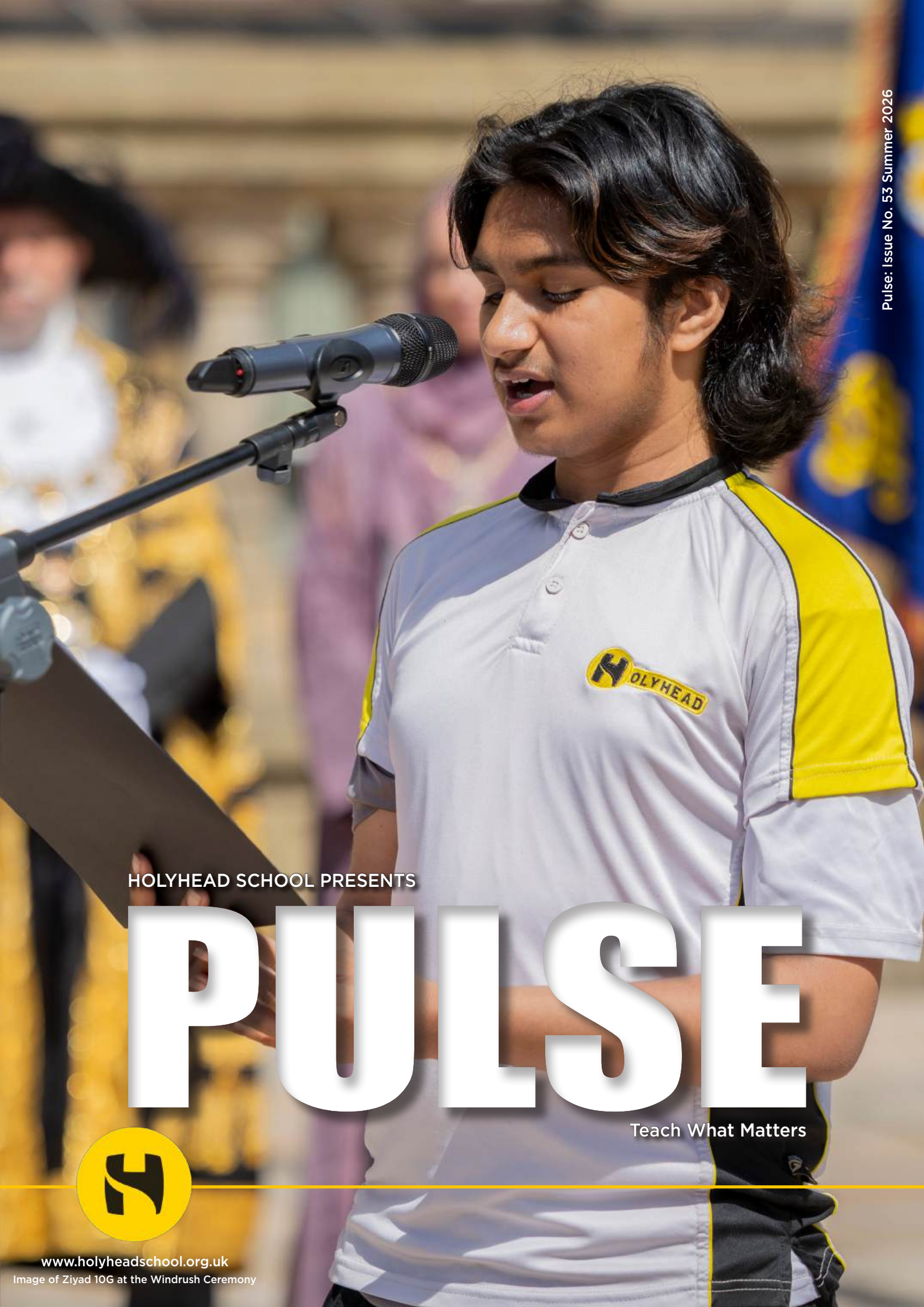
Pulse: Issue No. 53 Summer 2026



HOLYHEAD SCHOOL PRESENTS

PULSE

Teach What Matters

www.holyheadschool.org.uk

Image of Ziyad 10G at the Windrush Ceremony

Foreword

As we come to the end of another remarkable academic year, I am delighted to share the Summer Term edition of Pulse, which captures the breadth of experiences, achievements and opportunities that have enriched the lives of our students. The pages ahead are a powerful reminder that learning at Holyhead extends far beyond the classroom.

On a personal note, this has been an extremely challenging year due to the health of my son. Since November, I have watched from afar whilst the day-to-day running of the school has been in the exceptionally capable hands of Mrs Banger and the Leadership Team. Their professionalism, commitment and unwavering focus on maintaining high standards have ensured that students continue to benefit from the rich opportunities showcased throughout the Pulse.

The successes you will read about would also not be possible without the support of our entire community. Staff, governors, parents, carers and partners continue to work together for our young people. Most importantly, I would like to congratulate our students, whose talent, resilience and ambition continue to inspire us every day.

This term has seen students represent Holyhead with distinction across Birmingham and beyond. From participating in the 78th Windrush Flag Raising Ceremony to securing a third consecutive victory in the Envision Programme, our students have demonstrated confidence, leadership and social responsibility. Reading their reflections throughout this edition is genuinely inspiring. Whether developing confidence through the Maths Progression Programme or seeing Devesh Sondhi co-chair a major careers conference attended by more than 400 delegates, their stories highlight the impact of believing in young people and providing opportunities for them to shine.

Our partnerships with organisations such as the West Midlands Combined Authority, Morgan Stanley and the BBC continue to create meaningful experiences for students. Through these collaborations, students have developed sustainable business ideas, explored future career pathways, gained work experience and engaged directly with industry professionals, all whilst building their self-belief and confidence, critical for future success.

Enrichment remains a cornerstone of life at Holyhead. This term students have ventured across the Channel to experience French life and culture, attended the Big Bang Science Fair, competed in sporting competitions, participated in creative arts workshops and celebrated success in mathematics, languages and the arts. The quality and talent of our students was further recognised in the CRST Art Competition, where Holyhead students secured three Gold Awards, one Silver and two Bronze awards across Years 7–13.

