



DEER PARK

newsletter

FRIDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2025

ISSUE 6

HEADTEACHER'S HELLO



As we enter the final three weeks of the term, there is a fantastic energy around the school. Rather than winding down, this period is absolutely full of opportunities for our students to learn, grow, and participate in festive events. I also want to say a huge well done to our sports teams for their recent performances; your dedication, teamwork, and resilience have been outstanding, and you have represented the school brilliantly.

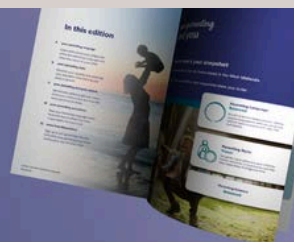
Mr Jones



MEET MR HOGG

Hello, my name is Mr Hogg and I am so happy to have joined Deer Park this September as a new History teacher. I am originally from Northern Ireland and moved here last September. I have really enjoyed teaching the History curriculum so far, and getting to know my new tutor group, 7F1. In my free time I enjoy cooking, going to the football and I play guitar in a band. I'm looking forward to getting to know the students better, working alongside my colleagues in the History department, and taking my first GCSE classes through their exams. ,

Parentkind



**We value you. We value your opinion.
We have invested in Parenting Language.**

What you get: a personalised magazine exploring your parenting language and style.

What we get: an insight into your view of how well we deliver for your child.

→ Click here to complete the survey in 15 minutes.

The Deer Park QUIZMAS is back!

Quiz for parents, students, friends and staff of Deer Park School.

Food and special performances from students.
Money raised will go towards local charity partnerships.

Thursday 11th December 5.30-7.30pm
Can you beat the teachers?

Keep an eye on your email or contact:
deerpark@deerparksecondary.org



YEAR 7

As we move into the run-up to the Christmas break, I wanted to start by saying how fantastically well the Year 7 cohort is doing. It has been wonderful to see the year group working hard and maintaining such high standards. As we approach the darker, colder mornings at the end of term, we know it can feel a little harder to get up and get going! However, attendance remains incredibly important right up until the break, so please keep making that effort to be here every day.

We have a busy few weeks ahead with lots going on, and we are looking forward to seeing Year 7 get involved as much as possible! Please don't forget to donate to the basic food bank appeal if you're able to, an appeal that is vital for those in need this winter.

It has also been great to see students demonstrating their artistic flair recently. We've seen some amazing entries from Year 7 for both the Christmas Card Competition and the Anti-Bullying posters—well done to everyone who got creative.

Finally, a massive shoutout to the Year 7 Boys Football Team, who have represented the school brilliantly this half-term. They are potentially playing to win the league this evening, so we are wishing them the very best of luck!

Keep up the great work, Year 7.

Mr Colley



STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Tabitha R-W



TUTOR OF THE WEEK

7 Elk 2



ATTENDANCE AWARD

Max T



SLT PRAISE AWARD

Taylor F

YEAR 8

We are well into the second half of the Autumn term and very soon all attention will turn towards Christmas.

As we move into darker mornings and more unpleasant weather, can I stress to you all the importance of excellent attendance. Whilst I fully understand that illness occurs, our attendance has dropped off this year compared to last and I am very keen to rectify this. As you are aware, attendance is a top priority in terms of basic expectations for students and is very much an item of collective responsibility. Its importance features in every assembly and we look to reward excellent attendance whenever possible. Please can I ask for your support in ensuring that absence from school is avoided unless deemed absolutely necessary. If you know of any factor affecting your child's attendance then please reach out to their tutor in the first instance who will look to support, where possible.

Final message from me is to congratulate the Year 8 football team who have moved into the next round of the Hampshire Cup after an excellent 4-1 win against The Costello School. We look forward to the next match!

Regards,

Mr Parnell



STUDENT OF THE WEEK

Charlie R-S



TUTOR OF THE WEEK

8 Sika 2



ATTENDANCE AWARD

all students on 100%



SLT PRAISE AWARD

**all students with
0 negatives**



YEAR 9

As the term draws to a close, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you Year 9 for the commitment and hard work that fills Deer Park classrooms. This term has been filled with significant learning, growth, and memorable achievements for our students. We have witnessed some fantastic contributions from our year group ranging from displays of creative talent with the year 9 fashion show, anti-ambassadors delivering assemblies, remarkable wins in extra-curricular PE and trips to support our learning outside of the classroom.

