

# Autumn 2025



Learn to succeed



# An introduction from the Principal...

Dear All,

Welcome to the latest edition of our Penwortham Priory Academy 'Priory Post'.

As ever, this edition brings together in one place, a selection of the key stories from this term as they appeared in our weekly newsletters, highlighting the wide-ranging opportunities and activities all our pupils have to contribute to our daily mission:

*To uphold our Priory standard – ensuring the highest expectations of all, from all, so that all pupils Learn to Succeed and leave Priory, equipped with the right skills and attitudes to help them succeed in life, contribute positively to society, and go on to further education, employment, or training.*

Here at Priory, we pride ourselves on having a school where, first and foremost, pupils feel safe, feel happy and feel like they belong to our school community. *Their pastoral care.*

When we have pupils, who feel safe and happy in school, we can focus on providing each with a varied and rich curriculum for them to gain good individual results as a stepping-stone into their futures. *Their academic care.*

Whilst all the time, gaining opportunities, from reliable adults, on how to become good citizens of the future. *Their 'Learning for Life'.*

In other words, a school where the attention we give to the pastoral care of our pupils is just as important as the attention we give to their academic progress and to the development of those skills we know our pupils are going to need to be successful in their lives beyond Priory – their 'Learning for Life'.

This edition then, once again highlights the wide-ranging learning activities that our pupils have been undertaking, to maximise their chances to achieve, not only in the time they are with us here in school, but in their life beyond Priory too.

A big thank you then to all the staff, pupils, parents and members of our local community for their dedication, commitment and hard work in ensuring that all our pupils leave Priory with not only excellent results, but with these rich and meaningful experiences that are guaranteed to help them in what are sure to be their exciting and bright futures.

We hope you enjoy reading our key stories from this term at Priory, a great school where every pupil *'Learns to Succeed'.*



Mr Matt Eastham, Principal  
Penwortham Priory Academy



# The Priory+ Awards



In the last week of the summer term, Mr Eastham presented badges and certificates to pupils who had achieved the next stage in the Priory+ Awards.

Almost 190 pupils achieved this recognition during the Summer term and on Monday, 14 July, those that chose to be personally presented by the Principal got to receive their rewards (pupils who opted out of this have their certificates and badges presented to them by their Head of Year), and we were delighted to see the queue into Mr Eastham's office went round the block! Thank you to Year 9 Matthew B for kindly stepping in to help with photos.

Priory+ aims to encourage and reward pupils for working on their own Personal Development. At Penwortham Priory Academy we believe that strong Personal Development provision contributes to making a positive difference to pupils' lives. The opportunities provided not only allow them to engage in activities they are interested in, but enables them to explore and build a strong pathway to, and foundation for, a successful future.



Our activities fit into five overarching strands, which supplement our Character and Culture Personal Development sessions in Learning for Life. There are five strands:

- Culture & Heritage** | **Future Citizens** | **Health & Well-Being** | **Skill Builders** | **Bright Futures**



## Priory+ Brochure

The brochure is currently being reviewed for the 2025-26 academic year. We will email parents a digital copy and send a printed copy home with Year 7 pupils.



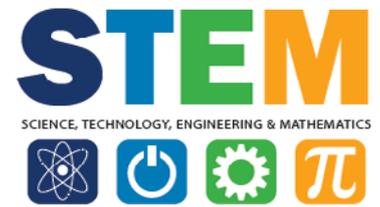
In the meantime, if you would like to know what the award means and how our pupils achieve it, please visit our website >>

[www.priory.lancs.sch.uk/personal-development/wider-opportunities](http://www.priory.lancs.sch.uk/personal-development/wider-opportunities)

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# Year 8 Have An Electrifying Careers Day with the National Grid

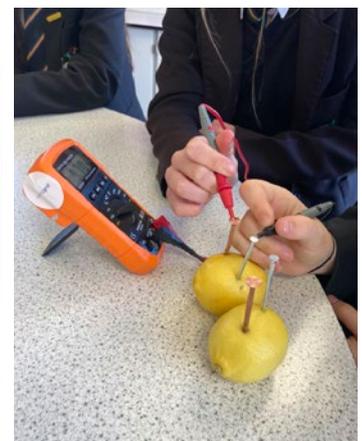
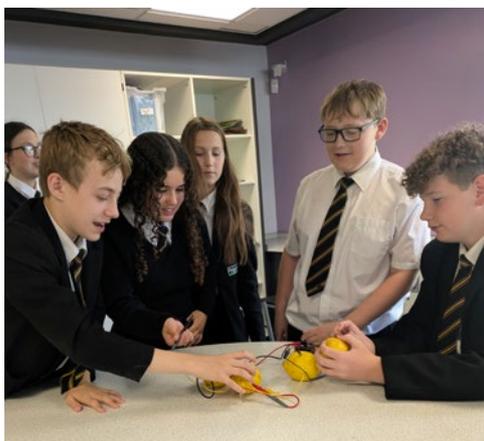


During the last week of term we held a careers day for Year 8 hosted by a team from the National Grid.

The aim of the event was to educate pupils about STEM and engineering linked to the work that National Grid do. Workshops included the building of lemon batteries and circuits, coding, K'Nex tower building, building of catapults and exploring energy efficiency project management. These workshops provided an insight into the various functions within National Grid and it is hoped that pupils have a greater awareness of potential future careers for the future.

Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, Ms Smith, said "The workshops looked so engaging, interesting and fun! I was envious that I had not been given such opportunities at school. Our Year 8s left classrooms on a high, and positive feedback was in abundance.

She added, "I hope that the workshops have provided career inspiration and pupils who would not be stereotypically interested in such careers, now are, having met a diverse range of National Grid staff. We are very grateful for the opportunities that our collaboration with the company have provided and look forward to another academic year where we refine activities and introduce more as the pilot partnership continues into the future."



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Principal Mr Eastham praised the 'strong performances' of the Class of 2025 as they received their fantastic GCSE results.

Priory pupils excelled, 60% gained a Grade 5 or above in English and 47% achieving a Grade 5 and above in Maths.

There were excellent results in science and languages, and Priory also offer vocational qualifications such as Performing Arts, ICT Digital Info Tech, Engineering and Childcare where the results were outstanding.

Mr Eastham said: "We're incredibly proud of this year's Year 11 students. They have achieved an excellent set of GCSE results that are a testament not only to their dedication and perseverance, but also to the unwavering support of their families and the commitment of our staff.



"Beyond this academic success, our students leave us as confident, well-rounded individuals, fully prepared for the exciting opportunities that lie ahead."

## GCSE Results Day: Their Stories

**Daniel** celebrated Grade 9 in Further Maths, Maths and French and not surprisingly he wants to take his Maths further.

"I want to go to LUSoM (Lancaster University School of Mathematics). I am happy with my Grade 9s."



**Chittara** aims to be an engineer and she achieved a Level 2 Distinction + in Engineering among other impressive results, including a 9-8 in Combined Science.



"I want to go to Newman College to study Physics, Maths and Computer Science. I want to do engineering in the future and Priory has helped me with this."

**Agnes** is a talented artist and pianist but maths is her priority as she too secured a place at LUSoM.

"I want to study Maths, Further Maths, Biology and Chemistry A-Levels. It's unreal looking at my GCSE results. I am so happy with Grade 9s in Chemistry, Maths and Chinese.



"I think I am most impressed with a 6 in English Language as that was better than I expected!

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# GCSE RESULTS

"I was so nervous doing my exams – I think I had around 10 hours sleep in a week while I was sitting them! Now it's all worth it."

"I have loved my time at Priory – it has amazing facilities."

**Emily P** admitted she has exceeded her own expectations with her GCSE results.

"When I opened the envelope and saw four Grade 8s I was relieved! I got a Grade 6 in my English mock exam so that was a big increase. Achieving a Grade 8 in Maths is also 'wow!'."

"I want to go to Runshaw and study A-Levels in Biology, Graphics or Art and Classics. I think I might do something veterinary in the future."



**Jake** has never wavered from his ambition to go into cyber security.

"I got the grades to get me there! I am happy, especially with my Grade 8 in Maths. I got a Grade 5 in Further Maths which I am pleased with as it was really hard and I didn't know if I would pass."

"I want to go to Newman College to study Maths, Physics and Computer Science A-Levels. I want to do an apprenticeship degree in cyber security. That's always been the plan."

**Ethan** said his results were 'pretty good.' He achieved a Grade 8 in Maths and Physics, among his superb results.

"I got a Grade 7 in my mock exams so I am happy with an 8 and also a Grade 5 in Further Maths. I was also pleased with a Grade 6 in English Literature, I did better in that than I thought."



"I want to go to Runshaw to study Maths, Physics and Computer Science and I will just see where it takes me!"

**Tom** hopes to become an environmental engineer.

"I achieved four Grade 8s and my biggest surprise was a Grade 8 in English Language. To be honest, straight after the exam, I thought I had failed it."

"I was really nervous about picking up my results and when I saw a Grade 8 I thought it was a mistake!"

"I want to go to Runshaw College and do Engineering and Geography which will hopefully help me become an environmental engineer and then I want to do Photography as it's fun."



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**Afnan** aims to make money!

"I was surprised as I got a 9-8 in Combined Science, I didn't expect that! I got a 5/6 in my English Literature mock so I improved on that with a Grade 7."

"I want to go to Newman College and study Economics, Maths and Chemistry. I just want to make money!"

**Kayleigh** and **Emily J** have both taken part in Priory productions and are going on to do Musical Theatre.

Kayleigh said: "I am going to Runshaw College, I have loved the productions at Priory and it's all I have ever wanted to do."



Emily will study Musical Theatre but also Criminology and Psychology at Newman College.

**Kira** admitted she felt relief when she opened her GCSE results. "I saw a Grade 8 in Science and Maths and the overall sense was relief!"

"I want to go to Newman College and study Accounting, Business, Law or Geography – three out of the four!"

**Abbie** is also going to Newman College. "I want to study Biology, Psychology and Law. I was amazed I got a Grade 8 in Food Preparation & Nutrition! I also did better than I expected in Science with an 8-7."



**Damari** wants to be a Civil Rights lawyer.

"I want to fight for my rights, I admire people like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. They really inspire me."

