

Message from the Headteacher



It has been a highly productive and successful start to the academic year 2026-2027! We are now coming to the end of Term 1 where we have been both celebrating the significant successes of last academic year and implementing our plans for this year.

We had excellent examination outcomes at GCSE and A Level and Vocational courses over the summer.

At GCSE a remarkable **33% of all grades were the very highest at 9-7 which is an exceptional achievement**. Our results in both English and Maths have also continued to surpass our expectations with students attaining grades 9-5 in both English and Maths, significantly above national average at 64%. Recent information from the Fischer Family Trust places **Bullers Wood in the top 11% of schools in the UK for attainment at GCSE nationally**. This is testament to the significant hard work of all our students and the dedication of all the staff as we work together. I am so very proud that all our students, regardless of ability, thrive at Bullers Wood. It has also been great to see the majority of last year's Year 11s join the Sixth Form alongside students from Bullers Boys and other local schools. They have made an impressive start.

Our A Level and Vocational students also had similar success with over 42% of grades A*-B. It was a pleasure celebrating with them on results day and hearing of their next steps whether that was a university place, employment or an apprenticeship.

Following updated Government legislation from last year regarding schools being 'mobile free', we have been reinforcing our "Off and Away" policy regarding mobile phone use in school. Thank you to all parents and carers for your support as we seek to ensure our young people abide by this, thereby minimising some of the issues caused by mobile phone use. Our young people continue to respond excellently to these expectations and very much appreciate why this is so important.

Our **Student Leadership Team** have made a very productive start to this year. They have been actively involved in a number of Headteacher Assemblies including presenting during Black History Month and Breast Cancer Awareness week. They have been leading with our student council representatives across the year groups, listening carefully to the issues our young people face and presenting practical solutions as we work together. They have also relaunched **Bullers Buzz**, our student produced magazine, packed full of interesting thoughts and articles.

This Bulletin outlines the amazing experiences our young people have had toward the very end of the summer term and the start of this term. Do take time to read where you can get a flavour of some of the many activities that have taken place. There is a lovely article about the World Challenge Trip to Namibia in July, alongside our Year 8 Geography field work trip to Juniper Hall amongst other articles and successes.

I very much wish all our parents, carers and students a very relaxing half term break and I look forward seeing our students return on **Tuesday 3rd November at 8.30am**

Mr S Hardwick
Headteacher



Spending two weeks camping in Namibia was truly an adventure of a lifetime. From seeing countless sunrises to singing with a Namibian choir, our expedition was one of new experiences.



Surrounded by sandstone, Spitzkoppe was beautiful, we enjoyed watching the sunsets every night from our campsite. At night the sky was filled with more stars than most will see in a lifetime, a view that none of us will forget. Cooking three meals a day for 21 people while camping was a huge challenge of the trip, and there were many highs and lows with meals as we navigated learning to cook with our teams, in such a different environment.

Evenings at the campsite consisted of campfires and marshmallow roasting whilst debriefing our incredible days. On our final night in Spitzkoppe our guide arranged for a Namibian choir to visit us. This was a highlight of the trip, where we spent the evening listening to beautiful music whilst also getting involved with the singing and

The next portion of our expedition was spent doing a conservation initiative. With local help we spent our mornings clearing roads and building pathways which sometimes proved tiring but rewarding. Our afternoons were spent driving throughout the area, tracking a broad range of animals; from water hogs to giraffes, kudu to elephants and our highlight - seeing a lion only 10m from us eating it's breakfast. On our final day at the project, we saw a pangolin, which are extraordinarily rare and even for guides a once in a lifetime sighting.

For our final days of the trip, we headed to Etosha Safari Park where we went for sunrise game drives, only adding to the variety of animals we saw. A highlight of the park was our evenings spent by the waterhole where at dusk different animals took turns getting their final drink of the night. Baby elephants, rhinos and families of giraffes all patiently waited their turn. We were astounded with how much slower the environment moved there, and it made us consider the pace of our own lives.

