# The Convent Chronicle

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Inspiring Ambition, Achieving Excellence

Dear Parents/Carers,

I imagine that there are few of us who have not had contact with someone who has had cancer. For me: my mum and my dad, both of whom survived, and numerous others, including my favourite Auntie who sadly did not. The load for them was made significantly easier by having a Macmillan Nurse attached to them. Practical advice and support in managing a wide range of challenging diseases is perhaps what they do best. For my Auntie, and my family, kind words and a cup of tea at dark times sustained us.



And so today we have been celebrating, as staff, their work with a 'cup of tea and some cake' although I've got to say that cake made a greater appearance! Cakes were gratefully made by many staff members and their families.

Aside from the obvious link to charitable works in the school being part of our mission as a Catholic school, these events also secure an education for our young people on the numerous issues that affect our community. Thank you too therefore for the Thurrock Foodbank Harvest donations; please, please send in the last donations. It is

important that girls in the school, are aware of their community's needs, near and far 'no man is an island', and you will see that we plan an event for Libya and Morocco as a result of the terrible events that have happened there in recent weeks. This will be run by the Year 10 Justice & Peace group and Mr White. Please donate your one pound on parent pay – over the last 3 years we have collected £35,000 for others.

As John Donne points out below, we are all connected and we never know when we will need those connections - or help from others.

#### 'No Man is an Island'

No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

By John Donne



#### **Penny Johnson** Headteacher















#### Year 11 GCSE Geography Field Trip

On 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023, Year 11 GCSE Geography students took a trip to Epping Forest to study the Debden Brooke for our coursework and in preparation for our exams later this year. We studied the different courses of the river (upper, middle, and lower) and the different ground types in the river's drainage basin. Our main goal of our investigation was to prove Bradshaw's theory, which states that the river's velocity, width and depth decrease with each course downstream.

At the start of the day, we took a coach to the Epping Forest field centre, and we split into groups to meet with our instructors where they talked to us about what we were going to do that day. Next, we all regrouped at the coach and travelled to the river. We then split into our groups again and each group investigated a different site along the river. We calculated the river width by holding a tape measure from bank to bank and recording the length. We calculated depth by putting a metre ruler into the water at three different points and recorded the number which touched the water's surface, and then we calculated the mean. We calculated the velocity by using a metre ruler and a stopwatch to calculate how long it took a cork to flow down the length of the ruler. We also did this three times and calculated a mean. We used a cork as it was biodegradable and so would not damage the environment if we lost it (which we definitely did a few times!)

When we got back to the field centre, we ate lunch and participated in a short lesson about the different types of ground around the river's source. We went out and dug small holes in the ground and found that the area around the centre was mostly sand and the river's drainage basin was mostly clay. It started to rain soon after, so we all had to quickly get inside before it got too heavy! The instructors then helped us fill in the rest of our booklets – we wrote about flood risks, different ways to choose sites, and how we could make our results more reliable for future investigations.

In the next geography lesson, we shared our findings with the rest of our group and summarised our findings onto some worksheets that we can later use for our GCSE revision. Overall, the trip was fun and it was a great (and wet) day!

Alyssa Merrell 11.34

## Anti-Bullying Ambassador Training Day



On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September, Mrs Bishop and Mrs Cross took 10 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors from Years 8-10 to Hassenbrook Academy for a training day. The training was run by the Diana Award, an Anti-Bullying charity and 10 other secondary schools from around Essex also took part.

Our students took part in many fun activities but there was also a

serious aspect of the day. The students have now learnt how to deal with many aspects of bullying situations and how to support our students.

We all enjoyed meeting other students and staff and as usual our students were outstanding throughout the day.

A big thank you to our mini bus drivers Ms Boller and Miss Franklin.

**Mrs Bishop** 

#### Uniform recycling...



outgrown her school uniform over the summer es she have things that still

break? Does she have things that still have life in them but that she no longer has need for?

If so, please consider donating her old uniform and/or PE kit to the school so it can be given a new home. We are especially in need of blazers and skirts. Thank you.

