

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

Headteacher: Mr E Roberts BA Hons. PGCE NPQH



Wrotham Road Meopham Kent DA13 0AH

Tel: 01474 814646

Website: www.meophamschool.org.uk

4th April 2025

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you've had a great week. It's hard to believe that we have reached the end of another term but I hope you are all looking forward to some important quality time with your friends and family over the Easter break.

Well Done

Congratulations to the following students who have received Headteacher Commendations in the past two weeks:

Luke E, Isla E, Francesca C (Y7) - English - World Book Day Winners.

Sophie H, Ellenor W, Tyler C (Y8) - English - World Book Day Winners.

Jasmine S, Kaya A, Sally I (Y9) - English - World Book Day Winners

Mackie R (Y10) - Sport - for delivery of a confident and well planned warm-up for his BTEC assessment.

Frankie M (Y10) - Sport - for delivery of a confident, well planned warm-up for his BTEC assessment and helping another student deliver their warm-up.

Ollie S (Y7) - Science - amazing effort in Science when working on Acceleration. Fabulous attitude to learning and brilliant at helping others understand the concept too.

Tony L (Y8) - English - superb presentation on 'Of Mice and Men.' Tony spoke with enthusiasm and demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the text.

Jack W (Y7) - Tutor Time - being consistently tenacious.

Denver M (Y7) - Dance - Excellent resilience, effort and performance in dance

Jack F (Y9) - History - Jack completed a brilliant poster in his Year 9 History lesson; their task was to complete a presentation or poster on any country in the British Empire.

Madison G (Y9) - History - Madison completed a brilliant poster in his Year 9 History lesson; their task was to complete a presentation or poster on any country in the British Empire.

Holly H (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Lucy H (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Oliver L (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Marley L (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Leo S (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Leo A (Y9) - History - Excellent presentation completed on a colony of the British Empire not studied this term.

Sienna B (Y7) - Tutor - Tenacity in overcoming challenges

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Ronnie P (Y7) - Maths - Always working hard during the lesson

Leighton Y (Y7) - Tutor - Showing respect and tenacity

Lilly A (Y8) - Science - Fantastic effort in science with great book presentation

Jack N (Y10) - Maths - Incredibly helpful in support to teacher while an incident in the classroom was dealt with

Maria K P (Y10) - Maths - Incredibly helpful in support to teacher while an incident in the classroom was dealt with

Kaya A (Y9) - Maths - Beautifully presented work, excellent effort with both school and home learning

Cultural Capital

On Monday 24th, a group of 30 Year 9 students took part in an **ethical debating workshop** with academics and students from **Canterbury Christchurch University**. Students looked at a variety of moral dilemmas, considering how different subject specialists might respond to them. It was a great opportunity to develop group work and presentation skills, as well as to look at ideas from different perspectives. I popped along, and was very impressed with the maturity with which the students grappled with some challenging ethical concepts, as well as the sophisticated arguments they came up with in response.

Thank you to **Ms Bishop** for organising the event.

49 students from Year 10 visited **the Globe Theatre** last week to see **Macbeth**. They behaved incredibly maturely throughout and were excellent ambassadors for the school. It was a fantastic show with some great interactive elements, and many students commented afterwards how impressive the performance had been. It was wonderful to see so many students inspired by some Shakespeare!

Many thanks to **Mrs Wahab, Ms Trueman, Ms Gappa** and **Mrs Cooper** for supervising the trip.

This week also saw our Year 11 Geography students visit the **Reculver Roman Fort** and coastline. This visit was to ensure that all students could complete their Geography field work - a key element of the GCSE specification. Our thanks to **Mrs Hatch and the Geography team** for organising the event.

Meopham Monthly

Well done to all of the students who contributed to the latest issue of the school magazine, the Meopham Monthly. There are some impressive articles and short stories in this issue and the magazine is a brilliant example of how the school community can come together to produce something really special. Our thanks to **Mrs Williamson**, Head of English, for her continued work with the students on this. You can read the latest issue, and past issues, from our website here:

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<https://www.meophamschool.org.uk/page/?title=Meopham+Monthly&pid=233>

(P.S. look out for the cameo from my pet rabbit Nessa, to celebrate the Easter edition - I just need to make sure she doesn't eat my copy of the magazine...)