We headed back to Windhoek after an incredible 13 days and enjoyed our final meal at a restaurant appreciating the luxury of not having to cook or wash up. Reflecting on our trip we realised what an incredible journey it had been, making new friends and gaining new perspectives. We returned home very dusty but full of stories and memories that we will treasure. It's difficult to capture our experience in words, but we all feel very grateful to have had this once in a lifetime adventure.





World Challenge—Namibia July 2026

“The trip was an amazing experience, from working with animals and camping under the stars to going on safari and hiking through mountains. I’m so grateful to for the opportunity to explore such a beautiful country, step out of my comfort zone and make unforgettable memories” – Kayla



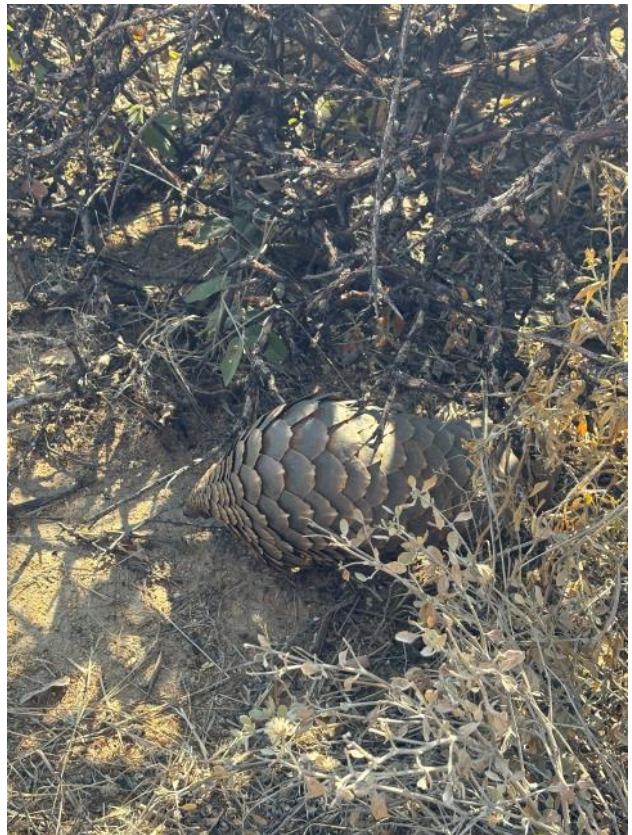
“Our trip to Namibia was an incredible opportunity to discover a new country, have once in a lifetime experiences and make memories that I will never forget!” - Lois

“Going to Namibia was one of the most incredible experiences and one I’m so grateful to have had the opportunity to go on. The friends and memories we made along the way is something that we will all cherish for the rest of our lives. From trekking in Spitzkoppe with views that felt unreal to seeing almost all the big five in person, it was a journey that felt truly magical” - Jemima





World Challenge, Namibia—July 2026





Year 8 visit to Juniper Hall

On Wednesday 30th September and Thursday 1st October our Year 8 students took part in a Geography trip to Juniper Hall. During this trip we visited two river points. At the first point it was in the middle course of the river Tillingbourne. We saw a lot of meanders, and we tested the velocity of the river. We also tested the depth and length. We saw some erosion caused by the water carrying rocks and then dropping them off when the weight was too much.

At the second point we noticed that the water was deeper. Where there was supposed to be meanders it was straight. This was caused by man-made additions to the river to keep it well managed so that the river is flowing as fast as it possibly can. This simple addition also made it so that the flooding risk was lower, so it was safe for locals to use the footpath and road. At the second point we also noticed that it was much wider and the velocity had increased a significant amount compared to the previous point.

On this trip my river knowledge has improved vastly, and I am so glad that the school offers this experience to us year 8 students. Thank you for reading and I hope you enjoyed!





