



Year 11 students blast off to Brussels!

What a fantastic and enriching trip our Year 11 students had on their recent educational excursion to the heart of Europe – Brussels, Belgium! The itinerary was packed with cultural, scientific, and historical highlights, making for an unforgettable learning experience.

Our journey kicked off with a deep dive into the cosmos, starting at the Euro Space Centre. Students explored exhibits on astronaut training, space travel, and the solar system, providing a hands-on connection to their physics curriculum.

We then continued our celestial education at the Planetarium. This immersive experience offered a stunning view of the night sky, deepening their understanding of astronomical concepts and the vastness of the universe.

The monumental Atomium, a symbol of Brussels, was another scientific highlight. Students learned about its history as a structure built for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair and how its nine spheres represent an iron crystal magnified 165 billion times. It was a towering lesson in both architecture and crystallography.

To connect our students with the world of finance, we visited the National Bank of Belgium Museum. The exhibits provided a fascinating look at the history of money, from ancient forms of payment to the evolution of the Euro. Interactive displays helped students

grasp the complex role of a central bank in the economy, offering valuable insights for their future studies.

The trip also had a sweet side! At Choco-Story, students immersed themselves in the history of cocoa and the secrets of Belgian chocolate-making. Naturally, sampling the delicious finished product was a crucial part of the learning process!

Finally, our students soaked up the festive Belgian atmosphere at the Christmas Market. This cultural experience allowed them to practice their French skills, try local specialities, and appreciate the vibrant European holiday traditions.

This trip was a huge success, providing our Year 11s with real-world context for their academic studies across science, economics and history.

Miss Ebanks, Teacher of Science and Mr Alabi, STEM Co-ordinator



A message from the Head

A huge well done to year 7 who have had a superb term with excellent attendance, enthusiasm for learning and lovely manners. We hope you feel as positive about your transition as we do. Thank you Ms Goodwin for your great leadership.

Year 11 have completed their first round of PPEs impressing us with their drive and maturity. Thank you to all the year 11 teachers for your unwavering support and Ms Coupland and Ms Walsh for taking care of their academic and pastoral needs.

The build up to the festive season is busy with assessments, winter shows, rewards activities, assemblies, Christmas lunch and charitable work but also with the usual high quality teaching and pastoral care.

As I mark five years as Headteacher of this school, I continue to feel very lucky to spend my working days with the most committed staff body and such delightful young people. I am grateful to everyone, including our families, for their support.

I wish you all a peaceful, restful break.

Ms C Moran, Headteacher



OPHS students perform at GLT winter concert

The Greenshaw Learning Trust winter concert at Charterhouse School was a truly wonderful celebration of talent, teamwork and community.

Students from across Brakenhale School, Broadwater School, Coombe Wood School, Greenshaw High School, Hartland High School, Park House School, Oakbank School, Orchard Park High School, and Wallington County Grammar School delivered an evening of fantastic music and impressively polished performances, showcasing months of dedication, rehearsals and hard work.

The standard of performance was exceptional and was a powerful reminder of the creativity, commitment and confidence of the young people in our trust.

Our students delivered two brilliant performances, a LAMDA piece, Christmas Clarity Chorus and the song Human. The concert ended with a wonderful song from the GLT choir, with Sofia and Demid singing solos.

Headteacher, Ms Moran said: "I have received multiple emails of praise from our Trust colleagues commending our students on their confidence, talent and wonderful conduct throughout a long day of rehearsals."

Thank you to Ms Maddocks and Mr Sahl-Taylor, Jaya, Sofia, Holly, Evie, Harisha, Rosie, Myah, Demid, Maria, Elsie, Ayanna-May and Jaydannay.

A great start for Year 7

As we come to the end of Year 7's first full term at Orchard Park, I want to take this opportunity to celebrate what has been a truly fantastic start for the year group. From their very first day, the students have shown confidence, curiosity and a real eagerness to be a part of our community. I am so proud of how they have settled so exceptionally well as they navigate new routines, building friendships and embracing the challenges and opportunities of secondary school with such maturity.

