



20 DECEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER



Dear families,

What a festive week it's been! From Christmas parties to carol singing, we've been embracing the holiday spirit. Our students have been busy crafting, baking, and performing, spreading joy and cheer throughout the school. We can't wait to see what exciting things they'll do next term.

Key Dates:

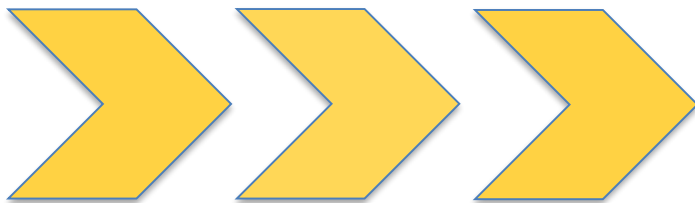
- 06 January 2025 - Term 3 Starts
- 09 January 2025 - GCSE resit results day
- 16 January 2025 - Year 11 Parents evening and parent forum (15:30-19:00 PM)
- 30 January 2025 - Year 9 Parents evening and parent forum (15:30- 19:00 PM)
- 13 February 2025 - Year 10 Parents evening and parent forum (15:30- 19:00 PM)
- 14 February 2025 – Term 3 Ends

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](#)



**NEXT TERM STARTS ON
6TH JANUARY 2025
WITH
WEEK B TIMETABLE**



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A Festive Season's Greetings from the Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of this term, I would like to take a moment to thank you all for your continued support.

This term has been one filled with fantastic achievements and celebrations. Our Christmas Show was absolutely fabulous, with so many students involved this year. It was wonderful to see their talent and creativity shine on stage, and the sense of community and pride was truly heart-warming.

Our STEM Academy is now in full swing, with students diving into exciting projects and challenges, while our Scholars Program continues to thrive with students demonstrating incredible focus and commitment to their studies.

We also had the privilege of showcasing the exceptional work of our Year 11 and Sixth Form students in the Art Department Exhibition. The creativity and dedication on display were truly inspiring, and it highlighted the incredible talent within our school.



Across all classrooms, there is so much to celebrate. From outstanding lessons to engaging activities, our students and staff have worked tirelessly to ensure a vibrant and enriching learning environment.

We also say goodbye to some valued members of our team. Mr Bills, Mr Williamson, Miss Smith, and Mrs Stephens will be leaving us at the end of this term. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavours and thank them for the positive impact they've had on the children during their time with us.

Finally, on behalf of everyone at the school, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming the children back on January 6th for another exciting term filled with opportunities and success.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support.



Mr Holmes, Headteacher



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REMINDERS

Whitstable Academy Secures Impressive Victory

Our U18 football team has achieved a significant victory against Welling United in the National League. This impressive win highlights the team's growing strength and potential.

The match was a closely contested affair, with both teams vying for control.

Despite facing pressure from Welling, our team defended resolutely and capitalized on a defensive error to secure a crucial 1-0 win.

We congratulate the team on their outstanding performance and look forward to their continued success.



Don't miss your chance to join our Football Academy!

Reminder: Football Academy Trials Tomorrow

Boys' and Girl's Recruitment Trial

****Date:** Friday, December 20th**

****Time:** 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM**

****Location:** Whitstable Town FC Stadium, Grimshill Road, CT5 4LN (3G pitch)**



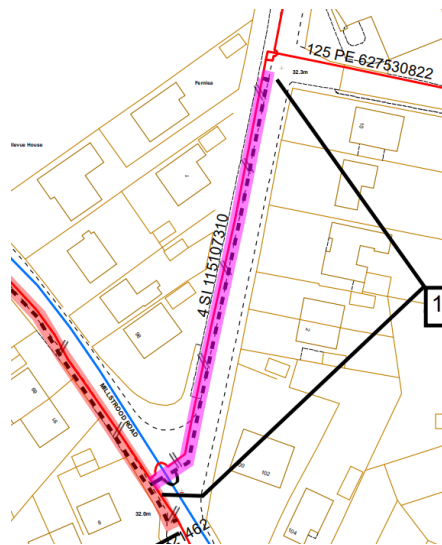
For more information, please contact Football Futures

<https://football-futures.com/>

Let's make tomorrow a success!

Important Notice: Gas Network Upgrade- Bellevue Road/Millstrood Road, Whitstable

Please be aware that gas network upgrade works will begin on **Monday 06th of January 2025** and are expected to last approximately three weeks. To minimize disruption, please plan your child's drop-off and pick-up times in advance, as the gas network upgrade will impact access to the school during this period.



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****Timetable for ALL year groups ****

Timetables for next year can be found on My Child At School. Students will receive a paper copy of this on Monday 6th January.

School Day Timetable (from September 2024)	
Period 1	8:40am - 9:35am
Period 2	9:35am - 10:30am
Break	10:30am - 10:55am
Period 3	10:55am - 11:50am
Period 4	11:50am - 12:45pm
Lunch	12:45pm - 1:20pm
Period 5	1:20pm - 2:15pm
Period 6	2:15pm - 3:10pm
7AOSL/Sixth Form	3:10pm - 4:00pm

****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.

THIS WEEK SO FAR...

