

BETHS VIP

Excellence - Community - Respect

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Dear Parents, Carers,

The MCC (Multicultural Committee) organised a non-uniform day today, Friday, May 17th with proceeds going towards the MCC Showcase event to the charity, Save the Children.

This week our Year 10s had a Spelling Bee House Competition, spelling words such as exuberant, expiation, aggravate, expatiate and ubiquitous!

We had our Year 8 and 9 Drama scholars taking part in a Frantic Assembly Workshop last week. The workshops are specifically designed for Year 8 and 9 students to give them an insight into creating their own work and using different theatre forms. These workshops will introduce participants to the basics of our building block techniques, using physicality to open up their ideas of what theatre can be. The focus is on fun, team building and learning new skills.

The workshop was paid for via the money Ms Grady gained from winning the Leading Teacher Jack Petchy Award in 2023.

Our Sixth Form building is coming along. More updates can be found in this VIP and also on our school Twitter site (or should I say X now!)



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- 23rd May – Year 9 & 10 Latin Residential trip to Greece depart.
- 24th May – Last day of term
- 3rd June – School returns
- 6th June – Year 8 HPV1 vaccination catch up session
- 13th June – Sports Day at Erith Leisure Centre
- 17th June – Year 10 Trial Exams commence until 28th June
- 20th June – Year 12 Parents Evening in Person
- 26th June – Sports Presentation Evening for selected scholars
- 26th-28th June – New Year 12 Inductions Day
- 27th June – Final GCSE & A Level public examination day
- 28th June – Year 7 reports sent home to parents. Deadline for UCAS reports.

Have a wonderful weekend,
Richard Blyghton



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FRANTIC WORKSHOP

On Wednesday 8th May, 44 students from Year 8 and 9 participated in a Frantic Assembly workshop focusing on movement & lifts. The workshop leader encouraged the students to try new and exciting moves, including making each other fly and lifting each other around the room to create a piece of work. Students worked hard in each two-hour workshop and were thankful for the opportunity to work with a professional from the industry.

Here is some feedback from the students:

"I enjoyed working with other people from Year 8 that I don't normally work with. It was interesting to see different aspects which will help me with my drama in the future." – Ollie



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FRANTIC WORKSHOP

The thing that stood out for me was the way the teacher had the excitement in his voice and he brought that into the activities we did. The workshop was exciting as it bonded me with others and I had a lot of fun. In my opinion, it was compelling all the way through. I would love to do this again, it was tiring though. “ -Jay

“It was an amazing experience that involved many lessons I will use for life. I enhanced my view on Drama as a whole and showed me a new perspective.” - Barack

“I think it helped me a lot in terms of my understanding of how skilled actors and performers are, as well as how much training and work they have to put in.” - Sam



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SIXTH FORM BUILDING

New Sixth Form building: The compound remains extremely busy with contractors for many different services on-site. Works for the next period include the continuation of masonry and roofing works, with windows and screed being planned.

Here are some updates with pictures!

Commencement of Bauder roof works



Internal ground floor, showing the steel frame, cement boards and the start of insulation.



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SIXTH FORM BUILDING



A picture of the ground floor showing the fireproofing of steelwork and storage of insulation boards.

Image is of the rear of building, facing the main school field, showing the installation of brick cladding.



Brick cladding installation over the cement boards.



YEAR 10 MACBETH THEATRE

Our Year 10 students were granted the remarkable privilege of experiencing "Macbeth" live on stage! It was a wonderful opportunity to ignite their imaginations, enrich their comprehension of the text, and engage with the characters.



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YEAR 10 SPELLING BEE

Our Year 10 students had the wonderful opportunity to partake in a spelling bee run by our English department. As the competition day arrived, nerves mingled with determination as contestants stepped into the spotlight, tackling each word with precision. A random word generator was used to determine which words were used, many of them tremendously difficult. However, this was no challenge for our scholars, as they showcased not only their linguistic skills but also their resilience and passion for learning.



