

ISSUE 18
28th June 2024



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing this after our Key Stage 3 Celebration Evening on Thursday 27th June. This was one of the best evenings I have experienced here. It was so heartening to be able to reward well over 100 students for showing outstanding Mastery and Endeavour this year, as well as being able to celebrate the work of community champions in each form group and our 'Holcombe Hero' in each year group. Thank you so much to all the parents and carers who attended and filled our hall (on a very hot night!) to join us in celebrating the efforts of these fantastic students. It was also our pleasure to welcome Sandra Bailey into the school to present the inaugural Michael Bailey Memorial Cup to our Performing Arts champion for the year, in memory of Michael and all he contributed to the school in his role of Chair of Governors here for many years. Thank you to everyone for coming and in particular thank you to Mrs Banks who masterminded the whole evening.

In addition to this we had some further great news this week. You will probably already be aware that we have been a Silver UNICEF Rights Respecting School for the past year in recognition of our work to ensure the school is a place where all staff and students are championing each individual's rights and the rights of others. This week we have now been awarded the GOLD Award. We are only the 2nd school in Kent and the 3rd school in all of SE England to have achieved this award. Look out for more news on this soon but this is a fantastic achievement for our school.

Our Year 11 and 13 students are now enjoying what is set to be the longest summer holiday of their lives! And how well they deserve to enjoy this after working so hard throughout the examination season. A Level results morning is Thursday 15th August and GCSE results morning is Thursday 22nd August and we look forward to celebrating with our students then. May I just gently remind all our Year 13 and Year 11 students to ensure that all textbooks are returned to school as soon as possible so that younger students can now benefit from them. Additionally if any Year 11 parents/carers have any uniform items which are no longer needed then please do drop these in to the school as we can definitely make use of them.

Next week is a very busy week with three 6th Form Induction Days on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday where we will be welcoming over 300 Year 11 students who are considering joining us in our 6th form next year. Then on Thursday 4th July we have our Year 6 into 7 Induction Day where we welcome the 150 Year 6 students who will be joining us in September. Thursday evening then sees us holding our Parents Evening for current Year 7 parents. We appreciate this is also election day but given that polling stations are open from 7AM to 10PM we felt the Parents Evening can still go ahead as usual from 4PM to 7PM and we will look forward to providing an update on your son's progress then.

After next week we then only have 2 weeks of this academic year left and in addition to working hard on our 24/25 plans we will be organising and holding our Art and DT exhibition on 11th July and our Founders Day and Evening Concert on Thursday 18th July. We hope to see many of you then.

Enjoy the blog and I will look forward to providing a final update for this year in our final edition in 2 weeks time.

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.

To be brought back to this page, please click the Holcombe Grammar logo in the top right hand corner of each page.

[Can We Help?](#)

[Year 8 Dover Castle Trip](#)

[Gold DofE Award](#)

[Year 10 Cambridge Trip](#)

[Chess Tournament Semi Final - Year 10 & 12](#)

[Chess Tournament Semi Final - Year 7 & 9](#)

[PE Trip](#)

[Sixth Form Cooking Club](#)

[Year 10 Reward Trip to Thorpe Park](#)

[Year 8 Biology Port Lympne Trip](#)

[Year 11 Thorpe Park Trip](#)

[Language Assembly on Careers in Football](#)

[Translation Bee Regional Final](#)

[Rocket Week](#)

[Music Corner](#)

[German Club](#)

[GCSE and A Level Art/Design/DT Exhibition](#)

[Understanding the Teenage Brain](#)

[Addictive Behaviour](#)

[Founders Day Spectacular Poster](#)

[Kooth Go Somewhere Good Poster](#)

[Friendly Competition Poster](#)

[Second Chance Medway - Community Pantry Poster](#)

[Term 6 Inter-House Details](#)

