



FIVE ACRES HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

30 November 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Welcome to the November edition of our newsletter. This month I am proud to share that the school has been allocated as a lead school for the RISE attendance and behaviour programme. This is good recognition from the Department for Education of our own success with attendance and behaviour and means that we will receive regular visitors and open events for schools around the South West who are working to improve their own attendance and behaviour. Huge congratulations go to staff directly involved in these areas within school, and thanks to staff, students and parents for the collective work that means we can be in the spotlight in this way.

Attendance continues to be one of our key success indicators for this year. I have been particularly impressed with the rises that we have been able to achieve together, which mean that fewer students are missing out on vital content and opportunities to widen their participation within school. A huge thanks to you as parents/carers for the part that you play in promoting the benefits of a good education and therefore good attendance.

Whilst in school, students can benefit from a huge range of opportunities and connections within the wider community. In the newsletter this month you will see many of these opportunities being celebrated, including the excellent representation that students, families and staff had at local and school-based Remembrance events. As we look forward to the month ahead, there are several things to look out for. Firstly, we look forward to celebrating with our Year 11 cohort the successes of their recent PPE assessments. We know that these are important to them as they continue to apply for their post-16 options. I wish them every success as they continue their vital studies. Years 7-10 will receive details towards the end of December about their own set of assessments, which will give them an opportunity to shine and be celebrated.

In December, we are also looking forward to releasing the names of our student council representatives. This is another vital part of our commitment to hearing the voice of every child.

We are pleased that students have had an opportunity to be involved in the democratic process that supports our British values. British values will be a prominent part of our morning greetings which will include messages around democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.



We are also excited for our students to take part in a Youth Parliament, to represent the school and its community in discussions with those from other Forest schools. More details about this opportunity will be given in the new year.

As we head towards the Christmas period, I would like to highlight the work that the student leaders are completing to promote donations to the Forest Foodbank. Social media posts plus information later in this newsletter will provide details of items for collection. Donations of any sealed food items will be accepted, along with the daily recommended items. Our appeal will conclude on 17 December, which coincides with our Christmas lunch day when students can wear festive jumpers, ties and socks.

Charitable work and giving is central to our understanding of inclusion, further opportunities have been provided for students recently including raising money for Children in Need and choosing charities to support through the Enterprise Society profits that students are working so hard to achieve. We are truly impressed with the efforts that they make in this area and other ways in which they support our local community, such as the making of lanterns to support the Berry Hill Christmas Lights switch-on event on Friday 28 November.

As a school we are proud to serve our community in this way and proud to continue providing a top level education for all students in our catchment area and beyond. Thank you for your support in our ongoing work.

NATIONAL SCHOOL MEALS WEEK

We have had a very successful week taking part in the National School Meals Week 2025 from the 10-14 November. As well as the canteen producing lots of nutritious meals, taster pots, and sharing information with our students, the PE department ran some daily sporting challenges, see the image of Tuesday's 'who can hold the longest plank' challenge. The winners of the challenges received a first, second or third place voucher for either a nutritious main meal, a healthy grab & go option or a reduced sugar sweet treat. Mrs Watts also shared recipes and tasters for students to try!

LACA, the school food people, have created a National School Meals Week recipe book to help school children to cook healthy and nutritious meals at home as well as enjoying them in school. The book features a collection of recipes from some school caterers and suppliers – showcasing the creativity, skill and passion that make school meals so special. From hearty mains to inventive desserts, it's packed with inspiration and ideas to celebrate great school food. Each recipe has an ingredients list, recipe details and a method of how to prepare the dish at home. Some of the school caterer recipes include Sweet Potato Curry, Butternut Squash Macaroni Cheese, Chickpea & Cauliflower Curry and Forest Fajita. You can access the recipe book via this link:

<https://www.lacansmw.co.uk/resources/nsmw-lets-get-cooking-recipe-book/>

Andre Alto, who won the 2025 LACA Grab 'N' Go Challenge, has submitted his winning recipe for the book. His Longganisa Rice Burger impressed judges at the competition, which was sponsored by SchoolGrid.



