

BETHS VIP

Excellence - Community - Respect

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Dear Parents, Carers,

We have reached the end of term and one that made us reflect on the achievements that happen and we don't always get to shout about it, because life is busy with so much happening. So here is a recap of our term and its successes. Starting with the sports, Basketball this term has had some great highlights. The Year 8 House competition saw Brampton as champions.

Year 7s came runners up in the U12s Kent Basketball competition and a huge congratulations to our Year 10 team who won the Kent Cup Basketball competition for the fourth year running!!

Three fantastic performances this term; our Speech, Music and Drama event and two Spring music concerts. The acting and musical talents of our scholars definitely stood out in these performances and I hope you got to witness this for yourselves. Our scholars were and rightfully so, proud of themselves.

"Keeping up with the Beths musical tradition, the first spring concert was, as always, a great success! From the audience to the performers, everything ran smoothly with amazing performances of all kinds of genres. A huge thank you to the staff for tirelessly putting the effort to create this wonderful experience and of course the performers who added the magic to this concert." - Dev P, Year 11



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“The second spring concert was a wonderful evening of music from all genres, from classical to rock. The audience were amazing, and it was incredibly organised by staff and students. A truly amazing night.” - Michael S, Year 11

Our Year 12 Young Enterprise team took their product, a sustainable and creative puzzle game designed using environmentally friendly materials, to the East London Trade Fair, held in Greenwich Market. The team had a great experience of seeing their product go from design mode to finished product to being sold to the public and competing against other local and London borough schools. And what a way to end their day and experience, by winning the Best Trade Stand! Congratulations to the team, let's take those entrepreneurial skills to the next level and compete for the Company of Year award!

On Wednesday, our musicians participated in the Bexley Festival of Music held at Fairfield Halls in Croydon. With hundreds of children and young people from Bexley schools performing in choirs, bands, and orchestras. Bexley Music's own ensembles included the Bexley Youth Orchestra, Bexley Youth Band, Little Big Band, Concert Orchestra, Intermediate Band, Beginner Orchestra and Beginner Wind Band, as well as their Junior and Senior Choirs, performing a wide variety of music including music from films, musicals, classical, pop and jazz.

“Playing at Fairfield was a very fun experience for me. Getting to hear the primary and secondary choirs sing pieces that they'd practiced long on was very pleasant. Getting to play my pieces with the ensembles in front of hundreds of others was also very fun!” -Adrian B, Year 13



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Congratulations to our semi-finalists from the Bexley Young Musician of the Year! You were amazing on the night and the whole Beths Community are very proud of you. A big Thank You to Ms Marriott and team for supporting and organising our participation in this event.

L-R: Jamie W, Maria K, Adrian B and Erim R.



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“On Thursday, the Bexley Grammar School’s annual University challenge competition took place. At Townley Grammar School. This competition is hosted similarly to the TV quiz show – University Challenge, where teams of 4 Year 13 students from each of the Grammar schools battle out to find the most intellectual team. I am proud to say our team came second with 210 points, with Chislehurst & Sidcup Grammar the winners with 225 points. Congratulations to Ewan T (captain), Alex W, Abiodun O and Riley T for a tough battle and a thank you to Ms West for her support to the team in getting them to this point.

In a recent news article, seven Bexley schools have an overwhelming majority of happy pupils, according to data from Ofsted! Three of the four grammar schools had 1-2% difference, with Bexley Grammar having a 99% rating, Beths came in second with 97%, and Chislehurst & Sidcup coming in third with 96%. Full details can be found here: [7 Bexley schools that are happiest according to Ofsted | News Shopper](#)

This end of term we see two overseas trips head off; one to the Bay of Naples and one to ski in Canada!! You can follow their journeys on our school social media sites: Facebook [Instagram](#) and [X](#) (twitter!)