KEY DATES

Term 6

- **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



YEAR 8 DOVER CASTLE TRIP



As part of the history curriculum at Holcombe Grammar School, we try to focus on as much local history as possible. With this in mind, Year 7 have recently visited Dover Castle, learning about its significant role in our local, national and international history. Whilst at Dover Castle, Year 7 were able to explore the famous Keep of King Henry II, redesigned to reflect what it probably looked like in the 12th century as a royal castle fit for one of Europe's greatest monarchs. They were also able to examine the ancient evidence of our history, through seeing the Roman Lighthouse (Pharos) and Anglo-Saxon church which still stand as evidence of Kent's varied history. Most importantly students were able to build their understanding of Dover Castle's significant role in World War Two from entering the Operation Dynamo exhibit in the wartime tunnels, here they learned about Admiral Bertram Ramsey and his daring plan to rescue British and French soldiers of the beaches of Dunkirk in 1940, preventing them being captured by Hitler's forces.

Pictures show some examples of parts of the site of Dover Castle visited on the trip.



GOLD DofE AWARD



In Feb 2023, Arthur in Year 12, as part of his Air Cadets Squadron, earned his Gold Duke of Edinburgh. On a gloriously sunny May 10th, he was invited to Buckingham Palace to receive his award, he is one of the younger students that has earned this award. Well done Arthur!



10 May 2024 11:34

YEAR 10 CAMBRIDGE TRIP

Written by Mrs Jhaj



On Tuesday 25th June we drove a group of our Year 10s to visit Queen's College at the University of Cambridge.

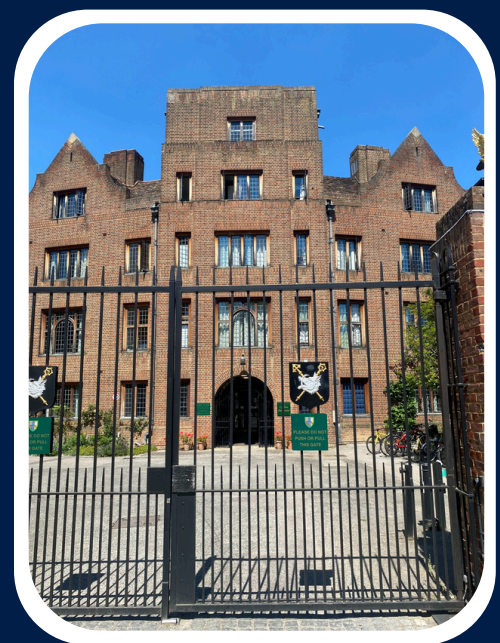
The students were given a wonderful programme of events, including a tour around the historical buildings, dating back to 1448. The college is a mixture of the traditional and new modern builds which comprise the living accommodation, alongside the studying and leisure areas. The Year 10s were able to access the working theatre, impressively the production of sound and lighting systems were on par with any west end theatre.

The presentation included a comprehensive explanation of the different types of courses available at university, the different entry requirements, how to choose your area of specialism and the opportunities available with a degree qualification. The Year 10s were informed of the importance of compiling a record of their engagement with super curricular activities (which could range from engagement with wider reading, podcasts, visits to places of interest) as well as the necessity for a good academic record. [Click here.](#)

Our students were fantastic representatives of Holcombe and asked questions, demonstrating their curiosity and engagement with the opportunities on offer. The Year 10s were very clear how their efforts at school, at this stage would significantly improve their opportunities for success in their chosen areas.

Thank you to Mr Phillips, for driving the group to Cambridge and back on one of the hottest days this year!

I look forward to taking more groups of students to experience days at this prestigious university. Experiences such as these, showing our students that the opportunities are there for the taking, if choose this pathway to fulfil their ambitions.



CHESS TOURNAMENT SEMI FINAL - YEAR 10 & 12



The whole-school Chess tournament may be over for the Key stages, with winners from Year 7, 10 and 12. However, the battle for the Grand Master continues. With three players in the semi-finals, it was time for Mr Fielding to draw out a wild card player from those who came second in the key stages. Harry was drawn as this year's fourth player ready to compete again.

