



Mayflower
High School



Newsletter

May 2026

Issue No. 5

The school year is flying by, we are now in the midst of Year 11 and Year 13 public examinations. This is an important milestone and I have been incredibly impressed with the maturity and determination they have shown throughout the revision and examination period so far. We wish them every success over the coming weeks and thank our staff and families for the continued support they are providing.

Alongside their preparations for exams, students across the school have continued to benefit from a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. This half term has included revision trips to Danbury, inspiring guest speakers, visits to the Comic Museum, and Duke of Edinburgh expeditions which have challenged and developed our students in so many positive ways. Our Year 7 students have also successfully completed their Bikeability training, building confidence and important life skills.

Year 10 students and their parents attended an information evening focused on what the students can expect in their final year before GCSE examinations, alongside a Higher Education Evening for our Year 12 students as they begin considering their next steps beyond sixth form.

While these wider opportunities are incredibly valuable, our core focus remains firmly on high-quality teaching and learning in the classroom. We continue to work hard to ensure every student receives the very best educational experience and support possible.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support throughout the term. I hope all of our students, families, and staff have a restful and enjoyable half term break.

Damian Lee
Headteacher



Damian Lee
Headteacher

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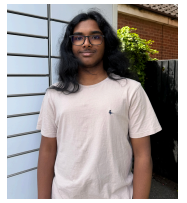
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Princes Trust

We are incredibly proud of Kenneth P. (Year 11), who has shown remarkable dedication and kindness by growing his hair for over two years to donate to the Little Princess Trust. This inspiring charity provides real-hair wigs to children and young people who have lost their hair due to cancer or other conditions.

Kenneth recently had his hair cut, marking the culmination of his thoughtful effort to make a difference to others. His generosity and commitment are a wonderful example to our school community, and we congratulate him on this fantastic achievement.

Mr Hurd and Mr Gardiner



Shadow and Marshmallow - Keeping their cool!

The axolotls have become much-loved members of our school community. Whether it's a quick visit between lessons or a quiet moment watching them glide through the water, they bring a calm and curious energy to the space. However, as we move into the warmer months, looking after them becomes a little more complicated than simply feeding and cleaning them.

Both Marshmallow and Shadow are much happier in cooler water. In fact, maintaining a stable, lower temperature is extremely important for their health and wellbeing. During the winter and spring, this happens quite naturally, but summer presents a new challenge. As classroom temperatures rise, so does the temperature of their tank and, unlike us, they cannot simply move somewhere cooler or switch on a fan.

Keeping their water at the correct temperature requires much closer monitoring at this time of year. We have already noticed that, even on mildly warm days, the tank can heat up faster than expected. This means more frequent checks, partial water changes, and careful management to avoid sudden temperature fluctuations, which can be stressful for them.

One of the best long-term solutions would be an aquarium chiller: a device specifically designed to keep tank water cool, even when the surrounding room is warm. Unfortunately, these can be quite expensive and are not something we currently have available. This is where we hope our wider school community may be able to help.

If anyone has experience with aquarium equipment, knows of a reasonably priced chiller, or even has one that is no longer needed, we would be incredibly grateful to hear from you. Supporting Marshmallow and Shadow through the summer will make a real difference to their comfort and wellbeing.

In the meantime, we will continue doing everything we can to keep their environment stable and safe. So, if you see someone carefully checking thermometers or adjusting the tank set-up, you will know why! As always, thank you to everyone who takes an interest in them. They may be small, but they are a big part of our school community.



Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions: A Term of Adventure and Achievement

This half-term has been a busy and exciting one for our participants in the The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, with students completing training, practice and qualifying expeditions across a variety of challenging locations.

Our Bronze students continued their DofE journey with training and qualifying expeditions at Riffhams. Students developed essential expedition skills, including map reading, campcraft and teamwork, while showing great resilience and determination throughout the experience. They completed the expedition successfully and should be extremely proud of their achievements.

