



Newsletter

March 2026

Issue No. 4

We have reached what has been a short but incredibly busy term, it is an absolute pleasure to reflect on the many achievements and memorable moments across our school community.

A strong focus has been placed on supporting our GCSE and A Level students, with a wide range of targeted interventions helping to ensure they feel confident and well prepared for the challenges ahead. Alongside this, our celebration assemblies have recognised the dedication and commitment of all students, highlighting excellent attendance and exemplary behaviour, something we are immensely proud of.

This newsletter is packed with just some of the many highlights from the term. From impressive sporting successes to the creativity and enthusiasm shown during World Book Day, our students have continued to shine in all areas of school life. We are also delighted to celebrate our Jack Petchey Award winners, who really do embody the values of our community.

One of the standout moments this term has been the incredible sense of community spirit, with students and staff coming together to raise an outstanding £2000 for Comic Relief. This achievement reflects the kindness and teamwork that make our school such a special place.

As we look ahead to the Summer Term, we are excited for all the opportunities it will bring and look forward to building on this term's successes.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Damian Lee
Headteacher



Damian Lee
Headteacher

In this Issue:

- Young Authors
- Film Students
- Hampton Court Palace Visit
- Heart Dissection with Year 6
- Science Update
- Axolotis
- Film Maker Masterclass
- February Breakfast Club
- Gold D of E
- Safer Internet Day
- Biology Revision
- Park Run
- Jack Petchey Speak Out
- Art - Teachers Artist of the half term
- Campeones Del Duolingo
- Music Newsletter
- Yr 13 Physics Trip
- Science Week
- Jack Petchey
- MediaMag Competition
- Drama Update
- Omar Haroon Visit
- French Spelling Bee
- Comic Relief
- Library News
- Mayflower Spelling Bee
- Safer Schools App
- University Of Cambridge Visit
- Spanish Spelling Bee
- Mayflower Chess Winners
- Sports Report

Celebrating Our Young Authors!

We are delighted to announce that several of our talented Year 7 students have been selected to have their short stories published in an anthology as part of the Stranger Sagas writing competition.

This exciting challenge asked students to imagine what might happen when an ordinary day suddenly turns upside down. With a strict 100-word limit, students had to carefully craft their stories, choosing precise and powerful vocabulary to bring their ideas to life. This format encouraged them to think creatively about plot, description and atmosphere, while also building confidence in their writing.

We are incredibly proud of the students who embraced the challenge and let their imaginations run wild. Their work will now appear in a published anthology, allowing them to see their creativity in print — a fantastic achievement and something to treasure for years to come.

Competitions like Stranger Sagas show just how powerful storytelling can be. They give students the opportunity to explore the weird, the wonderful and the mysterious, while developing their skills as young writers.

Congratulations to all of our published authors – we cannot wait to read your strange and spectacular sagas!

Sebastian M

Norah S, Freya W, Stanley C, Honor P, Alaia B, Maddie G, Harry E, Charlie R, Donnie L, Sophia K, Cairo B, Joseph B, Oliver T, Leo M, Freya B, Liam C, Frankie P, Hayden S, Niamh W, Jake F, Dylan L

Miss Kavanagh

Film Students Attend BFI Revision Day

Year 12 and Year 13 Film Studies students recently attended the KS5 Film Studies Revision Day at the BFI Southbank.

The event brought together A Level Film Studies students for a day of revision and film analysis, led by experts from the British Film Institute. Through a series of engaging presentations, film clips and discussions, students explored key areas of the A Level course and revisited important ideas from the film studies theoretical framework.

The sessions focused on developing analytical skills, strengthening the use of film terminology, and helping students apply critical ideas such as auteur theory, spectatorship, ideology, and expressionism versus realism to the films they have studied.

It was also an excellent opportunity for students to experience learning in a professional cinema environment and to meet other young people who share a passion for film.

The trip was an enjoyable and valuable experience for both Year 12 and Year 13 students as they continue their Film Studies courses.



Miss Kavanagh

History A Level Trip to Hampton Court Palace

In March, Year 12 and Year 13 students had the opportunity to visit Hampton Court Palace to support their study of the Tudor and Stuart periods. The visit brought the Tudor period, particularly the reign of Henry VIII, to life. The Tudor kitchens and Great Hall highlighted the scale of the royal court and some of the ways in which the Tudors maintained control. Students also took part in a Tudor A Level workshop on rebellions, deepening their understanding of this aspect of the Year 13 course.

Students explored later developments under William III, linking to their Year 12 study of the Glorious Revolution. The trip was an enjoyable and valuable opportunity for students to experience History beyond the classroom.



Miss Hughes

Heart dissection visit to Brightside Primary Year 6

In March, the Biology Department visited Brightside Primary School to deliver an engaging science session for their Year 6 pupils. The session focused on the importance of the heart and how it functions as part of the circulatory system.

During the visit, we explained the heart's key functions, its role in pumping blood around the body, and its basic structure. Using a real heart for demonstration, we showed pupils the different parts of the heart, including the chambers and major blood vessels, helping them to visualise how blood moves through it.

The Year 6 pupils were highly engaged and asked a range of thoughtful questions. To make the experience even more memorable, they were also given the opportunity to handle the heart themselves if they wished, which many found fascinating.