Our Combined Cadet Force partnership with Phoenix Collegiate has also gone from strength to strength. Supported by dedicated staff and colleagues at Phoenix, our pioneering group of Year 8 and Year 9 cadets have embraced every opportunity, from Paddle Week to their Windermere residential. The experiences gained in just one term have been exceptional and provide an exciting glimpse of what lies ahead for the programme.

I am particularly proud of the way our students continue to contribute to both the school and wider community. Through the work of our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, RSA8 Social Action Team and student leaders, our young people have demonstrated kindness, compassion and a commitment to helping others through fundraising, mentoring and community engagement projects. These values remain at the heart of Holyhead School.

Finally, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all staff whose dedication, creativity and commitment make these opportunities possible. We also bid a fond farewell to Mr Smeaton, Ms Williams, Dr Grewal and Miss Akhson as they move on to new opportunities, and thank them for their valued contribution to Holyhead School.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many achievements featured in this edition and join me in celebrating another highly successful term at Holyhead School.

With warm regards and extra special best wishes as well to our students awaiting exam results this summer!

With warm regards,
Mr D Knox | Principal

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78th Windrush Flag Raising Ceremony

On Monday 22nd June, our students had the privilege of taking part in the 78th Windrush Flag Raising Ceremony held in Victoria Square outside Birmingham Town Hall. This special event brought together civic leaders, community organisations, schools, and members of the public to honour the incredible legacy of the Windrush Generation.

Our students were proud to play an important role in the ceremony. They confidently read official Windrush poems, performed as part of the school choir, and helped create a respectful and uplifting atmosphere throughout the morning. Their professionalism, confidence, and enthusiasm reflected the values of our school and made us incredibly proud.

I would like to recognise the students:

- **Precious 8C** – Choir & Windrush Poem Reader
- **Akeelia 8H** – Choir & Windrush Poem Reader
- **Ziyad 10G** – Choir & Poem Reader
- **Zara 8E** – Choir
- **Hajahawa 7D** – Choir
- **Arielle 8G** – Choir

Their dedication, confidence, and commitment ensured that Holyhead School was represented with pride and respect at this important civic event.

The ceremony included speeches from a number of distinguished guests, including the Lord Mayor, the Chief Constable, the Chief Fire Officer, the Lord-

Lieutenant's Representative, Horace Barnes (WAWI), the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the High Sheriff. The raising of the Windrush flag, was accompanied by a beautiful acappella performance of Amazing Grace, followed by a minute's silence, providing a powerful moment of reflection and remembrance.

Windrush Day is celebrated each year to commemorate the arrival of the **HMS Empire Windrush** on 22 June 1948. Many people from the Caribbean answered Britain's call to help rebuild the country after the Second World War. They made invaluable contributions to the NHS, public transport, education, the Armed Forces, and many other industries, helping to shape the diverse and vibrant Britain we know today.

By participating in events like this, our students develop a deeper understanding of equality, inclusion, respect, and the importance of remembering the people whose contributions continue to enrich our communities.

We are incredibly grateful to have been invited to participate in such a meaningful occasion. Holyhead School is proud to support events that promote respect, unity, diversity, and community pride, and we look forward to continuing our involvement in future Windrush commemorations.

A special thank you goes to **Mr J. Dodds, Miss R. Dhanjal, & Mr C. Forde** for their support and commitment in helping our students prepare for and participate in this important event. Their encouragement and guidance ensured that Holyhead School was represented with pride, professionalism, and respect throughout the Windrush Flag Raising Ceremony.

Mrs A Mistry | Community Strategy Lead

Combined Cadet Force

Paddle Week Success

Cadets from the Holyhead School and Phoenix Collegiate Combined Cadet Force (CCF) have enjoyed an action-packed programme of adventurous training this term, taking part in exciting activities both on the water and in the heart of the Lake District.

The adventure began on the 14th May 2026, when cadets attended a Paddle Week Kayaking Experience at the Royal Sutton Coldfield Canoe Club in Brownhills. The day gave students the opportunity to develop their paddling skills, build confidence on the water and enjoy a challenging outdoor experience. Cadets learned essential kayaking techniques while demonstrating excellent teamwork, communication and determination throughout the day.
For many, it was their first opportunity to experience paddle sports in a structured training environment. Students embraced the challenge with enthusiasm, supporting one another as they developed new skills and grew in confidence.

Mrs S Seniaray | Refocus Manager

Combined Cadet Force

Cadets Residential Trip to Windermere

Four of our students recently had the opportunity to take part in a residential trip as part of their Cadets programme. The residential brought together cadets from Holyhead and Phoenix Collegiate to give our students the chance to develop new skills, build confidence, and strengthen their teamwork in a challenging but rewarding environment.

During the trip, the cadets took part in a range of activities designed to test both their practical abilities and resilience like mountain biking, paddling, rock-climbing and abseiling. There was even a chance for something called Ghyll scrambling, which involves climbing, jumping, and swimming through rocky mountain streams and waterfalls which can only be done in the Lake District! Each day offered new opportunities to learn and grow. Living away from home also helped the students develop independence and responsibility while making new friendships with fellow cadets.

"It was absolutely magnificent, my favourite activity was abseiling because it's something I haven't tried before. I would definitely do it again." **Hashwin 8C**

"The best part of the residential was the paddling and communicating with other Cadets. I would definitely go again if I have the chance as I learnt how to abseil, which is something I have never done before." **Precious 9F**

"I thought the residential was an amazing experience as you can easily benefit from the things we did. My favourite activity was paddling because it was a fun experience and enjoyed splashing other people. I would definitely go again!" **Ayaan 8A**

"The residential was very fun and unique. My favourite activity was paddling because it was something I had control over, not like rock climbing! I would definitely go again!" **Ishmeet 8D**

The students all returned with positive memories and valuable experiences.

The Cadets programme continues to provide fantastic opportunities for our students to challenge themselves, develop important life skills, and represent the school with pride. Congratulations to all four cadets on their successful residential experience, it was a joy to experience it with them!

