



A message from Mrs Shore, Assistant Headteacher

It has been a busy and exciting week at school! Our Year 10 students have shown great dedication as they begin their mock exams, demonstrating hard work and perseverance. Year 9 students had an incredible opportunity to visit Williams Racing, gaining valuable insight into the world of Formula 1 and cutting-edge science in action. Meanwhile, our Sixth Form students attended a Safe Drive presentation, which provided important and thought-provoking guidance on road safety.

We also held our Year 8 Parents' Evening online, giving parents the opportunity to meet with teachers virtually and discuss their child's progress from the comfort of their own homes.



A huge well done to our students for their fantastic efforts in raising money for Comic Relief! Through a non-school uniform day and a cake sale they have shown great enthusiasm and generosity in supporting this important cause. A big thank you to Mrs Jones, Mrs Greenland & Miss Pratt for supporting with the baking of cakes. This raised a further £148 for Comic Relief.

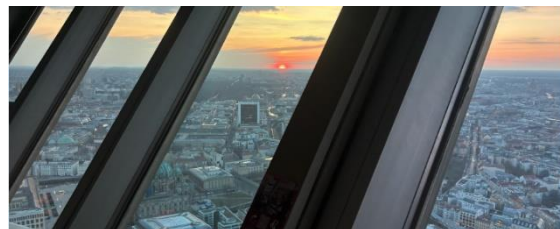
Despite the packed schedule, we have enjoyed the sunshine and the arrival of spring, bringing a fresh and positive energy to the school. We look forward to more exciting events in the coming weeks!





Berlin Trip

Day 1 It was a VERY EARLY departure but everyone arrived on time and had their passports (Happy Mr Bedecker). The initial excitement and early banter soon turned into subtle and not so subtle snoring on the coach trip to Heathrow. The travel company were amazing and arranged for someone from BA to assist in checking us all through. After a bit of breakfast and browsing at duty free merchandise that no-one can afford we eventually rounded everyone up and headed for the plane. 1 easy flight and coach transfer later we arrived at our hotel for a quick luggage drop off and then exploring the U-bahn and a lunch in Alexander Platz. The girls and guys had a great time at the interactive DDR museum. (Never let Will on the road in a real car as his simulator



Trabant driving is interesting to say the least!!!). We were then off to the TV tower where we managed to watch the sunset while looking down on an amazing city. Dinner was an interesting mix of wet salad and schnitzel, with many a laugh. Now back at the hotel with a fairly tired bunch (teaching staff especially). You can imagine the enthusiasm of being woken up early for breakfast at 8:30.



Day 2 Well who would have thought 16 to 19 year olds didn't like getting up early??? Despite this we managed to get them all up, fed and out the door to navigate the U-bahn to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. This has to have been one of the most impactful museums that I have ever been in. It tells the personal stories of the holocaust and is even more immersive because everyone is automatically silent when you get there. Immensely proud of everyone for not only taking this seriously but being moved by what they experienced. From there to the Mall of Berlin for food and a wonder. Best chips in the world with a slide that goes down 4 floors. I was a grown up and didn't use it like some others (Totally regret that now!!). Unfortunately, our trip to the Reichstag Dome was cancelled at the last minute due to an incident, but we all tracked over to the Brandenburg Gate form Mr Bedecker's daily group photo that EVERYONE loves and then a walk along Bundestrass to Siegestäule the Prussian monument to victory. The students had some time to then relax or continue shopping Before dinner.

