



Dear Parents and Guardians

It's summer term already and we are heading into the final three months of the school year. The days are longer and the weather has been warmer. Over the last few weeks, some of the refinements we have made to the way we do things at our school have had demonstrable impact. You will all have seen the latest on mobile phones and the increased debate around the suggestion of a legally enforced ban in schools.

Keeping our children safe and building a positive, inclusive, challenging and ambitious learning and social environment is at the core of our decision making. We took early action on the mobile phone issue a few years ago and introduced secure phone lockers for all of our children. We made this move ahead of most other schools with the intention of realising this ambition and to allow our children to be free from the very negative impacts of phone addiction. Recently we have further tightened up on ensuring a phone free day for all and have refined our systems and processes, including sanctions for non compliance, so that more children than ever have the benefit of time away from their phone. I was interviewed this week on Radio Stoke and had the opportunity to talk about how I feel the phone ban I implemented has impacted positively on our children and I was very proud to showcase the success of our ban. Thanks to all of you for supporting us in this and for continuing the work we need to do with children who still have not got the message that a ban means a ban.

It seems to have come around so fast this year but we are already into final exam season. For the year 11s and 13s the next two months are absolutely critical as they work and revise. There has been an incredible amount of support and intervention given over so far to helping children focus on their areas of weakness and also in technical exam prep. This will continue through the full exam season and colleagues here at school will be working hard to offer their support. However, there is a very real need to stress the point that not all revision will be done in school. Whilst some children are busy convincing their folks that this is the case, the fact is that the vast bulk of revision and exam practice happens during independent study after the school day during the evenings and weekends. The simple fact is that the more children revise now, the less challenging their exam season will be. All revision is good revision but children facing exams must focus on areas of weakness. At least two hours of additional revision a night and a significant chunk of the weekend will yield better grades and we must be ambitious for our children and encourage them in every way to aim high. Their futures depend on it.



On a sadder note, over the last few weeks we have had a small but significant spate of fighting in school. Whilst there are a range of parental views on how I sanction this, I need to be clear that I do not tolerate violent behaviour. Fighting is likely to result in a serious sanction for anyone involved. I say this as a statement of fact, not to sound threatening and I hope you understand that in making every effort to keep our children safe, there will never be an instance when I will agree that violent action and intimidating behaviour is an acceptable part of the school day. I am grateful for the support and challenge from those families who have talked to me about this, even when it has involved their children. My intention in taking a hard line on this is about securing a safe, inclusive, calm environment where everyone feels welcome and taken care of.

Summer term is always a busy one and it's the time of year when our children begin to transition to the next stage in their growth and education. This is a time to embrace the energy of seeing our children develop and to guide them in making the very best decisions so that they are safe, happy and fulfilled. I am privileged to be part of your children's lives and to be part of that journey

Warm regards
Nigel Bielby - Executive Headteacher



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Squidgy Fidget Toys

Over recent weeks, an increasing number of students have been bringing squidgy toys, often cubes, into school. These are marketed as fidget toys. While often used with the best intentions, the reality in our classrooms is that such toys are a distraction to the child themselves and those around them. Furthermore, in recent weeks our cleaning staff have had to deal with the contents of these bursting over desks and carpets.



In our school, Learning Support and Upper & Lower Hubs advise that, for specific students, a small amount of Blu Tac serves as an excellent fidget aid. It can provide students with the necessary sensory feedback and/or keep their hands occupied (addressing their need for movement), ultimately helping them to concentrate and focus effectively. The key is that using Blu Tac is not a toy. Where appropriate, it meets the needs of the student, while being discrete and not distracting other learners. Where individual students have permission for this, this information is shared with teachers.

As parents, we ask for your full support in:

- Not allowing your child to go into school, with a squidgy fidget toy - these will now be confiscated items.
- Where a child has permission to use a fidget aid, discuss with them why it is important to use something discreetly.

Thank you for your support.



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Parent Governor Elections



This is a reminder that the deadline to vote in the Parent governor Elections is 12 noon on Tuesday 28th April.

[Click here](#) for the link to the election form.



Singfest Concert



Thank you and well done to all the students who performed in the Singfest concert on the 19th March. We hosted the event here at HCCS, and welcomed singers from Smallwood Primary and Holmes Chapel Primary schools to sing alongside members of our choir, as well as an audience of family and friends.

We sang two big medleys - 'Good to be Me' and 'Celebration', as well as a variety of 'playground' songs.

It was a brilliant event to be part of, and a great opportunity for prospective students and their parents to visit our school.