Finally, I end my message with my heartfelt thanks to our parents, for their kind words following the sudden death of a Year 12 scholar, to my staff for supporting each other and our scholars during this difficult time, and to our scholars, for supporting each other and for checking in on their teachers. This week we have supported the Year 12 students by giving them the opportunity to see our school councillor, and also to speak with Rev. Trevor Wyatt, who stayed on in school after the Easter assemblies had taken place. Scholars have also been informed of links to sites/services offering help in their bulletin/on Teams and a letter had been sent to parents to explain how students can find help when



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outside of school. Excellent pastoral care from Form Tutors, Assistant Heads of Year and Heads of Years has also been offered and utilised by scholars, and is very much appreciated.

Have a wonderful Easter break. We look forward to seeing our scholars on Tuesday 22nd April.



Tuesday 22nd April - Return to school for summer term

Wednesday 23rd April - Year 13 WizeUp talk during PSHCE

Thursday 24th April - 6pm Year 9 Options Evening (in person)

Monday 28th April - Years 10 and 12 Trial Examinations commence for two weeks

Thursday 1st May - Year 9 Parents Evening (virtual) and Year 8 HPV1 vaccinations

Friday 2nd May - Deadline for Year 9 Option Choices

Wednesday 7th & 14th May - Year 12 WizeUp talk during PSHCE

Thursday 8th May - GCSE & A Level Public Examinations begin

Monday 12th May - Year 12 Work Experience week

Tuesday 20th May 6pm Year 12 UCAS Launch evening

Thursday 22nd May - 6pm Year 8 Camp Meeting for Parents

Friday 23rd May - Last day of term



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MR MANCHESTER RUNS THE LONDON MARATHON

On the 27th April Mr Manchester will be running the London Marathon for Brain Research UK.

In April 2010, Mr Manchester was diagnosed with a benign brain tumour—an acoustic neuroma—fondly known as "Terry." He has had 2 operations over the last 15 years, unfortunately they cannot remove all of Terry.

Running the London Marathon in 2025 has been a long-held ambition of Mr Manchester, having completed it 18 years ago, so he knows what's ahead—long, dark, wet nights of training and running up to 20 miles!

Since being lucky enough to get a place through the ballot, he wanted to use the opportunity to raise money for a charity close to his heart. Any donations would go a long way in easing the pain and suffering.

Sponsor a Mile! If you would like to sponsor a specific mile: Donate £26 and Mr Manchester will give you a live mention at that specific mile on Facebook during the run (energy levels permitting!). Put which mile in the comments box when donated.

Every donation counts—thank you for your support and supporting a fantastic cause!

[CLICK HERE](#) or scan the following QR code to donate



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YOUNG ENTERPRISE: SUCCESS AT THE EAST LONDON TRADE FAIR 2025

On March 19th, 2025, 13 Year 12 students from Beths participated in the Young Enterprise East London Trade Fair, held at the historic Greenwich Market. The event provided a fantastic opportunity for students to showcase their entrepreneurial skills alongside 15 other student companies including Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar and Bexley Grammar.

Our team presented their innovative product, Eco Maze, a sustainable and creative puzzle game designed with environmentally friendly materials. Their amazing marketing and eye-catching stall, along with their impressive sales pitch and customer service drew considerable attention from both visitors and judges alike.