Silver participants completed their practice expedition at Bures before taking on their qualifying expedition in Rendlesham Forest. Students demonstrated growing independence and confidence as they navigated routes, managed camp routines and worked collaboratively to overcome challenges along the way.

Meanwhile, our Gold students travelled to the Peak District for their practice expedition. The more demanding terrain and longer expedition days provided an excellent opportunity for students to further develop their endurance, leadership and navigation skills. Staff were particularly impressed by the positivity and perseverance shown throughout the expedition.

Across all award levels, students represented the school brilliantly and embraced every challenge with enthusiasm and maturity. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award continues to provide invaluable opportunities for personal growth, resilience and teamwork, and we are incredibly proud of all participants for their commitment and achievements.

A huge thank you goes to the staff, volunteers and parents who supported the expeditions and helped make these experiences possible.

Bronze



Silver



Gold

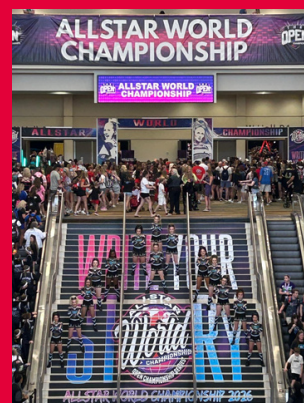


Black Ice Cheer

We are delighted to share the fantastic achievement of Jess C., who recently represented her team at the prestigious Allstar World Championship, held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando.

As Captain of Black Ice Dauntless, Jess led her team to an outstanding top 20 finish in an exceptionally competitive division featuring more than 40 teams, most of which were from the USA, where cheerleading is embedded within the school system. This makes the accomplishment even more impressive.

The event was an unforgettable experience, and Jess and her teammates demonstrated remarkable resilience, dedication and professionalism throughout. They are a truly exceptional group of athletes, and we are incredibly proud of all they have achieved on the world stage.



Comic Club's trip to the Cartoon Museum

On Friday 8th May, students who attend Comic Club had a wonderful day in London to visit the Cartoon Museum.

The day was filled with excitement, starting with our journey by train, followed by the underground, and a quick visit to Forbidden Planet to look at comics and memorabilia.

When we arrived at the Cartoon Museum, students had time to walk around the current exhibition 'The future was then' - exploring comics that looked into the future; did they get anything correct?

We then were lucky enough to take part in a comic book art workshop with their resident artist. The session taught us many things, including how to draw Batman and Wonder Woman in simple formats, the importance of eyebrows to show expression, and finally how to design your own cartoon character, which we then drew into a comic strip alongside the artist's own work.

The students were amazing, asking so many brilliant questions and working really hard on their artwork. It was a really fun day and everyone learnt so much.

Mrs Sayer



Year 7 Bikeability

We are pleased to be working with Essex County Council's Sustainable Travel Planning Team to support our students in developing a new School Travel Plan.

The aim of the plan is to reduce traffic around the school and improve road safety for our pupils. As part of this initiative, 30 Year 7 students recently completed their Level 3 Bikeability course, which is part of the national cycle training programme. This course helps young people build confidence and develop the skills needed to cycle safely on the road, including navigating more complex junctions and features such as roundabouts and traffic lights.

We strongly encourage students to consider cycling to school. We have access to bike racks where students can securely store their bikes during the school day. For safety, wearing a cycle helmet is strongly advised.

Mrs Cooke

Year 7 History

Students in 7X3 with Mrs Gower have now completed two fantastic history projects this year.

The first project challenged students to design and build either a motte-and-bailey castle or a stone keep castle, helping them to demonstrate their understanding of medieval defence and castle development. The creativity, effort and historical detail shown in these models was incredibly impressive.

Their second project was our Black Death Museum. Each student was assigned a different theme linked to the Black Death and had to create an exhibit for our class museum. Students explored topics such as medicine, religion, causes, treatments and the impact on medieval society, presenting their learning in highly creative and thoughtful ways.