Mrs Blackburn



Learning Resource Centre News

Book Recommendations

Over the past few weeks, our Literacy Team have been reading a fantastic range of verse novels in their spare time.

Verse novels are a unique form of storytelling. Written in a poetry style, they combine the depth of a novel with the rhythm of poetry. This makes them perfect for students who enjoy fast paced reading, as well as those who may feel more confident tackling shorter, more accessible texts.

Our team has thoroughly enjoyed these titles, and we believe many of our students will too. Whether your child is an avid reader or someone still finding their reading spark, verse novels can be a great way to build confidence and enjoyment in reading.

Here are some of our favourites that we would highly recommend to students:



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Year 7 – Readathon 2026

Our Year 7 students are getting ready to take part in this year's Readathon. This sponsored event is a fantastic opportunity for students to develop their love of reading while also supporting a fantastic charity. Through their efforts, we will be raising money for the charity Read for Good, which provides storytellers and books to children in hospitals all across the UK.

In the coming weeks, Year 7 will attend a dedicated assembly to launch the Readathon and inspire them to get fully involved. From there, they will be ready to go full steam ahead throughout May, setting personal reading goals and gathering sponsorship along the way.

Parents and carers of Year 7 students will receive a detailed email shortly with everything you need to know, including how to support your child and how sponsorship can be arranged. We look forward to working together to make this a rewarding and impactful experience for our students and for the children who will benefit from their efforts.

#HCCSLITERATUREFESTIVAL2026

HCCS CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION RESULTS 2026

Year 7

- 1st - Phoebe W (7LB)
- 2nd - James A (7MD)
- 3rd - Darcy W (7JF)

Year 8

- 1st - Jasmine A (8TG)
- 2nd - Seb F (8FO)
- 3rd - Austin W (8DT)

Year 9 Remembering Nell Competition

- 1st - Cara D (9KK)
- 2nd - Imogen S (9KK)
- 3rd - Auden H (9MS)

Year 10 - 13 Flash Fiction

- Top 3**
- Ashira O (11CPR)
 - Emily F (10IL)
 - Gracie G (10DD)

- Highly Commended**
- Brianna H (10AW)



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Y7 Creative Writing Competition Winner The School Trip That Went Wrong By Phoebe W (7LB)

It had been three weeks since me and Dad had moved to a little village on the edge of the Amazon Rainforest. We'd moved from London for Dad's work and were still adjusting ourselves to the hot, humid climate which massively contrasted to the cold, grey weather of Britain.

Today was my first day at my new school, which just so happened to be a school trip day! I was so excited for it as we would be venturing into the real Amazon Rainforest! THE ACTUAL AMAZON RAINFOREST!

I woke up, had breakfast and headed off to my new school. As I arrived, I suddenly realised that I was nervous. I'd never really been nervous before (I was overall quite a confident person) except when I accidentally stole a pencil crayon in year 1 and had to own up to the teacher. I took a deep breath and walked in smiling.

I introduced myself and sat down next to a kind girl called Zari, who asked if I wanted to sit with her on the coach. Soon after, it was time to leave. My heart was racing with excitement as we boarded the coach (which was more of a minibus) and sat down.

I chose the window seat so I could take everything in, and the jungle did not disappoint me. Bright heliconia flowers rushed past me in vibrant shades of red, yellow and orange and Brazil nut trees stood tall, massive giants emerging from the deep foliage. We disembarked the minibus and started to have a look around. Amid the bushes we found a small lake. I was itching to get a closer look at it, but I was warned not to go near the water's edge and to be careful. All of a sudden, I saw Bubbles coming from the water!

"Guys! Did anyone see that! I think there's something stuck under the water!" I called out to my classmates. Turns out that I was the only one who saw it and everyone thought I was going mad, but I know what I saw.

I edged nearer and nearer to the lake, determined to prove it. And that's when it happened. That's when I slipped and fell into the dark, murky waters in front of me. My lungs screamed for air as I sank down, down, down slowly sinking further into the deep abyss. Then. Everything. Went. Black.

When I awoke, I was lying on a bed of leaves in the middle of the jungle. I stayed there for a moment with my eyes closed, breathing in the fresh jungle air. Feeling my hair dance in the warm breeze and then suddenly I remembered! I sat bolt upright! My class! Where were they and, most importantly, if the hadn't saved me, who had?

