



13 DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER



Dear families,

This week has been a busy and festive one at The Whitstable School. Our Year 7 students celebrated academic success with a special lunch with the Headteacher, while our Stage Academy students spread joy through Christmas carolling at Maya's Community Cafe and Bradbury Grange Nursing Home. The school also achieved outstanding GCSE results, ranking top among non-selective schools in the area. For more details on these and other school news, please read our newsletter.

Update

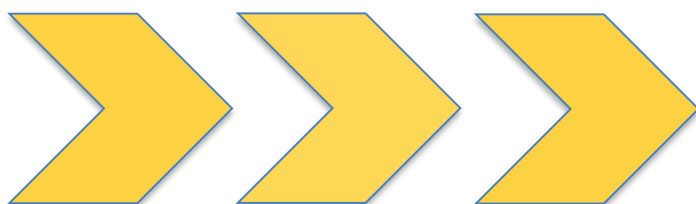
**** REVISED TERM DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 ****

Our term dates for the 2025-2026 academic year have changed. Please click the link below or visit our website for more information.

[Term Dates 2025-2026](#)

Key Dates:

- 17/18 December 2024 - Christmas Variety Show
- 18 December 2024 - Christmas Dinner
- 19 December 2024 - Sixth Form Parents Evening
- 19 December 2024 - Fish and Chips Day
- 20 December 2024 - Non Uniform Day
- 20 December 2024 - Term 2 Ends (Early Finish at 12:45)
- 06 January 2025- Term 3 Starts



NEXT WEEK IS WEEK A TIMETABLE



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England



**GOLD
SCHOOL
2020**

ON TRACK TO EXCELLENCE

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Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, ME10 2JS

Registered in England No. 07344732



****A Message from the Headteacher****

This week the government has published the first set of GCSE results for all schools in England. I am thrilled to share that **The Whitstable School has achieved the best GCSE results among all non-selective schools from Herne Bay to Faversham!**

This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our students, staff, and parents. I am confident that our forthcoming results will continue to improve as we further develop active learning strategies and introduce a wider variety of assessments for learning strategies in our classrooms. We are also strongly encouraging your sons and daughters to complete both offline and online homework, helping to build a culture where revising at home becomes second nature. This focus on home study is fundamental to securing the highest possible GCSE and A-level results.



As we approach the end of the term, we would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the critical importance of your child's attendance during the final week of school. This week serves as a significant culmination of their learning experience and is essential for their overall educational development.

Here are several compelling reasons to ensure your child is present during this pivotal week:

- **Comprehensive Review and Reinforcement:** The last week of term is regularly dedicated to reviewing key concepts and skills that students have learned over the past months. Engaging in this review process is crucial for deepening their understanding and solidifying their knowledge base as they prepare for upcoming assessments.
- **Final Assessments and Projects:** Throughout this week, many teachers will be conducting important evaluations, including final assessments and project presentations. Active participation in these activities is vital for your child to demonstrate their understanding and to receive valuable feedback on their performance.
- **Fostering Classroom Community and Belonging:** The last week is often filled with activities that foster a sense of community and belonging. It's a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate their achievements and strengthen friendships. These experiences not only recognise their hard work throughout the term but also help build social connections, which are essential for their emotional well-being.
- **Essential Information for the Upcoming Term:** During the week, teachers will communicate important information regarding the next term, including schedules, expectations, and any changes. Ensuring that your child is present means they will receive all necessary updates directly, allowing them to start the new term with confidence and clarity.

We deeply appreciate your support in encouraging your child to attend school during this vital week. Thank you for your ongoing partnership in your child's education.

Mr A Holmes
Headteacher



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REMINDERS

****Lost Property Collection ****

On Monday, December 16th, we will be displaying all lost property items in reception. Parents and carers are welcome to collect any items belonging to their children between 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM. Items left unclaimed after this date will be donated to our uniform cupboard.

****Engines Off ****

To help reduce air pollution, noise levels, and respect our neighbour's, please remember to turn off your engine while waiting to drop off or pick up your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

****Christmas Donations****

Drop off your donations at the school office by **Monday, December 16th**.



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THIS WEEK SO FAR...

