

ISSUE 17
14th June 2024



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our first Blog of Term 6.

The main focus here since we returned from May half term has again been our Year 11s and Year 13s who have been continuing to work through their formal GCSE and A Level examinations. They are nearly there now and the vast majority will have finished by this time next week. Overall our students have done really well through the exam season and we sincerely hope that they all receive the results they deserve in the summer. As these exams wind down though we do not stand still here and this week our Year 10s have been completing their end of year exams in readiness for the challenges which will face them when they are in Year 11 next year. Year 12 too will soon be having their end of year examinations to prepare for Year 13 which will be here before we know it.

Whilst talking about students who are leaving once examinations have finished, can I make my annual plea about unwanted uniform. If any parent or carer now has an unwanted blazer, tie, jumper or any other items of unwanted Holcombe uniform please do bring them in to the main office. We are all living in challenging times and if you have any unwanted items please do pass them on to us as other parents and carers may want them. Likewise, if any students in years 11 or 13 still have any GCSE or A Level textbooks please can they also be returned to school as soon as possible as they will be needed by Year 10/Year 12 students. We do know which students have which books so if they are not returned then we will have to send out letters requesting payment to reimburse us, so please do dig out those books and bring them in.

As ever there is much more going on here than just public examinations. Next week we have our Year 8 Parents' Evening with the Year 7 Parents' Evening in July. We also have our DT/Art exhibition on 11th July, Induction for our new Year 12s on 1st, 2nd and 3rd July and for our new Year 7s on 4th July. We have had some queries re: Year 6 into 7 Induction Day and (current) Year 7 Parents' Evening being on 4th July, the date of the General Election. I would just like to confirm that both events will be going ahead as planned.

Can I also draw all of your attention to some very exciting upcoming events for later this term:

- on Thursday 27th June we have our first Key Stage 3 Celebration Evening at 6:00 where we will be gathering to celebrate the achievements of over 100 of our students in Years 7 to 9. Invitations to prize winners have now gone out and we are looking forward to seeing many of you there.
- on Thursday 18th July we have our Founders Day which this will culminate in an 'extravaganza' of music and drama in the evening in our main hall. We look forward again to welcoming many of you in on that evening

On both events I am excited to announce that our new PTA will be there providing a range of refreshments. All schools need a strong and committed PTA and I am very pleased that our new PTA is already very active. If you attend on one or both of these events you will be able to meet some of them and see what they have planned for 24/25.

So a busy term has started with much to celebrate and look forward to. I look forward to updating you further in our 2nd blog at the end of this month.

Mr L Preston
Headteacher

CONTENTS

Our students have been involved in a number of brilliant activities over the couple of weeks. Please take a moment to read through these fantastic opportunities.

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KEY DATES

Term 6

- **Thursday 20th June**
 - Year 8 Parents Evening
- **WC Monday 24th June**
 - Year 12 Prelims
- **WC Monday 1st July**
 - Year 12 Work Experience
- **Monday 1st July - Wednesday 3rd July**
 - Sixth Form Induction Days
- **Thursday 4th July**
 - Year 6 into 7 Induction Day

If you would like to donate any outgrown uniform or any uniform that is no longer required, please could your child deliver them to Student Services. If parents would like to drop the uniform to the school, this can be brought to the main reception.

Thank you

STAY CONNECTED

Follow Us on Social Media

See all of the enjoyable and engaging activities we get involved in throughout the year.

Follow us on our social media channels.



[@TSAT - Holcombe Grammar School](#)



[@TSATHolcombe](#)



[@tsat_holcombegrammarschool](#)





CAN WE HELP?

What is the Hardship Fund?

The Hardship Fund is a source of financial help available to all registered full time school students. The aim of the fund is to help the students who have difficulties paying for:

1. Curriculum trips, visits and year group residentials
2. Uniform, shoes or sports kit
3. Emergency travel expenses
4. Equipment to access individual studies

Payments from the fund do not need to be repaid

Please scan the QR code below or click this [link](#) to see how we can help:

Scan me



GCSE AND A LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES COURSEWORK



The GCSE and A-level Media Studies students are now well underway in completing their NEA project, which is the coursework element of the course and is worth 30% of their overall mark. Students are given a range of briefs which are set by the exam board and they can choose one brief from television marketing, film marketing, magazines or music marketing.

