

**Newsletter  
December 2025**



Dear Colleagues

It's that time again and before you all start "Driving Home for Christmas" I want to take a moment to reflect on this year and your contribution to making it another great one for the SEAX Trust and far more importantly for our young people.

I try to find different ways to tell you how brilliant you are, and I worry that you feel that I am just saying the same words in a different order! I really do mean every word of praise and admiration I write.

SO, for my "Last Christmas" with the Trust I will try to find a better way of expressing my deep appreciation of your work. You bring "Joy to the World" of our young people and their families every day. You are a wonderful bunch of professionals who are so dedicated to getting it right and to making not just our pupils' "Christmases bright," but every day they are with us in school.

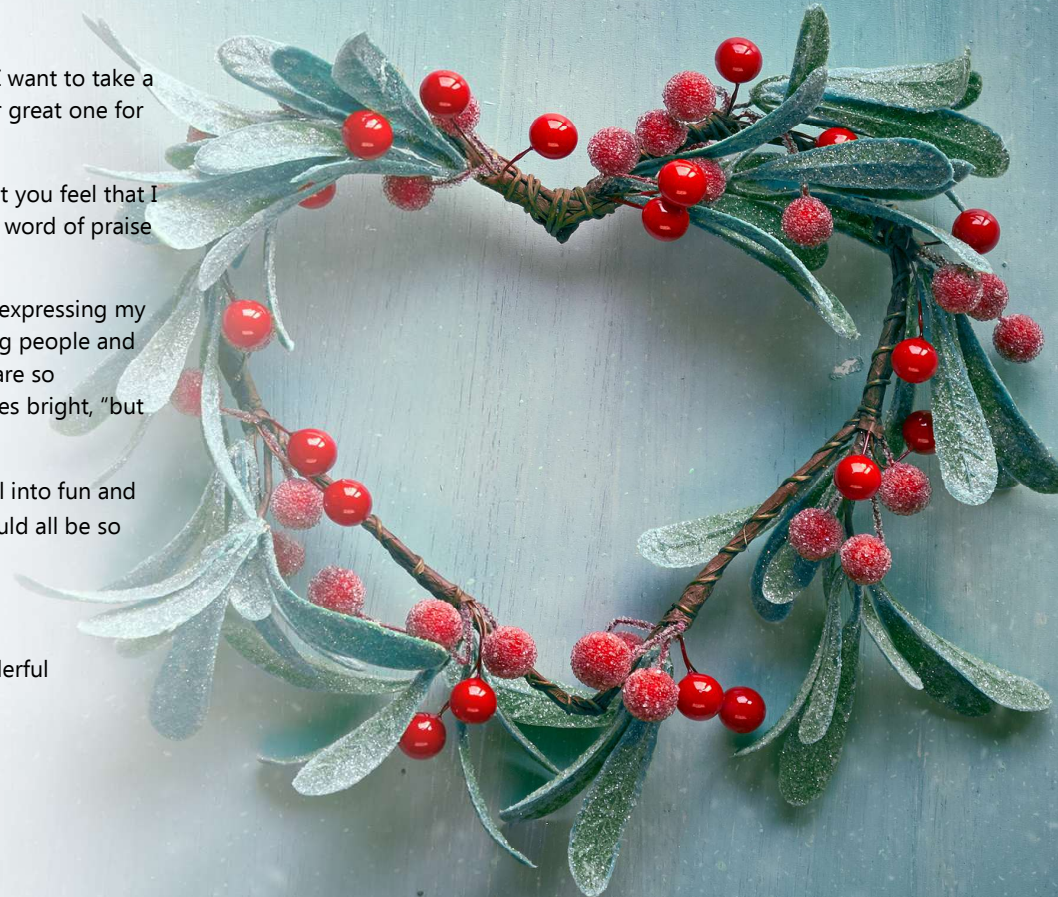
Now as it's time to "Let It Snow"—or at least let the holiday spirit snowball into fun and relaxation, please take a moment to reflect on all you have done. You should all be so proud.

Thank you for being the stars on our SEAX Trust tree.

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and a New Year that's a more "Wonderful Christmastime" than ever!

Best wishes

Ruth





# SEAX Trust Conference 2025

On Friday 24th October, colleagues from across all SEAX schools came together for our annual Trust Conference. This year, held across two school sites, Langham Oaks and The Hawthorns. The day had a strong sense of unity, connection and collective pride. It was wonderful to see so many friendly faces, both new and familiar, joining together to learn, share ideas, and celebrate the incredible work happening across our Trust.

After a warm welcome from the CEO, Ruth Sturdy, staff moved into a variety of sessions tailored to different teams: Teacher & LSA development, HR & Admin, Finance & Catering updates, Dog Mentoring, Pastoral & Residential discussions, Site Teams and more. Many colleagues also enjoyed the chance to explore another school site, gaining insight into the diverse environments in which our pupils learn every day.