Harry in year 10, faced Sam (SCT) in year 12 in the semi-final and they did not disappoint! The tension and excitement of this match was clear from the start. It was to be a close game, with each of the players clearly impressed with their opponent. With nodding and eyebrow raising throughout, this was to be a game that would play down to the final minutes. In the end Sam proved to be victorious and remarked, "That was the best game I've had this tournament", whilst shaking hands with Harry, who showed impeccable sportsmanlike conduct in reply stating, "If I had to lose to someone, I am glad it was you."



CHESS TOURNAMENT SEMI FINAL - YEAR 7 & 9



The remaining semi-final for the title of Grand Master, and to have their name engraved on the Magni-Reader shield, was played by Year 7 student, Jenson and Year 9 student Ayaan. Both students sat down, focussed and calm, ready for the task. Early on Afzal was convinced that a starting mishap was going to cost him the game, as Jenson took advantage of the opportunity that was given whilst remaining quiet and engaged. Ayaan could not contain his disappointment and announced early on that he believed he had thrown the game. However, Jenson was then to make a decision that turned the tide. Knowing his mistake, Jenson sighed but stayed silent, Ayaan almost missing the move, saw the option that was now presented to him, and took his chance. This was the way the game was to play out, with power and advantage moving from side to side, so much so, that once the other Semi-Final game was over, those participants crossed the room to watch. An illegal move was called against Ayaan, which caused a ripple in his concentration, allowing Jenson to power back. In the end, it was down to the two Kings, to battle it out, but with Ayaan armed with his Queen, he was able to corner Jenson into check mate.

A thoroughly well-played game, with impeccable manners and gentlemanly conduct, adjudicator for both the games, Miss Bloomfield said, "The semi-finals have been a joy to watch, to see students over all the key stages come together and play as equals really does show what wonderful students we have here at Holcombe."

The Grand Master Final between Sam Hall and Ayaan Afzal will feature in our next blog.



PE TRIP



On Monday 17th June the year 10 GCSE & year 12 A-Level PE groups visited the Sport & Exercise Science department at Canterbury Christchurch University. The purpose of the trip was to enhance students' knowledge of key aspects of their studies, in particular those relating to physiology and biomechanics, as well as to broaden their understanding of the possible Higher Education opportunities that are available in the field of sport. The morning sessions were spent with students involved in a tour of the University's new £66million 'sportslab' facility before being given an opportunity to experience a range of state of the art equipment and physiological fitness measures. After a brief lunch break to refuel (which was particularly needed by those students chosen to take part in the dreaded 30 second Wingate test!) the students spent the afternoon undertaking a series of field-based fitness tests in small groups. The students were a credit to the school throughout the day, something that was commented on by the University staff.



Year 12 students Noah & Edward being pushed to their limit during the 30second Wingate test.



Year 12 student Ethan testing his VO2 max levels



Year 10 student Austin having his blood pressure measured.

SIXTH FORM COOKING CLUB



University cooking doesn't need to consist of pot noodles and take-away and Mrs Simkins has proven that to a small group of Year 12 students. They volunteered themselves to take part in a pilot scheme for a club named 'Cooking for Uni' over the last 3 weeks, where they have learned to cook a few dishes that will help them in the future. These dishes included a Seven Veg Curry, Bolognese and a Chilli. As you can see from the photos, this has been a great success – look out for the club announcement in the future.



YEAR 10 REWARD TRIP TO THORPE PARK



60 Year 10 students were given the opportunity to go to Thorpe Park for the day as a reward for exceptional conduct, endeavour and upholding of the values of respect we aim to instil in our school community here at Holcombe Grammar School. We were blessed with a beautiful day which made the experience even more enjoyable for everyone. The students had a great time exploring the many incredible attractions on offer at the park and every student was a credit to the school in the way they conducted themselves. With so many amazing things happening with this year group, we look forward to organising the next reward experience for them.