It was a fantastic opportunity to support the pupils' learning and to spark curiosity about science. Pupils from Brightside Primary School were enthusiastic and respectful throughout the session, making it a very enjoyable visit.

Science Faculty News



The Science Faculty would like to extend its sincere thanks to the PTFA for their incredibly generous donation of new laboratory equipment. Their continued support plays a vital role in enriching the learning experience of our students and helping us bring science to life in meaningful and engaging ways.

Thanks to this kind contribution, we have been able to enhance our practical resources with a range of high-quality equipment, including microscopes, multimeters, pH meters, digital thermometers and a hotplate stirrer. These tools are essential in supporting hands-on learning across all key stages, allowing students to develop their investigative skills and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts through practical experimentation.



The new microscopes are already enabling students to explore the microscopic world in greater detail, while the multimeters and pH meters are providing valuable opportunities for accurate measurement and data collection. The addition of digital thermometers and the hotplate stirrer further supports our chemistry and physics practical work, ensuring students can carry out experiments safely and effectively using modern equipment.

We are incredibly grateful to the PTFA for their generosity and commitment to supporting science education within our school. Their donation will have a lasting impact, inspiring curiosity, fostering enthusiasm and helping our students to develop the skills they need for future scientific study and careers.

Thank you once again for your continued support.



Mr Griffiths

Marshmallow & Shadow: Small Creatures, Big Science Conversations

Marshmallow and Shadow continue to be a favourite feature of Lab 17, but they are more than just fascinating animals to observe. These remarkable axolotls provide an excellent starting point for scientific discussion across several key stages of biology.

For KS3 students, axolotls offer an engaging example of adaptations. Unlike most amphibians, they remain aquatic for their entire lives and retain their larval features into adulthood, including their feathery external gills. These structures increase surface area and allow them to extract oxygen directly from the water. This sparks discussions about how organisms are adapted to their environments and how these adaptations support survival.

At GCSE, the same features become a gateway to deeper biological ideas such as diffusion and gas exchange. Axolotls rely heavily on diffusion to obtain oxygen: their external gills and permeable skin provide large surfaces across which oxygen can move from the water into their blood. Observing the gentle movement of their gill filaments is a useful visual reminder of how organisms maximise surface area and maintain concentration gradients to make diffusion efficient.

For A Level Biology, our axolotls help bring ecosystem processes to life, particularly when discussing the nitrogen cycle. Like all aquatic animals, axolotls excrete nitrogenous waste (primarily ammonia) into the water. In the aquarium's filter, beneficial bacteria convert this ammonia first into nitrite and then nitrate in a process known as nitrification. Plants then absorb this nitrate and convert it into protein to support growth. This miniature ecosystem mirrors the nitrogen transformations that occur in natural aquatic environments and highlights the important role of microorganisms and plants in recycling nutrients.

From adaptations and physiology to ecosystem processes, Marshmallow and Shadow demonstrate how a simple classroom aquarium can support rich scientific discussion across the curriculum. They remind us that sometimes the most effective prompts for learning are right in front of us.

Mrs Poole



Masterclass with Oscar-Winning Filmmaker

Year 13 student Jack A recently attended a film masterclass day at the University of Suffolk, featuring Oscar-winning filmmaker Mat Kirkby and character development expert Dr Kira-Anne Pelican.

During the event, Jack learned about the process behind Kirkby's Academy Award-winning short film *The Phone Call*, gaining insight into how short films are written, directed and distributed. Jack also took part in a practical session in which students worked in teams to shoot a short scene using professional, industry-standard equipment, learning techniques such as the 180-degree rule.

The day also included a session on building complex characters using psychological approaches to storytelling, followed by a Q&A where students could ask questions about careers in film and television. The experience gave Jack valuable insight into filmmaking and the creative skills needed to work in the screen industry.

Miss Kavanagh

February Half-Term Breakfast Club



After the success of our morning Breakfast Club and October Holiday Club in the Progress Centre, we are extending our provision to cover more of the school holidays. Students were invited to join us for a morning celebrating Chinese New Year and making new friends.

Thanks to our friends at the PTFA, we spent some time discussing new games we would like to order with their generous contribution – Connect 4 and Uno remain firm favourites. We also tried our hand at making Fortune Tellers and laughed a lot at our Fortune Cookie Fortunes, particularly enjoying the ‘Be Kind’ message.

Breakfast Club runs every day from 8am during term time, and we will be celebrating all things Easter on Tuesday 7th April.

Mrs Paddock, Mrs Coulson, Mrs Thorogood

Gold Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

We are incredibly proud to celebrate the success of our students who have achieved their Gold Duke of Edinburgh’s Award this year. This prestigious award represents the highest level of the programme and recognises exceptional commitment, resilience and determination.



Over many months, students dedicated their time to volunteering, developing new skills, improving their physical fitness, and completing challenging expeditions. Their journeys tested teamwork, perseverance and leadership, culminating in the final Gold expedition and the successful completion of all required sections. This experience fosters confidence, independence and lifelong skills that will benefit them well beyond school.

Congratulations to all our Gold Award recipients on this outstanding achievement. We look forward to celebrating your success and seeing all that you accomplish in the future.

Safer Internet Day

As part of Safer Internet Day, our Digital Leaders planned and organised an online workshop for one of our local primary schools. This year’s theme, “Smart Tech, Safe Choices: Exploring the Safe and Responsible Use of AI”, formed the focus of the session.