### What colleagues valued most

Feedback from across the Trust captured the energy of the day:

- *"Sally Reed's talk about AI, loads of top tips!"*
- *"Meeting colleagues across different provisions and teams."*
- *"The teacher and LSA training on questioning and cold calling strategies."*
- *"WalkThrus and the chance to collaborate with other PD leads."*
- *"Teresa Williams was inspiring, so passionate about the Dog Mentor Scheme!"*
- *"An update on Finance and Procurement processes was really useful."*
- *"Being able to explore another school site and see different sensory areas."*
- *"Enjoyed delivering and participating in LSA sessions at Hawthorns."*
- *"Networking with site teams and discussing shared challenges."*
- *"Having a half-day wellbeing break was AMAZING - thank you!"*

As always, the commitment to collaboration shone through. Many colleagues highlighted that the informal conversations, shared ideas, and cross-school connections were among the most valuable aspects of the day.

### A new approach to wellbeing

This year's earlier finish was warmly welcomed by many, giving staff a well-deserved opportunity to relax, spend time with family or enjoy lunch with colleagues. It was a great way to focus on wellbeing.

### Your Feedback Matters!

Thank you to every colleague who took the time to share feedback. Your honesty, kindness, and thoughtful suggestions help us grow year on year. This conference only works because of the people who make up our Trust, and we're grateful for the care you put into helping us make it better for everyone.

# In Memory of Andy Hunter

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Andy Hunter in September 2025 after a short illness.

Andy played an instrumental role in the development and success of the SEAX Trust. Serving as Vice-Chair from the Trust's inception in 2015 and later as Chair of Trustees between 2018 and 2022, Andy's leadership and commitment were invaluable.

Prior to his work with the Trust, Andy was a dedicated Governor at Thriftwood School, where his passion for education and support for the community shone through. His connection to Thriftwood was deeply personal, as his daughter attended the school, and Andy's advocacy for inclusive education was unwavering.

After stepping down from the Board, Andy returned to Manchester to enjoy his retirement, leaving behind a legacy of integrity, compassion, and service. His contributions will be remembered with gratitude by all who had the privilege of working alongside him.

Our thoughts are with Andy's family and friends at this difficult time.



**Andy Hunter 1951-2025**

SEAX Chair of Trustees 2018-2022

## Grove House is 10 years old!



Grove House School is officially 10 years old! We opened in September 2015 with just 33 pupils and now 10 years later we have grown to over our roll capacity of 130.

The school buildings have massively improved, and our curriculum has got broader. The biggest achievement was seeing the children grow in confidence and maturity over the course of their school journey. Every child is empowered to thrive and is prepared for the next chapter in their life.

To celebrate this milestone, we held a Barn Dance, and everyone was invited, past and present. It was so lovely seeing everyone attend, catching up with so many of our Alumni and being proud of their successes and achievements.

This anniversary is more than a celebration - it's a tribute to our pupils, our parents/carers and our dedicated staff team. We would like to thank the PTFA for funding the Barn Dance.



2015 Assembly



2025 Assembly





## Dudbrook Care Home Visit



On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October residents from Dudbrook House Care Home were warmly welcomed to the Grove Coffee Shop.

They enjoyed homemade cake and freshly brewed coffee served by some of our Post 16 pupils and Grove Volunteers.

The visit was met with heartfelt appreciation with one guest commenting:

*"If every school were like this, the world would be a better place."*

Following a recent successful "Employee Encounter" at the care home, one of our Upper School pupils has secured a volunteering role there.

We are very proud of her showing great commitment and kindness and wish her success at this role.

On Thursday, 20th November, the Grove House Groovers visited Dudbrook Hall Care Home for a special musical performance that truly brightened the day for residents and staff alike.

Our talented students delivered an engaging set of songs, blending modern favourites with timeless classics. The performance featured popular hits from The Greatest Showman alongside nostalgic wartime melodies, creating a wonderful mix that resonated with everyone present.

The visit was more than just entertainment—it was an opportunity for our students to share the joy of music, develop their performance skills and connect with the local community in a meaningful way.

This event reflects Grove House School's commitment to fostering creativity, confidence, and compassion in our students. By taking their talents beyond the classroom, the Groovers demonstrated how music can bring people together and make a lasting impact.

A huge thank you to Dudbrook Hall Care Home for welcoming us so warmly, and to our students for their enthusiasm and dedication. We look forward to more opportunities to share music and joy with the community in the future!





## Remembrance 2025 at Grove House

On Friday, 7th November 2025, a group of our pupils from LH attended the annual Remembrance Service at the war memorial near Brentwood School. The event brought together representatives from several local schools, war veterans, the Mayor, and other dignitaries.

Our pupils demonstrated great respect throughout the occasion. They engaged thoughtfully with the veterans, asking meaningful questions that reflected their maturity and curiosity. The veterans and other attendees praised their conduct and interest.

During the service, one of our classes had the honour of laying a wreath on behalf of all staff and pupils at Grove House School. It was a moving and memorable experience that reminded us of the sacrifices made to protect our freedom.



Thank you to Mrs Hartie and her family for their beautiful knitted poppies, which helped us create a stunning “poppy wall” proudly displayed near reception for everyone to enjoy.



Class LMH have been busy creating beautiful light-up bottles, each decorated with decals honouring our war heroes. These thoughtful creations will be available for purchase in the Grove Coffee Shop. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activity, which also helped them develop their fine motor skills in a fun and meaningful way.