Miss J Brade | Teacher of Humanities

Deaf awareness

We were delighted to welcome Ruth Allen from Sandwell Deaf Community Association for an inspiring British Sign Language (BSL) workshop that brought Deaf Awareness Week to students in a workshop. The session created a lively and welcoming atmosphere, with students and staff immersing themselves in learning a completely new way of communicating.

Ruth introduced the fundamentals of BSL in an engaging and accessible way, guiding students through the alphabet, key everyday signs and simple phrases. A real highlight was seeing students' confidence grow as they practised fingerspelling their names which sparked incredible enthusiasm across the room.

Beyond the practical learning, the workshop also offered a powerful insight into Deaf culture and the importance of inclusive communication. Students reflect on how small adjustments such as awareness of visual communication can make a meaningful difference in ensuring everyone feels included and how barriers in communication can be reduced in everyday school life.

A memorable, thought-provoking and practical experience that left a lasting impression on both students and staff.

Thank you - Ms Grego and Miss Jandu for supporting Deaf Awareness workshop.

Big engagement, big respect, big learning!

Mrs A Mistry | Community Strategy Lead

Holyhead Celebrate

3rd Envision Victory

A group of Year 10 students from Holyhead School have once again achieved outstanding success in the Envision Programme, winning the final against five other local schools at an event held at Birmingham City Football Ground.

The students impressed judges with their innovative project focused on raising awareness of the risks of littering around the school site. Their campaign promoted the importance of keeping the environment clean and safe, demonstrating both creativity and a strong sense of social responsibility.

Throughout the programme, students were supported by professional mentors from **Wesleyan,** who have worked closely with Holyhead students for over five years. Additional guidance was provided by Envision mentors and Holyhead's Head of Year, Makeda Jeffers, all of whom played a key role in helping the team develop and deliver their project.

The Envision Programme is a UK-based youth empowerment charity. It partners young people from less-advantaged backgrounds with local business mentors to develop essential life skills. Students design and deliver youth-led social action projects to make positive changes in their school or college communities.

Envision has been an important part of life at Holyhead for over 10 years, offering students valuable opportunities to build confidence, develop key skills, and work collaboratively on meaningful projects.

This year's win marks an incredible third consecutive victory for Holyhead students in the competition. Building on this success, the school looks forward to continuing its strong partnership with Wesleyan and Envision mentors next year, as a new group of students prepare to take part in the programme.

Congratulations to all involved on this fantastic achievement.

Mrs S Parker | Head of Year 7

Morgan Stanley

Sustainable Enterprise Challenge

In March, 30 selected Year 7 students were given the exciting opportunity to take part in a sustainability-focused project led by Morgan Stanley. The three part programme launched with an inspiring introductory session, where a team from Morgan Stanley introduced the challenge and worked closely with students to explore eco-friendly and sustainable business ideas.

The Morgan Stanley (MS) team involved in delivering the project were

- Niall Dunleavy (Lead)
- Nahome Tewolde (Deputy Lead)
- Hugo Barttelot
- Oliver Logan
- Diego Skromne
- Sam Hesler
- and Olivia Fagan

Their support and mentorship played a key role in guiding students through the project and helping them develop their ideas.

The sessions started with students being paired with mentors from MS who supported them in developing their understanding of sustainability in the world of work. They were encouraged to think creatively, consider real-world environmental challenges, and begin shaping their own innovative business concepts.

The second session was conducted in-house as an independent working period. This led up to an exciting final showcase held in June. MS mentors returned to support the event as students completed their presentations and took part in a Dragon's Den-style pitch competition. The atmosphere was highly engaging, with a strong sense of excitement and anticipation throughout.

The panel of Dragons were:

- Mr Lane - Staff Governor & History Teacher
- Mr T Tariq - Maths Teacher & Holyhead Alumni
- Guy Shears - CEO
- and Orla Macsherry - Legal Consultant Morgan Stanley & CRST Trustee

The students rose brilliantly to the challenge, delivering well-prepared, imaginative & researched pitches that demonstrated real creativity, teamwork, communication and negotiation skills.

Student's reflection:

- "This was brilliant, can we do more projects?"
- "I was scared at first to present, but working with my mentor Oliver really helped me."
- "My team had the best idea and we loved working with Sam."

A huge thank you to the Morgan Stanley mentors for their time, support, and commitment in working closely with our students throughout the project. Their guidance made a significant impact on the students' learning and confidence.

To celebrate the students' hard work and success, they were also treated to a special Dunkin' Donuts party, which added a fun and well-deserved reward at the end of the experience.

This project gave students valuable experience in presenting, teamwork, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial thinking, helping them understand real-world business and sustainability.

Reflecting: **Holyhead School's motto "Teach What Matters"** & CRST values of integrity, creativity and social justice, through meaningful real-world learning experiences.

Mrs Alka Mistry | Community Strategy Lead

Teamwork and Communication.
Be the best Outstanding group.
Rules:

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens

It is Time...
To Enter the Den!

How Much
Everything Cost
Payments

Holyhead
Teach What Matters

Breakfast Club

Join us for FREE TOAST
at the Front pod (via Milestone Lane gate)
Every day from 8:15am - 8:30am

All students welcome

Showcasing Our Maths Journey

I was proud to take part in our recent **Parental Engagement Evening**, where the other students and I shared everything we have been doing as part of the **Maths Progression Programme** over the past two years. It was a great chance to show my parents the activities we have taken part in and how much my confidence and maths skills have improved.

Looking back, I can't believe how much I have achieved in such a short amount of time. The programme has helped me become more confident in maths and speaking to others, and it was amazing to see how proud my parents were as I showed them everything I have learned.

I would like to say a big thank you to Miss Khatun and the whole Maths team for all their hard work and for organising so many opportunities for us, including trips, interventions, mentoring sessions and Further Maths lessons. These experiences have helped me grow in confidence and achieve more than I ever expected. It was a brilliant evening and a great way to celebrate all of our hard work.

