



Sports day – a day of fierce competition and fun

Sports Day this year took place on Wednesday 16th July and was held at Croydon Athletics Arena, a professional 400m, eight-lane track that caters for all disciplines.

On the day, all students were allowed to enter up to three individual events, in addition to the 4x100m relays, that contribute points to the winning tutor group and most importantly, to the winning school house.

Sports day is a day of competition and fun, evident from the number of winners' certificates handed out, the joy of seeing the ice cream truck arrive (including the teachers) and the number of students who opted to proudly display their house colours by wearing an accessory or sitting for face paints on the day.

After an exciting day of competition, the overall house winner went to Hawking, with an impressive points total and followed up with the winning tutor groups from each year group:

- Year 8 - Hawking
- Year 9 - Hawking
- Year 10 - Parks
- Year 11 - Yousafzai

One of the most popular events of the day was the staff versus students tug of war that was closely won by the students last year. However, I am very pleased to report that this year was won by staff, making next year's competition a vital win for both groups.

Ms L Hansford, Head of PE



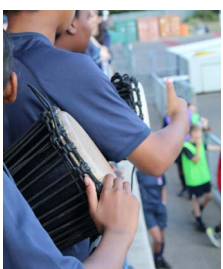
A message from the Headteacher

It's been another joyful year at Orchard Park.

The team spirit and tenacity of our students was demonstrated in bucket loads at Sports Day with huge cheering, drumming and clapping. We didn't just celebrate the winners: we praised and supported every child who competed, staying true to our 'drive' motto to embrace the journey!

Showing up and playing your part in both individual and school successes are important habits. Every day we've seen children working hard, supporting their peers and pushing forward even when it isn't easy. Now it is time to rest and reflect, to spend lots of time with friends and family, and to return ready to make the next stage of school the best ever.

Ms C Moran, Headteacher





A Festival of Play for 2025

Some of our Year 9 students attended the University of Westminster, Marylebone campus, for the annual Festival of Play event. It was a diverse, engaging, and creative career and computing conference sponsored by Digital Schoolhouse in association with Electronic Arts (EA).

Our students enjoyed various activities, from interactive workshops to inspiring talks from people in the game industry. Our students also used the art of storytelling to develop their gaming skills. Our congratulations go to Shamgar, who was spotted for his unbelievable storyline game design. He impressed the workshop coordinators so much that he has been encouraged to apply for the youth BAFTA awards for game development.

The students had the opportunity to learn about the technology behind video games, meet and hear from different professionals, explore how their interests aligned with STEAM and gain hands-on experience with creative tools and technology.

Mr S Alabi, STEM Co-ordinator

Year 7s set the standard for attendance and character points

What a phenomenal journey it has been since I joined Orchard Park High School in January! I was welcomed with such warmth and open arms by students, staff and families alike – and I couldn't be prouder to be part of such a dedicated and inspiring community.

This year, our incredible Year 7 cohort has truly set the standard across the school. With the highest attendance and most character points in the entire school, it's clear that their commitment, positivity and enthusiasm have shone through in every aspect of school life. This is a true testament to the hard work, resilience and high expectations our students live up to every day. I am beyond proud of what they have achieved.

The talent and teamwork displayed in sport this year have been equally impressive. From

our unbeaten boys' football team, who played every match with pride and passion, to our exceptional girls' netball team, who have proudly earned their place as the strongest in Croydon – Year 7 students have truly excelled on and off the pitch.

It has been an absolute joy to watch these young people grow in confidence, build friendships and develop into kind, hardworking and respectful members of our school community. I know they will go from strength to strength as they move into Year 8.

Wishing you all a safe, relaxing and well-deserved summer break – and I can't wait to see what amazing things you'll accomplish next year.

Mr S Kalatch, Head of Year 7

Year 8 students shine in all aspects of school life

As we come to the end of another fantastic school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what a brilliant year it has been for Year 8. This cohort continues to impress me with their maturity, positivity, and willingness to get involved in all aspects of school life. They have truly conducted themselves with excellence throughout the year, and I am incredibly proud to be their Head of Year.

Year 8 students have achieved great success in a range of events, from our annual Big Speech competition to sports fixtures and the ever-popular Big Quiz. Whether on the stage, the field, or in the classroom, they have consistently shown drive, determination, and a spirit of healthy competition. Their achievements are a testament to the values we hold dear at our school – excellence, drive, integrity, and collaboration.