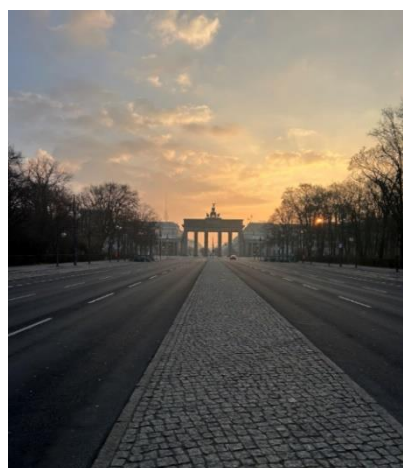
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bunny museum in Berlin). It also included a section of the original wall. Off to Checkpoint Charlie, lunch and then the spy museum, which is fully interactive. Major competition ensued to see who could evade the lasers in the shortest time. Dinner at an Indian restaurant followed by watching the end of a fantastic England win in the Six Nations. Unfortunately, too little too late to win the whole tournament. A bit sad that tomorrow is the last day.



Day 4 We were unceremoniously woken up at 5:40 by the fire alarm and we all had to evacuate the hotel. Luckily it was not serious and it was more entertaining watching how teenagers cope with being woken up early. I was able to take advantage of the early rise to run to the Brandenburg Gate and back. After breakfast it was off to the Palace of Tears where we had a guided tour and learned about the movement between east and west Germany during the Cold War. This was followed by an interactive scavenger hunt where the students were divided into groups and had to follow clues around Berlin to solve the puzzle. Well done King Neil group for winning (victory was guaranteed because of the name!). Lunch and last minute shopping for the amazing presents that parents will be receiving and then back to the hotel for

prize giving based on events that have happened over the last 4 days. I will leave it up to the students to disclose what category they won. Unfortunately, our flight has been delayed so how do 16-19 year old students entertain themselves? Why, hide and seek of course!!!

It has been a full on 4 days, but I feel everyone has gained something from this trip, including the teachers. I couldn't have done this without the amazing Miss Pratt and Miss Strange. They have been the students' guide and support and kept me in check (despite being rubbish at navigation).

Attendance Matters – Every Minute Matters

Congratulations to the 819 students with 100% attendance last week! Please ensure that your son/daughter is in every day as it will impact upon their potential lifetime earnings as described in this article: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67d2cf8f4702aacd2251cbae/The_impact_of_school_absence_on_lifetime_earnings.pdf?utm_content=buffer58cd0&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Absence Band	Number of Pupils (n)	Average earnings at age 28 (2024 prices)
0-1%	33,530	£32,200
0-9.9%	366,139	£29,800
10-100%	145,088	£19,500
Persistently absent		
50-100%	5389	£10,100
Severely absent		



If your child is too ill to attend school a message should be emailed to absence@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk



Uniform

It's been really lovely to see students wearing their uniform with pride again this term. However, we have noticed over the past couple of weeks that standards have started to slip and a number of students are arriving at school without the correct uniform; missing ties, jumpers or wearing trainers. Whilst we understand that there are some circumstances where this can't be helped and notes provided by parents, there have been several occasions where there have been no reasons given. Whilst the weather has improved, the uniform expectations remain the same. Students are required to wear full uniform, including jumpers.

You may be aware that we do have a uniform store on school site, which stocks all uniform items in a large variety of sizes; some of this is brand new and never worn. If a student arrives at school without the correct uniform, they will be asked by staff to come to the uniform store first thing in the morning and borrow items to rectify this, swapping their mobile phone which will then be returned at the end of the day when they bring back the borrowed item. Students who do not borrow clothing / footwear will need to sit in isolation until the correct uniform is brought in to school for them.

You will find a full list of uniform on the school website: [School Uniforms | Melksham Oak Community School, with ties / jumpers available from Sportsbug in Melksham Town Centre.](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's tutor in the first instance.

English – Key Stage 4

Using Tassomai for English and hitting the weekly goal is an excellent way for pupils to improve their understanding of key concepts. It is designed to support revision through regular practice to help embed knowledge, improve long-term recall and revisit misconceptions.

Weekly Overview

Year 11:

14184 questions answered and 52hours 22minutes spent revising.

Year 10:

16455 questions answered and 62 hours and 35 minutes spent revising.

Any problems, please find Mrs Robinson in L1.



