

Friday Focus



Issue 197 | April 2026

Highlights of this week's news at school and forthcoming events

Photo of the week
#weareblythe



AFRICAN ADVENTURES 2026

The Kenya trip was an unforgettable experience for our students, filled with both meaningful work and joyful moments. After travelling to Nakuru and stopping to take in the breathtaking views of the Rift Valley, students were warmly welcomed into their placement schools with vibrant ceremonies. Throughout their time there, they fully immersed themselves in school life - teaching lessons in subjects such as maths, English, art, and geography, coaching football and cricket, serving meals, and helping with practical tasks like painting classrooms and repairing furniture. Their compassion and enthusiasm shone through as they built strong connections with the children, sharing laughter, dancing, and singing along the way. On their final day, donations were thoughtfully distributed, and emotional farewell ceremonies highlighted the impact they had made. We are incredibly proud of how our students embraced this opportunity, creating lasting memories and leaving a positive legacy.

WELCOME

As part of our review of homework, parents of students in Year 7-11 will receive a link to a short survey in the email along with this week's copy of Friday Focus. We are keen to gather the views of stakeholders about key aspects of how students are encouraged to work independently. Although the survey is anonymous, there is an opportunity to share your child's name if you would like to be contacted about any points you raise. The deadline for this form is Friday 24th April.

Mrs Johnson
Headteacher

Pride, Respect & Kindness



HOUSE EASTER BAKE OFF

From Biscoff bites to lemon cake, and mini eggs aplenty, our Bake Off was an egg-celent success. Congratulations to everyone who entered, and especially to our winners: Grace H (Year 7, Centaur), Rosie H-C (Year 8, Sphinx), Jessica and Amelia W (Year 8, Sphinx & Pegasus), and Aariya K (Year 7, Pegasus). A big well done to all of our fabulous runners-up. Plus, well done to Mrs Bennett for the staff win. Finally, thank you to our student leaders, who supported the event by volunteering on the stall and to everyone who bought a treat and helped us to raise an amazing £115!



CROSS COUNTRY

It was a fantastic turn out for House Cross Country, which saw 37 runners compete on the school field course. All houses were well represented and given the soft conditions, great times were secured. Well done to all individual winners and a big thank you to Mrs Davies and Miss Perry for organising the event.

Boys: 1st Flynn E (Pegasus) Year 8, 2nd Isaac C (Sphinx) Year 7, 3rd Finlay D (Centaur) Year 8.

Girls: 1st Tilly H (Centaur) Year 10, 2nd Poppy W (Centaur) Year 8 and 3rd Isabelle C (Centaur) Year 8.



Pride · Respect · Kindness

KINDNESS AT EASTER

Our core value of kindness shone through at the end of the spring term as students selected members of staff that they wanted to give an Easter treat to. From choosing someone who inspires them, to selecting the person who brightens their day, staff read the kind messages, and as you can see from the photos they were thrilled with their surprise.



HOPE'S FANTASTIC CROCHET

Huge well done to Hope M (Year 8) for creating some truly fantastic crochet pieces! Hope runs her own crochet club in the library during lunchtime. Inspired by an underwater theme, her work is full of creativity and detail - and even more special as she gave them out to family over the Easter holidays.

What a thoughtful and talented achievement! Keep up the amazing crocheting, Hope!



MFL SPEAKING EXAMS

Many thanks to Mr Sutton and Mrs Cotterill for leading this week's sessions to help to prepare our Year 11 GCSE Spanish and French students for their speaking exams which start next week.

Student engagement was superb and feedback following the sessions was extremely positive.



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

As our new cohort of students prepare for their practice expeditions this weekend, congratulations to Anneliese (Year 10) who has successfully completed her Bronze Award, and to Josh (Year 11) who has achieved his Silver Award.



BUDGET-FRIENDLY CHICKEN CREATIONS

This term, our Year 10 Food, Nutrition and Preparation GCSE students have been planning and making a series of chicken dishes aimed at families on a budget. By using the whole chicken, the students have portioned their pieces, removed bones and then used as much as the bird as possible to reduce costs. This activity helps them to consider finances and plan ahead to create some excellent results.



SPORTING SUCCESS

We are extremely proud of Tommy, Year 7, a talented young footballer who represents Stoke City Academy. During the Easter break, Tommy and his teammates travelled to Porto to take part in the LGSP International Tournament, gaining valuable experience competing at an international level.

