

07 MARCH 2025

NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

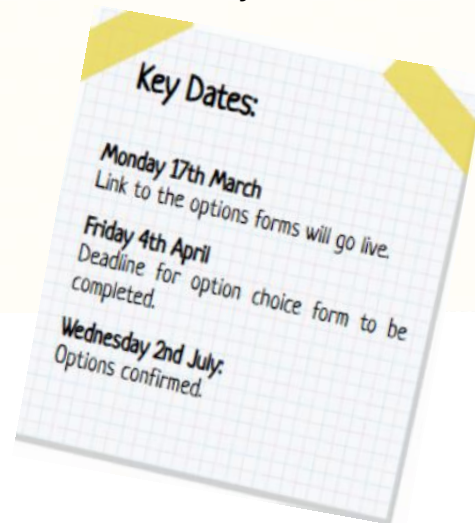
This week at The Whitstable School was a literary and culinary delight! Students celebrated World Book Day by unravelling the mystery of Roald Dahl's "Lamb to the Slaughter," while in Food Tech the aroma of delicious pancakes filled the air for Pancake Day. Read on for all the highlights.

Key Dates:

- 13 March 2025 - Year 8 Parents Evening
- 13 March 2025 - Careers Fair
- 27 March 2025 - Year 7 Parents Evening
- 04 April 2025 - Term 4 Ends

Update

We'd like to thank everyone who attended our KS4 Options Evening! We hope you found it both informative and helpful in your discussions with subject leads about course choices.



NEXT WEEK IS WEEK B TIMETABLE



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
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Council England



**GOLD
SCHOOL
2020**

ON TRACK TO EXCELLENCE

A member of Swale Academies Trust

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

Registered in England No. 07344732

REMINDERS

** Respecting Accessible Parking Spaces **

We kindly remind all parents and visitors to respect our designated accessible parking spaces. These spaces are reserved for individuals with disabilities who require close proximity to the school entrance.

Please remember:

- **Not all disabilities are visible.** Some individuals may have valid permits that are not always displayed.
- **Permits must be displayed.** If you have a valid permit, please ensure it is clearly visible in your vehicle's windscreen.
- **Cooperation is key.** We rely on everyone's cooperation to ensure these spaces are available for those who need them.

We understand that parking can be challenging, but we ask that you be considerate of others and refrain from parking in accessible spaces unless you have a valid permit.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in making our school accessible for everyone.

** Engines Off **

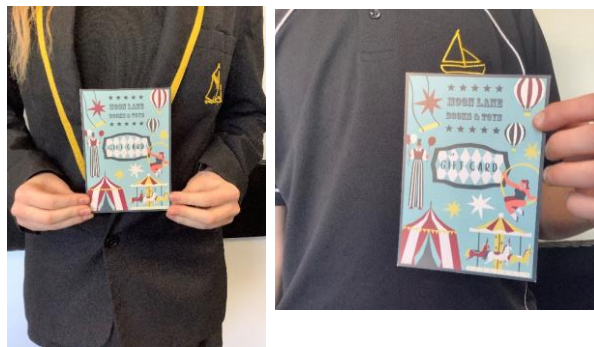
To help reduce air pollution, noise levels, and respect our neighbour's, please remember to turn off your engine while waiting to drop off or pick up your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

THIS WEEK SO FAR...

**TRACK Excellence Raffle Winners Announced! **

Each Wednesday, the school will run a 'TRACK Excellence' raffle with two 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's winners are
Holly and Albert (Year 9)



We've teamed up with local businesses for amazing rewards.

This week's prize is book vouchers for local book store **Tales on Moon Lane!**

Students with their prizes in the TRACK Excellence raffle.



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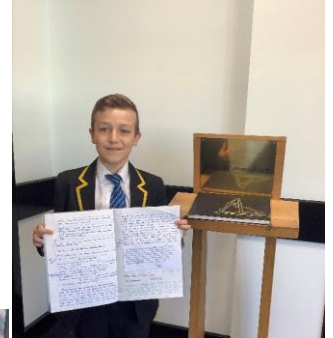
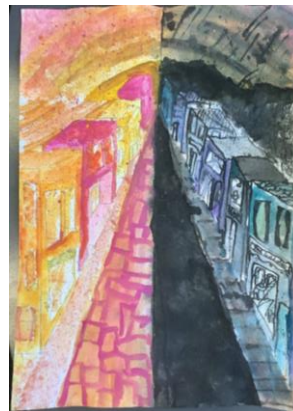
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**** Book of Commendation- Celebrating Student Success! ****

We are pleased to announce the following students have been recognized for their exceptional work and have been added to the Book of Commendation:

- **Mylie and Grace (Year 7):** Beautiful art work using Turner technique.
- **Mina (Year 7):** Produced beautiful art demonstrating perspective and colour.
- **Cody (Year 7):** Cody delivered a creative and insightful English presentation, exploring Norse mythology and drawing a unique connection between the powerful wolf Fenrir and Freddie, Ms. Senior's visiting dog.