A Night to Remember: Awards Ceremony with Special Guest

Last week, we hosted our first annual Awards Evening, and what a spectacular night it was! The event celebrated the hard work, dedication, and achievements of our exceptional students across a range of academic, sporting, and creative disciplines. The evening was a true testament to the talent and determination of our school community. Awards were presented for outstanding progress, exemplary effort, and remarkable contributions to school life. In addition to academic awards, special recognition was given to students who have demonstrated our 5 key TRACK values showing exceptional leadership, teamwork, and kindness throughout the year. These qualities underpin the values we cherish as a school. We were thrilled to welcome guest speaker Paul Bullion, who delivered an inspiring keynote address on his acting career in shows such as Peaky Blinders and The Witcher, encouraging our students to dream big and pursue their aspirations with confidence.



A big thank you to all the families, friends, and staff who joined us to celebrate these incredible achievements. Your support makes events like this truly memorable. Congratulations once again to all our award recipients—you are the pride of our school! We look forward to seeing what you accomplish next.



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A Star-Studded Workshop: Paul Bullion Visits TWS

Last week, our Drama students had an incredible opportunity to learn from the renowned actor Paul Bullion. He shared invaluable insights into the audition process and self-tape techniques, inspiring our students to reach new heights. On the day, two talented Year 11 students created stunning portraits of Paul Bullion as a gift.



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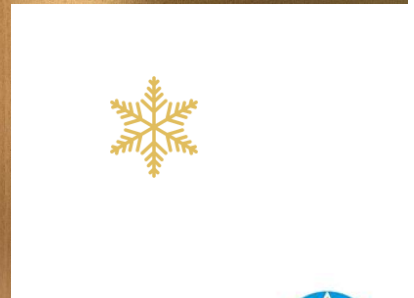
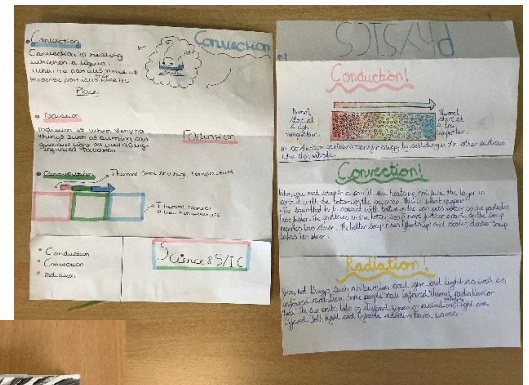
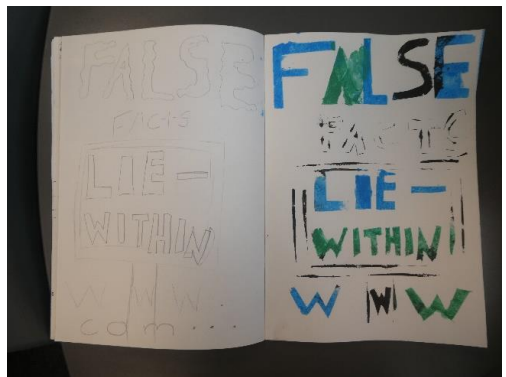


Book of Commendation- Celebrating Student Success!

This week, our students have produced some truly exceptional work, which has earned them well-deserved recognition in the Book of Commendation.

- Well done to **Talulah M and Ida C (Year 7)** for their impressive Physics poster.
- **Sophia W (Year 8)** for her beautiful Art poster.
- **Sienna W, Douglas N, Cody B, Tommy W (Year 7)** for their Creative Christmas Cards in Spanish.
- **Tommy J-W (Year 7)** for his excellent science work.
- **Henry H (Year 7)** for his Indigenous pattern in Art.

Well done to all! Check out some of their amazing creations!