During lunchtime club sessions, the Upper School Art Club has been busy creating a beautiful poppy display using recycled plastic bottles. Pupils transformed the bottoms of the bottles into petal shapes, painting them with vibrant red acrylic paint, while the lids were painted black to form the centres of the poppies. With help from Mrs Mason, the students assembled the poppies into a striking wreath. This eye-catching display is now proudly showcased near the reception entrance for everyone to enjoy.

On Thursday, members of our Knitting and Crochet Club, accompanied by several Post-16 photography students, visited the Poppies on the Pier memorial display in Southend. It was truly inspiring to see the handmade poppies created by our students featured within such a meaningful installation. The experience gave everyone a sense of pride and connection to this special tribute.

Below are some photos taken by our students:





## Grove House Post 16 Work Experience

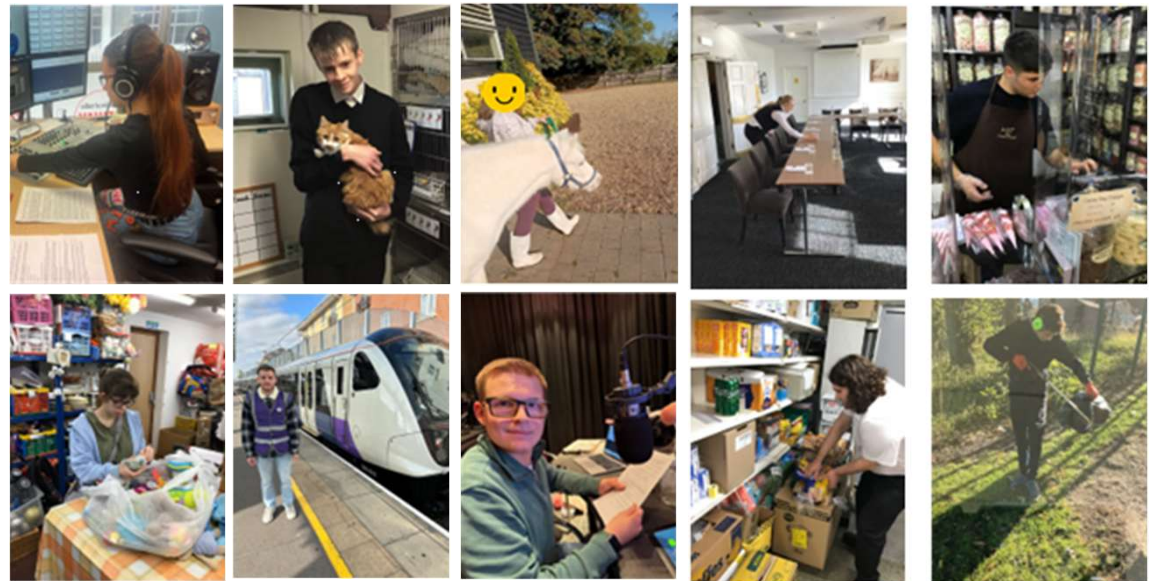
The first week of work experience was a resounding success.

All Post 16 students actively participated in their placements, demonstrating enthusiasm and professionalism throughout. They engaged with a variety of work environments and embraced new challenges, showcasing key competencies including:

- Communication
- Teamwork Time
- Management
- Confidence

This initiative provided valuable exposure to real-world settings, allowing students to develop essential life and workplace skills. Their conduct and commitment reflected positively on both themselves and Grove House School.

Congratulations to Archie who has been offered a weekly slot at Chelmsford Community Radio following his successful work experience there. You can listen to Archie via Chelmsford Radio Website, listen again and find Movie Madness.



# The Hawthorns School

## Out and About in Chelmsford

### Rubik Class Visit to the Essex Police Museum

We visited the Police Museum and had a great time looking at the different police equipment!



### Packham's visit to Springfield Library



The  
Hawthorns  
*celebrating diverse abilities*



### Attenborough Class Visit to Chelmsford Museum

As we concluded our fascinating journey through the Stone Age, Attenborough class enjoyed a trip to Chelmsford Museum. The museum team delivered a special session that brought history to life! The children had the opportunity to build a shelter, discover what foods were available during the Stone Age, and even handle authentic tools from the era.

After the workshop, we explored other exhibits around the museum and stumbled upon a wonderfully festive corner. This was the perfect introduction to our next topic, where we'll be learning about the story of Christmas and the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah.



# Out and About - The Great Outdoors

## Attenborough's trip to Melbourne Park

On Thursday morning, we walked to Melbourne playground. The children demonstrated excellent safe behaviour in all aspects of the trip and most of all, had a lovely time playing together out in the community.



## Packham Class

We embarked on a community visit to Oaklands Park. Although quite wet, the children had a great time exploring the park.



## Ayling-Ellis' trip to Oaklands Park



## Out and About - Community Visits

### Ayling-Ellis' first visit to The Meadow

The children loved exploring the woodland area as well as the adjacent grassy spaces and using the various tree swings. The children loved the freedom they had there to run and be amongst nature as well as a little hot chocolate and snack.



