



A message from Mrs Clark, Associate Headteacher

Welcome back! We hope you had a restful and enjoyable Easter break. It's been a fantastic start to the term, and it's wonderful to see so many of our students committed to their studies during the break, attending extra revision sessions. A big thank you to the staff who organised and supported these sessions – your dedication is greatly appreciated.

As we head into the final preparations for exams, some of which have already started this week, we'd like to remind all Year 11-13 students to continue checking their final exam timetables and stay on top of their revision. We wish all students the best of luck as they approach their exams – we know you'll give it your best effort!

In other exciting news, several building projects were completed over the holidays. We now have a brand-new student reception area, which will be ready for use next week, we are also pleased to announce that we now have two full-time receptionists to further enhance our communication with home. The footings for a new outdoor seating area have also been laid, which will be completed by September, providing extra covered seating for students at break and lunchtime.



You will also see that we are remembering VE day with a range of activities that students can participate in, including having photos with a Sherman Tank! The 8th May will also be a non-uniform day, with students encouraged to wear red, white & blue or their armed forces uniform. Voluntary donations of £1 will go towards the RBLI veterans charity. If you are able to contribute to this event, please email reception with FAO Mr Mitchell in the title.

We look forward to a busy and productive term ahead!

Best regards,



Year 10s Step Up to the Cultivate Challenge



Inspiring our future workforce



On Monday before the Easter holiday, our Year 10 students took part in an exciting and inspiring opportunity as representatives from EBP and Zebra Technologies launched the Cultivate Challenge. The room was buzzing with curiosity and enthusiasm as students began developing their own innovative ideas.

It was a pleasure to see the level of engagement and respect our students showed throughout the session. Their behaviour was exemplary, and their creativity truly shone through. We already have several heartfelt and thoughtful ideas beginning to take shape.

Over the coming weeks, students will refine these concepts into full business plans, ready to present their pitches after the Easter break. In May, two groups will be selected for further mentoring from Zebra Technologies, helping them perfect their projects ahead of the grand final on 3rd July.

We can't wait to see where their innovation takes them!



Students in year 7 are invited to participate in Readathon 2025 to raise money for Read for Good. The charity provides children in hospital with brand-new books and fantastic regular storyteller visits. Please support and sponsor your young person to help them do more.

How Readathon works

- Students set their own Readathon challenge. They can choose what to read (or listen to) - fact, fiction, audiobooks, blog, comics...anything counts!
- Ask family and friends to sponsor them per book or per minute of reading.
- Hand the sponsor form into the library once they have completed the challenge (deadline by 2nd June).

The simplest way to donate is online. Simply scan the QR code on the sponsor form or visit readforgood.org/sponsor.

Attendance Workshop

Book to attend our attendance workshop on Friday 2nd May: CouchA@melkshamoak.wilts.sch.uk



**SUPPORTING
BARRIERS TO
SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE**

PARENT / CARER WORKSHOP

- Practical strategies and resources to take home
- Hear from Key staff including Attendance, SENco, Family Liaison

FRIDAY 2ND MAY
09:30 - 10:30 / 3:30 - 4:30



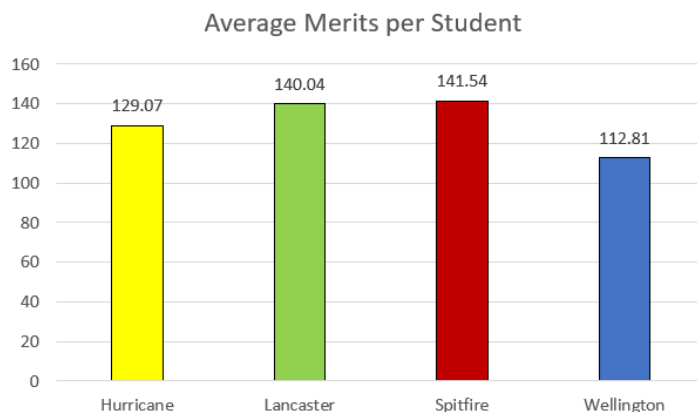
Sparx Maths Leaderboard

This week we recognise the Top 10 students from across the entire school, for their commitment and effort with Sparx Maths homework throughout April, including the over Easter holiday. In particular it is great to see several Y11s in the Top 10, demonstrating their hard work as they approach their final GCSE exams. Well done!

Monthly Leaderboard This month		
1	Olivia 7L	4325 XP
2	Josh 11S	3805 XP
3	Gowri 8E	3760 XP
4	<u>Elizabeth</u> 7E	3240 XP
5	<u>Kaidan</u> 11S	3175 XP
6	Sofia 7M	3084 XP
7	Megan 7L	2752 XP
8	Joshua 7K	2555 XP
9	Libby 11O	2435 XP
10	Edward 11M	2390 XP



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

Thursday 8th May: Year 7 Parents' Evening 16:00 to 19:00

VE Day – red, white & blue non-uniform day (£1 donation)

Thursday 22nd May: Year 10 Parents' Evening 16:00 to 19:00.



Safeguarding Why are friends so important?

Our society tends to place an emphasis on romantic relationships. We think that just finding that right person will make us happy and fulfilled. This can also be true for children as they negotiate puberty and engaging in those first relationships based on finding another person attractive but the shift and change in friendship groups in secondary school is also a huge challenge for many students. Research shows that friends are actually even more important to our psychological welfare. Friends bring more happiness into our lives than virtually anything else.

