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The Oaks Academy Newsletter May 2025

Headteachers Update



Welcome to our Summer Term edition of our school newsletter.

I do hope you enjoy reading this half-term's edition of the school newsletter. We are delighted to share with you the great work we are doing in raising academic standards and enrichment.

As ever at this time of year our Year 11 pupils are preparing for their GCSE Examinations. There has been a considerable effort in recent months by both pupils and staff to ensure that they are prepared as best they can be. This has included 'Elevate-Up' sessions after school each evening and, in addition, holiday and weekend tutorial support. We wish all the pupils success in the forthcoming weeks and look forward to sharing their success on results day in August. Our Year 11 pupils have been invited to prom at the end of June and this will be a great opportunity to round off the year after all their hard work.

We hope you enjoy reading about all the great things happening in our school and as ever many thanks for your ongoing support.

With best wishes.

Peter Kingdom

Headteacher

Whole School Focus: Numeracy

What is numeracy?

It's the ability to understand and use maths in daily life, at home, work or school.

Numeracy doesn't mean complex skills, like algebra, it means being confident enough to use basic maths in real-life situations.

There is no universally agreed definition, but NationalNumeracy.org.uk define numeracy as:

'Numeracy is having the confidence to use basic maths at work and in everyday life'.

To us numeracy means two things: having basic maths skills AND feeling confident in using them.

We believe that it is confidence that unlocks our numeracy skills. Many adults avoid using maths, just because they don't feel confident, or even feel anxious about it. Numeracy is about being confident with the numbers and data that can crop up in daily life.

Numeracy is as much about thinking and reasoning as about 'doing sums'. It means being able to:

- Interpret data, charts and diagrams
- Process information
- Solve problems
- Check answers

- Understand and explain solutions
- Make decisions based on logical thinking and reasoning

Why is numeracy important?

We use maths in every aspect of our lives at work and in practical everyday activities at home and beyond. We use maths when we go shopping or plan a holiday, decide on a mortgage or decorate a room. Good numeracy is essential to us as parents helping our children learn, as patients understanding health information, as citizens making sense of statistics and economic news. Decisions in life are so often based on numerical information; to make the best choices, we need to be numerate.

Numeracy in everyday life

We use numeracy every day in all areas of our lives. Our confidence and ability with numbers impacts us financially, socially, and professionally. It even affects our health and wellbeing.

Some examples of the ways we use maths every day include:

- Working out how many minutes until our train
- Increasing a recipe to serve extra guests
- Checking we've received the right change
- Working out how much to tip in a restaurant
- Setting and keeping to a budget
- Helping children with homework
- Managing our diet and nutrition
- Measuring medicine doses
- Making sense of statistics and graphs in the news

C. Highfield

Curriculum Team Leader - Maths

Numeracy is:	Numeracy is not:
Feeling confident with numbers at work, in the news, on payslip, with your children, and when managing your money.	Feeling pressure to work things out quickly.
Feeling able to apply for a new job, or training, that involves numbers or data.	Memorising methods or times tables.
Using a calculator to work something out, or knowing what to Google... and being able to tell if you get a sensible answer.	Being afraid to get something wrong.
Being confident with time, for instance when planning journeys.	Feeling that you have to work things out in your head.
Understanding what percentages mean, and how they are used.	Being afraid to ask someone else for help.
Knowing when an estimate will do.	Maths that isn't useful in daily life.

How parents can help with maths at home

1

Be positive about maths. Try not to say things like "I can't do maths" or "I hated maths at school" - your child may start to think like that themselves.

2

Point out the maths in everyday life. Include your child in activities involving numbers and measuring, such as shopping, cooking and travelling.

3

Praise your child for effort rather than for being "clever". This shows them that by working hard, they can always improve.

3 tips to help you feel better about maths:

1

Embrace mistakes

It may sound odd, but mistakes make it easier to learn. Every time we get something wrong we understand a bit more about how to get it right next time. Remember, nobody is born an expert - we all have to start somewhere.

2

Start with belief in yourself and the rest will follow

Confidence is the key to all learning. If you give yourself the chance to learn and accept that mistakes are part of the process, your confidence will naturally grow. The first step to improving is believing that you can.

3

Take your time

People are often so keen to find out their results that they rush to answer the questions. Take your time and read the questions thoroughly. There's no timer or progress bar so you can take your time to think. Take it at your own pace, have a break and come back whenever you need to.