What continues to stand out most about Year 8 is their willingness to give back and contribute beyond their own learning. So many students have stepped forward to represent the school, whether through taking on jobs to support me, assisting with transition events, or helping run after-school activities. Their teamwork and reliability have been vital, and they have played a key role in supporting our wider school community.

I want to wish all Year 8 students and their families a restful, safe, and enjoyable summer. I'm already looking forward to continuing as their Head of Year in September and seeing what more they can achieve in Year 9. Thank you, Year 8... you've been outstanding.

Ms C Ruby, Head of Year 9

See the safeguarding section of the school website (<https://www.orchardparkhigh.co.uk/safeguarding-overview>) for many sources of support while the school is closed.

Year 9 – a time of growth and challenge

What a year it's been for Year 9! This has been a time of growth, challenge, and increasing responsibility, and I'm proud to say our students have really stepped up. It has been fantastic to see them beginning to embrace their role as key stage 4 students, showing greater independence and maturity in how they conduct themselves around school.

One of the standout moments for me this year was seeing Year 9 take their first formal exam in the hall. For many, this was a completely new experience, and I was genuinely proud of how calm, focused, and prepared they were. It was a great opportunity to get a feel for what lies ahead in key stage 4, and I know that many left the room with a clearer understanding of the

expectations, and confidence that they are ready to rise to them.

Year 9 have also continued to get involved beyond the classroom – whether it's representing the school at events, helping out at transitions, or supporting staff with duties. Their willingness to contribute shows real character and reflects the values we strive to live by.

This year has laid strong foundations, and I'm genuinely excited to see what they'll go on to achieve in Year 10. For now, I wish all of Year 9 a well-earned summer break. Rest, recharge, and come back ready to take on the challenges and opportunities next year. You've got this.

Ms C Ruby, Head of Year 9



Year 10 – on the doorstep of Year 11

As we come to the end of another academic year, it has been a pleasure to reflect on the journey our Year 10 students have taken – a journey that has brought them to the doorsteps of their final year at school.

This term marked an important milestone for the year group, as they officially began their journey into Year 11. Their commitment was immediately evident during their first set of Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) in early July. The focus, determination and maturity shown throughout the exam period was outstanding.

From early morning breakfast revision sessions to silent working lunches and our after school 'Champions Hour', students embraced the opportunity to take ownership of their learning. Their conduct throughout the exam period was a real testament to their growing sense of responsibility and readiness for the challenges ahead.

Beyond the classroom, Year 10 students have embraced some incredible enrichment opportunities this year. Groups of students visited St Dunstan's college and Dulwich College for a day of workshops and experiences that broadened their academic horizons and offered a taste of different post-16 pathways. Other students enjoyed

unforgettable experiences on residential trips to Sweden and Spain, building friendships, confidence and life experiences. These trips are an important part of developing the whole student, and I'm so proud of how positively they represented themselves and the school.

As their Head of Year for the past four years, I've had the privilege of watching this year group grow from wide-eyed Year 7s into mature, thoughtful and driven young people. The journey hasn't always been smooth, but the resilience, humour and kindness this year group has shown has made every challenge worth it. They have grown not just academically, but as individuals and I am incredibly proud of the young adults they are becoming.

As we look ahead to their final year at school, it is now time for me to pass the baton on to Miss Walsh for the final leg of their school journey. I know that she will be an excellent support to them as they tackle their GCSEs and begin thinking about the next step in their journey.

Have a wonderful summer break- rest well, recharge and come back ready to finish strong in Year 11.

Ms L Goodwin, Head of Year 10

Sending off our Year 11s in style!

We said goodbye to our Year 11 students at the end of June after the final GCSE exam. Staff and Year 9 and 10 students formed a guard of honour for the students, lining the route from the exam hall, along the front path, and out to the school gates, applauding and cheering.

The Orchard Park Year 11 prom last week was a fantastic celebration and a perfect way for them to mark the end of an important chapter.

Everyone looked amazing, and the venue was beautifully decorated, creating a fun and elegant atmosphere. There was plenty of laughter, dancing, and unforgettable moments shared with both students and staff. The night went smoothly, with great music, delicious food, and a real sense of togetherness. It was a night to remember and a well-deserved reward after all the hard work throughout the year.

Ms J Walsh, Head of Year 11



Thank you so much to everyone who has supported the Friends of Orchard Park PTA group this year.

The aim for our fundraising in 2024-25 was new playground equipment, but we are sadly just slightly short of our target. For those who feel able, please consider donating to our justgiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/friendsfororchardpark> and help us to help the school.