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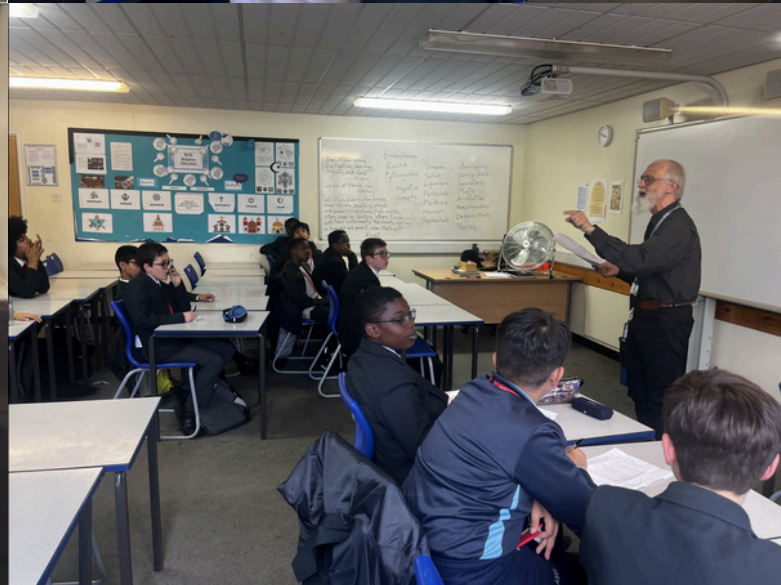
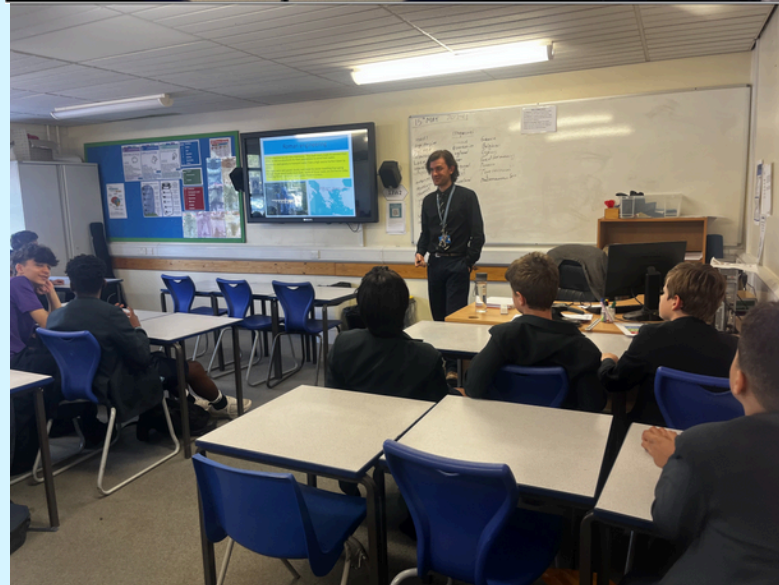
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YEAR 7 LATIN FORUM

This week concluded our Latin Forum with a heated and explosive debate on who was better: the Romans or the Greeks? The fierce Romans were headed by Mr. Papakostas and presented convincing arguments about their efficiency on the battlefield, prowess in empire building, and architecture. The Greeks, led by Mr. Simpson, passionately debated their excellence in philosophy, science, mathematics, and democracy. Ultimately, the Greeks won out. A special shout-out to Marcel, who won 'Best Debater' for his eloquent and enthusiastic speeches. Thank you to all who attended, and we hope you enjoyed it!



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KS3 CHINESE CLUB

During KS3 Chinese Club this week, the students got together to rediscover the Chinese Loong. During the session, they explored their cultural significance and the Chinese people's love and reverence for them. Using simple materials, they created their own interpretation of the Chinese Loong.



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SPORTS FIXTURES AND RESULTS

Results for week commencing 13th May

CRICKET					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Results
13.05.24	North Kent Cup	U14A	V Chis and Sid	Away	Lost
15.05.24	County Cup	U13A	V Dartford Grammar School for Boys	Away	Lost

Fixtures for week commencing 20th May

CRICKET					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Start time
20.05.24	North Kent Cup	U15A	V Chis and Sid	Away	2pm
20.05.24	North Kent Cup	U13A	V Hurstmere	Away	3pm

*Please note that some matches may be cancelled/postponed and therefore we ask you to keep an eye on the SOCS website.
Beths Grammar School | Sports Home (bethssport.co.uk).