## Sporting Achievements

### The All in Festival at Chelmsford Sports and Leisure Centre

On Tuesday morning, Marconi Class went to a sports festival and took part in lots of different sports activities such as trampolining, volleyball, hockey, Kurling and Boccia.

We had a fantastic time and enjoyed taking part in the different events!



### Bowls Tournament at Falcon's Bowls Club

On Tuesday afternoon, Oscar and Damir from Rubik, and Chester and Harry from Marconi took part in a bowls tournament at Falcon's Bowls Club against other local schools.

The pupils were taught various bowls games and activities and how to use the correct technique. They were lucky to be coached by expert bowls players.

They showed great enthusiasm and engagement throughout and were a credit to The Hawthorns. They also performed brilliantly and came in 5th place out of 14 teams!

We are so proud of them.



## Hawthorns House

Marconi Class were very excited to visit 'Hawthorns House', which is going to be our school's residential block. We had a good look around at the different rooms and were thinking about what it would be like to stay there. Some members of the class were already picking out which room they may like to have if they get the opportunity to stay there!



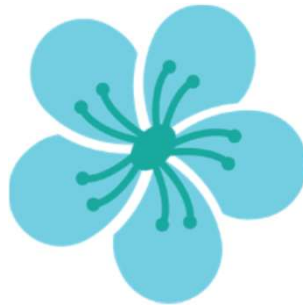
Sky Brown have looked at where different items should be stored within a house. They took part in this activity over at Hawthorns House.



## Multi School Council

On Thursday afternoon Rubik class took part in a multi school council meeting via Teams with 8 other schools; this was their biggest attended meeting yet! The meeting was started by talking about role models. The schools felt role models were those that stand up for others, share, are kind, encourage others and are good friends. They recognised that anybody can be a role model.

They looked at what the word achievement means to young people. Many of the children discussed their accomplishments such as trying something new, showing resilience and perseverance, finishing a task and helping others. We also spoke about the police and how we could improve relationships with them. Our children spoke proudly about what it means to be autistic and how police can recognise signs of dysregulation and how to support it. At the end of the meeting the children spoke about what makes a good school council and we spoke about our Hawthorns pupil voice and the purpose of it.



## Celebrating Achievements



Last week Luke received a letter from Multi School's council lead Kierran Pearce, with the opportunity to become an ambassador! He expressed his admiration on how Luke praised others and spoke with such passion during a recent Teams meeting. Luke has been appointed to join a carefully selected group of people to break down barriers towards children with special educational needs and mental health difficulties.

Congratulations Luke!



## Remembrance

In Art, we took time to reflect on Remembrance and created beautiful poppy-themed artwork.



## Following Instructions

This week in English, we have been exploring instructions. We've followed instructions to make colourful paper dragons, fearsome rock monsters, and even designed our own board games.



## Carving Pumpkins

In English, we continued our work on instructions, and the children did a brilliant job of writing step-by-step instructions on how to carve a pumpkin. Today they got to follow their instructions carving some real pumpkins!



## The Travelling Librarian

The children thoroughly enjoyed our visit from Katie the Travelling Librarian. Katie told a sensory story about winter celebrations and lights, using music, song, actions, props and sensory experiences to bring the story to life. The pupils managed this new experience admirably, and showed curiosity, engagement and joy throughout.

The winter theme of Katie's story was well-timed, as we have experienced all sorts of weather this week, from heavy rain to cold frosty mornings. Pupils have learned about signs of winter, with a particular focus on frost, and thought about keeping coats on outdoors in the cold. One child thought even further ahead, using pompoms to make a snowman!

# Important Dates & Holidays

Friday 5th December 1.30-2.15 - Parent Event - Winter Crafts in classes

Friday 12th December 2025 (3pm – 5pm) - The Hawthorns PTA Christmas Market

Friday 19th December 2025 - Last day of term

Monday 22nd December - School Holiday

Monday 5th January - First day of Spring Term

Thank you to everyone who donated towards our 'Wear Yellow' for Mental Health Day. We raised £124 for this wonderful Charity.

## Experiences of work and Post 16 Working Party

Tuesday 2nd December

1.30-2.45

We need your help! We would like to form a working party to gather information about post 16 provisions and experiences of work opportunities for our young people from across Essex.

The group would meet on a termly basis to share information found and will create a bank of information to support us all with our pupils next steps.

If you would like to be involved and attend this meeting, please contact Kathryn Sheffle on [admin@thehawthornsschool.com](mailto:admin@thehawthornsschool.com).

Attendance can be in person or virtual. If you'd like to be involved but can't attend this date, please still contact Kathryn.



Hello Yellow Day for Attenborough Class!



Thank you for all the donations for Sanctus!



Thank you for supporting us!



# FOHS

Friends Of Hawthorns School

Proudly presents our first.....

# CHRISTMAS MARKET

FREE ENTRY

The Hawthorns School  
Chelmsford, CM1 2BN



AMAZING RAFFLE PRIZES  
SANTAS GROTTO & DONKEYS

FRIDAY  
12TH DECEMBER  
3-5PM

PLUS... GIFT IDEAS, CAROLS, TOMBOLA  
PHOTOBOOTH, SNOW FUN & MUCH  
MORE...