FIVE ACRES HIGH SCHOOL REMEMBERS

On Remembrance Sunday our Student Leaders were honoured to represent Five Acres High School at a special dedication event at Bells Field, marking the unveiling of a commemorative bench in honour of Captain Angus Buchanan VC MC and Private Francis Miles VC – two local heroes awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery in World War 1. Many of our students paid their respects by representing armed forces cadet regiments and Guides and Scouts at services across the community.

On Tuesday 11 November, Five Acres High School remembered with a two-minute silence, reflecting on the courage and sacrifice of those who served. This beautiful poem, written and read by Beth, our Poet Laureate, was also shared as part of our remembrance. Two of our Year 8 student ambassadors represented the school at Berry Hill's Remembrance Service, alongside students from Berry Hill Primary School and Berry Hill Under 5s Group. Proud moments of remembrance, respect, and reflection for our school community.



KEY DATES

Wednesday 3 December
Governors Meeting

Thursday 4 December
SEND event

Thursday 4 and Friday 5 December
Nasal Flu Vaccinations (whole school)

Friday 5 December
Year 10 Woman in Black theatre trip

Monday 8 & Tuesday 9 December
Enterprise Society Christmas Markets

Tuesday 9 December
Key Stage 3 Pantomime trip - Bristol Hippodrome

Thursday 11 December
Year 11 Parents' Evening

Thursday 18 December
Christmas Carol Concert

Friday 19 December
Year 11 A Christmas Carol theatre visit

Monday 22 December - Friday 2 January 2026
Christmas Holiday

Monday 5 January
INSET Day

Tuesday 6 January - Friday 9 January
Year 7 - 10 Assessments

Wednesday 14 January
Shakespeare performance

Thursday 22 January
Options Evening

Tuesday 27 January
Governors Meeting

Thursday 5 February
Year 9 Parents' Evening

Thursday 12 February
Celebrations Evening

Monday 16 February - Friday 20 February
Half Term

Sunday 28 February - Sunday 7 March
Ski Trip, Aprica Italy

Thursday 5 March
Year 8 Parents' Evening

Wednesday 11 March
Governors Meeting

Wednesday 25 March
Year 11 Parents' Information Evening - Subject Specific Workshops

Monday 30 March - Friday 10 April
Easter Holidays

Tuesday 5 May
Governors Meeting

Thursday 4 June
Year 10 Parents Information Evening

YEAR 10 CAREERS FAIR – EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH LIVE AT CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE

On Wednesday 26 November, our Year 10 students took part in an exciting and highly valuable careers experience at Educational Outreach Live, held at Cheltenham Racecourse. The event brought together a huge range of employers, training providers, colleges, universities and industry professionals, giving our students the opportunity to explore future pathways first-hand.

Throughout the morning, students engaged with exhibitors from sectors including healthcare, engineering, digital technology, public services, hospitality, construction, the armed forces, creative industries and many more. Each stand offered hands-on activities, demonstrations, and meaningful encounters designed to spark curiosity and broaden aspirations. Students were fantastic ambassadors for the school - polite, enthusiastic, and eager to learn. They made excellent use of their activity cards, collecting stamps by speaking with exhibitors, asking thoughtful questions, and learning about routes such as apprenticeships, T Levels, A Levels and vocational training.

The experience has given our students a deeper understanding of the skills employers look for, the wide range of careers available locally and nationally, and the steps they can begin taking now to prepare for post-16 choices. We're incredibly proud of how Year 10 represented Five Acres High School, and we look forward to building on this through our wider careers and personal development programme.



UPDATES FROM HEADS OF YEAR

MR JONES - HEAD OF YEAR 7

Despite it being the bleak, miserable month of November - Year 7s at Five Acres continue to dazzle, sparkle and shine!