Year 8 visit to Juniper Hall

On Wednesday 30th September and Thursday 1st October Year 8 went on a school trip to Juniper Hall and visited River Tillingbourne. When we first arrived at Juniper Hall we went with our group leader to collect information about rivers and got a booklet to store all of our information. Then we borrowed some wellies, and got back on the coach to site one, crossways farm.

When we arrived at site one, we walked to the first part of the river we were studying. Our group leader explained what we needed to do, and we then got into groups, collected our information and got in the river. First, we measured the depth of the river using a metre stick. We did that 3 times, at different parts of the river. Once we finished, we calculated the mean, and then we measured the width of the river and the velocity (how fast the river was flowing).

Next, we travelled to site two, Abinger Hammer. When we arrived, we settled to eat lunch, and then we went in the river at site two, and measured the depth, width and velocity. Then we had to draw a picture of what we could see, including houses, the road, the river, trees, and fences, and labelled it. Finally, we travelled home. And in lesson put all of the information we gathered on graphs.

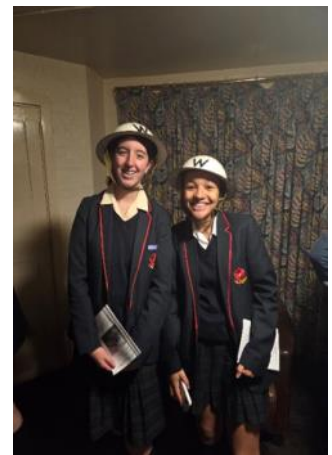
C Cook, Year 8 Young Reporter



Year 10 visit to Eltham Palace

On Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th October, our Year 10 History students enjoyed a fascinating visit to Eltham Palace as part of their GCSE studies. The trip gave students the opportunity to explore the unique history of the house, from its medieval origins to its impressive Art Deco transformation in the 1930s.

One of the highlights for many students was seeing Virginia Courtauld's famous gold mosaic bathroom (shown below), which provided a striking example of the luxury and modern design that made Eltham Palace such a remarkable home. Students engaged enthusiastically with the history of the site and were able to make valuable connections to their classroom learning.





Year 11 Urban Fieldwork—Stratford

The Geography trip to Stratford was extremely fun and gave us as geographers an insight into the lives of those who live and work in Stratford.

We gained more knowledge due to the practical element which cannot be replicated any other way. During our time there, we questioned people, analysed our surroundings and made decisions. This was all to compare different locations and their quality of life.

After our fieldwork some geographers stayed behind and had an early dinner with friends which was a nice addition.

We have now spent time back at school analysing our results which we will conclude and evaluate.





Jack Petchey Awards Evening

On **Monday 12th October** our Jack Petchey student and leader award winners for September 2025 to July 2026 attended their awards ceremony at The Churchill Theatre in Bromley. Congratulations to all our winners:



Mrs Salmons (Leader), Emma F, Laila H, Sophie F, Charlotte S, Assad K, Keith E, Isabelle M, Nya D and Kayla A

Year 7 Emotion Mapping

The aim for our Year 7 fieldwork was to explore different sites across the school and score each area depending on how we feel about it. Enquiry question: Which sites at Bullers Wood School are most liked by Year 7 students?

Today we walked around school looking at different sites for emotion mapping. We described the area, noted which aspects we liked and disliked at each site, then we rated the sites out of 10. Once we were back in the classroom, we collated the data and concluded our findings, we had a really lovely time. *Lottie, Year 7.*