The students have chosen a range of briefs to suit their own skillset and to engage in areas of the media they already have an interest in. This year in development, students are creating marketing for horror, action and sci-fi films, marketing for a sci-fi TV show, a sequence developed from a new fantasy TV show, sports magazines covering basketball and football and a music video, showing the diversity, range of the skills and interests of the students. Below are examples of some of the research and planning documents that students have to produce, before finalising their ideas for their final productions and starting the production processes.

PRODUCT RESEARCH

ACTION FILM

Research brief of this product... The Avengers are the most powerful superhero team in the world... This product is a sequel to the previous film... The target audience is young adults... The marketing strategy will focus on social media and trailers... The product is being marketed as a must-watch event.

KIN

Product research for a food product named 'KIN'. The target audience is young adults who enjoy quick and easy meals. The marketing strategy will focus on social media and influencers.

Interstellar

Product research for the film 'Interstellar'. The target audience is sci-fi enthusiasts. The marketing strategy will focus on trailers and social media.

Mountain Biking

Product research for a magazine about mountain biking. The target audience is mountain bikers. The marketing strategy will focus on social media and outdoor events.

Media Language	Denotations	Connotations
Costumes	The main costumes of the film should wear realistic, everyday clothes, such as a regular t-shirt or jeans and shoes.	The main costumes should help the audience understand the setting and the characters. They should be practical and functional.
Props	I could find a few props that are relevant to the product. I could use a knife to cut up something, but the knife may need to be used on the back of the hand and not the front of the hand.	The props should be used to tell the story and to create a sense of atmosphere. They should be used in a way that is natural and believable.
Body Language	The body language of the film should be relaxed and casual on the mountain bike, where the body language of the presenter should be to be engaged or funny.	The body language of the presenter should be relaxed and casual, but also confident and knowledgeable. They should be able to talk about the product in a way that is easy to understand.
Facial Expressions	The expressions of the animals could be threatening or angry, but should also be the presenter's facial expressions should be confident.	The animals' expressions should suggest that they are confident and that they will get along with their owner. However, the dog should also be a bit of a challenge to the presenter.
Settings	The murder should take place in the field near the house, close to a large bridge and avoid the area for safe practice. The house should be in the village to take some photos for the back cover.	The murder should happen in the field close to the house and to a large bridge. The house should be in the village. The bridge should be used for the murder scene.
Lighting	The lighting should generally be dark to add to the atmosphere, but it should be brighter at the points.	The dark lighting should represent some sort of 'happening' or 'murder' that the audience should be aware of. The lighting should be used to create a sense of mystery and suspense.
Camera Shots	I could take a few shots of the group on the back of the DVD cover as well as some medium shots on the front to acquire the viewer with them.	The low shot should make the criminals seem more powerful and threatening, as the viewer understands that they are the criminals of the film.
Written Language	The written language should be in a slightly threatening and serious tone on the back of the DVD cover that may just raise more questions than answers.	Using an ominous tone for the written language should create the viewer and make them want to watch the movie to understand what the book means and get answers to their questions.
Colour	The poster should use darker colours with splashes of brighter colours such as orange or red, with the image on the back should be in full colour as the viewer can get a real sense of the house.	The darker colours should create the theme of crime within the film as well as some of the characters' backgrounds such as them being their money, or getting jobs that are not intended to be good.

MOOD BOARD

A mood board for a magazine project. It includes covers of 'SLOAN', 'FOUR TWO', 'MEN'S HEALTH', and 'OUT'. The board is designed to inspire the look and feel of the magazine.

Quote to go with movie

synopsis

Main Image

Image 1 Image 2 Image 3 Image 4

info on the movie, audio, subtitles etc

Company logos

barcode

Credit block

Actors names and directors names

Main Image

Blend into a solid background

A grid of images showing different scenes from a movie. Each image is accompanied by a small text box containing product research notes.