Faculty Focus: MfL and Humanities

This half term is always a busy one in the MFL department with the undertaking of speaking exams. The Year 11 Spanish group worked incredibly hard on prepping for their oral exams, spending hours over the bank holiday weekend revising and did themselves and Miss Archer proud in the final exam. As well as this, we have had speaking exams in 6 other languages, including Polish, Portuguese, Persian, Russian, Chinese and Turkish! Well done to all of the pupils who have completed these exams this half term and good luck for all of your upcoming reading, listening and writing exams.

Key Stage 3 and Year 10 have been working on a variety of different topics this half term. Year 7 have studied describing their town and where they live, Year 8 have looked at holidays and describing where they stayed, Year 9 have been studying a visit to Madrid and looking at the city in detail and finally Year 10 have been describing their school including extra-curricular activities and school trips.

Spanish club have also had a busy half term, studying how Easter is celebrated in Spain as well as playing some Spanish playground games in the sunshine such as el escondite (hide and seek), pato, pato, ganso (duck, duck, goose) and las estatuas (red light, green light).

H. Archer

Curriculum Team Leader - MfL and Humanities Faculty

Term 3a has been a very busy term for the History department. As well as getting KS4 ready for their GCSE exams, and embedding key knowledge at KS3, there have also been other elements from the term that are worth celebrating. For example, a keen group of pupils engaged in a multi-school debate competition and narrowly missed out on 1st place. This was a great opportunity and emphasised the excellent teamwork and communication skills that our pupils have developed with their skills builder exercises in form time. As well as this, the history, politics and debating club at the school will also be taking part in Crewe Out Loud at Crewe College. Despite this event being for the creative arts, some humanities pupils will be delivering some speeches about the importance of the arts to society. Much like music, drama and art, the humanities department also wanted to showcase the sophisticated art of public speaking to an audience.

The history department has also been very impressed with the engagement that pupils have shown with VE day this year. To mark the 80th anniversary since the end of World War Two in Europe, the Oaks Academy has successfully worked on remembrance assemblies and form time sessions, 2 minutes silences, activities and games from the 1940s and VE day themed lunchtimes and decorations. An appropriate and respectful way to bring history to life and show support and thanks to those service people, past and present, that have given their lives for democracy and freedom.

B. Jessup

KS3 Co-ordinator of History and Enrichment

Thrive

What is Thrive?

Thrive is an alternative provision which is an evidenced based approach supporting the social and emotional needs of young people. Adolescence can be a challenging and confusing time for our pupils. Thrive helps pupils understand and learn how to manage their emotions. The brain is going through neuronal change at a rapid rate this gives pupils chance to re shape stress regulation systems and support a young person's sense of themselves and their capacities. Understanding brain development and using evidence-based practises helps support young people to be emotionally and mentally healthy, and ready to learn. Thrive's mission is to help children and young people become more emotionally resilient and better placed to engage with life and learning. In thrive students follow a programme tailored to their needs and behaviour, this work is set around critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication and teamwork. A bespoke timetable ensures they still complete core lessons (English, Maths and Science) allowing time for personalised approach to learning. Thrive creates a curriculum that meets academic requirements and nurtures each pupil's unique potential and together we set weekly targets to aim towards if all targets are met not only does the pupil feel successful they win star of the week or if it's more than once in a term they win star of the term.

In Thrive this month we have 2 competitions running:

1. Attendance competition - the winner receives a £10 Amazon voucher
2. The most golden moments

Thrive pupil successes this month are that attendance is up and behaviour has improved resulting in more time outside doing sports, and mindfulness activities.

Thrive's topics this term are:

Celebrating VE day 7th and 8th May

Mental Health Week – 12th-18th May

How Parents can get involved with Thrive at home

Thrive encourages families to get involved at home and this can be done by sparing time for the little things such as eat together as a family, have a movie night, be curious about their hobbies, the school day, sports, baking, art and crafts, walking and exploring. Here are some other Thrive ideas that may interest some families throughout the half term.

We hope you find these activities fun and entertaining. We would love to see any photos of things you have made or places you have visited.

L. Uddin

Thrive



OUR CLASS CONTRACT

WE PROMISE TO...

