

4<sup>th</sup> April 2025

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Dear Parent/Carer

## **WROTHAM SCHOOL NEWSLETTER**

### **Term 4 – 2024/2025**

As we continue through another successful school year, I'm delighted to share some of the latest highlights, updates and important information from across the school. Thank you for your continued support of Wrotham School.

### [Year 11 and 13 Exam Season](#)

We now find ourselves moving into the summer exam seasons for year 11. This is both an exciting and nervous time for our students who will start their exams in May. We have a number of sessions taking place over the Easter break for students to receive support from their teachers with revision and preparation, these always have a huge impact on those that attend. I would like to wish all students sitting exams in the coming months the best of luck and look forward to celebrating with them in August.

### [Term Dates for 2025/2026](#)

Planning ahead is key to a successful academic year. Please find below the term dates for the 2025/2026 academic session:

Term 1: Tuesday, 2nd September 2025 – Friday, 17th October 2025  
Term 2: Monday, 3rd November 2025 – Friday, 19th December 2025  
Term 3: Tuesday, 6th January 2026 – Friday, 13th February 2026  
Term 4: Monday, 23rd February 2026 – Thursday, 2nd April 2026  
Term 5: Monday, 20th April 2026 – Friday, 22nd May 2026  
Term 6: Monday, 1st June 2026 – Thursday, 23rd July 2026

For full calendar details, please visit our website: <https://www.wrothamschool.com/term-dates-2025-2026/>

### [Social Media and Online Safety](#)

A message summary from my recent letter to parents:  
Social media continues to pose a serious risk to students' wellbeing. The school handles hundreds of safeguarding reports each month—many originating from online platforms. Common issues include online grooming, bullying, extortion, exposure to harmful content, and serious mental health problems.

**HIGH EXPECTATIONS  
CHALLENGE  
OPPORTUNITY**

**wrothamschool.com**

 **Character  
Education  
Trust**

Company number: 07662701.  
A company limited by guarantee and  
registered in England & Wales. Registered  
office: Wrotham School, Borough Green  
Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks TN15 7RD

Parents are urged to:

- Delay social media access until at least 16
- Consider non-smart 'brick' phones
- Monitor and limit device use closely
- Use parental controls and keep communication open

Visit: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/> for support and information.

## Food Technology – 'A student's Experience'

### My Experience in Food Tech - By Y7

*When I first came into the food tech room, I felt really excited but at the same time nervous.*

*I first learnt what the different food sections are and why it is important to not mix different types of food because of cross contamination. This was important for my learning because it would make sure that the bacteria in the different food wouldn't mix and that could make you poorly. I understood what I was learning because Miss Green explained everything thoroughly multiple times.*

*We made mac and cheese, pizza, jam tarts, quiche, cake, mince pies and many more. The way the mac and cheese sauce is made surprised me because it went from liquid to a solid back to a liquid. The Mac and cheese, jam tarts and the cake were my favourites. The skills I developed were preparation skills, knife skills, oven / hob skills and cleaning skills. I now feel more confident to make things on my own in the kitchen.*

## Food Lessons – Apron Reminder

A gentle reminder that all students are required to bring a clean apron for every food lesson. Aprons provide essential personal protection and are crucial for maintaining hygiene and health & safety standards in our food tech classrooms.

## Year 8 Bowling Trip

On Tuesday 18th March, 80 Year 8 students and 6 staff descended on Maidstone Bowl to celebrate another busy and hard-working term. Spread across 16 lanes, the group enjoyed food, drinks, and an hour of bowling. It was a fantastic and well-deserved trip.

A big thank you to Miss Fuller, Miss Vint, Mr Scoones, Miss Hurley, and Mrs Green for attending - and well done to the students, who were a credit to the school.

## Relaunch of School Standards – Supporting High Expectations

This term we have relaunched our Wrotham School Standards, a whole-school initiative designed to reinforce high expectations and consistent routines. We believe that a structured, respectful environment benefits all students, allowing them to thrive academically and socially. The relaunch aims to bring clarity and consistency to several day-to-day issues and ensure students are supported in meeting clear expectations. We appreciate your ongoing support in reinforcing these messages at home.