YEAR 12 STUDENTS EMBARK ON THEIR UCAS JOURNEY



We are excited to announce that our Year 12 students at Holcombe Grammar School Sixth Form have already commenced their UCAS applications for university and apprenticeships. This early start is a crucial step in ensuring that each student has ample time to craft a compelling and thoughtful application, maximising their chances of securing a place at their desired institution.



To support our students in this significant endeavour, we have organised a series of workshops and dedicated form time tasks. These sessions are designed to provide comprehensive guidance on the UCAS application process, from personal statement writing, to selecting the right courses and universities. Our experienced staff have shared valuable insights, helping students to understand what admissions tutors are looking for and how to showcase their strengths and achievements effectively. To read more, please click [here](#).



YEAR 7 MUSIC SUCCESS



My name is Noah and I am in Year 7.

I taught myself to play the piano, ukulele, bass and kalimba during lockdown and I now regularly play piano at assemblies and recently played for the Year 6 parents, when they visited the school.

I have enjoyed my first year at Holcombe and it is my goal to make the school and my family proud.



STEM WEEK



This week our year 7 and 8 students embarked on an engineering expedition into the world of rockets. They have been given the challenge of firing a water rocket as far up into the air as possible however they must also produce the slowest descent they possibly can.

It has been brilliant to witness all the creative ideas that the students have developed in order to meet this challenge. Some students have placed parachutes within the nose in order to preserve the aerodynamic features of the rocket. One student is also developing a motorised trigger to release their parachute as their rocket starts to descend.

Other students have designed rockets that have their bottle fall away from a main rocket and parachute, in a similar to the way in which fuel tanks fall away from space crafts that are launched. I look forward to seeing the victors of this competition, but more so, I look forward to witnessing more innovative designs.

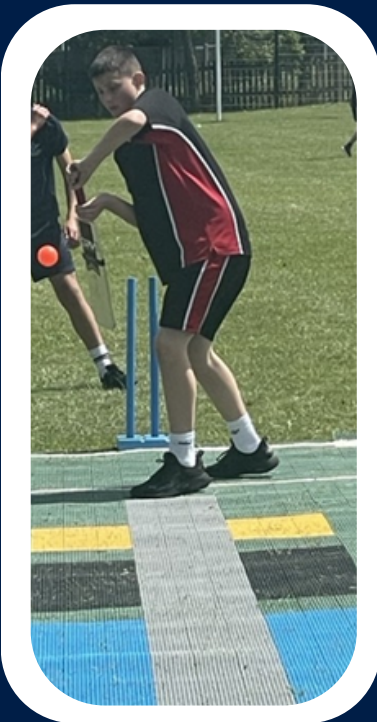
CRICKET COMPETITION



On Tuesday the 11th of June, Holcombe took part in the SSG Medway Cricket Competition at High Halstow Cricket Club.

In a competition with a new format of Year 7 students playing within a league structure, the attending students produced exciting run chases and expert batting within 6 league fixtures. Highlights of the tournament for Holcombe came from the excellent bowling from Rudhr, Josh and Harry who continuously were a thorn in the side of opposing batters throughout the fixtures and gained high praise from their opponents. The competition leads well into the development of young cricketers and assists the knowledge of playing the Dynamos Format of Cricket that the Year 7 and 8 cricket team will use in their upcoming League fixtures.

An enjoyable day for the students which saw great results against both Howard and Victory as well as strong bowling displays against Strood and Hoo. With the competition being the first of its kind we hope for more success in future years and a developing enjoyment of cricket for Holcombe students!