1. Show respect to everyone and accept ourselves.
2. Attend on time - bring them books and make the most of work time.
3. Show respect to everyone and understand the use.
4. Complete all work set in time.
5. Approach things with a positive attitude.
6. Show respect to all staff.

WE WILL NEVER EVER...

1. Disrespect ourselves.
2. Talk back to the staff.
3. Use mobile phones in lessons.
4. Be late to school or leave without permission.

IF WE FOLLOW THE RULES WE ARE ALLOWED TO...

- ★ Use mobile phones.
- ★ Use the internet.
- ★ Use the internet.
- ★ Use the internet.

14/6/25

CHANGE YOUR WORDS CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

5-4-3-2-1

thrive

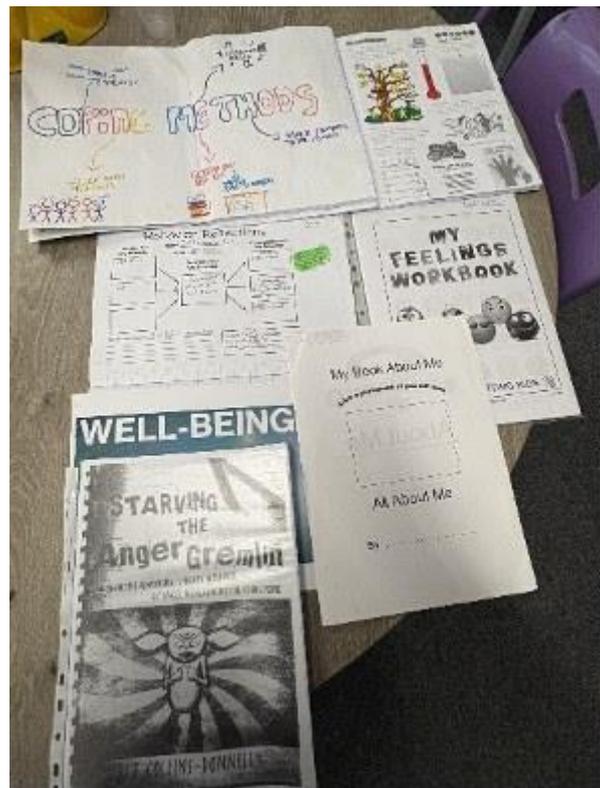
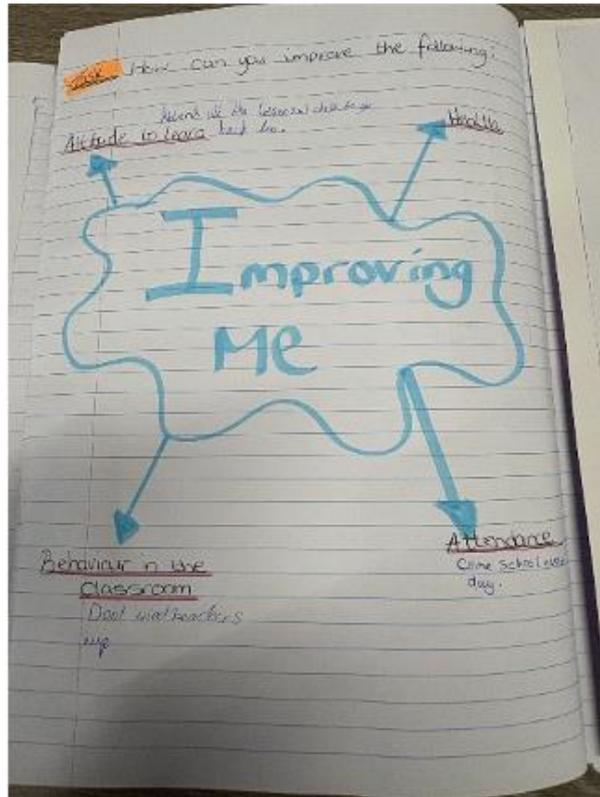
Grounding With 5-4-3-2-1

The 5-4-3-2-1 technique brings teens, or people of any age, back to the present moment through all of their senses.