Feedback has been very positive for our refreshment stalls at parents' evenings, so please look out for them again next year. We're continuing to raise money through easyfundraising: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friends-of-orchard-park> and we'd value more supporters signing up and using the site. Our most active users have raised hundreds of pounds so far at no cost to them.

Do follow us on social media @FriendsofOPHS for more news.



A visit to the National Gallery

Students on our Year 8 Excellence Pathway recently visited The National Gallery at Trafalgar Square. They had the opportunity to practise their observational and visual literacy skills by focusing on specific paintings from across the gallery and linking them to what they have studied in Year 7 and 8. The students also had the opportunity to sketch a few paintings.

Ms A Pain, Head of Art

Demonstrating school values

It's been another busy and exciting year for Character across the school! Our students have continued to demonstrate the school values of excellence, drive, integrity, and collaboration in everything they do, values which sit at the heart of our Character programme and help shape the kind, responsible, and determined young people we are so proud of.

One of the most competitive and exciting aspects of this year has been the race to collect Character Points. The competition is always fierce, and I've been overwhelmed by the number of full character cards we receive each week. It's a clear sign of just how many of our students are consistently going above and beyond to make a positive contribution to school life.

Our house system has also gone from strength to strength. From quizzes to creative challenges and sporting events, the house competitions have brought great energy and enthusiasm, while also raising an impressive amount for our chosen charities. A special highlight was our House Tombola, which was a huge success! I'd like to give a massive thank you to our Heads of Houses, who have led with real passion and commitment this year. Their leadership has been key in inspiring students and driving their houses toward victory.

To celebrate the achievements of our Zero Heroes and our winning house, we ended the year with a brilliant Field Fest – an afternoon of fun and games, complete with a visit from the ice cream van! It was a well-deserved reward for the students' hard work, character, and community spirit, and a lovely way to mark the end of term.

We are already looking forward to building on this success next year, with even more Character events, new challenges, and opportunities for all students to shine. Have a fantastic summer!

Ms C Ruby, Associate Assistant Headteacher, Personal Development



Mental Health Awareness Week

In May, we celebrated Mental Health Awareness Week. To show our support, students wore green ribbon stickers (thank you to Esme, Amelia and Jess for supporting on the school gate this week).

Students received an assembly from Mr Clarke and Ms Turner which delivered key messages on the importance of community and how to access support for mental health in and out of school.

The school also took part in 'Wear It Green Day' when everyone was encouraged to wear something green. The STAR hosted mindfulness activities which included a chalk mural, positive affirmations and a bake sale. We would like to say a huge thank you to Sam and Esme for supporting behind the scenes.

Students engaged in mindfulness activities for Fun Friday to celebrate the end of Mental Health Awareness Week. Students were invited to the art department to indulge themselves with a sweet treat, listen to relaxing music and colour some mandalas with inspiring quotes. A grand total of 55 students and two members of staff joined the fun!

If you would like to know more about mental health and how you can support your child, then please visit the Young Minds website for more information: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>





OPHS students step up to DiversITy challenge

This academic year a group of 16 students from Year 9 have been participating in the DiversITy Talent Programme.

Students were asked to take a challenge faced by today's society and to design and develop a prototype technological solution to try to solve or reduce the problem. The students divided up into two groups and worked through the ideate, design, development and testing phase of their project to produce two outstanding prototypes.

The first team named themselves OctosITy and they took on the challenge of the impact of social media on teenager's mental health. They developed a prototype of an app where people could log their mood in the morning and have mindful tasks set for them. They faced the issue that this is still technology-based, so they expanded their app to include augmented reality and a walking challenge, where users had to walk a set distance to unlock the tasks. The app also included the earning of 'aura' points to customise their avatar and the ability to challenge their friends.

The second team, called Phosphor, looked at ways to promote diversity and inclusion in society. The team worked to develop a system where a QR code is scanned on a mobile device and the user was directed to a page about that country. They included augmented reality as well with points of interest being included and their app had pages celebrating the culture and area the user had scanned. The team also wanted to develop a languages element where users could learn key phrases.

Both teams worked extremely well together, allocating team roles, looking at their target audience, collecting and analysing data and testing their final product.

On Tuesday 8th July, both teams travelled to the Institute of Technology in Swindon to present their projects to a panel of industry professionals and participate in a drone workshop. Both teams delivered brilliant presentations and fielded some very challenging questions from the judges about their products. Teams were awarded with certificates on the day and were given the opportunity to network with the professionals who were there.