Throughout the term, Year 7 students have thrown themselves into every aspect of school life. Their participation in clubs, activities and house events has been outstanding. Whether it's getting stuck into Fun Friday activities (karaoke and 'Just Dance' were big hits!), taking part in competitions or contributing to our charity events, they have demonstrated teamwork, resilience and a wonderful willingness to try new things. Many students have showcased their talents through sports, arts and academic challenges and it has been lovely to see their confidence grow each week.

I have also enjoyed seeing the way that they treat each other with such kindness. Year 7

have shown empathy, respect and a genuine interest in building positive relationships – qualities that have made a huge difference inside and outside the classroom. They are polite, enthusiastic and always want to share stories about their day (and often keen to ask about mine too!). They have fully brought into the character cards and shoutouts – regularly reminding me to make sure I do character shoutouts every day. Their energy and positivity is a credit to them and they should be incredibly proud of the start they have made.

Thank you, families, for your ongoing support during the first term. Your encouragement at home plays a vital role in helping Year 7 settle, flourish and enjoy their learning. As we head into the break, I wish all families a peaceful and restful holiday period. Whether you celebrate at this time of year or simply take the opportunity to relax, I hope you can spend quality time together to recharge.

We look forward to welcoming a refreshed, re-energised and ready Year 7 back in January, excited for everything the next term will bring.

Ms L Goodwin, Head of Year 7

Celebrating Year 8 successes

As we reach the end of the autumn term, I want to take a moment to celebrate the progress and achievements of our Year 8 students. Moving from Year 7 to Year 8 represents a significant transition, and they have handled this change, from being the youngest to moving up the school, with notable maturity and confidence. They have embraced this new chapter with enthusiasm and have established themselves as a positive presence within our community.

I'm particularly pleased with the way Year 8 students have interacted with the new cohort. They have been incredibly helpful and empathetic in assisting our new Year 7 students settle in. By acting as reliable and supportive role models, they have offered guidance that has made a real difference to our youngest students. Their willingness to lend a helping hand and foster a welcoming atmosphere speaks volumes about their developing character and responsibility.

The year group has also delivered some impressive academic results this term,

especially in mathematics. Year 8 students are continually achieving first place across the entire school for their engagement and effort on the Sparx platform, which is a fantastic achievement that demonstrates their dedication to their studies. Beyond the classroom, they have shown great involvement in school life through participation in 'Fun Fridays' and by being excellent, welcoming helpers at our open mornings and when assisting new students who join us.

I am really looking forward to the future with this year group. I am confident that they will continue to grow and achieve great things as the year progresses and I anticipate seeing even more positive contributions from them next term.

Finally, I wish all our Year 8 families a well deserved, restful break over the holidays, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in January.

Ms C Ruby, Head of Year 8

Year 9 look ahead to GCSEs

As the autumn term draws to a close, it's a great time to reflect on the significant progress and increasing maturity demonstrated by our Year 9 students. This year marks a crucial period as they continue to refine their approach to learning and begin to look ahead towards their GCSE options.

Our Year 9 students continue to be wonderful ambassadors for the school. They have shown consistent reliability and helpfulness in various school roles and events, contributing positively to the overall atmosphere. Their developing sense of responsibility is evident in how they conduct themselves

around school and in their interactions with both younger and older students. The commitment and focus Year 9 has shown this term sets them up perfectly for a successful spring term. I am excited about their potential and their capacity to rise to the demands of their impending GCSE options.

Finally, I wish all our Year 9 students and their families a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. Please enjoy this well deserved period of rest and time with family. We look forward to seeing everyone back in January, ready for another successful term!

Ms C Ruby, Head of Year 9

Reflecting on Year 10's journey this term

As we approach the holiday season and the end of the 2025 calendar year, it is a pleasure to reflect on the journey our Year 10 students have undertaken so far. This journey is seeing them settle into Key Stage 4 (KS4) and move ever closer to the bright lights of Year 11, their final year at Orchard Park High School.

I started in September as their Head of Year and have truly relished watching the growth of the students over the last few months.

Focus on personal development

In PSHE lessons and assemblies, Year 10 have been exploring crucial topics around mental health. They have also been exploring influence, and in the spring 1 term, will be looking at healthy relationships.

These are important discussions, and it has been wonderful to have so many engaging conversations with students about these topics. It's clear that these lessons are making a meaningful impact, which is fantastic to see.

