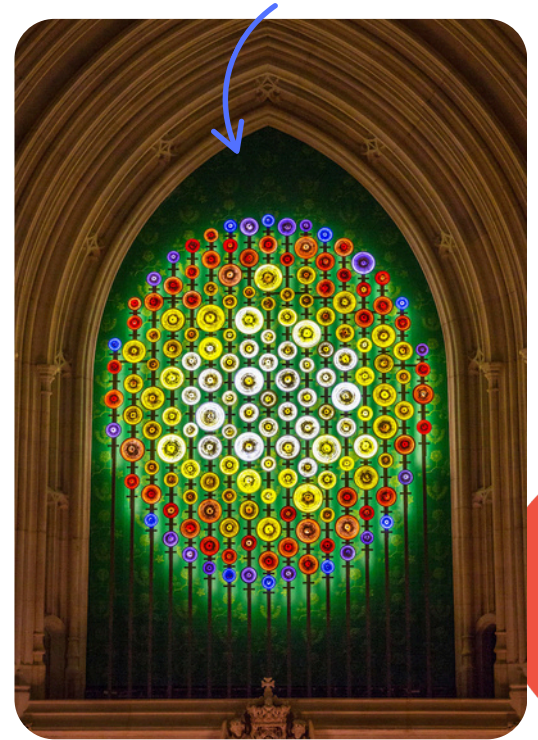
One of the highlights of the tour was Central Lobby, the symbolic crossroads of Parliament, where students saw the impressive statues of four former Prime Ministers: Winston Churchill, David Lloyd George, Clement Attlee, and Margaret Thatcher. Each figure represents a different era in British political history and reminds visitors of the leadership and decisions that have shaped the nation. It was a powerful moment to stand in a space where history continues to be made. (We even found out that Lloyd George's family paid for a higher plinth so that he didn't look too small next to Churchill!!)



During the visit, students also viewed the striking stained glass window in Westminster Hall that commemorates the women's suffrage movement. Installed in 2016 to mark the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which gave some women the right to vote, the window is a powerful tribute to the struggle for gender equality in British democracy. Designed by artist Mary Branson, the artwork features vibrant colours and flowing shapes that represent the strength and determination of the suffragists and suffragettes. It serves as a poignant reminder of the progress made and the individuals who helped shape a more inclusive political system.

This visit not only enriched students' understanding of UK government and history but also sparked discussions about civic responsibility and the role of democracy in modern society.

We're proud to support such enriching experiences that inspire curiosity and a deeper understanding of the world around us.



Our guide explained to us how the Commons was bombed during WWII and pointed out one of the only surviving arches which was preserved at the request of Churchill as a reminder. They were so many other interesting facts. I saw security sweeping the room in the Lords and saw all of the cameras and microphones as the debates are filmed live.

Following our visit we walked over to Trafalgar Square, passing 10 Downing Street, and saw the guards change. After that we headed back on the tube to London Euston to go to the British Museum. The museum had loads of artefacts from different points in history. After a few hours exploring we made our way back to the train station and began our return journey to Newcastle. Overall I had such a great time.

**TRIP REVIEW BY JESS MASON (Y8)** When I went to London it was such a surreal experience. Seeing Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament was so cool. It took 2 and a bit hours to get to London. After we got off the train we were outside of King's Cross Station. We headed straight down to the tube and the first stop was Westminster. We arrived at the Houses of Parliament and it was amazing but so busy. Walking by the side of the gates surrounding the building I was shocked at how much security there was. We had a debrief on how our experience was going to go and then we headed off. I couldn't believe I was in the real House of Commons and Lords.





# Royal Garden Party



The Royal Garden Party on 14 May was attended by 7,000 guests, including Mrs Holbrook! It was held at the request of the government to thank people working in the education and skills sector. Guests were treated to a performance by students from the Royal Ballet School, and music played by the British Army Band Catterick and the Band of The Royal Air Force Regiment.

What is a Royal Garden Party? Now a summer staple at Buckingham Palace, they originated during Queen Victoria's reign in the mid-19th century. Initially, these events were more exclusive gatherings, but they evolved into a way for the Royal Family to connect with a diverse range of people who have made positive contributions to their communities and a way of recognising and rewarding public service.

