



Dear all

The first two weeks back since the Christmas break have flown by. The weather in the first week was a challenge to us all but I have to say up front that the children were amazing and their behaviour was excellent, even though the weather was very cold. Keeping the children (and our staff) safe and delivering the best quality learning experience each day are two principles by which we manage the inevitable challenges that face schools.

We were able to remain open in that first week and keep our children learning in as safe an environment as possible largely due to the early morning hard work of our Site Team, Carl, Tim, John, Paul and Steve who voluntarily came into work well before 6am each day to spread grit, clear ice and snow and make sure that we were as ready as possible to welcome 1300 or so children and 160 staff. They also had the enormous task of setting up 240 desks and chairs each day so that the trial exams could go ahead. Because we have a joint use agreement with our leisure centre, the desks and chairs also had to be removed at the end of each day! This incredible team of colleagues also ensured that the exam hall was as comfortable as possible, picked up children in the school minibus and completed all of their already significant workload. The site Cleaning Team also all made it to work for their very early pre 5am shift and made sure that the children and staff had a clean environment to work in. In the face of difficult conditions, these colleagues really did an outstanding job and I am so grateful to each of them.

The trial exams are now almost over. Behaviour and approach to the exams has been mostly outstanding and the children appear to have worked very hard to do their best. I am very proud of this year group and I have very high hopes for them in the coming finals this summer, now just a few short months away. Our exams team and invigilators have once again delivered a superb programme of assessment. The exams all started and ended promptly and in a well ordered way. Our many concession students were expertly catered for and lots of our colleagues were on call to calm students who struggled at times. The bulk of workload these days in organising exams is enormous and I am pleased that our children have such an expert team to see them through this critical stage of their education



The exams are now being marked and moderated and results will be published in a formal 'mock' results day on February 5th. In the meantime, it's back to lessons and back to high quality revision and spending time working on areas of weakness and challenge that we and the children already know about. To all parents and carers, these next three months are absolutely critical and now is the time to be ambitious, to push our children a little harder, to put in the hard miles now and to be working the extra hours so that they achieve their very best grades and can be rightfully proud of their achievements. 2 hours or so extra each day is a rule of thumb whether homework is set or not and please don't accept the line that 'revision will all be done in school!' Whilst there will be some revision done in school, the truth is that the vast bulk of successful revision needs to be undertaken at home, extra to the school day and in a warm, quiet space with the phone turned off. We all want the same thing for our children. To be fulfilled, successful and to have access to the next steps in life. Now is the time to push for this and to help them make the difficult short term sacrifices that is demanded by a successful set of results

In this first part of the term, there have been some challenges, especially in the first week and especially in terms of making sure the children were safe and as comfortable in the exams. There was a string of social media posts about our arrangements during the first week that were deeply critical, sometimes sensationalised and focused largely on the negative. On the other side of the coin were the private emails that we received saying thank you for doing all that we could to keep the exams on track and to keep the children as comfortable as possible. We all know that the colder weather was not ideal and in these situations, we tried very hard, and with considerable success, to mitigate these issues. It would have been great to see more of this celebrated and shared by all.

To all of you who were supportive, understanding and objective, can I express my thanks on behalf of all of us here at school.

Warm regards

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher



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NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Curriculum Matters



Parent webcast - how we group students at HCCS

Our next parent webcast takes place on **Wednesday 29th January**. After our first webcast and parents forum last term we planned content for future events based on your feedback. Lots of parents and carers are interested in how we group children and why we do it this way. The vast majority of our teaching takes place in mixed-ability groups and on 29th January we will explore this - with a particular focus on mixed ability grouping in maths. You will receive an invitation next week with log in details for this webcast and we look forward to seeing you there.



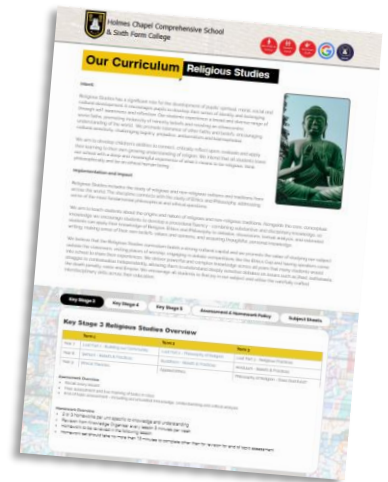
Year 9 options

Thank you to all of our parents and carers of Year 9 students who have supported their children through the KS4 options process so effectively. Every child has now made their choices.

Curriculum Website

Feedback from parents tells us that it is important to you that you understand clearly what your child is learning when and how you can support with that.

Despite the snow forcing the school to be closed on the INSET day on 6th January our faculty teams have worked hard on reviewing and preparing content for our website. This means we will very soon be in a position to share with you what our curriculum looks like for every one of our students, from Year 7 to Year 13. This will cover what we teach when and why we do it that way. We will also be able to share how every faculty assesses and feedback and how they are expecting students to work independently. Our IT team are now working on publishing all of the content on our website and it will go live very soon.