Damari achieved a Grade 8 in History and English Literature and said: "I did better than I thought I would in English Lit. I did hope for a 9 in History but Mr Eccles has spoken to me about it and a Grade 8 is still a fantastic result."

"I want to do A-Level Law at Newman College and also a BTEC in Criminology and Sport. I am into tennis and want to play for the college team."

"My dream is to have my own law firm with branches in Africa and the Caribbean."

**Geetha** is aiming for an apprenticeship at BAE Systems, after she achieved a 9:8 in Combined Science and Grade 8s in Maths and French.

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**GCSE RESULTS**

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"I want to do an Engineering A-Level at Runshaw College and then hopefully get on a degree apprenticeship."

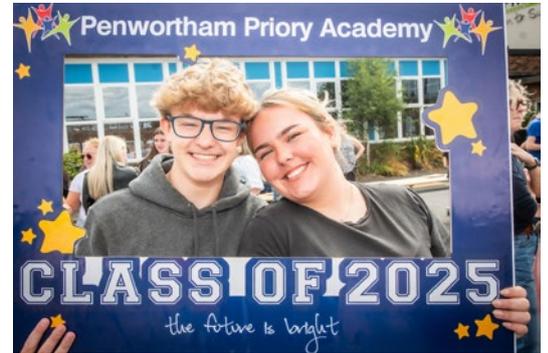
# GCSE RESULTS

We extended our heartfelt congratulations to all students, recognising not just their academic results, but also their personal development throughout their time at Priory.

Beyond exam grades, we also celebrate the many ways in which this year's leavers have contributed to school life - whether through sport, the performing arts, leadership roles, volunteering, or other enrichment activities.

Our mission has always been to nurture well-rounded individuals. We want every student to leave us not just with strong academic qualifications, but with confidence, compassion, and a readiness to contribute positively to the world around them.

As Year 11 students now take their next steps; into further education, apprenticeships, or other pathways; we send them off with pride and we wish them every success and happiness in the exciting futures that lie ahead.



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# Priory's Head Girls of the Past Return to Welcome 2025-26 Head Prefects

**1995 Head Girl Heather Taylor and 2005 Head Girl Hannah Humphris returned to Priory to welcome our current Head Prefects into their roles.**

Kacper, Tarela, Yasmine and Hiylie are Priory's Head Prefects for the 2025/6 school year following hustings that were held at the end of the summer term. Candidates had to make a 3-5 minute speech on why they wanted to be a Head Prefect, what changes they would make in school and how they would implement them. It then went to a staff and Year 11 vote.

Heather, whose surname was Collins at school, said: "It's 30 year since I have been here properly although my mum, Margaret Collins, was the Head's PA so I did used to pop in every now and again.

"It's lovely to be back, it has changed such a lot. It's nice to have a look around

"When I was Head Girl, you didn't put in for it, you just got voted in by pupils and teachers. There wasn't a speech as I wouldn't have done it!

"I enjoyed Art and Maths but mostly PE with Miss Slater. I remember a snowball fight as well!

"I work in the NHS now."

Hannah was the first of the Rooke family to attend Priory, five sisters and a brother followed her.

"I did have to make a speech to be Head Girl! I got fantastic GCSE results and I went to college and university to do primary education with maths specialism. My favourite teacher was Mrs Butler who was my Head of Year and maths teacher.

"I worked in education for a while, actually in a secondary school even though I trained for primary school, but then myself and my husband set up a climbing and education business called Climbing Wall Training.

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“It’s lovely to be back and see how the school has grown. The bones of it are still here from when I was here but it has moved on a lot.”

Both spent time looking at memorabilia from 30 and 20 years ago with our new Head Prefects, talking about school uniform, trips to Russia and teachers.

Hiylie said: “It’s lovely hearing them talking about their time at Priory, it’s really interesting. I am excited to be a Head Prefect. I have a lot of ideas, I want more communication with pupils and staff.

“Looking ahead to the school year, my GCSEs are daunting but I am excited to be able to change things as a Head Prefect.”



Tarela said: “When I talked to my Year 11 friends a lot spoke about wanting more food options so that’s something I will look at.”

Yasmine said: “I did not expect to get a Head Prefect role. I came to Priory from Hong Kong in Year 10 so I understand how alone you can feel when starting a new school so I want to use my experience to help others who maybe in the same situation. It is a real honour to be a Head Prefect.

“I have enjoyed meeting the former Head Girls. They have been telling me that their Food Tech room is now where the Bistro is and how much the school has changed.”

Kacper, who was unfortunately absent for the photograph, is a Young Leader for Explorer Scouts out of school and has firm ideas for the changes he wants to make at Priory.

“I want to support younger pupils. It’s important to me to help younger pupils through difficult times as I understand how painful it can be. I really want to make a difference in this area. I want the best for everyone.”



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# Pole Position! Year 7 Pupil Crowned British Karting Champion



**Speedy Riley has just been crowned British Champion in the 2025 British Kart Championship.**

The Championship is the highest level competitors can race at and is governed by Motorsport UK and requires a Race License in order to compete.

Riley is following in some very big footsteps, with the likes of Lewis Hamilton and Lando Norris, having all previously competed in the British Kart Championships!

Year 7 Riley has been go-karting for three years and now competes all over the UK and will be competing in Europe at some point next year.

He started his motorsport journey at the arrive-and-drive track near Euxton, going on from there to start owner-driver kart racing at Hooton Park Circuit near Liverpool.



From there he branched out to race in the Teesside Sprint Series in the Northeast before entering The Kart Championship and the British Kart Championships last year, where he finished 7th overall in both Championships in 2024, winning the Most Improved Driver of 2024 award at The Kart Championships awards night.

In 2025, Riley competed in three National Championships - The British Kart Championships, Super One Series and The Kart Championships. It's been a very successful year for him, becoming the Super One Series Champion as well as British Champion. He narrowly missed out winning The Kart Championship too!

Officially, it means Riley is now ranked number one in the UK in the Honda Cadet class, a class which regularly sees up to 34 karts racing on track at speeds in excess of 60mph.

"I am very proud," said Riley.

Riley charts his racing life on Instagram and you can follow his progress at

@rileyblakemoracing



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# Peer Mentor Support For Year 7



**Priory's friendly and approachable Year 11 Peer Mentors are based in the Year 7 dining area at break and lunch and are ready to help.**

Phoebe, Freya, Kayalnila, Jessica, Harry and others underwent training earlier this year as Year 10s and are willing and ready to assist any of the new intake who need them.

Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, Ms Smith said, "At Priory we realise that our older pupils are excellent role models for younger pupils and so we have a very successful peer mentoring programme in place. Our qualified peer mentors will help pupils cope with everyday life and worries at school and will offer guidance on both social and academic areas of school life."



All Peer Mentors have attended structured training sessions in school with an external trainer where they were given an introduction to mentoring and 'buddying' younger ones.

Each learner participated in activities across five challenges to gain an accredited ASDAN certificate. This nationally recognised certificate qualifies their competence in the role.

Phoebe said: "I became a Peer Mentor as I want to help younger pupils. I struggled myself at times and I needed help so I am glad I am in a position to help others."



Freya said: "I was the only girl from my primary school when I came to Priory so I want to make sure I help everyone settle in quickly."

Jessica said: "It can be scary making the move, this is a lot bigger than primary school, so it's good if we can help the new pupils."

Harry said: "I want to guide people on the right path."

The Year 11s will be in the Year 7 dining area on a rota and admitted most of the questions so far have been about directing the new pupils around school but they are available for any queries or problems from Year 7- so come and have a chat with them at the Peer Mentor Station!

# Enterprise with Heart: Pupils Raise £1,478 for Derian House



Priory's Business & Enterprise pupils raised almost £1,500 for Derian House – enough to support their Sibling Support group for three months.

Whilst in Year 10, the pupils took part in the Derian House £50 Junior Business Challenge, where they had to turn £50 into as much money as they could through fundraising efforts in a week at the end of last term.

One group, Dev, Charlie, Cielo and Zain, and their helpers, worked tirelessly washing staff's - and some visitors' - cars throughout the week.

They said: "We washed 21 staff cars and worked on it each day over a week. They were really impressed with our ability!"

"Halfords donated the car shampoo, sponges and other essential resources. It was fun."

Sienna and Keira organised a non-uniform day.

"I am enjoying the Business course and I enjoyed organising this. We went around to different classrooms collecting £1 from all the pupils."

Archie, Ellis and Lewis organised a raffle.

"We got prizes from local shops who were extremely generous. We also walked around school getting pupils to guess the name of a teddy bear which Smyths had donated. We also sold sweets.

"It was a good experience as we learnt how to make

a profit and also it felt good to do something for charity."

Noah and Alan sold sweets and drinks on sports day.

"It was a good day to do it and we sold out. Tesco and some other shops donated the goods. We set up in one spot and we were busy."

There was also a bake sale, staff v pupil penalty shoot-out and face painting.

Ann-Marie Fishwick, Derian's Community Fundraiser said: "It's absolutely fantastic. They have done such a good job and their passion has shone through with the donations.

"This is enough money to support our Sibling Support group for three months which is amazing, giving them much-needed days out and more."

Business & Enterprise teacher, Miss Gregson, said: "We would like thank the entire school community for participating and contributing both physically and financially to our Derian House fundraising week. We are exceptionally proud of our Year 11 Business group whom have raised a final total of: £1478.51."



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# Duke of Edinburgh Pupils Ready To Celebrate Bronze and Silver Awards



The Duke of Edinburgh Award isn't just about hiking and camping; it's also about discovering new skills, building friendships, and seeing your teachers in a whole new light!

"You find out teachers are fun!" That was the verdict from Mrs Cauchi's Duke of Edinburgh Year 10 Bronze Award pupils.

There is obviously much more to the DofE but our current Year 10s are celebrating their Bronze Award as Year 11s await to collect their Silver Award after receiving their Bronze Award in the last school year.

The Bronze Award involves the DofE Participation Award where pupils have to complete three official DofE sections: Volunteering, Physical and Skill. To achieve the actual Bronze Award, pupils also have to complete a two-day expedition, with overnight camping where pupils put up their own tents and cook for themselves, working as a team.



Ben said: "We went to Bibby's Farm at Rivington for our overnight expedition and it was fun. We made great memories playing games at night.

"I volunteered for three months to help with my brother's training at Penwortham Town FC."