Continued growth and key areas for support

As always, I am so proud of Year 10 and their continued growth and achievements. However, we still need to focus on two key areas to ensure their sustained success:

- **Improving attendance:** every day in school counts, especially as they progress through KS4.
- **Completing Sparx homework consistently:** regular practice is vital for

Orchard Park's Zero Heroes!

Our Zero Heroes, students without a single behaviour point because they demonstrated outstanding behaviour, completed all their homework, wore their uniform perfectly and upheld our school values immunity were treated to a hot chocolate morning during Period 0. This event is our way of recognising and rewarding their efforts, ensuring they feel appreciated for their exemplary conduct. Over 200 students have been recognised as Zero Heroes this term.

building confidence and embedding knowledge in their subjects.

- **Completing homework:** it is vital that students are completing homework set across all subjects to a high standard. This independent study is the foundation for success in their exams.

Please continue to support your child at home to ensure they stay on top of their work and come to school each day ready to learn.

Year 10 is an amazing group, and they are going from strength to strength. Let's keep up the fantastic work next term.

Wishing you all a restful break and a very happy new year.

Mr M Ovir, Head of Year 10

Year 11 show exceptional commitment

Our Year 11 students have been outstanding this term, showing exceptional dedication and commitment as they worked towards achieving their best in the Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs). I was genuinely delighted with their mature attitude throughout the exam period. They made full use of the extra revision opportunities offered by teachers and support staff—before school, during break and lunch, and after school. We even had visitors comment on their exemplary conduct in and around the exam spaces.

We are thrilled that, for many students, this hard work has already translated into significant improvements since the end of Year 10. It is essential now that they build on this positive

momentum by maintaining excellent focus in every lesson and by attending champions' hour, working lunch, tutoring sessions, and increasing their independent study. We want them to take confidence from this round of PPEs and concentrate on the actionable feedback their teachers have provided.

So many Year 11 students have earned prizes, accumulated character card points, and received well-deserved shout-outs in assemblies and line ups – a testament to their fantastic effort.

Thank you also to all the families who attended parents' evening. The conversations held were incredibly valuable. This year, we are placing a particular emphasis on attendance

and punctuality. With college and sixth-form applications underway, these factors play an important role in students' final year, so we greatly appreciate your support in reinforcing this at home.

It has been a pleasure working with Year 11 students this term, and I look forward to the next. After such a busy and productive few months, I'm sure they are ready for a well-deserved Christmas break. Thank you again for your continued support. I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year, and I am excited to see what 2026 holds for our fantastic Year 11 cohort.

Ms J Walsh, Head of Year 11

Celebrating Black History Month at Orchard Park

We celebrated Black History Month during October with several events run by Equality Club and the history department.

Equality Club led assemblies on the importance of celebrating Black History Month and recognising some significant black Britons and the impact of their activism. A huge well done to Tinuade, Charis, Jaydanay, Amy O and Niamh.

We also had a Black History Month party during Fun Friday organised by Charis, with a range of activities including a competition to make a creative response to this year's theme of 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride.' Students have also been taught about a significant Black Briton in tutor time each day ranging from Roy Hackett to Malorie Blackman.

The history department is running two further competitions: an essay competition on any event or person in black history linked to Britain or in other parts of the world, and a Black History Month passport encouraging pupils to visit locations in London linked to black history.

Mr M Evans, Head of Rashford House



House news

We have had an amazing start to the academic year, this term, with our Heads of Houses leading on a huge variety of exciting and engaging House events.

Every Friday we offer a 'Fun Friday' with a variety of activities, from Black History Month, dance games and code breaking, to mindfulness colouring. Students gain points for their Houses just by attending the events and can gain more points by entering the House competitions.

Parks House organised a Halloween baking competition at the end of October (pictured below) and we were awed by the baking skills demonstrated by our students – and staff! Students were able to taste and vote on the winning creation. Congratulations to our winners: Ms Pain, Grace and Holly.



In addition to all the usual activities, we had our first Raise and Give week in November, where each House hosted a competition to raise money for their House charities. Each house has held its own fundraising event. Parks students had fun in a basketball competition. Lewis in Year 7 scored an incredible 12 points in 1 minute and won the competition, followed by Marques in Year 11. Hawking house ran a Just Dance party in the theatre to raise money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Yousafzai played 'Red Light, Green Light' in the gym to raise money for Save The Children and Attenborough created a human fruit machine, as well as selling cakes and sweet treats. In addition, staff and students decorated their House Christmas trees and had a food bank collection for the Shrublands food bank.

