



The Howard School

Newsletter

welcome

We would like to say a huge thank you to all parents and carers who attended our Year 8 Options Evening. It was fantastic to see so many families engaging in conversations about the exciting next steps in their son's journey.

Year 8 is a key milestone, as students begin to think more carefully about their strengths, interests and future ambitions. The evening provided an important opportunity for families to explore subject pathways, ask questions and feel confident about the choices ahead.

Our students are encouraged to follow their passions, challenge themselves and select subjects that spark curiosity and motivation. These decisions play an important role in shaping future study, careers and personal development.

A special thank you to our dedicated staff who gave their time to support families, share guidance and offer reassurance throughout the evening.

Together, we will continue to aim high, work hard and support every student to achieve their very best.



Year 13 students were able to attend the Houses of Parliament on Friday 23rd and Monday 26th January 2026.



13A attended on Friday and were lucky enough to see the Houses at work, in particular the House of Lords. Students were able to watch Lords and Baronesses debating the *Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill*. This prompted some students to question their own opinions on the matter and to listen to those of others. The tour of the Houses was invaluable; although the students are primarily Criminology students, we were able to learn about the history of our government and the building itself. There are holes in the



front walls of the building created by bullets from World War I. We stood in the exact spot where Henry VIII had his fire in the Palace, and recently tennis balls (not as we know them) have been found in the wooden roof structure during repairs, from where he played tennis indoors.



13A were also lucky enough to meet Lord Simon Russell of Liverpool, one of only 92 hereditary Lords left in government. He spoke candidly about the work he does in government, what his career was before government, and answered questions connected to whether hereditary peers should be abolished, as well as one student's question about his favourite film.



13B visited on Monday and were given a different tour, being shown the more historical side of government. We were introduced to the statue that Margery Humes, a suffragette, chained herself to, which has been broken and not repaired in order to remain a discussion point for visitors and students; the plaque that tells



of King Charles I's trial for treason and his subsequent execution; and the stained glass that shows the laws created by government, which increase in colour intensity in line with the Thames tide.

Both groups were able to stand in the same spot that Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama have stood, although Donald Trump has been denied. Each day finished with students participating in a Snap Election, where they had to create their own campaign with a candidate and proposed policies connected to education, social policy, and the environment. Let's just say, we may have some budding MPs in our midst.



Our Year 11 students had an outstanding day taking part in mock interviews with a range of external employers, and they truly rose to the challenge. From the moment they walked through the door, students demonstrated maturity, professionalism and a genuine desire to succeed.

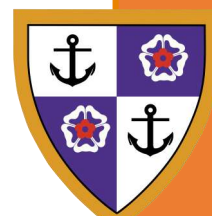
Each student experienced a realistic interview, answering real questions and learning how to confidently talk about their strengths, interests, ambitions and future plans. They explored what makes a strong first impression, how body language and eye contact matter, and why clear, thoughtful answers can make all the difference. Many students commented on how valuable it was to practise in a supportive environment before facing real interviews later in the year.

Opportunities like this play a vital role in preparing our young people for life beyond school. They help to build confidence, resilience and self-belief, while also developing essential communication skills that will support students in sixth form, college, apprenticeships or employment. Most importantly, they encourage students to recognise their own potential and believe in what they can achieve.

We were incredibly proud to see students stepping outside their comfort zones, listening carefully to feedback and applying it straight away. The progress shown across the day was impressive, and many students left feeling more positive and motivated about their futures.

A huge thank you to the external employers who gave up their time to support, challenge and inspire our students. Their guidance and encouragement made a real difference.

Well done, Year 11. You should be extremely proud of yourselves – the future is bright.



PARENTS' VOICE

Along with taking our Students' Voice, we also want to hear from our Parents and Carers and we will be looking to take their voice throughout the year. We will be emailing an electronic survey for all parents/ carers to complete as well as providing questionnaires at Consultation Evenings.

The feedback we receive is invaluable to make improvements to our school and we are incredibly grateful to all parents and carers for their time in completing this survey.

The responses we received were overwhelmingly positive with 91.5% stating that their child is happy at the school, 92.8% saying that their child feels safe at the school, and 92.2% saying that our students are well behaved.

There were, however, 2 areas that were raised that require our attention. Parents/ Carers said we could make you better aware of what your child is learning. To address this, we will be adding a section to our newsletter that details what we will be taught in each subject to each year group. Our parents and carers also mentioned that we could provide more detail on the clubs and extra-curricular activities we offer. Again, a dedicated page will be created for our newsletter to promote all of this to keep our parents and carers fully up to date with everything that we provide.