Discovery Centre Clubs

The Discovery Centre has a timetable of after school clubs which run from 3pm-3.45pm. The clubs offer opportunities to volunteer, meet new friends and learn new skills. Spaces have become available.

Please see Mrs Curry if you would like to find out more and sign up.

Monday - Lego Creations (Get creative with a wide selection of Lego)

Tuesday – Library Superheroes (Volunteer and become a member of the Discovery Centre Team)

Wednesday – Reading Champions (Volunteer and champion reading at MOCS)

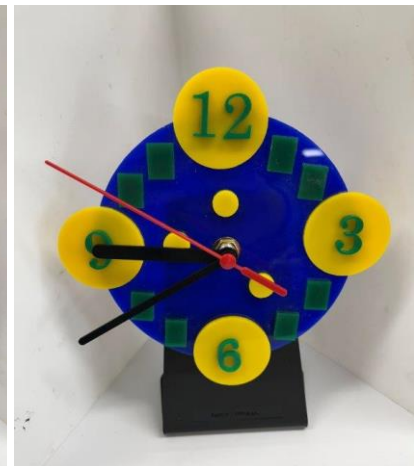
Thursday – Reading Club (Books and biscuits, read and chat)

The library is also open daily for students to read quietly and complete homework.



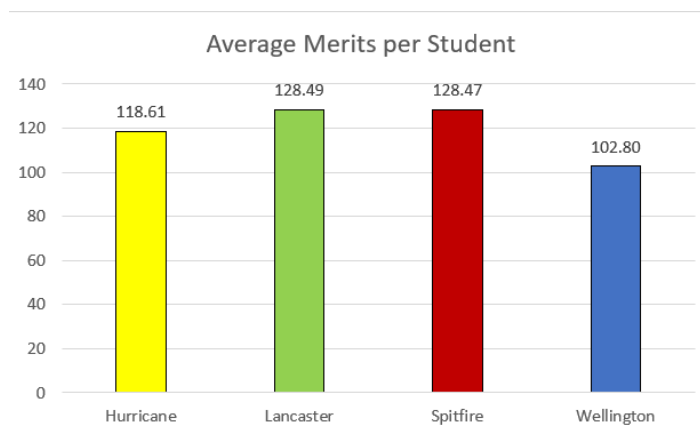
Design Technology – Year 8

Memphis Design inspired clocks: Using 2D design (CAD) to create their own clock design, acrylic is then laser engraved and cut (CAM) which is then assembled.





Merits



Key Contacts

In the first instance please contact your child’s tutor, who will be best placed to answer your query or direct you to the best person who can give you an answer. Details of the pastoral team are below:

Pastoral Manager

Ms A. Berry

berrya@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk

Heads of Year

Year 7	Mrs H. Pearce	pearceh@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk
Year 8	Miss S. Abraham	abrahams@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk
Year 9	Mr L. Ballinger	ballingerl@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk
Year 10	Mrs C. Hughes	hughesc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk
Year 11	Mr J. Oatley	oatleyj@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk
6th Form	Ms R. Cooper	cooperr@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk

To e-mail any other staff member please e-mail admin@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk with a subject line of FAO: <staff name>

Head of Careers Education

Ms C. Tranter

tranterc@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk



Upcoming Events

- Monday 24th March:** Year 12 Creative Media trip to Pinewood Studios
- Wednesday 26th March:** Year 10 Business Trip to Cadbury’s
- Wednesday 2nd April:** Year 13 Film Night Event
- Friday 4th April:** End of Term early finish at 12:40



Sextortion

This week's publicity around safeguarding in the national press is around sextortion which is connected to previous topics we have shared. The reported statistics are of concern and the changing dynamic of online crimes towards boys also needs discussion. Research shows that when boys are subjected to online abuse involving sexuality or nudes they are less likely to tell their parents or their friends. This means that together we need to work even harder with boys to raise the profile of this danger and promote sharing to enable them to help themselves and for us as a community working together to protect our young men.