On the day of the Garden Party, the Palace gates are open from around 3pm. The Party officially begins when Members of the Royal Family enter the garden at 4pm, when the National Anthem is played by one of the two military bands present. Members of the Royal Family circulate among the guests through 'lanes'. Each takes a different route and random presentations are made so that everyone has an equal chance of speaking to a Member of the Royal Family. Members of the Royal family then arrive at the Royal Tea Tent, where they meet further guests. Guests are free to eat, drink and stroll around the Palace gardens.



*The Lord Chamberlain is  
commanded by His Majesty to invite*

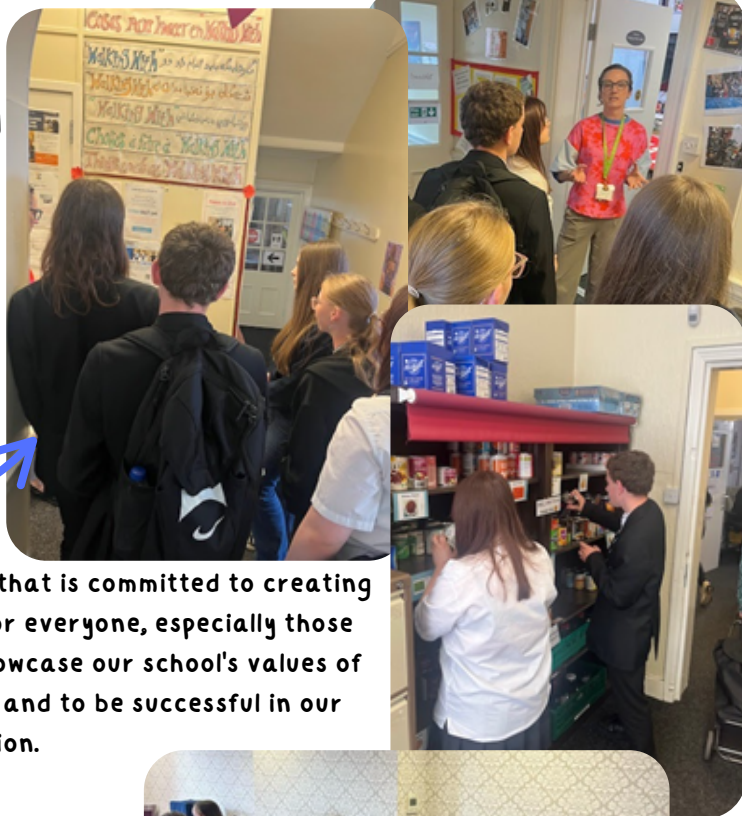
*Mrs. Kelly Holbrook*

*to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace  
to celebrate and recognise those working in  
Education and Skills  
on Wednesday, 14th May, 2025 from 4 to 6 p.m.*

*This card does not admit*



The Equalities Team visited Walking With, a local Wallsend support centre for asylum seekers and refugees, to better understand the challenges faced by those seeking sanctuary in the UK as part of our school's application to become a School of Sanctuary. 'I think this trip was extremely beneficial to us as a group because it showed us the reality of the struggle asylum seekers and refugees face on a day to day basis and highlights issues we don't regularly see within society, as these struggles are usually hidden or vague in the media.' Y12 student



A School of Sanctuary is a school that is committed to creating a safe, welcoming environment for everyone, especially those seeking sanctuary. We hope to showcase our school's values of kindness, inclusion, and respect, and to be successful in our application.



International School Award

**Certificate**

This is to certify that

**Longbenton High School**

has achieved

**Foundation level**  
Introducing internationalism

*Scott McDonald*

Scott McDonald  
Chief Executive, British Council



We have received the International School Award Foundation certificate. The International School Award prepares young people for life in a global society by increasing their understanding of other countries and cultures. It recognises LHS's commitment to developing global citizenship in young people. Reaching the Foundation level signifies the start of your international journey.



A Splash of Colour: an intergenerational Art project. LHS was paired with Fleetham Court where students and residents made canvas art together on the theme of light. This was so successful our relationship with Fleetham Court has flourished - we have played board games and bingo on following visits. Residents and students have got so much out of these visits.

# The Waffle

DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR SISTER NEWSLETTER  
CREATED BY OUR SIXTH FORM, OUT EVERY  
FORTNIGHT!



HAILSHAM AVENUE, NE12 8ER



WWW.LONGBENTON.ORG.UK



0191 218 9500



**LHS INSTAGRAM PAGE**



LHS X PAGE



LHS FACEBOOK PAGE



**Longbenton**  
HIGH SCHOOL