Talking Learning Event

Last Wednesday, students and staff took part in our first 'Talking Learning' event. This was an opportunity for staff and students to talk together about teaching and learning at our school, and what works best to support students in their lessons.

The event was a great success, and the students who stayed behind after school to help are a credit to both the school and their families - the quality of their work, and the confidence with which they spoke was truly inspiring.

Hopefully this is just the start of events like these, where students and staff can work together to talk about ways in which we can continue to move things forward.

My thanks to **Mrs Hatch, Mrs Greenwood, Mrs Romney, Ms Kesby and Ms Mills** for organising the event.

Swale Dance Fever Event

Nine students from Years 7-10 attended the **Swale Dance Fever** event at the Turing School last Thursday. The dancers were awarded the **Choreographic Intent Prize** for their Greatest Showman Medley, praised for their demonstration of the theme of inclusivity throughout their piece. Special thanks to our Year 13 Dance Captain **Kate R** who also attended and assisted **Mrs Greenwood** in choreography and rehearsals leading up to the event.

The students involved were:

Daisy D	Lily C	Elleora O	Violet N	
Isabella B	Daisy L	Ivy E	Fraser W	Theo H

Congratulations and well done to all involved!

Easter Holidays IT disruption

Over the Easter holidays there is significant work being undertaken on the school's IT systems. Whilst this will lead to improved services after the holiday, it will cause some disruption over the next few weeks.

Most notably there will be interruptions to the phone lines and internet provision, which will

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make it more difficult to contact staff and the school during the holidays. For some of the time staff will not have access to laptops and/or emails, and so you may not receive a reply as promptly as you would normally expect to.

If you are worried about your child or need safeguarding support during the Easter break, please contact the following agencies:

- Kent Integrated Children's Services (Social Care) on Tel: 03000 41 11 11
- Childline on 0800 1111
- Samaritans
- Kent School Health
- Kent Police on 101

In an emergency or where a child is at immediate risk of harm, we would advise that you call 999.

Site Update

The landscaping works around the school continue and the final areas to be leveled and seeded will be completed in the coming weeks.

We have received a donation of flowering shrubs and small trees from the Woodlands trust and we will be asking Student Leaders to get involved in planting these. **Mrs Greenwood** is working with a group of students who want to set up a **Gardening Club** and as part of this has been able to secure a sum of money from Cucina, our school meals provider, to set up an **edible garden on site** for use by our Catering students.

The addition of new knee rails around the site has also led to improvements in the appearance of the school, and reduced the muddy footprints inside the building after it rains.

Our 'Litter Lottery' focus on reducing litter around the site has had a noticeable impact at break and lunchtimes - and we now want to move towards involving Student Leaders in helping to ensure the site remains litter-free. Further site improvements are planned in the coming months to ensure our school environment looks and feels professional, and inviting for all of our colleagues and students.

Attendance and Home Visits

This week, all parents and carers received a letter regarding home visits for students who have not been attending school.

Regular school attendance is crucial to your child's academic success and overall development, and we want to ensure that every student has the support they need to thrive. Home visits are an opportunity to discuss any challenges your child may be facing and to work together to ensure their continued success. Please feel free to get in touch with **Miss Hodd** - our new

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Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance - or the Attendance team if you have any questions.

Practical Catering Lessons from September 2025 - a message from Head of Art and Technology, Mrs Morgan

The Art and Technology Department - which includes Hospitality and Catering - have made the decision to move the responsibility for purchasing ingredients from staff back to students and parents / carers starting September 2025, and this will be applicable to all year groups.

There are several reasons behind this decision which are as follows:

1. The current system was introduced when the school had a much smaller number of students, however as the school has expanded, the process of overseeing payments, ordering ingredients and food preparation has become unfeasible within school.
2. Students with specific dietary requirements will be able to amend ingredients and recipes according to their personal preference rather than accepting substitutions made for them.
3. We want to better prepare our young people for adult life, and the simple fact is when we become independent, we are responsible for budgeting and sourcing our own ingredients. Providing students with the opportunity to practise this when preparing for their practical Catering lessons will provide them with the skills and experience they need to complete this independently later in life.