The Digital Leaders delivered a presentation to Year 6 pupils, explaining what artificial intelligence is and discussing both the benefits and potential risks associated with its use. Following the assembly, pupils worked in small groups to take part in a range of activities designed to promote safe and responsible online behaviour.

The Year 6 students were highly engaged throughout the session and responded enthusiastically to learning from older students, asking thoughtful questions about how to stay safe online.



Miss McDowell

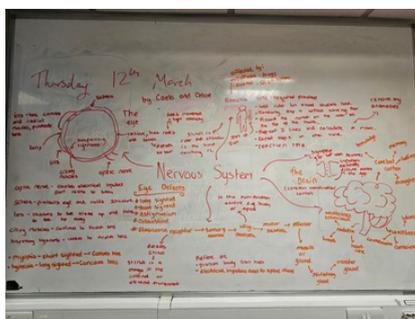
Year 11 Biology Revision

As GCSE season approaches, our Year 11 Separate Biology students have been working hard to prepare for their upcoming exams through a range of focused revision lessons in school. Their commitment and enthusiasm have been evident, with students making excellent use of a variety of effective revision strategies. A part of their preparation has been the creation of detailed mind maps covering the entire Biology specification. These have allowed students to make clear links between topics, organise complex information, and build a deeper understanding of key concepts.

In addition, students have been regularly practising exam-style questions and using mark schemes to refine their answers. This approach has helped them become more familiar with the structure of GCSE questions and develop the skills needed to maximise their marks.

Over the past two years, students have also built up a comprehensive set of flashcards, providing them with a valuable bank of revision materials. These resources have supported regular retrieval practice and helped to strengthen long-term memory.

We are incredibly proud of the effort Year 11 Separate Biologists have shown and wish them every success as they approach their GCSE exams.



Miss Le Grys and Miss Alderman

Mayflower students volunteering success



Many of our Mayflower students take part in the Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Each developmental award includes challenges in a skill, fitness and volunteering. Several students volunteer at Billericay parkrun and Lake Meadows Junior parkrun each weekend.

These events are popular with students as they provide a variety of roles, including marshalling, timekeeping, and scanning participant barcodes, and play a key role in helping both events to thrive.

In March, two Mayflower students completed their respective volunteer challenges at Billericay parkrun. Alfie in Year 9 completed his Bronze Award, while Sophie in Year 13 finished an impressive Gold challenge. This year-long undertaking involved nearly every volunteer role at the event, including that of Run Director!



Volunteer Event Director David Hayday said, "We love having DofE students involved in the event, and it's wonderful to see their skills and confidence grow over their time with us. Alfie and Sophie were great examples of volunteers who really help make the parkrun experience enjoyable for the residents of Billericay. It is particularly pleasing when we see students return – to volunteer, walk or run – long after their challenge has finished."

Jack Petchey Speak Out - Central Essex Regional Final

We are incredibly proud of Peniel O in Year 10, who represented Mayflower High School at the Central Essex Regional Final of the Jack Petchey "Speak Out" Challenge, held at Moulsham High School. The event was judged by a distinguished panel, including a Top 5 finalist from the 2025 series of The Apprentice, alongside the Mayoress of Chelmsford, making the occasion even more special and competitive.

Peniel competed against students from 16 other schools across the region, following an initial programme in which an impressive 1,095 students from across Essex were trained in public speaking. To reach this stage is a significant achievement, and Peniel rose to the occasion with confidence and poise.

Her delivery was truly outstanding, demonstrating clarity, passion and a strong connection with her audience. She spoke with maturity and presence well beyond her years, embodying the values of effective communication that the programme promotes.

Miss Kavanagh

Artist of the Half Term

Each half term, every teacher in the Art Department nominates a student they believe has shown excellent effort both in and outside of lesson time. Congratulations to Mia P, Esme P, Elliana W and Thomas L for this half term's nominations, recognising the outstanding work they have produced so far! We are very excited to see what you all achieve as the year continues.



MIA P 7F2



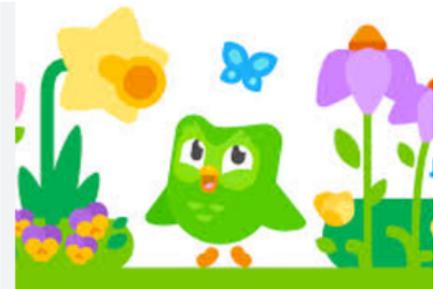
ESME P 10B1



ELLIANA W 7F2



THOMAS L 8R1



Campeones Del Duolingo

¡Es Semana Santa! Here are the Duolingo results....

1st Place: Mrs England Year 9 Manager 6546 XP points

2nd Place: Amy A 8R1 6485 XP points

3rd Place: Grace B 7R1 6207 points

4th Place: Isabella S 9B2 3198 XP points

5th Place: Amber H 10R1 2841 XP

¡Where are the boys? The competition starts again from Zero in April for the final competition of the year!



¡Buena suerte!

Music Department Newsletter - March 2026

We are extremely grateful to our PTFA for helping us improve the resources available to our musicians in the band room. Thanks to their significant investment, we now have a full complement of right-handed and left-handed bass guitars, as well as brand new individual Boss Katana:Go amplifiers, which have a much smaller footprint compared to traditional amplifiers.