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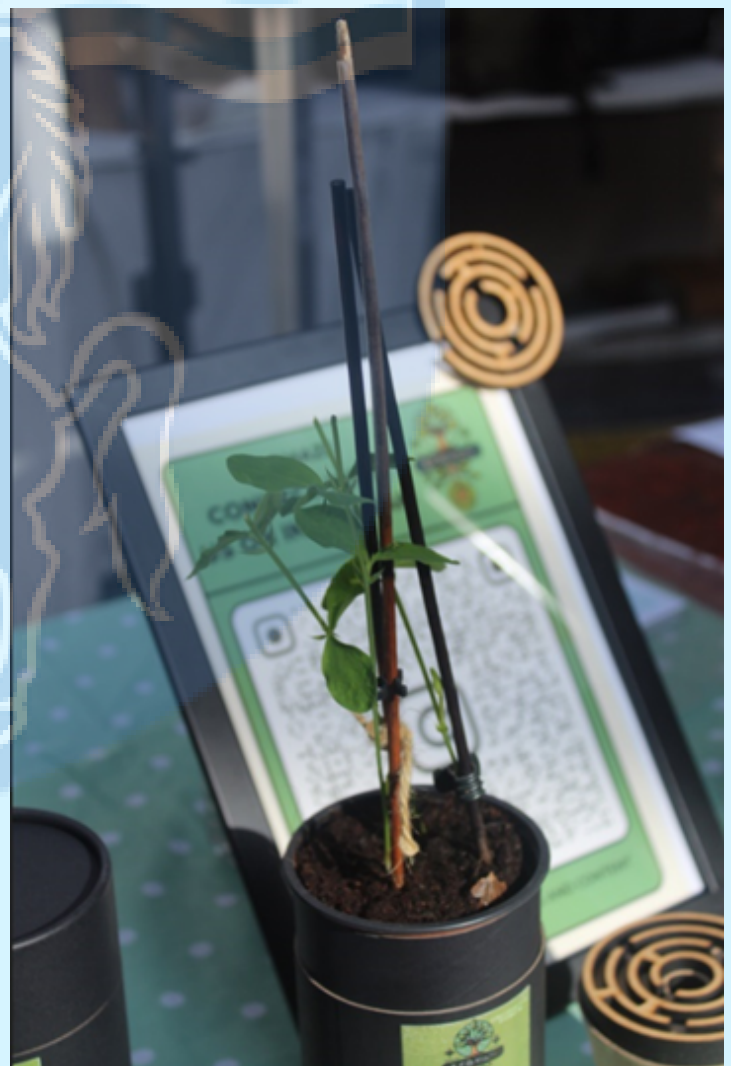
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YOUNG ENTERPRISE: SUCCESS AT THE EAST LONDON TRADE FAIR 2025

The highlight of the day came when our students were awarded Best Trade Stand, recognising their outstanding presentation, creativity, and professionalism. This achievement is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and entrepreneurial spirit.

I was extremely proud of every student, and they represented the school impeccably.

Congratulations to the entire team for their remarkable success at the Trade Fair, and we look forward to the students taking their skills to the Company of the Year Awards in April, hopefully walking away with Best Company Award!



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BASKETBALL FINALS

Huge congratulations to our Year 7s for finishing as runners-up in the U12 Kent Basketball Competition! They put in a fantastic effort but fell short against a strong Rainham Mark side in the final. An amazing achievement—we can't wait to see this team grow and succeed in the years ahead!



Our Year 10 basketball team has retained the Kent Cup for the fourth year in a row! In a thrilling 66-64 victory, Isaiah secured the win with a last-second basket. This incredible achievement highlights the dedication, teamwork, and perseverance of our players, who have held onto the trophy every year since Year 7. A huge congratulations to the entire squad for their outstanding effort and continued success



Final standings for all teams:

Finals: Year 7, Year 10

Semi - finals: Year 8, Year 9, Year 11, Year 13

Quarter - finals: - Year 12.

Here are some sport highlights from throughout the term:

<https://studio.youtube.com/video/Zpt-ACDQurY/edit>



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BEXLEY MUSIC CONCERT

Our talented students are gearing up for Percussion Supersonic alongside Woodside Academy & Marlborough School! An incredible opportunity to shine on a top stage at Fairfield Hall and support fellow schools with Bexley Music!



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BEST OF THE BETHS NEWSLETTER

Hot off the press! Best of the Beths March 2025 issue is now available [here](#). This month's edition features a Favourite Worst Nightmare album review by Hadi 10A, coverage of Super Bowl LIX by Oluwanifemi 11A, Year 9 House Football Finals 2024/25 by Faeq 9B, and an Oscars feature on Mikey Madison and Timothée Chalamet by Ronnie 12H3 – and much more!



THE OSCARS: POLITICALLY CORRECT OR POLITICALLY PERFORMATIVE?

EVIE 12A2

This year's Oscars were full of wins and subjective losses, but perhaps the most shocking occurrence (or lack thereof) is the politics. Despite America's highly controversial recent election, the awards seemed to avoid contributing to the country's political discussions.