Aryan 10G

Chess Club

In chess club, students can start a fun and exciting new hobby while socialising with each other in a friendly environment. It is a great place to make new friends, play against different opponents, and improve their chess skills. Members can learn new strategies, practise solving challenging positions, and build confidence by playing regular games. Chess club also helps develop important skills such as concentration, patience, critical thinking, and problem-solving, making it both enjoyable and educational.

Tanveer 8D

MathsWatch Rewards Trip

Congratulations to the top eight MathsWatch performers from each year group, who earned a well-deserved reward trip to Drayton Manor! The trip recognised the students' outstanding commitment, hard work, and consistent effort in completing MathsWatch tasks throughout the year.

Students enjoyed a fantastic day at the theme park, taking on exciting rides, spending time with friends, and celebrating their achievements. It was a wonderful opportunity to reward their dedication and recognise the positive attitude they have shown towards their mathematics learning.

Well done to all of the students who qualified for the trip. We hope they had an unforgettable day and continue their excellent work in maths next year!

UKMT

United Kingdom Mathematics Trust

This year, 60 Year 8 students took part in the prestigious UKMT Maths Challenge, demonstrating enthusiasm, determination, and excellent mathematical thinking. We are delighted to celebrate their fantastic achievements, with students earning 16 Bronze awards, 6 Silver awards, and an outstanding 1 Gold award. A special congratulations goes to Fabian, whose exceptional performance earned him the coveted Gold award. We are incredibly proud of everyone who took part and represented the school so well.

Ismaeel	47	Bronze
Leah	47	Bronze
Sophia	47	Bronze
Jaclyn	47	Bronze
Yasir	48	Bronze
Michael	48	Bronze
Arika	49	Bronze
Sabeeha	50	Bronze
Taj	52	Bronze
Asif	53	Bronze
Bevan	53	Bronze
Adeel	54	Bronze
Noah	57	Bronze
Anisa	57	Bronze
Hashwin	58	Bronze
Faris	58	Bronze
Tanveer	59	Silver
Safiya	63	Silver
Thaha	64	Silver
Tahmina	65	Silver
Ayaan	66	Silver
Akeelia	67	Silver
Fabian	78	GoldBiS

Girls in ICT

Year 9 Students Inspired by BBC Girls in ICT Event

On Thursday 23rd April 2026, seven of our Year 9 girls attended the BBC Girls in ICT event at BBC Mailbox, taking part in an inspiring day exploring opportunities within technology, digital media and broadcasting.

The event began with a talk from successful women working in IT and digital careers at the BBC, who shared their career journeys, pathways into the industry and the skills needed to succeed in the technology sector. Students were encouraged to challenge stereotypes and discover the creative and varied opportunities available within ICT.

The girls enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the BBC studios and experienced what it is like to work in a live broadcasting environment. A highlight of the day was taking part in a simulated BBC Midlands Today programme, where students took on roles as presenters and production team members, working with cameras, sound checks and studio equipment.

The group also visited the radio studios, where they took part in a Newsbeat run through, gaining insight into the teamwork and technical skills involved in producing a radio programme.

The visit was a fantastic opportunity for our girls to build confidence, develop teamwork skills and gain first hand experience of careers within technology and media. We are incredibly proud of their enthusiasm and professionalism, and hope the experience has inspired them to consider the exciting possibilities available in the digital industries.

Mrs R Johal | ADOL Business & Computing

Business & ICT

PRELOVED SCHOOL CLOTHES

Do you have any unwanted school uniform that is still in good condition?

Would you like to see fewer perfectly good school uniforms being thrown away each year?

Perhaps your child has outgrown their uniform and you no longer need it.

If so, we would love to accept any donations to help us set up a pre-loved uniform shop to pass on uniforms (for a small charge) to other families.

If you have any good quality uniform that you no longer need, we would be grateful for donations of:

Blazers
Ties
Jumpers
Shirts
Black trousers
Black skirts
PE kits

Parents or students can bring donations into school and drop them into the boxes in Reception.

Holyhead
Teach What Matters

Throughout the year, the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors have worked closely with younger students, helping them to identify concerns they may be experiencing and signposting them to the appropriate sources of support. They have met with students on a regular basis, building positive relationships and helping to improve their confidence and self-esteem.

The ambassadors have also worked collaboratively to organise a successful charity event, which included activities such as Sponge the Teacher, a penalty shoot-out, and henna art. These events not only raised money for charity but also helped to promote a positive and inclusive school community.

I am incredibly proud of all the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and deeply grateful for the hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm they have shown throughout the year. They have been excellent role models for their peers, and I would like to extend a huge thank you to each and every one of them for their commitment and contribution to making Holyhead School a safer, more supportive, and welcoming environment for all. I look forward to working with you all again next academic year.

Mrs Denny | Anti-Bullying Ambassador Lead/Vice Principal

"I've been an Anti-Bullying Ambassador since Year 9 and it's been a really rewarding experience. Every Friday at lunchtime, I'm on duty walking around the school, making sure everyone is okay. It's nice knowing that if someone ever needs help or just someone to talk to, they can come to me or any member of the Anti-Bullying team.
Recently, we also took part in our summer charity event to raise money for a charity. We organised lots of fun activities, including sponge the teacher, penalty shootouts, and stalls selling ice pops, , drinks and other snacks. It was great to see everyone getting involved while raising money for charity.
Also, being an Anti-Bullying Ambassador has taught me many things, for instance the importance of kindness, teamwork and supporting others." ***Gaganpreet***

"This year, as a member of the anti-bullying team, I fulfilled my duties by providing support to individuals in need. I also took on the role of a mentor, offering a listening ear and friendship to those who needed it during break times and lunch times. Furthermore, we organised our annual charity event, which featured familiar activities such as sponging teachers and a penalty shoot-out against Mr. Prentice. To enhance the event, we introduced new activities like henna artwork and sold drinks, snacks, and most importantly, ice creams to combat the heat. The event was a great success, raising approximately ***£230.00****, surpassing the previous year's amount. The funds raised will be donated to the charities Bringing Hope and Let's Feed Brum. Additionally, our Year 9 students participated in the Brushstroke community project, donating items collected from our Christmas food drive to support migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees as they settle into their new lives, allowing them to feel welcomed and supported."* ***Krystal***

Creative Arts

Students from Years 7–11 took part in an exciting **two-hour dance workshop** led by **professional artist Junior from Fabric Dance.**

It was inspiring to hear Junior's journey, from growing up in Handsworth to touring the world doing what he loves. He was incredibly impressed by our students' enthusiasm, commitment, and willingness to challenge themselves throughout the workshop.