Reading this article will give you an insight into the national press this week:

[National Crime Agency launches online campaign to tackle 'sextortion' among young teenage boys - National Crime Agency](#)

'Sextortion' is a type of online blackmail. It's when criminals threaten to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about you unless you pay money or do something else you don't want to.

There is a rise in cases involving 11-13 year olds and Scotland recently revealed a significant case involving an 8 year old. There is a rise of 'gangs' and individuals posing as young men and women and forming online relationships with young people to later extort money or criminal activities from them.

There are lots of ways to help young people to report such offences but the most important first step is to remove the stigma of sharing the experience with others so that help and support and action can occur.

The following link is really useful for families:

[Sextortion - Victim Support](#)

Please reach out to us at school if you have any concerns or worries around this topic or any other safeguarding worries for your families.



Family and Community Learning



Online Course

Booking closes
Tuesday 22 April

Supporting My Teen With Wellbeing Online

Tuesday 29 April 10:00-12:00

- Understand the changes in a teenage brain
- Learn techniques to promote wellbeing
- Explore positive psychology

Contact familyandcommunitylearning@wiltshire.gov.uk
or call the FaCL team on 01225 770478
Visit <https://workwiltshire.co.uk/family-and-community-learning/>
or scan the QR code




Our courses are free if you are 19+ years old, resident in the UK/EU for over three years (some immigration status exempt), have a Wiltshire postcode, and meet any of the following criteria: earn less than £25,000 pa, in receipt of benefits, military family, foster carer/care leaver/carer, have a disability.


Wiltshire Council



www.educampsadventures.co.uk



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Pick from 1 or 2 weeks of adventure - From 22nd June - 17th August

- Climbing and hiking experiences
- Shelter building and wilderness survival
- Make a splash at the Water Park
- Campfire building
- Coastal expeditions
- Work together to conquer challenges
- Mountain biking through lush forests
- Explore incredible castles
- Scavenger hunts and forest games
- Kayaking adventures
- Creative talent shows and team building fun
- Pioneering

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION



- Stay in comfortable, fully supervised New Forest lodges with 24/7 support.
- All cabins/lodges are supervised by fully trained, DBS-checked leaders.
- Enjoy all-inclusive meals (including breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks) to fuel your adventures.
- Learn to thrive independently whilst building strong friendships in a safe and supportive environment.

WHY CHOOSE US?

- Memories for life**
Experience unforgettable adventures you'll remember for years to come.
- Friends Forever**
Make lifelong friendships through group adventures and team activities.
- Safe and expert-led**
Qualified leaders ensure every activity is both safe and fun.
- Adrenaline-fueled adventures**
Our camps are filled with outdoor adventures that are challenging and fun.
- Skill development**
Build confidence, teamwork, wilderness skills and resilience through exciting challenges.
- Stunning Locations**
Discover the beauty of the UK's most scenic landscapes, from forests to coastlines.





Self Defence half day workshop

WEDNESDAY 28TH MAY
TROWBRIDGE
1.30PM - 4.30PM. AGE 11-18
COST £25

Mighty Girls & Helen from Systema bring you:

- Practical self-defence techniques
- A focus on movement, breath work, relaxation, and posture
- Enhance self-awareness & resilience
- Help equip you to handle various situations effectively

www.mightygirls.co.uk or QR Code to book



The club is offered at a discounted rate for all & free to some thanks to the support from: 




Summer Club

MON-WED 28TH, 29TH & 30TH JULY
BRADFORD ON AVON
10AM - 4PM.
AGE 8 TO 13 YRS

**BOOK FOR 1,2 OR 3 DAYS
JUST £85 FOR ALL 3 DAYS.**

3 days of fun, craft, adventures and empowerment with the Mighty Girls team.

Further details visit www.mightygirls.co.uk



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