We are continuing our fundraising for House charities throughout the year, hosting one event a term, and look forward to sharing the fundraising totals with you.

Ms K Brown, Assistant Headteacher



Position	House	Total raised	House charity
1st	Parks	£122	Croydon Minds
2nd	Attenborough	£37.65	Croydon Animal Samaritans
3rd	Yousafzai	£32.50	Save The Children
4th	Hawking	£9.00	Motor Neurone Disease Association
5th	Rashford	The event has been rescheduled for next term	

Winter Showcase success!

Ho, ho, ho! A cold and wintry setting played host to our 2025 winter show in the school theatre. The students brought warmth to the evening with outstanding songs, dances and monologues.

In front of a packed house, we were rewarded with a variety of talent from Year 7 to Year 11. From solo singers, piano performances, school band and rock band, all genres of music were covered. Also tonight for the first time, we were introduced to new compère

hosts for the evening – Joe and Reuben. These Year 11 musicians showed they are not just talented on guitar, but also at hosting.

The choirs sang beautifully, dancers graced the stage and the steel pans made a welcome return. A big thank you to all of the performers, backstage crew and staff that made it possible. All of the performers would like to wish everyone at Orchard Park High School a very merry Christmas.

Mr S Sahl-Taylor, Teacher of Music



A culture of kindness at Orchard Park

At Orchard Park we are always striving to ensure our students gain a wealth of experiences as well as learning opportunities outside the classroom.

We joined the borough-wide fundraising event for school supplies for Hurricane Melissa, raising £178 and shared activities for anti-bullying week and gratitude week (see page 5). We have continued to thrive by ensuring students are attending a character club at KS3 and students are completing their Character Passports to earn rewards in the new year.

Last week, everyone took part in a Christmas jumper day raising money for the Jimmy Mizen foundation. So many students and staff joined in with the festive event. We raised over £160 for the foundation. Thank you to everyone for their donations.

We also extended a warm invitation to several members of our local church, St George's, for a festive Christmas lunch last week. The event was a great success, thanks to Ms Walsh and the organisational efforts of our students. During the lunch, students and guests enjoyed playing games and shared stories, creating a warm atmosphere.



Careers roundup

Playing the stock market

On Monday, the Year 10 business studies groups attended an engaging investment training session with the Talent Foundry. Stephen Kelly, from M&G International Savings and Investment, generously supported the session, providing insights into his work in the trading industry and concepts such as commodities, pensions, shares, bonds, property, and cryptocurrencies as potential investment opportunities. The highlight of the day was a simulated Stock Exchange game, where students experienced investment decision-making and navigating the highs and lows of the stock market. Well done to Mason, Tommy, Zain, and Denira who demonstrated impressive risk-taking and analytical skills.



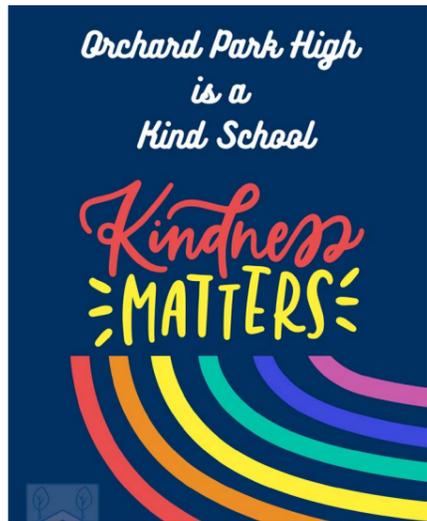
Green Careers Week

Students in Years 8 to 10 took part in the IGD Green Careers Employability Workshop as part of Green Careers Week 2025. The 45-minute online sessions introduced students to the world of green careers and the key employability skills needed for a sustainable future. Industry experts shared real-world insights into how businesses are tackling climate change, reducing waste, and promoting sustainability.

Through interactive challenges and reflection activities, students explored how their interests and skills could align with exciting career paths in the growing green economy. "It was inspiring to hear from real professionals who are helping the planet through their work," said one Year 10 student. A huge thank you to IGD and all the guest speakers for inspiring our students to think greener about their futures!