It is highly notable that 'Trump' and 'politics' were largely absent from the ceremony with there being relatively few references to politics. The most direct commentary alluding to Trump and the turbulence in the capital was subtly referenced to by the host, Conan O'Brien. As he referenced the now Oscar-winning film 'Anora', he said "You know 'Anora' is having a good night... I guess Americans are excited to see somebody finally stand up to a powerful Russian." This comment was the closest reference to Trump's presidency and more specifically his public blow-up in the Oval Office with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine. The discourse involved Trump chastising Zelenskyy for his harsh words against President Putin of Russia.

Aside from alluding to the country's 'divisive politics', O'Brien steered clear of discussion on any politically related issues that could be perceived as controversial. Mr O'Brien's monologue focus remained on Hollywood. However, whether that topic can be deemed as politically neutral is subjective.

Within recent years, the Academy Awards have been criticised for making a 'political choice' among the winners and nominees. In some cases, it seems to be an actor being rewarded for their overall performances throughout their career rather than their singular performance in their nominated role. Whereas in other cases, the Academy has been scrutinised for choosing a film to highlight underrepresented groups to appear diverse. This can be seen as problematic as these oddly timed awards can feel performative rather than true allyship.

For instance, the 2016 Oscars was heavily criticised for lacking any diversity among the majority of categories and even the winners themselves. Since then, we have seen an uptick in diversity in the Academy's nominations; starting the following year when there was a noticeable increase in diversity amongst the nominees. While this is a refreshing and long-overdue change, many wonder whether this is a genuine attempt to diversify Hollywood culture or an attempt to dodge further criticism.



2025 FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: SEASON PREVIEW

FAEQ 9B

***Odds-On Favourites for the 2025 F1 World Drivers' Championship:**

- 1) Lando Norris (#4 McLaren) - 36.36%
- 2) Max Verstappen (#1 Red Bull)* - 25.00%
- 3) Charles Leclerc (#16 Ferrari) - 18.18%
- 4) Lewis Hamilton (#44 Ferrari) - 15.38%
- 5) Oscar Piastri (#81 McLaren) - 11.11%
- 6) George Russell (#63 Mercedes) - 7.69%

bet365

(*SMALL NOTE: Please beware that all probabilities above are implied, meaning they are not literal but rather serve as a rough indicator. The odds are from Bet365, but have been censored down into probability figures to put them across to you as maturely and sensibly as possible. Odds shown are as of March 2nd 2025 at 17:00 GMT.)

That is just a glimpse as to how this 2025 F1 World Championship could potentially play out! Hopefully, you enjoyed the article (as well as maybe finding out more about the sport), and if you wish to comment to me about this, please private message me via Teams and/or Outlook. Don't worry, for I would really like to hear from you and shall respond as quickly as possible. If there are any questions about the Best of the Beths newsletter platform, please ask, in some form, Miss Stevens.

YEAR 9 HOUSE FOOTBALL FINALS 2024/25

FAEQ 9B

Hello again, and welcome back to the Best of the Beths Newsletter. I am Faeq Ojelade of 9B, and for the 2025 March edition, you may see that I have covered not only a 2025 season preview for F1 (produced for an intended February edition), but also the 2024/25 Year 9 House Football finals. The article choice here is interesting, especially given that I made a return to the Best of the Beths Newsletter platform in March of 2024 - for that edition, I covered the House Football finals for my year group (albeit whilst in Year 8). Now that another year has come and gone, here is another personal take on the finals that took place a few weeks ago...

*Cray vs Hurst: the fight for 5th

Unfortunately, Cray and Hurst each ended up last on both sides of their year group this year as opposed to 2nd in 2024. This also ended up being a rematch of their encounter in the match for bronze last year, which Hurst won 2-0. Now, this match was the one I saw the least of, and that really owed to the fact that the matches for bronze (which involved my form) and the final were happening over at the field (where a vast majority of the spectators were). But, I managed to catch a bit of the action with this match, albeit maybe not the most exciting parts of it.