In assembly Miss Andrews and I have the pleasure of delivering recognition to those in our year group who are working consistently well in all areas of Ambition, Community and Excellence and we want to note how widespread these rewards stretch as we have a considerable majority of students engaging and going the extra mile in their time here at school. With that being said we do want to draw your attention to the importance of attendance and how it contributes to our goal of excellence. Good school attendance has a significant, positive and cumulative impact on a student's academic attainment. Every day of consistent attendance is an investment in future success!

Thank you again for all of your ongoing support. We are thoroughly enjoying working with Year 9.

Kind regards,
Mrs Nelhams & Miss Andrews



STUDENT OF THE WEEK
Thomas P



TUTOR OF THE WEEK
9 Roe 2



ATTENDANCE AWARD
Ruby H-R



SLT PRAISE AWARD
Thomas M

YEAR 10

Year 10 continue to rise to the challenges set for them and find the right balance in juggling the many aspects of this particular year. In assembly, a quick show of hands told me that over half the year group had secured their work experience placements for the summer, and had also visited a college on a college taster evening. This focus on careers and life after Deer Park is fantastic, and lays some strong foundations for when they enter the all important Year 11.

As part of my role, I have the pleasure of going into many lessons and witnessing their hard work first hand. This week I saw Year 10 working on their ICT coursework with Miss Applegate and Mrs Fosbraey, with many looking at extension activities. In Geography with Mr Sanders, a new unit was being started on coasts, where students were learning about how the total coastline of the UK is constantly changing due to erosion. In RE with Miss Williams, students were receiving a recent assessment back, and looking on areas to improve. Mr Hughes in PE was analysing the role of all rounders in cricket, and looking at introvert and extrovert personality types, with reference to Ben Stokes' innings at Headingley in the last Ashes series. (Based on the First Test this year, we might need more of this!)

Alongside the fantastic focus from all students, it was also a great reminder of how engaging and diverse our curriculum is, with students wanting to be in lessons and do well.

Despite the darker and colder weather, Year 10 continues to lay some excellent foundations going forward. Keep up the great work!



STUDENT OF THE WEEK
Mia C



TUTOR OF THE WEEK
10 Roe

Thanks.
Mr Gregory



ATTENDANCE AWARD
Izzy L



SLT PRAISE AWARD
Kristina V



YEAR 11

Despite the dark nights drawing in and the cold weather ramping up, Year 11 continue to impress with their diligence and effort as the mock exams near. The Prepare to Perform program continues to be a success and the numbers of students attending these sessions increase week by week.

The best parts of being a Head of Year 11 arrived in the last fortnight as I was able to celebrate with the Statistics students who received their GCSE certificates for this subject - a massive congratulations to these students!

With only a few weeks to go until the end of the Autumn term, it's important that students continue to complete revision in subjects in order to give themselves the best possible chance in the upcoming mock exams. Mr Theobald's 'Brain Hacks' at the end of each week's assembly gives a really good insight into the best ways in which students can revise effectively; he will be giving more details in the Parents' morning session on 12th December about how you can assist your child with revision and the upcoming exams.

As always, I remain proud of the work Year 11 are doing. Keep going, team!



STUDENT OF THE WEEK
Emma C



TUTOR OF THE WEEK
11 Fallow

Thank you,
Mr. Smith

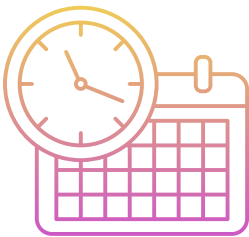


ATTENDANCE AWARD
Isabelle B



SLT PRAISE AWARD
Anna Q-M


UPCOMING DATES



Date	Activity	Year Group
01/12/2025	Basic Food Bank Collection Week	Whole School
01/12/2025	Box Theatre Macbeth	Year 10 & 11
01/12/2025	Nasal Flu Immunisations	Whole School
03/12/2025	SIX The Musical Trip	Year 9 & 10
04/12/2025	Christmas Celebration Evening	Ticketed Event
04/12/2025	STEM Exploration Trip QinetiQ	Selected Students
09/12/2025	Wildern Server Room Trip	Year 10 ICT
10/12/2025	GCSE St Paul's Cathedral Trip	Year 9 & 10 RS Students
11/12/2025	Christmas Charity Quiz	Ticketed Event
11/12/2025	Christmas Jumper Day	Whole School
12/12/2025	Year 11 Coffee Morning	Parents of Year 11 students
19/12/2025	Last Day of Term. 12.30 Finish	Whole School



SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT: EDUCATION FOR LIFE – RELATIONSHIPS



This half term we are focusing on our second theme of Relationships. The programme consists of Education for life lessons, tutor sessions and assemblies which will be underpinned by our Rights Respecting Ethos.

YEAR 8: CURRENT CURRICULUM

Prejudice & Discrimination

In this unit, students will explore what it means to be part of a fair and equal society. Students will study prejudice and discrimination in relation to gender, sexuality and race. The aim of the unit is to ensure students have an understanding of their own rights as well as encouraging them to become active global citizens who will promote fairness, equality and cohesion in society.

YEAR 10: CURRENT CURRICULUM

Family matters

In this unit, students will be exploring parenthood and fertility. Looking at the challenges and options for both. This unit will also give students an opportunity to explore the choices with unplanned pregnancy, as well as how to cope with loss and grief. We will explore the warning signs of domestic abuse, coercive control, online grooming and gangs.

YEAR 7: CURRENT CURRICULUM

Diversity, Prejudice & Discrimination & Bullying

In this unit, Students will explore the benefits of living in a diverse society and the importance of celebrating differences.

Students will study prejudice and discrimination by studying different types of prejudices that people hold. We will investigate the consequences of prejudice and discrimination by exploring hate crimes in the UK. Finally, students will look into the issue of bullying and encourage a collective responsibility to ensure this does not take place within our local community and beyond.

YEAR 9: CURRENT CURRICULUM

Respectful Relationships

In this unit students will be exploring the concepts of marriage and divorce.

Students will begin thinking about what they look for in a partner, religious views on marriage, different types of marriage ceremonies, same sex marriage, forced marriage, relationship break-down and divorce. Students will explore these concepts from different religious perspectives and have the opportunity to form their own views and opinions.

YEAR 11: CURRENT CURRICULUM

Communication in relationships

During this half term, year 11 are looking at managing healthy relationships, the nature of giving consent in sexual relationships and when informed consent cannot be given. We are also looking at sexual harassment & stalking and signpost where to look for further support. We finish the unit by looking at the harms of revenge pornography, the dangers of AI pornography and the how to tackle misogyny.



CAREERS INFORMATION



**FOR A FULL LIST OF ALL
OPEN EVENTS**

CLICK HERE 

ENGINEERING APPRENTICESHIP JOBS FAIR

10 February 2026 5-7pm

Thinking of an apprenticeship in engineering?
Come along and meet employers recruiting
engineering apprentices for Sept '26

Who should attend?

- Anyone that is thinking of a career in engineering, giving you "skills for life".
- Whether you'll be a school or college leaver in 2026, or just thinking about a change in your career, this event is for you!

Why attend?

- The evening will provide the ideal opportunity to meet and chat to local employers about some of the amazing apprenticeship opportunities available
- Find out about apprenticeship vacancies for September 2026 and how to apply
- Speak to current apprentices about what life is like at SETA
- Speak to SETA staff about your options
- It's FREE to attend!
- Parking is available on a first come first serve basis

Where is it taking place?
Southampton Engineering Training Association (SETA)
First Avenue, Millbrook, Southampton, SO15 0LJ

When is it happening?
Tuesday 10th February 2026
There are 2 bookable arrival times: 5pm or 6pm

BOOK ONLINE:



https://www.setatraining.co.uk/seta/events_open_evenings.html

SKILLS FOR LIFE APPRENTICESHIPS

Supporting Tomorrow's Engineers

CAREERS INFORMATION

Barton Peveril Year 10 Open Event

[Click here to register your interest](#)



SCAN ME

LIVE Q&A
SESSION

MS Teams Meeting
Scan the QR code to join
Or join by clicking [here](#)
Meeting ID: 321 455 587 583 0
Passcode: 7SN2FT9r

NHS ENGLAND SOUTH EAST

Why Choose Pharmacy? A Career That Makes a Difference

Curious about a career that combines science, healthcare, and helping others? Join us for an inspiring webinar exploring the world of pharmacy!

