



NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Issue: 189

Date: 23rd May 2025



Dear all

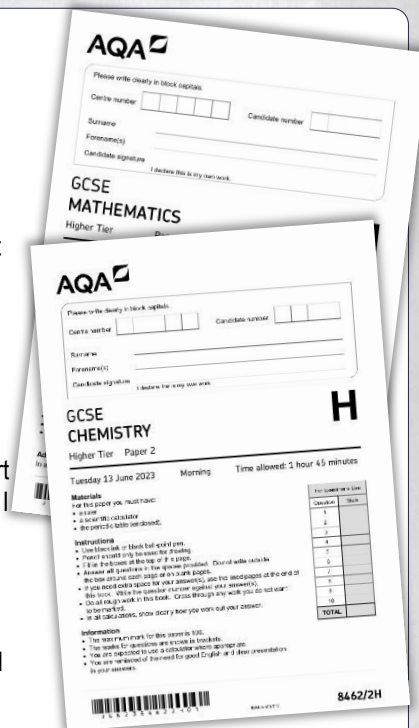
Half term 5 is usually short, always intense and dominated by external examinations. These are now well underway and I am very proud of the way in which most of the students have clearly worked so hard preparing for these exams and how they have applied themselves to doing their very best. The next few weeks heading into June are incredibly busy for the students and it's important to help them pace themselves through the next few weeks. This is definitely a marathon not a sprint and keeping our children focused on each separate paper as it comes up is crucial as is not overthinking exams that have already been sat. Thanks for all of the support that you are clearly giving your children in this phase of their levies and we will do all that we can here to help smooth their experience over the next few weeks. We will continue to do our part here so that the children are cared for and nurtured in these challenging weeks. I read an article last week which was questioning the validity of written public examinations and whether they have a place in the emerging world of AI. At the end of the piece, the author referenced research that showed without doubt that one of the biggest influences of future success, social mobility, a sense of choice in life and fulfilment even, was much higher for people who had achieved their targets in examinations. Working hard now, putting in the time now, keeping firm, appropriate and consistent pressure on now can still bear fruit in the long term as well as on results day.

The logistics and set up for exams is a massive challenge for schools so I'd like to celebrate the dedicated colleagues who make this all work for our children. Our SEND team, Exams team and Site team work closely together so all of the necessary planning, admin and implementation happens as if by magic.

The rise in examination concessions means that now, over a quarter of students now have some form of adjustment in terms of time, venue, size of room, support, coloured paper, scribes, readers etc etc. Making sure that these adjustments are in place and in line with statutory regulations is a massive operation. Megan Walker, our Concessions Officer and a key part of our SEND Team is highly experienced in working closely with the examination boards and regulatory authorities. She also coordinates with the invigilation team and site team to ensure that we are compliant and that our children are well looked after throughout their exams. She and the team around her are an incredible group of people who have the child at the centre of every conversation. They all deserve our respect and gratitude for enriching the lives and supporting the learning of our more vulnerable children.

Because we have a joint use agreement with the leisure centre, each and every morning during the exam season, our site team, led by Carl Wagstaff set up around 250 exam desks and chairs in the sports hall alone and then, so that the hall is safe, clean and tidy for our community to use for sports and events, take them down again the same evening. They also set up and organise a significant number of small rooms and venues for children who have a concession that demands this. The fetching and carrying, set up and take down for the exams is additional to the normal schedule for our site team who always work so hard to keep our school clean, safe, smart and comfortable. I am sure that along with me, you will want to say thanks to them

Scheduling and rooming for examinations, as well as the complex and detailed interactions with exam boards and individual examination entries for all of our children literally takes months of detailed prep where there can not be a single mistake. This is time heavy, thankless, 'invisible' and painstaking. Nevertheless, it underpins the success of every exam and every exam result our children receive so it is very much business critical. Once this is done and the exam season starts, things get really busy. In the hour before each exam begins, our Exam Team, led by our Exams Officer Sam Crompton, make sure that papers have been copied onto specific colours and copies made on large print for children with those concessions. These then need to be quickly and securely delivered to the right venue in time for the start of the exam.



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Holmes Chapel Comprehensive
School & 6th Form College

In addition, equipment for scribes needs to be sorted, concessions checked and invigilators present at the right time, in the right place and with the right instructions. This intricate waggle dance is performed in the time leading up to the start of every single exam and at the end, papers have to be collected and logged, sorted and parceled up in exactly the right format before being sent off for marking. Getting this right means that the exam season runs smoothly and our children, who are at the heart of all of this, hardly see or are aware of what goes on behind the scenes.