From what I myself saw, it seemed like Cray were the more dominant force in that match, as they had quite a few chances. They nearly converted some of those, but before I arrived from the ongoing third-place match, they managed to convert one. Victor of Cray scored the first, only and winning goal of the match to give Cray 5th place. And do you know what makes that more impressive? The fact that he was playing with a **broken arm**. In my opinion at least, it takes bravery to play in that condition, and for that achievement I will happily commend him. With that then, Cray had their revenge for last year, albeit whilst ending their campaign in 5th place, lower than ever before.

Year 9 House Football Finals 2024/25: 5th-Place Final

Cray (9C)	Hurst (9H)
*Victor (1-0)	---



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MCC NEWSLETTER

The latest issue of Perspectives, brought to you by the Beths student-led Multicultural Society, is now available [here](#)! This edition celebrates diversity, reflection, and community, with features on the significance of Ramadan and Lent, a spotlight on Asian culture, celebrations of Ghanaian Independence Day, and much more.



Student Reflections on Ramadan

A brief overview on Ramadan

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic year, and it's arguably the most holy month of the year for Muslims. In Ramadan, Muslims fast from pre-dawn to sunset, a period of 11-16 hours (depending on the time of year), for 29-30 days. This fasting entails sacrificing food and drink, and if married, abstaining from sexual activities during sunset hours. The ultimate goal of fasting is attainment of God-consciousness, known as taqwa in Arabic, meaning a state of constant awareness of God. From this awareness, a person's discipline and self-restraint should grow, as well as their incentive to do good deeds and avoid evil. In terms of who fasts, all Muslims who have reached puberty are obligated to fast. However, certain people for whom fasting would be considered a hardship are exempt from fasting. This includes pregnant or nursing women, women on their periods and the elderly. The exemptions make up for their lack of fasting by feeding a poor person for every day of fast which they miss. During Ramadan, those fasting usually get up before dawn to eat Suhur, a modest breakfast-like meal, and either begin the day or go back to sleep. At sunset, they break their fast with a variety of light foods such as dates, soup, or fruit. This is known as Iftar.

At the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate Eid ul-Fitr, meaning 'Festival of the Breaking of the Fast'. Children traditionally receive a variety of gifts from parents, relatives, and friends. A special prayer and sermon are held on the morning of Eid, followed by a community celebration. In this article, I have compiled a few student reflections on Ramadan. On behalf of the whole MCC, Ramadan Mubarak to the Muslim community.

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Student Reflections on Lent

Martin Litchev

Head of Perspectives

A brief overview on Lent

Lent is a significant period in Christianity, it lasts for 6 weeks and prepares Christians for the celebration of Easter. This period is marked by solemnity and soberness as it marks the beginning of preparations for the commemoration of Christ's death and resurrection. Lent calls for Christians to ready their hearts and minds to remember the life of Jesus. The Lent period begins with Ash Wednesday, named after the customary practice of blessing ashes being used to make a cross on individuals' foreheads, symbolising the beginning of their Lenten fast. The 40 days that Christians fast for during Lent are symbolic for the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, where he fasted and avoided temptation from the devil. The way this fast is carried out varies amongst Christian denominations. Those belonging to traditional or Orthodox denominations follow a strict fast, abstaining from meat, fish, eggs, and fats from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Others instead opt to give up a single indulgence for Lent, such as alcohol or chocolate. Many also use Lent as an opportunity to intensify their bible study. The final week of Lent is known as 'Holy Week', the final week before Easter. This begins with Palm Sunday, when Christians remember Jesus' triumphant arrival into Jerusalem, church services will often include processions of palm leaves symbolic of those laid at Jesus's feet as he rode into the city. Following this is Holy Monday, when Jesus cleansed a temple which was being ran like a market. Then Holy Tuesday sees Jesus return to Jerusalem from Bethany, using a fig tree as an example to teach his disciples. Spy Wednesday commemorates Judas's betrayal of Jesus. Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples, in which he predicts his betrayal by Peter. Finally, Good Friday is when Christians around the world remember Christ's crucifixion and burial.