All of a sudden, I heard a bush rustle to my left. I whirled around to see a mysterious boy stood staring at me. It was as if he was gazing deep into my soul looking for answers and wondering who would make the first move. He opened his mouth and then closed it again,



as if he wasn't sure what to say. I stood up, brushed the dirt off my damp skirt and then said with a smile, "I'm Emma. Nice to meet you."

"I'm Theodore," said the boy rather bluntly. "You were in the lake."

"Yes, I slipped and fell. Do you have a problem with that?"

"You humans are always trying to disturb the peace of the jungle! I have lived here only a year and already I have had to save a human from drowning."

I stood there looking puzzled. "You're not human?"

"Of course not! How dare you propose such an absurd thing! Obviously, I am a water spirit! How could you be so blind to my glistening skin and blue eyes!"

Now that I looked more closely, I noticed that Theodore did indeed have skin which glistened, as rays of golden sun shone through the canopy, and his eyes were a startling shade of iridescent blue. I apologised for my 'rudeness' and politely asked if I could return to my class now.

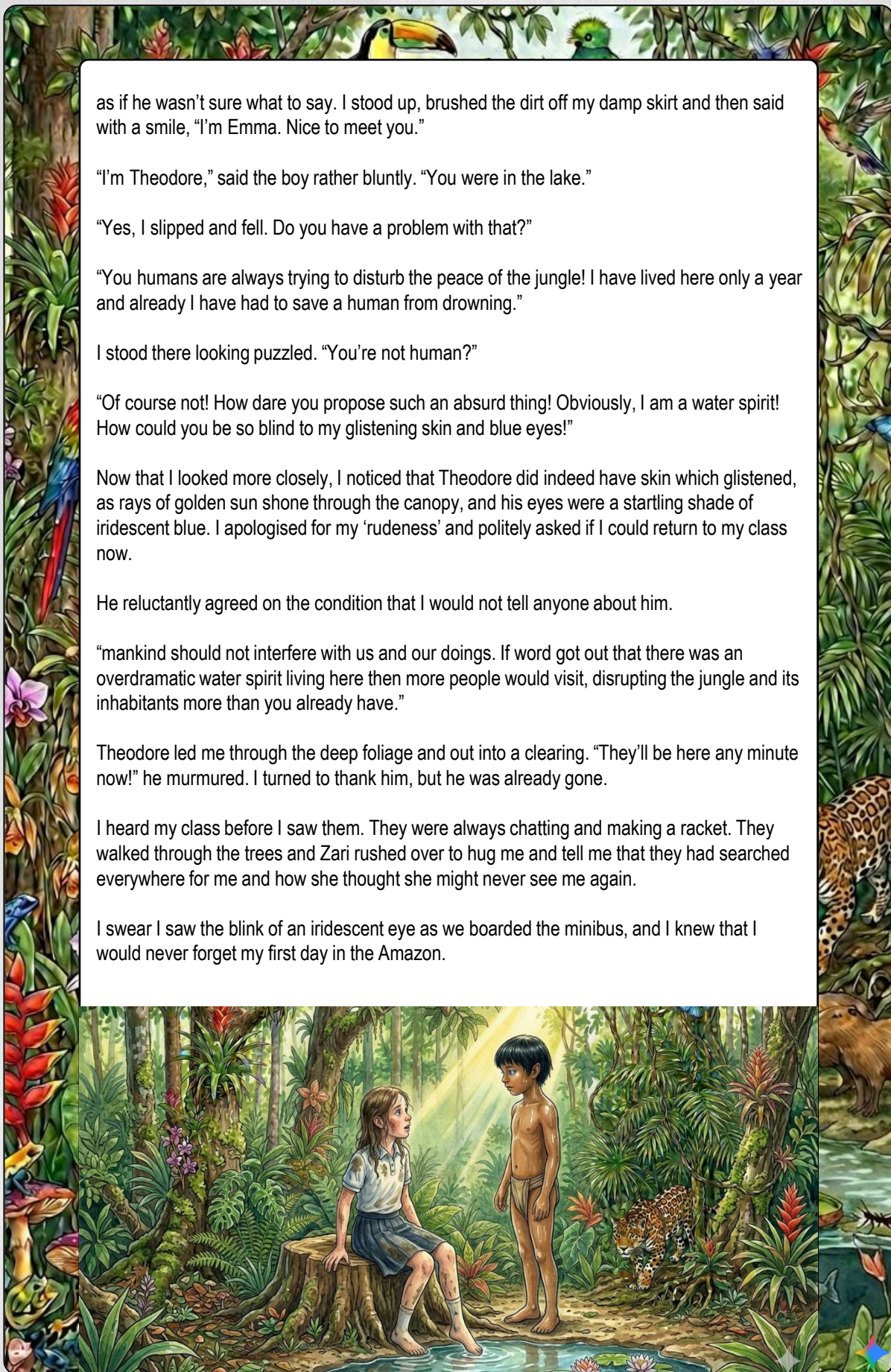
He reluctantly agreed on the condition that I would not tell anyone about him.