Key areas of focus include:

- Mobile Phone misuse
- Toilet misuse
- Anti-social behaviour and conduct outside of lessons
- Politeness and respect
- Punctuality to lessons
- Uniform Policy

Breaches of these existing rules and regulations will lead to detentions or further escalation. Students have been briefed and well prepared in assemblies and in progress time.

### Careers and Character Related News

#### Term 4 Years 9-13 – Careers Fair 2025

I was so proud of the students who attended the careers fair this year – so many of them really made the most of this opportunity to explore their plans for the future. A number of the exhibitors came up to me to say that they'd never been to a fair with such engaged and motivated young people and they are all to be congratulated. What a credit to the school!

Mrs Hollinshead, Mrs Cheval and the site team start planning this event nearly a year in advance, and as a result we had a range of exhibitors that were able to talk about every employment sector and all of the different routes at post-16 and post-18. They were all able to talk to Year 9 students about their GCSE options and how their subject choices may help them in the future. We were also very happy to host students from Grange Park School for the third year, allowing their students the opportunity to understand and explore their options in an adapted 'quiet' session, which some of our students with sensory needs were invited to attend.

We're very grateful that so many people from our community were able to join us to help inspire our young people. A huge thank you to all of the employers, universities and education providers who were able to join us, including BAM who were giving students the chance to find out about careers in construction management as well as an update on the school build. We were especially excited to have some Wrotham School alumni join us, including Cpl Sam Allingham who is now in the Royal Marines – he really enjoyed returning to school and speaking to some of his former teachers, as well as having some meaningful conversations with our current students that involved them trying on night vision equipment!





## WROTHAM SCHOOL CAREERS

**Year 11: making plans and applications for post-16 learning**

**Have you completed your feedback on Morrisby yet?**



## What I liked...

- I liked being able to speak to people who have done the things I am considering **Alfie – Yr 9**
- I liked that you could speak to universities and find out about sixth form **Millie – Yr 9**
- I liked the amount of apprenticeships there and I liked that sixth form info was there **Gideon – Yr 10**
- I liked how there was a diverse range of employers, universities and colleges. Everyone was really friendly and enthusiastic about their topics **William – Yr 10**
- I liked to be able to talk to people who have the same goals as me and to understand what the future may look like **Bonnie – Yr 11**
- The wide range of options and I was able to learn some things I didn't know before **Caydence – Yr 11**
- Lots of opportunity and new career pathways that I was not previously aware of **Bella – Yr 12**
- That there were numerous people there so I could look at multiple options in one place **Ava – Yr 12**
- How the stations went into detail about futures within those jobs **Phoebe – Yr 13**
- A good variety of different industries **Shylah – Yr 13**
- I learned more about accommodation and student finance for university **David – Yr 13**

## What I learned...

- I learned about marine biology **Bella – Yr 9**
- I've learned that there are a lot of different paths I could take after GCSEs **Maisie – Yr 9**
- I learned that DofE would help me get into a lot of different jobs **James – Yr 9**
- I learned about different roles and what you have to do to get to that position **Lacey – Yr 10**
- That not knowing exactly what specific job you want is normal **Aaron – Yr 11**
- I learned about the qualifications I need to enter the job I want to work in **Henry – Yr 11**
- That architecture can be anything. Not just designing houses, but even down to designing railways **Lilyrose – Yr 12**
- I've learned some tips for when I'm applying to universities and what grades I need **Chloe – Yr 12**
- About different opportunities, some of which I hadn't considered before **Ava – Yr 13**
- About job role responsibilities, for example HR and accounting **Ewan – Yr 13**
- There are many different jobs within each sector **Phoebe – Yr 13**

### Year 7 - Character and Careers Education

This term, Year 7 have been focusing on how our character strengths relate to skills needed for the world of work. For example, how integrity links to professionalism, and how important resilience is in our working lives. This has culminated in them working in teams to propose ideas for an app that would help people to build resilience and manage stress. Some ideas encouraged people to take care of themselves by giving them prompts to take part in wellbeing activities. Others gave people a space to share their feelings.