In this article, I have compiled a few student reflections on Lent. On behalf of the whole MCC, Happy Lent to all Christians.

Diving Deep into Asian Culture

Kelly To

Operations

What is Asian culture?

Out of the many 48 Asian countries that make up half the total world population, there are so many different customs and traditions, from styles of clothing and food to the festivals celebrated. I believe that every country is truly unique and even within each country, there are distinct variations in culture depending on the region. For instance, I think Vietnam has a good representation of this. After watching the popular Vietnamese artist, Hoa Minzy's music video titled, Bắc Bling (Bắc Ninh), featuring Xuân Hinh and Tuấn Cry, I could see the showcase of multiple cultural traditions, through the displays of job occupations, village activities and even subtle portrayals of national values.

This music video deeply inspired me as, though comedic in nature, there is a level of celebration of the culture, reminding us of the importance of honouring where we came from and how we came to be the people we are today. The video demonstrated how core values such as family and hard work (to name a couple) can be built upon to become the foundation in creating a society that we know today. Hoa Minzy was able to successfully interweave as much of her region's culture into the music video as possible: she based the beat and melody off the instruments traditionally played and linked the lyrics to what she wanted to say about her region, introducing the viewers to a vast array of beautiful locations through scenic shots, and she hinted at cultural values and norms. One of the scenes that really stuck out to me was when Hoa Minzy was surrounded by elderly women and the camera focused on one of them smiling. To me, this emphasised how being surrounded by family and even 'fictive kin' could be enjoyable as your network of people could easily bring you comfort, security and a sense of belonging. This support system is always dependable on when in times of need, there is a strong subconscious obligation to help your community, which reflects one of Beth Grammar's own values.



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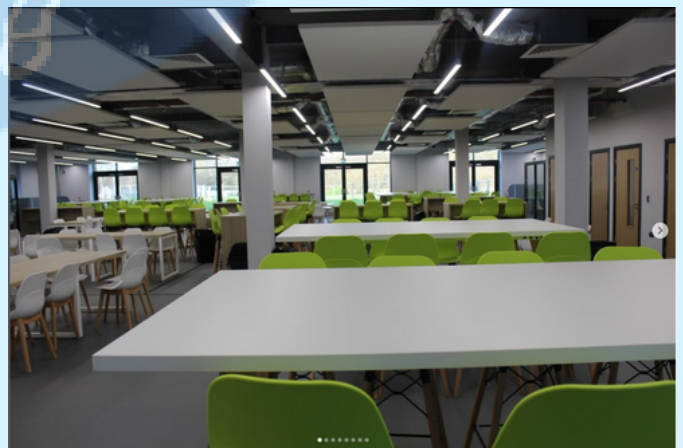
AN INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD PREFECTS BY EDWIN 12C1

On Monday 24th January, the newly built, long-awaited Jubilee Sixth Form Centre was opened for Year 12 and Year 13 to populate. Since then, almost a month later, the 6th Form Centre has perfectly integrated itself into the flow and function of our school, with the Sixth Form seamlessly transitioning their lessons and directed studies into all 16 classrooms and the food-court-esque 6A1. Coincidentally, around the same time, the news of who would be on our new Prefect Team was revealed to us. And so, in order to both introduce a few members of our Head Prefect Team, and to look at the Sixth Form Centre in a bit more detail, I conducted a mini 2-person interview – the biggest one yet – in order to learn more. With my 2 interviewees being Dominik G, Uriel A, and an addition from myself, here's what we spoke about:

What do you think of the social impacts of giving the 6th form their own space?

I think that having our own space to recreate has allowed us to mingle more, as prior to this, groups of sixth form students were strewn across the school site, for example the hall, canteen and quad. Now we can speak with different groups far more easily as well as interacting with the Year 13s. However, I think we are now distanced from the younger years, making it harder for us to be the role models in the school. –

Dominik G, Head Boy



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AN INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD PREFECTS BY EDWIN 12C1

If given the chance for a redesign, what aspects would you add to the Sixth Form Centre? A nap room, because A-Levels are very demanding, and we need an area to unwind and relax. – Uriel A, Deputy Head Boy

What do you like most about the Sixth Form centre?