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Dan said: "I volunteered at Penwortham St Theresa's football club. I enjoyed cooking at our expedition. It was a good time and we found out teachers are fun!"

Wren said: "I volunteered as a Young Leader at the scouts at Middleforth Primary School and I have continued to do that."

"The expedition was fun, it was camping with my friends so I enjoyed it."

Lilly added: "I volunteered at my stepmum's hair salon. I liked swimming in the lake at Bibby's Farm."

The Silver Award is a step further with more outdoor activities.

Year 11's Taylor, Harvey, Aaron, Anna, Hannah and Will were just some of the eighteen participants who took part in this in the last school year.

Mrs Cauchi took the pupils rock climbing in the Lake District and they also went to Whitehough Outdoor Centre in Pendle, walking up Pendle Hill in a practice run, while their actual expedition was in the Lake District.



Harvey said: "It's a nice achievement to receive the DofE Silver Award. The Lake District expedition was fun, I enjoyed playing cards!"

Will said: "The teachers were different on the expedition, they were a lot more fun! I enjoyed rock climbing and learnt a lot of new skills including team work. I also enjoyed playing football with Mr Hunter, he is quite a good goalkeeper!"

Hannah said: "It was great being out with my school friends. The Silver Award is a good achievement for my CV."



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# Year 9 Reach New Heights As They Explore Local Iconic Landmark

Year 9 pupils this week had an opportunity to visit the magnificent St Walburge's Church in Preston as part of a cross-curricular trip to see how History and RE have impacted our local area.

We were fortunate to have Maria, a parishioner at St Walburge's, taking us on a tour of the church and many of its beautiful and historic features.

Pupils and staff, including Principal Mr Eastham, were also fortunate enough to be able to climb the steeple, the tallest on any parish church in England.

It's safe to say that many pupils found the 150+ steps a challenge, but the spectacular views over Preston were well worth it.

Mr Eccles and Mrs Hanu  
Humanities



## Class of 2025: Umar Hansrot

### Leaver Secures Apprenticeship and National Award



We were delighted to hear from one of our Class of 2025 pupils this week, who shared some fantastic news about his next steps since leaving Priory.

Following a careers seminar hosted in school by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) earlier this year, Umar successfully applied for and secured an apprenticeship with the government department. The visit back in March organised by Careers Adviser, Ms Smith, gave pupils a valuable insight into civil service careers and opened doors to real opportunities, including this one.

Umar wrote to thank the school for its encouragement and guidance, saying: "I'd like to thank Priory for supporting me and motivating me to achieve this post, as well as my community for supporting me."

In addition to the achievement, Umar has also been recognised after winning a national Volunteer Recognition Award. He recently attended a conference and will be heading to an event in London later this month to celebrate.

Principal, Mr Eastham added, "This is a fantastic achievement and a real testament to Umar's hard work, determination, and the positive attitude he always showed during his time at school. I'm so pleased that both Ms Smith and the school could play a part in supporting him on his journey".

We're incredibly proud of his success and grateful for his kind words. We wish Umar all the best in his apprenticeship and hope to welcome him back for a visit in the future!



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# From Primary to Priory at Open Evening

Our doors opened last Tuesday evening to over 450 families as they began their search for a secondary school for their children.

Our Principal Mr Eastham, was the first to greet our visitors at the door, and Prefects stood by ready to guide them around the school with a personal tour. Pupils from all year groups were posed in departments ready to share their experiences of Priory. Year 7 pupils chatted with former primary school peers who were keen to hear all about their first month at their new school - showing such confidence that many parents were fathomed they had only been with us a few weeks!

Interactive activities were set up across the school for children to enjoy whilst parents questioned teachers and pupils. Showcase explosions and a cow's heart and lung dissection in Science, puzzles in Maths (whilst trying not to gobble too many mini gems!), French statues coming to life in Languages, trampolining, darts and badminton in PE, fantasy fiction in English and so much more. The ICT & Computer Science department took the opportunity to show off their gadgets - robots and 3D printers amongst them whilst, in Drama, hair and make up, costumes and lighting demonstrations took centre stage.

Meanwhile, the Humanities department was a hub of activity where Mr Momoniat's OS map folding and dress for the weather challenges were matched in History where visitors were challenged to pair the date with the historic photo in the fastest time, before picking up a bag of freshly popped popcorn from the Duke of Edinburgh pupils.

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Visitors were 'drawn' to the Technology department with pupils' artwork and the smell of cookery from the Food room, before our young guests made keyrings which they coloured and then assembled laser-cut Perspex letters spelling out their name - the perfect keepsake of the evening.

All this activity was bound to work up a thirst so a hot cuppa was on offer, with a friendly smile, at the Priory Pod - our outdoor hub serving drinks and food for those on the go. Meanwhile, in the Bistro, our Catering team offered scrumptious samples and demonstrated our new kiosk ordering system.

This was the second year we invited our Leavers back to help out - and Class of 2025 did an amazing job! Our Year 11 Leavers are perfectly placed to offer a personal testimonial about their time at Priory and their enthusiasm and positivity made them some of our best ambassadors.

*The event was a great success but we couldn't do it without the support of our pupil volunteers. We've received many compliments from prospective families who named and thanked individuals for their maturity, manners and guidance during their visit. You were an absolute credit, pleasant, engaging and confident. Parents - you should be proud!*

Mr Eastham thanked everyone for their efforts on the night, but also recognised the hard work beforehand that goes into making these events such a success. We hope the event inspired our visitors and we look forward to meeting them again should they choose Priory as their first choice school.



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# Priory Celebrates Black History Month

Two of Priory's Head Prefects, Tarela and Hiylie, have planned a range of activities beginning next week to raise awareness of Black History Month including assemblies, food sales and music.

In the last school year Class of 2025 DaMari, who will be returning for the event, asked Principal Mr Eastham if he could promote Black History Month more at Priory, helping to educate pupils about iconic Black people in history and their influence. Now Tarela and Hiylie have taken up the baton and have been putting a lot of thought into their plans for this important month.

Tarela said: "We have discussed our ideas with Mrs Qadri who runs the Culture Club in school which we attend.



"We plan to talk in assemblies for Years 7-10 about Black history and also invite guest speakers in. I think people need to be educated on the cultures that are all around them and the history behind them.

"We will have a bake sale on October 17th where we will sell Ghanaian and Caribbean food which a group of us will make. We have other activities planned through the week as well."

Music played through the speakers at break and lunch will be from Black musicians, including Sam Cooke, Whitney Houston, Luther Vandross and Aretha Franklin.

Culture Club runs every Wednesday lunchtime in Hex 1 and everyone is welcome.



# Year 7 Inspired by Natural High Assembly

On Tuesday, Year 7 pupils took part in a powerful and engaging assembly led by David Graham. David is the founder of the Natural High programme, a nationally recognised initiative that encourages young people to find fulfilment through their own talents and interests, rather than through harmful behaviours or substances.

Delivered through a lively mix of music, competitions, and pupil interaction, the 75 minute session was designed to be both fun and thought-provoking. Pupils were asked to bring a pen to take part in the interactive MIND Competition, and the atmosphere was buzzing with energy as David performed a selection of songs and encouraged pupils to reflect on their own strengths and choices.

Supported by Police Authorities, Local Education Authorities, Drug Action Teams, Councils and Community Safety Partnerships, Natural High has received praise from schools and education professionals across the UK.

Feedback from other schools has highlighted the programme's ability to engage students, promote positivity, and reinforce school values - and our pupils were no exception.

Ms Smith, Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, said: "We were pleased to welcome David to Priory. His message aligns perfectly with our commitment to personal development and wellbeing, and it was fantastic to see our Year 7s so engaged and enthusiastic."

Mrs Farley, Head of Year 7, added: "The pupils really enjoyed the assembly, telling me that it was 'inspiring', 'fun' and 'really, really good'."

"There was lots of pupil participation and they were engaged throughout. They especially enjoyed the dancing and the games."

"The session left a thought-provoking and lasting impression on our Year 7 pupils, and we're proud to continue offering opportunities that inspire positive choices and personal growth."



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## Sport for All: A Day of Inclusion and Leadership at Priory

A sports inclusion event for primary schools was held at Penwortham Primary Academy on Tuesday, 7th October, bringing together pupils from across the local area.

A total of 11 primary schools participated in the event, which celebrated diversity and teamwork through a variety of engaging sports activities.

The children had the opportunity to try out a range of inclusive sports, including dodgeball, boccia, golf, and even axe throwing - each designed to encourage participation, fun, and collaboration regardless of ability or experience.

Supporting the event were 14 Year 8 students, who played a vital role in helping to run the activities.

Mr Hankin, Active Health Officer, said, "Their enthusiasm, leadership, and teamwork were outstanding, and they did a fantastic job ensuring the day ran smoothly and that all participants felt welcome and included."



Over the course of the year we host and assist in the running of a number of high profile, primary school sports events. These events engage our students to develop leadership skills required of the roles by helping to run them; officiating, scoring or acting as young leaders, whilst allowing primary pupils and their parents to experience our school's facilities.



# Former Pupil Officially Opens 'The Nest' - A Hub for SEND and Emotional Support

**Class of 2025 Daniel McCall returned to Priory to officially open the new SEND and well-being facility, the Nest.**

The Nest stands for Nurture, Encourage, Support and Talk and it's a room dedicated to supporting and developing the social and emotional needs of our young people.

Daniel, who took GCSE Art, donated one of his paintings to be displayed in the room.

ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) Mrs Eastham said: "We asked Daniel to paint a calming picture, including nature and tranquil colours, and what he produced was outstanding."

"We decorated the room thanks to a £3000 grant from the Crescent Purchasing Consortium and their 'Give Back' grant funding which included a new soft seating area as well as a new meeting table and chairs."

A range of people will use the Nest, including the school nurse every alternate Monday (Medical referrals via Mrs Holland plus lunchtime drop-ins); Compass Bloom, a mental health charity in school every Tuesday (Referrals via Mrs Willis, Family Support Manager); ELSA sessions which run every Wednesday (Referrals via Mrs Holland) and School Counsellor sessions will be held Thursdays and Fridays (Referrals via Mr Sipton).



SENCo Mrs Holland said: "This was a Head of Year room which was vacant on our pastoral corridor so it was ideal to transform it into the Nest."