In Mrs Darvill's lessons, the Year 7 musicians are continuing their work on riffs, learning 'The Final Countdown'. Year 8 are developing their skills in Ground Bass with the song 'Bittersweet Symphony', and Year 9 are exploring song structure through a new piece for this year, the Whitney Houston classic 'I Wanna Dance With Somebody'. It has been fantastic hearing them perform these pieces as class bands!

The Year 8 students currently working with Mr Tuck on Ableton Live have been learning how to compose music for 8-bit video games as part of a new project. By understanding the limitations of this type of composition, they have been using processes such as arpeggiators and audio effects like redux to create this instantly recognisable genre. The first batch of compositions is now coming through, and we hope to share these soon!

Mr Huxford's classes have been singing excellently, with Year 7 learning about Oratorios through 'Hallelujah Chorus', Year 8 singing songs from Jukebox Musicals, and Year 9 honing their MC skills by writing their own raps.

We have an exciting Vocal Concert on Friday 1 May that our singers in FLOW are working towards. We look forward to sharing ticket information at the start of the Summer Term!



Year 13 Physics trip to Gt. Baddow

As part of the A Level Physics course, our Year 13 physicists had the opportunity to visit Great Baddow High School to handle radioactive sources. To receive their certificate demonstrating that they meet the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) for the A Level Physics course, students must prove they can safely remove, position and return a source of ionising radiation.

To complete this, we were fortunate to use Great Baddow High School's Cobalt-60 cup source. This material emits both beta and gamma radiation, so a well-planned risk assessment, completed and followed by the students, was essential to ensure all necessary safety standards were met. Students then had the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to handle the source safely and take readings using a Geiger-Müller tube, measuring the count rate at a range of distances and illustrating the inverse square law relationship.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to the wonderful Science Department at Great Baddow for allowing us to take our students there for the afternoon. We look forward to continuing this valuable experience in the future.

Mr. Cerson



British Science Week 2026

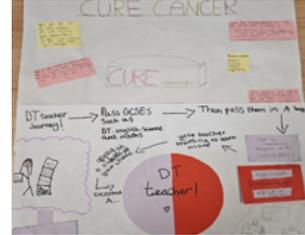
British Science Week brought excitement to Year 7 and 8 students at Mayflower High School, with a range of engaging activities designed to spark interest in STEM and inspire students to continue exploring science.

Students took part in hands-on challenges that encouraged them to think like scientists and engineers. By designing solutions, testing ideas and solving problems, they developed key skills while applying their scientific knowledge in creative ways.

A key focus of the week was challenging stereotypes in science. Students explored what it means to be a scientist and discussed how science is for everyone, regardless of gender or background. These conversations encouraged students to reflect on their own perceptions and recognise the importance of diversity in STEM, helping them to see themselves in these roles.



Photos of activities produced by students



Mayflower High School is delighted to be part of the Jack Petchey Award Scheme. Over the course of the year, nine of our students will receive this prestigious award. The Achievement Award recognises students who go above and beyond, both within the school and in the local community.

Each student receives £300 to spend within the school, which the award winners choose.

Our six award winners this term are:

Ellie has won her award for volunteering at a local dance group that supports adults with learning difficulties. She has provided one-to-one support to individuals at the group, making a real difference to their experience. Ellie has also raised money for the dance group, further demonstrating her dedication and commitment.



Thomas won his award for his outstanding dedication and positive attitude. He regularly volunteers at Billericay parkrun and assists at school sports events, often at weekends. Many people have commented on how helpful and enthusiastic he is. Thomas also showed great determination by completing the regional finals race despite being injured and in significant pain, making him a real credit to the school.

Ralph has shown fantastic commitment by volunteering in the Dyslexia Centre over the past few terms, helping to run the Lego Workshop at Wednesday and Friday lunchtimes. After sharing his interest in chess, he decided to start a Chess Club, the success of which was highlighted in our Ofsted report. Ralph has been brilliant with the younger Year 7 students and has supported other year groups in learning and improving their chess skills. His contribution has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated by both staff and students.



Emily has made an outstanding contribution to the Mayflower community throughout her seven years at the school. As a dedicated member of the Digital Leaders Team since Year 7, she has played a key role in promoting online safety through assemblies, workshops and activities, including supporting local primary schools. Emily also gives her time to the Eco Club, helping to raise awareness. Her enthusiasm, leadership and willingness to volunteer make her an inspiring role model and a valued member of the school community.

Sam is a dedicated member of the Student Librarian team who gives his time generously to support the Library. He visits every day, regularly asking what jobs need doing and always offering help to others. Sam has helped build bookshelves, reorganise shelves and sort books for sales, often giving up his lunchtimes to do so without being asked. His initiative and willingness to help make him a real pleasure to have on the team.



Bella made an invaluable contribution to the school production by choreographing large dance numbers and planning and leading rehearsals with casts of over 20 students. She showed great leadership and dedication throughout the process, acting as an excellent role model for younger year groups. Her enthusiasm and creativity helped inspire many budding dancers and choreographers, playing a key role in the success of the production.

If you would like to nominate a student please email me at educate@mayflowerhigh.essex.sch.uk and signpost it for the attention of Mrs Cooke.

Year 13 Psychology

Our Year 13 Psychology students recently travelled to London for a highly productive Tutor2u Grade Booster workshop. The session was specifically designed to extend their subject knowledge and sharpen their exam technique, providing invaluable insights into deconstructing complex questions and mastering high-level evaluation.