If you have any questions, please email us at
fixtures@beths.bexley.sch.uk

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD MANAGE EXAM STRESS BY YOUNG MINDS UK

Young Minds UK have put together a helpful guide about how parents/guardians can support their young person during exam stress. To read the full article, please click here [Young Minds UK](#)

Topics mentioned: [exam time](#)

About: Exams are often a source of stress for young people. And after two years of academic disruption due to the pandemic, many will be experiencing them for the first time this summer. This blog explains how parents can help their children cope with exam pressure and achieve their potential, while also protecting their mental health.

Listen to their concerns

It's important to understand that your child may well be feeling worried at this time, and that this is normal. Encourage them to talk about their concerns, and reassure them that their feelings are valid and that you are there to support them.

Help with exam preparation practicalities

Helping your child to plan a realistic revision timetable, which breaks the days and subjects down into manageable chunks, will reduce their anxiety by increasing their sense of control and confidence. It will also help ensure everything is covered.

Discuss different revision techniques and help your child to identify which suit them best. It could be making flashcards or mind maps, watching online revision videos or talking questions through. If there are topics your child finds particularly difficult, make sure their revision plan targets these. And offer support by listening to a recap or testing them on what they have learned, if they find this is helpful.

Do ensure your child has a distraction-free place to study too. This could be a school or public library if there isn't a suitable space at home.

“ Helping your child to plan a realistic revision timetable, which breaks the days and subjects down into manageable chunks, will reduce their anxiety by increasing their sense of control and confidence. ”



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HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD MANAGE EXAM STRESS BY YOUNG MINDS UK

Encourage healthy routines

Sleeping well, eating regular healthy meals and relaxing are important for everyone's wellbeing. Encourage your child to stick to healthy routines and to make some time for activities they enjoy – such as exercise, doing something creative, getting fresh air, seeing friends playing in person or online – as these help reduce stress.

Revision is most effective when combined with regular breaks, so make sure that your child does step away from their books. You could suggest a cup of tea and a snack, a quick walk or a TV programme they enjoy.

Relaxation techniques, such as focussing on breathing slowly or shoulder rolling, can reduce stress or help your child sleep if they are finding it difficult to unwind.

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Promote a sense of perspective – and don't add to the pressure

Young people can feel overwhelmed by pressure to get high grades in exams. It comes at them from school, peers, social media influences and more. So, while it's normal to want your child to do well, it's really important that you avoid heaping on more pressure, and that you help instil a sense of perspective. Avoid nagging and over-policing their revision.

Encourage your child to focus on realistic goals of their own, rather than to compare themselves critically to their peers or to worry about expectations other people have of them. This applies both to the amount of revision they are doing and to the results they feel they should get. If they are struggling, focussing primarily on the core subjects (maths, English, science) as well as one or two others they enjoy, may reduce stress and allow them to progress to their intended next steps.

Reassure your child that exam results do not define them; that they are far from the only measure of success; and that you are proud of them whatever happens on results day.

Look out for signs that your child is struggling

While some degree of worry or nerves around exams is to be expected, do be aware of signs that anxiety levels may be building. These can include sleep or appetite problems; difficulties with concentration; or physical symptoms such as nausea, sweating or palpitations.

If your child's anxiety is spiralling, encourage them to talk to you, or perhaps to a teacher, about how they are feeling. If you are worried that your child may be experiencing depression or longer-lasting anxiety, discuss this with the GP.



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KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE ONLINE

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

Emotionally Based School Avoidance is a term used to refer to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. It's often rooted in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. The rate of children who miss school more than 10% of the time in England has more than doubled since before the pandemic: rising from 10.9% in 2018-19, to 22.3% in 2022-23.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include complaining of a tummy ache, headache, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity which is making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGING OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

While there may be times you feel frustrated or angry, try to stay calm; acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss a range of coping strategies together to help them face the discomfort and overwhelming feelings. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk and practice the strategies in less overwhelming situations first.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and limited time on screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

REDUCE STIMULATING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

If a child is avoiding school, reduce their access to more stimulating activities (such as watching television, playing games and spending time with friends) during school hours, where possible. This reduces the potential for the child having rewarding experiences at home, which could be interpreted as a positive aspect of avoiding school.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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BETHS GRAMMAR SCHOOL,
HARTFORD ROAD
BEXLEY
KENT
DA5 1NE

Email Address: admin@beths.bexley.sch.uk

**Email Address (to be used for items/concerns of a more
'sensitive' nature): HeadsPA@beths.bexley.sch.uk**

Telephone Number: 01322 556538



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