"Before this, our SEND and well-being sessions could be held in any room on our corridor but now this is a dedicated place where pupils know where to come to."

Daniel said: "I worked on my painting on and off for four weeks. It's nice to see it in the room."

# Year 9 Embarks on Chinese Language and Culture Programme in Collaboration with UCLan



Eleven Year 9 pupils have been given an amazing chance to learn all about Chinese Language and Culture, in lessons delivered in school by UCLan.

Teacher Mia Liu will come into school every week and pupils will explore one of the world's most widely spoken languages as well as learning about Chinese traditions and culture.

The course, organised by Head of Languages, Mrs Scully, will run for the full academic year with pupils able to sit the Chinese Youth Test (YCT), a nationally recognised qualification for young learners of Chinese.

Mrs Scully, explained, "As a school, we chose to collaborate with UCLan to deliver Chinese language and culture lessons because it offers our pupils a unique opportunity to broaden their global understanding, experience an exciting new language, and develop valuable cultural awareness for the future. What a fantastic opportunity!"



Amna said: "Some of my family are bilingual and I like languages so this was interesting for me. I want to push myself and this is different."

Corey said: "I really wanted to do this course. It sounds interesting and it's an opportunity to learn something new. I can't speak any other language so this will be helpful and I can also learn about new cultures."

Marshall said: "Some of my family are Chinese so it will be good for me to speak to them in their first language."

Pharaoh said: "It's cool and I am hoping it will help me in the future."

Jacob said: "I want to be a pilot and you need a language for that and also it's a new skill for my Duke of Edinburgh award."

Charlie said: "I want to go into business and imagine I will have Chinese clients so this will be useful!"

Holly added: "I have cousins who live in Hong Kong so this was appealing for me."

# A Creative Legacy For Agnes With New House Designs for Priory

**Class of 2025 Agnes has used her artistic talents to create new logos for our four Houses – and they look amazing!**

Historically, the school has had creatures linked to its Houses - Calder Cats, Douglas Dragons, Hodder Hornets and Ribble Rhinos.

Last year, the decision was made to reintroduce these mascots, and pupils were invited to submit design ideas.

Following initial interest, Agnes who was in Year 11 at the time, was asked to create all four designs to ensure a consistent visual style. Her hand-drawn illustrations were met with enthusiasm and approved by pupils and staff alike.



Since this point Ms Smith, with her design background, and Mr Oakes with his graphics skills have been developing the logos further to suit a variety of applications such as House badges, pull-up banners and school merchandise.

Agnes, now studying at the Lancaster School of Maths, said: “They were having a badge competition as Ms Smith wanted them all looking modern.”

“Humanities teacher Mrs Cauchi, a House Leader, asked me to update ‘Douglas’. Then it was suggested I do them all!”

“I love art, although I don’t really think I am that good at it, so I did them all by hand.”

ICT Technician, Mr Oakes said, “They needed a few tweaks so they could be used on the digital signage and the school had them made into badges.”



“I am really impressed with Agnes’ design. They look so good.”

Agnes concluded: “I am proud they will be used for years to come. It’s a nice legacy.”

Badges have been distributed to pupils and staff, and are now part of the school uniform.

*Thank you to our Year 8 models - Emeli P, Luna C, James McK and Bobby W.*



# Year 8 Enjoy Spooky Biscuit Creations at Mrs Lockwood's Cookery Club



This month's After School Cookery Club gave our Year 8 pupils the chance to get creative with their Biscuit Showstoppers on a Halloween theme.

Several students had approached Food Technology teacher, Mrs Lockwood, with the idea of making something spooky, and after some discussion, they agreed on decorated biscuits as the perfect seasonal treat.

As always, pupils were enthusiastic and eager to develop their culinary skills. Mrs Lockwood was impressed with their baking abilities, and the biscuits tasted as good as they looked!

We've managed to grab Mrs Lockwood's trusted biscuit recipe, which has never let her down and continues to be a firm favourite with all.

A big thank you to all the pupils who took part. The next Cookery Club session will take place in November. Keep an eye out in our newsletter or on the Year Group Teams for details.



The After School Cookery Club welcomes suggestions for future sessions, so if you have an idea, let Mrs Lockwood know!



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# Year 11 Swimmer Completes Swim No 1 of her World Record Attempt!



**Divya came to Priory from India for Year 11, having swum for 12 years there.**

In September, Divya completed a remarkable feat in itself, completing the Catalina Channel solo swim in California, covering the 34km stretch in 15 hours and 23 minutes. This makes her the youngest Indian swimmer, at 15, to complete the Catalina Channel solo.

However this is just one of her 'Ocean's Seven Challenge' where she aims to complete the seven world's toughest open-water Channel swims.

Her challenge is named 'Mission Sapt Sagar' with its vision to raise awareness for 'Empowering Girls through Education and Sports.'

Divya, who had literally tested the Catalina Channel waters as part of a six-person relay the two days before her solo attempt, said: "The Pacific was a big test, there were high swells and strong currents. We set off at 11.30pm so it was pitch dark, the water was choppy.



"There were tears and yelling at my dad and I did question myself at times but I kept reminding myself: the

"However when it was sunrise, it was inspirational. I saw dolphins and fish.

"I had my dad and a coach on the boat next to me, along with official observers, and they couldn't touch me. They had to throw food and drink into the water for me.

"There are strong rules – it was only swimming goggles, swimming hat and swimming costume. There was no wetsuit but the temperature wasn't too bad.

"It was mentally hard, after eight hours it was all in my brain but quitting was never an option.

mountains are not moving, I am moving towards them." Divya trains around 10 hours in a pool overall on weekdays, she does gym work every day, and then at weekends she trains at Capernwray, in open water.

"I wanted to swim the English Channel at the start of October but Storm Amy stopped it so I have to wait for the slots to open again."

Divya has high ambitions: "The youngest person to do all seven oceans is a 20-year-old New Zealand girl so I want to break the world record and do them all by the time I am 19. That's the plan.

"I want to highlight female sports and what females can do. Every girl has such potential and can achieve so much if they put their mind to it. I want to empower females."



As well as all this, Divya has also been using her efforts to fundraise for Children In Need and has raised over £1,200.



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# Year 7s Are Embracing Life at Priory

**Priory's new Year 7s have certainly embraced their secondary school life so far!**

Our youngest pupils have completed a half-term and are already sure what their favourite lesson is – most opting for PE which is no surprise! – and they are thriving in their co-curricular clubs.

Parker, who went to Middleforth Primary School, said: "It is different to primary school as you have to get to different classes but I know my way now."

"My favourite subject is PE, I am at Preston North End's Academy at Under 12 level so I enjoy sport."

Jess B said: "I moved here from Wigan so I only knew one person. I feel like I have settled in well, I know my way around and I have made tons of new friends."

"I like football and cross country and attend the after school football club. I want to be a vet in the future."

Sophie said: "I had a tricky start as I sprained my ankle the weekend before I started school so I came here on crutches! I have made a lot of new friends and I enjoy PE the best."

Brynco said: "I love French, Mrs Scully is such a good teacher. She plays games to help us understand it better."

Arthur said: "I like French too! I am enjoying Priory. I like Music, Geography and I love History."

"I like that in break times and lunch times you can do so much, from computing, to going to the library and more. There is a lot of choice. I like the 3D Printing Club too."

Ethan said: "I have been here for over a month now so I have got used to the layout of the school and settled in easily."

Jessica C said: "I like Drama and PE and enjoy Computers."

Heather said: "I am in the production of Annie so that's exciting. I am also in the Pixel Edge Club and 3D Printing Club."

"I enjoy Maths, PE and Drama as well."

Emily, whose mum is Science teacher Mrs Eastham, said: "I like having my mum here as I can go and see her at the break. I like Food Tech and Maths the most."



# Priory Pupils Depart for Icelandic Adventure of a Lifetime



On Thursday morning, a group of excited Priory pupils boarded the coach to Manchester Airport, ready to begin their five-day educational trip to Iceland.

Led by Mr Metcalfe and the Humanities department, the trip promises a packed itinerary exploring Iceland's awe-inspiring landscapes, geothermal wonders, and rich cultural heritage.

The visit is closely linked to the Geography curriculum and offers pupils a unique opportunity to experience learning beyond the classroom from waterfalls and volcanoes to glaciers and geysers.

We'll be sharing updates throughout the trip, courtesy of Mrs Cauchi, so be sure to follow our social media channels to keep up with their adventures.

We wish the group a safe journey and a truly unforgettable experience!



Facebook [PriorySTC](#)

Instagram [penworthampriory](#)



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# Year 11 College MEGA Day Inspires Futures in Digital and Technology



On Wednesday 8 October, a group of enthusiastic Year 11 students took part in an exciting MEGA Day at Runshaw College, designed to ignite interest in the fast-growing digital and technology sectors.

The event was delivered by the award-winning IN4 Group, in partnership with Lancashire County Council, and offered students a unique opportunity to explore future-focused careers in a hands-on, engaging environment.

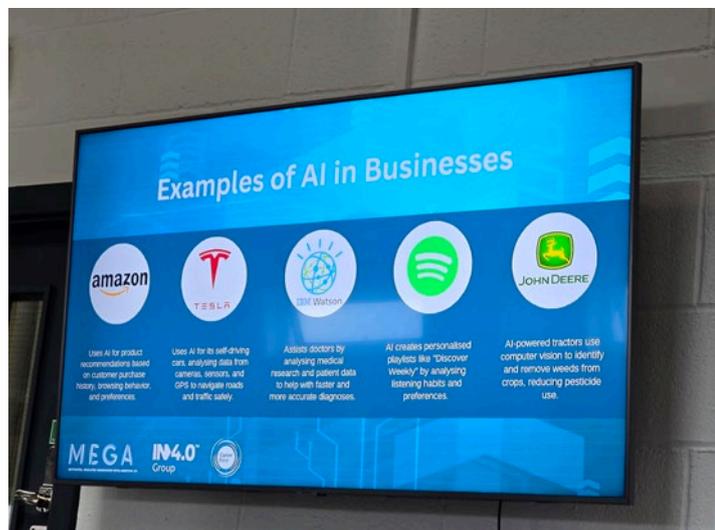
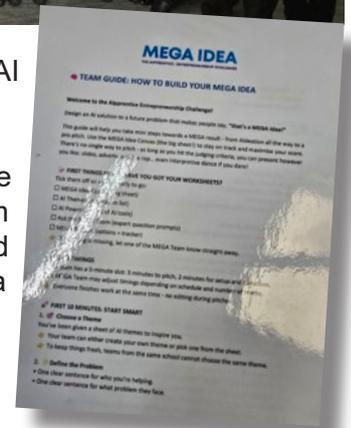
The MEGA Day was fully funded with our students arriving ready to dive into the world of artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital innovation.