Our school is blessed with a team of dedicated non teaching professionals who are often called 'support staff'. This is because they facilitate the work of everyone who teaches and without them, teachers simply could not do their job. They are so much more than 'support' though. These colleagues are in so many ways the foundations that make our school great. They work hard behind the scenes and play their part in ensuring that the school you have chosen for your children runs smoothly each day.

So this week, at the end of a half term, let's give a massive thankyou and offer our gratitude to the three teams I have talked about already and also the Welfare and Safeguarding Teams, the Admin Team, the Finance Team, the Cleaning Team, the Catering Team, the IT team, our Reception staff, our Technicians and the HR Team. These are all valued, important and special colleagues who are a fundamental part of our school and community.

Have a great half term break and look forward to seeing you for the final half term of the school year

Warm regards

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher



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Welcome to HCCS!

Over the past few weeks, our learning support and pastoral team has been out and about visiting local primary schools - and what a fantastic experience it has been! These visits are all about helping Year 6 pupils feel excited and prepared for their journey to secondary school. It's been a joy to meet so many enthusiastic young people.

A **huge thank you to our brilliant student leaders**, who played a key role in each visit. Their confidence, honesty and warmth made a lasting impression as they answered questions, shared advice, and reassured pupils about what to expect in Year 7. They truly embodied our school values of **Learning, Belonging, Pride and Ambition**, and we couldn't be prouder of the way they represented our school.

We also want to sincerely **thank all our primary schools** for the warm welcome we received. It was wonderful to be invited into such friendly and engaging environments. These strong partnerships with our feeder schools are a vital part of supporting a smooth transition for every child.

And the journey doesn't stop here - **we'll be continuing our visits after half term**, with more opportunities to meet future students, answer questions, and share with students what makes Holmes Chapel such an amazing place to learn and grow.

We can't wait to welcome all our new students and parents to our school in a few weeks time!

Our transition days for Year 6 students will take place on 19th and 20th June and our Parent Information Evening will take place on Thursday 26th June. We look forward to having everyone together on those days and seeing even more student leaders take part.





Curriculum Matters

Parents Forum and planning for September.

Now our Year 11s and 13 are well into their exams, we start our process of planning for next year. Our faculties and subjects have been working hard on making clear what we teach, when we teach it and when we assess it. This means that you can understand better what the key knowledge is that your children need to learn and you can support them in that. It means we can ensure we assess everything we expect them to remember - and let you know how well they have done this.

As part of this, we were delighted to welcome so many parents into school on Wednesday evening last week to share some of this work. This gave those who attended the chance to ask questions on behalf of our whole body of parents and carers and to help us fine tune what we are doing. It will also be really helpful in planning our information evenings for next year. There will be lots of exciting news to share with you all then.

For those of you who couldn't attend, Mr Munro and Mr Jones' presentation is [here](#). We will add more information to this page when we come back after half term, most importantly an FAQs document.

In summary, we discussed how we will be sharing **Knowledge Organisers** with students, parents and carers next year so you can all be clear about the knowledge students are expected to learn and remember. We shared how these will tie into our assessment and interim cycles.

We discussed the importance of **homework** - and how this will be a major focus for us as a school on 2025/26. We spoke about how we will be introducing Satchel 1 - a new app - which will replace Google Classroom to help you and your children understand what homework is being set and to clear up issues with Google having simply too much information for parents.

We shared the **calendar**, explained how **parental engagement events** will work next year, including a different approach in the Lower School (Years 7 and 8). We also looked at Mock Results Evenings and Celebration Evenings. All of these events aim to support you in having a closer involvement with our school so that all of our students can succeed in knowing and remembering more of our curriculum.

We will continue to update our [curriculum webpage](#) with all of this information for you.

We're very excited about next September!

Contacting our teaching staff

One issue which emerged on Wednesday was how important parents and carers felt it was to be able to contact class teachers. It can be frustrating for you when you don't know the best way to do this!

