

MHS Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

As we approach the end of a vibrant and productive autumn term, I want to take a moment to reflect on some of the many highlights. Last Friday's Trust Training Day was a real standout—staff across the Trust engaged in inspiring sessions focused on AI and digital literacy, equipping us with tools to enhance teaching and learning in a rapidly evolving world.

Our Year 11 students have returned from their work experience placements full of enthusiasm and valuable insights—well done to them all for representing the school so positively. We've also welcomed a trainee occupational therapist who will be working with us three days a week, further strengthening our support for student wellbeing. This term, we've delivered an impressive 370 flu vaccinations, and 70 pupils enjoyed a fantastic enrichment trip with the GLIDE faculty on Monday. Year 11s also benefited from an apprenticeship masterclass and a visit from Stoke-on-Trent College, who delivered an informative assembly on post-16 options. Students have also been engaging with the Future Skills Questionnaire, helping us tailor our careers provision even more effectively.

We are now looking forward to Friday's non-uniform day, raising funds for NHS mental health services and the Air Ambulance—thank you in advance for your support.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Congratulations to Max who has recently won the District Schools Cross Country Championships coming overall 1st place after three races. Max is a dedicated athlete, training three times per week and is currently running for the City of Stoke Athletics Club. This year he has been racing in numerous national level competitions, and he has now qualified for the Staffordshire Schools Finals in February.



Please can parents and guardians who drop off and pick up students in a vehicle be mindful of local residents, pedestrians and road safety laws as not doing so is creating hazardous conditions. Cars should not:

- Block driveways on Southlowe Avenue
- Park on double yellow lines
- Park on the pavement
- Park or stop on zigzags
- Stop in the bus stop layby
- Use the school entrance as a turning circle

ALTON TOWERS

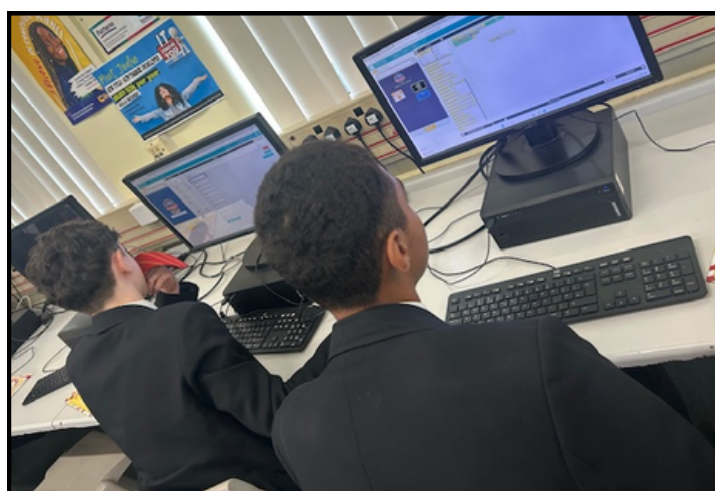
This week, a group of enthusiastic Year 9 and Year 10 pupils from Computer Science, ICT, and Business Studies embarked on an exciting enrichment trip to Alton Towers. The visit offered a unique opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world scenarios in one of the UK's most iconic theme parks.

Computer Science students investigated how the Alton Towers mobile app supports the park's operations. Back in class, they took on the challenge of reimagining the app—adding features to enhance accessibility and user experience. This hands-on project gave pupils a valuable glimpse into the world of software engineering and mobile development, sparking interest in future tech careers.

ICT pupils focused on identifying the park's target audience and exploring ICT solutions used throughout the site, including in restaurants and guest services. They also analysed the Alton Towers logo, discussing what makes a logo effective—an exercise that ties directly into their coursework on branding and design.

Business Studies students examined the park's marketing strategies, with a particular focus on how seasonal events attract visitors. Pupils reflected on how these techniques could be applied to their own coursework projects, gaining insight into promotional planning and customer engagement.