The day began with a warm welcome and a guided tour of the college's impressive facilities, giving students a glimpse into the opportunities available for further study and career development. This was

followed by an introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI), where students learned how AI is transforming industries and reshaping the future of work.

Working in teams, students were challenged to become AI Entrepreneurs for the day. Their task? To design an innovative AI-powered solution to a real-world problem set by industry professionals. Through a mix of ideation, digital tool integration, and collaborative thinking, students developed their ideas and prepared to pitch them in a high-energy Dragon's Den-style showdown.

The day also featured a fun Kahoot quiz to reinforce key AI concepts, and plenty of



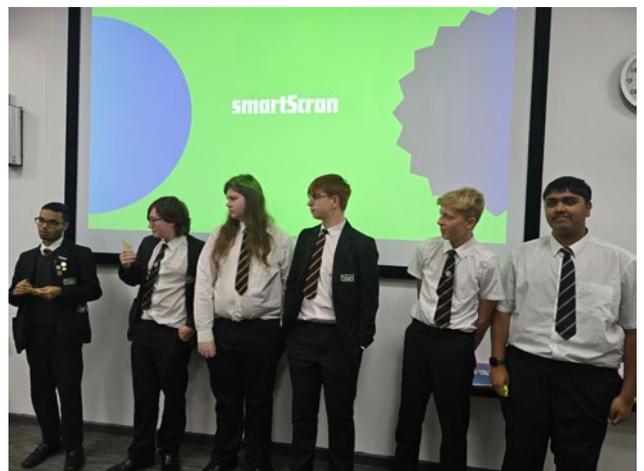
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time for teamwork and creativity. In the final session, students presented their pitches to a panel of business, education, and local representatives, showcasing their enterprise, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Awards were given to celebrate outstanding ideas and teamwork, and students returned to school buzzing with inspiration and new knowledge.

Head of ICT & Computing, Mrs Qadri, said, "The MEGA Day not only helped raise aspirations but also equipped our students with valuable digital skills and insights into exciting career pathways in technology and innovation.

"I'm incredibly proud of Year 11 for their enthusiasm, creativity, and teamwork throughout the day. Events like these play a vital role in helping young people make informed decisions about their futures, and we look forward to seeing where their digital journeys take them next!"



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# Year 11 Historians Explore the Gruesome Past at Thackray Medical Museum



REPORT BY MRS CAUCHI, HUMANITIES TEACHER

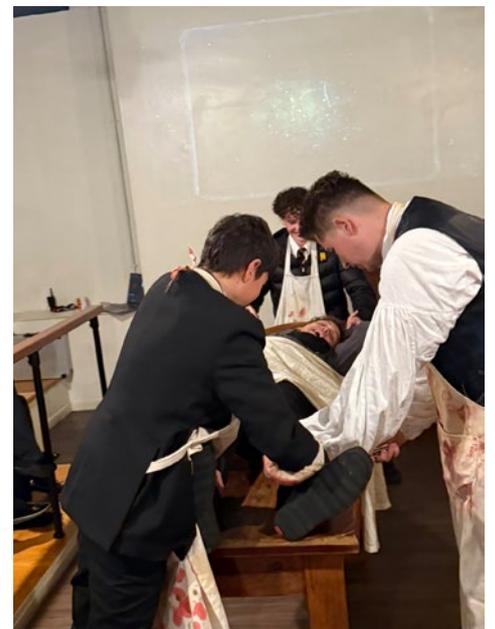
**Our Year 11 GCSE History students recently enjoyed an unforgettable trip to the Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds, where they explored the fascinating and often gruesome history of healthcare.**

The museum offers immersive galleries that chart the evolution of medicine; from grimy Victorian streets to modern-day medical breakthroughs. Pupils wandered through mock alleyways of 19th-century Leeds, visited a seventies-style sexual health clinic, and discovered how the world responds to medical crises. They also had the chance to witness the innovations that have shaped how we care for ourselves and each other.

A highlight of the visit was a hands-on workshop on the History of Surgery, where pupils stepped back in time to experience a Victorian operating theatre. Leevi F-W, Oli W, and Ellis T took on their roles with enthusiasm and skill - Leevi as the screaming patient, and Ellis and Oli as the trusted surgeons. The quick 30-second surgery vividly demonstrated the horrors of medical practice in the Victorian era, complete with the unforgettable smell of rotting flesh and barbecue to add to the realism. It's safe to say this is an experience they won't forget in a hurry!



The museum was excellent and the trip tied in perfectly with the GCSE curriculum unit - Britain: Health and the People. As pupils now reach the end of their Medicine Through Time topic, this visit provided a valuable and engaging summary of key ideas. We encourage all students to continue reviewing this material as we begin our final topic: Elizabethan England.



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# Year 7 Science Club Lights Up With Colourful Flame Tests

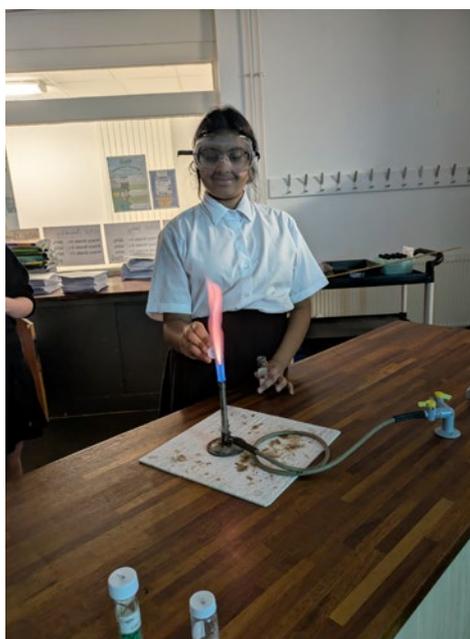


Science Club is back this half term, and what better way to kick things off during Bonfire week than with a dazzling display of flame tests?

Open to all Year 7 pupils, the club explored how different metal ions produce distinctive flame colours - a classic experiment that combines chemistry with creativity. Pupils applied the skills they've been developing in lessons, including the safe use of Bunsen burners, to carry out the tests confidently.

Assistant Head of Science, Mrs Potter, said, "The activity was a great way to embed the skills they need in lessons as well an enjoyable practical to participate in. Most of the pupils thought the green flame was the most impressive but as you can see, they produced a range of colours."

Science Club runs every Tuesday after school in the Science department with Mrs Potter. All Year 7 pupils are welcome. Come along and ignite your curiosity!



Learn to succeed

# Year 10 Celebrate Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award Success



On Thursday, 6 November, we proudly celebrated the achievements of 47 Year 10 pupils who have successfully completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Parents were invited to join an evening event which marked the culmination of months of dedication, resilience, personal growth and development. Supporting the event were three Year 11 pupils currently working towards their Silver Award, who helped as part of their own volunteering requirement.

The audience was treated to a video montage showcasing the pupils' expedition, which took place in June. This provided parents with a glimpse into the various activities and challenges the pupils faced and overcame during their two-day expedition at Rivington.

The prestigious Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award requires students to complete three sections: volunteering, physical fitness, and learning a new skill. Our pupils excelled in all areas, as well as demonstrating their commitment and willingness to embrace outdoor adventure.



After receiving their pin badges and bronze embossed certificates from Principal Mr Eastham, pupils enjoyed a glass of celebratory juice and posed for souvenir photographs - a fitting way to recognise their hard work.

Humanities Teacher and Duke of Edinburgh Co-ordinator, Mrs Cauchi said: "We are incredibly proud of our pupils for completing their Bronze Award. It's a fantastic achievement that demonstrates determination, teamwork, and a drive to step outside their comfort zone. These qualities will serve them well in the future, and we hope many will go on to pursue their Silver, or even Gold, award."

As part of the evening, Mrs Cauchi introduced the Silver Award to pupils outlining what it entails: longer volunteering and physical activity commitments, a more challenging expedition, and opportunities to further develop independence and leadership skills.

The Duke of Edinburgh programme is designed to build confidence, resilience, and practical life skills; qualities that prepare young people for future education, employment, and beyond.



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Congratulations to all our Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award recipients

# Childcare Provider Talks

## Apprenticeship Opportunities To Year 11

Year 11 Childcare pupils were treated to an inspiring visit from Ashbridge Nursery last week, a well-established early years provider with sites in Hutton, Walton-le-Dale, Bilsborough, and Cottam.

Our visitor, Jennifer Mitchell shared valuable insights into the fantastic apprenticeship opportunities available at Ashbridge, sparking enthusiasm and curiosity among our pupils. The nursery provider offers a comprehensive training programme designed for school leavers, providing full-time placements that combine hands-on experience with structured learning. Pupils work towards Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in Early Years Practice, gaining the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a childcare setting. Most impressively, successful apprentices are guaranteed a permanent offer of employment upon completion of their training.



Childcare teacher and SENCo, Mrs Holland, commented, "Ashbridge offers fantastic opportunities for our school leavers. We have had previous students who have moved onto their Apprenticeships following completion of the Childcare and Development qualifications with us and now have established careers within the childcare setting."

To further support pupils in making informed decisions, Jennifer has kindly invited the group to visit Ashbridge's Hutton site in early December. This visit will allow pupils to see the nursery in action and gain a deeper understanding of the day-to-day responsibilities and rewards of working in early years education.

One of our Childcare pupils, Pheobe, shared her thoughts following the session: "I found the session really informative and I was previously looking at continuing my childcare studies at college, but I am considering applying for one of the apprenticeship places now I know more about it."

We're proud to see our pupils exploring exciting career pathways and grateful to Ashbridge for their continued support and partnership.



# Remembrance at Priory



In remembrance of those who served and lost their lives in conflict, last Sunday our head prefects represented Priory at Penwortham's Remembrance service.