**Mrs Burrow** 

#### Lunch Money

If your daughter has loaned lunch money from the Finance Office could you please ensure it is paid back the following day.

We have a large amount of outstanding money owing and emails have been sent home. If you have received an email could you please ensure the money is returned as soon as possible.

This service is only available for emergencies and if the money is not returned on time it could lead to us being unable to loan money to another student.

**Finance Office** 

## ParentPay Accounts



**ParentPay** 

It is important that our Parents

have a ParentPay Account, and that this account is activated. This enables parents to purchase equipment and not to miss out on school trips.

If you require another copy of your ParentPay Activation Letter then please email Mrs Wood on:

woodj@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk.

**Finance Office** 

Get the Studybugs App the quick and easy way to report your daughter's absence

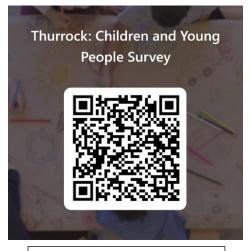


**Mrs Burrow** 

#### Thurrock SEN - Delivering Better Value Surveys

Thurrock SEN would like parents and pupils to have their say about how to improve send services in Thurrock.

Could you please support Thurrock SEN in their 'delivering better value' work and complete either the child/young person or parent/carer surveys below by using the relevant QR code or clicking the relevant link:



**Child/Young Person:** https://shorturl.at/qwCXY



Parent & Carer: https://shorturl.at/bFHRU

**Thurrock SEN** 

The Den! An online engagement opportunity for 11-16 year olds with **SEND** 

## CALLING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11-16

#### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Den is an informal virtual hangout for young people aged 11-16 providing an opportunity for young people to share their experiences and work together to improve services for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, living or attending education in Thurrock.

Meeting via MS Teams from 5.30pm on the following dates:

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 Monday 13th November 2023 Wednesday 13th December 2023

You can join 'The Den' and participate in regular online meetings and share thoughts and feelings on our online pinboard. Parents and / or guardians must complete this online registration form:

https://forms.office.com/e/xECdu8uE5 <u>A</u>

**Thurrock Children's Services** 

#### Vacancy

We have vacancies for Exam Invigilators to work during the exam periods. If you are interested in joining on a casual basis please see the full advert and job description on the school website or contact Jackie Reynolds finance@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk for further information.

**Finance Office** 

#### Water Bottles



Please check your daughter's water bottle is made of plastic NOT GLASS. Unfortunately, we have had instances of broken glass bottles which have caused a hazard in the school.

Mr O'Hanlon

## Spelling Bee

## Prepare for "Excellent spelling!" at Spelling Tests, ASSESSMENTS and Spelling Bee!

**SPELLING BEE COMPETITIONS THIS YEAR:** 

For Year 7- Autumn Term For Year 8 - Spring Term For Year 9 – Summer Term

Get ready! – Week 3

FOR YEAR 7	FOR YEAR 8	FOR YEAR 9
observant	starve	posters
observance	superannuated	post
observation	cryptic	hautboys
expectant	boulder	offices
expectation	timber	grooms
hesitant	maxim	posset
hesitancy (hesitation)	sniff	suborned
tolerant	readjustment	invested
tolerance (toleration)	flag	insane root
substance	accumulate	sewer
(substantial)		husbandry

For Year 8 in detail

Learn the words – they are all from Animal Farm:

starve - die of food deprivation

superannuated - too old to be useful

cryptic - having a secret or hidden meaning

boulder - a large smooth mass of rock detached from a place of origin

timber - the wood of trees prepared for use as building material

maxim - a saying that is widely accepted on its own merits

sniff - perceive by inhaling through the nose

readjustment - the act of correcting again

flag - a rectangular piece of cloth of distinctive design

accumulate - get or gather together

For Year 9 - in detail. Learn these words -

they are all from Macbeth – Act 1

posters: a noun meaning "swift riders" (on horseback, or foot –or broomstick)
post: a messenger of "letter carrier" who, using fast horses, delivered mail rapidly