Notice and say out loud or internally:

- 5 things you can see (pick a colour, for example, 5 blue things)
- 4 sensations you can feel (e.g., your back against the chair, cool air on your hands)
- 3 sounds you can hear
- 2 things you can smell (it's OK to actively smell things, like the laundry detergent on your clothes)
- 1 thing you can taste

Date: _____
 Name: _____
 Class: _____



Attendance chart

Who will win this term!	India	Dem	Kate	Kyleigh	Lily	billij	Lydia	Emma
Week 1	87%	93.3%	91.3%	94.2%	84.1%	92.8%	80%	81.3%
Week 2	87.5%	76.9%	91.7%	94.4%	84.7%	93.1%	77.3%	81.9%
Week 3	87.6%	75.2%	92.0%	94.6%	84.9%	93.3%	79.5%	82.3%
Week 4	86.5%	74.7%	91.6%	94.9%		91.1%	77.7%	83.1%
Week 5								
Week 6								

ATTENDANCE



FOR DELEGATE USE



Using creativity to manage stress and anxiety

Play and arts-based activities act as a vehicle for providing the key relational experiences that a young person needs to develop a healthy sense of self and to learn how to self-regulate. Creative activities help to reduce our levels of stress and can allow us to be present and in the moment, reducing levels of anxiety and enabling us to find calm. Through play and creativity young people can explore what is tolerable in a safe space – they are exploring the things that might cause them to become anxious or stressed. As they use their creativity, they gradually develop a better ability to move between states of being hyper-aroused or being hypo-aroused (more withdrawn and shut down). It is this ability that enables self-regulation. Being able to release some of the energy in our bodies when we are stressed through active creative activities (such as dance, music, drama, puppetry) will help to reduce levels of arousal. Likewise, using creativity (drawing, painting, sewing, model making) can help to raise levels of arousal for young people who are feeling very flat and removed from life. Knowing what the young person enjoys and encouraging them into creating alongside you can be helpful for managing stress and anxiety and for providing them with the sensory feedback that can energise or calm and soothe them.

There are many Thrive® strategies and activities that use the arts to support the development of self-regulation. The following are applicable for all young people who are anxious and stressed. Repeated activities, such as those detailed below, and opportunities within relationship can support the development of a more robust stress-regulation system.

- Do colouring activities to music, either individually or as part of a piece of shared art – draw a picture for young people to colour or choose a design and print it off.
- Invite young people to 'take a pen for a walk' in pairs – one person leads and the other follows. On a large piece of paper, the leader and the follower create lines and patterns together with their pens. At the end of the activity, have them look at the patterns they have created and then create a picture or pictures from their 'pen walks'. Repeat the activity, taking it in turns to lead.
- Drawing or painting to music – they listen to music and draw whatever comes into their mind. You can change the music and do a different drawing or add to the original drawing by playing a different piece of music. They should compare their creations at the end.
- Making no-cook playdough and adding in colours, smells and textures. They could also decorate a container for storing the playdough and then design a game for using the playdough.
- Making slime – provide the ingredients or give them a range of possible ingredients to experiment with.
- Teach finger knitting and see how long they can make their knitting.
- Provide a range of different fidget toys. They decide which ones they like and then design their own, making them out of balloons or gloves, and sand or cornflour, or water or water beads.
- Making a collage of their likes and interests – for example, they could draw an outline of their body and make a life-sized collage, putting all the things that represent them on the outside and some of their thoughts and feelings on the inside. Alternatively, they could make a mask and decorate it.
- Journaling – provide journals and pens and give them time to just write any thoughts, feelings and ideas. You could share one you have started to model the idea, or they could research different types of journaling.
- Listening to different pieces of music and working together to choreograph a dance to one of the pieces. They could decide on a theme for a dance and find some music to go with it, or they could design their own workout (thinking about how fast they want it or what sort of workout you would like), either after listening to some music (and designing the workout to go with the music) or choosing music to go with the already-designed workout. When they have completed the choreography of the dance or workout, they could try it out with a friend or staff member.

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RC HANDOUT Using creativity to manage stress and anxiety/240529 1

FOR DELEGATE USE



Open-ended, process-led activities that are repeated frequently and shared with a trusted adult are most effective when seeking to reduce anxiety and stress. Noticing and allowing space to talk about body language, feelings and triggers can really support a young person while they are being creative. Doing this with a trusted adult alongside provides opportunity for self-discovery, relaxation, exploration and safety.