### Year 8 – Morrisby Careers Platform

Year 8 students have now signed up for Morrisby, our online careers platform. Part of the sign-up process involved taking a questionnaire about what they hope their future careers might look like in terms of what tasks they'd do, what environments they'd work in and more. That then helps to personalise Morrisby to each individual student. For example, in the 'About Me' section, they can see some interpretations of their answers, allowing them to gain some self-awareness about their hopes and aspirations. In the 'My Choices' section, they can look at suggested careers and find out lots of up-to-date information about each one including average salaries, what the job involves, and different routes they might follow to get into that job. Then they can 'favourite' or 'bin' the career to help them shortlist. They can retake the questionnaire whenever they like, and we recommend they do this at least once a year as they grow older. Having access to Morrisby will also allow them to submit details of their work shadowing placement.

### Year 8 – PAL Live Careers Event

Year 8 also attended PAL Live! Online in lessons last term, alongside over 15,000 other key stage 3 students across Kent and Medway. They had the opportunity to hear about different vocational and technical options that will be available when they sit their GCSEs. Very soon, they will be considering their GCSE options (just as Year 9 are doing at the moment!); it's important that they are making informed decisions that take into account what comes after those GCSEs. We had three different providers talk to us and students also got to hear from current apprentices and trainees.

- Highways England talked to us about the Lower Thames Crossing, exactly what the project is and how apprenticeships, university graduates and other trainees are a part of that.
- North Kent College spoke to us about what vocational courses (like BTECs and T levels) actually are, and how some apprentices might do their training through them.
- IPS International is an independent training provider (ITP) that delivers the training part of an apprenticeship for a range of jobs including engineering, digital, construction, automotive and childcare. Students might apply to an ITP after their GCSEs, A levels or even as part of a career change later in life.

Students were able to ask questions in the chat that were answered in a document that has been uploaded [online here](#), along with a recording. (Scroll down to the resources section).



### National Apprenticeship Week – Year 9-13

National Apprenticeship Week is a national event where employers and apprenticeship providers share information, bust myths and are generous with their time advice about apprenticeships. At Wrotham School, students were offered a range of activities inside and outside of lessons. We wanted to help them take advantage of the opportunity to understand this option, which they can choose to take at 16, 18 or at any time in their career. **Year 11** students started the week with a presentation from the ASK Apprenticeships service in assembly, where they had the opportunity to compare this route to options with which they are perhaps more familiar. Some of our Year 11s have expressed an interest, so we invited Ed Panting from the Education People to run a workshop with them, which allowed them to understand how to find vacancies, understand the information online, and also make the applications.



We even had some students make applications in the session!

**Years 9-13** took part in activities both in progress time and in their lessons that were targeted towards their particular career stage. For example, **Year 12** looked at how they might find out whether degree apprenticeships are an option for their career goals.

**Year 13** students who are applying for apprenticeships were invited to attend an interview preparation session with Michelle from CXK, where they had the opportunity to learn more detail about the format that interviews might take, the kinds of tasks they may need to complete in assessment centres, and how to respond to competency-based interview questions (e.g. 'Tell me about a time when...') using the STAR structure for their answers.



### **Year 11 personal careers guidance meetings**

Throughout terms 2-4, Mrs Hollinshead – our level 6 qualified careers guidance counsellor – has been meeting with Year 11 students to offer them advice and guidance in their careers planning. Every student has their own needs and plans, so every meeting is different and the decision about what we'd cover was ultimately decided by that individual. Some students needed help with applications, others wanted support in decision-making, whereas others wanted help in how to best prepare for their next steps and/or future careers. Further meetings will now focus on students who need additional support – if you feel like you or your child may need some information or advice, or perhaps their post-16 plans have been disrupted and need to change or they want to explore backup plans, please email [ahollinshead@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:ahollinshead@wrotham.kent.sch.uk)