Year 7s remain top of the charts for attendance - maintaining an impressive 96% for the year to date - the crown is ours! The competition for the 'Best Tutor Group' sash is red hot between 7SWS with 97.6% and 7LTM with 97.1%.

We have also now taken the lead with the number of positive points as a year group. Doing particularly well are Logan and Nika who have both amassed over 300 positive points now! Special shout-outs as well to Mollie, Paige and Jacob - who have the most points for acts of kindness to date. Year 7s are getting stuck into the extra-curricular offer as well with many accumulating 3 Character Education badges already and Orlagh is leading the way with 4.

Academically, Year 7s are thriving as they work their way towards their first secondary school assessments after the Christmas break. The positive habits they have established, through homework and in lessons, will no doubt see them flourish.



MRS PHELPS - HEAD OF YEAR 8

Congratulations to Year 8s who recently won an award for surpassing their attendance target of 95% for three days in a row. This figure means that students are taking full advantage of our world-class curriculum and are working day in, day out, towards their own stories of success. The inter-tutor competitions are well underway too with Mrs Haywood pipping Mr Maidment to the post and winning the prize last term.

Another highlight this year has been the introduction of Sparx Reader. So far, Year 8s have completed 866 hours of active reading between them - the highest number of hours in the school. 8AFS currently have the highest number of Sparx Reader Points and seem to be the most ambitious group at this stage. Fostering a love of reading equips students with the tools to navigate a world full of misinformation, disinformation and malinformation - enabling them to show empathy and to question what doesn't seem right.

Our Year 8 rugby team have won the GLT Cup in their finals - a huge congratulations to those involved. Achievements being carried out beyond the gate of Five Acres are also worth noting: these range from black belts in Karate to singing for an audience, clubs and cadets. Please send us details of students' achievements so that we can celebrate success both in and out of school.

Social Media is an unavoidable topic for us this term. It's important to remember that the comments our children post on social media can have real and lasting consequences. Please encourage your children to be safe. Being safe means being kind to others as well as themselves - avoiding incriminating comments that don't reflect their true values. It is all too easy to make comments and find ourselves in difficult situations. Open conversations about responsible online behavior can help them build good digital habits and protect their well-being in an increasingly connected world.

I end with a shout out to Aalish, Lily-Rose and Riley J who have the most positive points on their record this year so far.



MR ROBBINS - HEAD OF YEAR 9

November has been a strong month for our year group, and it has been encouraging to see attendance improve; however, we still need a continued push to ensure every student is in school, every day, wherever possible. It was particularly pleasing to see our students who represent the uniformed services wearing their service uniforms with pride for our Remembrance Day event on Tuesday 11 November, showing real maturity and respect. As we move into the final few weeks before Christmas, time is closing in quickly, and it is vital that we keep our momentum going into December - in attendance, behaviour, and engagement in extracurricular activities. Every day in school, every positive choice, and every opportunity taken will contribute to a successful academic year for our students in 2026.



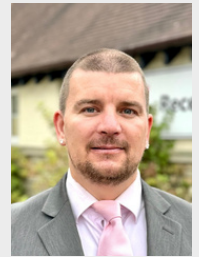
UPDATES FROM HEADS OF YEAR

MR HAYWARD - HEAD OF YEAR 11

The countdown is speeding up and we have a lot to get through before we celebrate at The Prom! As a reminder- The Prom is at Speech House Hotel on 3 July.

We have another round of PPEs coming up in the New Year. This will be another chance to prepare for exams ahead of the summer exams (official exams). This will be the third round of PPEs and Y11 will be in full swing in terms of revision and preparation. Everything we do in school and any work set outside of school is all aimed towards improving chances of success in the summer. This will give students more chances of being selected for the post-16 options of their choice. Linking in with this, all students should now have firm ideas as to who their chosen post-16 provider will be. We currently have sixth-form and colleges coming into school to help students make further informed decisions.

The results from the most recent PPEs will be out soon, as I mentioned in the last newsletter, many Y11 will see improvements in the second PPEs over the first PPEs which will give them confidence moving forward. So many of our Year 11 students see the link between attendance, hard work, revision and attainment. There is a Y11 Parents' Evening coming up on 11 December where the PPEs can be discussed.