hautboys: from the French haut meaning "high" and bois meaning "wood"

offices: servants' quarters

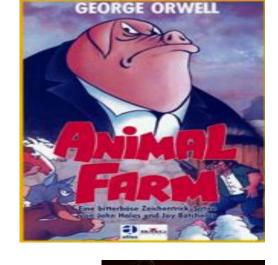
**grooms**: servants who slept at the foot of the king's bed **posset**: warm drink of milk and ale, often taken just before

retiring

suborned: bribed
invested: crowned

**insane root**: henbane or hemlock, said to cause madness **sewer**: a server: a household official in charge of serving food

husbandry: thrift, economy



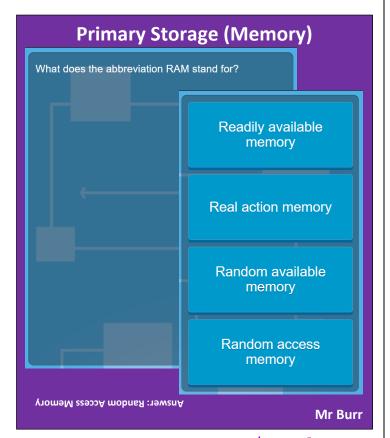




# Learn them to improve your spelling!!!

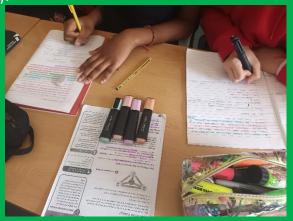
**Miss Petrova** 





RE

Year 10 have been working really hard so far learning the ropes of GCSE RE. They have been learning about the story of creation and whether this is a literal or symbolic story.



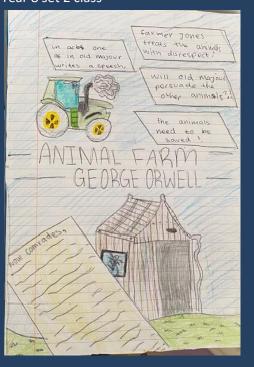
They have now started to learn how to write a 12 mark question, and they have been dissecting the different elements that make up the answers.

Well done Year 10. Keep up the good work.

**Miss Bird** 



Another great Animal Farm title page from Mia in Mrs Grints Year 8 set 2 class



**Mrs Grint** 

Maths



#### **Maths Questions of the Week:**

Harry and Erik have £400 in total.

Harry gives Erik £60

Erik now has  $\frac{1}{4}$  of what Harry has.

How much did Harry have at the start?

A school is planning a summer barbecue. Two shops have deals on burgers.

Fresh Foods
Burgers 64p each
Buy two get one free

Farm Best 24 burgers plus 25% extra £10

Which deal offers the best value for money?

Submit your answers in Room 21 at break time and receive 5 Achievement points!

Mr Amenze

## Macmillan Coffee Morning



Staff held a Macmillan Coffee morning today in the staff room to raise funds for this worthy cause.

Our star bakers were Mrs Collis and Mrs Bialek's husband who provided a vast array of cupcakes cakes.



Several staff contributed cakes and staff enjoyed cake, a hot drink and a chat.

We have raised £115 so with more donations to come.

A big well done to our staff.

**Mrs Bishop** 

### Justice & Peace Group Karaoke for **CAFOD**



The Justice and Peace Group are organising a Karaoke at lunch times on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October to help those devasted by the earthquake in Morocco and the floods in Libya. We are asking students who would like to attend either to sing or listen to please make a donation of £1 in advance on Parent-Pay, so that we will have the list of names of those attending in the Hall. We are inviting students to write their song requests on the sheet for their Year Group in the Foyer by Wednesday. They need to songs with good words and a good message.

We thank you in anticipation for your generosity.

**Miss Carson** 

#### **BCYS** Youth Mass

#### Thursday 5th October at Brentwood Cathedral 6-9pm

This is a good opportunity for those who will be attending the Youth Gather weekend to meet some of the leaders in advance if parents are able to take them to the Cathedral CM15 8AT and collect them afterwards. Please see bcys.net for further details.