CASH PREFERRED BUT CARD ACCEPTED

[WWW.PTA-EVENTS.CO.UK/FRIENDSOFHAWTHORNSSCHOOL](http://WWW.PTA-EVENTS.CO.UK/FRIENDSOFHAWTHORNSSCHOOL)



## Hawthorns Christmas Market WISHLIST

We are so excited to hold our first Christmas Market and hope you can all join us! We are raising funds to be able to supply more outdoor play equipment so if you are able to donate anything towards our market, we would be extremely grateful.

### DRINKS

If you have any unopened bottles or soft drinks hiding away we would love them for our tombola!

### SWEETS & TREATS

Any donations of sweets or chocolates will be great for our tombola and to create hampers.

### TOYS & TEDDIES

Toys in great condition and teddies are wanted for us to have on our stall for a new home.

### XMAS DECS & JUMPERS

Any decorations or christmas jumpers will be gratefully received!

Donations can be given to Rhian or Jordan or left in the school reception. We are also looking for volunteers to help set up, run a stall, clean up. If you can help please get in touch.



# TERM 2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

## INSPIRING WOMEN

Throughout the autumn term at KHS, we have taken opportunities to highlight achievements of inspiring women from the past and present.

Starting off with the resilience and effort of the England women's football team during the summer, we learnt about players with their own special needs who have gone on to great things including **Hannah Hampton** and **Lucy Bronze**. Model and actress, **Ellie Goldstein** brightened up the Strictly Come Dancing stage, and our Year 7 pupils had the chance to meet her recently at the President's Sporting Lunch at Barleylands.

As part of fundraising activities for Children in Need during November, BBC Radio 2 presenter **Sara Cox** showed us true grit and perseverance completing five marathons in five days!

**GREAT NORTHERN MARATHON CHALLENGE!**

### Inspirational!

**Phenomenal!**

Raised over £10,000,000...10 million pounds!

## CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS



"Don't let anyone rob you of your Imagination, your creativity, or your curiosity."  
- Mae Jemison

During World Space week, we learnt about **Mae Jemison**, who became the first African-American woman to travel into space aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour in 1992.



Spinney class presented an interesting assembly about the impact **Elizabeth Fry** had on prison reform in the 1800s due to the terrible conditions for women and children.



On the subject of inspiring females, it has been a joy to see the dog mentor programme expand at Kingswode Hoe this term. Our super Senior HLTA, Teresa Williams, shared her passion for the positive impact Nellie has had on wellbeing in our school since she joined us in 2022 with staff at the SEAX Day in October.

We have been delighted to welcome Mabel to KHS too, led by HLTA Holly Reynolds with her infectious enthusiasm for the benefits of dog mentoring. Mabel has shown particular fondness for listening to pupils read since joining the school.

Some truly inspirational female, as well as furry, staff members to celebrate!

Nellie and Mabel even feature on the Christmas cards created by Year 9 pupils in the workshop this year.

## Dog Mentor Developments



Kingswode Hoe School  
What we plant today, we grow tomorrow



Nellie is in school on a Monday and Friday, greeting pupils on the gate, helping out with work experience and interventions. She finishes the week with a popular wellbeing walk.

Christmas card designs



Introducing...Mabel

Mabel is in school on a Wednesday and loves listening to pupils read.



The Dog Mentor

**Dogs Supporting Education**

Anxiety Reduction  
Attachment & Relationship Building  
Attention & Behavioural Difficulties  
Communication & Social Anxieties  
Stress Coping Strategies  
Improving Staff Wellbeing

07970 255697  
email: jen@thedogmentor.co.uk  
www.thedogmentor.co.uk

## Employability opportunities at KHS

- ✓ Pupil leadership- clubs and credit time
- ✓ KHS Shop
- ✓ Duke of Edinburgh curriculum-supported work placements
- ✓ Food and cooking
- ✓ Café Hero
- ✓ Creative sessions- Business & Enterprise
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities- helping our staff
- ✓ Meeting new people- greeting visitors
- ✓ Welcoming new pupils

Year 10 & 11 pupils started their Work Placements in the autumn term, volunteering in a range of important jobs around the school. Pupils applied for the role they wanted and, if successful, given the chance to support staff in the various roles. The placements have proved very productive, with lots of staff praising the hard work put in by the pupils. They have designed work badges and worn their lanyards with pride. Pupils will continue their roles next term to master new work-related skills, gain confidence and achieve positive references to help prepare for adulthood. Further external supported group work placements will also continue in the new year.

## Employability



# KHS Work Placements

As part of their work experience and 'Destination' sessions, Year 10 & 11 pupils have been on visits to various venues in Colchester.

Pupils completed an initial Vocational Profiling session and fully engaged with the process.



PE  
 Newsletter  
 IT Support  
 Dog Handling  
 Reception  
 Kitchen Duties

Site Maintenance



Kingswode Hoe School  
 What we plant today, we grow tomorrow



# Identity & Self Expression

## Year 11 Arts Award

Year 11 pupils have taken turns teaching a creative session to Oak Class this term as part of their Arts Award Skill Share. Pupils did an amazing job, preparing activities such drawing and African drumming, encouraged pupils and delivered a well rehearsed tutorial, interacting brilliantly with the younger class.