Congratulations to all our commended students!



**** Making Smart Choices: "Smashed Live" ****

Our Year 7 and 8 students participated in the 'Smashed Live' project last week, a valuable program that focused on developing their ability to make informed decisions regarding underage drinking. Through engaging activities and positive thinking techniques, they learned how to handle peer pressure and make responsible choices.



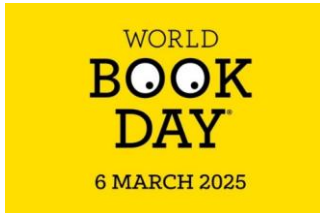
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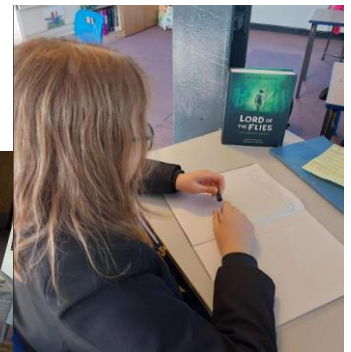
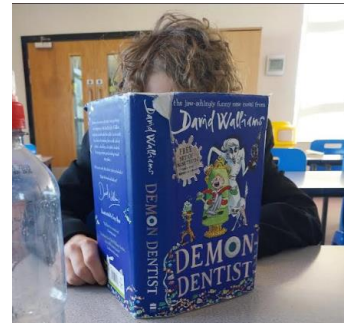
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**** World Book Day ****



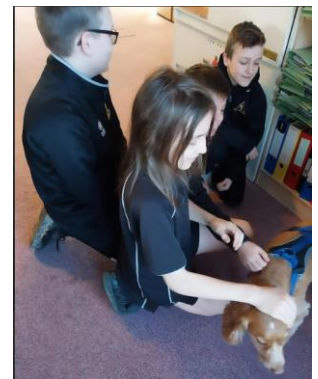
World Book Day took a thrilling turn at The Whitstable School! Departing from Dahl's beloved 'Matilda,' students explored the suspenseful 'Lamb to the Slaughter,' unravelling its mystery throughout the day. In GZ20, the intrigue deepened with added clues and a captivating crime scene setup, complete with a chilling 'mint sauce' hint.

Year 7 also enjoyed two classic tales. It was wonderful to see pupils immersed in reading!



**** Eddie the Dog Provides Curriculum Support for Year 7 English ****

Year 7 English students received a special visit from Eddie, a therapy dog from Cuddle Club, this week. While studying Norse myths, specifically the legend of the savage wolf Fenrir, Eddie's presence provided a unique opportunity for students to compare and contrast. His visit inspired students to write detailed and engaging descriptive pieces, enhancing their understanding of the curriculum.



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**** Electric Atmosphere at VEX Nationals! ****

The VEX Robotics UK Nationals in Telford was an unforgettable experience! **Team WHIMECH**, our talented group of six Year 7 and 8 students, competed fiercely against top teams from across the nation, showcasing their remarkable ingenuity and teamwork. The competition was intense, with 180 qualifying matches determining who would represent the UK in Dallas. Despite a valiant effort, our team's 306 points fell just short of the 330 needed for the finals.

However, we are incredibly proud of **Team Whimech's** progress! They demonstrated significant growth throughout the tournament, going head-to-head with some of the UK's top grammar and private schools. Notably, **we are the second-best non-selective state school in the country!** Congratulations to Harrison A, Harrison S, Jack, Arlo, Leo and Henry for their outstanding performance.

A huge thank you to Mrs. Donovan Bayley for her tireless dedication and to Mr. Costley for his invaluable support on-site during the Nationals. Thanks also to all the staff who helped, and to our sponsors, the Worshipful Company and Gwen Smith, for the amazing team T-shirts.

Interested in Robotics? Join Robotics Club Thursdays in LZ28!



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**** Year 10 Pancake Success ****

This week, Year 10 GCSE students tackled the challenge of creating consistent, evenly sized pancakes as part of their Food Choice studies, which explored the links between religion and food. They showcased their culinary skills and creativity with a variety of toppings, delivering fantastic results!



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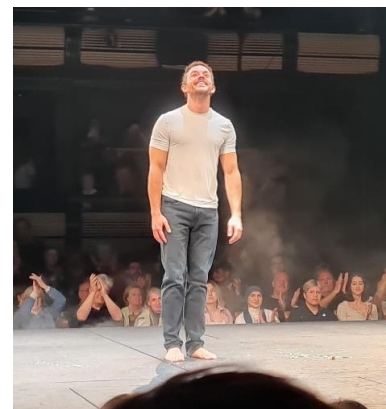
**** Year 9 Rugby Success ****

Our Year 9 boys represented TWS brilliantly at the district rugby gathering on Tuesday night! Their teamwork and commitment were outstanding and it's a pleasure to see their continued improvement. Captain Max led with an inspiring team talk, while Bruce secured crucial turnovers, Logan made powerful runs and every player provided fantastic support. The team's collective effort resulted in a victory over St. Anselm's and a draw with HBH.