This year, all 16 students have shown real resilience, drive, collaboration, integrity and excellence throughout the project.

Teams worked with an industry expert who navigated them through the project and worked with both teams offering support and guidance throughout the year. The professional commented on how well the teams conducted themselves, how proud he was of the work they produced and how lovely all students were in general.

A huge well done to OctocITy (Regan, Hayden G, Tem, Alfie, Jia, Vira, Alexandra and Sofiya) and to Phosphor (Hayden G, Samson, Ata, Finley, Falisha, Amber M, Ruby and Amalie). They were outstanding throughout and we are all very proud of them.

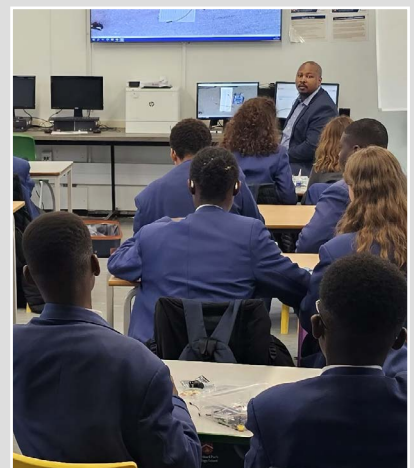
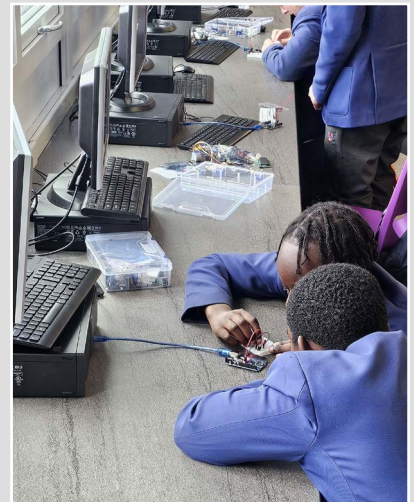
Ms F King, Head of Computer Science

Exciting series of hands-on STEM workshops

At the beginning of June, Years 7 to 9 participated in a series of hands-on STEM workshops led by experts from the local STEM community.

The STEM sessions featured robotics, coding, electronics, and interactive technology projects, providing students with the opportunity to build, programme, and problem-solve using real-world tools and technologies. From programming robots to wiring circuits and creating their digital projects, students explored how technology works and how they can shape it.

Mr Alabi, STEM Co-ordinator





Unforgettable day at Selhurst Park

A group of our talented students had the opportunity to play on the pitch at Selhurst Park, the home of Crystal Palace Football Club.

Students took to the field and received an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the stadium, including the players' changing rooms, tunnel, and dugout.

Our young footballers showcased their skills with pride, energy, and teamwork. The experience was truly inspiring for everyone involved.

A huge well done to Evie, Kelly, Keyanna, Lily, Mica, Jacob, Godwin and Tommy– you represented the school brilliantly. Special thanks to The Palace For Life Foundation Team for making this opportunity possible. We will be working very closely with them during the next academic year.



Students hike on the South Downs for DofE Award

The Duke of Edinburgh Expedition is always one of the highlights of the summer term. Last Thursday, 25 participants began their training expedition along the South Downs Way. We started the morning at Firle and made our way to Firle Beacon. Along the route, students had the opportunity to practice their navigation skills. That evening, we camped at Alfriston Campsite, where students practised setting up tents and basic campcraft. Dinner preparations began at 5.00pm, and students were able to share the meals they had planned within their teams.

It is always a pleasure when members of the public approach me to praise our students on how well-behaved and respectful they are. The giggles eventually quietened down in the evening, and we were woken by the sounds of birdsong and sheep in the morning. I had the pleasure of sharing a cup of tea with Emeka as we watched the sunrise.

All participants showed great perseverance and were a credit to Orchard Park High School, especially during the hot weather we experienced. I look forward to our assessment expedition, which will take place from Thursday 11th to Friday 12th September.

Ms H Baatjies, Duke of Edinburgh Leader



UKMT Junior Maths Challenge

On May 1st, 80 of our most able Year 7 and 8 mathematicians took part in the UK Junior Maths Challenge, a prestigious national competition. We are incredibly proud to share that the results and certificates received, represent the best achievement Orchard Park High School has ever recorded in this event.