The experience was both interactive and engaging, moving beyond the traditional classroom setting to bring the curriculum to life through collaborative activities. It was a thoroughly enjoyable day for everyone involved, leaving our students feeling energised and well-prepared as they approach their final examinations.

MediaMag Production Competition

We are delighted to share that Film Studies students at Mayflower High School are taking part in the prestigious MediaMag Production Competition 2026, run by the English and Media Centre. This national competition, now in its 13th year, celebrates the creativity and talent of young filmmakers across the UK. This year's theme, "Reflections", offers students an exciting and flexible starting point, encouraging them to explore personal, creative and thought-provoking ideas through moving image. Our students are currently developing a range of original productions, including short films, documentaries and experimental pieces. With a maximum running time of five minutes, the competition challenges students to think carefully about storytelling, editing and visual style to create impactful work. We are incredibly proud of our Film Studies students for taking on this challenge with such enthusiasm and initiative. Their willingness to engage in a national competition outside of their core coursework demonstrates real commitment to developing their creative and technical skills. The competition also offers a fantastic opportunity for recognition, with shortlisted entries being showcased at a special screening at BFI Southbank in July. We look forward to seeing the final productions and celebrating the hard work, creativity and ambition our students continue to demonstrate.

Miss Kavanagh

Drama Department

LAMDA Classes at Mayflower

We are very excited to welcome The Drama Centre to Mayflower, providing after-school LAMDA classes every Friday. These classes are open to all students from Year 7 to Year 13 and run from 3.30–4.30pm in the Drama Department.

The Drama Centre specialises in delivering weekly LAMDA classes, teaching pupils how to become strong, confident and resilient performers and public speakers. These skills not only empower students but also provide them with valuable life skills.

For more information or to join the classes, please visit the Drama Centre website: <https://www.thedramacentre.co.uk/>

We teach
LAMDA
— Exams & Qualifications

**THE
DRAMA
CENTRE**
Public Speaking
and Acting

Curriculum

Year 7 have been exploring the play *The Terrible Fate of Humpty Dumpty*, learning about flashbacks and different structural features. Year 8 have been experimenting with abstract theatre and have particularly enjoyed puppet making. Year 9 are preparing for GCSE by studying the styles of different theatre practitioners. Year 10 have been focusing on script work and building character, while Year 11 have been working towards their practical exams.

Homework

All KS3 classes are set half-termly homework tasks on Google Classroom. Many of these are practical and creative, and we encourage students to enjoy some screen-free tasks. We continue to be impressed by the diversity and creativity of the ideas submitted.

Studio Lighting

We now have fully working stage lighting in our Drama Studio, made possible thanks to two Jack Petchey Awards. The Year 11 practical exams on 19 and 26 March were the first time we used this with an audience, and we all agreed that the improvements to practical work are significant! We look forward to using this with all classes throughout the Summer Term.

Omar Haroon Visit

We were delighted to welcome back former student, Omar Haroon, who recently visited to share his journey since leaving school. Omar spoke openly about his experiences with dyslexia and how, with the right support and determination, he has gone on to access a course in Film Studies, in preparation for a degree in Film and Media.

During the visit, Omar reassured students that having dyslexia does not limit potential—it simply means learning in a different way. He encouraged everyone to embrace the support available, whether that's teaching assistants, assistive technology, or extra time, and to never feel discouraged about asking for help.

"Accepting support was the turning point for me," Omar shared. "Once I understood how I learn best, everything started to click."

Students found the talk inspiring and relatable, gaining both practical advice and confidence. Omar's message was clear: believe in yourself, use the support around you, and don't be afraid to learn differently—success can follow in many forms.

We thank Omar for returning and inspiring the next generation.



Mrs Thorogood

Year 7 French Spelling Bee: A "Magnifique" Success!

Our Year 7 linguists took center stage today for an impressive French Spelling Bee. These students went above and beyond, putting in extra revision time to master their vocabulary and compete with flair.

Our Fantastic Participants: Clementine B, Alice B, Laurel B, Scarlett M, Ivy D, Aasi G, Sophie C, and Olivia R.

The Results: After a spirited competition, we are proud to crown Ivy D. as our winner! Ivy walked away with a £10.00 voucher for her top-tier spelling skills.

Every participant earned a celebratory sticker and will be awarded a special French badge for their hard work. Bravo to Ivy and a huge well done to everyone who took part!

The SEND Team joined forces with the Sixth Form to embrace the theme Through the Ages for Comic Relief 2026. Channelling our favourite 80s divas, we donned leg warmers and jelly bracelets, fingerless gloves and day-glo beads, with some students even sporting iconic 80s hairstyles.

Mrs Paddock and the TA Team

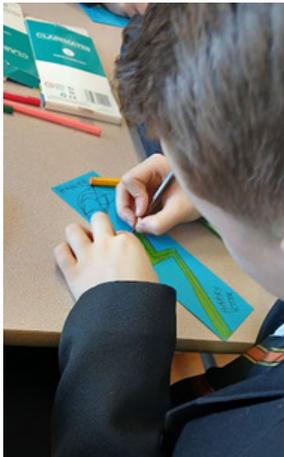
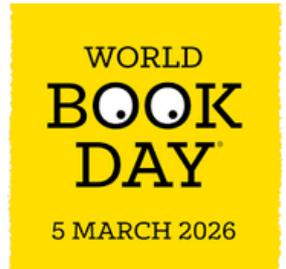


Library News

March is a busy month for book lovers, with World Book Day taking place on 5 March!