YEAR 9 STEM VISIT TO UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH



MCS Projects Ltd provided The Kent Science and Technology Challenge Day, at The University of Greenwich, on Friday 7th June, 2024. Twelve Year 9 students worked in mixed school teams of four, on activities that gave them an insight into some of the topics that they could study at university. Activities were designed to develop skills of planning and team work. Throughout the day students completed three out of four activities:

The Robotics Challenge: each team was provided with a Lego Mindstorm EV3 robot, which they programmed in order to navigate around a course. Each robot was equipped with ultrasonic and infrared sensors. The E-FIT challenge: having witnessed a simulated crime, each team used the latest E-FIT 6 facial recognition software to create a computer image of the thief. They considered problems with memory and facial recognition. The Vehicle Challenge: each team designed and constructed a battery powered vehicle from kit pieces, considering power transmission, speed and torque. Each team's vehicle was timed between starting and finishing lines. The Medical Diagnostics Challenge: each team assumed the role of a doctor, diagnosing conditions suffered by simulated patients. They tested samples, evaluated brain function, examined X-rays and brain scans. They considered how the brain works, seeing equipment operated directly by the brain.

At the end of the event, participants put questions about university life to a team of university students. All participating Holcombe Grammar School students received certificates.



A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY CONFERENCE



Canterbury Christchurch University (CCCU) A level Sociology Conference on Wednesday 12th June 2024.

Students were invited to experience a day at the Canterbury Christchurch University, to develop their understanding of the sociological issues covered to date in their A level course. As expected the conduct of the students was excellent, all listening attentively and engaging with the tasks.

The lectures delivered were:

- Welcome to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law
- What are the current policies, research and debates into the sociology of education? What was (as is still) the impact of COVID-19 on education?
- Why study Sociology at university? The distinction between knowledge based on facts (empirical research) and knowledge based on opinion (social media). The development of a critical sociological imagination.
- How to write your personal statement, with a Q&A session.

The student feedback from the Year 12 is below:

Daisy - The fact that studying sociology is beneficial in all aspects of life because it relates to so much around us. The session on personal statements, we can't just say what we like, we need to say how that will be beneficial to us as an university student".

Jaelon - Yesterday I learnt to not use "I am" during my personal statement but to say things such as "I had to put my communication skills to use when I was involved in distributing food to the homeless at a church community event" which works as evidence to times where I used my skills. Also, not writing statements such as "I am able to communicate with others". This statement is generic and doesn't actually prove anything to the people who would read this statement. I also learnt that within sociology it's crucial to question everything no matter what it is for example "why are most modern societies capitalist?" instead of just accepting what we are familiar with. It creates a space to dive deeper into aspects of society and obtain deeper meaningful understanding around issues rather than making snap judgements based on opinions. In summary, we are de-familiarising the familiar despite it being what we're used to.

Tyrlil - The first lecture by Sarah Cant was really useful. She spoke about how sociology can be transformative which I completely agree with. The second lecture on education was useful for reinforcement for my education knowledge but I also found out other things, like that the purpose of education is not clear cut and simple.

HOLCOMBE CROWNED THE BEST MEMORY MASTERS IN TSAT



By Mrs Banks

On Thursday 6th June, three Key Stage 3 students, Zak Year 9, Jacob Year 9 and Samiul Year 7, were crowned winners of the TSAT Secondary School BIG QUIZ.

Students across the trust were challenged to learn the facts from multiple knowledge banks, including science, history, geography, English literature and mathematics. Our students secured their place on the Holcombe team through a school round, followed by an individual trust round and then representing the school face to face and head to head in a team round against fellow finalists from the Maritime Academy.

Our students were incredibly composed, exceptionally prepared and completely personally motivated to win.

In dramatic style, the competition was closely fought until the final round, with only one point separating Holcombe from Maritime when the winner was decided.

As a school, we are incredibly impressed with and proud of Zak, Jacob and Samiul. The win is completely theirs to claim, with them having taken complete control of the preparation and recalling of the facts. They spent hours preparing for the test, fully self-motivated - all credit to these dedicated young people.

The students will receive their trophy, rewards and certificates at our forthcoming KS3 Prizegiving evening on 27th June 2024. More of this on the next page.

Please see below a few words from the students involved.