Whether you're a student thinking about your future, a parent supporting career choices, or a teacher guiding young minds—this session will shine a light on the exciting opportunities in pharmacy, especially the vital role of pharmacy technicians.

Hear from professionals working in the NHS, discover the different career paths available, and learn how pharmacy can be a rewarding, flexible, and impactful career choice. Bring your questions and leave with insights that could shape a future in healthcare.

Who should attend: Students (Years 9–13), college learners, parents, carers, teachers, and career advisors.

Thursday 4th December 6pm – 7pm



Hampshire
County Council

Hampshire Achieves

GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND IN
HAMPSHIRE: PLANNING FOR POST-16 OPTIONS FROM YEAR 9 ONWARDS

CLICK HERE

WWW.DEERPARKSECONDARY.ORG

THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE



Deer Park School

From Thursday 4 December 2025 to Friday 19 December 2025, we will be running our festive 12 Days of Christmas Attendance challenge!

Each day, all attending pupils will be entered into a draw, with two lucky winners chosen at random from every year group to take home a prize.

Perfect Attendance Bonus:

Don't miss a day! Pupils who attend all 12 days will automatically be entered into a final draw to win a spectacular Christmas Hamper on Friday, December 19th.

Be a Deer Park attendance HERO (Here Everyday Ready Ontime)



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

DEER PARK RRC - THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Article 6: The Right to Life, Survival And Development

This week, we're exploring Article 6 of the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child. It says that every child has the right to life, survival, and development (growing with age both physically and emotionally). But what does this really mean? It's not just about having the basic necessities such as clean water or a warm roof on your head—it's about the adults in your life fostering a safe, welcoming environment in which you have the freedom to explore your identity and grow into a unique, educated, kind, and well-rounded individual. Every child should be granted access to multiple healthy, nutritional meals daily, as well as a variety of snacks from all food groups, to have the chance to grow and develop their muscles, arms, legs, and mind. Every child should be raised in a loving, judgement-free environment which gives them a voice and allows them to express themselves in any way they choose. Every child should have a wide range of activities accessible to them, to allow them to have down-time and good mental health.



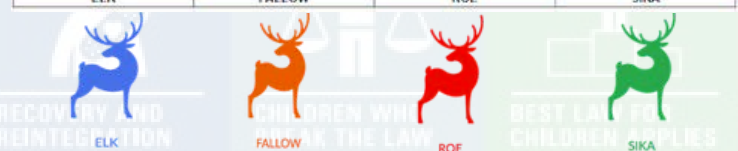
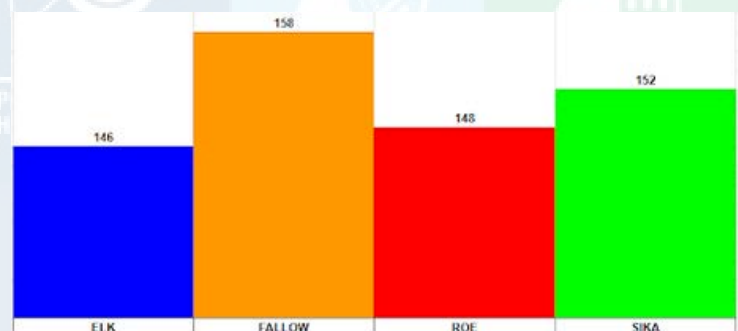
Let's be mindful this week:

- *Let children have their own identity and be themselves
- *Don't deny children access to the food they need to grow
- *Make time to educate and engage in learning opportunities with your child
- *Give children a life worth living