Personally, I really love the multitude of classrooms. With 14 main classrooms, not including the central parts on the 2nd and 3rd floor, and the open-plan 1st floor, there is so much room for all sorts of activities – classes, study sessions, and even extracurricular activities. Specifically, the open-plan bottom floor is likely my favourite aspect. It is so spacious, and with all of its seating areas, inviting colour scheme and its own catering area, it really fosters a social environment that makes getting to know your peers (in a school with over 300 people in the Year 12 alone) that much easier.

How do you think the Sixth Form centre has changed our school academically?

There is a much larger capacity for teaching with the additional classrooms. The school has suddenly become so much bigger, so much more capable at providing a good education. The rapid transformation means we can all learn and study much more efficiently, and I believe the academic impact has been immensely positive so far.



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AN INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD PREFECTS BY EDWIN 12C1

What are the positives and negatives of the Sixth Form Centre in comparison to the LRC?

The clearest positive is the space. The Sixth Form Centre has, I'd say, over x9 the space that the LRC has. It also has its own catering area, and is its own designated teaching area. 6A1 alone fares better as an educational area than the LRC in its entirety. However, it is crucial to remember that the 6th form centre serves as its own designated hub for Sixth Form students, while the LRC is meant to be more akin to a library. In that regard, the LRC has aspects that the 6th form centre severely lacks in. Students still return to the LRC when they need access to computers, and there are also books for revision and super curricular study in the LRC. While they both have their positives, however, I would much prefer to have the spacious 6th form centre than the LRC.

And that wraps up my interview with Dominik and Uriel on the new Sixth Form Centre. I'd like to say thank you to my peers for helping me out with this article, and I look forward to the future of Beths with this new building as an asset. In my past years at Beths, I witnessed the former LRC be demolished, the previous Sixth Form Centre become a new LRC, and this new Sixth Form Centre rise from mounds of dirt and metal poles to a fully established learning environment, something that will remain a staple at Beths for decades to come. Something undeniably beautiful.



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FIXTURES AND RESULTS

Results for week commencing 31st March

BASKETBALL					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Score
31.03.25	Kent Basketball Finals	U15A	Ravens Wood School	Neutral	Won 66-64
31.03.25	Jr NBA	U13A	The Howard School	Away	Won 42-17
02.04.25	Kent Basketball Finals	U12A	Rainham Mark Grammar School	Neutral	Lost 46-54

Fixtures for week commencing 21st April

CRICKET					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Start time
24.04.25	Kent Cup	U13A	Bullers Wood School for Boys	Away	2pm

FOOTBALL					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Start time
25.04.25	North Kent Cup SF	U13A	St Pauls Academy	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



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BETHS PARENTS ASSOCIATION



Beths Parents' Association present

2025 Quiz Night

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MAY**

**BETHS GRAMMAR
SCHOOL
HARTFORD ROAD**



**FUNDRAISING FOR ENGLISH, DRAMA, AND ART
AND TECHNOLOGY**

£10
PER TICKET

DOORS OPEN AT : 6.45PM

QUIZ STARTS AT : 7.15PM

BUY TICKETS & MORE INFO:
Classlist

<http://join.bethspa.co.uk>

£75
PER TABLE
OF 8



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KEEPING YOUR SCHOLAR SAFE

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.

follow

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

INSTAGRAM

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Instagram remains one of the world's most popular social media platforms, especially among teens – with around 70% of 13 to 17-year-olds using it. Owned by Meta, Instagram allows users to share photos and videos, create interactive 'stories', broadcast live, send private messages and follow others. With regular updates and new features, it's essential for parents and educators to stay informed about how children are using the app – and what the risks are.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Instagram's design encourages prolonged use through endless scrolling of trending content and generating a fear of missing out (FOMO). Children can quickly lose track of time browsing posts from friends, influencers, and strangers, which may disrupt their day-to-day activities.