# Thriftwood College Trip

Year 10 pupils have been visiting a range of colleges to understand the different post-16 options across Essex and Suffolk.



A group enjoyed an in-depth tour finding out about the provision at Thriftwood College earlier this term.



It has been good to continue to make links across SEAX Trust schools this term and we wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year!

Thank you to staff for energy and organisation of these valuable opportunities for pupils!

# AUTUMN TERM 2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

Kingswode Hoe School  
What we plant today, we grow tomorrow



# Langham Oaks – Autumn Term 2025

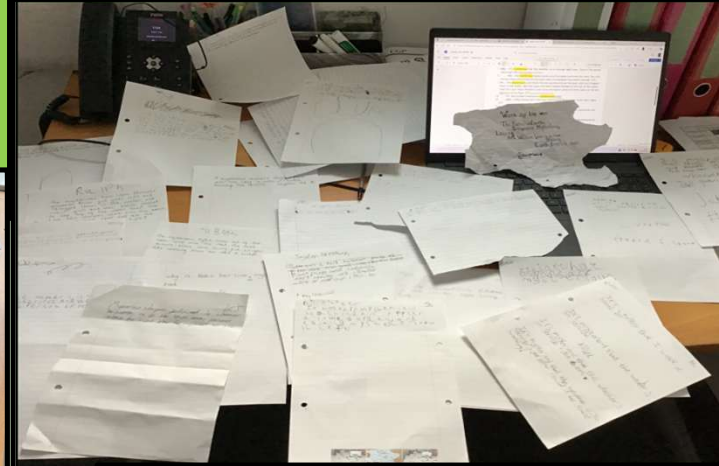
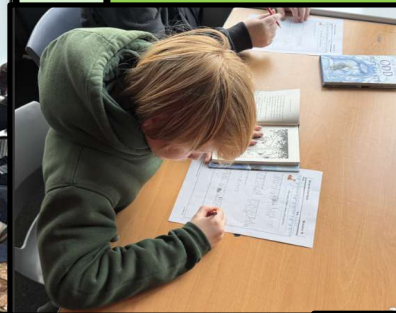
Our Word of The Week entries. We had 28 entries for the word “mysterious” An excellent effort



Our year 11 pupils visited Colchester Institute in November as part of their post 16 preparations. They enjoyed meeting staff and viewing the facilities

Year 7 students analysing the first chapter of their new book Odd and the Frost Giants

Giants



Year 11 boys giving a great effort in their first GCSE mock exam

We have had Residential Ofsted Inspection in November. The inspectors were with us Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. I would like to thank all those parents who gave such positive feedback. I would also like to thank all staff for their hard work and commitment as always but particularly during the inspections and finally to the boys but in particular to those who were brave enough to speak with the inspector.

A successful autumn walk from school to Langham Church, with some OS map navigation ...

Langham Church is interesting as it is not where it should be! Langham was probably a victim of the Black Death (or bubonic plague) which swept through Europe in 1349-51, reducing the population of England by about 30%. As the country gradually recovered, many communities relocated to another site leaving houses and barns to rot and fall down. A church, which was the only stone building in the village, did not decay and so has remained.

Langham Church is Saxon in origin; Roman bricks are visible in the South West.

Langham Church and the surrounding Stour Valley was painted by John Constable in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and this picture now hangs in London's National Gallery.

- Counting tree growth rings.
- Cooking operations.
- Inside the church.
- Looking at the font.
- Reading a bible.
- Sitting under the lychgate.

A very cold, but enjoyable day at Polstead woods with Year 6. Cooking and using a Kelly Kettle/tools /knives effectively.



### Sustainability at Langham: planting native trees and shrubs around the grounds.

- The Woodland Trust have kindly donated Langham Oaks 420 bare-rooted native trees and hedging plants for our recreation grounds.
- Planting trees is a great way to "hack" carbon dioxide (a major greenhouse gas) out of the atmosphere.
- Hedges are also excellent for wildlife. Berries and seeds provide food and back built nests in the branches. Small mammals like voles are protected by dense foliage and thorns. At Langham, hedges form a strong woodland on the western side of our football field. Hedges also stabilize soil erosion and cool the air during the hot summer months. Since 1995 over 150,000 miles of hedges have been lost in England alone. Much better than machinery part-wear led to farmers grubbing up hedgerows to increase field size.
- English hedges and field systems are ancient, as testament to a network of hedges in the southwest levels have been dated back to the Stone Age. Amazing!
- Mr Cove



### Thorpe Park STEM trip....

Boys enjoyed the activities and had to collect stamps on a card to earn entry to the rides. This was achieved by talking and listening to people and completing tasks, whilst getting involved in with the different science, technology, maths and art events throughout the Park



Pupils enjoying boxing interventions delivered in school by REACH Essex Projects. Huge thanks to Tom Paget and his team for this fantastic opportunity for our pupils.



### Year 7 creating Greek God style top trumps in preparation for their speaking and listening assessment.



### Assembly 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2025

Mr Tweed looked at "The importance of Employment".