We did want to share that 9 out of 10 parents and carers would recommend the Howard School to their friends and family! Thank you so much for your support; we really do greatly appreciate it.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING SAFE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly woven into young people's digital lives. It can offer some educational benefits and day-to-day assistance; however, it also raises concerns about misinformation, privacy, fairness, and safety. This guide provides parents and educators with practical strategies to support young people to navigate AI tools responsibly, and to use them safely and with discernment.

1 DEMYSTIFY WHAT AI REALLY IS

Children encounter AI in most online places, including games, streaming platforms, and school tools. Explain that AI uses patterns from past data to make decisions, but it doesn't think or feel like humans. Use age-appropriate examples, like how recommendations on YouTube or Netflix work, to build understanding and prevent false beliefs about AI being all-knowing or alive.

2 TALK ABOUT RISKS OF MISINFORMATION

AI can create convincing false information, including deepfake videos, photos, and fake 'facts'. Encourage children to think critically about what they see and read. Teach them to double-check information using reliable sources, to look at images and videos carefully, and to ask an adult if something doesn't seem right.

3 DISCUSS DATA AND PRIVACY

Explain that AI systems learn by analysing lots of data, sometimes including personal information. Help young people to be mindful of what they share online and why protecting personal data matters. Model good habits like reading app permissions together or reviewing what's collected by voice assistants like Alexa or Siri.

4 ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF AI

Support children, when using AI tools, to explore ideas, make art, or build projects. This fosters confidence, imagination, and independent thinking. When children use AI creatively, rather than just passively consuming it, they are more likely to stay engaged and make thoughtful choices.

5 USE AGE-APPROPRIATE AI TOOLS

Not all AI platforms are suitable for children. Choose tools designed for education or creativity, with clear safety policies. Review terms of use and privacy settings, and help children use them in age-appropriate ways. For example, some chatbot tools mimic conversation but should only be used with guidance and boundaries in place.

6 USE AI TOGETHER

Exploring AI tools together can help adults understand how they work and spot potential issues. Try co-writing a story with an AI writing assistant or experimenting with an AI art tool. This encourages curiosity, helps you stay informed about the latest AI tools, and allows you to reinforce safe and respectful use while modelling critical thinking.

7 SET BOUNDARIES FOR AI USE

Establish when, where, and how AI tools can be used, just as you would with any digital technology. For example, you might agree not to use AI tools to complete school assignments without permission, or to avoid unsupervised use of voice assistants. Consistent boundaries help manage overuse and misuse.

8 WATCH FOR OVERRELIANCE

Some AI tools, like homework help apps, may be tempting shortcuts. Encourage children to use AI to support their thinking, not replace it. Celebrate effort and process over perfect answers. Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning and that relying too heavily on AI can limit real understanding.

9 TEACH DIGITAL ETHICS AND LITERACY

Help children explore how AI works, where it might be biased, and why ethical thinking matters. Building digital literacy alongside ethical awareness ensures children engage with AI critically, not just conveniently. Help young people to understand that not all people use AI for legitimate purposes; some use it for malicious reasons. Encourage questions about fairness, representation, and who benefits from certain tools; talk about algorithms, echo chambers, and the impact of automation on daily life.

10 STAY CURIOUS AND INVOLVED

AI is developing rapidly, and staying informed helps you support the young people in your care. Follow trusted sources for updates and keep the conversation going. If a child brings up a new AI trend or tool, take the opportunity to learn about it together. Showing interest builds trust and strengthens digital resilience.

Meet Our Expert

Home to the world's largest CPD library for educators, The National College has transformed the way education establishments go about developing their workforces and managing compliance. Our three memberships help all phases and types of setting raise standards, save time, reduce risk, and build a culture of improvement.

Our Year 8 students recently enjoyed an inspiring and action-packed visit from **Mingalaba** and guest speaker **Steve Eadon**, who brought a powerful message about the importance of languages, communication and global opportunities straight to The Howard School.

Drawing on his extensive experience working at **Arsenal FC**, Steve delivered an engaging assembly that challenged students to think differently about languages. He explained how speaking more than one language can be a true “game-changer” – opening doors to exciting careers, international travel and opportunities within professional sport and beyond. Students learned how communication skills are just as important as technical ability, teamwork and attitude when aiming high in any career pathway.

Following the assembly, students took part in a series of fast-paced, small-group football sessions on our Astro. Using coaching techniques inspired by his work at Arsenal, Steve encouraged students to communicate clearly, problem-solve together and support one another – all while enjoying high-energy drills and challenges. The sessions perfectly demonstrated how language, culture and teamwork come together on the pitch, mirroring the demands of elite sport.