The atmosphere was full of energy, positivity and smiles, with students fully immersing themselves in the joy of dance. It was wonderful to see so many young people enjoying the experience and developing their confidence.

"I really enjoyed my experience because it helped me improve in my understanding of dance and increased my interest in dance, its my first time in a long time that I had so much fun in school, honestly want this to happen again and I really like our dance coach he was really nice and very talented and I'm definitely going for extra training at FABRIC." **Precious 9F**

One of our key aims as a school is to encourage as many students as possible to get involved in dance, helping them to develop their passion and skills beyond the classroom.

Congratulations

to our Drama Stars of the Term

Malachi 10G
Tawhid 8A

Both students have shown outstanding commitment and enthusiasm in Drama this term. They should be extremely proud of their achievements and have been awarded Drama badges to wear proudly on their blazers. Well done!

Looking Ahead…

Would you like to perform in next year's school production?

- Dreaming of a leading role?
- Want to perform on stage?
- Ready to showcase your acting, singing or dancing talents?

Keep an eye out for **auditions in September 2026**.

Can You Guess Next Year's Production?

Here's your challenge…

"Your wish has been granted… Our next school production is hidden in a magic lamp."

Can you guess what it is?

Mrs C Brandy
DOL Creative Arts

PE SPORTS REPORT

GO LEAD: EMPOWERING FUTURE FEMALE FOOTBALL LEADERS

A group of Year 9 girls were selected to take part in a football specific leadership programme this year. This programme was designed to encourage students to explore a range of possible leadership roles through football.

The course was divided into 3 parts, part one was an introduction to the concept and Holyhead students worked with students from other schools in a range of activities centred around developing the skills that leaders require.

Part 2 was held at Aston Villa's training ground, where students took part in football based leadership roles, such as leading warm ups and/or skill development. From this, students then got involved in leading some activities for Year 7 students at Holyhead, putting their skills into practice. The leaders also helped to plan and deliver the Inter-House Year 7/8 girls football tournament. This allowed them to put their skills to the test, and to achieve their silver and gold leadership awards.

The final session of the programme was Football Refereeing. Students learnt about the rules of football and how to referee to these rules - when to blow the whistle and how to flag correctly. This was a fantastic end to the course and students got to practice refereeing a small sided football match. This was an amazing experience and was definitely an inspiration to our students. Students will supplement this further by refereeing some primary football events in September. Students had an amazing time and we could have some potential future referees in the making.

LEXUS BIRMINGHAM TENNIS OPEN

A group of 27 students attended the Lexus Birmingham Tennis Open at The Edgbaston Priory Club on Friday 5th June. Students were invited to take part in an hour's coaching session from professional tennis coaches, and then had the opportunity to watch professional tennis matches. Students had a fantastic day, they learnt new ways of breaking down the skills of tennis for students, got to experience some wheelchair tennis, played in some fun tennis tournaments and were able to watch some high class professional tennis. Students had free time to experience some of the activities on offer, and they even had a Q&A session with a famous tennis player - Kamil Majchrzak. We had a wonderful time, and hope to return next year with more students.

ASTON SCHOOLS ROUNDERS

Due to the weather and transport issues, the Year 10 girls Rounders team was the only team that got to play in their tournament this year. Holyhead hosted the tournament and in the end, it was only Holte school that attended. Holyhead were fielding first and got 4 players out straightaway. Holyhead demonstrated some excellent fielding skills and tactical awareness.

When batting, Holyhead scored some great rounders and in the end they defeated Holte 9.5 rounders to 5.5. Fantastic effort from the girls, and a great way to end their competitive Rounders career at Holyhead.

HOLYHEAD SPORTS DAY 2026

This year, Holyhead's annual Sports day was held on Thursday the 3rd July. With the sun shining brightly, spirits were high and there was lots of excitement in the air!

The competition began with Year 9. Students ran the 80m first followed by the 200m. This was followed by the 300/400m, and then the Relay. Our new event this year was the Mixed Relay. This consisted of 1 girl and 1 boy from each form/house. Students really responded to this event and were excited to take part. Stand out performances for Year 9 were Kaisha (new record in 80m - 10.84), Precious, Jadon (new record in 400m - 1.07.88) and Adeeb who won the Shot, Discus and the Javelin.

Year 10 were next and as this was their last ever sports day at Holyhead, students were keen to get involved and take part. There were some excellent performances again and these also included the field events that students completed on Mon 29th June. Zemirah had an outstanding performance overall. She won the Discus and the Javelin (new record of 20.80m), and she also won the 300m (new record of 56.84). Other great performances include a new Shot put record for Dat with a new record of 13.3m. Tre'Sean also achieved a new record of 30.4m in the Discus, and Oliver smashed a new record of 26.5m in the Discus.

The Year 8 competition was well attended also and students had lots of fun cheering on their peers in the sunshine. Some great performances from Fatima who won the 300m and came third in the 80m. Other good performances came from Arielle who won the 80m and Laura who came second in the 200m. Well done also to Geovanny who won the 400m, Dehquan who won the 200m and Tanveer who won the 80m. Great effort from all athletes.

The final competition of the day was for Year 7. This was their first sports day and they were all super excited. All students performed extremely well and some outstanding performances included Banna who won the 300m and came second in the 80m, Harmony who won the 80m and Shania who won the Shot, Discus and the Javelin. Other great performances include Omer who won the 300m and achieved a new record of 52.78secs, Ahad who won the 200m and Manveer who won the 80m.

Well done to all the students who took part in Sports Day 2026. Excellent effort and congratulations to all the medal winners.