The Film Society

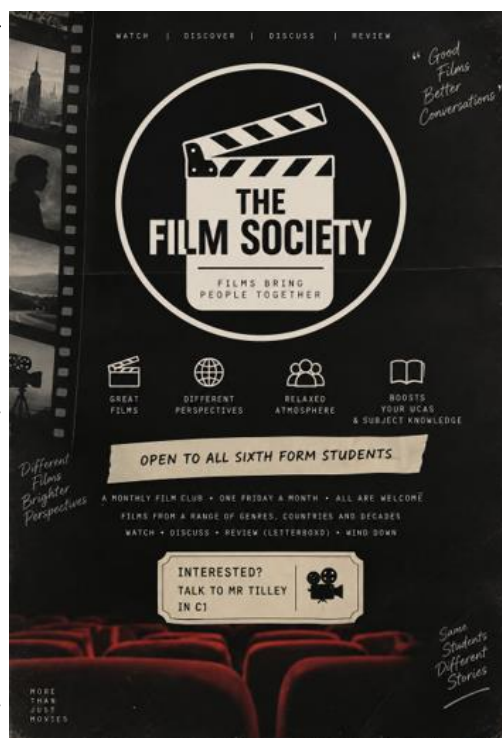
The Film Society got off to a fantastic start this month with our first after-school screening for Sixth Form students. The aim of the society is simple: to bring students together through great films. Each month, students will have the chance to watch something different, discover new genres, explore films from different countries and decades, and enjoy cinema in a relaxed setting at the end of the week.

Our first screening was a real success, with students staying after school to watch the film together and share their reactions afterwards. It was great to see students enjoying the experience, discussing their favourite moments and engaging with film outside the classroom.

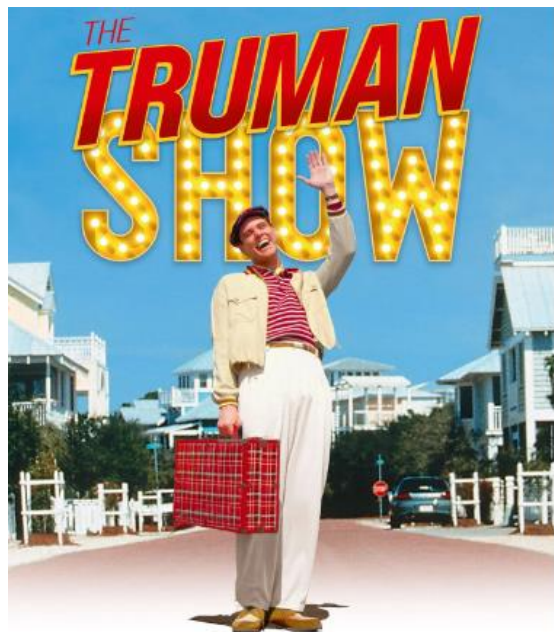
For students with an interest in Media, Film, History, English, Journalism or reviewing, the society also offers the chance to broaden their cultural knowledge and begin building a personal film diary through platforms such as Letterboxd.

The Film Society will run once a month on a Friday after school, with a different film chosen for each screening. Staff are also very welcome to come along and join us.

Thank you to everyone who supported our first screening. We are already looking forward to the next one!



Film Review: The Truman Show



The Truman Show is a film about a man who slowly discovers that his entire life is actually a television programme. Which is awkward, because most of us would be annoyed to find out our family was fake, but Truman also discovers that his neighbours, his colleagues and even his wife are all actors. At least when our relatives embarrass us in public, they are usually doing it for free.

Jim Carrey is brilliant as Truman, balancing cheerful optimism with the growing suspicion that something is very, very strange. He begins to notice that the same people keep walking past him, the radio seems to be reporting his movements and the weather is suspiciously dramatic. In other words, it is exactly like being at school, except the timetable is controlled by a television producer and there is no escape through the library.

The film is funny, clever and increasingly unsettling. It asks important questions about privacy, reality and whether people would rather live comfortably in a lie or face the truth. It also proves that if your wife suddenly starts advertising kitchen products during an argument, you should probably investigate.

The Truman Show is a thoughtful, entertaining film with a big idea at its centre: sometimes the most frightening thing is not being watched, but discovering that everyone else already knows the script.

Rating: 5 stars out of 5. Would recommend, although I would avoid waving at any suspiciously well-placed cameras.