Let's help every child
thrive 

A parent's guide to creative expression of emotion at home

Often, when a big feeling happens for children and young people, it pops up with no warning. These helpful tips on how to use arts and creativity alongside your children and young people at home will help you find ways to safely express and manage emotions, create 'feel good' brain chemicals, help reduce stressful feelings and develop thinking skills.

These activities are designed for you to do together. This is important as it helps build a strong, supportive relationship, enabling you to explore emotion and develop a shared language for communicating feelings.

Many favourite memories relate to one or more of our senses. For example, during a walk through the woods, the smell of a campfire might stimulate your brain to bring back a memory of a similar time, maybe a cub camp or toasting marshmallows on the fire, in turn this could make you smile or have a warm feeling. All of the activities below will engage different senses and help to develop expressive, emotional language during the activity.

Activities

Key phrases to try out during the activities are: "Show me", "I'm curious about...", "Let's try it together"

Sensory words to try: bright, shiny, dim, sparkly, scary, crunchy, squelchy, hard, soft, cold, warm, slimy, mushy, rough, soapy, sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, fruity. Feel free to add your own words to this list.

Animals and nature

Nature exists as a fun, magical and endless source of calming and soothing. Within nature and in our homes, animals offer an instant source of joy, unconditional love and increase our levels of oxytocin, the love hormone.

Activities to try: Spending time looking, listening, foraging, smelling and touching the things that nature offers us. Just remember to wash hands, remove your rubbish and forage safely. Try sand play, mud play, water play, mini beads, hugging/stroking pets, cloud watching, star gazing, rain drop races, dancing in the rain, running along a beach, walking through the woods. For teenagers, they enjoy seeking out risk taking behaviour and trying new things. The outdoors is great way to enable teens to take calculated risks and push their boundaries to the limits. Fishing, hiking, rock climbing are some great ways to support them in this way.

Sensory exploration

From birth through childhood and beyond, sensory exploration helps to make sense of the world around us by using our senses of tasting, smelling, seeing, touching and hearing. Engaging our senses will help us to learn and retain information well, it is crucial for brain development.

Activities to try: Baking using store cupboard ingredients, kneading bread dough, making a calm bottle, creating a sensory garden/tub, for older children and young people they enjoy making slime, creating new culinary dishes or natural fruity facemasks to invigorate the senses.

Music and movement

Helps to increase body awareness, spatial awareness and co-ordination. This allows children freedom to communicate all sorts of emotions without judgment or expectation. Music can offer us the opportunity to experience loudness, quietness, energy, calm and everything in between.

Activities to try: Dance, percussion, creating playlists linked to a feeling, rough and tumble play, tai chi, yoga, silly walks, silly faces, follow my leader. Music is one of the most fundamental ways we can express emotion, older children and young people could be supported to compile playlists to reflect a range of feelings and emotions. Music has a fundamental impact on the reward pathways of the brain and can trigger 'feel happy' chemicals which can help to calm and regulate.

Drawing and painting

Getting messy is a great way to engage the senses and helps children to create shapes and images for fun and to explore emotion.

Activities to try: Painting rocks, mandala colouring, painting an image to show a feeling, hand or foot painting, landscapes, self portraits.

Our adolescents too need to have a creative outlet to explore emotions, journaling is an excellent way to allow them to express emotions through drawing, scribbling or even painting.

Story telling, writing and drama

Using a puppet to tell a story or act out an event that has happened will help with sequencing, order sorting and problem solving.

Activities to try: Puppet theatre, comfy corner for reading together, writing stories together, telling funny stories.

Make and model

Encouraging children to make something out of nothing will help them to explore sensation, switch on their imagination and feel pride in what they have created.

Activities to try: Junk modelling, play dough, clay, shaving foam shapes.

'It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self.'
Donald Woods Winnicott

Crewe Out Loud

Crewe Out Loud was a fantastic success on Saturday 17th May. Our pupils participated with performances from Choir, piano solos, vocal solos, Drama monologues and duologues and speeches about the importance and value of the arts. We also had Art work on display in the exhibition.

Our pupils were able to perform in a professional theatre and also an amazing outdoor theatre and share their hard work with the local community. They also saw performances from other primary and secondary schools in the area.

We had a fantastic day celebrating the arts.

