

# Headteacher's Letter

As we reach the end of another successful academic year, it is a time to reflect on an incredibly busy and purposeful year. This year we have been part of the educational journey of 191 pupils across our four sites. Every child who moved on in the last twelve months, did so into a positive destination. We survived the dreaded Ofsted, had our Advanced Status judgement renewed from the National Autistic Society and gained external accreditations. We also supported over 60 educational trips and experiences for the young people in our school.

This last week has been quite overwhelming, with messages of support and gratitude from parents, the feedback that acknowledges the work of my dedicated team of staff has been phenomenal and we are all so grateful for your support. We know that our school faces some uncertainty, and the special school review has and continues to challenge. I hope that in the Autumn, I can work with my colleagues in the local authority to have a unified approach to meeting the needs of pupils who would benefit from a place at Grange Park. Please, if you can do so, share your views by completing the consultation before the 31st July. Please click on the link [HERE](#)

This week, the new School Improvement Advisor visited and agreed with our judgements, she was impressed with our work, continued development and consequently our school has been rated as "green". We are fully staffed for September and new teachers have spent time in school learning more about the Grange Park way, our shared vision, values and ethos. It is always sad to say goodbye to colleagues as they become friends and are very much part of our family.

As we anticipated, this week has been tricky for some pupils due to the changes, but despite the beginning of the week wobble, it has been a very calm end to term. Thank you for all your support. We have found the moving up timetable week helpful and the new Year 10 pupils have certainly benefited. We plan to do this every year moving forward.

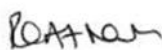
The talent show was another incredible evening with over 40 pupils participating with confidence and enthusiasm. It is so wonderful to see pupils from all year groups showcase their talents. This is also an event where I get time to chat with you. Although this year, I was doing a pretty poor job of serving burgers (I have a plan to improve this next year!). The raffle raised just over £1600 which we will use to support the Chessington and cinema trip. SNS our IT support company donated a surface pro which was won by a Year 12 pupil and Onecall PC donated an IPAD which was one by a Year 8 pupil. I do hope the family that won the barrow of booze enjoys it! A huge thanks for all the raffle donations and those who bought tickets. I was disappointed to miss our sports day and I hope that with the support of Stansted Parish Council we will be able to hold the event on the green next year.

Following my letter about interactions with the school, it has been positive to meet with parents to review attendance where it falls short of the government requirements. We really know our pupils and appreciate that sometimes a period of illness can impact attendance. However, I am under pressure to ensure that the children attend school every day and I have this expectation of my staff as well as the pupils. September is a fresh start, and we look forward to working with our families to support the pupils to be in school every day. There have been updates to the attendance guidelines and term-time holiday requests will follow this. Working together has a positive impact on the pupils, their wellbeing and attainment.

In September, we will ask the pupils to consider representing their class as part of the School Council. Please do encourage your child, as their pupil's voice helps me make decisions on the school and resources we buy. Following an application process and interviews, I have appointed the pupil leadership team. I welcome Katie, Adam, Caitlyn, Robert, Ahana, Lucca, Harrison and William.

I do hope you all have a wonderful, safe, summer break and I look forward to welcoming the pupils back to school on Monday 2nd September

Thank you for your continued support.



Miss Renukah Atwell  
Executive Headteacher

## Upcoming Events

Thursday 22nd August 2024 - GCSE Results Day

Monday 2nd September 2024 - First Day of the Academic Year

Monday 16th September 2024 - School Photographer

Friday 20th September 2024 - Whole school Trip to Chessington

Tuesday 24th September 2024 - Flu Vaccinations - Year 5 - Year 11



SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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## Message from the Chair of Governors

Here we are at the end of another school year, a year filled, on the whole, with good things for our pupils and staff. The school is well resourced compared to many other special schools.