In preparation for the challenge, students engaged in focused classwork and dedicated themselves to fortnightly practice homeworks using past papers. The questions in the Junior Maths Challenge are designed to stretch students beyond the national curriculum, encouraging deep and creative thinking about mathematics. Below is an example of the type of problem our students encountered:

Our Year 7 and 8 students rose to the challenge with confidence, and every student's efforts were recognised with a certificate. Included within these are this year's outstanding results of 19 Bronze, 16 Silver, and 4 Gold certificates.

From the Gold award recipients, we are thrilled to announce that Abdullah has, for the first time in Orchard Park's history, qualified for the next stage: the UKMT Kangaroo. He will sit this follow-on challenge on June 10th, alongside other top-performing students from across the country.

To support his preparation, Mr. Baksh has provided Abdullah with a booklet containing 15 past Kangaroo papers. We are all wishing him the very best of luck.

Ms N Devane, Maths Teacher



Action-packed football tour to Spain

From Wednesday 18th to Saturday 21st June, 45 students from Years 8, 9 and 10 swapped the classroom for the Catalonian coast as they headed out on a thrilling football tour to Lloret De Mar, just outside Barcelona. Accompanied by Ms Goodwin, Ms Hansford, Ms Walsh, Mr Headley and Mr West, the group enjoyed a packed itinerary of competitive football, sunshine, adventure, and team bonding that created lasting memories.

There was no time to rest after arriving, as within hours of checking into the hotel, the under 14 squad headed straight into action for their first fixture against local side Athletic Lloret. Despite the quick turnaround, the team put in a spirited performance, drawing 2-2, thanks to a powerful free kick from Micah and a well-taken goal by Alex S.

Soon after, the full tour party hopped back on the coach for a 25-minute journey where the under 15 team faced CD Palafoells. The match was a high-energy contest that ended in a hard-earned 3-2 victory. Standout goals included a lovely solo effort by Alex S, a crisp low drive from Malachi, and a tidy finish from A'Shyah following an excellent assist by Malachi. A brilliant start to the tour!

The next day brought a change of pace, as students enjoyed some downtime at a local waterpark, soaking up the sun and the slides. That evening, a combined under 14/under 15 squad played their final fixture against a second Athletic Lloret side. The exciting 4-4 draw featured a stunning hat-trick from Ricardo and a sharp finish from Jamie, ensuring our teams remained unbeaten across the trip.

Friday brought even more thrills as the group spent the day at PortAventura World- Spain's top theme park – braving rollercoasters and enjoying some well-earned free time in the sun. Evenings were filled with bowling, mini-golf, and souvenir shopping in the local town – a great chance to relax and enjoy each other's company off the pitch.

Throughout the trip, a behaviour points system was in place to encourage responsibility, teamwork and positivity. Students could earn points for actions like helping with equipment, speaking Spanish, or showing great manners and lose them for things like lateness, poor organisation or using phones at the dinner table. The overall winner was Alex S, who took home a goody bag from the official FC Barcelona store. Micah was deservedly named Footballer of the Week for stepping up and excelling in the under 15 games, leading the defence with maturity and skill well beyond his age group.

Staff were incredibly impressed with the students' behaviour, teamwork and enthusiasm throughout the tour. They represented the school brilliantly, both on and off the pitch, and embraced every opportunity with energy and positivity.

Thank you to all the staff who made this trip possible, and to the students for making it so special. We hope the memories, the friendships, and the footballing moments stay with them for many years to come.

Gracias, Barcelona!

Ms L Goodwin, PE Teacher

Greenshaw Learning Trust Athletics Championships

On Monday 7th July, a group of 25 of our most talented athletes represented the school at the first-ever Greenshaw Learning Trust inter-school athletics competition held at Bath University.

Over 16 of our Trust schools were in attendance, which saw boys and girls from Key Stage 3 and 4 (KS3 and KS4) compete in one track event, one field event and then a team relay. Not only did the students have the possibility of first, second or third for each individual performance, points all contributed to an overall team performance and most coveted of all, the winning school. It is with great pride I can report on the following successes:

Track:

- KS3 girls 200m – Shalika, first
- KS4 girls 200m – Gabby, first
- KS4 boys 200m – Ricardo, second
- KS4 girls 100m – Deborah, third
- KS4 boys 100m – Jahmal, second
- KS4 girls under 15 relay – third
- KS4 boys under 15 relay – third

Field:

- Under 13 girls high jump – Adesuwa, first
- Under 15 girls high jump – Jayda, second
- Under 15 girls long jump – Gabby, third

These impressive results, plus the points gained for entry into every event, resulted in our under 15 girls and the under 15 boys crowned as the second best teams overall and, even more impressive, is Orchard Park crowned the third best school in the entire trust!