HOLCOMBE CROWNED THE BEST MEMORY MASTERS IN TSAT



By Mrs Banks

Samiul:

Hello everyone! My name is Samiul, and I am a year 7 student in Guardian (my form).

As you may be aware, I, and a few friends, represented our school in a whole trust competition, known as the big quiz.

When Mrs Banks first uploaded it to our teams in either December, or January, I was a bit intrigued. Our school had made it to the final last year, but sadly lost to our biggest rival, Rochester Grammar. I wanted to claim the glory, the fame and the pride that would eventually put me on the front of the school blog. However, the most motivating thing was winning the ten-pound gift card; I couldn't even fathom how many reactions and questions my form had for me, it was so much it could possibly make you faint. Even though I had won the ten-pound gift card, there was still a responsibility that I was put upon. Up until mid-March, I spent majority of my time revising my knowledge booklet, memorising as much as I could. It was now time for ROUND TWO. Round two was fairly easy, a quick 25 question quiz that I completed in a good 10 minutes. Without thinking too much, we had made it to round 3, also known as the finals. The final was meant to occur in early May, however it was cancelled and rescheduled to the 6th June. It was a good and bad thing, the good was that we had time to revise, but bad being we had to contain the excitement inside us for another month.

On the 6th of June, we had gone through what had seemed to be a gameshow. Winning points in every round, and after a long and anticipating 25 minutes; we had won. I was now part of the best three children in the TSAT.

To everyone who wishes to be a part of this next year, here are some top tips I would give you when it comes to memorising.

1. Repetition – this is good for people who are in school or in lesson. Whenever you have time, just repeat information to your head, whether you go to the toilet, heading to lesson or even hanging about in the football fields, you could be playing football, score a goal and scream, “INTERNAL ENERGY IS THE TOTAL OF POTENTIAL AND KINETIC ENERGY INSIDE A SYSTEM.”
2. Blurting – this is basically writing down all you have learnt on a certain topic and see which bits you have missed. This is great as it can solidify the information just like repetition, and you can research the information quickly as well.
3. Discussion – this is not really a memorising technique, but it can help you if you make it to the finals. If you discuss what topics you will revise, there is a higher chance of getting more questions right, as you have studied your specific topics the most. This is something that we didn't discuss as a team, but luckily for me, when you have great teammates like mine, the chances of losing are very low, but it would become certain if we were to designate roles.

Honestly, it was a great experience, I sure know how to win next time. I hope some of the readers can take part in representing Holcombe as well.

With a smile, I wish you all the best!

Zak:

I believe the key part about the big quiz is the cooperation between teammates. We all focused on our specialities to ensure revision was as easy as possible. Some of us wrote down repeatedly the necessary information while others recited important information into ordered lists. We used our team to minimise what we had to learn and checked up on each other so that we all knew everything we should. This was our advantage over the maritime school, who, as individuals had the same weak points.

KS3 PRIZEGIVING



KS3 PRIZEGIVING



HOLCOMBE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**WE ARE PROUD TO
PRESENT OUR**

KS3 PRIZEGIVING EVENING

AND YOU MIGHT BE INVITED

*YOU
might be*

Invitations to KS3 Prizegiving were emailed to the parents/guardians of prizewinners last week.

The event is on Thursday 27th June and is by invite only.

Students invited were also emailed by Mrs Banks on Friday 7.6.24.

Make sure you have checked your email inbox and sent your RSVP if you have been invited.



Bletchley Park Trip – 6th June 2024



Students in Year 10 and 12 Computer Science visited the prestigious site of the Bletchley Park Code Breakers on D-Day.

As part of the day the students engaged in guided tours from veterans, tailored subject workshops on ciphers, visits to the mansion and working areas of the site, as well as witnessing a replica of the first computer – The Colossus – at work.

In surprise additions, students also caught a fly over from a replica RAF plane and witnessed a peer reciting the Polish text on a Polish Cipher Memorial.

With fantastic weather to help, it was a truly enjoyable experience for all (despite the joys of traffic jams on route).



