

The Hedingham School Newsletter 2 October 2026

Ready, Respect, Safe



Dear Parent/Guardian

As the weeks fly by at the start of term, life within the walls of the school is incredibly busy. Clubs are up and running, sporting fixtures have started, revision sessions in place for Year 11, auditions for school performances completed and lessons are in full swing.

We continue to promote our vision to students, and, at the start of the school year, it is a good opportunity to remind families of the ambition of the school. Our vision is carefully crafted to strike a real balance between academic success but also the growth of our students into well rounded and impressive young people who are equipped with the skills and characteristics to make an impact beyond the walls of Hedingham School.

Vision

We build our Vision through our wider curriculum, as well as our Personal Development Education and enrichment programme.



Characteristics

We actively promote the following characteristics amongst our students and try and attach these to being part of the Hedingham School identity. These are part of our rewards and recognition system and something we actively look for in our students around the school. I believe that these characteristics, if fostered and developed in their time in school, will not only benefit them whilst with us but will stand them in good stead as they step into the wider world.



Positive Currency

We have had a cycle of house assemblies this week and one of the features of these assemblies has been the language around “positive currency”. Our hope is that students always ensure that their individual contribution to the school is a positive one. At a basic and fundamental level, by maintaining more House Points (positive) than Behaviour Points (negative) students are adding value to the school. There remains a hunger in students to gain House Points and next week in standards sessions with form tutors, we shall be reflecting on the “currency” that students have accrued this term. This is something to be mindful of as parents, and a language you can use at home that will support us here in school.

Attendance

This remains a central focus for us as a school, with our attendance statistics sitting below where we would hope. Benefitting from the culture that we have established here requires regular and consistent attendance and the link with student progress, attainment and wellbeing is so clear. We are using tutors more explicitly to engage in early conversations around attendance, attempting to quickly turn around attendance concerns before they become deeper rooted and complex.

As parents and carers, the value you place on education has a profound influence on your child's attitudes and aspirations. By ensuring that your child attends school regularly, you are sending a powerful message that education matters, that learning is important and that every day counts.

We understand that children will sometimes be unwell and that families can face challenges. When difficulties arise, we encourage you to work with us so that we can provide support wherever possible. However, we ask that avoidable absences are kept to an absolute minimum.

Excellent attendance is about far more than statistics. It is about giving every young person the greatest possible chance of success. Students with strong attendance are better placed to achieve their potential, build confidence, develop positive habits and access the full range of opportunities that school life offers.

Year 11 Prefects

We welcome our new Year 11 team of Prefects. They step into a position of leadership and responsibility. They are supporting duties around the school (particularly at lunch and break) but have also played a key part in Headship Team elections and will be a central part of Open Evening as family guides. They received a special invite to the Sixth Form MacMillan Coffee Morning Fund Raiser last week which became an “all you can eat cake fest”!



MacMillan Coffee Morning

This year we raised over **£325** for MacMillan Cancer Support. Well done staff and students for providing the fantastic cakes.



Year 11 Revision Session

Year 11 have really hit the ground running this year with their attendance to revision sessions. There have been great turnouts both after school and at lunchtime. A huge thank you to the staff giving up their time to support Year 11, and also to the students themselves for their dedication in the lead up to the mocks!

It's great to see students buying in to the culture of learning that we're continuing to build within the school.

Student Council

We are pleased to announce that our Student Council elections will take place on Monday 5 October. The Student Council provides an important opportunity for students to have a voice in school life and to contribute to the continued development of our school. Each form group will elect three Student Council representatives, who will meet with members of the Headship Team throughout the year to share the views, experiences and ideas of their peers. Each term, the Student Council will focus on a different area of school life:

Autumn Term: Teaching and Learning: students will discuss their experiences of learning, including in the classroom and homework.

Spring Term: Pastoral Care and Well-being: students will consider how the school supports students' well-being, behaviour and pastoral needs.

Summer Term: Extra-curricular and Wider Opportunities: students will provide feedback on clubs, activities, enrichment and the wider opportunities available within school.

Following the Council meetings, a Year Representative will also be elected. Year representatives will meet with the Headteacher to share the key feedback, ideas and suggestions raised by students within their year group.

Students wishing to stand for election will have the opportunity to explain to their form group why they would make an effective representative on Monday 5 October. Their peers will then vote to select the three students they feel will best represent their views.

We believe the Student Council is an important part of ensuring that student voice has a meaningful impact on school improvement. It also provides students with valuable opportunities to develop their confidence, communication, leadership and teamwork skills.



Year 11 Careers Fair

Year 11 attended a Careers Fair at Chelmsford Racecourse on Wednesday 23 September. This was an opportunity for students to have conversations with, and gather information about, colleges, further education providers, employers and apprenticeship schemes. Students had prepared well for the visit by identifying exhibitors they were interested in, leading to meaningful interactions and an extremely worthwhile visit. Some students even took part in a race to change wheels on a racing car and to dress up as a judge!

Sixth Form Headship Team

The week beginning Monday 21 September was the election for this year's Headship team. 11 Year 13 candidates were nominated for the role and went through a rigorous process delivering a speech to Years 10, 11, Sixth Form, Prefects and staff followed by an interview with the Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form. Year 10 and 11 forms then cast a vote whilst Sixth Form students and staff are able to cast individual votes. There is also a separate vote by prefects.