Accompanied by Head of Year 11, Mrs Eastham, the four prefects paid their respects at Liverpool Road's war memorial. Kacper and Tarela were asked to read out the names of Penwortham's WWII fallen, and Yasmine and Hiylie laid a wreath on behalf of the school.

"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for their tomorrow we gave our today."

#WeWillRememberThem  
#Remembrance #LestWeForget



## What is Armistice?

**"WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?"**

Armistice was an agreement to end the fighting of the First World War as a prelude to peace negotiations. It began at 11am on 11 November 1918.

Armistice is Latin for to stand (still) arms.

To this day we mark Armistice Day around the United Kingdom with a two minute silence at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month.

"At the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month – we will remember them."



# Compost Corner

## Autumn Update

**Priory's gardens are our pride and joy and award-winning gardener Mr Farron wants to let parents and pupils know what to expect each month as the landscape changes.**

Season's greetings fellow composters! Well, what an amazing and challenging year it has been with an extremely hot summer and a very wet autumn. However the weather does bring advantages for the new year, with extended root growth and the rain falling at the right time for seeds to germinate for the growing season of spring and autumn.

So what's new; we welcomed the arrival of Eddie the Eagle who displays his seniority through the gardens and also the completion of the courtyard featuring olive trees, rock features and a lily which will flower through spring, summer and autumn.



**Tips to do now** - collect as many fallen leaves as possible and put into a bin liner adding a drop of water and tie the top to leave to decompose to mid spring. This creates a truly wonderful composted mixture of nutrients which is ideal for all plants containing nitrogen, calcium and potassium. From this you will be thrilled with the results that the plants show. It is time also to prune shrubs, plants and roses and also remember to cover them up before winter comes.

Consider planting for the new year for early colour and show. Plant bulbs of daffodils, crocus, allium, cyclamen, anemone and chionodoxa - all of which you will notice in the Priory gardens come early spring.

As Christmas is not too far off may I suggest alternatives as presents that will last for many Christmases to come. Why not try a gift that will last a lifetime. May I suggest perennial roses, my favourite Rosa Sunny Sky (Rose of the earth 2016). The strong stemmed flower produces a long succession of lightly scented summer flowers; without a doubt a stunner. Rosa-Simply Gorgeous has deep lavender buds that reveal unusual toned flowers with a heavy fragrance. An alternative is Echinacea Rainbow Marcella which has an astonishing variety of



colours that open with tangerine, orange and red creating a visual feast.

### Design and Development This Year

The Boulevard that stretches from the entrance of the Priory Gardens to the corridors of Science and English has been well received by giving a pleasant walk through for all to see, showing the various colours and structure of the many plants from early spring to winter.

The Courtyard now allows all who pass a picture of serenity and grace and come spring the emergence of a very special water lily will emerge to the top of the still pond giving the final touch to this construction. I hope you like and enjoy the experience of Priory's growth.



In other news, last year I arranged a special off-site visit to a local garden nursery to show our interested pupils the making of Christmas wreaths. The owner of Newgate Nurseries and staff welcomed Mrs Massey's class and showed them the materials used to construct the wreaths. The owner asked the pupils to choose a Christmas tree for display in the main hall. This was a wonderful gesture and I have agreed with Mr Cookson that this agreement will continue for years to come. The pupils, with the guidance of myself and Mrs Massey, will help with this very happy chore of decorating the tree.

To conclude, I would like to thank the pupils especially for their kind remarks and showing respect to our gardens here at Priory. I look forward to the season ahead.

ADESTE FIDELES  
LAETI TRIUMPHANT

Mr C Farron  
Head Gardener

PS Keep blooming,  
everyone!



# Our Unforgettable Adventure in Iceland



Over October half term, a group of Priory pupils embarked on an extraordinary five-day journey to the land of fire and ice, where dramatic landscapes meet fascinating culture.

Led by Mr Metcalfe and the Humanities team, the trip to Iceland offered students the chance to experience geography and science in action, from thundering waterfalls and volcanic craters to geothermal wonders and glacial lagoons.

This article takes you through the journal of their adventure, in the words of Mrs Cauchi, showcasing the incredible sights, hands-on learning, and unforgettable memories that made this trip so special.

## DAY 1

After setting off from school yesterday, our group of 43 students and staff arrived safely in Iceland last night following a short delay. The pupils were exemplary throughout the journey — a real credit to the school.



After checking into the hotel and enjoying a quick meatball pasta tea, we headed straight out on an Aurora Hunt... and what a start to the trip! A truly spectacular display of the Northern Lights - a bucket list moment for everyone.

## DAY 2

Another incredible day of exploring! After breakfast, we set off for the famous Golden Circle tour with a local guide. First stop — Hellisheidi Power Station, where students learned how Iceland harnesses geothermal energy to power the nation.



Next, we headed to the Secret Lagoon for a magical dip in the outdoor natural hot springs — a truly unforgettable experience! The day continued with visits to the breathtaking Gullfoss Waterfall and the spectacular Geyser, which didn't disappoint with its dramatic blow eruptions.



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To end the tour, we visited Thingvellir National Park where students had the chance to stand directly between the two tectonic plates of North America and Eurasia.



Walking between these colossal plates as the sun set over the frozen Icelandic landscape was a super way to end the tour. We may have even had a little snowball fight!

After dinner, we took a peaceful evening walk along Reykjavik's harbour, finishing at the stunning Hallgrímskirkja Church — the perfect end to a busy yet awe-inspiring day.

### DAY 3

Our South Shore Adventure was nothing short of spectacular! First stop — the mighty Skógafoss Waterfall, where everyone got completely drenched but loved every minute of it. From there, we explored the dramatic black sands of Reynisfjara, marvelling at the towering basalt columns and incredible coastal scenery.

We then took an unforgettable glacier walk at Sólheimajökull — its sheer size and icy formations left everyone amazed. We rounded off the tour with a visit to the stunning Seljalandsfoss Waterfall, taking in the breathtaking views behind the curtain of water.

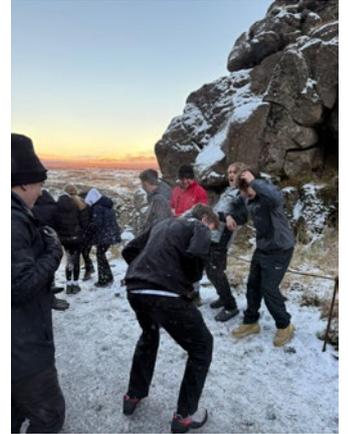
After evening meal there was still energy to spare for a late-night swim in the local outdoor geothermal baths in the heavy snowfall — the perfect way to unwind after another action-packed day! A night to truly remember for all.



### DAY 4

Our final day in Iceland was the perfect way to round off an unforgettable trip. The morning began with some free time in Reykjavík, where students explored the city, sampled local delicacies and pastries, and soaked up the vibrant Icelandic culture.

Next, we made our way to the world-famous Blue Lagoon — a real highlight of the trip. Students were fantastic, relaxing in the milky-blue geothermal waters and enjoying the iconic silica mud masks.



On the journey back, an unexpected stop at the 2024 Grindavík lava flow became a real favourite — witnessing the raw power of nature and the lasting impact of volcanic activity was both fascinating and humbling. Touching recent volcanic lava flows was something else!

A few more bucket-list moments ticked off, and a truly memorable way to end our Iceland adventure — seeing first-hand the beauty and power of our planet.





## DAY 5 HOME

Home safe from Iceland!

We've safely returned from an absolutely breathtaking few days in Iceland, and what an adventure it's been! The students were truly exemplary throughout, embracing every part of the trip — and creating lifelong memories along the way.



The weather was kind to us throughout, with crisp, clear evenings that rewarded us with glimpses of the Northern Lights, rounding off what was a truly once-in-a-lifetime trip.



A huge well done to all the students for representing Priory so brilliantly.

*Mr Metcalfe, Mrs Cavchi, Mr Eastham,  
Mr Eccles, Mrs Ham, Mrs Kurvitts*



*Learn to succeed*

# Empowering Pupils, Building Futures: Peer Mentor Training at Priory



ASDAN Peer Mentor training has proved so popular that we have two cohorts of Year 10 pupils undergoing training each year.

It's two days of training led by Tahir Mahmood and Gemma Appleton from 'We Are With You', commissioned by Lancashire County Council.

Peer Mentoring can support children and young people by:

- Enhancing social competence
- Building security within the setting and wider community by realising their worth as social beings
- Improving attendance and educational attainment
- Developing friendship skills in a positive environment



During the sessions pupils will develop their listening and team working skills, they will discuss scenarios that they could come across and how they can manage them effectively. Among other tasks, pupils participate in role plays and communication challenges across five strands to gain a 10 hour ASDAN accredited certificate. They also bag themselves a £25 gift voucher as a reward.

Tahir said: "We deliver a Peer Mentor short course to Year 10 pupils who are aspiring to be prefects or Head Boys or Girls.

"It's teaching the skills they need to be a prefect and the issues they may come across. It's accredited by ASDAN and delivered by us. It's around 10 hours and it's teaching pupils skills to use in school but also skills to take into their life and into their careers."

Jacob said: "I took this course because I thought it would look good on my CV. We have been through

ice breakers so far – ways to introduce yourself to people."

Sophie said: "I have signed up to this course because I want to be a prefect."

Lainie added: "I am learning how to communicate better, how to talk to people so it isn't awkward, it's a good skill to have."

Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, Ms Smith, added, "At Priory, we always look for opportunities to develop our pupils' life skills and provide leadership experiences. Our current Peer Mentor team has assisted younger pupils in the school, and our new additions will enable us to have more widespread coverage and provide some relief to our Year 11s as they approach their exams".

ASDAN offers nationally recognised qualifications based around the development of personal, social and employability skills, making the course the perfect addition to a pupil's college application or CV.

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# Grassroots Glory as Priory's Pitches Earn Advanced Status

**Priory has some of the best school football pitches in the area to hire out with a Pitch Power Report marking four of the six pitches 'Advanced' – the highest mark!**

The other two have been marked 'good' with Priory's Estates team aiming to have all their pitches with 'Advanced' rating as soon as they can.

It's primarily been down to the hard work of Estates Supervisor Tim Bamber.

He said: "I have been at Priory for five years. I started taking an interest when my son played for Penwortham St Theresa's, one of the clubs that use the school's facilities, and the pitches weren't the best and needed upgrading.