WEEKLY HOUSE CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS 24.11.25

New Events Completed

- *Children in Need
- *European Day of Languages



Deer Park School

Christmas Jumper Day

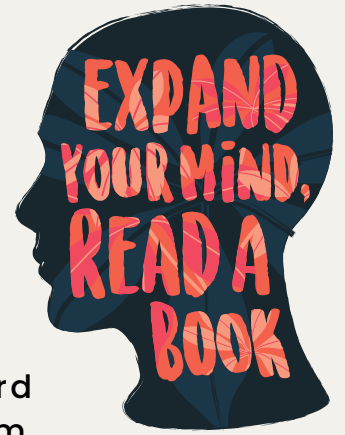
11 DECEMBER 2025

Save the Children

MISSION CHRISTMAS cashforkids

Literacy in Tutor Time: A Word a Week

This term, our focus has been on expanding vocabulary and developing a shared language across the school. Our Word of the Week initiative in tutor time is an easy way for students to learn new words and integrate them into their everyday language. Our most recent word was mediate.



For something a little different, our Weird and Wonderful Word of the week was respair, which is an English dialect word from the 16th century that means "fresh hope and a recovery from despair".

The Big Questions

Over the past few weeks, students have also had the opportunity to explore some big questions and fascinating topics. These discussions are designed to broaden students' knowledge and critical thinking skills. We've delved into:

- Hot topics from around the world; Should public transport be free for all?
- Influential People; Mary Seacole
- This week in history; The publication of Charles Darwins 'The Origin of the Species'
- Have you ever wondered; Whether the first car had seatbelts?

These short explorations in tutor time help students build their cultural capital and become more engaged and informed citizens. We look forward to more exciting discussions in the coming weeks!

Vocabulary Updates

Please remember to check the key vocabulary we're using in our classes this half term. Research shows a strong link between a student's vocabulary knowledge and their academic success. By helping your child learn and use these words, you can make a big difference in their learning journey and consolidate their learning from school.

Year 7

Year 9

Year 11

Year 8

Year 10

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORT UPDATE

Year 11 GCSE PE Parents | Our Year 11 GCSE cohort are in the final stages of their NEA written sport evaluation. Having already analysed their strengths and weaknesses within their fitness & skill components in their sports, they are now working hard to develop their training plans to support their weaknesses and improve outcomes on the pitch. This coursework provides a realistic insight into the sports science industry. We recommend they spend an extra 30 minutes a week on this document which is accessible via Google classroom. Please email their class teacher if you have any questions.

PE Uniform (cold weather) | please ensure your child has packed extra layers for underneath the Deer Park PE top. Many of our students are now packing appropriately but a small few still are attending with no extra layers. We also highly recommend sports gloves as an additional optional item for their PE bags.



Fixtures

Monday 24th - Jnr Girls Development Match v Wildern (h) JRH

Monday 24th Year 7 Boys v Woodlands (a) ELP

Wednesday 26th November- Year11 Boys v Weston (h) JRH

Thursday 27th November - Year 7 Boys v St George (h) ELP

Monday 1st December - Year 7 Boys Rugby v Wildern (h) JRH

Clubs

Amazing progress has occurred with our regulars at rugby club on Thursdays. We are in the process of identifying friendlies with Wildern to support further development for year 7, 8 and 9. Year 7 v Wildern training game Monday 1st December.



GCSE PE

- Quick fire questions to support your child's learning
- Year 9 - What is the difference between an eccentric and concentric muscle contraction?
 - Year 10 - What is the difference between direct and indirect aggression?
 - Year 11 - Name the three planes and axes of movement?
 - Challenge - Why is training at altitude advantageous for long-distance runners?

DEER PARK FASHION SHOW

What an incredible night! I am absolutely bursting with pride following our Year 9 Fashion Show. After weeks of exploring complex themes surrounding Fast Fashion and Non-Western Patterns, the students transformed their research into a spectacular runway event that truly dazzled.

However, the success of the evening went far beyond the designs. This was a massive team effort that showcased true professionalism. I want to give a huge shout-out to the students who modelled with such confidence, but also to the unsung heroes of the night: the technical crew on lighting and sound, the creative hair and makeup teams, and the organized front and back-of-house staff who kept the show running seamlessly.

To top off an amazing evening of art and performance, I am thrilled to announce that through ticket sales, we raised a fantastic £365 for Children in Need! To every student involved: you should be incredibly proud of what you achieved. You were amazing!



SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES

The NSPCC logo is a green circle with the text "NSPCC" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

New data from the NSPCC reveals that online grooming crimes have reached record levels in the UK with criminals increasingly using private messaging platforms like Snapchat and WhatsApp to manipulate and groom children. The NSPCC are urging parents to talk openly with their children about online safety and understand the risks associated with these apps. The NSPCC has also appealed to tech companies to implement new tools to prevent these crimes and better protect young people.

To read more about this and get advice on online safety from the NSPCC, visit https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2025/data-shows-how-criminals-are-using-private-messaging-platforms-to-manipulate-and-groom-children/?utm_campaign=20251117_KIS_CASPAR_November17&utm_content=Data%20shows%20how%20criminals%20are%20using%20private%20messaging%20platforms%20to%20manipulate%20and%20groom%20children&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Adestra



Christmas

BASIC FOOD BANK APPEAL

We are asking Deer Park students to donate items to the Basics Food Bank Appeal. This is a House competition, so try and bring as much items in as possible to maximise your tutor's points!

Collection Dates - Please bring your items to Room 209 (CAD) on the following days during am registration

Year 7 - Tuesday 2nd December

Year 8 - Wednesday 3rd December

Year 9, 10 & 11 - Thursday 4th December

WE ARE LOOKING FOR NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS SUCH AS:

TOILETRIES (SHOWER GEL, DEODORANT ETC)

TINNED VEGETABLES

TEABAGS/COFFEE/SQUASH

TINNED SOUP

CEREAL

THE ITEMS YOU COLLECT MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO FAMILIES IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO EAT THIS CHRISTMAS.



This is the most up to date list from Mission Southampton about the items they urgently need. Please ensure that all items are non-perishables.

URGENTLY NEEDED

TINNED COLD MEAT (HAM, SPAM, ETC.)
TINNED HOT MEAT (CURRY, PIES, STEW, ETC.)
COFFEE (SMALL JARS)
CEREAL (ESPECIALLY WEETABIX)
COOK-IN SAUCES (JARS & PACKETS)
JAMS & SPREADS
TEA
RICE
HOT CHOCOLATE
HOUSEHOLD LARDER
NAPPIES SIZE 4
NAPPIES SIZE 5
NAPPIES SIZE 6+
NOODLES (PACKETS)
PET FOOD (DOGS)
SUGAR (SMALL BAGS)
TINNED FISH
TINNED MACARONI CHEESE
TINNED MIXED VEG
TINNED POTATOES
TINNED SWEETCORN
TREATS (CHOCOLATE, CRISPS, ETC.)
TOILETRIES (SOAP & SHOWER GEL)
TOILETRIES (MALE & FEMALE DEODORANT)
TOILETRIES (SANITARY TOWELS)
TOILETRIES (SHAMPOO)
TOILETRIES (TOILET ROLLS)
TOILETRIES (TOOTHBRUSHES)
TOILETRIES (TOOTHPASTE)
UHT MILK
CARRIER BAGS

LOW ON STOCK

BABY FOOD
CUSTARD
GLUTEN FREE
NAPPIES SIZE 3
PASTA
SOUP (PACKETS, CUPS)
SOUP (TINS, PARTICULARLY CHUNKY)
SQUASH & DRINKS
TINNED CARROTS
TINNED FRUIT
TINNED KIDNEY BEANS & PULSES
TINNED RICE PUDDING
TINNED PEAS
TINNED TOMATOES
VEGETARIAN, VEGAN