The atmosphere throughout the day was fantastic. Students showed excellent engagement, resilience and enthusiasm, fully embracing the chance to learn in a different and memorable way. Many left feeling motivated to explore languages further and to think more ambitiously about their futures.

We are extremely grateful to Steve and Mingalaba for giving our students such a valuable experience and for reinforcing the message that languages can truly take you anywhere. Opportunities like this support our school ethos of high standards, high achievement and preparing students to thrive in an increasingly global world.



RAMADAN MUBARAK

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**A MESSAGE FROM TEAM RE
TO OUR MUSLIM STUDENTS AND COLLEAGUES
YOU ARE MOST WELCOME TO U23 FOR**

- PRAYER
- RESPITE

AT BREAK AND LUNCH



Our **third Photography Taster Session in a series of tasters** has now taken place – and what a fantastic way to bring the programme to a close.

Students went far beyond simply “point and shoot”, diving into the creative world of DSLR photography as part of their GCSE workshop experience. The focus was on developing technical confidence, creative risk-taking and an eye for detail, and the results have been outstanding.

During this final session, students explored:

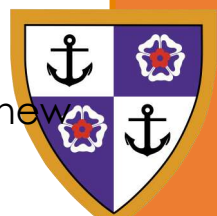
- Mastering the zoom – framing shots with precision and purpose
- Capturing motion – freezing fast action or creating smooth movement
- The intentional blur – moving the camera to create artistic effects and paint with light
- Workflow pro – saving work and building digital portfolios on Google Slides

A huge well done to all students who took part across the three taster sessions. The creativity, focus and enthusiasm shown throughout have been excellent.

Parents and Carers

If your son attended **any of the Photography Taster Sessions**, their work is now live in the relevant Photography Workshop Google Classroom. Please do take a look at their impressive portfolios and celebrate their fantastic work at home.

Another great example of students pushing themselves, developing new skills and discovering creative talents beyond the classroom.



Medway SENDIASS

January - March 2026 Information Sessions

Medway Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Information, Advice and Support service (SENDIASS) have a number of information sessions this year, so please come along and see us if you require information or advice.

No need to book, just turn up.

Please note, if you require support in relation to EHCP applications or appeals, please contact the service separately as these sessions are not suitable.

Strood Children and Family Hub

27th January - 12.30
until 14.30

Chatham Children and Family Hub

24th February -
10.00 until 12.00

Gillingham & Twydall Children and Family Hub

25th March - 10.00
until 12.00

 medwaysendias@family-action.org.uk

 01634 566303

 www.medway-sendias.org.uk

SENDIASS
hosted by



Our Year 9 GCSE Drama students have been working incredibly hard in rehearsals and are now ready to perform their own powerful and exciting interpretation of *Lord of the Flies*. The commitment, energy and focus shown by this cohort has been truly outstanding, and it has been fantastic to see their confidence grow with every rehearsal.

Adding to the excitement, their performance takes place in the very same week that the brand-new television adaptation, written by Jack Thorne, is broadcast on BBC One. This has created a real buzz around the production and has given students an extra sense of pride in the work they are producing.

Throughout the rehearsal process, students have demonstrated impressive creativity, teamwork and resilience. They have explored character, tension, movement and staging, pushing themselves to go beyond their comfort zones and take risks with their performances. These are exactly the kinds of skills that sit at the heart of GCSE Drama and will support them across many other subjects too.

Ms Cordell and Mr Knights are extremely proud of the entire class and the dedication they have shown. This performance marks a fantastic start to their GCSE journey, and we are very excited to see what this talented group will achieve next.



Student Voice

Collecting 'Student Voice' is really important to us here at The Howard School; we want to hear what you have to say about YOUR school.

As well as providing an opportunity for our entire cohort of students to complete an electronic survey at Christmas and Easter, we also adopt the following procedure for collecting our students' voice;

FORM CAPTAINS COLLECT STUDENT VOICE FROM THEIR FORMS



TERMLY MEETINGS FOR FORM CAPTAINS TO MEET WITH THE STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM



SENIOR STUDENTS MEET WITH SENIOR LEADERS



SENIOR LEADERS DISCUSS THE ISSUES RAISED BY STUDENTS

The outcomes of the discussions had by the Senior Leadership Team will be relayed to our Student Leadership Team with actions based on their comments. These actions will also be detailed in our newsletters for all students, parents, carers and staff to read.



