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MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Dear Parents, Carers,

I hope you had a lovely Easter break. This is a short term which will inevitably fly by quickly as we prepare for the trial and public examinations. Next week our Year 10s and 12s scholars will be sitting their trial examinations, to not only assess where they are but also to give them exam techniques and experience of formal exams process to prepare them for their time next year.

The GCSE Art & Photography and Art A Level examinations commence on Tuesday 6th May and the main GCSE and A Level examinations commence on Thursday 8th May, so just under two weeks to go. With all the preparation our scholars have done, this can be a stressful time for them, as they try to balance revision and exam techniques, but we believe they will reap the rewards of their hard work during the summer when they receive their grades. If your son/daughter is finding the exam period stressful or needs additional support, please contact their Head of Year.

Over the Easter break, we had two overseas trips, one to the Bay of Naples and the other to Canada for skiing! The groups had the best time, be that learning new cultural experiences, new skills or being out of their comfort zone (some budding karaoke starts in the making I hear!) Our social media site show what the trips go up to if you are interested to find out more.



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As part of our Sustainability programme, all our Year 7s and 8s planted a sapling with the view of neutering it until they reach Year 11, where then then decide to either take it home or donate it back to the Woodlands Trust. As you can see below they are flourishing pretty well now.



We have some dedicated runners amongst our staffing team, with Mr Manchester competing in the London Marathon this Sunday, following the footsteps of Ms Smart, Ms West and Mr Webb who ran it last year. Mr Manchester is running for Brain Research UK.

A reminder for Year 9 parents. We have Parents Evening on Thursday 1st May (virtual) with bookings open now until Tuesday 29th April and the deadline for the Year 9 Option choices is Friday 2nd May.

Have a wonderful weekend,
Richard Blyghton



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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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YEAR 9 SCHOOL TRIP TO NAPLES- APRIL 2025

From the 4th to the 8th of April, Year 9 students embarked on an exciting school trip to the Bay of Naples, exploring Italy's rich history – here is a detailed day-by-day account from the time.

Herculaneum highlights

Tucked away in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius, this ancient Roman city, preserved by a volcanic eruption in 79 AD, offers a unique glimpse into the past.

However, exploring Herculaneum is not for the faint-hearted. The city's steep climbs and high pavements provide a real challenge for visitors. Navigating the narrow, uneven streets requires some agility. The elevated walkways meant that we were carefully picking our steps, trying not to trip on the rough stone edges.

Despite the challenging climbs and our tired legs, the sun was shining beautifully and it was an unforgettable experience to begin our tour of Naples. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing a more primitive takeaway hotspot for the Romans – a little different to Bexley's hotspots, contemplating whether or not remains were troughs, public jacuzzis or fountains and which sculptures and preserved paintings were the most impressive.



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Journey to Hotel Tourist

Driving from Herculaneum to Sorrento in a coach is a somewhat nerve-wracking experience. The winding pathways through the hills stretch endlessly, hugging the edges of steep cliffs that drop dramatically to the sparkling Mediterranean below. As the coach twists and turns, it feels as though you're teetering on the edge of the world, with just a thin stretch of road separating you from the drop.

After a very long day, if you were lucky enough to keep your eyes open on the coach journey, you could see lemon and orange groves, limoncello stalls on cliff edges on the main road, beautiful winding wisteria, ornate Easter displays in shop windows and that sensational Amalfi coastline.

Checking into Hotel Tourist was smooth and all were happy with their room allocations. Some were surprised to note that they had two toilets in their bathroom! Rest assured, they were informed of the use of a bidet. Every day is a school day!

Dinner was a welcome respite after check in. Several students tucked in to bread rolls and second servings of tomato pasta which was generously scooped from the waiter directly from the dish... It was a surprise for many of us to learn that this was in fact our starter! A chicken schnitzel with fries was the main option available to follow and some of our eyes were bigger than our bellies. To finish, we finally sampled some of those delicious oranges we saw growing on the journey into Sorrento. It is safe to say we left for bed with full tummies and excitement for Vesuvius tomorrow.



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The dizzy heights of Vesuvius

We started the day well rested with an ample breakfast supply of pastries, Melba toast and cakes. The buffet was a welcome opportunity for some students (and staff) to take just a small quantity of at least six croissants! Plenty of Italian coffee, hot milk and chocolate were enjoyed too. A delivery of packed lunches arrived and we were ready to embark on our excursion to Vesuvius and Pompeii.

The coach journey to Mount Vesuvius was a scenic drive through the surrounding areas of Naples in Italy. As we were heading towards the base of the famous volcano we were also welcomed by the strong scent of sulphur – I hasten to add that this may or may not have come from the volcano. No one confirmed but there were plenty denying!