Governors have had many discussions with regard to County's wish to re-designate a number of special schools, including ourselves and if we have had many discussions, you can perhaps imagine the number of meetings Miss Atwell and our Senior Leadership Team have had to contend with! It has been a difficult twelve months with, in my view, County officers being less than transparent in their dealings with us and other KsENT schools. There is a consultation questionnaire currently being circulated requesting ".....your feedback on the following proposed changes in relation to: **Special Schools' designation and admission guidance** and **The school-to-school model of support**....." This questionnaire is to be completed on-line at [www.kent.gov.uk/specialschoolsreview](http://www.kent.gov.uk/specialschoolsreview) or complete the survey in paper form and email it to [specialschoolsreview@kent.gov.uk](mailto:specialschoolsreview@kent.gov.uk). Your response has to be in by midnight on 31 July 2024, so not much time to complete the survey and return it. Alongside each question there is a rectangular box in which you can give further information as to how this change might affect you.



My own feeling is that when reading through the questions the obvious answer is "Yes" – every parent/carer would prefer to have a special school provision within three miles of home but would this provision be the best education for the child? The "solution" to this local provision is for mainstream schools to accommodate all manner of pupils with SEND with only those with the most profound learning disabilities attending 'Special Schools'. Is it going to save the education authority money or break even? I don't know. There is a nationwide problem regarding funding of SEND provision, not just in Kent and I accept this does need to be addressed.

Until the last few days, officers have ignored the fact that KsENT special schools, of which we are a member and with the exception of one school, have been judged as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. All pupils attending Grange Park have 'failed' in mainstream education and governors are extremely proud of both our staff and pupils, as to how all rise to the challenge and become success stories.

On a lighter note, I would like to say how wonderful Sports Day was on Stansted Village Recreation Ground – the weather was perfect, the car parking easy, the field accommodating all sports, the use of the village hall an asset with plenty of shade under the trees to enjoy picnics. Our children all looking so very smart in their sports uniform – certainly a day to treasure.

Leavers Assembly was a further highlight with Year 11s celebrating their time with us in great style with very few dry eyes whether they be proud parents/carers or equally proud staff. What a great afternoon we all had with good wishes given for the next stage in their academic journey.

Terms 5 and 6 have been very busy with exams in term 5 and 'expeditions' off site in term 6 – there are not many quiet days at Grange Park.

I am pleased to say that from September, our second Parent Governor, Mr Steve Prescott will be in place and I am very much looking forward to welcoming him to the Board.

Matthew Balfour, my Co-Chairman, and I have formed a strong partnership over the past year and whilst not looking forward to battles to come, we are ready to deal with whatever is thrown at us. In the meantime, we would like to wish everyone a good summer break in the hope that the sun will start to shine again in time for the holidays!

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Sue Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Mrs Sue Murray

Chair of Governors

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## Stansted

### Knole Park Trip

We couldn't have got luckier with the weather with our trip to Knole Park; the sun was shining, and the deer were about!



On arrival at Knole Park, we were greeted by their lovely team who showed dedication to their work and guided the pupils through the workshops smoothly. We began by exploring a range of objects that would have been used in the Tudor era. The pupils were challenged with finding out what the objects were and then trying to decide on who would have used them.



After that, we spent some time looking at and using some musical instruments from the Tudor Times; we found out about the rebec, the lute and the lap-harp which were string instruments and hearing a rendition of Greensleeves played by one of the Knole team!



After lunch we separated into two groups for the remaining activities; costumes and a park walk; where we could continue learning more about the Tudors.

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During the costume session, the students impressed the team with their knowledge of Tudor outfits, answering all of the questions the team had and proudly sharing what they had learnt about. We had our very own Lady Sackville present, in her rich, black clothing, along with another noble friend! And of course, not to forget our Farrier, Head of House and Nursery Maid!



During our park walk we discovered how King Henry VIII had decided that he wanted to own Knole House so that he could hunt the deer and we walked along the valley to see where King Henry VIII might have shot his bow from. The students raced to see if any of them could run as fast as a deer themselves, but unfortunately that wasn't to be – the deer have an unfair advantage, running twice as fast with twice as many legs!