God bless you.

**Miss Carson** 

## Friday 6th October is our CAFOD Harvest Fast Day



#### HARVEST FAST DAY

FRIDAY 6th October

PLEASE HELP THE POOR BY CHOOSING SOUP & ROLL £1

AND DONATE **MONEY SAVED** TO CAFOD to help others in need.



CAFOD is the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development. In addition to the usual selection in the Canteen, there will be an optional Simple Lunch of Soup & Roll for £1 so that we can donate the rest of them money we would usually spend on lunch to CAFOD to help our brothers and sisters in the world who are starving overseas. (We helped local people in need recently through our collection for the Thurrock Food Bank.) In this way we also experience a little bit of hunger in solidarity and empathy with the poor by choosing the Simple Lunch option.

**Miss Carson** 

## Feast of the Archangels

#### Today we are celebrating the Feast of the Archangels.

## **FEAST OF THE ARCHANGELS:** Michael, Gabriel and Raphael.

The name angel comes from the word messenger in Greek; the angels bring God's messages. The archangels are the princes and leaders of God's angels and are important in the 3 largest religions of the world, the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. There are 9 choirs of

angels serving God:

- 1. Seraphim
- 2. Cherubim
- 3. Thrones
- 4. Dominions
- 5. Virtues
- 6. Powers
- 7. Principalities
- 8. Archangels
- 9. Angels



#### **Angel Gabriel**

is the angel of communication.

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce the Good News asking her to be the Mother of God's Son, Jesus. We read about him in both the Old and New Testament particularly in St. Luke's Gospel.

Tonight, find out what happened to Zechariah when Angel Gabriel appeared to him with a message? (see Lk.1:5-25)



#### **Archangel Michael**

protects us against evil. His name means 'Who is like God?' which was the war cry of the angels, lead by Michael who cast Satan and his bad angels out of Heaven. He drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden when they disobeyed God.

(We read about him in Genesis and in the Book of Daniel Chapter 12 in the Bible)



#### **Archangel Raphael**

brings God's healing. His name means 'God has healed'. He is also a guide to God's people. He helped Tobias to meet his wife Sarah. He revealed his identity as "I am the Angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the throne of God." We read about him in the Book of Tobit in the Bible. Angel Raphael Says: "Praise God and tell everyone about the good things he has done for you, so that they too will honour him and sing his praises." Tobit 12:6

PRAYER: In the Book of Revelation,
Saint John, was given a vision into Heaven,
and he saw the angels and saints around God's throne,
praising him night and day in the words of the
Holy Holy prayer, which we say at Mass.
So when we say this prayer we are joining in with the
continuous praise in Heaven as we say together
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Amen.
N.B. this is Little Way week – being an angel and doing
little acts of kindness for one another.



God bless you,

E-mail: admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

### Hurray! Youth Gather returns!

#### For students in Years 9, 10 &11 - BCYS Youth Gather, 21st-22nd October, Essex Outdoors on Mersea Island

Youth Gather is back for 2023 and the BCYS are absolutely thrilled to be joined by the fantastic Adenike, semi-finalist on the voice. Taking place at Essex Outdoors on Mersea Island, there is cabin accommodation and a brilliant range of outward bound activities, opportunities for climbing high ropes, archery, zip wires and much more to keep you challenged and entertained, plus performances, input and workshops from Adenike and the SVP! All meals are included, plus two Mersea activities, 2 BCYS workshops, accommodation and travel to and from Mersea Island – all of this for just £70! Diocese. Apply now at: www.bcys.net/events/yg23/

Mrs Johnson is offering a 50% discount for the first 10 students who come forward and give their names to the Chaplain, Miss Carson by signing the Youth Gather list, so it will only cost them £35. If you need further help with the full cost please write to or email Mrs. Burrow <a href="mailto:burrowl@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk">burrowl@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk</a> who will assist you confidentially.

