

Headteacher's Welcome

Hello again from Meopham School as we embark upon another busy week of learning. As we now begin (unbelievably!) the run-up to Christmas, there'll be plenty going on at the school over the next few weeks, and plenty to update you on for this week!

Cultural Capital *a message from Miss Hodd (Assistant Headteacher)*

Swalebot Competition - Friday 14th November

Mrs Hatch took four **Year 9 students** to the first annual **Swalebot** competition at Whitstable School. The boys were technically brilliant and worked superbly as a team, with two students **building** the robot, and the other two working on **coding and programming**. Once the robot was built, the team worked out their strategy for play and students competed in the game to earn points.

It was a close match with **Meopham scoring 182 points** and the winning team scoring 184, leaving us in a very respectable 2nd place. **Well done to all involved.**



Woodville Theatre Trip - Thursday 20th November

Fifty **Year 10 students** had the chance to visit the **Woodville Theatre in Gravesend** last week to see a production of **A Christmas Carol** by the Dickens Theatre Company. This is a set text for GCSE and provided students with the great opportunity to see the **novella transformed onto the stage**. Both students and staff had a lovely time.



Headteacher Commendations - *Miss Hodd (Assistant Headteacher)*

Students who have demonstrated exceptional examples of our **TRUE values** and have nominated for **Headteacher Commendations** this week are:



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Abigail Mc (Year 9) - Fantastic film composition work in Music

Charlie C (Year 10) - Demonstrating good focus in an English lesson

Preston M (Year 10) - Participating positively in English

Finley K & Freddie L (Year 9) - Detailed brochure on the Conflict of the Middle East

Harley C (Year 9) - Creating an outstanding large scale painting in Art

Kira W (Year 10) - Positive engagement, focus and participation in Maths

Ezekiel K & Charlie K (Year 9) - Excellent collaboration to plan a film trailer in Music

Akshara T (Year 12) - Planning and teaching an amazing lesson to her peers in Health & Social Care, including a starter and plenary activity!

All students on this list will be invited to Headteacher Commendation on **Thursday at 12:30pm in Mr Roberts' office** for Domino's pizza and their certificates.

Attendance - a message from Miss Hodd (Assistant Headteacher)



- Every missed school day costs an average of **£750** in **lifetime earnings** (DfE, 2025b).
- In Years 10–11, **each day off = 0.8% lower earnings** by age 28 (DfE, 2025b).
- Students with persistent absence (>10%) are **less likely to have stable jobs** by age 28 (DfE, 2025b).

£750

Cost of each
day missed

0.8%

Less earnings
by 28



- Regular absence **reduces motivation and engagement** with school and **raises the risk of behaviour difficulties**, harming outcomes (Dräger, Klein & Sosu, 2024).
- Students with worse attendance **face higher risks of anxiety and depression** (Kearney, 2016).



Sporting Results

Year 7 Netball Festival at Dartford Science & Technology College

Our Year 7 Netball team demonstrated outstanding **resilience and determination** during their recent festival against Dartford Science & Technology College, St George's Church of England School, and Northfleet School for Girls.

While the team finished 5th overall, their improvement throughout the day was remarkable. They started with a challenging 6-0 loss but finished their final match with



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an incredibly tight 1-0 defeat.

The squad is now focused on identifying the best positions for each player as they look ahead to future games and continued improvement.

Player of the Match: A huge congratulations to **Anabel T**, who was awarded Player of the Match for her exceptional strength, determination, and relentless fight for the ball.

Key Messages

Sixth Form Applications - a message from Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Romney

Applications to Meopham Sixth Form are now open, and we have already received applications from a number of students.

Students should use [Kent Choices](#) to complete their applications.

Further information about the courses we are offering from September 2026 can be found on our website [here](#).

Debating Society

We were delighted to see even more students attending our newly-formed Debating Society last week, where the motion was: *"this House believes Artificial Intelligence will be the downfall of society."* After a vote from the floor, the proposition's team was successful. Congratulations to all who took part!

All students are welcome to attend Debating Society on **Monday Lunchtimes in English 8.**

Teaching and Learning Tips - a message from Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Romney

"Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce" is a questioning technique designed to enhance student engagement and critical thinking during classroom discussions. It aims to replace the traditional model, where a teacher asks a question, gets an answer, and then moves on.

Pose: The teacher asks an open-ended question to the entire class that requires deep thought, rather than a simple factual recall. A "no-hands-up" rule is often enforced to ensure all students remain engaged, as any one of them could be called upon.

Pause: The teacher waits, allowing sufficient "think time" for students to formulate an answer. This is crucial for developing confidence and better responses.

Pounce: The teacher selects one student for an initial answer. The teacher encourages a direct, focused response.

Bounce: The teacher "bounces" the first student's answer to another student (or group), asking them to comment on, build upon, critique, or provide an alternative perspective on the initial response. This step can be repeated, promoting student-to-student interaction and deeper analysis.

Benefits

Increased Participation: The "no-hands-up" approach keeps all students accountable and ready to answer.

Deeper Thinking: It encourages students to move beyond surface-level answers and engage in more complex reasoning and discussion.

Assessment for Learning (AFL): Teachers can use the "bounce" stage to formatively assess student understanding and identify areas where more teaching may be needed.

Improved Engagement: The dynamic, interactive nature of the questioning strategy can make lessons more engaging and productive.

Sixth Form Update - a message from Mrs Hartley, Senior Assistant Headteacher - Raising Standards and Sixth Form

We are delighted to share our pride in how the **Year 13** students approached and managed their recent mock examinations.

Their attendance, punctuality to all exam sessions, and overall conduct were superb and a real credit to them. This excellent level of professionalism is a fantastic indicator of their readiness for the summer examination series. We know how hard they worked to prepare for these assessments, and the maturity shown throughout the process was truly commendable.

We now look forward to sharing the forthcoming mock grades with you, which will provide vital feedback as we move into the final stages of the academic year.

UCAS Reminder

To ensure applications can be processed and sent to UCAS before the Christmas break, all completed applications must be submitted to Mrs Hartley for final internal checks by **Friday, December 5th**.

Important Reminder: Reading Day on December 12th

Please note that Friday, December 12th, will be a designated Sixth Form Reading Day. Students are not required to come into school on this date.

Instead, staff will set specific work, revision tasks, and follow-up activities from the mock exams on Google Classroom for students to complete independently at home. This is a valuable opportunity for focused, uninterrupted study time.

Year 11

We are very pleased with how swiftly Year 11 has transitioned back into their regular lessons following their mock exams, showing great focus and commitment to tackling their next steps. We look forward to celebrating their hard work in the forthcoming **'reveal'** assembly on **Friday, December 4th**, where they will officially receive their mock grades.

Moving Forward

A huge well done to our Year 13s who have been working hard over the past week in their mock examinations, as well as completing their applications for university via UCAS. We are sure their hard work will be rewarded, and it is genuinely inspiring to hear all of their plans for next year and their aspirations for the future. This is always a huge motivation for us as teachers and school staff. We are here every day as we want to secure the very best opportunities for our students and seeing our Year 11s and Year 13s take their first steps into young adulthood - looking beyond school life - is a real privilege. It is also a huge responsibility, as we help them to prepare for their exams and ensure they have all the tools they need to be successful and to demonstrate just how excellent they truly are. As with all of our students, we are with them all the way!

Have a lovely week,

Mr Roberts