

The Hedingham School Newsletter

19 March 2026

Ready, Respect, Safe



Dear Parent/Guardian

Message from Headteacher

This time of year is typically incredibly busy due to the rapidly approaching external examinations, deadlines with controlled assessments and forward planning towards significant events in the summer, including transition days for Year 6 students and those who have applied to our Sixth Form. We also have a Year 5 taster day, celebration events and an "Insight to Sixth Form" day for our Year 10 students. There is definitely an energy about the school at the moment, and, in a short half-term, the weeks just tick on by!

Paul Finch
Headteacher

Activities Week

Information around this exciting week has now been circulated to students. For the week beginning 7 July, the school timetable will be suspended for all students in Years 7-9 to focus on a range of enrichment opportunities. As I have emphasized in the past, my philosophy is that, alongside academic progress and achievement, school should also be about lasting meaningful experiences that students reflect back on in time with real fondness. A week of activities that break the mould of a typical cycle of curriculum lessons also aligns with our values of broadening student horizons. Details of activities week have been distributed to students directly but is also available on our website through the link below. Please note that the number of places available on these trips have been calculated reflecting the number of students already committed to the PGL residential. Students in Year 7 will have the opportunity to go on visits of this nature during the Activities Week falling in the summer of their Year 8 and 9 academic years.

Please can families quickly return choices of activities so that we can commence the organisational processes behind running an event of this scale.

[Activities Week 2026 - Hedingham School and Sixth Form -](#)

Easter Holidays

For our students in Years 11 and 13, the Easter holiday is absolutely crucial in preparing for the external examination window that sits a few short weeks from the other side of the school break. With the outcome of examinations being so heavily gauged by performance in terminal examination sittings, and with such vast amounts of content to memorise and recall, independent revision is vital. Every year we see the clear link between those who perform well in exams with those who diligently prepare through regular, effective and consistent revision. We value parental support in creating an environment in which their children are motivated and encouraged to engage in thorough revision. Our top tips are:

- ◆ Make sure that revision is **active** (rather than just reading information or highlighting words). Active revision includes making mind maps, revision cards, overview sheets, applying knowledge to past paper questions etc
- ◆ Revision should focus on the areas that students are not great at, despite the urge to keep focusing on the things that they are good at
- ◆ Short periods of revision, done often, is better than long periods of "cramming". Timetable frequent periods of revision, interspersed with a break and perhaps some form of reward
- ◆ For Parents/Guardians of Year 11 students, if you are unclear on what can be used to revise, a guide for the core subjects is attached. Similarly, our PowerPoint used with students on what good revision looks like is attached.

Work Experience

As a reminder, parents and students need to complete the work experience online form (link below) to confirm a placement has been found and provide contact details among other key pieces of information **before next Thursday**. Any work experience related questions should be directed to Mr Batch hed.batchd@hedingham.essex.sch.uk in the first instance.

[Year 10 Work Experience 2026 – Fill out form](#)

Dora Love Visit

Year 9 students had the opportunity to participate in the Dora Love Prize, a project based on the awareness of the holocaust, the discrimination and prejudice of people targeted such as Jews, disabled people and homosexual men.

On Thursday 12 May, students from the Good-To-Great group examined the ideas for the prize and began to plan their projects. The morning was spent researching and planning who was targeted during the time of the holocaust. This was compared to who may be targeted in contemporary society. The idea behind the prize is to spread awareness and teach an empathic understanding to the community.

The day included meeting the founder of the Dora Love Prize who provided a deeper understanding of the project. He helped develop their ideas and hopefully erase the false accusations to prevent something like the holocaust occurring again.

The students will get the chance to enter their project into the competition by presenting it in May.

After School Detentions

I have made an important update to our behaviour and sanctions system. As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining a calm, safe, and purposeful learning environment, the school will be introducing afterschool detentions for students who significantly breach our Behaviour Policy or who fail to attend lunchtime detentions. We intend to implement this change from after May half term (w/b 1 June).

Afterschool detentions will be an hour in duration, starting at 3.15 and finishing at 4.15pm. They will run twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays.

These detentions are designed to support students in modifying their behaviour and understanding the consequences of repeated or serious misconduct. The process will work as follows:

- ◆ **Subject-level lunchtime detentions** will be issued for initial concerns or lower-level behaviour issues
- ◆ **Senior staff lunchtime detentions** will follow if concerns escalate or if the first detention is missed

After school detentions will be issued when a student fails to attend either of the lunchtime detentions, or in response to more significant breaches of the behaviour policy (including multiple C3 level incidents in a week).