Standout performances came from: Max, Leo, Bruce, Logan, Sam, Rogan, Danny, Harry and Josh. We're now eagerly anticipating the 7s tournament at Canterbury Rugby Club later this month! Well done, boys!

**** Shakespeare in the City: Sixth Form's Bridge Theatre Trip ****

Last week, our Sixth Form English Literature students had the opportunity to see Shakespeare's 'Richard II' at the Bridge Theatre, featuring Jonathan Bailey. The students enjoyed a sunny day exploring London, including a walk along the Queen's Walk. The play was a resounding success, with students praising the modern adaptation, interactive stage props, and diverse cast, all experienced from the intimate setting of the Bridge Theatre.



UPCOMING EVENTS

**** The Whitstable Town FC Stadium Final Scholarship Trials ****

Date: Friday, April 11th (April half term)

Time: 17:30 - 19:00

Location: Whitstable Town FC Stadium, Grimshill Road, CT5 4LN

Availability: Limited spaces for this year's academic intake.



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

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

We thank you in advance for any opportunities you are able to provide.



Are you able to support a Year 10 or 12 student develop valuable employability skills?

We are seeking work experience placements for our students during the week of **Monday 30th June to Friday 4th July 2025.**

We manage our Work Experience program through Unifrog, which handles all the necessary administration, including risk assessments, health and safety policies, and parental/carer consent.

If you can offer a placement during this week, we would be incredibly grateful.

Please complete the short form to express your interest or scan the QR code:

Form: [Work Experience Placement Form](#)

Alternatively, you can contact us directly at: tws-workexperience@swale.at



NOTICE BOARD

**Emotional Wellbeing/Support Workshops (Feb-Mar 2025) **

Boost your family's emotional wellbeing! We've got a fantastic line-up of workshops designed to support parents and children. Check out the links to the posters for more information and registration details:

- [Less Stress Guide in Exams](#)
- [Understanding ADHD](#)
- [All online workshops](#)



** Cucina Restaurant: Themed menus **

TREAT YOURSELF & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Buy a small double chocolate chip cookie and support girls' education for International Women's Day!

£1 each

Tomorrow is **International Women's Day** a time to celebrate the achievements of women and champion gender equality.

For every **small double chocolate chip cookie** sold today, we'll **donate** proceeds to **United World Schools (UWS)**, helping **girls** in remote communities access education and **build a brighter future.**

Find out more about United World Schools at: www.uwsglobal.net

7th March



Cucina IFG

Ramadan GRAB BAG

DURING THIS RAMADAN CUCINA ARE OFFERING GRAB BAGS FOR YOU TO TAKE AND ENJOY AT HOME TO BREAK YOUR FAST

EACH GRAB BAG INCLUDES:



Dates



Apple & Mango Juice



Vegetable Samosa

AVAILABLE EVERY SCHOOL DAY FROM THE FIRST DAY OF RAMADAN UNTIL EID AL FITR COLLECT YOURS AFTER SCHOOL FROM THE RESTAURANT!

£ 2.70

*All Grab Bags are available at the price of a free school meal

COMING UP... CELEBRATE EID AL FITR WITH US THIS MARCH!



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We are excited to support Red Nose Day and encourage our community to join us in making a difference. If you would like to donate and contribute to this wonderful cause, please follow the link provided: [Donations comic relief](#)

PERFORMING ARTS WEEK



WEDNESDAY 19TH MARCH PS&E
Performing Arts Sharing COMEDY
IMPROVISATION PERFORMANCE/DANCE PERFORMANCES

FRIDAY 21ST MARCH PS&E
Karaoke Party! TAKE ON TEACHERS AND FELLOW STUDENTS IN A SINGING BATTLE. PRIZES FOR BEST AND WORST

YOU CAN JOIN IN EITHER OF THE EVENTS ABOVE IN EXCHANGE FOR A DONATION TO COMIC RELIEF. DETAILS TO FOLLOW ON PARENT PAY

ARE YOU A YOUNG CARER?



Do you care for a family member or friend with an illness, disability, mental health issue or addiction?

Do you help with practical tasks, physical care or emotional support?

If so, come along to the Young Carers Support Group on a Wednesday lunchtime in GZ2 with Mrs James.

** Timetable & Family Hub Information **



"Timetable information and details about our local Kent Family Hub can be found here: [Kent Family Hub](#)



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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 delivered 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 USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

- 1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT**
Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading tools can assist by slowing and reading words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.
- 2 READING ON SCREEN**
Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability: adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.
- 3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS**
Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in settings under 'accessibility' and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user-friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.
- 4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES**
Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.
- 5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS**
Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve solving puzzles or problems-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.
- 6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS**
Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.
- 7 USING AUDIOBOOKS**
Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to the audio, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.
- 8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING**
Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.
- 9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY**
Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most applications, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to 'hear it read aloud'. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.
- 10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS**
While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13-16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media sites include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert
Cathrina Lovell is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Cathrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

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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>

Best Wishes
The Whitstable School Team



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