"mankind should not interfere with us and our doings. If word got out that there was an overdramatic water spirit living here then more people would visit, disrupting the jungle and its inhabitants more than you already have."

Theodore led me through the deep foliage and out into a clearing. "They'll be here any minute now!" he murmured. I turned to thank him, but he was already gone.

I heard my class before I saw them. They were always chatting and making a racket. They walked through the trees and Zari rushed over to hug me and tell me that they had searched everywhere for me and how she thought she might never see me again.

I swear I saw the blink of an iridescent eye as we boarded the minibus, and I knew that I would never forget my first day in the Amazon.



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Sir David Attenborough Competition

Happy 100th Birthday Sir David Attenborough

“The Wonders of Nature”
2026 Biology Photography Competition

To celebrate the centenary birthday of Sir David Attenborough, Holmes Chapel science faculty are holding a wildlife photography competition.

How to enter:

Email your photograph with your name, tutor group and a brief description to:

sciencecomp@hccs.info

Closing Date: 8th May
Sir David's birthday!



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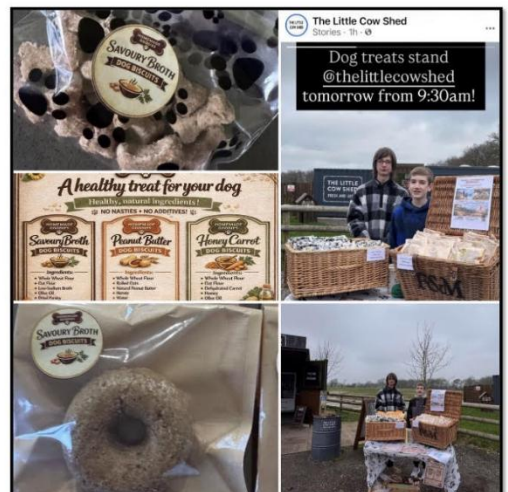
Jude Edwards and Lucas Nash have been selling home made, natural dog treats. They have had a stall at The Little Cowshed and their 'pop up' will be appearing at various locations over the coming months. The reaction to the dog treats has been incredibly positive so far!

Fundraising for Borneo

Summer 2027 will be an extremely exciting time at HCCS with over 50 students heading to Borneo for a life changing expedition with CAMPS international.

The month-long trip will give students the opportunity to support local communities, take part in conservation projects and complete their PADI scuba qualification.

Fundraising for the trip is in full swing and with 15 months left until departure students are well on their way to raising their funds.





Helping Young People Navigate the Digital World

For today's young people, life online is an essential part of everyday life. Social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms and AI tools are not separate from the "real world"—they are where students socialise, learn and express themselves. While this digital landscape offers many opportunities, it also presents challenges that young people and the adults around them must navigate together. Teenagers say they value being online as it helps them stay connected with friends, explore interests and relax, yet many also admit they struggle to manage their screen time and can feel drawn to their devices for long periods. They often feel that adults focus too much on the risks, without recognising the positive role the online world plays in their lives. At the same time, many young people say they would hesitate to tell a parent or carer if something went wrong online, often worrying about overreactions or having their phone taken away.



This highlights the importance of communication. Open, regular conversations are far more effective than strict control alone. Young people respond positively when adults set clear and fair boundaries, explain the reasons behind them, and listen calmly without immediately resorting to punishment. Informal, everyday conversations—rather than one serious "big talk"—can help build trust and make it more likely that a young person will seek help if needed. When it comes to screen time, it is also important to look beyond the number of hours spent on devices. Time online can include homework, socialising and entertainment, all of which have different impacts. Interestingly, many young people say they actually welcome boundaries, particularly when these are discussed and agreed together.

Although many online experiences are positive, there are risks. Young people may encounter cyberbullying, harmful content or unwanted contact from strangers, and these experiences can affect their wellbeing. Changes in mood, withdrawal from friends, anxiety, or a drop in school performance can sometimes signal that something is wrong. However, young people may try to deal with these situations alone, making it even more important to create a supportive environment where they feel safe to talk. Alongside this, the growing presence of Artificial Intelligence is shaping how students learn and interact online. Many use AI tools to research information, support homework and generate ideas. While this can be beneficial, it also raises concerns about over-reliance and the accuracy of information, highlighting the need to encourage critical thinking.