By the end of the day, all were happy and worn out – including the deer! The pupils had shown once again just how amazing Grange Park pupils are and made us very proud with their excellent behaviour, manners and knowledge! Well done Year 5's and 6's!



## Year 5 & 6 Reculver Trip



We were greeted by the fantastic Anna, from Anna Outdoors, when we arrived at Reculver Coastal Classroom. We had a selection of activities for our trip that was focusing on "Why Oceans Matter"; and what better way to get started than some hands-on fieldwork, exploring the beach and collecting samples!



The 5's and 6's thoroughly enjoyed scavenging the beach to find lots of different things. We found things like Green Shore Crabs, common whelk eggs, Devil's Toenails and Cuttle Fish bones. We were hoping to scavenge shark teeth(!), but due to the tide and a cliff slide, we had a great discussion about the importance of our coast lines and how much they change. The classes had many questions for our coastal expert and loved sharing their own knowledge as well.



Once we had collected a whole range of items in our buckets, we took them to make our very own mini-ecosystems! The students worked in groups, collating their findings and being extra careful of their live findings! The students were able to talk about, and share with the group, what they had found.



To celebrate such a fantastic day out, we spent some time on the park before travelling back to school on the minibuses. We can't wait to go back again!



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## Year 5 & 6 Cricket Tournament

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June our Grange Park cricket team, made up of a combination of Year 5 and 6 pupils travelled to Kings Hill Cricket ground to take part in the School Games Inclusive Cricket Tournament.

The pupils listened really carefully to all instructions given out and represented our school superbly - their behaviour was impeccable! After a quick warm up, it was time to put their fantastic cricket skills into practice. We played a number of different schools and had to bat and field in order to gain as many runs (and stop our opponents from scoring runs) in order to win the match. Over the tournament we recorded three wins, two draws and a loss.

Amazing team spirit and effort, along with endless cheering and encouragement was shown by our pupils throughout the whole tournament. Well done to all of the pupils who took part!



## Year 7 Trip to Enviropower

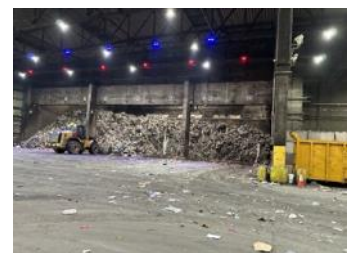
On 21<sup>st</sup> May Year 7 had the exciting opportunity to visit Kent Enviropower in Allington as part of our Geography curriculum. We donned our high viz and hard hats to learn all about resources and waste management along with the importance of recycling.

The facility sorts separated materials for recycling and recovers energy from non-hazardous waste. The facility is able to process up to 550,000 tonnes a year of mixed waste for energy recovery and a further 65,000 tonnes of separated materials suitable for recycling.



We had a tour from a helpful lady called Sarah and got to see the weighing bridge, the tipping hall, the control room and even got to sit in the chair to control the huge crane that moves the waste. Did you know that Kent Enviropower can generate up to 43 Megawatts (MW) of electricity. 34 MW of this will go to the local electricity supply network?

We had a fantastic time learning about the importance of recycling and where our rubbish goes, although we did find the tipping hall rather smelly!



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## Year 6 Residential to Bowles Rock

For the second year running, Year 6 have had their residential at Bowles Rock. And for the second year running, it was brilliant! The Bowles Rock activity centre owes its name to some towering rocks that are a mere 154 million years old, but even these rocks raised an eyebrow at the size and number of suitcases trundling past them on our arrival. You never know what you might need on a two-night stay...



Before we had even unpacked, the children were sent on a treasure hunt to help them find their way around the centre which involved a lot of excited running and shouting but alas no real treasure. That afternoon saw us shoot some bows and arrows – congratulations to Mrs Towner for being the closest to the bullseye. The evening session saw us try our hands at pool kayaking which was an enormous success. The children went from viewing capsizing with some trepidation, to seeing it as truly hilarious and they delighted in working as a team to capsize the instructor's boats. Needless to say, there were no complaints when the lights went out at 10pm.