Key contact details for teachers are published on this page: <https://www.hccs1978.co.uk/staff-list>. You are able to contact any of our senior or middle leaders directly by clicking on their photo or their name. If you want to contact a teacher about your child's progress in a particular subject, then please contact either the head of subject or the head of faculty. They will decide who is the best person to respond to you. Teaching can be a frenetic job, and this means that teachers cannot respond immediately - unless your concern is urgent, please give them five working days to respond.

Parent forum May 2025



We learn together
We belong to this community
We are proud of ourselves and each other
We have consistently high expectations



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Year 11 School Uniform in Exams

I would like to take this opportunity to praise your children for their excellent effort, behaviour, and positive attitude during the exam period so far. Their focus and determination have been inspiring.

As the school holidays approach, please be reminded that all students must return in full school uniform. This is not only a school requirement but also follows the guidance of Ofqual the exams regulator. Any student not in correct uniform will not be permitted to sit their exams.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.



Alternative Learning Week – July 2025

As you will be aware, July 7th - 11th is not a usual school week but an Alternative Learning Week. Students will be either in school doing a range of alternative activities or on trips. The school day will run with the usual timings and school uniform will be required unless otherwise specified.

Both the Wild Shore and Chester Zoo trips are in the process of being finalised and will appear on Scopay for those who have registered as soon as the final cost have been calculated.

Mon 7th	Tues 8th	Weds 9th	Thurs 10th	Fri 11th
Activity Day Year 7 (in school)	Chester Zoo Year 7&10	Stratford-upon-Avon Year 7/8/9/10/	Jodrell Bank Year 7	Alton Towers Year 7
Alton Towers Year 8	Activity Day Year 8 (in school)	Fishing Years 7/8/9/10/12	Ironbridge Year 7/8	Fishing Years 7/8/9/10/12
Derby Uni Visits Year 12	Food Trip Year 8/10	Alton Towers Year 9	Fishing Years 7/8/9/10/12	Chester Zoo Years 8/9
	Army Skills Year 9 (in school)	Art Gallery Visit Year 10	Wildshore Years 8/9	Drama Workshop Years 8/9/10
	Alton Towers Year 12		Alton Towers Year 10	Army Skills Year 10 (in school)
			Army Skills Year 12 (in school)	



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Drop offs and pick ups at the start and end of the school day



The approach roads to our school and around the estates are narrow and a number of residents have mentioned that traffic has increased and parking is blocking roads. Some have expressed concerns about road safety. Please be mindful of the amount of traffic at the beginning and end of the day around the school and how you might contribute to this. Encouraging our children to walk to school is a healthy way to start the day and arranging a safe drop off and pick up location a little further away will greatly help ease congestion.

Note that in the interest of keeping our children as safe as possible, the existing policy which has been in place for some time is that no vehicles except for the busses can drive onto the school site between 08:25 and 08:40 and 15:10 and 15:25. Thank You in advance



Congratulations to our Year 9 students who have successfully completed the Life Skills Award. This award is promoted by the Youth Sports Trust and is recognition for the qualities that students have developed over the course of the academic year. Alongside completing an online booklet students have been required to contribute in lessons through conversations with staff and also demonstrate the relevant behaviours throughout the year. The award itself focuses on the 4 domains of Physical Literacy; cognitive, social, emotional and physical competence. We are hoping that up to another 100 students pass this award just after half term. So on behalf of the PE faculty, congratulations for your engagement and efforts throughout the year.





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School & 6th Form College



Year 11 Leavers



11AA



11AD



11AM



11HG



11JB



11LB



11MF



11VM



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Holmes Chapel Comprehensive
School & 6th Form College



Careers Corner

Work experience 2026 (current Year 9)

In the next school year the annual one week work experience for Year 10 will take place the w/b 23 March 2026. After half term, parents and students will receive information about how work experience is organised and how students will be prepared for this exciting week in their school journey.

Jobs of the Month



Battle of the Bands

25th June 2025 6pm

What is it?

It's a live music event.

Do I have to be in a band?

No, it just has to be live music. You can do solo/ duo etc

What do you mean by "live"?

Music that is produced on the spot. So play instruments and sing, use decks/ mixing to create music/ use loops to create music.

What can I play?

Anything! You can cover a song, do a medley or play original music

What's in it for me?

As well as getting the chance to perform on a stage with an audience, prizes! As well as £100 for the winners, £50 for 2nd and £25 for 3rd, there will be additional prizes depending on what we see.

Who decides on the prizes?

We will have a judging panel who will keep us all entertained!