The team delivered an outstanding performance, winning all but one of their matches and securing an impressive 5th place finish out of 20 teams. Tommy made a real impact throughout the tournament, showing not only his technical ability but also his determination, composure, and strong work ethic in every game.



BLYTHE BRIDGE READS

Congratulations to our Year 9 Bedrock Stars!

We celebrated 10 students from across the year group who have demonstrated real ambition and determination in further enhancing their reading and vocabulary. They have topped the Bedrock Charts and earned the highest number of points in the year group!

They were rewarded with a well-deserved Easter treat for earning the most points over the last few weeks.

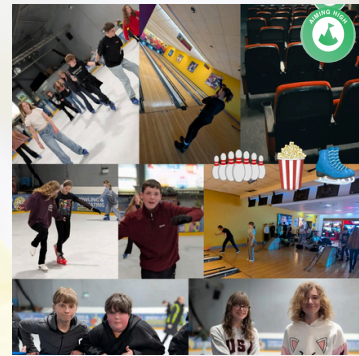


Musical Theatre Success

WE WILL ROCK YOU

Our students have a huge range of talents and interests outside of school, including a number who are involved in musical theatre. Recently Lydia (Year 11), Cara and Piera (Year 7) performed with Rooftop Studios in 'We Will Rock You'.

Well done girls - you rock!



REWARDS TRIP

Before the Easter break, our students thoroughly enjoyed the Silver Rewards Trip to the Cinebowl! They each had a day filled with fun activities and celebration of their hard-earned achievements. A special shout-out to our students for showing incredible resilience on the ice-skating rink! Some started off on unsteady skates, but by the end they were moving confidently and independently around the rink. Well done and thank you to Mr James for his wonderful organisation.

THRIVE WEEK

Students

Assembly Theme - Violence against women

Bonanza Week

Wellness Menu in the canteen

Mindful Mondays

Early Bird Swim (Tuesday 7.45 - 8.20am)

Meditation with Mr. Peiry (Wednesday Lunch Time)

Fun Swim Wednesday (after School)

Road Safety (Thursday)

Feel good fitness (After school Thursday)

Pride • Respect • Kindness

#THRIVE_AT_BLYTHE

THRIVE WEEK

We launched our brand new initiative 'Thrive Week'. There was a wide range of activities and sessions focused on personal development and wellbeing, with plenty for students to get involved in throughout the week. Activities included swimming, fitness, meditation, healthy food in the canteen, wellness ambassadors, road safety, and themed assemblies.

We also had an exciting 'Bonanza Week', where students had the chance to earn plenty of achievement points. It was a fantastic week full of opportunity, positivity and involvement for all.



YEAR 11 LITERACY LEADERS

Our Year 11 literacy leaders are still hard at work spending time reading with Year 7 students, sharing stories, building confidence, and inspiring a love of reading. It has been fantastic to see such positive role models supporting our younger students throughout this year. Well done to everyone involved - keep turning those pages!



TRANSITION

We loved welcoming Year 5 pupils from our partnership primary schools for their transition mornings last half term. Pupils have enjoyed taking part in DT and science activities, getting a real taste of life at Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form, with sessions delivered by Mr Jackson. It has been fantastic to see so much enthusiasm and to chat with them about what school life is like here. We can't wait to welcome the remaining Year 5 groups.



YOUNG ENTERPRISE

The Year 12 young enterprise group have been selling their cakes, which formed their business idea as part of the Young Enterprise 10X challenge. The Young Enterprise 10X Challenge is a national enterprise programme open to young people aged 11-19, in which participants are given a £10 budget to start and run their own mini business. Teams research, develop, and sell a product or service of their choice, while competing against other schools across the UK for prizes. Alongside the business activity, students build key skills including creativity, teamwork, budgeting, and communication, gaining practical, real-world experience of entrepreneurship in the process.

READING ADVOCATES: MAX, HARRISON, LUCA & HARVEY



'Wicked World' by Benjamin Zephaniah

"We all first read this book back in primary school, so coming back to it now in Year 11 it felt kind of different. Back then, we didn't really think much about it, but now we understand the meaning behind a lot more of the poems. It doesn't feel like boring poetry, it's more like spoken word or rap, which makes it easier to get into. Some poems are funny, while others talk about serious stuff like racism and different cultures, and now it actually makes us think more than it did before."