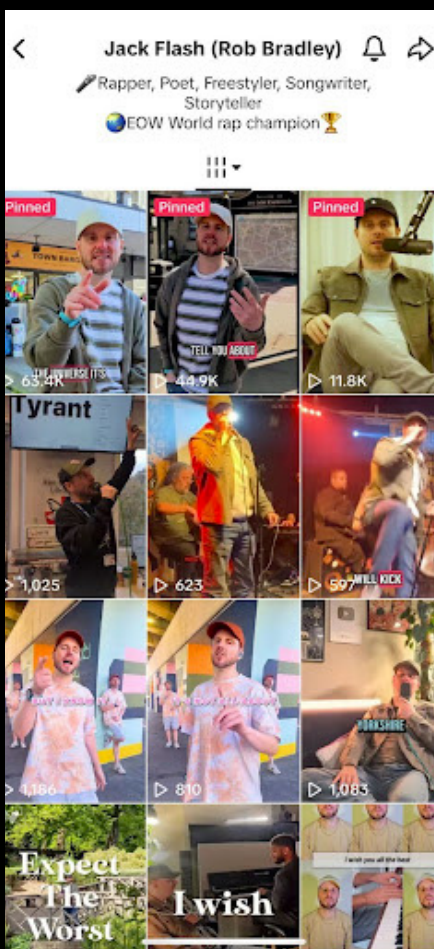
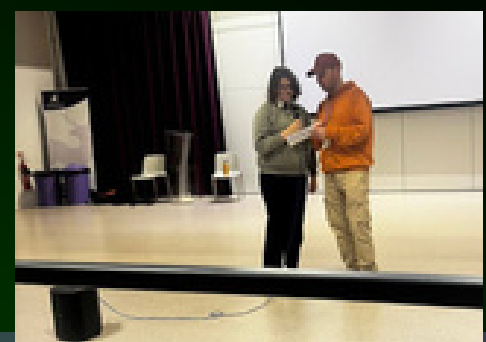




The Rap School

Rob Bradley

This half-term, our Year 9 students had the incredible opportunity to work with championship rapper and spoken word artist, Rob Bradley, for a truly memorable creative literacy day.



The event kicked off with a fun, creative and motivating presentation delivered by Rob to the entire Year 9 cohort. He shared insights into his career in music, the power of language, rhythm, and storytelling, setting a high-energy tone for the rest of the day.

Following the assembly, Rob led three distinct creative literacy workshops. The sessions were vibrant and fast-paced, incorporating freestyle techniques, collaborative writing exercises, and engaging games designed to unlock the students' confidence and creativity. Students were challenged to find their voice and use language in dynamic new ways.

The day culminated in fantastic performances, as our students had the chance to perform the original raps they had created. The energy in the room was palpable, and students overwhelmingly reported having a fantastic and enriching day. This experience successfully blended artistic expression with core literacy skills, proving that writing can be both powerful and incredibly fun.

CHESS TOURNAMENT

Our talented chess players from year 7 and 8 put their skills to the ultimate test in the English Chess Junior Under 13 Tournament last week, representing Deer Park School with distinction!

The highlight of the competition was the intensely strategic and nerve-wracking match against King Edward VI School. The games were a true masterclass in strategy, with our students demonstrating exceptional concentration and tactical foresight.

The team's dedication and hard work shone through. Win, lose, or draw, every student showed outstanding sportsmanship and represented our school brilliantly.

The future of chess at Deer Park is looking very bright!

Well done to all competitors!



FRANTIC ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP



We are thrilled to report on the fantastic three-part physical theatre workshop held on Tuesday, November 18th, delivered by the world-renowned company, Frantic Assembly.

Our Year 9, 10, and 11 Drama students had the incredible opportunity to work directly with professional practitioners, exploring the innovative and dynamic rehearsal techniques that define Frantic Assembly's distinctive style.

Years 10 and 11: Fostering Exam Success

For our GCSE students, the workshops were an invaluable resource.

- The Year 11 students kicked off the day, using the intense two-hour session to hone their skills in lift work, ensemble building, and creating dynamic narrative sequences. This practical, high-energy experience was directly aimed at enhancing their preparation for the upcoming Devised Component of their GCSE examination.
- Year 10 followed, focusing on the fundamental principles of Frantic Assembly's collaborative approach. Students explored how movement can be used to communicate complex emotions and relationships, building a strong foundation for their future GCSE practical work.

Year 9: An Inspiring Introduction

Our Year 9 students showed exceptional commitment, dedicating their final lesson and an hour after school to complete their two-hour session. They were introduced to the power of physical storytelling, successfully mastering basic lifts and learning to trust their partners to create powerful, non-verbal theatre. Their enthusiasm and willingness to embrace challenging physical work were outstanding.

All students approached the workshops with incredible energy and professionalism, displaying the resilience and teamwork essential to becoming successful theatre makers.