The students have produced some truly impressive projects this year and should be extremely proud of the effort, imagination and historical understanding they have shown throughout both tasks. Well done, 7X3!



Unders 15's

Four Mayflower Year 10 boys have enjoyed double football success this year with their team, Billericay U15 Reds.

Ethan L. (C), Taylor H., Oscar J. and Ethan P., alongside their teammates, finished joint top of the Brentwood League U15 Division 3, securing promotion to Division 2 for next season.

In addition, after going 1–0 down in the first half of a closely contested cup final held at Billericay Stadium, the team showed excellent resilience to fight back and win 2–1. This result saw them complete a league and cup double for the 2025/26 season.

What a fantastic achievement — well done, boys!



GCSE RS London Places of Worship visit

On Wednesday 15th April, our GCSE students in Years 10 and 11 took part in our first London Places of Worship trip. The morning began with a visit to St Paul's Cathedral, where students enjoyed a tour focusing on the history of the building and its impact on the surrounding area. This was followed by a question-and-answer session with one of the priests, with an emphasis on how Christianity addresses thematic issues in the world today. Following this, students visited the Buddhapadipa Temple. Here, they were able to immerse themselves in a traditional Tibetan Buddhist temple, with practitioners speaking to them about the Buddha's key teachings, along with the significance of the artefacts and religious structures they encountered. Students found both experiences highly supportive of their GCSE studies and benefited greatly from the immersion in different faith traditions. A big well done to our students for how well they conducted themselves on the trip; they represented the very best of Mayflower High School.

Mr M Wallen & Miss C McGroder



Year 7 Antarctic Flags Project

Congratulations to the Year 7 winners whose entries for the Antarctic Day Flags Project 2024 were chosen to represent the school. Their flags have made it all the way to Antarctica!

Your flag was taken to Antarctica by Joe Jackson, Third Officer on the RRS Sir David Attenborough. This is one of the UK's research ships and has undertaken many voyages around Antarctica and the sub-Antarctic. To find out more about the ship and where it is currently located, visit:

[RRS Sir David Attenborough information](#)



Antarctica Day 2025

This certificate is awarded to: Mayflower High School
For designing inspirational flags "in the interests of all mankind!"

Your flag travelled to

Neumayer Channel, Antarctica

Latitude

64°47' S

Longitude

63°27' W

Flag bearer

Joe Jackson, Third Officer, RRS Sir David Attenborough

Signed: Fiona Sheriff & Rose Edmondson

Antarctic Flags Project Co-ordinators, on behalf of UKPN



Vocal Concert - Friday 1 May 2026

On a beautifully warm, sunny evening, we welcomed a fantastic audience to the main hall to share the vocal music we have been working on this year. The evening featured extremely accomplished performances from our main vocal groups FLOW, Barbershop and All The Singer Ladies, covering a huge range of sacred, secular and popular music from the late 16th century to the present day. Some of the Year 7s who attended the opera trip to see La traviata in January sang with FLOW to close the first half with a performance of the Brindisi drinking song, helping to encourage the audience to buy refreshments from our wonderful PTFA during the interval.



It was lovely to welcome back our alumni singers, Flown Away, for this concert. Some of these singers left Mayflower High School over 10 years ago but still meet every few months with Mr Tuck for rehearsals. One alumni singer even flew home the evening before from their home in Spain to perform at the concert! They sang some of the pieces with FLOW as well as performing a selection of works as their own ensemble. The concert also featured a variety of solos and duets, and it was lovely to see performers from Year 7 through to Year 13 taking part. A member of the audience remarked on how positive it was to see such a strong sense of community across all age groups, both performing and attending. As a department, we are very proud of how hard our musicians work, and it was especially pleasing to celebrate their performances on such a wonderful evening.

Legend Night 4 - Tickets Available Now!