The next day was full of new experiences for the children. From rock climbing to dry-slope skiing, the children showed true perseverance and courage to overcome their fears and give it a go. By the end of the session, they were taking the lift up the slope and gliding down without so much as a helping hand from anyone. Some raucous and frightening stories were told around the campfire before the world's messiest marshmallow eating competition started. Tonight, no-one made it past 9:30pm!

The summer rain returned with a vengeance on Friday, so we headed out to some local rocks to explore caves, squeeze through crevices and get generally filthy. Fortunately, the afternoon was spent in the shelter of the pool, building rafts and kayaking once more to round off a sensational trip.



A huge thanks to everyone involved: the parents and carers of Year 6 for letting them go on such a trip and preparing their children so well; to all the staff at Grange Park for making it happen; to the wonderful staff at Bowles Rock; and most of to the Year 6 children – you were absolutely fantastic!

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## Wrotham

### Harry Potter Theatre Trip

Pupils in Year 10, 11 and Key Stage 5 had a fantastic experience when visiting the Shaftesbury Theatre in London to watch Harry Potter and the Cursed Child Part One and Two.

All the pupils who attended were spellbound by the magnificent play. The pupils were impeccably behaved while catching the train to London, enjoying a lovely McDonalds for tea and showing great resilience when catching our train home at 11pm. Well done to all the pupils who enjoyed a wonderful theatre experience.



### Chatham Dockyard

Pupils in years 7, 8 and 9 visited Chatham Dockyard during the exam period and completed a number of different workshops to develop their STEM skills.

They were able to work together in groups from across the year groups to create a boat and battled against each other in the water. They also got to build a rocket and launch at a target which they loved doing. The pupils got to learn about rope making in a ropery and design things that are made from rope. It was a fantastic day.



### Greenwich Observatory

The students enjoyed their trip to the Greenwich Observatory where they were treated to an immersive experience in the Planetarium about space and the moon. Students then got to explore the Greenwich observatory and explore the many different telescopes. In the afternoon the pupils enjoyed taking part in a variety of sporting activities in Greenwich Park. Well done everyone.



## Food Tech

Year 7,8 and 9 have been working hard in cookery. They have been busy making sausage rolls, lasagne, focaccia, bread rolls, spaghetti bolognese, veggie lasagne, Victoria sandwich, veg cous cous, ragu sauce, mushroom risotto



They have learnt lots of new skills and developed their confidence using a range of techniques to prepare and cook a variety of recipes.



## Textiles

Throughout this school year all students have engaged with Textiles. They have experimented with a range of different fabrics and techniques, such as fabric marking and silk painting. They have all had the opportunity to use a sewing machine to try applique and make bags, cushions, books, postcards and plushies. They have brought their own personality into their projects making them all unique. They have been a pleasure to teach. Well done everyone.



## Grange Park at the National Gallery.

I am really pleased to announce that once again Grange Park will be part of the Take One Picture exhibition at the National Gallery this summer.

Back in Term 1, Year 7 and 8 worked together to on a project inspired by the painting *Surprised* 1891, by Henri Rousseau. Their work was submitted to the gallery and selected from 300 schools around the world to be part of this amazing and prestigious exhibition.



The gallery is celebrating its 200 year anniversary and as part of the celebration the exhibition will take place outside, along the walls of the Gallery and into Trafalgar Square, Our jungle umbrellas can be seen from 1 August – 1 September 2024 as part of the Free Festival of Art , North Terrace, Trafalgar Square.

Admission free

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions/take-one-picture-2024>



## Repair Café

Pupils in Year 10 were able to visit Aylesford School to take part in a careers event.

The pupils met a range of people who work in different industries who talked about their careers, and then demonstrated a range of technical skills that they apply to fixing a range of household items.