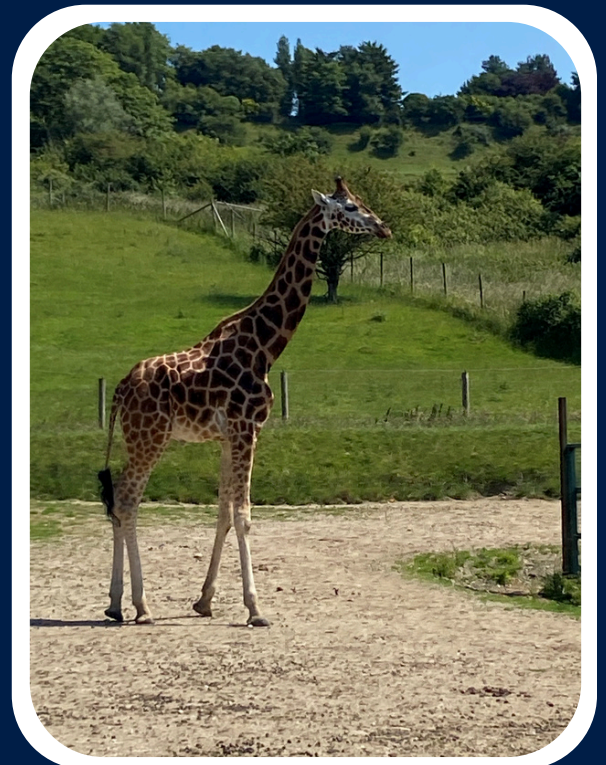
YEAR 8 BIOLOGY PORT LYMPNE TRIP



This week saw most of the Year 8 students go on a trip to Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve near Hythe, Kent. Across the two days 129 students enjoyed a fun packed day at the reserve exploring the wildlife park's 600 acres.

They spent the day going on a safari ride on converted army trucks as well as getting up close and personal with the animals in their enclosures on foot. The reserve is home to over 900 rare and endangered animals, including the largest herd of black rhinos in the UK, western lowland gorillas, the only giraffes in Kent, big cats as well as primates and bears. The students also listened to talks from the keepers at some of the enclosures which gave them an extra insight into some of the behaviour and habits of the animals. The trip was definitely memorable for the students and has given them memories for their memory banks!

All the students behaved exceptionally well and were a credit to themselves and the school keeping themselves engaged and their spirits high despite the hot weather and steep hills to climb. Thank you to all the staffed involved with the running and organisation of this trip, whom without their help and support this trip would not have been possible.



Year 11 Thorpe Park – 27th June

2024

Students in Year 11 visited Thorpe Park on 27th June accompanied by Miss Lee, Mrs Obee, Mrs Fox, Mrs Howell and Mrs Mills.

After lots of excited coach chatter relating to Hyperia (the newest ride) and The Walking Dead ride (a ride and actor based experience), the groups enjoyed 4 and a half hours of thrills, chills and plenty of delectable delights from the stalls and shops situated on site.

It was the perfect way to celebrate the end of the students GCSE exams, and the start of their extended summer break. Good luck Year 11 and well done for everything you have achieved!



After a little persuasion Year 11 student finally tried the teacup ride.



The Walking Dead Ride definitely didn't disappoint!



Looks like Mrs Obee and Miss Lee are enjoying their spins of the teacups too!

LANGUAGE ASSEMBLY ON CAREERS IN FOOTBALL



We had an External Speaker Steve Eadon from Mingalaba coming to deliver an assembly on languages and careers for year 7 and 8.

Steve worked for Arsenal for 15 years managing the award-winning “Arsenal Double Club” modern languages project, which used Arsenal and football to inspire young people to learn a language.

He spoke about his experience at Arsenal, how he studied German at school and University and how it helped his future career.

He also spoke about the importance of learning a language nowadays and what careers in football are available for those with languages.

Students were engaged and enjoyed the talk and some students spoke to Steve at the end of the Assembly asking him for advice on how to use their languages for future careers.