A Magical Christmas Carol 🎄

Our pupils had a wonderful time watching A Christmas Carol at the Whitstable Playhouse. Pupils were bowled over by the brilliance of the cast- some of whom are pupils from TWS. A huge 'Huzzah!' and 'Well done' to Poppy, Reece, Charlie, Oli, Izzy and Niamh for your amazing performances. The show was magical.



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A Heartfelt Thank You ♥

We're incredibly grateful to our amazing parents, staff, and local businesses (Siesta Canterbury, Quex Adventure Farm Park, and Little Green Books, Herne Bay) for their generous donations to our **Gift Grotto**. Your kindness will make a huge difference to our students' Christmas.

Thanks to your support, **70 students** will be spending the next few days choosing gifts for loved ones, enjoying warm drinks, and writing Christmas cards.

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
From the Safeguarding Team at The Whitstable School.**



A Magical Christmas Show: Thank You!

We'd like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who supported our Christmas Show. Our talented students loved sharing their performances with you. We can't wait to bring you more magical moments next year! #TWSPerformingArts



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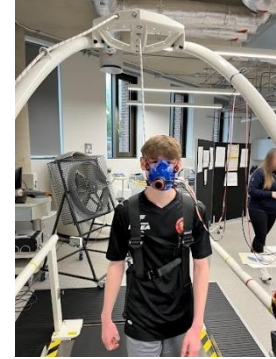
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Year 12 Sports Science Students Visit CCCU

Last Friday, our Year 12 Sports Science students had a fantastic opportunity to visit Canterbury Christ Church University. They were able to explore the campus, experience university life, and use cutting-edge fitness testing equipment. This enriching experience will undoubtedly inspire their future academic and athletic endeavours.



Whitstable Castle Reindeer Trail

Our talented Key Stage 3 Art Club students have created eight stunning reindeer sculptures for the Whitstable Castle Reindeer Trail! These unique creations showcase the students' creativity and artistic skills.



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A Festive Fiesta of Languages!

This Christmas, our MFL department has been a hive of activity! Our students have immersed themselves in various cultural traditions, from the whimsical Catalan [Caganer](#) to the mysterious [Tío de Nadal](#).

- **Year 7** has been busy crafting their own [nativity scenes](#), a beloved Spanish tradition, while learning vibrant Spanish colors.
- **Year 8** has channeled their creativity into designing stunning poinsettias, a Mexican Christmas symbol.
- **Year 9** has embraced the Catalan tradition of the [Tío de Nadal](#), creating their own mischievous log that, if treated well, will reward them with a Christmas surprise.

Our annual MFL Christmas party was a resounding success, filled with festive cheer, delicious treats, and a toast to the New Year with [12 lucky grapes](#).



To all our students and teachers for their hard work and enthusiasm. Thank you!



A group of students were invite by the MFL team to celebrate the festive season with a fun-filled Christmas party. They learned about Spanish Christmas traditions, like eating 12 grapes for good luck and creating their own Caganers from marshmallows.



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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 **Freya (Year 7), George (Year 8), Ella (Year 9)**



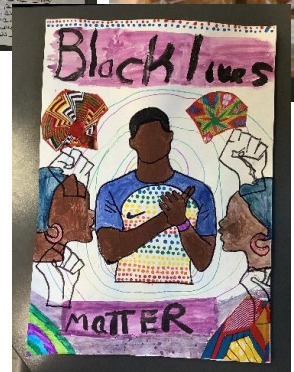
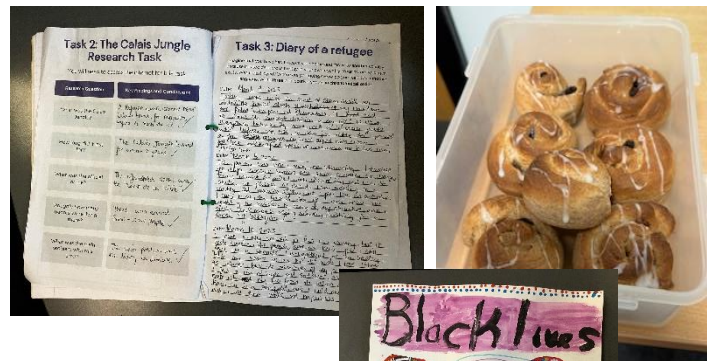
Students with their prizes in the TRACK Excellence raffle.



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 **Rosie (Year 8)** for impressive cake baking skills
- **Frankie and Tilley (Year 12)** for their poetic skills
- **Evie (Year 8)** for her diary of a refugee in Geography
- **Kitty (Year 8)** for her impressive poster.



We are also thrilled to announce:

****Sophia (Year 8)**** and ****Henry (Year 7)**** are the winners of this term's Book of Commendation prize draw. They each received **£10 Amazon voucher** for their multiple entries in the book.