The contest was hotly contested this year, and the standard of interviews were incredibly high but after the votes were counted the four winning candidate are:

- Head Girl – Rosie Jinks
- Head Boy – Sonny Burgess
- Deputy Head Girl – Abigail Hunter
- Deputy Head Boy – Logan Owen

Huge congratulations to the winning candidates.



Parking – Christmas Fields

I have been in discussion with local residents as well as the Neighbourhood Lead regarding concerns about local parking in close proximity to the school. The complaints particularly focus on the area of Christmas Fields, which is a private road where parking is intended for residents and their visitors. Residents have reported vehicles being parked on the grass, which is causing additional disruption and potentially damage as we enter the autumn and winter seasons. Whilst I have emphasised that children need to be dropped off and collected, using the estate as an alternative school car park, particularly parking on the grass or obstructing residents' access, is not appropriate.

I appreciate the logistical challenge that restricted parking presents for parents who are collecting children but please be aware and sympathetic to the concerns of our local neighbours.

Year 9 Football Thriller

U16 Girls Match Report - Alec Hunter 4-5 Hedingham

Hedingham's U16 Girls kicked off their season with a thrilling comeback victory away to Alec Hunter, running out 5-4 winners in a game packed with drama, determination, and some outstanding goals.

The visitors started slowly as they looked to organise themselves, and Alec Hunter took advantage, grabbing an early lead within the opening minutes. That setback proved to be the wake-up call Hedingham needed, as they began to settle into the game and find their rhythm.

Ruby H led the response in spectacular fashion. Cutting in from the right wing, she unleashed an unstoppable strike into the top corner to level the scores. Buoyed by the equaliser, Hedingham pushed forward with confidence. A dangerous cross from May B caused problems in the Alec Hunter box, and when a clearance fell kindly to Ruby H, there was only going to be one outcome. Another brilliant finish gave the visitors a 2-1 lead.

Alec Hunter refused to back down and continued to battle hard. Their persistence paid off when they closed down a Brooke K goal kick and found an equaliser just before half-time, leaving the teams level at 2-2 going into the break.

After an encouraging team talk from Batch and Scarlett P-Y, Hedingham returned to the pitch confidently for the second half. However, that confidence briefly worked against them as they gave away possession too cheaply. Alec Hunter capitalised, finding gaps in the defence to regain the lead early in the second half. The home side kept up the pressure and soon added another goal to make it 4-2. With their backs against the wall, Hedingham showed tremendous character. True to the club's spirit, they dug deep and refused to give in. Determination throughout the team sparked the comeback, with Syd J grabbing a crucial goal to pull one back and make it 4-3. Sensing an equaliser, Hedingham continued to press. April S, who had been outstanding throughout the match, picked up the ball near halfway, drove through the opposition defence, and finished emphatically to level the scores at 4-4.

The momentum was now firmly with the visitors. In the final five minutes, Hedingham pushed for a winner and were rewarded in dramatic fashion. Once again, April S surged forward and produced a stunning strike over the goalkeeper to complete an incredible comeback and seal a 5-4 victory.

****Player of the Match:**** April S, a tireless performance capped by two vital second-half goals, including the winner.

An excellent display of resilience, teamwork, and determination to start the season with three points. Well done, girls!



Concern with Buses

We have received some family concerns surrounding the school bus contracts and the transportation of children to school. Although we have no influence on decisions around bus routes, pricing or organisation, I think it is important for me to gauge the extent of these concerns in the community. Our attempts to communicate with the bus company to date have been futile but I am aware of concerns from other local areas and schools that use the same bus provider. My hope is to use a collective voice to challenge some of the concerns that are being raised by our community, working together with support from local headteachers. In order for me to gather parental views, if your child uses the bus service, can you please outline your concerns on the Microsoft form via the following link so that I can centrally compile evidence. [Hedingham School & Sixth Form – Fill out form](#)

Open Evening

I would like to express my thanks to those from the local community who attended our Open Evening event last night. It was a truly special evening with such a positive vibe. It is a pleasure to open our doors and give an insight into the talents and abilities of our students; a very proud evening for all of us in the school. I must thank our incredible students involved in the evening, either as guides, subject ambassadors or involved in the performances in the Main Hall. A special mention must go to Poppy Butterly and Thomas Hughes, two hugely impressive year 7 students, who stood in front of two halls full of visitors and delivered a speech about their experience transitioning into Hedingham School. I must also thank all the school staff for their involvement and welcoming visitors into their classrooms, answering questions and making the evening such an enjoyable one.

As much as our open Evening is an important way of seeing the school and getting a flavour of the philosophy that underpins our approach, equally valuable is coming to see the school in action. As such, we invite families to come and tour the school on a normal day, with classrooms full of children. The magic of this school sits with the people within it. This was so evident within last night's Open Evening where we offered an insight into the vibrant and broad talents and abilities of our students and the committed and dedicated approach of our staff. More so, I am looking forward to our school tours, which start next week, to offer a glimpse of the purposeful, warm and focused learning environment that I have the privilege to witness as I regularly move around the building. There are some wonderful things happening in classrooms.

We have a booking system to schedule a tour over the next week with tours running from 9.00am each day. You can access the booking system via our website.



Paul Finch, Headteacher