CHILDREN IN NEED FUNDRAISING

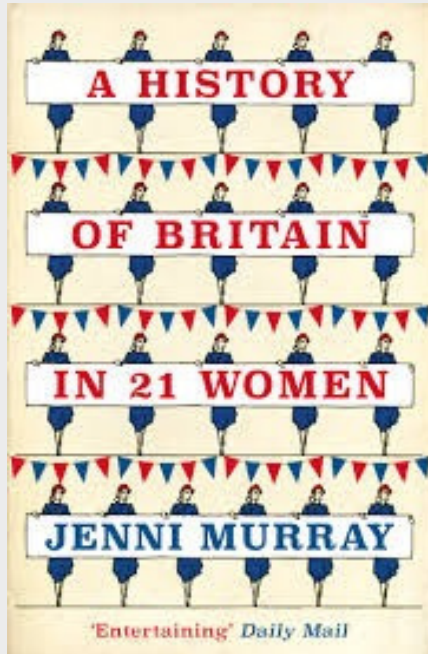
Thank you to everyone who donated towards our Spare Pennies for Pudsey appeal. Alongside the donations and sales from Children in Need merchandise, we raised £262.75.



READING RECOMMENDATIONS

English Teacher, Mrs Langton shares her picks for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

KEY STAGE 3

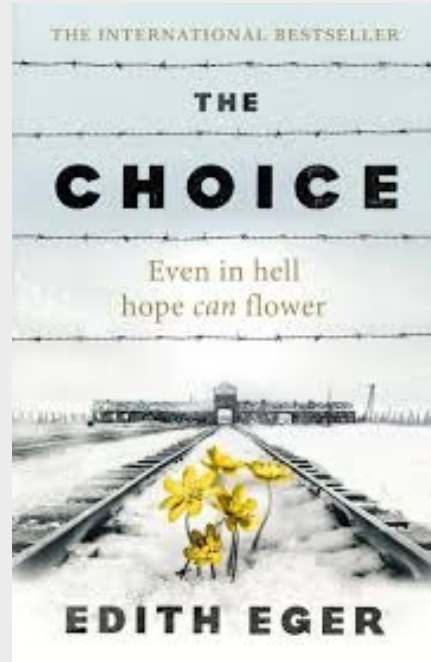


A History of Britain in 21 Women by Jenni Murray

They were famous queens, unrecognised visionaries, great artists and trailblazing politicians. They all pushed back boundaries and revolutionised our world.

Journalist and broadcaster, Jenni Murray presents the history of Britain as you've never seen it before, through the lives of 21 women who refused to succumb to the established laws of society, whose lives embodied hope and change, and who still have the power to inspire us today.

KEY STAGE 4



The Choice by Edith Eger

In 1944, 16-year-old ballerina Edith Eger was sent to Auschwitz. Separated from her parents on arrival, she endures unimaginable experiences, including being made to dance for the infamous Josef Mengele. When the camp is finally liberated, she is pulled from a pile of bodies, barely alive.

The horrors of the Holocaust didn't break Edith. In fact, they helped her learn to live again with a life-affirming strength and a truly remarkable resilience.

The Choice is her unforgettable story. It shows that hope can flower in the most unlikely places.