How do i sign up?

Just add your contact details ot the poster in the Arts corridor.

How can I watch?

Tickets will be on sale closer to the event.

Where is it taking place?

In the Theatre.



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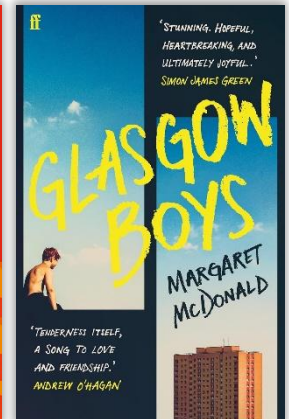
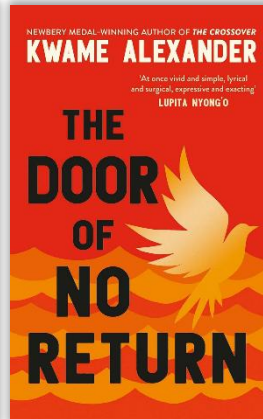
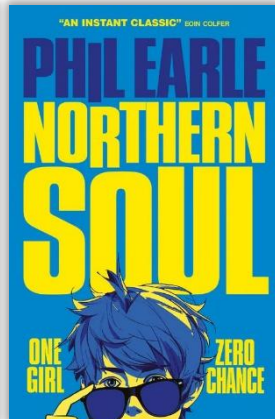
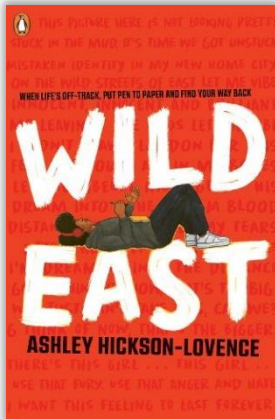
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LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE NEWS

Book Recommendations - Empathy Day Festival - 2nd - 12th June 2025

EmpathyLab has produced a Read for Empathy book collection, with accompanying book guides, annually since 2017. Each title in the collection has been chosen carefully by a panel of judges. The list has been created as a practical tool to help young people learn more about empathy and put it into action. We have chosen four of our favourites from the list, full list can be found at <https://empathylab.uk/RFE/>



Read for Good - Readathon Update

Our Year 7 Readathon is well underway, and our students have made a fantastic start. So far, they have raised an impressive £150.03, read 9,171,987 words, and passed 409 AR quizzes. What a brilliant achievement!

The Readathon will continue until Sunday 15th June, giving students plenty of time to read even more and boost those totals.

If you would like to support their amazing efforts, donations can be made online using the QR code. All monies raised will go directly to Read for Good a fantastic charity who provide storytellers and books into all major hospitals across the UK. Let's keep the momentum going - happy reading, Year 7!



Read
for Good

A Spectacular Celebration at the Cheshire Schools' Book Awards 2025!

This year's Cheshire Schools' Book Awards was a truly unforgettable celebration of reading, creativity, and storytelling, hosted in the magnificent surroundings of the Storyhouse in Chester.

Students and staff from schools across Cheshire came together for a full day event brimming with literary inspiration. The programme featured a stellar line up of author talks from acclaimed writers Ashley Hickson-Lovence, Gavin Extence, Bea Fitzgerald, Manon Steffan Ros, and Nathanael Lessore.

Attendees also enjoyed hands-on, book themed crafts and an exclusive guided tour of the Storyhouse library. The day culminated in the eagerly awaited Awards Ceremony, where students, teachers, and authors came together to celebrate this year's outstanding books and the joy of reading.



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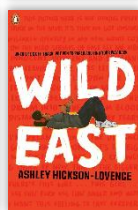
NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive
School & 6th Form College



Congratulations to the winners of the evening!

In the Younger Age Category, Matt Goodfellow took home the top prize with *The Final Year*, with Liz Kessler as runner-up with *Code Name Kingfisher*. In the Older Age Category, Gavin Extence won with *Finding Phoebe*, with Ashley Hickson-Lovence as runner up with *Wild East*. A huge well done to all the authors and shortlisted titles that captivated young readers across Cheshire.



Year 13 Forensics



Recently the Forensic Science students were treated to a visit from officers from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service as part of their work into Fire Investigation.

Covering the chemistry of combustion, different types of fire and how they are extinguished, students were able to gain a first hand understanding on how firefighters tackle fires.