At the foot of the volcano the coach stopped and we begun our hike up to reach the summit. The hike lasted approximately 25 minutes for the fittest of the group – Miss Stevens and her support group required an



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extra 10 minutes to lower the heart rate, calm the leg muscles down and take in the picturesque views. Once at the summit the views were nothing short of immense. It was an awe inspiring experience and pictures do not do the dizzy heights of Vesuvius justice.



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Chambersplaining Pompeii

NB – ‘Chambersplain’ – Verb – Synonym: explaining

To make (an idea or situation) clear to someone by describing it in more detail or revealing relevant facts. In the wisdom of Mr Chamberlain of Beths Grammar School only.

Following our trip to Mount Vesuvius, it was only fitting to make our way to Pompeii, the city in the path of its destruction.

Pompeii was buried under up to 20 feet of volcanic ash and pumice after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, preserving the city for centuries. The ruins of Pompeii were rediscovered in 1748, and extensive excavations have since revealed a well-preserved snapshot of Roman life, including homes, temples, and public buildings. Excavations of the site continue to this date, with some Mr Chamberlain noticing key differences in the city some 20 years after his initial visit.

As we have the privilege of having two historians on the trip, it was only fitting that we handed over the reins to one of them to take us on an educational journey of Pompeii. Luckily, Mr Chamberlain has been swotting up through the medium of podcast, television and a rather interesting book that he has brought with him on the trip. Key locations for ‘Chambersplaining’ included the amphitheatre, Roman baths, takeaway joints, a local Roman bar, houses and a theatre. Mr Chamberlain was so professional in his delivery we often had members of the public pausing nearby to listen to his pearls of wisdom! This was then followed by a pizza making class in the evening.



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Winds of change: A day of two halves!

Yesterday was an incredibly long and eventful affair, but an adventure has been had along one of the most stunning coastlines in the world; a boat trip from Sorrento to Positano and Amalfi was exactly what the doctor ordered after a day of hiking. This day comes in three parts and I apologise for the delay, but rest was required! So let's begin, picture the scene – beautiful sunshine and a day at sea...



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Setting sail from Sorrento, we took some time after the walk down to the bay to explore. This was where the first (of many) ice creams were consumed. Some students exceeding five! I guess you know what they say, when in Italy... eat the gelato!

Boarding our shared tour boat, Bendetta II, we are pleased to report that there was in fact no sickness episodes and we enjoyed soaking up the spectacular views of the cliffs, the deep blue waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and the occasional glimpse of dolphins – yes, you read correctly! Patience paid off for Lucas 9H.

Positano, our first stop, is coined the jewel of the coast. The boat approaches Positano's shoreline, offering a panoramic view of the colorful buildings cascading down the cliffside. We had a short time here to take a stroll through Positano's boutique shops. You may be surprised to read that yet more ice cream was consumed here...

After soaking in Positano's beauty, it was soon to time to set sail again, heading towards Amalfi. The boat ride revealed hidden beaches, sea caves and cliffside villas. Let's just say, I don't think any of us are keen on the idea of living with a cavity underneath our homes.

Amalfi was once the centre of a maritime republic, including the stunning Amalfi Cathedral, built in a mix of Romanesque and Byzantine architecture. Amalfi's main square, Piazza del Duomo was the perfect place to stop and take in the beauty of the town. Here you could find a fountain to refill your water bottle with water directly from the mountains. A few of us took advantage of the water and you can see the fountain below where you could admire the statues pouring you a drink. Or in some cases, be the backdrop to a busking attempt! I am pleased to report none of our students were successful in their endeavours here.



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Doesn't this sound lovely? I bet you're wondering by this point in the blog where the wind of change took place. After a long and beautiful sunny day exploring, we were ready to get back on the boat and get to the planned ice cream stop in the itinerary for David's demonstration! Sadly our boat was a little delayed which meant that by the time we got back to Sorrento we experienced torrential rain. Nothing says 'time for ice cream' quite like walking up hill (again?!) in cold and wet conditions. However, nothing stopped our students on this trip and they kept in fantastic spirits. Especially those who are becoming firm members of the Miss Stevens support group. When will I learn to wear appropriate footwear?! And that is why Mrs Cato-Sargent created the rule book! Sandals and torrential rain are never going to be a good idea – Doh!

As I feel we can't give full appreciation to David's fantastic ice cream display in this post alone – no other ice cream could compare, especially an ice cream that the students themselves made! More ice cream talk will follow in the next post, hope you haven't had enough of it by now, we certainly haven't!



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If you like having no beverage and eating ice cream in the rain.

I do hope that you had a little tune from Rupert Holmes in mind reading that title. Well, if you do like eating ice cream in the rain you're in the right place! After a day of having several ice creams in the sun, who were we to say no to more in the winds of change?