The Brentwood Youth Service are very well known and have been coming into our school for over twenty years and have been running residential retreats for Catholic schools from all over the diocese for even longer. You can be assured that they will take very good care of your daughter, who will be well-supervised while enjoying time with other young people from other Catholic schools.

**Miss Carson** 

## Extra-Curricular Sports Timetable - 3:30-4:30pm

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
All Years Cricket: <u>SF</u>	Year 10 & Y11 Netball : SF	<u>U16 (Y10&amp; Y11)</u> <u>Football: MB</u>	All years Rugby: SF&GS	
		MALA MALA Y8 Netball: ZB	The state of the s	
	KS3 (Y7-Y9) Football: GS		Y7 Netball: KW	
All years Basketball club: GS	All Years Badminton Sports prefects	Y9 Netball: GS	XII	
		All years Fitness: SF	All years cross Country: ZB	
<b>y</b>			*	

## Safeguarding our Children at Grays Convent

At Grays Convent our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Collis, and our Safeguarding Officers are Mrs Wells and Mrs Bishop. Students can contact any of our Safeguarding Team during the school day.

#### Worried about a child?

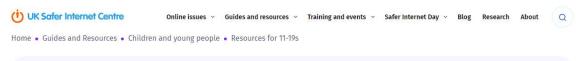
You can phone or write to The MASH about your concerns. Phone immediately if you believe it is urgent.

- Thurrock MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding hub), Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL, Tel: 01375 652802.
- Emergency Duty Team (for out of hours) 01375 372468.
- Police Child Abuse Investigation Team **01277 266822** or call **999** if you are concerned a child needs immediate protection.
- Childline 0800 11 11 www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk; www.facebook.com/nspcc

**Mrs Collis** 

#### Internet Safety Tip - UK Safer Internet Centre - Resources for 11 Years+

Here you will find films, games, quizzes and advice to help you to use the internet safely, responsibly and positively. https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people/resources-11-19s



Children and young people

## Resources for 11-19 year olds



The internet is a brilliant place to connect with others, to be creative and to discover new things.

Here you will find films, games, quizzes and advice to help you to use the internet safely, responsibly and positively.

Mr Burr

## Pope Francis - Tweet of the Week



## Pope Francis 🐶 @Pontifex · 2d

The #WordofGod invites us not to hide behind the complexity of problems, behind "nothing can be done about it." It urges us to unite worship of God and care for the human person. For Sacred Scripture has been given to us to go forth and meet others, drawing near to their wounds.

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Walk Online Roadshow for Parents, Carers and Practitioners Wednesday 22nd November 2023

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

-20:00 till 21:30

Thurrock LSCP have offered the Walk Online Roadshow for all Years 5s. We are pleased to be able to offer a session for parents, carers and practitioners.

This session explores show parents, carers and practitioners can support their children to navigate the online world.

Visit the website to access the link.

Please note that this session is for over 18s only.

www.thurrocklscp.org.uk



## Child and Family Counselling Services

Parents are now able to access direct support for their child by referring them into the safe hands of our Child and Family Counselling Services (CFCS). We have a team of highly experienced Counsellors, Specialist Child and Adolescent Counsellors and Play Therapists available within the counselling team who work in our specially adapted therapy rooms.



We offer support to children, young people and parents through talking, play and art therapy.

CFCS provides therapy to children, young people and families. We support many different issues such as:

- Self-harm
- Identity
- Anxiety

- Bullying
- Bereavement
- Parental separation and family issues or conflict.

The pathway is overseen by our Head of Child and Family Counselling Services, who is supported by a team that are both passionate about and dedicated to the wellbeing of children and young people. The team has achieved very positive and reparative outcomes for children and families.

#### What can you expect?

After an initial contact, we will arrange an assessment to explore the issues your child may be experiencing and will then identify which model best supports the difficulty your child may be facing.

#### Who do you contact?

If you are worried about your child and would like to talk to us further, please either email Catherine cmunns@bccs.org.uk or call on 07792 732206 and we will be pleased to help.