The day was a resounding success, with pupils fully embracing the experience and demonstrating exemplary behaviour throughout. It was a fantastic blend of fun and learning, bringing curriculum content to life in a dynamic and memorable way.



FUTURE CAREERS

At Moorside High School, we believe that high-quality careers education is key to helping students make informed, aspirational choices about their futures. Our careers programme is designed to support every student from Year 7 to Year 11, offering tailored guidance and real-world experiences that prepare them for life beyond school.

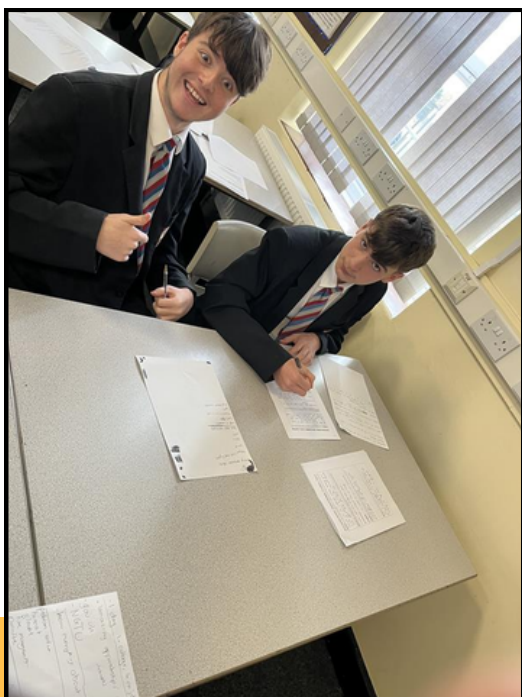
Led by Mrs Bell and our full-time Level 6 Careers Adviser, Mr Gordon, the programme includes one-to-one advice, work experience opportunities, and access to platforms like Unifrog, which helps students explore university courses, apprenticeships, and career pathways.

We are proud to hold the Quality in Careers Award, recognising our commitment to delivering impartial, inclusive, and inspiring careers education. Through partnerships with employers, colleges, and training providers, we aim to broaden horizons and raise aspirations—ensuring every student is ready for their next step.

For more information and to see our Careers Learning Journey in full, visit our [Careers page](#).

APPRENTICESHIP WORKSHOP

Some students from year 11 had a brilliant opportunity to take part in an apprenticeship workshop from an outside agency called Higher Horizons. Through the day students looked at degree apprenticeships and everything that is involved with them to make them successful. This included doing mock interviews to best prepared students for the near future



PARENT VOICE

Make a lasting impact on our school community by completing the School Parent/Carer View Questionnaire and be in with a chance to win a prize! This is a fantastic opportunity to share your insights and ideas to shape the educational experience at Moorside High School and to win a voucher for Mantra Indian Restaurant, [Home - Mantra Indian - Indian Dining in Stoke-on-Trent](#). The questionnaire closes on Friday 7th November and the winner will be drawn at random after 9am. Access the questionnaire at <https://forms.office.com/e/j1K340mBb7>

If you have a business and would like to donate a prize to sponsor our future parent surveys or support any aspect of our school community, please contact jlowe@mhs.potteries.ac.uk

PARENT FORUM

Based on parent feedback in the Summer Parent Voice Survey, we're making changes to the Parent Forum to better reflect your preferences and priorities.

From now on, meetings will take place once per term, with a mix of in-person and online sessions depending on the topic. They'll be held on Monday or Tuesday evenings between 5 and 7pm.

This year's meetings are scheduled for Tuesday 4 November (online, 6–7pm), Monday 26 January (in person, 5–6pm), and Tuesday 19 May (online, 6–7pm). A Teams link will be sent for online sessions.

The forum will continue to provide a space for communication between parents and staff, sharing views on school life, and supporting events and initiatives. We're also improving how we share updates, including better promotion of meeting dates, half-termly feedback emails, and more use of newsletters and social media.

We hope these changes will make the Parent Forum more inclusive and responsive. If you'd like to get involved or share ideas, we'd love to hear from you. Email calcock@mhs.potteries.ac.uk to express your interest in joining our group.