One great film. One great afternoon.

Mr Tilley, Head of Media Studies



Year 12 visit to Thorpe Park

On **Thursday 15th August**, our **Year 12 students** traded the classroom for coasters as they ventured into the annual **Thorpe Park Fright Night** excursion. This highly anticipated trip served as a fantastic opportunity for the year group to bond, unwind, and test their nerves against some of the UK's most thrilling rides and live-action scare mazes.



The year group have worked so hard over this first term to settle into new, challenging routines and rise to the demands of their new academic studies. Moving into the Sixth Form is no small transition, and therefore it was wonderful to be able to give them the day as a reward for their incredible efforts. We hope

that it helped them to strengthen peer connections and build cohesion across the year group, ready to face the challenges of the next two years as a community that supports and uplifts one another.

Arriving at the park, the students quickly immersed themselves in the spooky atmosphere. As day turned to dusk, they braved iconic rollercoasters like Stealth, The Swarm, and Hyperia in near-dark conditions, adding a whole new level of adrenaline to the experience. Beyond the rides, the park came alive with roaming actors and specialized scare zones, pushing our sixth formers' bravery to the absolute limit. It was brilliant to see students stepping out of their comfort zones, laughing off the jump scares, and celebrating each other's bravery.

Despite the terrifying encounters and thrilling distractions, the exemplary behaviour of our Year 12 cohort shone through. The staff members accompanying the trip praised the students for their maturity, punctuality, and the fantastic team spirit they showed throughout the day. Whether they were queuing together, sharing a box of donuts, or encouraging a classmate to conquer their fears on a big drop, their unity was on full display.

A huge thank you to all the staff members who gave up their time to supervise, and to the Year 12 students for making the event such a memorable and successful trip out. You have set a fantastic standard for the rest of the academic year!

Year 12 Spanish

Our Spanish Year 12 students have had some rich and engaging learning experiences this summer term, taking part in a wide range of hands-on cultural and language activities.

Highlights included a trip into the National Gallery in London where students explored the Spanish Baroque period. We explored the work of key artists such as Zurbarán, Murillo, El Greco, Valdés Leal, Velázquez and Ribera, and students produced very thoughtful and insightful reflections which they shared through discussions, drawing on both their personal perspectives and independent work.



Zurbarán



Back in school, students took part in workshops on Spanish cinema and culture, deepening their understanding of the Hispanic world.

To round off the programme, Year 12 enjoyed a cooking session delivered in Spanish, followed by a shared meal together.

This was accompanied by a traditional *sobremesa*; a Spanish custom referring to the time spent relaxing, talking, and socialising at the table after a meal, an important part of Spanish culture that values conversation and community.



Term Dates 2026-2027

Term 1

Start: Tuesday 1st September 2026

Finish: Friday 16th October 2026

Autumn break: Monday 19th October 2026 to Friday 30th October 2026

Staff Development Day Tuesday & Wednesday 1st & 2nd September 2026

Term 2

Start: Monday 2nd November 2026

Finish: Friday 18th December 2026

Christmas break: Monday 21st December 2026 to Friday 1st January 2027

Staff Development Day Monday 2nd November 2026

Term 3

Start: Monday 4th January 2027

Finish: Friday 12th February 2027

February break: Monday 15th February 2027 to Friday 19th February 2027

Staff Development Day Wednesday 13th January 2027

Term 4

Start: Monday 22nd February 2027

Finish: Thursday 25th March 2027

Spring break: Friday 26th March 2027 to Friday 9th April 2027

Staff Development Day Monday 22nd February 2027

Term 5

Start: Monday 12th April 2027

Finish: Friday 28th May 2027

Early May Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May 2027

May break: Monday 31st May 2027 to Friday 4th June 2027

Staff Development Day Friday 28th May 2027

Term 6

Start: Monday 7th June 2027

Finish: Wednesday 21st July 2027

Staff Development Day Friday 25th June 2027