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Year 7 News

The Year 7 students have had a positive start to the term despite the cold conditions.

Before the Christmas break we held a whole school assembly. As part of this we celebrated the students who have upheld a positive approach to learning and who have lived by our school values throughout the first term.

Congratulations to the following students on achieving these awards:
Thomas C, Oliver J, Leo M, Jude N, Lilly-May M, Hollie W, Jack W and Ava W.

Tutor group attendance competition:

The tutor group attendance competition results for the last 1/2 term are now in.

1st place 7AL - 97%

2nd place 7FO - 96%

3rd place 7SP - 95%



Congratulations to 7AL, they will be rewarded with a celebration breakfast on Friday 31st January 2025 8.45am - 9.10am in the restaurant.

Looking back on the first term, we can see how far the Year 7 have come. They have settled in well, adapted to the changes and expectations of life at secondary school and we are incredibly proud of them all.

The Year 7 Team



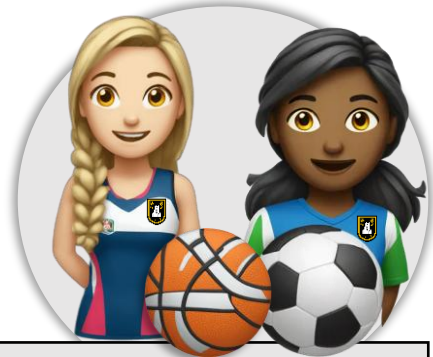
Year 7 News - Continued

Sports and Extra Curricular

Netball and Football fixtures will resume next week.

Year 7 - Netball Tuesday 21st Jan at home against Sandbach 3.15-5pm.

Year 7 - Girls Football on Wednesday afterschool



Fitness

Some of our students have been taking part in fitness classes in their PE lessons this week.

Alongside this, students have studied the character skill resilience and discussed how being resilient and self motivated can help when faced with challenges.

An Olympic Event

Last Friday saw our parish youth council members attending St Lukes Church Hall to meet and interview brother and sister olympic rowing champions Tom and Emily Hall. After the unveiling of the village's 'golden phone box' defibrillator, the celebrations continued at the hall where a video presentation celebrating the achievements of the sports stars was enjoyed by all followed by a set of interview questions posed to the duo by Cllr Chris Jackson and our HCCS students. Emily commented on how well researched our learners were in the questions they posed. On the final day of the Olympic regatta in Paris Emily was part of the women's eight that won bronze before older brother Tom helped the men's eight to gold 20 minutes later. In doing so, they made history, the first brother and sister to win medals at the same Olympic Games since 1908 – matching the exploits of archers William and Lottie Dod in London 116 years ago.

Thank you and well done to our student council members on representing HCCS with their usual flair and interest.

Photos: The parish youth council congratulating Tom and Emily Ford with Cllrs Michael Street and Brian Bath
Tom and Emily Ford cutting the ribbon on Holmes Chapel's new golden defibrillator



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Sixth Form News



Exciting News: GamCare Coming to Our School!

We are pleased to announce that GamCare, a leading charity offering support for individuals affected by gambling, will be visiting our school on Monday 20th January. GamCare will be delivering a session to our Year 12 students to raise awareness about gambling-related issues, with a focus on prevention and support.

What is GamCare?

GamCare is a national organization dedicated to helping people who are affected by problem gambling, whether directly or through someone they know. They offer free, confidential support through various services, including a helpline, online chat, and face-to-face counselling.

Why is GamCare Visiting Our School?

The goal of GamCare's visit is to provide our Sixth Form students with essential knowledge about the risks associated with gambling, how to recognize the signs of problem gambling, and where to turn for help if they need it. Gambling, particularly online gambling, has become a significant issue for many young people, and it's important that we all understand the potential dangers.

What to Expect During Their Visit.

The session will cover topics such as:

- What gambling is and how it can affect people
- The signs of problem gambling
- How to stay safe when engaging in gambling-related activities, particularly online
- How to access support if gambling becomes an issue



Students will also have the opportunity to ask questions, share their thoughts, and learn about the available resources they can turn to if they or someone they know is struggling.

A Positive Step Forward

By bringing GamCare into our school, we aim to create an open environment where students feel comfortable discussing difficult topics and seeking help if needed. This visit will contribute to our ongoing commitment to promoting mental health and well-being within our school community.

We're looking forward to their visit and hope this will be an informative and empowering experience for our Sixth Form students.