Bletchley Park Trip – 6th June 2024



Student Testimonials

It was very interesting to get an insight into part of the history of the computing and the interactive elements of the visit such as seeing the enigma machine and the rooms in which the coders actually lived in during their code breaking war efforts were really interesting to see and experience.

D-day flyover was also a perk to see especially in a historically important place that help with the war effort so much.

It was a great learning experience that was relevant to my subject, and also a good way for me to connect with peers from different classes in my same subject that I otherwise would not have had the pleasure of talking to.

I found the trip really insightful. I was really blown away by the magnitude of the probabilities that surrounded both the Enigma machine and Lorenz's Machine.

I liked the touring around the Park and enjoyed asking and being asked questions about the time.

I was very surprised and intrigued with the work that went behind the scenes ignoring the war the battling itself and how these little factors that go unnoticed like being able to solve the enigma and Lorenz machines and being able to decipher them from such minor mistakes which led to the victory for us in WW2 very interesting.

I also enjoyed touring and looking at the machinery and environment that those who were involved in the Bletchley park scheme as well how this was kept a secret and how long it was kept for.

Bletchley Park was a very good learning experience about both computers and WW2 history. The tour guide was very nice and informative.

Overall it was a great trip, there were loads of activities we did, and they were all interesting, I could even feel my brain expanding throughout the day. every activity we did was great, especially the enigma machine activity.

It was a very educational and informative trip and definitely learnt a lot about the history of ciphers used in world war 2, and a concept that is covered and taken for granted by modern computing.

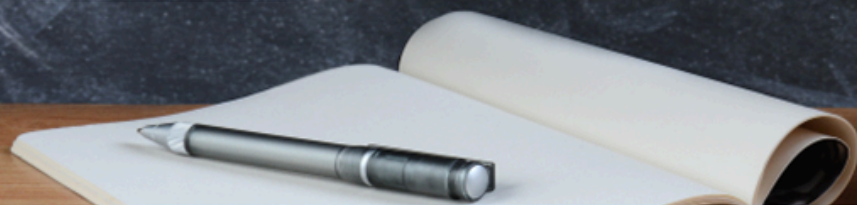
SUPPORTING A CHILD WITH ADHD



Complete online in your own time

Supporting a Child with ADHD

on average 17% of the students in your class are likely to be neurodivergent



Teachers, school staff, social workers, parents and related professionals

This popular FACE accredited CPD course is now available as distance learning.



Book online

facefamilyadvice.co.uk £48 CPD certificate included



ADHD course for Teachers, Parents and Related Professionals

Now available as distance learning...

Complete in your own time!

All sessions booked & delivered online via facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Tuesday
11 June

19:00 - 21:00
£24



Introduction to OCD

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Looking at the complexity of this serious condition.

Monday
17 June

19:00 - 21:00
£24



Improving Family Communication

How to reduce the shouting and arguing and start the talking.

Thursday
20 June

19:00 - 21:00
£24



Supporting a Child with ADHD

Challenging the stereo types and explaining how this condition impacts on the child and giving ideas on how we can support them.

Thursday
27 June

19:00 - 21:00
FREE



Supporting Healthy Sleep

Coping with insomnia, screen damage, neurodiversity dysregulation.

E-scooters – are you breaking the law?



Can I ride my e-scooter to school or work?

No, it's Illegal...

E-scooters are classed as motor vehicles and are required to be taxed and insured. It's not possible to get insurance for privately owned e-scooters, which means it's illegal to use them.

Can I ride my e-scooter on the pavement?

No, it's Illegal...

You cannot use e-scooters on public footpaths, cycle lanes or roads.

What happens if I'm caught using my e-scooter in public spaces?

The scooter may be seized and as a result, destroyed.

If stopped by an officer, you may be asked to complete a breath and drugs test. You also risk a £300 fine and six penalty points on your licence for no insurance.



**Kent
Police**

Think before you buy:

The number of electrical scooters being used on our streets has risen, as well as reports of serious injury and fatalities.

For more information and advice on the use of e-scooters visit www.kent.police.uk/road-safety