Simple steps can make a real difference in supporting young people. Setting clear boundaries—such as limiting phone use at mealtimes or overnight—explaining decisions, involving young people in creating rules, and modelling positive habits all help to build trust and understanding. Taking an interest in the platforms and tools they use, and keeping conversations open and ongoing, are key. Ultimately, supporting young people in the digital world is not just about restricting access, but about helping them develop confidence, resilience and good judgement. By staying involved and maintaining open communication, families and schools can work together to help young people build healthy and safe digital habits for the future.



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NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Cricket Competition

On Tuesday 28th April, students in Yrs 9-11 will be representing the school in a national cricket competition organised by ECB and MCC.

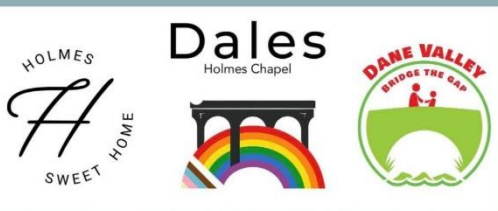
The Knight-Stokes Cup is aimed to promote state school cricket through local, regional and national competition this summer. Holmes Chapel will face schools in the local area at Sandbach School next week, with the winners progressing to the next rounds in June.

Students have been practising at Holmes Chapel Cricket Club in preparation, under the guidance of Mr Pirie and Mr Lowe.

Fixtures:

28th April @ Sandbach School

- 10:40am – Holmes Chapel vs Brine Leas (Pitch 1)
- 11:35am – Holmes Chapel vs Malbank (Pitch 2)
- 12:30pm – Sandbach vs Holmes Chapel (Pitch 1)
- 1:25pm – CHS vs Holmes Chapel (Pitch 2)



SHORT STORY COMPETITION

PRIZES PROVIDED BY OUR SPONSORS:
1ST PLACE – BRIDGE THE GAP £50
2ND PLACE – DALES VOUCHER £30
3RD PLACE – HOLMES SWEET HOME VOUCHER £25

THIS YEAR'S WRITING COMPETITION IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF OUR LAST YEAR'S GUEST JUDGE, PHILIP WATTS. THE THEME IS "BEAUTY IN THE LITTLE THINGS." PARTICIPANTS MUST WRITE AND SUBMIT A POEM, SHORT STORY, OR RELATED COMPOSITION, THAT RELATES TO THIS THEME.

COMPETITION DETAILS:
30TH APRIL – 1ST SEPTEMBER

ALL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT PRIDE 2026

SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS TO: HCPRIDEWITING@GMAIL.COM

200-300 WORDS

FAMILY FUN RUN

REGISTRATION OPEN!

Date: Sunday 10th May 2026
Location: Dane Meadow
Time: 9.30am
Entry: £3 per child



Are you aged 4-16?

Are you fundraising for any charities or local groups, or do you just like running and getting medals?

Then take part in our Family Fun Run this May!

The route round the Dane Meadow is approximately 2km, with disabled access and accessible routes available.



To take part please fill in the online registration form: www.hcpartnership.org.uk/funrun

To volunteer as a steward, email: info@hcpartnership.org.uk



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Staff Vacancies



We currently have vacancies at HCCS. These include:

- Temporary Teacher of Music
- Finance Manager

[READ MORE](#)



NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Thank you!

You've done something very special.

Year 7 Students

You've helped to raise:

£267.00

And that money will help turn the British Heart Foundation's research into cures and treatments to beat the world's biggest killers.

Which means that families can spend more time with the people they love.

Beat heartbreak from heart diseases stroke vascular dementia diabetes



British Heart Foundation 2019, a registered charity in England and Wales (225971) and Scotland (SC039426)

bhf.org.uk



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NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College




SEND 0-19 Advice Sessions



SEND 0-19+ health practitioners (On behalf of health visitor/school nursing services Cheshire East) for parents of children & Young people for support, signposting and guidance with all SEND related issues and helping to understand why your child may be struggling and ideas that may help. Think your child may have SEND and not sure where to go or what to do? Need support around toileting, sleep, behaviour or development – feel free to book in for some advice. You will be seen on a 1-1 basis and there is no need to bring your child.

[Click here](#) for the dates and locations

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