### **Year 11 careers support during the summer and after leaving Wrotham School – Ed Panting**

I'd like to introduce Ed Panting, who is the Engagement Officer for our area of Kent. He works for The Education People and his job involves providing support to young people and their families if they need help making the transition from Year 11 into a post-16 option. He will be joining Year 11 in an assembly after the Easter break so that he can introduce himself and explain when they might need his help. Ed and his team focus on supporting students after they have finished their GCSEs, and students and their families can refer themselves if they find themselves in need of support. Last year, **they directly helped 748 young people** with their post-16 transition from Year 11 into Year 12 across Kent. If you would like more information about what they do, [please click here](#).





## Year 8-10 Work shadowing launch and upcoming deadline

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July is fast approaching, and Year 8-10 students (with support from their families) are submitting details of their work placements on Morrisby. It's important that this is done as soon as possible, because after that submission, Mrs Hollinshead then has to do some checks and request some information from the placement. A reminder that applications should be **submitted by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May** – we can accept submissions after that date, but we cannot guarantee that the placement will be approved in time.

A quick guide on how to find the submission form on Morrisby is below. Student usernames are their school email address, which uses the username for the school computers. E.g. 23Hollinshead@wrotham.kent.sch.uk. They set their own passwords when they first logged in. They can either use the 'forgotten password' link to get a reset email sent to their school email, or ask their progress tutor for help.

The image shows a sequence of three screenshots from the Morrisby website, illustrating the steps to access the work experience submission form. The first screenshot shows the main navigation menu with 'Progress' highlighted. The second screenshot shows the 'Work Experience' page with a red arrow pointing to the 'Open online portal' button. The third screenshot shows the 'Welcome to Connect, your work placement portal' page with a red arrow pointing to the 'Submit a new placement' button.

**What to do next**

Make sure your A level choices keep open your preferred study areas. Check entry requirements for your preferred course(s) or apprenticeship(s).

10 minutes

**About Me**

- Aptitudes
- Aspirations
- Personality
- Priorities
- Study Interests

**My Choices**

- Careers 2
- Subjects 3
- Destinations
- Apprenticeships
- Planner

**Progress**

- Action Plan
- Activities 41/55
- Open Days
- Personal Statement
- Work Experience

**Activities**

aspiration digital

CAREER FAIR

**What is work experience?**

Work experience is a valuable opportunity to immerse yourself in a professional environment, and gain first-hand insights into what it's like to work for a specific employer and explore the diverse range of roles available within their organisation. During your work experience, which could last from one day to a few weeks, you may be introduced to an employee who will show you around, tell you about the company and help you settle in. They might give you a timetable for your time there or it may be less formal. You might shadow or observe employees to find out what they do or take on specific tasks and responsibilities.

You can find out more about work experience and how to find your own work experience placement on the [Work Experience and Great Alternatives Insight post](#). Alternatively, your school or college may arrange it for you.

**Why is work experience important?**

**How to make the most of your work experience**

**Accessing your work experience**

You can access your work experience in two ways:

Use your browser to access the online work placement portal

[Open online portal](#)

OR

Download the Connected Careers Manager app to your phone

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

Scan to log in

Once you've downloaded the app, scan the QR code to get started.

**Welcome to Connect, your work placement portal**

From this page you can submit self placement applications, search for placement opportunities, check the status panel to complete the required task.

**Placement Summary**

View details of the one future, present and historic placement you're assigned to, as well as any placement applications that are currently pending verification.

[View your placements](#) [Submit a new placement](#)

**Skills Builder Summary**

**Placement**

Click the link



### **Year 10 CV writing**

In term 4, Year 10 have been drafting their first CVs during progress time, and then uploading this to their Morrisby account so that we can return to and improve them in one-to-ones and group sessions with Mrs Hollinshead later in the year. They have been introduced to the purpose of a CV, what the different sections are for, and the importance of tailoring a CV for each application (whether that's for a job, work experience placement, internship or apprenticeship).