I understand that this may cause some concern for some families because of the expense of ingredients. To minimise this cost as much as possible we are also in the process of reviewing Schemes of Learning for the next academic year to reuse staple ingredients across multiple recipes, such as herbs, spices, etc.

We would also encourage families to measure or weigh their ingredients before coming into school to reduce food waste.

Any students who receive free school meals will continue to have ingredients purchased for them. If your child does not receive free school meals but affordability is a concern, please speak with either Mrs Morgan, Head of Art and Technology, or your child's Head of Year.

Students will be expected to bring their own container to take their dish home in. Students who fail to bring ingredients into school without prior communication from home providing a valid reason will be provided with a theory based worksheet to complete during the lesson and will receive a sanction for lack of equipment.

We are providing information regarding this now, and will also provide reminders leading up to the new academic year, to ensure families have as much notice as possible to adjust to these changes. We thank you in advance for your support with this.

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Parent/Carer Evenings

Many thanks to all those families who attended our **Year 8 Parent/Carer Consultation Evening** this Wednesday. It was great to see so many purposeful discussions going on across each department and we hope the evening was useful.

We are aware that holding the evening across our two halls in the two buildings can pose a challenge. Unfortunately, it is a matter of not currently having a sufficiently large enough space to hold all departments collectively. However, we do have plans to hopefully make structural changes to our main building over the summer to allow for a more open-plan central area where all appointments could be held within the same space.

A reminder that our **Year 7 Parent/Carer Consultation Evening** takes place on **Wednesday 7th May**. More information will follow in a separate letter. *Please do read the information carefully, as advice is provided on which hall each teacher will be based in, which can help parents/carers group appointments in the same hall together.*

Uniform Reminder - a message from Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Davies-Lane

We are very pleased to see the significant improvements in uniform standards over the past few months. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring our students present themselves smartly and professionally.

As we approach the Easter break, we would like to remind you of our uniform policy: students should not return to school with piercings, false nails, or false eyelashes.

We will also continue to remind students that school skirts must be worn at the appropriate length and should not be rolled at the waist. Additionally, please note that only black socks are part of our school uniform; white socks are not permitted.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining these standards.

Moving Forward

We are now approaching the crucial part of the academic year when our students begin to prepare for both internal and external exams. First, however, as we all reach a well-deserved break, it is important to reflect on all we have achieved as a school this year already.

I have had the immense pleasure over the past few weeks of visiting many students in lessons to find out what they have been learning. Suffice to say, I have been very impressed with the quality of students' work and their engagement in their lessons. From the Year 8 students keen to tell me the plot of *Of Mice and Men* (I didn't have the heart to tell them that - as an English teacher - I'd read it about ten times!); to the students learning about rhythm in Music and

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stomping along to *Eye of the Tiger*; to the students confidently communicating in superb French as part of their GCSE course, it has been genuinely wonderful to see the wide variety of impressive skills students are developing each and every day.

It is also important that, as a school community, we continue to hear your views as parents/carers. After the Easter break, I will be providing more times where I will be available to meet with parents/carers to discuss any ideas or views you'd like to share about the school. Furthermore, we will be sending another survey to parents/carers, to gain feedback on how you feel the school is progressing and what we can do to continually improve your child's educational experience.

In particular, we are very keen to hear your views on the following initiatives we are hoping to launch soon:

- Ideas for our new House system;
- The naming of our two buildings;
- Our new rewards programme;
- Student Leadership opportunities you feel should be available in school;
- Inter-House events our students could participate in;
- How we can further involve parents/carers within the school community.

Of course, we will be asking our students for their views on all of the above too, but it's important as stakeholders that you too are a big voice within our school improvement journey.

In short, we are really keen to engender that sense of belonging once again within Meopham School. Naturally, we are first and foremost a place of learning, but we want to make sure our community offers much more than just the normal curriculum, and provides all of those experiences to our students that make their time at school memorable. We can't wait to get started next term!

Have a lovely Easter,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E Roberts', written over a horizontal line.

Mr Roberts
Headteacher