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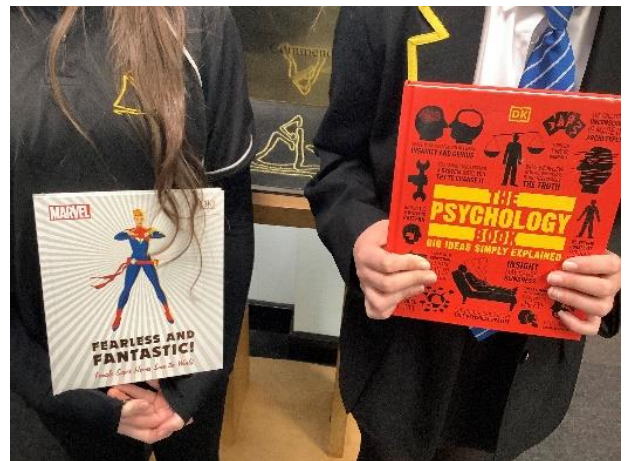


Year 7 Students Recognized for Academic Excellence

A group of talented Year 7 students were rewarded for their outstanding academic achievements with a special lunch with the Headteacher last Friday. Well done to all!

TRACK Excellence Raffle Winners Announced!

Each Wednesday, the school will run a 'TRACK Excellence' raffle with three prizes for students. To enter, students just have to have seven or more positive signatures over the two weeks. Students with negative signatures are still able to participate. This week winners are **Hetty P (Year 7)**, **Nevaeh L (Year 8)**, **Mason B (Year 8)**



Students with their prizes in the TRACK Excellence raffle.



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****Spreading Festive Cheer with the Stage Academy****



The students of the **Stage Academy** have been busy this week spreading a little festive love. They visited Maya’s Community Cafe in Herne Bay where they sang carols for the volunteers and donated mince pies to the food bank. They also visited Bradbury Grange Nursing home where they sang for the residents there, the students were wonderful and chatted away to the residents for a while which really made their day. On the way out of the building the children sang Silent Night through the corridors so that the residents who cannot leave their rooms could hear some Christmas magic. It was a lovely reminder of how far a little kindness can go.

Stage Academy continues to be busy next week with The Christmas Show! Tuesday 17th/Wednesday 18th, tickets available via [Ticketsource](https://www.ticketsource.co.uk).



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**** Our Three Kings Parade is Coming Soon! ****

Did you know that Spanish children do not ONLY get presents from Father Christmas? In January they are brought presents from the Three Wise Men (just like baby Jesus in the nativity story). This year we will hold our own Three Kings Parade, just like they do in Spain! This week we have started the search for our Kings. Here are some of the wonderful nominations that our Year 7 pupils have been writing in Spanish!

Find out more about 3 Kings Day [here](#)

Find out more about the 3 Kings Parade [here](#)



El Desfile de los Reyes Magos (3 Kings Parade)

SUMMARY
All Year 7 pupils are invited to attend the traditional Spanish 3 Kings Parade on Tuesday 7th January during the last half of TRACK time!

ELABORATION
Your mentors will bring you out to the courtyard and you will line the edges of the parade ground (marked in red). There will be Spanish Christmas music, and if you wait patiently and demonstrate TRACK values, you will receive a treat from the Kings and their camels!

STRUGGLE
In the event of poor weather, the parade will take place in Lower Logic. Line up either side of the corridor.

ACQUISITION
Three Year 7 pupils will be chosen to be our kings: Raise your hand if you would like to be considered! You will need to make a short speech to your class in Spanish. Each Spanish class (8 classes) will vote for one of their members to be crowned and the MFL staff will make the final decision.

HOOK




Year 10 Food Students Impress with Festive Baking

Year 10 have been developing their practical skills and scientific understanding of ingredients as well as getting into the festive spirit. We have been looking at the role of gluten in bread baking and pastry and the shortening effect alongside theory work in Nutrition. The students have worked hard to produce complex bakes and we have had some fabulous outcomes. Here is a small selection of their Cinnamon Star breads and mince pies! Well done!



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Celebrate the Season with Our Christmas Dinner! 🌲

Our Christmas dinner is now available on ParentPay and students can choose from both vegan and non-vegan options.

The Christmas dinner will take place on the 18th December in the restaurant and all ParentPay payments need to be completed before the 13th December 2024. Those who receive free school meals will have received a google form via email to complete (if you have not please contact tws_admin@swale.at).

Please be aware that limited other meal choices will be available on the day from our Grab and Go pod.

This month students can also enjoy our festive menu, gingerbread biscuits, hot chocolate, and more.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date! 📅

Our Careers Fair is coming up on **13th of March 2025**.

Keep an eye out for more details!