Friendships have a huge impact on your mental health and happiness. Good friends relieve stress, provide comfort and joy, and prevent loneliness and isolation. Developing close friendships can also have a powerful impact on your physical health. Lack of social connection may pose as much of a risk as smoking, drinking too much, or leading a sedentary lifestyle. Friends are even tied to longevity. One Swedish study found that, along with physical activity, maintaining a rich network of friends can add significant years to your life.

But close friendships don't just happen. Many of us struggle to meet people and develop quality connections. Whatever your age or circumstances, though, it's never too late to make new friends, reconnect with old ones, and greatly improve your social life, emotional health, and overall well-being.

The benefits of friendships

While developing and maintaining friendships takes time and effort, healthy friendships can:

Improve your mood. Spending time with happy and positive friends can elevate your mood and boost your outlook.

Help you to reach your goals. Whether you're trying to get fit, give up smoking, or otherwise improve your life, encouragement from a friend can really boost your willpower and increase your chances of success.

Reduce your stress and depression. Having an active social life can bolster your immune system and help reduce isolation, a major contributing factor to depression.

Support you through tough times. Even if it's just having someone to share your problems with, friends can help you cope with serious illness, the loss of a job or loved one, the breakup of a relationship, or any other challenges in life.



Boost your self-worth. Friendship is a two-way street, and the “give” side of the give-and-take contributes to your own sense of self-worth. Being there for your friends makes you feel needed and adds purpose to your life.

Why online friends aren't enough?

With many students being over reliant on their phones the following is true:

Technology has shifted the definition of friendship in recent years. With the click of a button, we can add a friend or make a new connection. But having hundreds of online friends is not the same as having a close friend you can spend time with in person.

Online friends can't hug you when a crisis hits, visit you when you're sick, or celebrate a happy occasion with you. Our most important and powerful connections happen when we're face-to-face. So encourage your children to make it a priority to stay in touch in the real world, not just online.

What to look for in a friend?

Have these conversations with your children to talk about what a good friend is and how they can be a good friend.

A friend is someone you trust and with whom you share a deep level of understanding and communication. A good friend will:

- Show a genuine interest in what's going on in your life, what you have to say, and how you think and feel.
- Accept you for who you are.
- Listen to you attentively without judging you, telling you how to think or feel, or trying to change the subject.
- Feel comfortable sharing things about themselves with you.

As friendship works both ways, a friend is also someone you feel comfortable supporting and accepting, and someone with whom you share a bond of trust and loyalty.

Focus on the way a friendship feels, not what it looks like



The most important quality in a friendship is the way the relationship makes you feel—not how it looks on paper, how alike you seem on the surface, or what others think. Ask yourself:

- Do I feel better after spending time with this person?
- Am I myself around this person?
- Do I feel secure, or do I feel like I have to watch what I say and do?
- Is the person supportive and am I treated with respect?
- Is this a person I can trust?

The bottom line: if the friendship feels good, it is good. But if a person tries to control you, criticizes you, abuses your generosity, or brings unwanted drama or negative influences into your life, it's time to re-evaluate the friendship. A good friend does not require you to compromise your values, always agree with them, or disregard your own needs.

If your child needs support with friendship issues please reach out to us at school via your child's head of year or tutor.



Together

we help **you** to support **your child**

#TogetherWeHelp

Booking closes
Tuesday 3 June

Starting Secondary

at Calne Library The Strand SN11 0JU

Tuesday 10 and 24 June 10am - 12pm



Session 1

- Why can changes be tricky?
- Exploring emotional intelligence and resilience
- Developing strategies to support your child starting secondary school

Session 2

- What's the difference between primary and secondary school?
- Understanding your role in the move to secondary
- Managing online safety and recognising stress

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, including resettlement schemes), 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



CHALLENGE | ASPIRE | NETWORK



Together

we help **you** to support **your child**

#TogetherWeHelp

Booking closes
Tuesday 6 May

Supporting My Teen with Wellbeing

at Calne Library The Strand SN11 0JU
Tuesday 13 May 10am - 12pm



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

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Wiltshire Council



CHALLENGE | ASPIRE | NETWORK



Family and Community Learning



Supporting My Teen With Wellbeing Friday 20 June 10:00-12:00

Trowbridge Family Hub

County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JQ

Booking Closes Friday 13 June 2025



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

Contact familyandcommunitylearning@wiltshire.gov.uk
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Wiltshire Council



NEW: Teencraft Sessions - After school craft sessions designed for 12-16 year olds, take place on the second Tuesday of the month.

Sessions may be inspired by the Museum and its collections, but sometimes we do a craft just for fun. Each month there is a different craft to learn and do!

13 May – Amazing Artefacts

10 June – Macramé

8 July – Paper Making

12 August – Tie dye

Date: 2nd Tuesday of the month – [see details online](#)

Times: 3.45 pm to 4.45 pm

Location: Lecture Hall at Wiltshire Museum

Cost: £7.50 per participant

Booking essential as places are limited. If the event is sold out, email hello@wiltshiremuseum.org.uk to be added to the waiting list.