HOUSE

Pumpkin Carving Competition – Get Spooky! With Halloween just around the corner, we're gearing up for a frightfully fun tradition — our Spooky Pumpkin Carving Contest! We can't wait to see your eerie, imaginative, and spine-chilling creations. The student with the spookiest pumpkin will win a special prize and earn House Points for their team! How to Enter: Carve your pumpkin, snap a photo, and email it to Miss Roberts by midnight on 31st October.

Let the haunting creativity begin!

RANK	HOUSE	HOUSE POINTS
1	Churchill	36795
2	Bridgewater	34963
3	Doulton	34718
4	Moorcroft	34031
5	Wedgwood	33117

Assessment and Homework

From half term 2, assessments for all year groups will be synoptic focused.

What does this look like?

Students will be tested on learning from the previous term.

Why have we done this?

Synoptic assessments are designed to evaluate a student's ability to draw together and apply knowledge, understanding, and skills from across a broad range of topics within a subject. Rather than solely focusing on recently taught units, these assessments encourage learners to make connections, synthesize information, and demonstrate holistic understanding. Synoptic tasks mirror real-world problem-solving by requiring students to integrate learning from different areas, reflect critically, and present coherent responses. This approach not only deepens subject mastery but also prepares students for higher-level thinking and future academic or vocational challenges.

How will homework support the synoptic assessments?

To support students in preparing for these synoptic assessments, we will be introducing weekly or fortnightly homework tasks that are specifically designed to act as revision. These tasks will revisit prior learning, reinforce key concepts, and help students build confidence in applying their knowledge in a more integrated way.

Praising Homework

To reward those who are completing homework, display boards around the school will show excellent student practice. These display boards will be populated with homework from each department for every year group, chosen by the department itself. Students who are picked will be rewarded with a prize that could be: raffle tickets, House Points, praise post cards and many others. Students will be picked fortnightly. Work will also be shared via social media and the parent bulletin, so everyone is aware of the hard work that is being completed.

Raffle tickets
next term will
focus on
Homework.

Prize for the end of
term draw is:

a £50 One4all
shopping voucher!

Mini spot check prizes, front of
queue passes, House Points and
postcards home can also be won!



ANTI-RACISM

This week, a group of passionate Year 9 students delivered an inspiring anti-racism assembly to our Year 7 and 8 cohorts. Their message was powerful and thought-provoking, and they truly embodied our REACH values — showing Respect, Engagement, Achievement, Community, and Hard Work throughout.

Their public speaking skills were exceptional, and their commitment to promoting inclusivity and understanding was evident in every word. A huge thank you to these outstanding students and to Miss Blood, who is leading this remarkable group with dedication and care. More information will be shared soon by the group about their plans moving forwards.

We are incredibly proud of them all



OFFICE UPDATES

Upcoming Dates & Reminders

- Year 7 Form Tutors Evening: Wednesday 6th November 2025, 4:00–6:30 PM
- Year 11 Mock Exams Start: Monday 18th November 2025
- Year 11 Parents' Evening: Tuesday 16th December 2025, 4:00–6:30 PM

Site Access Reminder

Only parents and carers who have been authorised to drop off and collect students are permitted on site.

Lockers Available

With the recent increase in lost belongings, we would like to remind students and parents that lockers are available to rent.

For more information, please contact the school office.

MEMES

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MEMES

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Memes may look like simple jokes, but, for many teenagers, they form a shared cultural language. Quickly created and reworked, they spread across social media platforms as images with text or short videos. Nearly eight in ten teenagers share memes (79%, YPulse), making them part of daily life. While memes encourage creativity and participation, they can also spread misinformation or reinforce harmful stereotypes.

SPREADING MISINFORMATION

While memes help to communicate complex topics, they can also spread misinformation. Memes may sometimes include content presenting false facts or biased viewpoints, especially around health, politics, or current events and, as they're designed to be shared quickly, young people may not question their accuracy.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Memes are widely circulated, and not always age-appropriate, meaning young people may encounter explicit language, sexual content, or graphic imagery, even without searching for it. As memes spread fast on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or WhatsApp, it's nearly impossible to filter them completely.