This book is available to borrow in the library.



SPRING TERM

MONDAY P4 CITIZENSHIP



- Year 7: How do I show respect for people different from me?
- Year 8: How do I tell if a relationship is good for me?
- Year 9: How does media (including porn) distort ideas about sex and relationships?
- Year 10: How do my values and emotions share relationship choices - and how do I set boundaries?
- Year 11: Revision skills

KEY DATES

- Friday 17th-19th April**
 - DofE Bronze and Silver Practice
- Monday 20th-24th April**
 - Year 11 MFL Speaking Exams
- Monday 27th April**
 - Year 9 Options Evening
- Tuesday 5th May**
 - Year 8 Progress Evening



CAREERS SPOTLIGHT - BENCHMARK 6

We are currently collating all work experience for Year 10 and 12, and out to work day for Year 9. Well done to all those who have met the deadline, a reminder that we need completed paperwork as soon as possible to ensure your child is participating in these excellent opportunities. Please email Mr Goodwin or Miss Housley if you need further support.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

In the coming weeks, we will be communicating with Year 10s about the details and selection process for next academic year's prefects. We will also be communicating the application process and details of the new "Head Student" sixth form roles to be selected from this year's Year 12 cohort, ready for a September start. Our PRK champions will also be holding a Kindness week in school and will be meeting again to confirm the details of this soon.

HOUSE UPDATES

Key Stage 3 Swimming Gala
Wednesday 25th March saw the House Swimming Gala take place. Students from each house were selected to compete in a variety of races. We had well over 30 students participate which another excellent turn out for House competition. 6th form leaders were excellent in assisting at the event and helping to collate scores and officiate.

- Upcoming Competitions**
- Spelling Bee (KS4 and 5)
 - Staff and sixth form volleyball
 - Swimming Galas (KS4 and 5)
 - Sports Day
 - KS3 House curriculum event
 - Year 7 Art Competition
 - Drama script review competition (all years): Ongoing competition and deadline 11th April; results to be shared soon
 - Spitfire/History Modelling
 - Xbox competition
 - Chess tournament
 - 6th Form football and/or Netball Competition for events continued throughout the year
 - Chess league
 - Fantasy football league

Star performers included:

- Oliver B who won several races including the 50m free style, 50m backstroke and 100m breaststroke.
- James M winning the 200m freestyle and the 50m butterfly.
- Holly H winning the 100m butterfly and the 100m medley.

- 1st place Pegasus (200 +14)
- 2nd place Sphinx (150 +14)
- 3rd place Centaur (100 +10)
- 4th place Serpent (50 +14)

2 extra points per student entry
A big thank you to Miss Martin for organising and leading the event.

Dates, details and any more events to be communicated in the coming days and weeks.

Sphinx: 1818 (1st)
Pegasus: 1573 (2nd)
Centaur: 1524 (3rd)
Serpent: 1352 (4th)

ASSEMBLIES

- Year 7, 8, 9 & 11: Celebration assemblies
- Year 10: Exam preparation
- Year 12: UCAS launch with Miss Alford



Group	Block 6 (5)
Year 7 Girls AC	12 th April - 15 th May
Year 7 Boys AC	Swimming
Year 7 Girls DV	Football
Year 7 Boys DV	Basketball
Year 8 Girls AC	OAA
Year 8 Boys AC	Volleyball
Year 8 Girls DV	Swimming
Year 8 Boys DV	Handball
Year 9 Girls AC	HRE
Year 9 Boys AC	Tramp
Year 9 Girls DV	Swimming
Year 9 Boys DV	Football
Year 9 Girls AC	HRE
Year 9 Boys AC	HRE



MENU CHOICE

Those in receipt of free school meals are entitled to £2.72 per day.

REMINDER

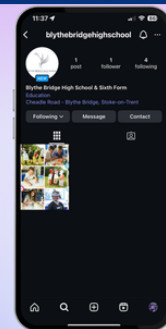
A reminder for students to check their timetables and bring in the correct kit for their PE lessons with appropriate footwear. Please also remember to bring in ingredients for food technology lessons.