**BOTH AVAILABLE IN THE
SCHOOL LIBRARY**

TERM 1 ACADEMIES & SOCIETIES

Day	Lunch Time	After School 3-4pm
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Academy on the Redgra Y7 1pm Dodgeball Academy in Blue Gym Y8 1pm Enterprise Society (Y7 & Y8 in Room 27) Eco Society (Week A. All years. Room 21, 1pm) 	
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Academy on the Redgra Y9 1pm Dodgeball Academy in Blue Gym Y7 1pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photography Academy (Y10, Room 1) Boys Rugby (all years) Girls Football (Y7 & 8) Dance Academy (All years in 10 Block)
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Academy on the Redgra Y8 1pm Dodgeball Academy in Blue Gym Y10 1pm Y11 GCSE PE Table Tennis 1pm 10 block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pottery Society- (week A All years Room 5) Boys Football (all years) Girls Netball (Y9 &10) Rock Band (Week B Y7-9)
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Academy on the Redgra Y10 1pm Dodgeball Academy in Blue Gym Y9 Quiz society (week B, all years room 31, 1pm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls Netball (Y7 &8)
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Academy on the Redgra Y11 1pm Bible Study Club Society (All years. Library, 1pm) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board games/card games Society (All years, room 16) Lego Society and Craft Society- (All years, room 16). Darts Academy (All years, 10 block). Shakespeare Performance (Y7-10, room 48/Hall)

LANTERNS FOR LIGHTS SWITCH ON

Year 7 and 8 students showed off their creativity making lanterns for the Berry Hill Christmas Lights switch on event on Friday 28 November.



FIVE ACRES HIGH SCHOOL RETAINS NATIONAL QUALITY MARK PLUS AWARD!

We are delighted to announce that Five Acres High School has successfully retained its prestigious Quality Mark Plus Award from the Association for Character Education (ACE). The assessor praised our school's "strong commitment to ensuring that character education remains at the heart of the school's ethos and vision," recognising it as a defining feature of Five Acres' identity.

The report highlighted many areas of excellence, including:

- A consistent and embedded approach to character education, supported by clear systems and visible values around school.
- Our rewards and recognition culture, with students wearing their badges with pride and sharing how they've lived our core virtues.
- The success of the Platinum Character Champion Award, now recognised as a model of good practice across the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- The positive impact of introducing Kindness as an explicit school virtue, seen through student actions and ambassador roles.
- A rich array of leadership and enrichment opportunities, from Character Leaders to enterprise projects, helping students live our values beyond the classroom.
- Our commitment to sharing best practice with other schools locally and nationally.

ACE commended the "transformative" progress made since our last review and celebrated the pride, consistency and inclusivity of our Character Education programme. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, and the support of our parents and wider community. Together, we continue to live our motto: Aim High, Work Hard, Be Kind.



REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR APPEAL FOR THE FOREST FOODBANK

On behalf of the Student Leadership team, we would like to inform you about our chosen charity for this academic term and some ways that you can get involved in making an impact on our local community. Our school has chosen to donate to the Forest Foodbank, an organisation that endeavours to help those in need.

The charity strongly embodies our values: Creativity as to what they provide to people, Respect for both people who struggle and people who may not be struggling, Ambition to help anyone in need and Determination to provide support. These values are a strong part of our school and with your help, we can ensure we show them everywhere else.

The Forest Foodbank was first established in 2013 and in 2024 they gave out 3297 food parcels to adults and 1573 to children. There are approximately 80,000 people in the Forest of Dean and 800 students at our school, so they have provided support for around 22% of people where we live, with 90% of donations that they receive coming from people who kindly donate items. This is a number to truly be proud of, and this year we are striving to raise that number and help more people who are in crisis.

So, how can you get involved? Throughout December (up until 17 December) we are hosting a Reverse Advent Calendar. This is something that the Foodbank has created to encourage donations that are needed the most. For example, tinned foods are a large help to people in crisis - so on Monday 1 December, we will be asking for tinned donations. Boxes will be available in Reception to access all day, plus we will be sharing daily social media posts informing you of what items we have received that day, what we would like to donate the next day and many other awareness messages throughout the school. We strongly encourage students to get involved and be a part of our larger community, as together we can make an impact and provide essential support to those who need it most, especially around Christmas - a time when families struggle more and a time that we are able to give away products that we don't necessarily need.

If you are unable to provide specific items that follow the advent calendar, any donation is greatly appreciated, though the Advent Calendar has been designed for items that are scarce, so we recommend that these items are your first choice to bring in. Please keep an eye on our social media platforms for reminders!