ETHICAL HACKING TALK

Our year 10 Computing and IT students were lucky enough to hear a talk from Brandyn Murtagh, a professional pentester (ethical hacker) and bug bounty hunter, who shared his journey and expertise in the field of cyber security.

With over 11 years in the industry and more than 10 cybersecurity certifications gained since he started at age 16, Brandyn offered valuable insights into how to build a career in this dynamic field.

Brandyn discussed Bug Bounty, where companies openly invite external hackers to test their infrastructure, web apps, mobile apps and games. Bug Bounty is a large, diverse community of hackers globally and is a great way to learn and test skills.

Brandyn gave some excellent tips into getting into this career - take a look at the pathways you could follow and where to learn below!



ABOUT ME
I'm Brandyn

I'm a professional pentester (ethical hacker) and bug bounty hunter - more on this shortly

Over 11 years in Cyber Security

I've gained over 10 cybersecurity certifications, starting at age 16

Some hacking exams lasted 24-48 hours (rough)

I started off with knowledge on PC gaming and how to build a computer, and built up from there

I've also started my own company and been on TV!

WHERE TO LEARN

- TryHackMe
- HackTheBox
- PortSwigger Labs
- Youtube CTFs
- Comp Sci clubs

Pathways for Year 10 (UK)

- Computing/IT, Maths; English for clear reports
- Post-16: A-levels (CS/Maths), T Levels (Digital) or apprenticeships
- Clubs & competitions: CyberFirst, CyberCenturion, NCSC challenges
 - Certifications later: Security+, CREST, OSCP (advanced)
- Portfolios: safe lab write-ups, CTF reflections, GitHub (no sensitive data)

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online videos are often associated with apps such as YouTube, but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a potentially addictive, never-ending stream of short clips tailored to users' interests based on their viewing habits. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while most content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where young people are "most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

TikTok's Following Feed shows videos from known creators, while the default For You Feed serves endless clips based on viewing history. Most are harmless, but unsuitable content can still appear, and watching for long enough signals interest to the algorithm. Although TikTok bans illegal or inappropriate uploads, the volume of posts means some slip through, increasing the chance that children encounter age-inappropriate material before it is detected or removed.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Ofcom reports that most online harms for girls involve body image, while boys more often see dangerous stunts. Both types appear frequently on TikTok and spread quickly through its engagement-driven algorithm. Harmful challenges have included the "blackout" trend, where users held their breath until passing out. Families filed lawsuits after children died linked to the trend, showing how extreme or risky content can rapidly reach young people and negatively influence them.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but children can still spend money. TikTok coins, costing £9.99 to £224.99, let users buy gifts for creators. TikTok Shop adds risk by allowing purchases from influencers or companies, sometimes leading to poor-quality items driven by persuasive marketing. A Canadian investigation found TikTok collected personal data from many children for targeting and advertising despite age limits, meaning young users may lose control over their personal information.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Between 1.6 and 1.9 billion people use TikTok, meaning there's a high risk of unwanted attention from strangers. Accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public view by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and allows anyone to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

TikTok's short videos may appear lighthearted, but they can expose young people to harmful ideas. Misinformation is common, and Ofcom reports that nearly one third of 12-15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source, increasing the chance of seeing racist, misogynistic, extremist or conspiracy material. Even brief clips can influence impressionable users and shape their worldview, making discussions about critical thinking, propaganda and online influence especially important for parents and educators.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

TikTok's fast-paced stream of eye-catching videos can be potentially addictive for young users. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the platform, double the time recorded in 2020. Excessive use can disrupt sleep, increase irritability, and distract from healthier activities. Constantly skipping between short clips may also affect attention span, making it harder to focus on longer tasks such as homework or reading.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's in order to manage settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children cannot alter these settings without parental approval.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure they don't share any identifying information or respond to dangerous trends, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok, it's important to talk about misinformation and propaganda.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

Parents can restrict in-app purchases on iPhone and Android devices to prevent accidental or impulsive TikTok spending. Young people can easily spend large amounts on TikTok coins or low-quality products promoted through TikTok Shop. If a disappointing purchase occurs, turn it into a discussion about influencer marketing and how online promotions can be misleading.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parents are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Our Expert

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION



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