It is nearly time for the next instalment of our Legend Night series! For those of you who are new to Mayflower High School, or haven't attended a Legend Night performance yet, here is a quick run-down of what they are.

The Legend Nights explore a musical legend of some kind, whether that is an artist or a musical event. So far we have covered Motown, The Beatles and David Bowie, so this year's Legend Night is an exploration of a date: 24 September 1991. This was the day that five important albums were all released:

- Nirvana – Nevermind
- Red Hot Chili Peppers – Blood Sugar Sex Magik
- A Tribe Called Quest – The Low End Theory
- Pixies – Trompe le Monde
- Primal Scream – Screamadelica

The Legend Night will feature performances of songs from across these five albums, either as traditional covers or arrangements in different styles. The show will also include narration through documentary clips and interviews exploring why these albums are so significant. Audiences at previous events have left astounded by the quality of the performances, as well as what they have learned about the music along the way.

Clearly, this is an event not to be missed and demand for tickets is expected to be high, so make sure you purchase yours before they sell out, as this is a one-night-only performance!

Tickets are priced at £8 and are available now via:

[TryBooking – Legend Night 4 Tickets](#)

Legend Night 4: 24 September 1991 will be performed on Friday 3 July, starting at 7.00pm and finishing at approximately 9.40pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

Aseptic Technique in A Level Biology

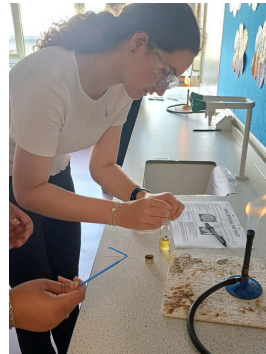
Students studying AQA A Level Biology recently completed the required practical on aseptic technique — an important method used in microbiology to prevent contamination when working with bacteria.

During the practical, students learnt how to safely transfer microorganisms using sterile equipment and careful laboratory procedures. This included flaming inoculating loops, keeping Petri dish lids closed as much as possible, and working near a Bunsen burner to reduce airborne contamination.

The investigation helped students develop key practical skills while also reinforcing the importance of accuracy and safety in scientific research. Aseptic technique is widely used in hospitals, pharmaceutical laboratories and medical research, making this practical an excellent introduction to real-world biological science.

Students demonstrated excellent teamwork and attention to detail throughout the investigation, producing reliable results and gaining valuable experience in microbiological techniques.

Mr T Griffiths



Vegetable Patch

Our school vegetable patch now has its first bed filled. Our potatoes, radishes, herbs and edible flowers are all coming along nicely. Students have enjoyed looking after them and have been surprised at how quickly they are growing.

We still have more beds to fill, so watch this space!



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 Megan M. (12X), Sophie L. (9B2), Phoebe W. (8B1) and Hayden S. (7M1) 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.

Megan M



Sophie L



Phoebe W



Hayden S



Sidra Naeem Visit - Year 7 RS

On Friday 24th April we were very fortunate to once again welcome Sidra Naeem to Mayflower High School. Mrs Naeem came to speak to our Year 7 students about her experience as a Muslim in the UK, and to highlight the key religious beliefs of Islam.

This has supported our students' learning in their current module on Islam, adding a personal dimension from a practising believer. Students were fully engaged throughout, supporting their own learning by volunteering to try on traditional dress and demonstrating their knowledge.

It was wonderful to welcome Mrs Naeem back, and we look forward to her visiting again in the future.

Mr M Wallen



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.



Autism Awareness - Students Speak from the Heart

Students and staff were treated to a truly inspiring assembly this term, as Destiny T., Tiffany J., Jack A. and Frank T. delivered a heartfelt presentation about autism awareness and acceptance. A number of other students also worked hard behind the scenes and contributed to the assembly, whether through speaking, technical support, or assisting the presenters during rehearsal.