The Forest Foodbank
Together with Trussell

Reverse Advent Calendar

Please check our website for Christmas opening times, and to see what we may be running short of. Thank you!

1 Tinned soup	2 Shampoo	3 Pasta	4 Tinned tomatoes	5 Rice	6 Deodorant
7 biscuits	8 Washing up liquid	9 Tinned fish	10 Coffee	11 Jam	12 Breakfast cereal
13 Tea bags	14 Chocolate bars	15 Long-life fruit juice	16 Instant mash potatoes	17 Tinned vegetables	18 Cooking sauces
19 Tinned potatoes	20 Tinned meat	21 Toilet rolls	22 Rice pudding	23 UHT long-life milk	24 Tinned fruit

theforest.foodbank.org.uk

Registered Charity in England & Wales 1183196

AMBITION. CONFIDENCE. CREATIVITY. DETERMINATION. RESPECT

SEND SUPPORT EVENT - 4 DECEMBER 2025, FIVE ACRES HIGH SCHOOL



relationships
matter



Support for Families with SEND - Gloucestershire's Local Offer for Parent Carers

Beezee

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
EMPLOYMENT
AND SKILLS **HUB**



It is never too early to start thinking about Preparation for Adulthood for your young person.

Pop into our SEND parents information drop-in coffee morning, have your chance to talk to SEND professionals for a 1:1 chat between the hours of 10.00am till 12pm on Thursday 4th of December 2025 at Five Acres

Gain valuable insights into healthy lifestyles with promotion from BeeZee, explore what's available in your local area through the Local Offer, connect with your local Gloucestershire Parent Carer Forum to share experiences, access support, and help shape services for children and young people with SEND. Learn about **Post-16 education and employment opportunities** for your child from **The Employment and Skills Hub**, and receive expert guidance from the **Preparation for Adulthood Support Team** to help your young person become as independent as possible.

What Does PfA Mean?

Preparation for Adulthood

3 key messages

4 Pathways

Preparation for Adulthood



Personalise your approach

Employment



Develop a shared vision

Independent Living



Improve post-16 options and support

Community Inclusion



Raise aspirations

Health



Plan services together

For more information, please contact Sarah and Iim:

Preparationforadulthood@gloucestershire.gov.uk

TENTORS TRAINING EVENT

Huge shoutout to our incredible students who completed the challenging 10+ mile hike around Blaise Castle Estate on Sunday 16 November! Your resilience, determination, and hard work were truly commendable. You faced this demanding trek with confidence and embodied the Five Acres High School values and spirit of fitness. We are immensely proud of every participant. This was more than just a training session: it was an outstanding display of personal achievement. Well done!



CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION



AMBITION - CONFIDENCE - CREATIVITY - DETERMINATION - RESPECT

CHOP IT LIKE IT'S HOT COOKERY CLASSES

Mrs Watts' Year 8 Chop It Like It's Hot Cookery classes are a hit after school. Week 1 saw students prepare chilli and week 2 it was all about pizzas. Sweet treats were Belgian waffles! Well done everyone. Year 9 students have been using fish in their dishes, making savoury tarts with smoked salmon



Year 8 Cookery Club

The country of choice this week was Belgium. Students had a wafflely good time!!



Supporting the Fish In Schools Hero programme, Year 9 students were provided smoked salmon by the school to include in their savoury tarts this week.

Introducing new flavours and overcoming cost barriers to all!



FUNDRAISING FOR MOROCCO EXPEDITION

To support our students fundraising for the Morocco expedition, you are invited to a Christmas Quiz to be held at Gloucester Academy on Wednesday 3 December 2025. Maximum of 6 members per team, tickets cost £10 per adult and £5 for under 18s. Please note there is no charge for students who are taking part in the expedition. The ticket price includes entry and festive cheeseboard! Students will be selling snacks and there will be a raffle too. Cash only on the evening. To register your team, please go to: <https://buff.ly/Fq1NYvu>