GIRLS GO SHINE SUMMER FOOTBALL REFEREEING COURSE

Our Go Lead referees had a fantastic opportunity to put their refereeing skills into practice when they were selected to referee the FA Primary Girls Go Shine Football Tournament at the King Edward's Aston Playing Fields in Aston. There were 18 schools taking part in the tournament, so our referees had a busy morning. The girls demonstrated their excellent knowledge and understanding of the rules of the game and they were praised by the FA on their excellent refereeing ability.
I am hoping that our girls continue to build on their confidence and ability in refereeing, and even perhaps pursue refereeing in the future. The FA interviewed Kaisha and Krystal on their football background and teams that they play for. They also spoke about refereeing in the future and the importance of breaking the barriers of women in all aspects of football. These interviews will be available soon on the FA website. Huge well done to all our female referees - excellent role models and positive examples to Holyhead. We hope to create even more female referees in the future.

Mrs C Gill | DOL Health & Wellbeing

YEAR 7 FOOTBALL

Our Year 7 football team have made an outstanding start to their Holyhead football journey, enjoying a highly successful first season and showing fantastic commitment, teamwork and determination throughout the year.

One of the highlights of the season came on Wednesday 29th April 2026 when the team were crowned winners of the annual local Futsal Tournament held at Hamstead Hall Academy. The players produced some excellent performances throughout the competition and were deserved winners, receiving their gold medals at the event.

The team's success continued outdoors over the course of the year as they comfortably won the Aston Schools Football League, finishing clear at the top after an excellent league campaign. The squad's league winners medals will be presented during the Year 7 End of Year Awards Assembly. Along with this, the winners shield will take pride of place on display in school as a reminder of their fantastic achievement.

Throughout the season the squad have played exciting, attacking football and demonstrated a great deal of talent. While there is still plenty of room for development over the coming years, the foundations are extremely promising. We now look forward to building on this success next season, with the aim of challenging for the League Cup, defending the league title and hopefully retaining the Futsal Tournament, should it return next year.

Congratulations to all of the players on a fantastic first season representing Holyhead School. We look forward to seeing what this talented group can achieve in the years ahead.

Mr A Gill | Head of Year 12

Holyhead SIXTH FORM

Year 12 Update

It is hard to believe how quickly Year 12 has progressed since September. The year group has grown in confidence, maturity and independence, embracing the opportunities Sixth Form has to offer. With Year 13 now in sight, students are increasingly recognising the commitment, resilience and organisation needed to achieve their goals and prepare for life beyond Holyhead School.

Careers, UCAS & Future Pathways

Students have taken part in a wide range of opportunities both in and out of the classroom. During tutor time, they have explored careers, higher education and apprenticeships, and have recently begun UCAS preparation through Unifrog. Many are now researching courses, drafting personal statements and preparing applications for submission at the start of Year 13. It is encouraging to see students taking ownership of their future pathways.

Charity Week & School Life

A highlight of the year was Charity Week, where Year 12 tutor groups helped raise a record-breaking amount for Birmingham Children's Hospital. Their enthusiasm, creativity and teamwork reflected the strong sense of community within Sixth Form.

The year group has also enjoyed a range of sporting events, including the Staff vs Sixth Form football match and the Year 12 vs Year 13 fixture, alongside Charity Week activities. These events have strengthened relationships across Sixth Form and created many memorable moments.

NEC Convention

A key highlight of the final term was the Year 12 visit to the NEC Convention, where students explored university, apprenticeship and career opportunities. They showed excellent independence in travelling to meet staff at Birmingham New Street before attending together. Students represented Holyhead School exceptionally well, engaging confidently with universities, employers and apprenticeship providers.

Work Experience & Wider Contribution

Work experience has been a major focus, with the vast majority of students securing placements for Work Experience Week (29th June–3rd July), with some arranged outside this period. These experiences will help students build confidence, develop transferable skills and gain insight into future careers. We are extremely grateful to employers, parents and carers for their support.

Alongside this, many students have supported school life through events, Sixth Form recruitment and mentoring younger students. Their contribution has been greatly appreciated by staff.

Home Study Award

Over 50 students have been awarded home study in recognition of their strong attendance, punctuality and attitude to learning. Eligible students may sign out during Period 4 when not timetabled, provided they are up to date with work. To qualify, students must achieve over 95% attendance, limited lateness and demonstrate independence. This continues to promote high standards across Year 12.

End of Term & Next Steps

Before the end of July, students will take part in a week of wellbeing activities, including Sixth Form Wellbeing Day, to support their transition into Year 13.

As the year draws to a close, the focus is on finishing strongly. Students are encouraged to continue working hard in preparation for Year 13 and beyond, making the most of Sixth Form and the summer period. The habits they develop now will be key to success in university, apprenticeships and employment applications.

Mr A Gill | Head of Year 12

Year 13 Update

With exams concluded and all coursework submitted, our students can look back with pride on the incredible effort they have invested throughout their studies. They have done everything in their power to achieve their best, and that dedication deserves to be celebrated.

As a sixth form, this time of year always brings mixed emotions. We are incredibly happy for the students as they prepare for their next steps. Seeing their excitement is a reminder that the extra hours our team invested to ensure they had everything needed to succeed were worthwhile,

At the same time, we feel a great sense of sadness, having developed such strong relationships with this year group over the past two years.

Results Day is Thursday, 13th August. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible to collect your results, celebrate your achievements, and provide guidance on your next steps. For those who may need to navigate the clearing process, we will have a dedicated space available with support on hand to help you make calls to universities.

As we bid farewell to the Class of 2026, I would like to take this final opportunity to thank our students,, their families and the staff who have supported them throughout the past two years. I wish you every success in the future, and please remember that you will always be part of our Sixth Form community.

We are always here for you!