After the talk, the students were given a tour of a fire engine, and got to use the equipment.



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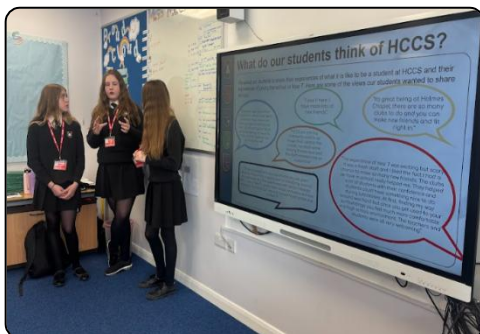
NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Year 7 News

Our Year 7 students have been helping with the transition visits to our primary schools this week. They talked to Year 6 students in their former schools about what life is like at HCCS, answered any questions and reassured them. They were fantastic ambassadors, we are really proud of them all! Well done!



Celebrations

Lily has once again excelled herself with her running. She took part in a local 4 mile race in Moulton and finished 1st Under 16 Female, and won a £25 voucher for her efforts.

The previous week she came 3rd Female in the Middlewich 2k race, where she won another £15 voucher. Lily runs for Vale Royal AC and has also completed 124 Parkruns. Well done Lily!



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Thea was Captain for the U12 Cheshire County Netball team over the weekend. They won the whole tournament winning all matches.

A huge congratulations to our Year 7 football team who won the South Cheshire Final against Shavington 4-1 captained by Zach L

Thanks to Mr Gamble & Mr Pirie for coaching the team.



National Schools Sports Week

As a school we will be celebrating NSSW during the week 16th - 22nd June. Students will be participating in tournaments in their PE lessons, we will have Athlete mentors visiting the school to speak with students in assemblies and run sports masterclass sessions. Afterschool we will be running inter-tutor competitions for some of our students. Watch this space. More information to follow after half term!



NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive
School & 6th Form College



Athletics – South Cheshire Trials

On Tuesday 6th May a group of year 8 and 9 students competed against the other schools in South Cheshire to compete to be the best and win a place to be a part of the South Cheshire Athletics squad. All of the students were fantastic and great ambassadors for the school. It was lovely to see the dedication and enthusiasm in our students, they were an absolute credit. Well done to Dan Morris who not only won his 100m and came 2nd in the 200m but also was scouted by Nantwich Athletics club, such a fantastic achievement.

Results

- Dan M 100m winner / 200m 2nd place
- Emily H 200m winner / 100m 2nd place
- Maddison G 200m 2nd place
- Sophie L 300m 2nd place
- Isabel R 200m 4th place
- Brianna H long jump placed

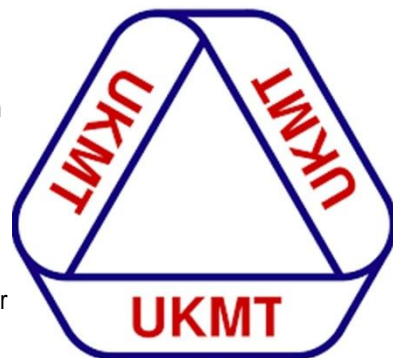


UKMT

Over the Easter holidays the results came in for the follow on rounds from the Intermediate Maths Challenge that students in years 9, 10 and 11 sat earlier on in the year. We had amazing results and these four students should feel very proud of themselves as only the top students in the country are invited to take part.

Nathaniel Russell (Year 11) achieved Silver certificate in the Pink Kangaroo.
Matthew Knox (Year 9) achieved a Silver Certificate and Vincent Pearson (Year 9) achieved a Bronze Certificate in the Grey Kangaroo.

Eric Miao (Year 10) qualified for the Hamilton Mathematical Olympiad and achieved a Certificate of Merit!



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[Click here](#) for the latest news



[Click here](#) to see how much was raised by HCCS for the Easter Chick Appeal



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 **everybody**
HEALTH & LEISURE



SUMMER CELEBRATION

**FREE
ENTRY**

SATURDAY 5 JULY • 10AM - 3PM
HOLMES CHAPEL COMMUNITY CENTRE

FUN FAMILY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING:

- BBQ/Bar
- Bouncy Castle
- Face painter
- JDL mini markets
- Rugby Club Games
- Skate Park
- EB Sports games
- Inflatable darts/nerf gun alley
- MAD Reptiles

everybody.org.uk

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