Take a moment to read about the experience a parent shared with us:

I had contacted a number of professional services to assist me in helping my daughter. At the suggestion of my daughter's school a referral was made to **BCCS** and it was then that I met one of their counsellors. After months of unanswered questions and "hitting brick walls" I finally had answers, structure and a profound understanding of how a small little girl's mind works.

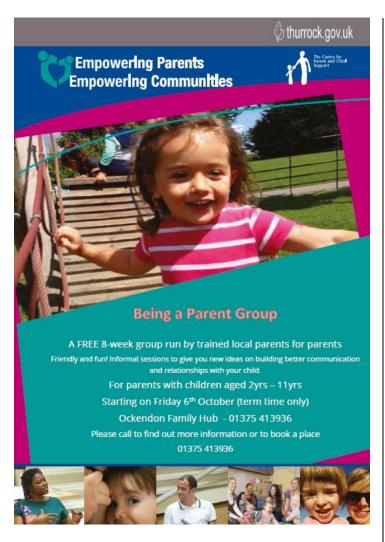
For me, there has been nothing so worrying as watching your child struggle and the **BCCS** counsellor's help has enabled me to help her for which I will be forever grateful.





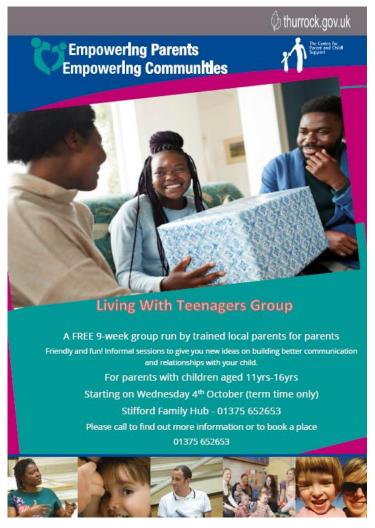
BCCS, 133 High Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9AB Brentwood Catholic Children's Society - Registered Charity Number: 1000661













ARE YOU A PARENT LIVING IN THURROCK?

HAVE YOU GOT TIME TO SPARE TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

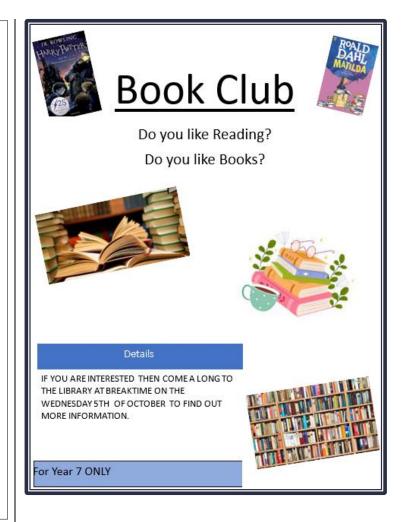
ARE YOU THINKING OF GOING BACK TO WORK?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BUILD YOUR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE?

We would like to invite you to our coffee morning on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 10-12pm at Chadwell Family Hub, Claudian Way, RM16 4QE

To share information on Being A Parent Group (BAP) running at Family Hubs across Thurrock and how to become a parent group leader volunteer (PGL) and support the delivery of these groups in your community.

If you are interested please contact Chadwell Family
Hub for more information on
01375 840433



## **Key Dates and Events**

Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> October	Black History Month begins	Whole school
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Rise Above Day (pupils finish at 2:30pm)	Years 7-11
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> October	CAFOD Fast Day	Whole School
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 7 Welcome Mass	Year 7
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 7 Rochester Trip Debrabant Day	Year 7 Whole School
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 9 Information Evening 6-7pm	Year 9
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Students break for Half Term – 3:25pm finish	Years 7-11
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Non-Pupil Day	<b>Years 7-11</b>
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> to Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term	Whole School
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> October	Students return for 8:25am start	<b>Years 7-11</b>
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Year 11 Information Evening 6-7pm	Year 11
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> to Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Anti-Bullying Week	Whole School