We had a wonderful day celebrating, with Year 7 students taking part in book-related activities in the Hall throughout the day. Staff decorated their doors with book-themed displays across the school, and a used book sale was held in the Library at break and lunchtime. It was truly fantastic to see both students and staff getting so excited for World Book Day.

Mrs Sayer



Mayflower High School Spelling Bee 2026: A Celebration of Excellence and Integrity

On 28 January 2026, Mayflower High School proudly hosted its highly anticipated annual Spelling Bee Final—an event that continues to grow in both scale and significance within the school’s Literacy Programme. This year’s competition was a resounding success, drawing a supportive audience of over thirty parents, guardians and siblings.

From an initial pool of more than 250 Year 7 and Year 8 students, just 18 outstanding contestants progressed to the final stage. Reaching this level is a commendable achievement, reflecting not only their linguistic ability but also their dedication, perseverance and passion for literacy.

The atmosphere throughout the event was one of encouragement and mutual respect. Every contestant demonstrated remarkable composure and integrity, embodying the very best qualities of Mayflower High School. Each participant was a credit to themselves, their families, and the school community.

The final rounds were fiercely contested, with the competition becoming particularly intense in the later stages. The audience was treated to gripping “sudden death” rounds that kept everyone on the edge of their seats. Ultimately, Thomas L emerged as the overall winner, securing his place on the prestigious Spelling Bee School Shield. Ronnie T achieved a well-deserved second place, while George N claimed third.

All three top performers were awarded individual trophies and Amazon vouchers in recognition of their exceptional achievement. Every finalist also received a Spelling Bee certificate, celebrating their hard work and success in reaching the final.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all finalists, listed below in no particular order:

Blossom B, Ruhaibah Y, Jake W, Amy A, Violet T, Johanna S, Ayur K, Mia P, Will H, Thomas L, Phoenix G, Yousuf G, Henry D, Stanley C, Emily B, Eliza B, Ronnie T, George N.

A special thank you goes to our dedicated judges—Mrs Paddock, Mrs Sayer, and Miss McCulley—whose expertise and professionalism ensured a fair and smoothly run competition. We are also grateful to our Master of Ceremonies, Mr Kilvert, whose organisation and efficiency kept the event running seamlessly.

Finally, we would like to thank all the parents, carers and siblings who attended to support the contestants. Your presence contributed greatly to the warm and encouraging atmosphere that made the event so memorable.

The Spelling Bee Final remains one of the cornerstone events of our Literacy Programme, and this year’s success reinforces its importance within our school community. We look forward to building on this momentum in the years to come.

Congratulations once again to all involved—well done, everyone! We eagerly anticipate another fantastic competition next year.

M. Ncube

Safer Schools App

We'd like to let you know about a helpful (and free!) app that can support you and your child when they're online. The app, Safer Schools England, is packed with up-to-date advice on online safety, gaming, and mental health.

Designed for both parents/carers and students, the app offers practical tips and guidance to help keep children safe online. It also includes useful features such as audio playback, short surveys, and notifications with the latest advice and alerts.

To download the app, simply visit your app store and search for Safer Schools England. Once installed, you will be asked to enter your school name and a PIN:

- Parents/Carers: 5500

We also encourage students to download the app so they can access support and advice whenever they need it.

Student PINs are:

- KS3: 2952
- KS4: 3766
- KS5: 7650

Once logged in, we recommend enabling push notifications so you can stay up to date with the latest information.

As a school, we are committed to helping students make safe and informed choices online, and this app is a great way to support that at home too.

The graphic features the Safer Schools England logo on the left, which consists of a shield with two stylized figures and a rose. To the right of the logo is the text 'SAFER SCHOOLS ENGLAND' in large, bold, blue and purple letters. Below this, it says 'To find out more information on how to be safe online, download the Safer School England App.' and 'You can sign in using the QR code or the codes that are for your Key Stage.' In the center, three smartphones are shown displaying the app's interface. On the right side, there are four QR codes arranged in a 2x2 grid. Below each QR code is a key stage or user type and its corresponding PIN: KS3 2952, KS4 3766, KS5 7650, and Parent and Carers 5500. At the bottom left, there are icons for the App Store and Google Play. The Mayflower High School logo is in the top right corner of the graphic.

SAFER SCHOOLS ENGLAND

To find out more information on how to be safe online, download the Safer School England App.

You can sign in using the QR code or the codes that are for your Key Stage.

KS3
2952

KS4
3766

KS5
7650

Parent and Carers
5500

Mayflower High School

University of Cambridge Visit to Mayflower:

This half-term, we were delighted to welcome Jess Morrissey and Emma Leze from the University of Cambridge, who visited Mayflower to work with a group of selected students with strong academic potential and aspirations towards top universities.

Emma spoke to Year 10 students about post-16 choices, while Jess worked with Year 12 students on making competitive applications to high-tariff universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and other Russell Group institutions.

Our Year 10 students explored the importance of A-Level choices, career pathways, and the steps leading to different degree courses. They were also introduced to a range of subjects, from the familiar to the less well known, helping to broaden their understanding of future possibilities.