Mr M Mills | Head of Year 13

RSA8

Social Action

There has been a real buzz around our RSA8 Social Action project this year.
The students involved were:

Amara 8A	Aland 8F
Yasir 8A	Balwant 8F
Precious 8C	Ameera 8H
Hashwin 8C	Zahraa 8H
Anisa 8E	Akeelia 8H

The students began their journey with a launch introducing the importance of social action and the positive impact young people can have within their communities. This was followed by an engaging "Talk to Talk" workshop, where students developed their communication, teamwork, and presentation skills.
The group showed great energy and creativity, discussing ways to make a meaningful impact. They chose to support a local Church Rose Nursing Home.

The students visited the care home and quickly built wonderful connections with residents. The atmosphere was full of joy and excitement as they took part in a range of activities, including painting nails, singing, arts and crafts, and enjoying games of dominoes together. The visits were not only fun, but also incredibly meaningful for everyone involved.

The students were given a creative challenge as part of a national care home initiative to design and decorate two Zimmer frames for competition, based on forest and Aston Villa themes. With just four days to complete the task, they demonstrated excellent teamwork, resilience and creativity in bringing their ideas to

We are delighted to announce that our forest-themed Zimmer frame won the competition—a truly brilliant result!

Their enthusiasm, kindness, and commitment to making a difference have been truly inspiring, and they have represented the school exceptionally well.

This project embodies Holyhead School's
"**Teach What Matters**"
ethos, fostering responsible, compassionate students who impact society.

It aligns with the Central Region Schools Trust's vision of social justice through exceptional schools, demonstrating how student action creates positive community change.

Well done RSA8!

"What began as a brief visit to the nursing home became deeply meaningful. I formed instant connections with residents, listening to their stories and creating decorative paper chains together."
Anisa 8E

Mrs A Mistry | Central Community Strategy Lead

Collaborative Art, Design and MFL Project

As part of an exciting cross-curricular project between Art and MFL, Year 7 students have created jungle masks inspired by the formal elements of art. Throughout the year, students have explored space, form, texture, shape, line, value, colour, and pattern, linking their learning to the work of four different artists.

Students experimented with a range of media, including monoprinting and watercolours, while investigating how artists develop and create their work. At the end of the project, they evaluated their own outcomes and, in MFL, translated their reflections into French. This helped them communicate their ideas, discuss artists, and describe their artwork in another language, further developing their oracy skills.

Ms Stafford, Mrs Robertson and Mme Grego

Outstanding work by Gaganpreet in Year 10! She created a beautiful self-portrait in her Art lesson and, demonstrating her impressive linguistic skills, went on to produce additional compositions in Spanish, Punjabi, and Hindi. Congratulations to Gaganpreet on receiving the Fine Art trophy, and well done on showcasing such talent as both an artist and a linguist!

Mrs D Thacker | Teacher of MFL

CRST Art Competition Winners

From over 750 entries submitted across all schools in the Trust, Holyhead students achieved outstanding success, securing Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards across multiple categories.
We are delighted to announce the following winners, who will receive their awards during the end of Summer Term Awards Assemblies. If you have not yet seen the entries, please do visit the virtual gallery to view the impressive range of work.
Please note that some Sixth Form entries could not be included at this stage as they remain live coursework until August. These will be celebrated in September.
Congratulations to all students involved for their creativity and achievement!

Exhibition Link: https://www.artsteps.com/view/69cac04cbd6001776ab30bec

Yr 13 Silver: Sufia
Yr 13 Bronze: Ebony
Yr 12 Gold: Saffron
Yr 10 Gold: Gaganpreet
Yr 8 Gold: Zara
Yr 7 Bronze: Krish
Special consideration award medal: Krish - Year 7

Year 13 Fine Art students showcased their work at the exhibition alongside their teacher, Mr Brown.

We are especially proud of Sufia, who was awarded the Silver Trophy for Fine Art, and Ebony, who received the Bronze award.

Congratulations to both students, and best of luck with your results in August.

We look forward to celebrating and showcasing their excellent work in September.

Ms Stafford, Mrs Robertson and Mr D Brown

A Fantastic Day Trip to Boulogne-sur-Mer!

Un voyage inoubliable!

Our trip to Boulogne-sur-Mer was an unforgettable adventure, packed with sunshine, new experiences and plenty of laughter from start to finish.

The day began long before sunrise as students and staff gathered in the early hours of the morning for our journey to Dover. Although it was an early start, the excitement was clear to see as everyone eagerly anticipated the day ahead. After boarding the ferry, the atmosphere was buzzing with excitement. Students explored the ship, enjoyed breakfast, took in the spectacular sea views and counted down the minutes until we reached France.

Our first stop was a fascinating visit to a snail farm, where students discovered the life cycle of snails, how they are reared and why they are considered such an important part of French cuisine. Of course, no visit would have been complete without sampling the famous delicacy - escargots! There was some initial hesitation, but thanks to Mr Almane, who gently persuaded more and more students to give them a try, many surprised themselves by discovering they were actually rather delicious. It was fantastic to see so many students stepping outside their comfort zones and embracing a new cultural experience.

Next, we headed to the beautiful beach at Boulogne-sur-Mer, where we were greeted by glorious sunshine. Students made the most of the fantastic weather by paddling and swimming in the sea, playing football on the sand, throwing frisbees and even building impressive sandcastles. The beach was filled with smiles, laughter and friendly competition, making it one of the highlights of the day.

Our final destination was Cité Europe, home to the enormous Carrefour shopping complex. Here, students had the opportunity to put their French speaking skills into practice as they confidently ordered food, asked for items and made purchases. They enjoyed browsing the many shops before treating themselves to delicious French snacks and souvenirs to take home. It was wonderful to see classroom learning being brought to life in such a practical and enjoyable way.

Even an unexpected three-hour delay in Calais couldn't dampen spirits. Rather than letting it spoil the day, students made the most of the extra time by playing football, enjoying games of Uno, chatting with friends and simply relaxing together. Others took a quiet moment to appreciate the beautiful French sunset before beginning the journey home.

The trip provided far more than just a fun day out. Students developed their confidence, experienced another culture, practised their language skills and created memories that will last for years to come. It was wonderful to see everyone supporting one another, trying new things and representing the school so positively throughout the day. Trop cool!

A huge thank you goes to Mrs Grego and all the staff who organised and accompanied the visit, helping to make it such a memorable experience.