Futures event

Twelve of our Year 10 students attended the St Dunstan's Futures event last week. The event, which students were invited to as part of our ongoing partnership with St Dunstan's, included exhibitors from across a range of industries and universities. Well done to Mary, Jessica, Alfie, Jermaine, Zane, Shamgar, Stephanie, Jia, Falisha, Leah, Leila and Finley who asked brilliant questions and made the most of the opportunity.



Celebrating World Kindness Day and Anti-Bullying Week

We marked Anti-Bullying Week using our assembly to remind learners of our core values of Integrity and Collaboration, and how these connect to the British Values of Mutual Respect and Tolerance. Students explored what bullying is, how to recognise it, and the importance of seeking help. Students and staff wore odd socks to show their support.

We were also visited by Joe Pepper, Governor for Safeguarding. He spent time with students, who told him they really appreciated the support for reporting bullying and unkindness.

We celebrated World Kindness Day by giving all students a Galaxy Ripple and an article about how kindness can create a ripple effect in a community. Students were challenged to carry out a random act of kindness and keep the ripple going across the school. It was wonderful to hear so many stories of kind actions spreading throughout our school! A reminder that students can always report unkindness or bullying to a trusted member of staff or via the school website [here](#). We hope the ripples of kindness continue to flow beyond our school gates and into students' homes.

Student donations to the City Harvest Foodbank last week equated to 186 meals: which was a real testament to the kindness of our young people and their families/carers.

Year 11 geographers demonstrate their skills

Our Year 11 geography students enjoyed two field trips this term – the first was to the River Tillingbourne in Dorking, back in September.

Our GCSE Geography students demonstrated their collaboration and geographical skills when working as a team to collect width, depth and velocity measurements in the river. The staff at the Field Studies Council commended their great behaviour and river knowledge. A 'shout out' for great effort goes to Kevin, Cayenne, Cara, Jai, Emyphil and Fiza.

Students then completed their human geography fieldwork in November with a visit to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford.

The aim was to see if the regeneration of the Olympic Park had left a positive legacy 13 years on from the Olympic games. Students conducted their data collection exceptionally well through completing pedestrian counts, environmental quality surveys, field sketches and questionnaires to the public.



Special mention go to Holly, Cara and Hannah for their confidence in their conduction of the questionnaires.

Emyphil, one of our Year 11 geographers, said: "We investigated whether the regeneration project left a positive legacy. To do this, we carried out four primary data collection methods: questionnaires, pedestrian counts, annotated field sketches and environmental quality surveys. We found that people were still using the park, locals viewed the area as safe, and it is a peaceful area full of green space. However, some people mentioned it was expensive. Therefore, when I come to writing my conclusion, I will likely conclude that it has left a positive legacy. Overall, the day was great, and we worked well in our groups to complete the fieldwork ready for our Paper 3 Geography exam."

Thank you to the staff that supported both these trips.

Ms E Feist, Head of Geography



Adventures on the South Downs

The Duke of Edinburgh expedition is always a highlight of the autumn term, and this year's took place on the stunning South Downs.

Students set off from Seven Sisters Country Park, full of energy and determination. There was a competitive spirit right from the start.

Jake quickly took on a leadership role, confidently managing the route planning and navigation. The weather brought its challenges – students had to persevere through high winds and heavy rain – but their resilience shone through, and all students arrived safely at the campsite.

Due to the strong winds, setting up tents proved particularly difficult. Emeka and Hayden, our 'tent kings', stepped up quickly to support other team members, showing excellent teamwork.

During the night, we experienced a severe storm. Thankfully, no tents were blown away and everyone stayed safe. By 9.00am the next morning, students were up and ready to face the final day. It brought fresh challenges, including hailstorms. Hamila played a crucial supportive role, encouraging her peers when they were ready to give up.

It is always a great pleasure to escort our students on the Duke of Edinburgh expedition. I would like to thank Mr West and Miss Veal for their support on this trip. We're already looking forward to our next adventure!

Ms H Baatjies, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Leader



UK Parliament visit

An Education and Engagement team from UK Parliament visited Orchard Park to deliver a series of talks. Throughout these sessions, students gained a comprehensive understanding of how the UK Parliament operates, including the distinct roles and responsibilities of Members of Parliament (MPs) and members of the House of Lords. The assemblies also empowered students by highlighting various ways for citizens to make their voices heard within the democratic process, encouraging active participation in civic life from a young age.