1

DEFINITION OF A CHILD

2

NO DISCRIMINATION

3

BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

4

MAKING RIGHTS REAL

5

FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP

6

LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

7

NAME AND NATIONALITY

8

IDENTITY

9

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

10

CONTACT WITH PARENTS ACROSS COUNTRIES

11

PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING

12

RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS

13

SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY

14

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION

15

SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS

16

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

17

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

18

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

19

PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

20

CHILDREN WITHOUT FAMILIES

21

CHILDREN WHO ARE ADOPTED

22

REFUGEE CHILDREN

23

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

24

HEALTH, WATER, FOOD, ENVIRONMENT

25

REVIEW OF A CHILD'S PLACEMENT

26

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HELP

27

FOOD, CLOTHING, A SAFE HOME

28

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

29

AIMS OF EDUCATION

30

MINORITY CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

31

REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS

32

PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL WORK

33

PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL DRUGS

34

PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

35

PREVENTION OF SALE AND TRAFFICKING

36

PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION

37

CHILDREN IN DETENTION

38

PROTECTION IN WAR

39

RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION

40

CHILDREN WHO BREAK THE LAW

41

BEST LAW FOR CHILDREN APPLIES

42

EVERYONE MUST KNOW CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

43-54

HOW THE CONVENTION WORKS

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



Huge congratulations to RJP (Year 9) for winning this month's Photographer of the Month with the theme *Winter*. RJP's stunning image captures the rich colours of a winter twilight sky, with beautiful reflections of historic ruins mirrored in the water below. The photograph is atmospheric, creative and full of detail, showing real artistic flair and technical skill. A fantastic achievement – we look forward to seeing what RJP captures next!

Photographer of the Month Competition



Love & Friendship



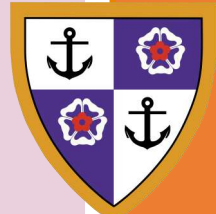
This month, we're capturing what truly connects us, the bonds of love, friendship, and togetherness. From shared laughter and quiet moments to joyful reunions and tender gestures, we want to see the connection through your lens.



Deadline: 24th February



Every month, we set a photography challenge to a theme. To participate, please send your photographs in JPEG format to bartyj@thehowardschool.co.uk (Art Technician). The successful photograph will be featured on our social media page and in our school newsletter.





Collecting 'Student Voice' is really important to us here at The Howard School; we want to hear what you have to say about YOUR school.

Towards the end of the last academic year, we asked our out-going Year 11 students their opinion on their learning, what revision techniques worked best for them, what initiatives worked to motivate them etc... Their honest and anonymous responses allows us to better prepare our next cohort of Year 11s for their exams.

The out-going Year 11s said that our after school interventions and pre-exam interventions were the most effective at supporting their academic progress (89%) so we will be introducing more of these sessions for our current Year 11 cohort to support them. The survey also praised a further 2 initiatives; the QLAs and having a Subject Specialist Form Tutor for additional support. Following this feedback, our QLAs are being improved and Subject Specialist Form Tutors will remain in place.

At the end of the survey, students had the opportunity to write a message to specific staff. The number of students that took the time to write messages was overwhelming! All messages were passed on to the relevant staff member and they were extremely grateful for the kind notes received.

A staggering 9 out of 10 of our Year 11 students were satisfied with the education that they received here at The Howard School.





Meet Your Head of House



Mr. Edwards

Ms. Samuels

Ms. Anglin

Mr. Dunn

Ms. Mulrooney



ATTENBOROUGH



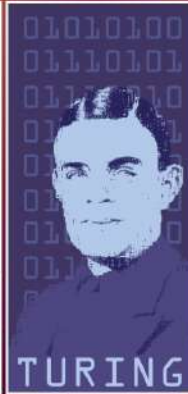
HAWKING



PANKHURST



TULL



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HAWKING



TURING

CAREERS FAYRE 2026

Spend the day talking to students about their future and possible pathways into your industry, promote your company and inspire your future workforce.

Tuesday 10th February
The Howard School
Derwent Way
Rainham, ME8 0BX

Get in contact now

masonk@thehowardschool.co.uk



GOLDEN TICKET

During each lesson, our students have the opportunity to receive a Golden Ticket. This Golden Ticket can be received for going 'above-and-beyond' during the lesson. These Golden Tickets are collected in our Main Reception and a portion of the ticket is also taken home so parents/carers can recognise this immense achievement as well.

The tickets are collected in boxes in each of the students Houses and tallied at the end of the academic year. The House that collects the most gets points added to the House Championship total for their House as they compete for the Laurel Cup.

But it doesn't stop there!

At the end of the academic year, all of the Golden Tickets will also be collected by Year Group where a Prize Draw will take place. Each year group were asked what they would like the opportunity to win, and the prizes by year group are listed below. The more Golden Tickets each student receives, the greater their opportunity is to win! Good luck!

Year 7

Nintendo Switch

Year 9

Tablet

Year 11



£200 bike

Year 8

Meta Quest

Year 10

PlayStation 5





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