It's safe to say that an amazing time was had by all. Here's to next year's trip—we can't wait to do it all again! A l'année prochaine!

Mrs L McKinney & Mrs V Grego

Science

THE BIG BANG

Our Year 7 students attended the Big Bang fair at the NEC. They were able to gain hands-on experience with different experiments and workshops. This included working with robotics, exploring the future of AI, getting an understanding of how science is used in the police , as well various other STEM fields. The students came away thoroughly inspired by what they partook in. After they had a whole new perspective on what science is, and the vast network science covers. Students were amazing throughout the whole day, and enjoyed the visit.

Enrichment Week

During enrichment week Year 10 students went to Sandwell Valley Country park to enhance their understanding of ecological and environmental science through hands-on fieldwork activities. Students took part in pond dipping and quadrats to investigate the local diversity. Our Year 10 students really enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to explore the biological wonders right on their doorstep.

Mr J Mohr | DOL Science

YEAR 9 Graduation

On Friday 10th July, our Year 9 students celebrated their Key Stage 3 Graduation. This is the second year that the event has taken place and it provided a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the hard work, dedication, and achievements of our students over the past three years.

Throughout their time in Key Stage 3, the Year 9 cohort has shown tremendous growth in confidence, resilience, and motivation. They have embraced new challenges, developed important skills, and made valuable contributions to school life. It has been fantastic to witness their progress and see them develop into mature and ambitious young people.

As they prepare to begin the next stage of their educational journey in September, they are well equipped to meet the opportunities and challenges of Key Stage 4. I would like to congratulate all of our Year 9 students on their achievements so far and wish them every success as they embark on their GCSE courses.

We look forward to seeing all that they will accomplish in the years ahead.

Mrs D Denny | Vice Principal

From Handsworth to the Spotlight: One Student's Inspiring Moment at Aston Villa

When more than **400 education leaders, employers, careers professionals and business representatives** gathered at Aston Villa for one of the region's biggest Careers and Enterprise events, there was one speaker who truly stole the show.

Representing **Holyhead School, Central Regions Schools Trust and the West Midlands Combined Authority,** one of our students stepped onto the stage with confidence, authenticity, and professionalism beyond his years.

What happened next was nothing short of extraordinary.

Speaking passionately about the importance of careers education and employer engagement, Devesh captivated the audience from beginning to end. His powerful words, genuine enthusiasm and natural presence left a lasting impression on everyone in the room.

Devesh wasn't just speaking about opportunities - he was living proof of what can happen when young people are given the confidence, guidance, and support to achieve their potential.

The audience's reaction said it all.

As soon as he stepped off the stage, delegates queued to speak with Devesh. Employers praised his presentation, offered words of encouragement, and even expressed interest in future employment opportunities. It was a remarkable moment and a clear reflection of the talent, determination and character he displayed throughout the day.

More importantly, he represented something much bigger than himself.

Devesh was an outstanding ambassador for his family, Holyhead School, and the community of Handsworth. With humility, maturity, and confidence, he demonstrated exactly what our young people are capable of when they are given the chance to shine.

Events like these remind us that careers education isn't just about helping students choose a job - it's about building confidence, creating opportunities, and empowering young people to believe in themselves.

This was one of those unforgettable moments where talent met opportunity, and the result was truly inspiring.

We couldn't be prouder of everything he achieved, and we can't wait to see where his journey takes him next. If today was anything to go by, the future is incredibly bright.

Mrs S Wilkins | Director of Careers

Finding My Voice:

as a Holyhead School Sixth Form Student to Co-Chairing a Major Careers Conference

I never could have envisioned speaking to over 400 industry professionals, headteachers, careers leads and ambassadors from some of the biggest names in the country - KPMG, Jaguar Land Rover, Atkins Réalis and Severn Trent. I'd spoken in assemblies before, and once, through the Envision programme, secured £1,000 of funding to create a Mental Health Room. But nothing on this scale.

It all started in the Autumn, when Holyhead School arranged for our A-Level Sociology class to visit the West Midlands Combined Authority. They're responsible for driving economic development, managing the transport network, and - perhaps most importantly for us - making sure that when we leave Secondary School or Sixth Form, there are high-level jobs waiting for us.

While touring their offices, I accidentally walked straight into the Mayor's office. Richard Parker, who was clearly caught off guard, even took a picture with us! I knew, from the offset, this was a place I definitely wanted to work at.

A few months later, that's exactly what happened. I was offered one week of Work Experience with their Insights & Intelligence team to look into youth unemployment - a crisis every young person can feel - and explore what the West Midlands Combined Authority can actually do to help.

The week was packed. I sat in on meetings with councils from across the seven regions, and got a tour of the NEC. It was an incredible experience, and an inspiring one - I'd started the week with no real plan for after Sixth Form, and left it knowing I definitely wanted to explore politics.

One real highlight was speaking with Helen Dearne OBE , the Combined Authority's Executive Director of Policy and Strategy, who received an OBE from the Queen, for her work in the Civil Service. She was remarkably down to earth, and told us how she began her 40-year career filing papers and worked her way up to somebody with access to Downing Street and the floor of Parliament. If you've ever wanted to know what Downing Street is like, she said it could definitely do with a new paint job.

The experience didn't end there. A few weeks later, I was given the opportunity to co-chair a conference at Villa Park, and I was able to share our experiences as young people stepping into the world of work - the struggles, the anxieties, the challenges. The timing couldn't have been more relevant, as earlier in that same week, Alan Milburn's interim report found that one in eight young people are currently not in education, employment or training, and that many graduates, not just school leavers, are struggling to find their way in. The key takeaway was that employers weren't hunting for perfect candidates. They wanted people ready to learn.

Looking back, this never would have happened had Holyhead School not arranged that one trip. From what started as a mere trip, turned into a week at the Combined Authority, then speaking at Villa Park in front of 400 people, and I'm incredibly fortunate to have been supported by everyone within Holyhead, who have instilled the confidence to me to do something just like this.

Devesh 12B

West Midlands Combined Authority

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