Year 12 students received guidance on how to stand out when applying to competitive universities. They discussed how to engage critically with super-curricular activities to strengthen applications and learned the ins and outs of the Oxbridge application process, including interviews. We thank Mr McSweeney for supporting and facilitating the Year 12 session.

Opportunities like this are invaluable in raising aspirations and supporting students—particularly those who may not have previously considered applying to universities such as Cambridge. It was especially encouraging to hear students leaving the sessions saying, “Maybe I could go somewhere like Cambridge.”

We would like to thank Jess and Emma for their engaging and thoughtful sessions, and for taking the time to answer students’ questions. We look forward to continuing our work with the University of Cambridge to ensure all students, regardless of background, can fulfil their potential.

Mr Huxford

Spanish Spelling Bee



Y7 Spanish Spelling 25th March

Huge well done to the below year 7 who participated in the Spanish spelling bee. Seb won first place with 9/10 and walked away with a £10 Amazon voucher.

Seb M 7R1 (first prize), Henry C 7F2 (joint 2nd), Emily B (joint 2nd), Norah S 7R1, Hayden S 7M1, Jack L 7M1, Lauren C 7B1, Harry E 7F2, Violet T 7B1, Liam C 7R1,) 7M2, Lara P 7M1, Logan Y 7F1

Mayflower Hosts First-Ever Chess Competition

This week, Mayflower hosted its first-ever chess competition, joined by Marshalls Park Academy, and it proved to be a fantastic afternoon filled with exciting games and friendly rivalry. Students came together to test their skills, with an impressive 40 games played over the course of the event.

The atmosphere was electric as players showcased sharp openings, clever tactics, and well-planned endgames. Fast-paced matches demanded intense concentration, offering spectators an exciting display of high-level play. Students demonstrated their ability to think several moves ahead and control the board, making this a valuable opportunity to challenge themselves, sharpen strategic thinking, and connect with fellow chess enthusiasts. Over the hour, participants displayed strong technical skill and admirable sportsmanship.

Both schools showed incredible talent, making the final results extremely close. The competition concluded with a dramatic head-to-head between each school's top player. Overall, Mayflower secured victory and took the trophy, with Ralph G triumphing in the final match.

It was an afternoon enjoyed by all, leaving players and spectators alike eagerly anticipating the next competition.



Cross Country News

Mayflower High School has enjoyed one of its best cross country seasons ever, with outstanding performances both as a team and individually.

Sophie B – International Cross Country!

Massive congratulations to Sophie B in Year 9, who has had an unprecedented season. Representing Essex Schools, she finished 10th out of 350 girls from 46 counties at the English Schools Cross Country Championships in Liverpool. Sophie also qualified to run for England at the SIAB International Competition, where she won Gold as part of the England Mixed Cross Country Relay Team.

Reaching this level requires incredible commitment and training. This half term alone, Sophie has competed in national-level races in Durham, Liverpool, Nottingham, and Bangor. She is also a member of the East of England Triathlon Team—a truly remarkable achievement!



Jake W - Outstanding Comeback

Jake W has had an inspiring season, overcoming early-season injury that caused him to miss the first race. Despite this setback, he bounced back brilliantly, finishing 9th at the Essex Schools Championships and qualifying to run for the county team.

Jake went on to represent Essex at the Southern Intercounties, finishing an excellent 33rd in what is traditionally a very tough race. His resilience, determination, and dedication have made this a truly remarkable season.

Mayflower Retains District Swimming Champions Trophy

Mayflower High School proudly retained the overall champions trophy at the District Swimming Gala, continuing an incredible 11-year winning streak. A fantastic team effort saw the squad win by a comfortable margin, taking on some excellent swimmers from across the Basildon District.

The team returned with an impressive 16 Gold, 9 Silver, and 10 Bronze medals, with Connor M winning three Golds being a particular highlight of the event.

Overall Top 3 Schools:

1. Mayflower – 419 pts
2. De La Salle – 337 pts
3. Billericay – 324 pts

Well done to all the swimmers for their skill, dedication, and teamwork!



Football Round Up

Year 7 Boys Football: Semi-Final Victory

After a 1–1 draw against Bromfords, the Year 7 boys thought they might have missed out on a semi-final play-off spot. However, with a couple of other results going their way, they qualified in 4th place, setting up a semi-final against league leaders Billericay School.

In what can only be described as the perfect away performance, Mayflower defeated Billericay 3–1 to secure their place in the final. Goals from Jake W, Noah N, and Jamie C gave the team a well-deserved 3–0 lead, with Billericay only managing a consolation goal in the last minute.

There were outstanding performances all over the pitch, with Josh A impressing on the wing and earning Man of the Match. This fantastic win set up the District Final at Billericay Town FC against Woodlands.



Year 7 Girls Football District Cup Final Victory

Our Year 7 girls' football team played in the District Cup Final against Billericay at Billericay Town Football Club. It was an exciting and highly anticipated match, with both teams eager to lift the trophy.

From the first whistle, Mayflower showed great determination and teamwork. We controlled possession well and created several early chances, which paid off when Ruby scored our opening goal, quickly followed by Amelie, giving us a strong finish to the first half.

Throughout the match, our defence remained solid, preventing the opposition from creating clear opportunities. Our attacking play continued to impress, resulting in two more goals in the second half. Each goal was the product of excellent passing, communication, and skill.