Careers Fair

Date 13th March 2025
Time 9:00-2:30pm

We would like to invite you to our Careers Fair 2025!!

Aims of the event:

- To engage the students through interactive displays and discussions
- To provide the students with information about different career paths
- To inform the students about a range of new careers and industries

For further information on how to get a stand at our event please contact us on 01227 931300 or tws_careers@swale.at

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BRIT KIDS

SATURDAY COURSES IN CREATIVE, MEDIA & PERFORMING ARTS FOR 7-18 YEAR OLDS AT CANTERBURY, KINGS CROSS AND CROYDON

WHAT DO WE DO? MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE

TO FIND OUT MORE, GO TO BRITKIDS.ORG

FOLLOW US ON:   



WALKING HOME! ALONE?

Call Strut Safe
0333 335 0026
Find us online
strutsafe.org

FRI & SAT: 7PM - 3AM
SUN: 7PM - 1AM

Canterbury Winter Activities

December 23rd - January 3rd, 2024

Our Activities

- My Pet Star at The Marlow Theatre
- Family Food and Fun
- Dance Workshop with Hasland Dance
- Djembe Drumming Workshop
- Family Board Game Afternoon
- Graffiti Workshop

Contact us
CanterburyFH@kent.gov.uk

Find us on Facebook or Instagram at
Canterbury Family Hubs



Family Hub Sites are run by Kent County Council

Canterbury Family Hubs

Information:

Booking Activities:

All activities that require booking are only available to children and young people in receipt of Free School Meals. To book on, please contact us: canterburyfh@kent.gov.uk

Drop In Activities:

Our drop in activities are available for everybody, no need to book.

23rd December

My Pet Star - Marlowe Theatre

Based on the book by BAFTA-winning writer Cressida Aerts and award-winning illustrator Rosalind Beardshaw, this original Marlowe Theatre production is now adapted for stage. Packed with original songs, My Pet Star is the perfect introduction to theatre, for the whole family to enjoy. For 0-19 years (25 SEND). Parents/carers in attendance.

Meet at: 12:45pm

The Marlowe Theatre
The Friars
Canterbury
CT1 2AS



2nd January

Herne Bay Family Food and Fun

Drop in to enjoy a range of seasonal arts and crafts activities led by our Family Hub team and enjoy a warming meal. To make your time with us even more special please book into one of the two workshops we have on offer led by partner organisations during the event. For 0-19 years (25 SEND).

10:00am - 2:00pm

Herne Bay Family Hub,
Memorial Park,
Herne Bay,
CT6 5RG

2nd January

Dance Workshop

Led by local partners Hasland Dance, an opportunity for beginners or those with more experience to learn a new routine and develop your dance skills. For 8-11 years.

10:00am - 12:00pm

Herne Bay Family Hub,
Memorial Park,
Herne Bay,
CT6 5RG



2nd January

Djembe Drumming Workshop

Make some noise with our long-term partners The Rewards Project and learn how to play a Djembe hand drum during this two hour workshop. For 8+ years.

12:00pm - 2:00pm

Herne Bay Family Hub,
Memorial Park,
Herne Bay,
CT6 5RG



3rd January

Family Board Game Afternoon

Drop in and see us to enjoy a cosy afternoon of board games and a communal warm lunch cooked with fresh ingredients. To make your afternoon even more special book into the Graffiti workshop led by The Rewards Project. For 0-19 years (25 SEND).

12:30pm - 4:30pm

Whitstable Family Hub,
Tower Parade,
Whitstable,
CT5 2BJ



3rd January

Graffiti Workshop

Take a board and a spray can and develop your art skills in this creative workshop led by the Rewards Project. Wrap up warm for this one as it will take place on our outside games area due to the nature of this activity. For 11+ years.

1:00pm - 3:00pm

Whitstable Family Hub,
Tower Parade,
Whitstable,
CT5 2BJ



Healthy Child Clinics and Breastfeeding Support Groups

A drop in clinic for you to come along, have your baby weighed and speak to a member of the Health Visiting Team. Breastfeeding information, advice and support is also available. Please arrive no later than 15 minutes before the end of the clinic.