AI CHATBOT CONCERNS

Meta's AI, which is available on Instagram, allows users to chat with an in-app chatbot. While often helpful, it can blur boundaries for young users, who may ask for or read content that is inappropriate or see it as a real friend or confidant. Privacy issues also arise, as conversations may not be as secure or private as children assume.

RISKS OF GOING LIVE

The livestream feature allows real-time broadcasting to followers – or anyone, if the account is public. This increases the chance of unwanted contact from strangers and pressure to act in ways that gain attention, including engaging in inappropriate behaviour. Viewers may also post offensive or harmful comments during live sessions.

THREADS INTEGRATION

Threads is Instagram's sister app for public, text-based conversations. Posts from Threads appear in users' Instagram feeds and can lead children to view, share, and comment on public conversations with strangers. The content may not always be age-appropriate and can be misleading or false.

SCHEDULED MESSAGING

Instagram's newer ability to schedule direct messages means that children could receive messages late at night or early in the morning. This can disrupt their sleep or keep them preoccupied before the school day even begins.

EXCLUSION AND LOW SELF-WORTH

Feeling left out online can have a real emotional impact. Being left out of photos, receiving fewer likes, being unfollowed, or being ignored in chats and comments can leave children feeling excluded, which often hurts as much as in real life. There is a risk this can lead to reduced self-esteem and a sense of not belonging.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE INSTAGRAM'S SUPERVISION TOOLS

Instagram's built-in Family Centre lets parents monitor how much time their child spends on the app. Specialised 'teen accounts' are private by default and offer controls on who can message them. Make sure that children use their real age when registering their account to ensure they have these protections.

OPEN UP THE CONVERSATION

Talk regularly to the children in your care about what they enjoy on Instagram – and what makes them uncomfortable. Encourage honest chats about filters, body image, and online approval. Reassure them that they don't need to edit their appearance or chase 'likes' to feel valued.

SET BOUNDARIES FOR THREADS AND AI

Parental controls on Instagram also apply to Threads. These allow parents to monitor time spent in the app, check follower lists and adjust exposure to sensitive content. Discuss AI features, too, therefore helping children understand that chatbots aren't real people and should be used with care.

BE MEDIA-SAVVY WITH INFLUENCERS

Parents should follow a few of the influencers their child watches, so they can better understand the content they're seeing. Use this as a springboard to talk about the difference between genuine recommendations and paid promotions – and how online personalities can shape opinions and behaviour.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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ACTIONS FOR HAPPINESS CALENDAR

Active April 2025

MONDAY



TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

1 Commit to being more active this month, starting today

2 Spend as much time as possible outdoors today

3 Listen to your body and be grateful for what it can do

4 Eat healthy and natural food today and drink lots of water

5 Turn a regular activity into a playful game today

6 Do a body-scan meditation and really notice how your body feels

7 Get natural light early in the day. Dim the lights in the evening

8 Give your body a boost by laughing or making someone laugh

9 Turn your housework or chores into a fun form of exercise

10 Have a day with less screen time and more movement

11 Set yourself an exercise goal or sign up to an activity challenge

12 Move as much as possible, even if you're stuck inside

13 Make sleep a priority and go to bed in good time

14 Relax your body & mind with yoga, tai chi or meditation

15 Get active by singing today (even if you think you can't sing!)

16 Go exploring around your local area and notice new things

17 Be active outside. Plant some seeds and encourage growth

18 Try out a new exercise, activity or dance class

19 Spend less time sitting today. Get up and move more often

20 Focus on 'eating a rainbow' of multi-coloured vegetables today

21 Regularly pause to stretch and breathe during the day

22 Enjoy moving to your favourite music. Really go for it

23 Go out and do an errand for a loved one or neighbour

24 Get active in nature. Feed the birds or go wildlife-spotting

25 Have a 'no screens' night and take time to recharge yourself

26 Take an extra break in your day and walk outside for 15 minutes

27 Find a fun exercise to do while waiting for the kettle to boil

28 Meet a friend outside for a walk and a chat

29 Become an activist for a cause you really believe in

30 Make time to run, swim, dance, cycle or stretch today



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together



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