Follow us on



Instagram

@blythebridgehighschool

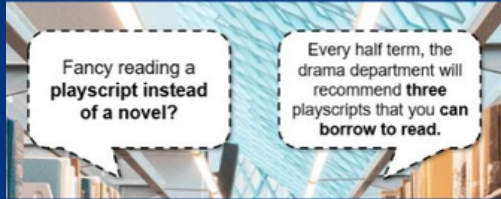


Check this out



Did you know you can raise free donations for Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form every time you shop online? With over 7,500 retailers including Tesco, Amazon, John Lewis and more, a percentage of what you spend is donated to our school at no extra cost to you. Signing up takes just a moment and is completely free – simply scan the QR code below to get started and help support our students.

Drama Reading



This half term's recommendations are:

Art shows the breakdown of a friendship because of a white painting with white stripes!	Birthday is set in an alternative reality where men are able to have babies – will they cope any better than women?	An Evening with Gary Lineker follows a group of friends on the evening of the semi-final in the 1990 World Cup.

You are very welcome to borrow these or other plays through Mrs Baines.



plus BLYTHE BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM
PRE-LOVED UNIFORM SHOP

If you are interested in purchasing items please email t.matthias@bb-hs.co.uk and we will let you know what we have in stock. Donations are always welcome.

6 Reasons to Put Your Phone Away

by @Inner_Drive
www.innerdrive.co.uk

- Lowers Concentration**
Having your phone out while doing homework or revision has been shown to reduce performance by 20%.
- Increases FOMO**
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), or the compulsive need to know what others are doing leads to worse moods and increased anxiety.
- Increases Stress and Anxiety**
Over use of mobile phones leads to increased anxiety, feelings of loneliness and low self-esteem. Reliance on mobile phones can cause irritation, frustration and impatience.
- Warp's View of Reality**
Nobody is as happy as they seem on Facebook or as wise as they appear on Twitter.
- Reduces Memory**
Instant messages are distracting, which often leads to forgetfulness.
- Makes You Sleep Worse**
Prolonged use of a mobile phone leads to poor sleep quality and duration. The backlight on your phone delays the release of Melatonin, which is a hormone important for sleep.

Train to Teach in Local Schools

Primary (3-7) • Primary (5-11) • Secondary (11-16)

- Funding for Selected Routes
- Full or Part-Time Routes
- Gain School Experience

The John Taylor SCITT
jtscitt.co.uk

BLYTHE BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM COMMUNITY LETTINGS



BLYTHE BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM

Blythe Bridge High School & Sixth Form is excited to offer our school facilities to the local community and businesses.

If you are looking for a regular indoor or outdoor venue for your club or society, or a space for a one off event, we offer a range of facilities.

THESE INCLUDE

MUGA PITCHES ● GRASS FOOTBALL PITCHES ●
MAIN HALL ● CLASSROOMS ● ICT SUITES ● ART
FACILITIES ● HARD COURTS ● SWIMMING POOL



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Free School Meals



HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET?

See if you are entitled...
It costs nothing to try, so why not give it a go!

You may be eligible for support via benefits related Free School Meals if you meet any of the following low income entitlement criteria:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance. Please note the 'new style' job seekers allowance is not a qualifying benefit.
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance. Please note the 'new style' employment and support allowance is not a qualifying benefit.
- Eligible for Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and the household income (as used by HMRC to assess tax credits) is not more than £16,190.
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- In receipt of the 4 week run on of working tax credit
- Universal credit (provided you have an annual net earned household income of no more than £7,400 as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods). Your net earned income is your household income after taxes and deductions and does not include income from Universal Credit or any other benefits you may receive.

Even if your child prefers packed lunch, it is worth registering to receive benefits such as:

- A discounted place on some school trips
- Year 6 Headstart pack on transition including one school tie and headphones
- 20% voucher for National Schoolwear, Hanley
- Access to free food and activities during the school holidays

Help the school by registering for Free School Meals!

By registering for Free School Meals, you will also allow school to receive PUPIL PREMIUM, which is extra money from the government to support children from families on lower incomes. The funding that school receives can be used for a range of interventions including help with costs of school trips, music fees, teaching assistant staff, after school programmes and equipment.

The Pupil Premium strategy can be found on the school website.

Holiday Activities and Food



www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Educational-awards-benefits/Holiday-activities-and-food/Holiday-Activities-and-Food.aspx



To apply, visit the Staffordshire County Council website
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/educational-awards-benefits/freeschoolmeals/apply-online.aspx