Friends of Orchard Park

The Friends of Orchard Park is our parent teacher association. We aim to raise money to enhance our children's experience at the school and to foster closer links between school, home and the local community.

All parents/carers of our students and all our school staff are automatically members of our Friends' association. We actively welcome community members and encourage all our past students and families to maintain their close links with the school.

We have had a great start to the academic year, welcoming our new Year 7 parents and new committee members. We will be arranging our AGM for next term, so please keep an eye out for information on that after the Christmas break.

This year, we're continuing to raise money for playground equipment. Our [website](#) lists all the ways you can help out, including how to directly donate via [justgiving](#) for those who feel able. At this time of year, we want to particularly highlight [easyfundraising](#) which is a fantastic way to bring in donations while you shop online – at absolutely no cost to you. Our top two supporters on easyfundraising have raised over £500 just between them! If you ever shop online, please do sign up and use their app/website first.

Thank you so much to you all for your continued support. We look forward to many more activities in 2026.



Our latest sports news

It has been a great first term for our Sports teams, with an impressive number of students attending the clubs and representing the school in competitive fixtures. We are also very proud and excited to announce a new volleyball club has started running this term and hopefully cheerleading will start after the Christmas break.

Getting girls into professional sports

On Wednesday 15th October a group of eleven Year 8 students (*pictured above*) attended the 'Queens' charity basketball event that focused on getting more girls playing basketball. This event included a training session run by a professional coach, a powerful speech given by two professional female basketball players on the important role of education when taking the step into professional sports and finished with an interschools tournament. The team was captained by Adesuja who went on to lead the team to a third place finish and the most valuable player was selected as Princess.

Players included: Adesuja (c), Lara, Eyshila, Dara, Dasaskia, Evie, Azra, Nyla, Ester, Kaelynn, Princess

Football tournament



We topped our group by drawing 1-1 with Ark Blake (Evie scored) and then beating Oasis Coulsdon 2-0 (Evie and Keyanna scored) and then drawing 0-0 with Riddlesdown. In the semi finals, we narrowly lost 1-0 to Combe Wood to finish in third place.

A huge well done to all students who were on the team.

Matt Ratana Rugby 10s tournament

On Friday 21st November, a group of our Year 9 and 10 students took part in the Matt Ratana Rugby 10s Tournament, delivering a day full of determination, skill and standout moments.

We opened the competition against a very strong Riddlesdown side, edging a narrow win by just seven points. Jermaine set the tone for the day with an incredible solo effort, sprinting the full length of the pitch to score the winning try. Our second match saw us face Meridian, who proved equally tough. However, with some superb rugby on display, we secured another well-earned victory. Jermaine, Alfie and Raphael were exceptional throughout, driving the team forward with real quality.

Next up was a disciplined Sackville team. We started brightly, with Shay making a powerful carry straight from the kick-off, but despite our strong opening, Sackville proved too strong and we suffered our first loss of the day.

This placed us in the third/fourth place play-off, once again against Riddlesdown. Although they struck early with a quick try, this seemed to spark us into life. The boys responded brilliantly with three rapid tries, sealing a confident and deserved win.

The day finished with several outstanding achievements. Jermaine, Alfie, Raphael, Tem and Shay were all scouted and recommended for a rugby academy scheme, which is fantastic recognition of their talent. To top it off, Jermaine was awarded player of the tournament.

A huge well done to all involved. We look forward to the next opportunity!

KEY DATES

2025

Autumn term ends

Friday 19th December

Christmas holiday

Monday 22nd December 2025 to Friday 2nd January 2026

2026

Inset day

Monday 5th January

Spring term

Monday 5th January to Friday 27th March

Half term

Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February

Easter holiday

Monday 30th March to Friday 10th April

Summer term

Monday 13th April to Friday 17th July

Half term

Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May

Other inset days for 2025-26:

Friday 27th March

Monday 29th June

Parents' evenings to come in 2026

Year 7: 12th February

Year 8: 19th March

Year 9: 14th May

Year 10: 15th January

Year 11: 23rd April



Proud to be
part of the



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