### **Year 12 work experience week**

Year 12 are currently being supported in their search for meaningful work experience in the first week of July. So far, some of our sixth formers have already secured some fantastic placements, including:

- Teddy P who went through a competitive application process for a placement with BAM,
- Bella who has a placement with the Fort Amherst Heritage Trust,
- Lily-rose has a place with a legal firm,
- Madison has a placement with the European School of Osteopathy, and
- Stephen who has a placement with Network Rail.

An extra congratulations goes to Teddy M, an aspiring doctor who earned a placement with the cardiology department at Maidstone hospital. He actually completed this in March and got some incredible feedback from the staff there.

Well done, everyone!

Year 12 students who are yet to find (or in the middle of applying for) a placement are getting support from Mrs Hollinshead, including through access to a padlet with over 100 different ideas and opportunities. **If they would like some one-to-one support**, they can book in a meeting with her at any time, using the booking link at the bottom of her email signature.

### **Year 12 experience at a Top 50 UK Law Firm**

We're wishing the best of luck to Grace and Caydence in Year 12 who, over the Easter break, will be attending an exclusive work experience opportunity at Birkett's law firm in Sevenoaks and London. With all expenses paid, the fantastic programme of activities will allow them to shadow solicitors, take part in projects and also build their employability skills. This opportunity was offered directly to Wrotham School Sixth Form and one other local school with only three places on offer. A number of Year 12s applied within school, and all of them received feedback on their application from our trust's Director of HR, Mr Sanchez and Mrs Hollinshead in the first stage of application in order to help them improve and refine their answers to interview questions.

In order to achieve their places, Grace, Caydence and Nicole had to go through a rigorous application process. All three of them got through to the final stage and were fantastic representatives of the school. A huge congratulations goes to all three of them, including Nicole who only just missed out on the full placement, but has been invited to a limited-place workshop with Birkett's about the recruitment process in the legal profession including coaching on interview skills.

## Year 12 Aspiration Digital Sixth Form Careers Conference



In March, over half of our Year 12 students attended Aspiration Digital. This was their first opportunity to experience a conference and understand how these types of events are structured and how to get the most out of them. The conference itself is open to all sixth forms in Kent and over 1000 students attended, taking over 6 screens in the cinema at Bluewater. One of the biggest lessons that came from the event is that not every idea will be relevant to you as an individual, but there will be some useful and important information that you can take away from it. Throughout the day, we saw:

- Myth-busting careers in marketing
- What is project management? (From the tech team at Ocado)
- From shampoo to sport – a talk from Russell James about using his skills to change from one sector (consumer goods) to another (sport) and following his passions and interests.
- A panel talk about routes into different digital careers (we were excited to find out that one of the panellists was a Wrotham School alumnus!)
- What if university isn't for me? And how to use LinkedIn to network
- The BBC spoke about digital careers in the TV industry, including project management on BBC iplayer and the roles that don't involve needing to learn how to code
- A talk from a neuromarketing specialist about how we make decisions (reflecting on career decisions).

A theme that ran throughout every talk was that young people need to **be curious** – take advantage of opportunities that crop up, ask questions, make connections with people who can teach you skills or share their contacts or advice. Basically – be open-minded and confident. Our students were a real credit to the school – they were the first to ask questions of the speakers, and when some were randomly selected to go along to workshops (one with an entrepreneur, another with the Met Office) they jumped at the chance.

### **Year 13 university workshops and support**

A huge congratulations to our Year 13 students who completed their applications to university in January. Each student has had at least two or three one-to-one sessions with Mrs Hollinshead to support them through the application process and prepare for the next stages. Many of them are now replying to offers, attending interviews and looking at accommodation and student finance. Students and their parents/carers should have received a copy of Mrs Hollinshead's action plan that guides them through what they should be doing over the next couple of months – please let her know if you would like another copy either on paper or via email.

In February, we were lucky to host Fin and Charlie from Canterbury Christ Church University, who not only went through the details of student finance, but also gave them advice on how to earn money while they're at university, information about grants and bursaries (money that doesn't need to be paid back), and also ways to save money and carefully consider spending.