Here are some quotes from year 7 and 8 students:

"It was really good to hear about languages being used outside the classroom"

"I want to work with something with languages, now I have ideas of what to do"

"It was good to hear that you can use languages with football"



TRANSLATION BEE REGIONAL FINAL



Written by Mrs Ortega

John in Year 8 and Ethan in Year 9 were both school finalists for the Regional Final competition of the Translation Bee hosted by the University of Bath.

Competition was fierce as they both competed against the Spanish Translation Bee finalists of the entire Kent region. They were among the 57 finalists out of the 4056 students who entered the competition in Kent.

They did not win but they had a positive experience as they were able to use his communication skills and public speaking in front of other students.

Well done to John and Ethan.



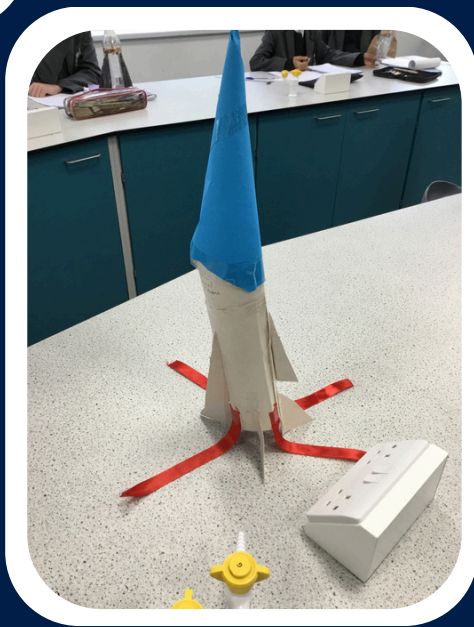
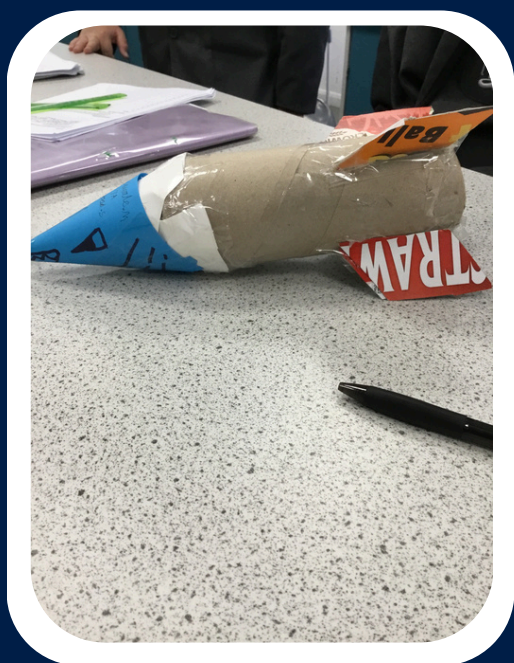
ROCKET WEEK



Our Year 7 and 8 cohort continued their rocket building project this week. Many students got the opportunity to test out their designs using the launchers at school. Some students scrapped the ideas of attaching parachutes and redesigned their rockets to glide through the air. Some students turned their rockets into cars. There were road blocks and discouraging moments for the students but in spite of all the issues with their rockets, they showed great resilience in redesigning their rockets.

We have also had a former student, who works at BAE systems as a systems engineer visit our STEM club to talk to a small group of students about the aerospace technology that BAE are currently working on. Our students were most interested in the visors produced for fighter pilots which enable them to see underneath the plane and track their enemies. He will be visiting the school again to encourage our students to build devices and produce software to control their devices.

In STEM club, we will be continuing the rocket building project. We are setting our minds on building the perfect gliders. Term 6 continues to be full of excitement in science.



MUSIC CORNER



On 25th June, the Music department took 30 students to watch the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra perform rock music with number such as 'Sweet Child O Mine', 'Another Brick in the Wall', and 'Seven Nation Army' at the Royal Albert Hall. Students were complimented on their conduct throughout the show by a member of the public.