Speaking confidently in front of the school community, the students shared personal experiences, important facts and thoughtful messages about understanding and celebrating differences. Their honesty, bravery and determination made a lasting impact on everyone in the hall.

The assembly beautifully reflected our school's core values of Success, Opportunity and Happiness for all. The students spoke eloquently about their own experiences of autism and were able to educate others, helping the school community to develop a deeper understanding of how we can support one another. They demonstrated great respect through their kindness, empathy and encouragement of inclusion for all. Most importantly, they promoted happiness by reminding everyone that being different is something to be celebrated.

Staff and students alike were incredibly proud of the presenters, who showed remarkable confidence and maturity while speaking from the heart. Their assembly encouraged meaningful conversations across the school and reminded us all of the importance of acceptance, compassion and belonging.

Well done to all involved for delivering such a powerful and memorable assembly — you are a credit to our school community.

Mrs Thorogood



English Schools Athletics Track and Field Cup

The Year 7–10 athletics team attended the first round of the National Cup Athletics meet.

After weeks of dry and warm weather, conditions changed suddenly for the first major athletics event of the season, with strong winds, rain and hail disrupting events throughout the day. The Mayflower athletes did not let this knock them off their stride and still produced some excellent performances.

The Junior Boys (Y7 & Y8), Inter Boys (Y9 & Y10) and Inter Girls (Y9 & Y10) teams have all progressed to one of the East of England Regional Finals, to be held on Friday 12th June at Chelmsford.

There were some excellent individual performances:

Top individual performances:

- Sophie B. (Y9) – 1500m: 4:55 (29 pts); Relay (16 pts)
- Jayden O. (Y10) – 100m: 11.7s (26 pts); High Jump: 1.56m (18 pts)
- Alice T. (Y8) – 800m: 2:46 (22 pts)
- Dylan L. (Y7) – 1500m: 4:58 (22 pts)
- Charlie C. (Y10) – 100m: 12.1s (22 pts)
- Jake W. (Y7) – 1500m: 5:07 (20 pts); Relay (13 pts)
- Daniel N. (Y9) – 80m hurdles: 13.1s (19 pts)
- Liam S. (Y9) – 300m: 40.9s (19 pts)
- Dominic G. (Y9) – 200m: 25.4s (19 pts)
- Anya S. (Y10) – 800m: 2:43 (18 pts)
- Kamran S. (Y8) – 300m: 43.6s (18 pts); Discus: 22.70m (17 pts)



Under 15s Cricket

The Under 15 team won their first Tier 2 County Cup match against Hall Mead School.

In a format that was unfamiliar to the boys and different from traditional cricket, Mayflower secured victory by 15 runs. Player of the Match went to Chris C., whose final over went for just one run when it looked like Hall Mead might just sneak over the line.

The game was played in great spirit, and we look forward to more cricket fixtures later in the year.



Year 7 Basketball

The Year 7 basketball season came to an end with a loss in the B League final against James Hornsby School. The final score was 36–20.

The team has progressed significantly this year and the students have been a pleasure to take around the district and county in the various competitions.

Although it was not to be in the final, I am confident that, provided the boys show the same level of commitment and hard work next year, silverware will not be too far away.



Year 9 Basketball - District Champions!

The Year 9 boys' basketball team won their district semi-final to set up a rematch against Woodlands, who had previously beaten them in the group phase.

The boys battled hard in a closely contested match between two excellent teams. This time, however, they came out on top and were crowned district champions.

A fantastic achievement and a reward for all the hard work, determination and teamwork shown throughout the competition. Well done, boys!



Boccia Competition

Students from Mayflower proudly took part in a recent boccia competition held at St John Payne School. Ten enthusiastic Year 9 students represented the school with excellent teamwork, determination and sportsmanship throughout the event.

Well done to Abigail S., Amelie S., Edwardine N., Ellie T., Elsie O., Evie B., Layla V., Mariam T., May O'D. and Vanesa A.





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