### **Year 13 Date for the diary – workshop about clearing and clearing plus**

The University of Essex have kindly offered to run an online workshop for students and their families about how clearing works and how to come up with a plan. This is for any students who want to go to university – whether they've already applied and hold offers, or if they are deciding to apply late.

**It's a myth** that most students only need clearing if they don't 'get in' to their first choices – in 2024, over half of all young people who went through clearing did so by choice. Some wanted to change their subject, and others got higher grades than expected and wanted to look at new options. Nearly 70,000 people used clearing last year, which is more than 1 in 5 of all applicants to university that year. We feel that it is important that every young person has an understanding of what it involves, even if they don't end up using this service. The session will be held on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May at 5pm** and a **Teams link and invitation** will be sent out to Year 13 parents and their families.

### **Year 13 – DWP Workshop – How to get careers support after you leave school**

**Year 13** students who have decided not to apply to university were invited to a workshop with the DWP, which focused on how to get access to careers support as an adult. The session introduced them to different resources, including the National Careers Service website and careers advisers. Kali from the DWP also introduced them to Job Centres and explained how and when someone might access support while job hunting, as well as how they tailor their support for people with additional needs, such as disabilities or caring responsibilities.

In their feedback, the students said that they liked how inclusive the session was, and that they felt that there was support available after they leave school if they don't find a job or apprenticeship straight away. They enjoyed learning about how SMART goals can help with career planning, and enjoyed trying out the NCS's online Skills Assessment.



## New Build Update

If you have been anywhere near the school recently you couldn't fail to have noticed the build progress.

The superstructure of the halls block (at the front of the site) is now complete (the superstructure being the steel frame and the slab flooring), and swift progress is being made on the teaching block (at the back of the site), just about half of the steel has been erected, and the rest will follow quickly.

We will shortly see the installation of the cladding on the halls block, and it will start to look like a proper building!

Mr Cater and Mrs Abbot joined me on a site visit, and are pictured below having signed the steel which the 6<sup>th</sup> formers (plus a number of year 10/11) signed before it was installed.





More steel beams will be signed by all the other year groups before they are installed in the teaching block.

2 students have already visited the new school buildings, pictured below as a reward for months of volunteering with the Site Team for her DofE Bronze Award, another visited to take photos of the construction work as part of her A-level photography coursework.



## Young Carers



**27%**  
of Young Carers  
aged 11-15 miss  
school

**67%**  
of Young Carers  
are worried  
about their future

Our school is dedicated to supporting all young carers and those who may have caring responsibilities. We work closely with IMAGO, a support network for young carers, to ensure they receive the help they need.

There are over 10,000 known young carers in Kent, and BBC research suggests there may be as many as 30,000 more who remain unidentified. It's important for young carers to know they are not alone.

Caring for a loved one can be challenging and may impact a young person's confidence, school attendance, academic performance, and overall well-being. Kent Young Carers strives to reduce these challenges while recognizing the strengths that come with being a carer, such as resilience, empathy, and a caring nature.

Kent Young Carers is a countywide service that supports young people aged 5-18 who care for a family member with a long-term illness, disability, mental health condition, or substance misuse issue.

To learn more, visit IMAGO.

If you need support or have any questions, please contact:

Miss Hurley (Lower School Young Carers Lead) or

Mrs Mann (Upper School Young Carers Lead) at

[youngcarers@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:youngcarers@wrotham.kent.sch.uk)

Who are happy to assist you and your child.



## How can you get support?

Miss Hurley  
Lower School  
Young Carers Lead

Young Carers Club  
M20

Friday Lunch Time

Mrs Mann  
Upper School  
Young Carers Lead

Young Carers Club  
M20

Friday Lunch Time

If you are a young carer, drop in to see us for support.

Thank you for all of your continued support this year and we look forward to updating you shortly on all of the exciting news and updates from the school in the summer term.

Have an enjoyable and restful Easter Break.

Kind regards

Mr Cater

Headteacher

Wrotham School