Year 10 Work Experience w/b April 29th

Thank you again to those who have helped arrange a work experience placement for our Year 10 students. It would be helpful if all placements could be sorted by February half term

Can you please make sure all the paperwork is complete and sent to jill.rawsthorne@hccs.info

Thank you again for your support

Mr Baker

Work experience Coordinator



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LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE NEWS



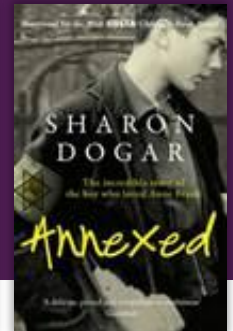
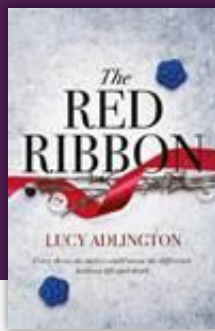
We are excited to announce that Year 8 students will soon be receiving their chosen Bookbuzz books! This program is a fantastic opportunity to inspire a love of reading, with each student selecting a book from a carefully curated list of age-appropriate and engaging titles. Not only does Bookbuzz encourage independent reading, but it also helps to improve literacy skills, spark imagination, and provide students with the chance to explore new genres and authors. We are thrilled to see our Year 8 students diving into their books and discovering the joy of reading!

Reading Recommendations

To mark Holocaust Memorial Day and the liberation of Auschwitz, we have curated a poignant booklist that will help inform and educate teenage readers about the events of the Holocaust. These thoughtful selections aim to deepen understanding and foster important conversations.

Holocaust Memorial Day

27 January 2022



Millionaire Readers

Our Millionaire Readers are continuing to take over, multiplying each week, setting new records and inspiring others to reach for the stars.

Keep up the amazing work – we can't wait to see how far you'll go! Keep reading!

Thomas C (7), Imogen C (7), Emily Invernon (7), Lucie G (7), Edith L (7), Jack W (9), Evie R (8), Ella M (8), Katie W (8), leuhan G (7), Anna W (7), Matthew K (7), Bethan S (7), Harriette N (8), Caitlin S (8)



Staff Vacancy – Business & Finance Manager



We have an exciting opportunity for a suitably qualified and experienced person to temporarily fill our challenging role of Business & Finance Manager during a period of maternity leave. The successful candidate will bring an in-depth expert professional perspective to a key area of our business and also add significant value as an individual to the existing team at HCCS. [Click here to read more.](#)



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NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Music Performance Tour 2025 Black Forest Germany

We still have a few places left on the Music Performance Tour

Students from all year groups are welcome

Everyone on the tour will be part of the performance program we will create for the tour

The tour price of £880 includes all transport, excursions and meals while in Germany

Please contact richard.lawson@hccs.info to sign up for the tour or if you have any further questions

SEND Meet Up

On Monday 27th January at 10am Jo Glover - Director of SEND and Clair Bailey SENDCo at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School will be attending the SEN session at Sam Dales to answer questions and chat about all things SEN related.

Please come along to join us in this community event .



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Middlewich & District Foodbank

Thank You for Your Support of Middlewich Food Bank!

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our students and parents for their incredible generosity in supporting the Middlewich and District Food Bank. Thanks to your donations, we were able to contribute an impressive 34.93 kilograms of essential items to help others.

Your support has made a real difference in our community. Over 100 families in the area have had a better Christmas holiday, thanks to your support.

Once again, thank you for your generosity. We are extremely grateful for your support.



CAMP KENYA FUNDRAISER

VALENTINES BAKE SALE

Help raise funds towards our expedition to Camp Kenya in July 2025

Friday 14th February
10:10am - 10:30am (Break Time)

Big Canopy Area

ALL CAKES £1.00 EACH





NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College



Parent Workshop Supporting your Child with Additional Needs

What:

A 90 minute workshop helping you to identify your child's needs, understand their rights and how to access support

When:

Wednesday 29th January 2025
10.15am - 11.45am

Where:

At Fellowship House, Park Road,
Congleton, CW12 1DP

Book now

Email: FamiliesandCommunitiesTeam@visyon.org.uk
Call: 01260 290000

Registered Charity Number 1107951
Registered company number 5250758



Visit www.visyon.org.uk, or call 01260 290000, to learn more about how our charity supports children, young people and their families with mental health & emotional wellbeing across Cheshire East.



Parent Workshop Understanding Anxiety

What:

This workshop aims to help you to understand the various ways which anxiety presents itself in children and offers ideas on how to support your child to manage their anxiety.

When:

Wednesday 22nd January 2025
10.15am - 11.45am

Where:

At Fellowship House, Park Road,
Congleton, CW12 1DP

Book now

Email: FamiliesandCommunitiesTeam@visyon.org.uk
Call: 01260 290000

Registered Charity Number 1107951
Registered company number 5250758



Visit www.visyon.org.uk, or call 01260 290000, to learn more about how our charity supports children, young people and their families with mental health & emotional wellbeing across Cheshire East.



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