As Mr Chamberlain and Miss Stevens stood in the perpetual rain and Mrs Cato-Sargent and Mr Papakostas ferried students through the queue to make their choices, the mood was – slowly – improving. After everyone had their ice cream, we went through to meet David, the owner and ice cream genius. David was an absolute tonic to our drowned rat mood. Let's just say that it got a little loud and excitable and we left feeling ready to take on anything! Come at us, rain!

The demonstration involved students pouring ingredients, mixing and decanting lemon ice which, despite for some having several ice creams, was truly delicious. They have access to the recipe now, so do request they make it at home!

Following the demonstration we went on to dinner and karaoke. The night really didn't want to leave us any time soon! More on that singing next...



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Karaoke bar highlights

We arrived at the karaoke bar and were both anxious and surprised to see that there were in fact many people seated and enjoying their evening meal. Luckily for those other holiday makers, we were ready to give them a memorable couple of hours. I hasten to add that this would depend on your perspective on the matter and the over all quality and calibre of vocal contributions.

We were seated and given drinks and bar snacks of croutons, popcorn, crackers and more. Lucas D was relatively confident he consumed the majority for his portion of the table – and good on him too! We then began a period of technological set up hiccups and set up a few Guinea pigs, including myself and Mr Papakostas to get the night going.



Exploring the Wonders of Naples: Part one

Naples is a city which certainly offers a fascinating journey through time. For anyone captivated by the ancient world, two of its most intriguing landmarks which we visited today are the National Archaeological Museum of Naples and the labyrinthine tunnels that wind beneath the city. Together, they provide a unique opportunity to step into Naples' layered past, offering a blend of archaeological treasures and historical secrets.



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As one of the most important museums in Italy, our first stop at the National Archaeological Museum of Naples (Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli) is a must-visit for anyone interested in the classical world. For those of you who know Mr Papakostas, know that he was certainly in his element here! Whilst in the museum we visited the Pompeii and Herculaneum collections and the Greek and a Roman artefacts, including pottery and mosaics.



After a quick pit stop for lunch and a browse of the genuinely fake gold chains and Palm Angel sunglasses, we were ready to visit the underground network of Naples. To be clear, I am not talking about their train system! The Napoli Sotterranea, or Underground Naples, is a network of tunnels, caves, and passageways that have been used for various purposes throughout history—from ancient Greek times to World War II as we learned in our tour today from Alan. In our tour it was clear that there is more that's Greek about this city than may meet the eye, from its origin to its brickwork style. As well as this we learned of the links to Christianity and more surprisingly perhaps, the ways in which the tunnels were used during World War II as air raid shelters. Be warned, this excursion is not for the faint hearted. There are some incredibly tight and claustrophobic nooks! However, a phenomenal experience if you can withstand a little restriction at some points.



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FIXTURES AND RESULTS

Fixtures for week commencing 28th April

TENNIS					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Start time
02.05.25	LTA Youth Schools	U15A	Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School	Away	3pm

CRICKET					
Date	Competition	Team	Opposition	Venue	Start time
29.04.25	Kent Cup	U12A	Ravens Wood School	Away	2pm
30.04.25	Kent Cup	U13A	Bullers Wood School for Boys	Away	2pm

*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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MONDAY 12 MAY
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THE HUB QUIZ NIGHT

YOUTH CAFE

Friday 16th May!

**7pm to 8:30pm
School Years 7-11**



**AT ROOTED COFFEE HOUSE
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MILKSHAKES SMOOTHIES SNACKS



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**An Interactive Quiz with prizes - come as
a team or come along and join a team!**



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THE HUB

OPEN MIC NIGHT

YOUTH CAFE

Friday 20th June!

7pm to 8:30pm
School Years 7-11

AT ROOTED COFFEE HOUSE
BLACKFEN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

MILKSHAKES SMOOTHIES SNACKS

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**TO PERFORM
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THE HUB



for school
years 7-11

YOUTH CAFE

**Fridays 2, 16 May
20 June, 4, 18 July,
8, 22 August**

Hang out with friends

Snacks & Drinks

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Games Consoles

Craft Nail Painting

Jewellery Making

Phone Charging

Pool Table



For more info contact:
simon@blackfencommunitylibrary.org

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£10
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QUIZ STARTS AT : 7.15PM

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Classlist

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£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. Trigger Warning: This guide contains mention of suicide, which may be distressing for some readers.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 25-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



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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

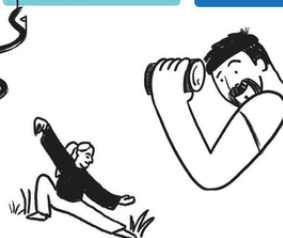
27 Find a fun exercise to do while waiting for the kettle to boil



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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