The pupils were able to find out about how to fix electrical items, woodwork and textiles skills and ask lots of questions to the volunteers.

Well done Year 10!



## Sports Day

There was a different feel to Sports Day this year, which was held on the village field in Stansted.

Pupils from across the school participated in a wide variety of events, and we were lucky to have so many parents join us to watch the sporting prowess on display! The weather was perfect and we were fortunate to be able to use the village hall for some much needed shade.

Well done to all the pupils for giving maximum effort and all the cheering and support from the sidelines from our spectators.



## Whole School Residential

For our residential trip this year, the school went to Broadstone Warren in Surrey.

Pupils had a brilliant time taking part in a whole host of activities ranging from tomahawk throwing to the more adrenalin filled 'leap of faith'. There was something for everyone and it was fantastic to see our pupils pushing themselves out of their comfort zones and overcoming their fears.

Evenings were spent around the campfire, under the stars, eating well-deserved marshmallows and smores after a fun-packed day of activities.



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## Talent Show & BBQ

To celebrate the end of another wonderfully successful year, we held our annual talent show and BBQ on the 12th July.

As always, the pupils put on a fantastic show, with a dress rehearsal in the afternoon for the staff and pupils, and then the main event in the evening with lots of families in attendance.

The Talent Show was followed by our annual BBQ and raffle. Thank you to all those who supported us with donations of prizes and also buying tickets. We raised in excess of £1600, which will pay for the annual whole school trip to Chessington in September and also go towards our Christmas cinema trip.

Thank you again to everyone who helped us celebrate another great year at Grange Park.



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## College Partnership

Our college partnership students have had an incredibly busy year across both sites. Here is a flavour of what college life is all about, written by some of our Grange Park students at College.



'Hi, my name is Callum and I am studying Animal Management. I am on a Level 1 Award and I'm really enjoying the course I'm doing. I think my lessons are good and I have some great teachers like Alex, Kirsty. I have passed the course and I have made some really great friends.'

*Callum*

'My time in College has been staggering and a brilliant experience. I've made friends along the way; I've been mischievous, kind and always bringing a smile. I really enjoyed my time in college, but I also had to face all sorts of challenges.

All these challenges kept getting me agitated and worked up, but there was only one thing that I had to do and that was to ask for help.

If anyone was to start college and they needed some advice, then this is what I would've liked to say to them – keep calm and carry on.

In other words, always take things one step at a time, keep calm, keep trying your best, make friends, have a great time and never give up because giving up is not an option – believing in yourself is. That's one to remember.

Always believe in yourself, keep telling yourself "I can do this" and always keep on fighting till the end and then suddenly you'll soon fit right in.'

*Josh*

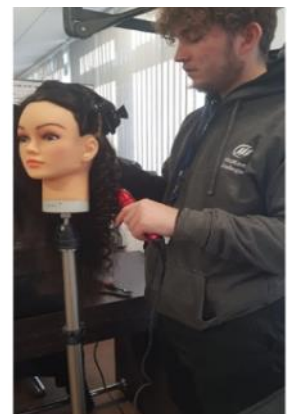
'I have been at Mid Kent College Maidstone for 3 years; I have enjoyed my time at College and have completed 3 different courses.

The first year at College I did a Business and Admin course followed by a Foundation course. This year I studied hairdressing and have learnt many new skills. The best thing about being at College is the breaks and the food.

Next year I will not be with Grange Park as I will be 19. I am staying at Maidstone College to do another course.

This is a photo of me on my hairdressing course.'

*Rhone*



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'My time at College was quite difficult at first but I got used to it.

I've made some new friends and spent time with old ones like Kasey and Jared.

I'm doing Animal Management in College, its very fun and makes me love animals more.

To any new person coming to this College it will be scary at first but you will find your way to success in the future.'

*Jamie*



'This year I have completed a Level 1 IT and Business course.