Lastly, a massive thank you must go out to the event organisers, the PE staff and of course the students in attendance, especially with such an early start to the day. I'm sure next year will be bigger and better and the target is always to be the best school in the Trust.

Ms L Hansford, Head of PE

Summer PE roundup

Inter schools football tournament

Shirley High, in partnership with Orchard Park, planned and hosted the inaugural Croydon Inter-Schools Cup Tournament. The tournament saw three schools (Orchard Park, Oasis Shirley Park and Shirley High) compete for the trophy in what was an enthralling afternoon of competitive football. Orchard Park started strong with a 1-0 win over Shirley High, with standout performances from Micah and Theo in defence ensuring we kept a clean sheet. The team consisted of a combination of Year 7 and 8s and presented those selected with the opportunity to showcase their talent.

The Orchard Park team was successful in reaching the final, despite losing to Oasis Shirley Park in the group stages. This was an opportunity to avenge that defeat and we took the lead with a long range strike from Micah putting us up 1-0 in the first half. Oasis Shirley Park equalised due to a dubious decision not to flag offside from the linesman. Following this disappointment it took the games to penalties in which came down to which team can hold their nerve under pressure. Orchard Park successfully converted all of their penalties with Oasis missing 3. Sol scored the winning penalty leading to wild celebrations from the team as they celebrated their first trophy together (hopefully of many more to come in the future).

We are in the process of completing an application to enter the current Year 7s and 8s into the England Schools Cup (ESFA) for the season. This is one of the most prestigious cups in the country and I am confident that our current crop of players can compete at the highest level associated with school football.



Croydon Athletics:

Year 7: A group of Year 7 students competed in the Croydon Schools Athletics Competition in June. From the outset, their attitude and enthusiasm was outstanding and they represented the school with pride. Several standout performances earned medals against some of the top young athletes in the borough. Congratulations to Pier placing second in the 800m race, Trey placing first in the 100m race, Sol placing third in javelin, Dara placing first in high jump, Lara placing third in javelin, and Adesuwa placing third in the 200m race.

Year 8: 25 of our Year 8 students competed in the Year 8 Croydon Schools Athletics in May. With the talent on show across the schools, we are proud to have been in the mix and succeeded with a host of medals across a range of events. A special shout out to the following students for their performance: Year 8 girls' relay (Shalika, Nylah, Sienna P and Lily); Kate G bronze 300m; Kody P gold high jump; Tymon silver 100m; Nial R silver 300m. With many of our students coming in the top three for their respective heats, we were very impressed with their effort and contributions.

Year 9: A group of 22 talented Year 9 students were selected to represent the school at the Croydon School Athletics competition in May. All students demonstrated strong team spirit. Our winners included:

- Gabby - first in 75m Hurdles
- Jahmal - third in 200m
- Zane - third in 100m
- Taliyah - first in 200m
- Ibrahim - second in 200m
- Las - second in 800m
- Ata - third in javelin
- Amara - first in javelin
- Emmanuel - first in high jump
- Keyanna - second in long jump

Year 10: 25 of our Year 10 students competed in the Year 10 Croydon Schools Athletics in May. The students were exceptionally behaved and represented the school outstandingly across the different athletic events. A particular mention to Keira W (second in discus), Maya B (third in javelin) and Daniel O (third in high jump) who won medals on the day.

Ms L Hansford, Head of PE

TERM DATES

Start of autumn term 2025

- **Monday 1st September** – school is closed to all students – Inset day
- **Tuesday 2nd September** – Year 7 and Year 11 students only in school
- **Wednesday 3rd September** – all students return to school (8:35am)

Autumn term ends

Friday 19th December

Half term

Monday 20th October to Friday 31st October

Christmas holiday

Monday 22nd December to Friday 2nd January 2026

Spring term 2026

Monday 5th January 2026 to Friday 27th March

Half term

Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February

Easter holiday

Monday 30th March to Friday 10th April

Summer term 2026

Monday 13th April to Friday 17th July

Half term

Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May

Other inset days for 2025-26:

Friday 17th October 2025
Monday 5th January 2026
Friday 27th March 2026
Monday 29th June 2026



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