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



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Robotics Team Shines at Simon Langton Grammar School

Our robotics team recently took advantage of the opportunity to participate in a thrilling skirmish at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys. This event provided our students with a valuable chance to refine their robotic skills and gain valuable insights from other experienced mentors.



Facing off against eight formidable teams, our students showcased their dedication and technical prowess. The skirmish was judged by a balance of 6th form students and members of Langton's senior team who have previously competed at the Vex World Championships. This expert panel provided our team with invaluable feedback and advice on how to further elevate their performance.

While we ultimately secured second place in the skirmish, this experience has ignited even greater enthusiasm within our team. We are excited to carry this momentum into the upcoming qualifying rounds after the new year. We extend our gratitude to Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys for hosting this fantastic event and for providing our team with a valuable learning and development opportunity.

Festive Baking in Full Swing 🍰

Our Year 11 students have taken a well-deserved break from their studies to practice their culinary skills. They've been busy baking delicious Christmas Couronnes, getting ready for their upcoming practical assessments. Year 10 students have also joined in the festive fun, creating impressive Yule Logs. Their chocolate Swiss rolls, filled and covered with rich chocolate ganache, are a sight to behold!



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GCSE Portfolio Exhibition

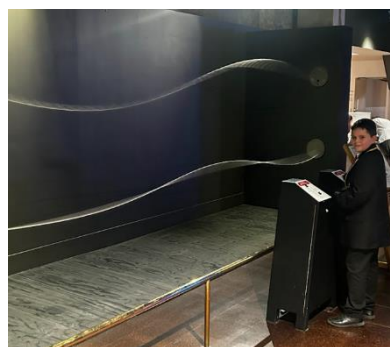
The GCSE Fine Art, Photography and Textiles students exhibited their work to celebrate the end of their coursework and give staff, students, parents and guardians the opportunity to view the amazing achievements of the students.

We are extremely proud of the high quality of work and creativity exhibited this year - well done to all involved.



Our Year 7s had a blast at the Science Museum! 🚀

Last week, our Year 7 students enjoyed a fantastic trip to the Science Museum in London. They explored interactive exhibits, learned about scientific discoveries, and had a great time!



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Year 10 students showcase their creative talents with festive snow globes 🧑‍🎨

Year 10 students have been busy getting into the Christmas spirit and learning about different methods of forming plastics in Design and Technology



UPCOMING EVENTS

**Free Tickets to Whitstable Town FC's Christmas Match! ** 🎟

Join us for a festive football match on Saturday, 21st December at 3:00 PM. Whitstable Town FC is offering FREE tickets to all families! To claim your tickets, simply click on the attached link and register. Let's make it a Christmas to remember! <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/wtfc/1506313>



Young People's Winter Wellbeing Guide

Please find the Young People's Winter Wellbeing Guide attached. Please share this guide with the young people you work with and other relevant professionals.

[Young People's Winter Wellbeing Guide](#)



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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



****Save the Date!**** 📅

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

Keep an eye out for more details!

Important Work Experience Dates for Year 10

- Week of: June 30th - July 4th, 2025 (5 days)

What is Work Experience?

Work experience is a valuable opportunity for you to:



- Gain exposure to the professional world and explore different career paths.
- Develop essential skills desired by employers, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.
- Boost your confidence and build your personal and social skills.

Finding Your Placement:

You are responsible for finding your own work experience placement. This allows you to explore your interests and connect with potential career fields. We will be providing support through Unifrog, a platform that helps you track and manage your placement search.

Have Questions?

If you have any further questions about work experience, please don't hesitate to contact:

- Email: tws-workexperience@swale.at



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NOTICE BOARD

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 Corrinne Averiss 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 skill. 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 cozy 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

1:30pm - 3:30pm

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

Thursdays

1:30pm - 3:30pm

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

Fridays

9:30am - 11:30am

Whitstable Family Hub,
Tower Parade,
Whitstable,
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At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formally published by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

- 1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING**
It's a concerningly common for young people to spend more 'doomscrolling' (travelling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious). Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose. Instead of aimlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people occasionally discovering harmful material.
- 2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT**
It's important to keep abreast of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising or 'products' – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.
- 3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS**
Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you've seen a dancer or a poet on Instagram, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.
- 4 REDUCE SCREEN TIME**
Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screen time; they also track how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and suggest children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.
- 5 FILL THE VOID**
Monitoring and reducing screen time can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider and outline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young people will temporarily cut down on their screen time, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.
- 6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS**
One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day when they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.
- 7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD**
Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body image to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish truth from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.
- 8 DIGITAL DETOX**
Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox' (from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screen time and less exposure to potentially harmful content). Alternatively, rather than avoiding the opportunity, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.
- 9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR**
Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – and if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screen time reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.
- 10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"**
Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones. Consequently, it's important to explain to young people why managing screen time is important. Set out the benefits and share that, while all the above information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

Meet Our Expert
John Inley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.

WakeUpWednesday | **The National College**

@wake_up_weds | www.thenationalcollege | @wake.up.wednesday | @wake.up.weds

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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>



Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! 🎄🎁
The Whitstable School Team



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