MASKED MESSAGES

Some memes are designed to be confusing or layered with hidden meanings, making them hard for parents, and, sometimes, other young people to understand. Online groups often create these memes to look like inside jokes, but they can sometimes conceal offensive, harmful, or misleading content.

HIDDEN HARMS & LOSING SENSITIVITY

When serious topics like violence, racism, or mental health are turned into jokes, children and young people may become less sensitive to these issues over time. While a funny meme may seem light-hearted, it can carry messages that belittle certain groups, encourage risky behaviour, or mock personal struggles. Repeated exposure through memes can make harmful behaviour seem normal or less important. Over time, this can blur their understanding of what is funny versus what is discriminatory, harmful, or damaging to themselves and others.

PERMANENT DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Unlike spoken jokes, memes leave a trail. Created or shared memes can resurface later and be misunderstood, even if intended as harmless. Once online, memes may be copied, saved, or spread beyond a young person's control - digital actions can follow them into their future, shaping how they are perceived by peers, teachers, or even employers long after the original meme has been shared.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Talk regularly with young people and try to understand their online world - discuss what they find funny about the memes, and why. By listening without judgement, you build trust, making it easier for them to come to you if they see something harmful. Open conversations also help children and teens think critically about the messages behind memes rather than simply accepting them at face value.

MODEL HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Show children and teens positive online behaviours, such as taking breaks from screens, avoiding late-night scrolling, and engaging in offline activities. Setting clear routines around screen time at home can help to reinforce healthy boundaries and reduce the risks of overuse. By modelling balanced technology use, adults can help children and young people see that digital entertainment, including memes, should be just one part of life.

TEACH DIGITAL LITERACY

Help children and young people learn to question where information comes from and whether it's reliable - developing media literacy skills prepares young people to understand and navigate through their future online lives. Show them how memes can sometimes exaggerate or misrepresent facts for laughs, and encourage them to check credible sources when memes claim to present truth.

FOSTER EMPATHY ONLINE

Remind children and young people that memes should never come at someone else's expense. Encourage them to think about how a meme might make another person feel before sharing or creating it. Highlight examples of positive memes that celebrate creativity without hurting others. Fostering empathy, respect, and kindness in digital spaces will help them become more aware of promoting a safer, more supportive online culture.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Cristina Moreno-Almeida is a Senior Lecturer in Digital Culture at Queen Mary University of London. She specialises in memes, online networks, and youth culture, examining how digital spaces shape identity and everyday life.



See full reference list on our website

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The National College

PUMPKIN COMPETITION



The poster is for a 'Pumpkin Carving Competition' at 'Moreside High School'. It features a dark background with silhouettes of trees and leaves. At the top left is the school's logo, a stylized 'M' with a leaf. The title 'PUMPKIN CARVING COMPETITION' is in large, bold, orange and white letters. Below it, a yellow banner contains the deadline 'DEADLINE: 31 OCTOBER 2025', the prizes 'PRIZES FOR 1ST, 2ND & 3RD PLACE', and the email address 'SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO LROBERTS@MHS.POTTERIES.AC.UK'. At the bottom, five carved pumpkins are shown, each with a different face. Below the pumpkins are five small shields representing the school houses. At the very bottom, a purple banner contains the text: 'THINK YOU CAN CARVE THE CREEPIEST, FUNNIEST, OR SPOOKIEST PUMPKIN? GET CREATIVE THIS OCTOBER HALF TERM AND ENTER OUR PUMPKIN CARVING COMPETITION! HOUSE POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR ALL ENTRIES'.

HOUSE SYSTEM

**PUMPKIN CARVING
COMPETITION**

DEADLINE: 31 OCTOBER 2025

PRIZES FOR 1ST, 2ND & 3RD PLACE

**SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO
LROBERTS@MHS.POTTERIES.AC.UK**

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