I believe that consistency and clear boundaries are essential in helping students make positive choices. After-school detentions form part of this approach, ensuring that missed sanctions are followed up appropriately.

Improved Toilet Facilities in School

We have expanded the toilet facilities in school after speaking with students about their view on how their school experience can be improved. We have dedicated toilets for students in Years 7 and 8 and another area for students in 9, 10 and 11. Students have been asked to use the toilets dedicated for their Year Group only. We shall monitor this to ensure that students abide by these expectations.

Year 10/11 Rugby Final

On Wednesday 18 March, 21 students from Year 10 and 11 headed to Barking Rugby Club for the Essex County U16 Plate Final. Their opponents on the day were a strong Woodlands side who were coming off a Trophy win at the Framlingham School 7s the previous weekend and preparing for the Rosslyn Park National 7s the week after. The Heddingham team, made up of 10 U15s and 11 U16s, went into the game as underdogs but fought from minute 1 to 80 in what turned out to be a fantastic match.

Heddingham scored a couple of early tries and looked the stronger of the two teams for much of the game. Standout performances from Max Pantling, Jimmy Stephens, Harry Ramsey and Stanley Jennings meant we went into half-time only 19–24 down. We started the second half extremely well, scoring early to level the match at 24–24. Unfortunately, as the half went on, our boys began to tire, and Woodlands capitalised by scoring several more tries.

The final score was 55–24 to Woodlands, but coaches from both sides, and the referees, felt that the scoreline did not fairly reflect the quality and competitiveness of the game. Although we suffered a loss on the day, there was plenty to be positive about. Most encouragingly, half of the team will have the opportunity to compete in the same competition again next year. After reaching two county finals in a row, we hope that third time will be lucky and the boys will finally get over the line!

Meningitis Outbreak—Advice to Parents

Within our community, I imagine that there are understandably concerned families about the meningitis outbreak in Kent, worried if this poses any additional threat to their children.

The outbreak of meningitis in Kent has been heavily covered in the news. The public health team at Essex County Council have said that there is no increased risk to anyone in Essex unless they have a direct link to a case of meningitis in the Kent outbreak and been contacted by the UK Health Security Agency. Simply being a contact of a person with a direct link does not increase the risk. If you would like to know more about the outbreak and how it is managed there is an update on the [UK Health Security webpage](#). If you would like to know more about meningitis and how to spot it the [NHS webpages](#) give good advice.

Attendance

We are always proud of our students and are always looking for ways to celebrate their efforts. Each half-term we like to celebrate the Form Group in each Year Group with the highest % attendance. For the half-term from 5 January to 13 February 2026, the winners are!

- ◆ Year 7 - Miss Plumb's Form (KPL)
- ◆ Year 8 - Mrs Binders Form (RBI)
- ◆ Year 9 - Mrs Ravi's Form (ARA)
- ◆ Year 10 - Mr Nancarrow's Form (DN)
- ◆ Year 11 - Mr North's Form (DNO)
- ◆ Sixth Form (Year 12 & 13) - Miss Wallis' Form (HWA)

Congratulations to each of these forms on their excellent attendance. Remember, this is judged on a specific half-term, not the year to date, so every form has a chance to win each half term!

Year 10 Interviews

Year 10 took part in their mock interviews last week as preparation for their Work Experience (8-10 July) starts to ramp up. The students had a 20 minute 1:1 interview with a member of the local business community where they discussed work experience plans as well as future career aspirations and current academic progress. The interviewers were very complimentary about our students who conducted themselves excellently throughout the process.

Geography Field Trips

In March, Year 10 Geography students completed a day of fieldwork as part of their GCSE course. They spent a day investigating what it is like to live in Sible and Castle Hedingham and comparing the homes, parking and services in the two villages. Students surveyed the built environment, traffic and sounds in both villages and they particularly enjoyed chatting to residents about their experiences of living in these villages. We would also like to thank the community for completing the online questionnaire to support our research.

Once students had supported the community shop in Castle Hedingham and checked out the quality of the leisure provision in the play park in Castle Hedingham they returned to school to successfully present and analysis their findings as well as to evaluate the methods they had used. They worked really well all day and we are now looking forward to our second day of fieldwork in June when we will visit the beach.

Paul Finch, Headteacher