"I talked to Facilities Manager Keith Bolton and we applied for a Football Foundation grant which we got and we were able to receive training and buy equipment.

"We have progressed and improved the pitches over the years and now we get a lot of positive comments about our pitches and it is a big source of pride at school.



"They are used from March-September on weekdays by grassroot teams and, because they are good pitches, they can be used for longer. They are also used at weekends.

"Pitch Power assess our pitches every six months and it's great to see where we have come from, from Poor to Advanced. We do take really good care of them with the time and budget and everyone is proud of how far we have come."

Mr Bolton said: "Both myself and Tim have had training by the Grounds Maintenance Association and attended conferences to learn how we can improve the pitches. We have also received equipment such as a tractor and a robotic line marker.

"The pitches have improved dramatically. It shows we are doing the right things by being graded 'Advanced' on four of our pitches – and we are aiming for all six to reach the top mark!"

Contractual agreements for the use of Priory's grass pitches are currently with Penwortham Town FC, Penwortham St Tereasa's FC, AFC Penwortham, and Kingsfold FC.

The 3G pitch has availability every Wednesday 9-10pm (2 x 7v7 pitches). The 3G can also be available on a Saturday from 2-4pm by arrangement.

In addition to the grass and 3G pitches, Penwortham Priory Academy has a wide range of facilities for hire from conference suites, classrooms, netball courts and a dance studio to a sports hall, gym and hall. For further information, enquiries or to make a booking, please visit the school website at [www.priory.lancs.sch.uk/facility-hire-at-priory](http://www.priory.lancs.sch.uk/facility-hire-at-priory) or email [lettings@priory.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:lettings@priory.lancs.sch.uk)

*Learn to succeed*

# Priory's Food Bank Appeal Meets House Competition



Earlier this month, Priory launched its Food Bank Donations appeal to support families in our local community - and the response so far has been phenomenal.



Donation baskets can be found in the Science department Nucleus, with each representing a House. Pupils have been encouraged to bring in items such as tinned food, cereals, pasta, rice and toiletries.



With the final collection day set for Thursday, 18 December, Mrs Massey will be delivering the donations to Penwortham Food Bank - and with the amount already gathered, she may need to make two trips!

Year 7 have led the way, with Miss Burbidge's 7EW4 collecting over 200 items so far. Pupils have arrived with bags full of thoughtful donations, and parents have shared how their children are learning about value for money by choosing own-brand items to maximise their contributions.



Special commendation goes to Emily E, who generously saved her own money to donate three times! Further recognition goes to Josh P, Oliver L, Imogen R, Eric B, Annabelle W and Archie H for their outstanding generosity.

Mrs Qadri's 7EW1 has also done exceptionally well and posed for photos with their labelled up boxes - very organised guys!

House Leader & Science Teacher, Mrs Massey said, "The generosity shown by our Year 7 pupils has been incredible. They alone have donated more than we've seen in previous years combined, and it's inspiring to see such kindness and community spirit in action."

Let's keep the momentum going - there's still time to donate before 18 December. Which House will top the leaderboard? Every item makes a difference!



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# Priority Leads the Way with Self-Service Dining Innovation

**Priority has transformed the dining experience for its pupils and staff with its groundbreaking self-service system.**

The school is the first in the country to install the innovative touchscreen kiosks through CRB Cunninghams, which makes the whole process of ordering food faster and more efficient.

## Why the Change?

Strategic Business Development Manager Mrs Barker explained: "Myself and Estates Manager Mr Bolton were reviewing our catering system. At Priority, we are always looking at improvements and unique solutions.



"We manage our own in-house catering service and we wanted to cut down the queues at tills and upgrade the whole dining experience for our pupils.

"We spoke to CRB Cunninghams who had already developed a self-scan type kiosk, and together we developed the self-service advance pay system, bringing in new technology ideas, and it's had a massive impact.

## How It Works

"The pupils go to a self-service kiosk and order their food, the cost is charged to their account, they get a receipt and then they go to pick their food up.

"It's a lot smoother, it stops long queues, crowded tills and it improves satisfaction. The faster flow means our pupils also get to make better use of their breaks and lunchtimes.

## Benefits for Everyone

"Our menu changes on a three-weekly rota so we become familiar with what is being ordered, it's great for planning and this avoids food waste. The pupils also have to have money on their account to pay for it so it's eradicated any debt.

"It has made a real difference and has transformed our catering service. It has exceeded our expectations.

"We are the first school to install this type of advance pay system and we have also had other schools coming in to see it, as well as councils and other catering providers."

Mr Bolton said: "It's made a massive difference. From ordering to receiving food it is around 30 seconds. It's technology the pupils use all the time in fast food restaurants so they are already familiar with how it works.

"If we see a way to make it even more streamlined, we feed it back to CRB Cunninghams and they make the necessary adjustments to make the system even better."





## Staff and Pupils Alike Praise The Change

Catering Managers Mrs Billings and Miss Morley both agree it's a huge success. They said: "It makes everything a lot easier, we can keep control of quantities so there is less waste and it also increases uptake as the pupils can come back for anything extra as there are no big queues to tackle. There's a great sense of calm and order in the dining room."

Assistant Principal Mr Gee said: "It's like going from dial-up internet to broadband, the speed is that increased. The new system allows children to order really quickly, get their food, and then have time afterwards to do all the activities that we have in school."

Year 8 Lewis said: "The queues go down really quickly now which means we can do other things in our lunch-time. It's like ordering in McDonald's."

Year 8 Matilda said: "I like it. It's faster and you know how much money you have to spend. There is a good selection of hot food and snacks."

Year 9 Sophia said: "Before, the queue took a long time and now it's much easier."

## Setting a Benchmark

Managing Director at CRB Cunninghams, Adrian Burt, concluded with: "Penwortham Priory Academy has



been an absolute joy to work with. Their forward-thinking leadership and commitment to enhancing school life through innovative technology are clear in everything they do. What has been truly inspiring is how naturally pupils have taken to the kiosks, familiar technology they already use in everyday life, now improving their school mealtimes from the very start.

Priory is a perfect example of what's possible when a school's commitment to giving students the very best experience is paired with the right technology. They've transformed lunchtimes into something students genuinely enjoy and have set a new benchmark for what cashless catering can look like across UK secondary education."

## Showcasing Success

As part of CRB Cunninghams' national campaign to introduce the concept, several Priory pupils and senior leaders recently featured in a professional promotional video. The filming captured real-life use of the system and highlighted how quickly and confidently students adapted to the technology.



The campaign also includes a detailed case study, positioning the school as a leading example of innovation in cashless catering. Both the video and case study will help demonstrate to other schools, councils and outsourced catering companies how this system can transform the dining experience.

You can take a look at the finished case study and video [here](#), along with an article published this week in [Public Sector Catering >>](#)

[www.crbcunninghams.co.uk/case-studies/penwortham-priory-academy-kiosk-success-story/](http://www.crbcunninghams.co.uk/case-studies/penwortham-priory-academy-kiosk-success-story/)

[www.publicsectorcatering.co.uk/in-depth/penwortham-priory-academy-sees-major-rise-school-meal-uptake-lunchtime-transformation](http://www.publicsectorcatering.co.uk/in-depth/penwortham-priory-academy-sees-major-rise-school-meal-uptake-lunchtime-transformation)

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# Priory Runners Excel at South Ribble Cross Country Championships

On Friday, 14 and Saturday, 15 November, Priory pupils represented the school at the South Ribble Schools Cross Country Championships, held at Hutton Grammar School.

Year 10 and 11 runners braved the challenging conditions on Friday afternoon, battling strong winds and rain brought by Hurricane Claudia, while Year 7–9 pupils competed on Saturday morning in much calmer weather.

The event brought together schools from across South Ribble, with pupils selected based on their performance in our inter-house competition. Distances ranged from 2,000m for Year 7 to 3140m for Year 10/11 boys, testing stamina and determination on a muddy, slippery course.

Those finishing in the top ten will now go forward to represent South Ribble at the Lancashire Championships early next year. Well done to Year 7

Belle L who claimed a podium position for second place, alongside top ten places for Year 7 Parker B, Year 8 Eleanor M and Year 9 Hollie L. A special mention also goes to Year 11 Taylor T, who finished 5th in the Year 10/11 boys' race - a fantastic achievement and a testament to his commitment, having represented Priory every year.

Head of PE & Sport, Mr Bullock, said, "Our pupils showed incredible resilience and determination on a tough course, especially those who ran in Friday's stormy conditions. There were some outstanding individual performances, and we're proud of every runner who represented Priory so well. We look forward to seeing our qualifiers compete at the Lancashire stages in the New Year."

Well done to all our runners, you were fantastic ambassadors for Priory!



# Year 9 Discover Languages At Work

In November, Priory hosted its latest 'Make Languages Work' event, a dynamic and inspiring day designed to show Year 9 pupils how learning a language can unlock exciting career opportunities.

As pupils begin to think about their Options, the event is perfectly timed. Head of Languages Mrs Scully explained: "This is the fourth year we've run this event, and every time it gets better. The pupils are so engaged, they ask great questions and really see the relevance of languages to different jobs."

Starting with a presentation from the University of Lancashire's TESOL lecturer, Karen Smith, on the importance of languages, the day was then split into two parts:

There were three workshops delivered by the Confucius Institute at Ulan; two focusing on Chinese language, calligraphy, Tai-chi and traditional painting. The third was a British Sign Language workshop, led by Ricci Collins, who is hearing impaired. Pupils learned basic signs and communicated with Ricci through an interpreter, sitting in complete silence and showing the utmost respect throughout. This powerful session highlighted that language is not only spoken or written, it can also be visual and inclusive.

The second part was a career speed-dating session which proved very popular. The hall was filled with tables and the Year 9 pupils moved around to engage with each of the visiting professionals. There was a huge range of people available

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to chat to about their jobs and the importance of different languages to their roles.

Visitors included Sarah Cutts Translation, specialising in Spanish and French legal and commercial documents; Mr and Mrs Taylor, who work in the food and wine industry; and representatives from the Army, who highlighted the strategic importance of language skills.

Pupils also enjoyed interactive sessions such as a drinks tasting with Mrs Bailey, using authentic phrases, and talks from Mrs Day of Penwortham Primary School about her experience of teaching languages.