'Well organised, as an event and the orchestra itself, good choice of songs.'

'Very teen experience, the orchestra captured the essence of those songs really well. Can't wait till the next one'.

'My first ever experience of a live performance. I think that the music was very powerful. In my opinion the orchestra were very organised'.

The students were fantastic during the trip, we look forward to taking others to experience live music in the near future!



Upcoming music events that might interest you:



The Oasthouse Theatre Rainham - The Acoustic Session Saturday 29th June 2024 evening all tickets £6 for more information visit <https://www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk/productions.php> or contact General Enquiries: info@oasthousetheatre.co.uk

Woodville Theatre Gravesend Legend the music of Bob Marley Saturday 12th October 2024 7:30pm Standard Ticket £30 Concession £28. For more information contact Box Office on 01474 337500 or visit [Legend - The Music of Bob Marley](#) | [The Woodville](#)



GERMAN CLUB



This week we have been learning the names of countries in preparation for the Euros which are going on in Germany currently. It has been fun to discover which countries are cognates of English. We have practised our pronunciation and have done some reading, listening and writing activities too .

We have also been filling in a wallchart of the Euros. Students have enjoyed seeing how their favourite team is doing, and they are hoping they will get to the finals!

GCSE AND A LEVEL ART/DESIGN/DT EXHIBITION



HOLCOMBE
GRAMMAR
DESIGN +
TECHNOLOGY



Holcombe Grammar ART + DESIGN + TECHNOLOGY

Presents

2024 A level and GCSE

Thursday 11th July 2024

The Hive

4.00PM - 5.00PM



ART &
DESIGN
DEPARTMENT

UNDERSTANDING THE TEENAGE BRAIN



Are you aware of teenage brain development and how it impacts on behaviour?



Understanding the Teenage Brain

"Every parent and teacher should hear this...."

Mr Mead, Headteacher at Lytchett Minster School, Dorset

Two-hour online talk **Monday 15th July 7-9pm**

Book Now £24

facefamilyadvice.co.uk





Addictive Behaviour

Thursday 11th July (7pm to 9pm)



An online session looking at the process of addiction and how we can fight back

Available to book now £24

facefamilyadvice.co.uk
on the PARENT page

All Tickets £4 via +Pay

Founders Day Spectacular

Get your
tickets **NOW**

18th July, 6-8pm

Holcombe School Hall



Whatever you're feeling
this summer...

**GO SOMEWHERE
GOOD**

kooth

Get inspired with simple ideas for good stuff to do
this summer. Vote for the chance to win prizes!



And if you need a safe space to get support for your
well-being, [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) is here everyday.

Visit: [kooth.com/GoSomewhereGood](https://www.kooth.com/GoSomewhereGood)
[#GoSomewhereGood](https://www.kooth.com/GoSomewhereGood)

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

FAIR PLAY AND FRIENDLY COMPETITION

In school sports, fair play and friendly competition are important for character development. Fair play embodies respect and integrity while good-natured competition balances rivalry with camaraderie. This guide addresses potential challenges – like the pressure to win – and offers practical tips on instilling values of fair play and cultivating a positive sporting environment for young athletes.

1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Parents, carers and teachers should try to exemplify fair play: demonstrating respect for opponents, coaches and officials. Children frequently learn by observing adult behaviour, so displaying a sense of fair play sets a powerful precedent for them to follow in their own actions on and off the field.

2 EFFORT OVER OUTCOME

Encourage children to focus on giving it their all, rather than basing their entire performance on whether they win or not. This fosters a growth mindset, where the journey and the process of improvement are valued just as much as the end result. It also reduces the pressure to "win at all costs", which can be a harmful outlook in some situations.

3 SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Establish clear guidelines and expectations for behaviour before, during and after sporting events. Ensuring that children understand what is considered acceptable conduct helps prevent misunderstandings and promotes a positive, respectful atmosphere.