The pupils who took part are:

Brooke B
Ruby B
Maddy W
Pola H
Dylan S
Rutendo M
Jonah W
Oliver I-B
Teegan W
Bronwyn H
Kamdi P
Chrystabelle G
Chelsea-Blu S
Mythily B
Mert K
Maja B
Maisy T
Charley S
Adam S
Logan W
Victor Z
Cayden N

We also had some amazing art work on display.

E. Wright

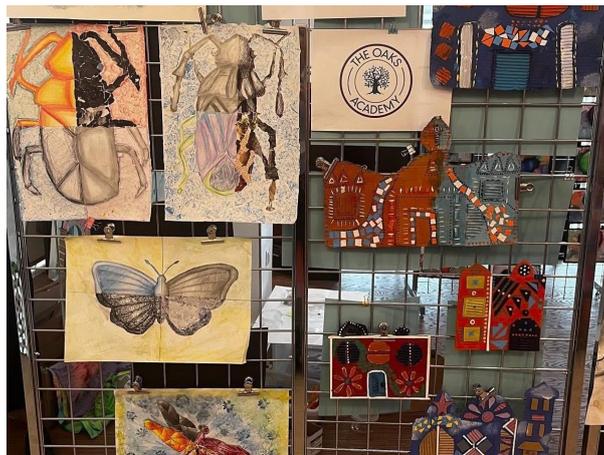
Curriculum Team Leader - Performance and Vocational Faculty











Careers

On Wednesday 23rd April, a group of selected Year 10 pupils took part in a dynamic Revision and Study Skills Session led by the team from Higher Horizons. The workshop was designed to equip pupils with practical strategies for effective revision, time management, and exam preparation - essential tools as they look ahead to their GCSE journey.

The session was highly interactive, giving pupils the opportunity to reflect on their current habits and explore new techniques to support their learning. Pupils engaged enthusiastically, gaining valuable tips on how to stay motivated, organise their workload, and make the most

of their revision time. Mrs Abberley, who helped coordinate the session, commented: *“It was fantastic to see our pupils so engaged and eager to learn new ways to improve their study skills. This workshop has given them a real confidence boost as they begin to think more seriously about their future pathways”*. This inspiring session is part of an ongoing programme with Higher Horizons to raise aspirations and broaden horizons for our pupils. As a follow-up, the same group will be visiting the University of Chester in June. This exciting trip will give pupils a chance to explore a university campus, experience student life, and further develop their understanding of higher education pathways. We’re proud of our Year 10 pupils for their positive attitude and commitment to their future success. Opportunities like these are a fantastic way to build confidence, raise ambitions, and prepare our pupils for the next steps in their academic journey. We also look forward to a number of exciting careers events taking place this summer, giving all pupils the chance to explore a range of future education and employment opportunities:

- 3rd June - Year 10 Chester University visit Year 10 Employee readiness programme - select dates and pupils
- 11th June - Year 10 More Able Keele University visit
- 17th June - Year 10 Made in Crewe Manufacturing employer encounter event - select pupils
- 4th July - Year 10 Secondary college at CCSW
- 17th July - Drop down CHARACTER day all year groups
- Year 9 Pledge Explore visits - select dates and pupils

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development





Parent Survey

We Value Your Feedback – Please Complete Our Parent Survey

We hope this message finds you well. As part of our ongoing efforts to develop our school and provide the best possible experience for pupils and families, we are inviting you to complete our Parent Survey. Your feedback is incredibly important to us. It helps us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve. Whether it's about communication, academics, school culture, or support services, your input plays a vital role in shaping the future of our school community.

The survey will only take a few minutes to complete, and all responses are anonymous. You can access the survey using the link below:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=t5Y2C2Xgm0ap5yVME_VWQGcDykhsgdPjhzh7qTPRshURFo3NDRWWTBMMlpRT0FFOE5LMlIXSUpENS4u

Please complete the survey by Friday 23rd May. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us. Together, we can continue to create a supportive, engaging and successful learning environment for all pupils.

E. Abberley

Assistant Headteacher - Community and Personal Development

Calendar Dates

Here are some upcoming key dates:

- Wednesday 18th June - SEND Parent Evening
- Thursday 26th June - Year 11 Prom
- Friday 4th July - SAC Day
- Friday 4th July - Year 10 Secondary College Day
- Friday 11th July - Trust INSET Day
- Wednesday 16th July and Thursday 17th July - Cultural Capital Days