Finally, Mrs Small, who leads the Japanese Club every Wednesday at Priory, spoke about the opportunities learning the language brings and the influence of Japanese companies in the UK.

Feedback from guests was overwhelmingly positive, praising the pupils' enthusiasm and behaviour. Mrs Scully added: "There was something to grab everyone's attention, and it really showcased the value of languages beyond the classroom."

Thank you to our Year 10 pupils who supported the event and made our visitors welcome:

Will B, Catherine C,  
Thomas E, Phoebe G,  
Alexis G, Issy T, Zara W,  
Reese L, Sienna W-M,  
Saachi R, Megan B,  
Matthew S.



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# Dinner is Served - Priory Style!

Priory was brimming with festive spirit today when Christmas jumper day coincided with Christmas lunch.

The catering team had been planning the perfect menu for weeks, and it didn't disappoint! Pupils enjoyed a traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings, followed by a scrumptious sticky toffee pudding for dessert. Adding to the fun, Senior Leaders rolled up their sleeves to serve lunch - a Priory tradition that always brings plenty of smiles.



Christmas Jumper Day was more than just festive fun, it was about giving back. Pupils donated £1 to Barnardo's, helping support vulnerable children and families. Combined with recent bake sales and the 'Guess the Teacher' competition, Priory has raised over £400 for the charity this half term.



And the festive fundraising isn't over yet! Tomorrow is House Colours Day, where pupils can wear a top or bottoms in their House colour along with their own clothes. A £1 donation for Derian House is appreciated and can be paid online via SCOPay or passed to form tutors in the morning. Clothing must be sensible and appropriate for the school environment.



Thank you to everyone for your generosity and support.



# Priory in the Community

## Bringing Festive Cheer to Penwortham



Yesterday, singers from all year groups visited Longton Nursing Home and Booth's Supermarket in Penwortham, to perform a selection of Christmas Carols and other Christmas songs.

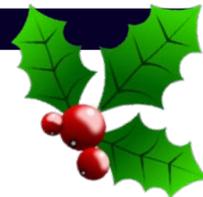
This annual activity gave our pupils the opportunity to perform in different venues and offered the chance for other members of the public to experience musical events themselves who might not ordinarily be able to come into school.

Lead teacher of Music, Mr Taylor commented, "Our presence was very well received yet again this year and it was so pleasing to be able to take such good numbers of pupils to offer some Christmas cheer to both the residents in Longton and the shoppers in Booths, who gave so generously to our extra-curricular music fund. We greatly look forward to going again next year."



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# Christmas Card Competition Winners



You know the festive period is near when we launch our Priory Christmas Card competition and, as always, the standard was sky high!

Former winner, Year 11 Jessica, was one of the judges and she was impressed with our winner, for the second year running, Year 9 Imogen.

Imogen entered a digital design – the first time a digital entry has won this tough competition, which had to be a winter or Christmas theme with a link to Priory.

Imogen said: “I started off with one design on my iPad and I didn’t like it so I changed it at the last minute. I enjoyed doing it and am pleased to win again!

“Last year’s winner was the words Priory with designs inside but this was different.”

Jessica, who is studying GCSE Art and plans to do A-Level Art, said: “We had a lot of entries so it was difficult choosing the winner but Imogen’s was just a bit different and it contained elements of Priory, such as the House mascots and Priory people as the ribbons on the presents. There was good attention to detail.”

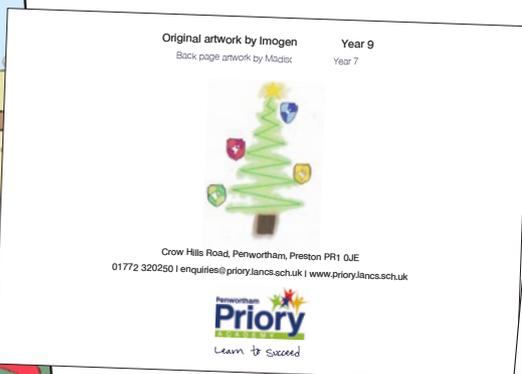


Imogen won a £15 Amazon voucher and, more importantly, her design is the school Christmas Card 2025. Year 7 Madison was runner-up and her contemporary design has been printed on the back of the card.

Madison, who received a £10 Amazon voucher, said: “I was pleased to come second.”

Year 7 Oliver was third and he has already spent his £5 Amazon voucher. “I will buy some food for my cactus plants! I found it interesting to do. I didn’t think I would come in the top three.”

Jessica said: “We liked Madison’s design as it was contemporary and again a bit different. Oliver’s had good pencil work and used a lot of colour, with Priory elements.”



## Year 11 Referees Are On The Ball

Five of our Year 11s will be hoping they don't have to write too much down in their new roles!

Eden, Will, Callum, Ben and Taylor have all qualified through the Lancashire FA to referee matches at junior football league level, at least.



Ben is 16 so he is now a Level 7 qualified referee so he can be the man in the middle in any matches while the rest, until they turn 16, can referee matches a year below their age group.

They are currently officiating in the Central Lancashire Junior Football League, with Taylor also refereeing in the Accrington & District Junior Football League.

They also all play football, four for the Leyland Pirates and Will for Sir Tom Finney.

Ben said: "We went on a three-hour course at night at the Lancashire FA and then spent a full Sunday there. It was good, it inspired me. It was learning from people who are at a good standard."

One of them was former Priory pupil Ed Duckworth who is a professional referee in the English Football League.

Will said he wanted to be a referee because: "It's a chance to earn money!" and Eden agreed with him!



Taylor said: "I wanted to do it as it's just a case of seeing where it can take you. You never know where. For the money as well!"

"It does also give you a different perspective on football when you play it."

Callum said: "I did not have a job so this was a good opportunity to learn something new and make some money. "It isn't always easy though. You do get a few players who answer back so it can be tricky."

Eden said: "You do also get parents shouting at you and it's hard to say anything back to them so you do have to take it. There isn't a lot you can say."

All have had to dish out red and yellow cards and write a few names down in their notebooks so far!

Ben and Taylor were voted in the top 15 junior referees in Lancashire – they are voted by the manager of the teams they officiate over.

# Priory Wins North West in Bloom's 'Secondary School of The Year' Again!



**Our gardener Mr Chris Farron has again won praise from Britain in Bloom after Priory won the North-West Secondary School of the Year for the fourth time!**

Chair of North West in Bloom, Mr Bernard Pendleton, said: "Priory gardens are amazing. They are by far the best Secondary School gardens in the North-West, I would say they are the best in the UK."

"Chris does an absolutely fantastic job. When you come into Priory, it's like being at the RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park!

"Chris is very good in that he shares his knowledge with other local schools."

Mr Farron said: "It's lovely to hear such praise. The pupils comment on our gardens a lot, especially the ones who have been here from Year 7-11 to see how all the Priory gardens have developed."

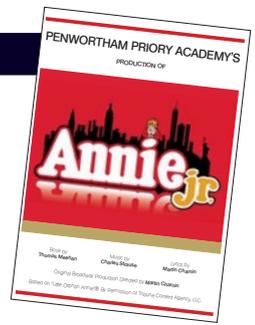
"They say how much they have enjoyed watching the progress and that's so nice to hear."

"It gives me a huge sense of pride to be here, I love coming to work, and the awards are a nice recognition for everyone at Priory."



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# Priory Pupils Bring Broadway Classic 'Annie' to Life



It may be cold outside but the sun certainly came out for our production of Annie, and it was amazing!

Our pupils wowed the audience with the story of orphan Annie who escaped a tough life and was adopted by America's richest family in New York.

The school production is an annual tradition at Priory and a lot of hard work and dedication goes into making them a success. Pupils from all year groups join together to make up a unique family – on stage and backstage – with Lead Teacher of Drama, Miss Howell, leading the talented bunch.



Miss Howell said: "The pupils have been so dedicated and committed. They have turned up for rehearsals and have really enjoyed it. They have made a lot of new friends and I am proud of all of them."

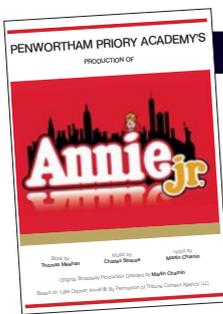
Year 8 Quinn played Annie and sung beautifully. She goes to the Pauline Quirk Musical Academy out of school.

She said: "I was nervous about performing but I enjoyed it. It's my first big lead role and I do want more of them."

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"I have loved playing Miss Hannigan and getting into her character. It's been fun and it's been a welcome break from revising for my GCSEs."

Year 11 Caleb, who is the billionaire Mr Warbucks, said: "The best part has been wearing the suit! It's very smart."



Year 11 Molly, who played Grace, also showed off her exquisite singing voice. She said: "I have private singing lessons in Leyland as it's something I wanted to be better at and my singing has improved."

"I want to do Musical Theatre and have a choice of Blackpool Theatre Collective or Pendleton Sixth Form College after my GCSEs."

"It's been amazing starring in Annie, I love performing in front of an audience."

As well as two evening performances, the cast performed two special matinees; the first for our partner primary schools where the hall was packed out with our young guests.

For the second matinee, on Wednesday we were delighted to entertain senior residents from Penwortham Grange & Lodge Residential Home and Priory Park



Care Home. Visitors enjoyed tea and scones during the interval, served on our finest China by our pupils. Visitors got to meet our cast and were all especially thrilled when one of the stars of the show, Honey the dog, came out to meet them.

The matinee was followed by a short carol service in the Rose Garden against the backdrop of our new Christmas tree. The cast, crew and visitors sang festive classics to the accompanying music provided by Mr Taylor.

From Hudson Street Orphanage to Warbucks' mansion, our talented cast truly brought Annie to life and we've received some amazing feedback from our community...

*"Congratulations to Miss Howell and her team for yet another amazing success."*

*"Amazing!!! What a talented bunch, and such a great performance! Well done everybody, you should be very proud."*

*"Fantastic performance, so much talent on show. Well done everyone."*

*"Thank you from Whitefield Primary for inviting our Year 4 and 5 children to come and watch this fantastic performance. The children said 'it was amazing' and they loved seeing so many Whitefielders in the cast."*

A huge thank you to everyone who came along. We hope you enjoyed the show as much as we did.

As Annie reminds us, 'You're never fully dressed without a smile' – and there were plenty of those last week!



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