Pupils really enjoyed finding out about the world of work and look forward to Mr Tweed's next assembly.

<https://x.com/LanghamOaks/status/1974845915308667034>



Old Knobbly oak tree in Mistley is one of the oldest oak trees in England. Dendrochronologists (scientists who study tree rings) have dated it to about 1200 - before Magna Carta, The Black Death and the discovery of America. Amazing!

Year 6 boys enjoyed climbing over this ancient tree and listening to Ivan reading from the Old Knobbly book.

Great stuff!  
Mr Cove

Introducing pupils to the Silva compass and its relationship to OS maps for footpath navigation off site. Mr Cove



Year 6 visit to Languard Fort



Staff and pupil's receiving their 50/100/200 metre swimming certificates. Congratulations to all pupils on this massive achievement. With a special mention to Adam (staff) who gained his 100-metre award.



On Wednesday we attended the year 9 & 10 SESSA football tournament. The group showed excellent teamwork and behaviour throughout, eventually winning 2-1 in the final to win the tournament. Well done to those involved.

**Langham Oaks** @LanghamOaks · 4h  
 👉 Staff and Students from @LanghamOaks School observe 2 minutes silence as part of today's Latimer League fixture against Treetops School. #rememberance @PoppyLegion #rememberanceday



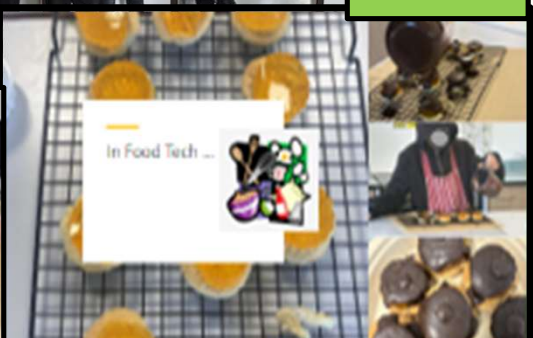
In Food Tech...

**Royal British Legion** @PoppyLe... · 4h  
 Replying to @LanghamOaks and @SeaxTrust Thank you for joining the nation as we paused for a two-minute silence ❤️

**MID ESSEX** **ITT** ... x  
 INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING  
**Mid Essex ITT**  
**(Teacher Trai...**  
 641 followers  
 1h · 🌐

Today was our second training day for our new course in partnership with the **SEAX TRUST** and local special schools. We were welcomed by Headteacher Alan Wells, **Kate Hart** and the wonderful staff at Langham Oaks in Colchester and learnt about the school and the boys they support. We learnt about their innovative curriculum, observed some lessons - including the amazing outdoor 'bushcraft' class! - and had some training on trauma informed practice.

In Art...



# Christmas Activities at Langham Oaks 2025

- Christmas Jumper Day - Thursday 11th December
- Christmas Dinner - Wednesday 17th December
- End of term trips for pupils - Thursday 18th December
- Enterprise event and award ceremony - Friday 19th December





# Thriftwood School



Thriftwood School celebrated its **50th anniversary** during the month of November! We marked this special milestone with a themed celebration week. During the week, we embraced the spirit of the **1970s**, the decade Thriftwood School first opened its doors. Events included:

- **A non-uniform day:** Learners and staff were invited to come to school dressed in **1970s-style clothing**.
- **A Seventies-Style School Dinner:** Our kitchen team served a special lunch inspired by popular dishes from the 1970s which included Spam fritters!
- **Activities and Celebrations:** Throughout the week, classes took part in themed activities, music, and learning about the history of our school and the world in the 1970s, including a silent disco.
- **Anniversary bears:** Every learner received an anniversary bear as a gift to mark the event.





# Thriftwood School



***A group of our KS3 learners went on a fishing trip to Hanningfield reservoir. Jamie Benton, a Hanningfield Ranger, kindly invited a group of learners to experience a day fishing. He provided all the fishing equipment and bait and gave up his time to coach our learners in the art of trout fishing. All the learners caught, and were able to take home, a fish for their dinner. A huge thank you to Jamie, for providing this excellent experience!***

## **Community visits**

***Visits out in the community are integral to our curriculums and support our learners to prepare for adulthood***

***Merlin class met a former student when they were out in the community learning to pay for items in a café. Sam enjoyed talking to the class about his job at the garden centre. He spoke about how he has recently learnt to drive a forklift truck and that this was the best part of his job.***

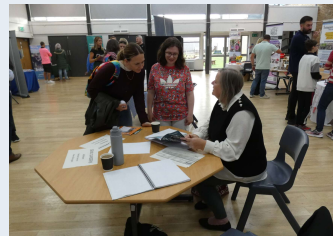


# Thriftwood College

## Next Steps

We have been working hard to support our students with future employability and getting ready for their next steps. This has included:

- Volunteering opportunities
- A 'Next Steps' information event for parents and students with representatives from various providers
- A focus on employability skills and future provisions in annual reviews
- Visits to future provisions such as Chelmsford and Braintree College
- Careers trip to Brentwood Community Hospital
- Interviews with SEND Careers Advisers
- Sourcing work experience placements for our Year 12s



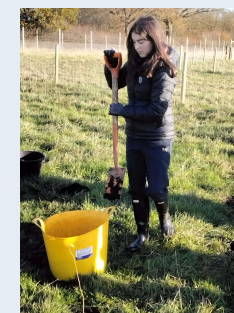
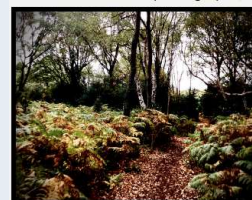
## Parent Support

We held our first parent support coffee morning on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Our Student Development & Transitions lead has organised these regularly to extend our communication with parents and improve student outcomes. The Independence Project, Snap and Butterflies joined us to talk to parents about what they can offer. Throughout the year different external providers will be invited. Parents reported that they found this helpful. We hope this new initiative will continue to grow.