4 HIGHLIGHT COOPERATION

Underline the value of teamwork and cooperation in achieving success. Success isn't just about individual achievements, but about how well the team communicates, encourages each other and works together towards a common goal. A strong focus on cooperation fosters camaraderie and mutual support among players.

5 DISCUSS ACCEPTING DEFEAT

Help children to understand that they can't win every contest – that losing occasionally is a natural part of both sport and life in general. Teaching them to accept defeat gracefully and learn from their mistakes promotes resilience, humility and the ability to bounce back stronger from setbacks. Taking a loss in one's stride is also an admirable trait and can help children and young people garner respect in their future life.

6 ENCOURAGE INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION

Promote an environment where all children feel welcome and valued, regardless of their skill level. Prioritise the importance of participation and enjoyment over winning, creating a supportive atmosphere where every child can thrive and develop their abilities without unnecessary pressure.

7 FOSTER CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

Teach children how to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully, both on and off the field. Providing them with strategies for effective communication and problem-solving helps build stronger relationships and enhances their ability to navigate challenges, which can be a huge boon to them throughout their adult lives.

8 TEACH RESPECT

Emphasise to children the importance of respecting everyone involved in the game, regardless of the outcome. Respect for your teammates, opponents, coaches and officials helps to create a positive, inclusive sports environment where everyone can feel valued and appreciated.

9 GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Offer feedback that focuses on areas for improvement rather than unfiltered criticism. Praise what a child has done well and advise on how to improve, rather than simply pointing out shortcomings. Encouraging a growth mindset and highlighting progress helps children to develop confidence, resilience and a desire to continue striving for excellence.

10 CELEBRATE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Try to avoid solely drawing attention to children's physical performance on the field. Recognise and celebrate acts of sportsmanship, fair play and kindness, too. By spotlighting positive behaviour, you reinforce the importance of such conduct and inspire children to practise this in the future, creating a culture of respect and camaraderie within the sports community that does wonders for morale.

Meet Our Expert

Caroline Holder is a PE consultant based in Staffordshire. Having worked across all age ranges delivering PE in schools, she now trains teachers and works with schools to develop their provision and ensure it achieves maximum impact for pupils. She passionately believes in the impact that PE, sport, and activity can have on children.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

COMMUNITY PANTRY



We support those struggling with living costs. Our Community Supermarket in Medway offers goods at prices up to a third cheaper than mainstream stores. We are now introducing the Community Pantry Scheme to reduce weekly food expenses further.



HOW THE PANTRY WORKS

Monthly direct debit

Choose between two membership plans:

10 preselected items weekly for £16.50 a month

20 preselected items weekly for £33.00 a month

COLLECTION

Every Thursday morning, your selected items will be delivered to our Supermarket for collection. If you opt for the 20-item plan, you might receive some duplicate items.

SELECTION OF ITEMS

Our Pantry offers a variety of essentials, including:

- Fresh produce
- Pantry staples, tins, pasta, rice
- Chilled goods
- Household items
- Toiletries

Selection may vary weekly based on stock availability. We aim to stick to the preselected items, our Supermarket may offer exchanges for similar items if stock permits. Feel free to leave any unwanted items behind for other members, though please note that refunds are not available.

HOW TO APPLY

We're thrilled to announce that the Pantry is set to launch in early June, with payments taken monthly by Direct Debit

Don't miss out on this opportunity to save on your weekly shopping! For any inquiries or to join the Pantry, please email support@2ndchancemedway.org

Community pantry at Second Chance Medway Community Hub
105 High Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4DH



COMMUNITY SUPERMARKET

The Pantry is separate from our Community Supermarket membership. You may sign up for both individually. The Community Supermarket will closed until 1pm on Thursdays to run the Pantry.

SUPPORT US

Join our volunteer team at the pantry and supermarket to help individuals and families in need access essential resources. Your contribution creates a welcoming environment, providing access to food and basic essentials. Flexible opportunities and training provided. Together, we can make a lasting difference in our community.