I know I have become a lot more independent and confident during the year. I have presented Power Points to the class and taken part in a tombola to raise money for charity. Next year I will be a Mid Kent student studying Level 2 IT and Cyber Security.

The best part of this year has been making friends and passing all my assignments.

I am looking forward to starting a new course in September.'

*Daisy*

'My name is Cody, and I am doing Level 1 Animal Care. I have made quite a few friends during my time at College and honestly, I think the lessons are great and understandable.

We have learnt multiple different things that are very interesting and engaging.'

*Cody*

## End of Term and Leavers Meal

On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June, Medway and Maidstone students met up at Pizza Hut at Chatham Dockside.

It was great to see so many students and everyone ate plenty and enjoyed bottomless drinks. Jane, one of the Learning mentors from Maidstone, came and joined us, it was great to see her looking so well.

This was a time to say goodbye to many of our students and wish them well in their new placements.

Some are staying at college and others are moving on to other opportunities.

We wish them all good luck for the future.





# Post16@Grange Park

2023/2024

**100%** of students moved onto a positive destination



**88%** Post16 attendance. Above National Average



**55%**

Pupils transitioned independently to a mainstream provision

**100%**

Of students completed work related activity

**100%**

Of students made progress in their SCERTs.



The top three most popular course areas are Creative Media and IT, Service Industries and Creative Arts

**68%**

Studied a qualification at Level 2 or above



WORK EXPERIENCE

**3,970\***

Work experience hours completed by Post 16 Students

**£928,000\*\***

Approx saving to the Local Authority for 2024/2025



\*\*Based on new pupils GPS has said they can meet need during the consultation process as well as current students transitioning into mainstream before the age of

\*WEX hours based on the study programme hours assigned to each level and the timetabled hours from Post16@Wrotham

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We would like to congratulate Henry on passing his driving test!

Henry has been completing his work experience with Tom, supporting with IT at Wrotham over the past few months, and we have shared his driving journey. It has been brilliant seeing Henry arrive in the morning in his car. Well done Henry!



## End of year treat

We were very fortunate yesterday to get a visit from the ice cream man. With the temperature rising, pupils and staff were eager to get their hands on an ice cream from his extensive selection. A big thank you to Miss Atwell for arranging such a lovely treat for us all.



## GCSE Results Day

GCSE results day is Thursday 22nd August.

Results will be available to collect from the school reception between 10.00 - 11.00am at the Wrotham site.

Pupils will need to collect these in person or provide written consent for a parent to collect them on their behalf. Any results not collected on the day will be sent to pupils in the post.

All the pupils have worked so hard and we look forward to celebrating your achievements with you.



## Arbor

The school switched from School Gateway to Arbor just after Easter, and it has been really helpful for parents and carers to see everything in one place. The Arbor Parent App can be downloaded from either the Apple or Google Play Store.

From the app, you are able to see your child's attendance, the lessons for the day, along with being able to give consent and pay for trips, visits and school dinners.

If you have any issues using the app, please do not hesitate to contact the school office, and they will be happy to help. Alternatively, there is a very useful parent guide on the Arbor help page.

<https://support.arbor-education.com/hc/en-us/sections/201716749-Parent-Portal-and-App-Getting-started-and-logging-in>

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# Grange Park School Term Dates 2024 -2025

## **GRANGE PARK SCHOOL** **SCHOOL YEAR 2024/2025**

### **TERM 1 - 2024**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
<b>END OF TERM 1:</b>	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2024

### **TERM 2 - 2024**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<b>END OF TERM 2:</b>	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2024

### **TERM 3 - 2025**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
<b>END OF TERM 3:</b>	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

### **TERM 4 - 2025**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2025
<b>END OF TERM 4:</b>	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2025

### **TERM 5 - 2025**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2025
<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
<b>END OF TERM 5:</b>	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025

### **TERM 6 - 2025**

<b>START OF TERM FOR PUPILS:</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025
<b>END OF TERM 6:</b>	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025

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\*Please note that we will have an early closure at the end of term on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024