## Appreciating our Environment

Our students have enjoyed looking after and appreciating our environment. This has included volunteering with Chelmsford City Council to plant trees and clear up litter. They have also enjoyed working on the allotments as well as on our college grounds. Our photography students visited Galleywood Common to apply their compositional skills they have been learning. They captured some fantastic photos.





# Thriftwood College

## The Washclub

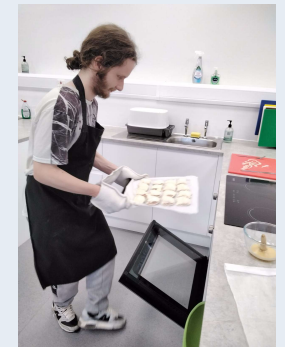
The Washclub enterprise project is going from strength to strength. Students have enjoyed being part of every step of the process from designing packaging, making soaps and wax melts and selling their products at Chelmsford Market. They are learning so many skills and are feeling proud of their achievements. We are so grateful for our partnership with The Independence Project that has made this possible.



Pick up some Christmas gifts here: [The Washclub @ Thriftwood College | Soap, Candles, Wax Melts](#)

## Christmas Buffet

Our catering students have been busy preparing for our annual Christmas Buffet. Students are involved in planning and cooking for the yearly event. It is always a great social occasion involving the whole college. This will be our biggest one ever!



## Presentation Evening

On 3<sup>rd</sup> December we welcomed our leavers back to receive their exam certificates and achievement portfolios. It was so lovely to see how well they have transitioned to their new provisions, how much they have matured and how happy and well they are looking. Well done leavers, we are so proud of you!

# Health & Wellbeing Package for all Directly Employed Staff!

**DON'T FORGET TO USE YOUR PACKAGE!**

Looking after yourself is just as important as looking after others.

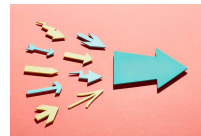
As part of our commitment to staff wellbeing, don't forget that you have access to a wide range of support through our **Health & Wellbeing Package**

## What's included in the Health & Wellbeing Package?

*Details can be found on the poster here.....*

## How do I access these services?

*Please scan the QR codes with your smartphone*



We encourage you to take full advantage of these offerings. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to your school HR Leads.

Together, let's make health and wellbeing a priority in our workplace!

**Education Mutual**

# Health is on the way

A wide-ranging of comprehensive services at your fingertips

Gold Trusted Service Award 2022 feefo

Gold Trusted Service Award 2024 feefo

Services included:

- Flu Vaccines
- Maternity + Paternity Support
- Bereavement
- Men's Mental Wellbeing
- Stress Management
- Financial Wellbeing Coaching
- Counselling
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Live Webinars
- Menopause: Supporting Staff
- Menopause: Navigating your personal Journey
- Menopause Counselling
- Physiotherapy
- 24/7 GP Service
- Nurse Support Service
- Surgical Assistance

**Browse the services available:** Please scan this QR Code with your smartphone to read our services in further detail

**How do I access these services?** Please scan this QR Code with your smartphone to complete a Healthcare Request Form

## Our Vision



### WE ARE A TRUST WHICH:

- puts no limits on what we believe young people can achieve; creating opportunities and meeting individual needs so that our young people can live rich and fulfilled lives
- Values our staff and is committed to providing an environment which creates opportunities for professional growth and development
- has the courage and drive to challenge and champion change to enable equal opportunity and equity for all
- influences, respects, listens and acts and, in turn, is known as a voice to listen to, act upon and respect.

### OUR SEVEN KEY DRIVERS:

1. **Ensuring an excellent education** with a focus on meeting individual needs and where no limits are placed on achievement
2. **Young people are prepared for the future;** for meaningful and suitable employment, self- advocacy and independent living
3. **Leadership at all levels** including governance supports our academies and challenges them to better meet the needs of our children and young people
4. **Investing in our staff** means that they are well equipped and passionate about providing the very best for all our young people
5. **Providing a safe, sustainable and stimulating environment** in which we push the boundaries of what is possible through harnessing the power of edtech
6. **Collaboration and sharing** are central to our belief that we all learn from each other
7. **Financial decisions** are always made with our children and young people at the centre of our thinking which results in value for money



Merry Christmas  
and a very  
Happy New Year!

From all the Central Team

Kate

Ruth S

Mike

Mikaela

Kim

Ruth B

Catherine

Irina

Darren

Yana