Tuesdays | Thursdays | Fridays

1:30pm - 3:30pm | 1:30pm - 3:30pm | 9:30am - 11:30am

Herne Bay Family Hub,
Memorial Park,
Herne Bay,
CT6 5RG

Kingsmead Family Hub,
Kingsmead Road,
Canterbury,
CT2 7PH

Whitstable Family Hub,
Tower Parade,
Whitstable,
CT5 2BJ



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The Whitstable School

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www.thewhitstableschool.org.uk

Headteacher: Mr A Holmes BA (Hons), MA, NPQH



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, travelling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during the period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

- 1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY**
Children spend more time online during school holidays. Increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, enabling parental controls and ensuring children engage in offline activities can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open communication about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and protect your child's privacy. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.
- 2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS**
The prevalence of festive fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Check flames, assist with candles and use fire blankets. Practice fire safety protocols, including fire drills, to ensure everyone knows how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid overloading sockets, use fire safety blankets and use fire safe decorations to prevent mishaps.
- 3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS**
More families tend to travel during the holidays, including to busier areas, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Plan emergency kits and routes to weather hazards. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate stress in busy locations.
- 4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES**
Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross-contamination, unclear labelling and use of shared kitchen equipment can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergies needs to hosts, provide clear labelling and carry necessary medications like inhalers or epinephrine. Teaching children how to identify allergens and avoid high-risk ingredients like nuts and dairy is essential to reduce the spread of illness.
- 5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS**
Cold weather and seasonal indulging can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Encourage gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection rates. Promote hygiene, encourage vaccination, sanitised surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.
- 6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD**
Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distraction driving, poor road safety and limited weather can compromise road safety. Encourage good road safety practices, avoid distracted driving and wear seatbelts and reflective gear.
- 7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS**
Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical fire and choking hazards if misused. Trayed wires, sagging Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.
- 8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS**
Some toys and gifts can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensure that gifts meet safety standards and age requirements. Do not compromise on safety for more expensive or popular gifts. Check for recalls and ensure toys have proper safety warnings. Encourage thoughtful gift-giving that prioritises safety over price.
- 9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE**
Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to mistakes in fire safety, driving and supervision. Encourage regular breaks, meal preparation and delegation of tasks to reduce stress. Encourage self-care that promotes relaxation to create a positive, joyful holiday experience for everyone.
- 10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY**
Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of water safety for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide non-alcoholic alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and safe.

Meet Our Expert
James Whelan is a qualified health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety, specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies. He has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.

The National College
Wake Up Wednesday

Source: See all references on page 4 at <https://www.thenationalcollege.com/parentsafety-over-the-holiday-season>

Useful links:
 X @wake_up_weds
 Facebook /www.thenationalcollege
 Instagram @wake.up.wednesday
 TikTok @wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 8.12.2024

Reverse Advent calendar

Help us get ready to help people this Christmas!

Simply add one item each day to a Bag For Life during the month of November, and please consider sharing the list with your colleagues and friends

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 box of cereal* | 2 long life milk* | 3 tuna | 4 tin of ham | 5 dried pasta (500g)* | 6 Christmas chocolates* |
| 7 baked beans | 8 tooth paste | 9 tin of fruit | 10 washing up liquid | 11 biscuits | 12 peanut butter |
| 13 tin of carrots | 14 crisps | 15 coffee | 16 shower gel | 17 tin of peas | 18 deodorant |
| 19 pasta sauce | 20 tin of soup | 21 shampoo | 22 tea bags | 23 mince pies* | 24 Christmas pudding* |

*Please consider Buy from products

We will have collection points in early December, so keep an eye on our social media. If you have collected a lot with your school/group/workplace and would like us to collect, call our Operations Manager on 01227 936450 (option 4) or email warehouse@canterburyfoodbank.org.

If you need support, please call 01227 936450, WhatsApp 01227 501944 or email info@canterburyfoodbank.org canterburyfoodbank.org



Canterbury Food Bank is a registered charity (1151791)

For more updates and events, please visit our website and follow us on X and Facebook.

- <https://www.thewhitstableschool.org.uk/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/TheWhitstableSchool>
- <https://x.com/TheWhitSchool>

Best wishes
The Whitstable School Team



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