By the final whistle, Mayflower had secured an impressive 4–0 victory. The team celebrated together, proud of their performance and the hard work that led to winning the District Cup.

Overall, it was a fantastic achievement for the team, showcasing their teamwork, effort, and determination, and providing a memorable experience for everyone involved.



Year 7 Boys District Champions

Mayflower were crowned District Champions after an unforgettable 5–4 victory over Woodlands in a dramatic and hard-fought final. Having lost to the same opposition earlier in the season, the team were determined to make a strong start—and they certainly did.

Harley opened the scoring with a superb free kick after just five minutes, before Jake doubled the lead on 12 minutes with a well-worked counter-attack down the left following sustained pressure from Woodlands. Woodlands responded well, particularly down their left-hand side, pulling a goal back in the 22nd minute. Both teams battled fiercely for the remainder of the half, with Mayflower taking a 2–1 lead into the break. The second half saw Woodlands come out strongly, equalising just four minutes in before taking the lead on 43 minutes. Despite this setback, Mayflower kept their composure and pushed forward. In the 52nd minute, Archie equalised from a corner to make it 3–3.

With the game full of twists and turns, Noah struck with a long-range free kick to put Mayflower 4–3 up late on. Woodlands levelled from the penalty spot, but with extra time looming, Mayflower found one final moment—Harley scored with virtually the last kick of the game to secure a thrilling 5–4 win and the district title.

Year 8 Boys Football

The Year 8 boys have made excellent progress this year, losing only two competitive games throughout the season. They were unfortunate not to reach the District Cup Final, having beaten Billericay in the quarter-finals before narrowly losing to the eventual winners with a last-minute goal.



District Champions Again!

A late Freddie C winner in a 1–0 semi-final victory against league winners Beauchamps set up a District Cup Final against Woodlands.

Having already faced Woodlands twice in the league this year—winning once and losing once—we knew the final would be a tough encounter. The challenge became even greater when Mayflower went 1–0 down early in the first half, completely against the run of play. However, the deficit didn't last long, as Liam S capitalised on a defensive error, slotting a low, powerful shot past the goalkeeper to equalise.

After a period under pressure, Dom G wiggled his way into the penalty area before being fouled by the Woodlands defender. The skipper confidently took the resulting penalty and scored, putting Mayflower ahead. Liam S then extended the lead with his second goal, making it 3–1.

The moment of the match came from Zak S, who channelled his inner Dennis Bergkamp to score a stunning goal, sealing the victory for Mayflower.

Another successful year and more silverware for this talented squad—well done, lads!



Senior Boys Football

After a brilliant league performance, it was unfortunately not to be for our senior boys, who had high hopes in both the County Cup and District Cup.

A 1–1 draw in the District Cup Semi-Final against Beauchamps went to penalties. Despite creating the better chances—particularly in the second half—the boys were unable to score the much-desired second goal, and a couple of outstanding saves from the Beauchamps goalkeeper ultimately saw them through.

In the County Cups, both the Year 10 and Year 11 teams were knocked out in tough draws. Both teams had commendable runs, with the Year 11s giving everything in their final game together as a group.

We wish all the Year 11 boys the very best of luck in their future football careers. It was an unfortunate end to the season for a very talented side.

Essex Plate Champions!

Congratulations to the Year 9 Rugby team who triumphed in the County Cup Plate! Following convincing victories in the quarter-final against Sandon School and the semi-final against Bancrofts, the boys earned the privilege of playing under the lights at Barking Rugby Club in the final against Castle View School from Canvey Island.

The final was a thrilling contest, with the scoreline remaining within a single try for the entire match as the rugby flowed from end to end. Every player gave their all, contesting battles across the pitch. With just one point separating the teams and time running out, Dom G scored the decisive try under the posts, securing Mayflower's first County Cup Plate victory since 2015. Player of the Match was Liam S, who scored three phenomenal individual tries.

After the match, the team celebrated their well-earned victory with burgers and chips in the clubhouse. Our thanks go to Essex Schools Rugby for organising such a fantastic event—it was truly a memorable occasion for all involved.



Year 7 and 8 Rugby

Both the Year 8 and Year 7 rugby teams finished the season on a high, securing comfortable victories in their most recent fixtures.

The Year 8s defeated James Hornsby, with Charlie J finishing as the top scorer. A huge thank you to Mr Millham and Mr Harding for their excellent coaching and support throughout the season.

The Year 7s showcased their attacking strength in a dominant win against Beauchamps, with Jasper W, Jamie C, Ronnie P, and Matt S all scoring multiple tries. The team will round off their season this week with a final match against St Martins.



Panathlon Tenpin Bowling Competition

On 27th February, twelve students from Mayflower High School took part in a Tenpin Bowling competition at Hollywood Bowl, organised by the Panathlon Foundation, a national charity dedicated to creating inclusive sporting opportunities.

The atmosphere was full of excitement and friendly encouragement, with students cheering each other on and celebrating every good score. Across several rounds, some participants showcased impressive skill with strikes and spares, while others enjoyed improving their technique as the games progressed.

The trip offered more than just fun; it was a fantastic opportunity to develop coordination, concentration, teamwork, and confidence, as well as social skills. Everyone got involved, and the event was filled with laughter and positive moments.

