



Dear Parents/Carers,

At the start of this week families were informed of their Secondary School places for Year 6 students moving into Year 7 in September 2026. We're delighted to be welcoming the new cohort, and have emailed all parents/carers who have a child joining us next year. This includes a significant number of siblings, but even if we have your details for your older child it is important to complete the registration form which has been sent by email in order to confirm your child's place.

World book day this year had the theme of comics and animated characters, and Year 7 & 8 students and staff did an excellent job with the themed fancy dress. There are lots of photos included below. This follows on from last Thursday's comic workshop with visiting author, Kev Sutherland. Keeping with our We Are A Reading Academy focus, all Year 7 are out on a trip on 25th March. They are going to Gawthorpe Hall for an exciting Shakespeare-themed special event. Activities include a timeline activity to learn about Shakespeare's life and plays; and fits with their English lessons. They will discover what historical evidence tells us about Shakespeare and using one of Shakespeare's famous soliloquys, pupils will take part in a game of 'Shakespearean tennis' in the stunning surroundings of Gawthorpe Hall's Long Gallery. As well as the opportunity to handle authentic replica Tudor weaponry and examine how Shakespeare used swordplay within his plays.

Next Thursday, we host the 5th annual Pendle Education Trust Careers Fair. This is a brilliant opportunity for students to engage with a range of employers as well as explore the different courses available from Nelson and Colne College. The exhibitions include practical demonstrations and hands on opportunities, and students can talk to the employers and tutors with any questions they have. As we host the event, we welcome students from our other Trust schools - Castercliff Primary Academy, Casterton Primary Academy, Pendle Primary Academy and West Craven High School; as well as Primet Primary joining us in the morning. All of our Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 students will be visiting the fair at different times throughout the day, and Year 11 able to drop in during lunchtime. This event also helps students work towards their 'Exploring Careers' badge as part of the Pendle Education Trust Pledge.

Next Thursday is also Year 11 Parents' evening, which will be taking place in the Humanities block, just past the PE block. This is an important opportunity to talk to your child's teachers, and get advice about how to make the most of the remaining weeks. Their Spring term trackers will also be given out on the night, with all of their current grades and their mock results.

Principal's Awards

Awarded to the students in each year group with the highest number of Positive Points and 0 Negative Points each week.



J Pilkington
Principal

Lucas
(7E)

Asad (8M)
Holly (8P)

Mohammad
(9E)

Hamna (10A)
Myla (10E)
Shazil (10E)

Wiktor
(11A)



Artsmark
Silver Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England



Leading Parent
Partnership Award
2022-2025

Stars of the Week

Congratulations to this week's star students:

Year 7

P- Penelope
R- Oliver
I - Hope
M - Patricia
E - Lucas
HOY - Dalton

Year 8

P- Holly
R- Samuel
I - Haram
M - Romis
E - Khloe
T - Fajar
HOY -Evin

Year 9

P- Samuel
R- Alyan
I - Myles
M - Ahmad
E - Aliza
T - Khalil
A - Archie
HOY - Simas

Year 10

P- Aaryan
R- Amara
I - Lewis
M - Mia
E - Shazil
T - Gracie
A - Samuel
HOY - Daisy

Year 11

P- Floyd
R- Josie
I - Chanelle
M - Dani
E - Hussain
T - Vanesa
A - Scarlett
HOY - Courtney

Primet Positive Focus: Motivated

This week we have been focusing on our core value of being motivated. We set high aspirations and are driven to meet them. We value the importance of working hard to achieve our goals and the rewards gained from reaching them.



UNCRC Articles

As part of our UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award, we have been looking at each of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child Articles. There are 54 Articles in total. This week we have been learning about:



- Article 38 – War and armed conflicts: Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflicts.
- Article 39 - Recovery from trauma and reintegration: Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

Upcoming Dates

- 10th March – Year 10 MEGA Hub event at Nelson & Colne College
- 11th March – Year 8 Extraordinary Minds event at Nelson & Colne College
- 12th March – Pendle Education Trust Careers Fair, hosted at Primet
- 12th March – Year 11 Parents' Evening
- 13th March – Year 11 Geography exam preparation and study skills trip
- 17th & 19th March – Primet's Got Talent at lunchtime, £1 on the door to watch
- 20th March – Year 9 Lancashire Book of the Year judging event
- 23rd March – Culture Day, including 2 British Olympics Athletes in school running sports events
- 26th March – Year 9 Personalised Choices Evening
- 27th March – Last day of term, normal finish time at 3.20pm



KOOTH

I'm delighted to let you know we are offering two webinar dates for parents, carers and family members who are supporting children through exams this year. Please find more details below and do please share with families in your networks.

How you can support your child to manage exam stress

Join Kooth for a free 45 minute webinar and you'll hear from one of our community engagement team, alongside a clinician from Kooth.

They will offer expert tips on:

When to take action

Share practical ideas to help children manage their anxiety

Discuss how Kooth can provide extra support.

The content has been written predominantly for families with secondary and higher aged children sitting GCSEs, A- Levels or Nationals and Highers in Scotland.

Book 9th March, 6:00pm [Link](#)

Book 16th March, 7:00pm



Parents' Evening Dates 2025-2026

This is an opportunity for you to speak to your child's subject teachers and discuss how they are progressing. We value a team approach, working with yourself in order to get the best possible outcomes for your child, so appreciate your commitment to attending.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Tutor meetings in September & October 2025 & 29 th January 2026	30 th April 2026	15 th January 2026 & Personalised choices evening 26 th March 2026	16 th April 2026 & Power to Perform evening 26 th March 2026	27 th November 2026 & 12 th March 2026



Taylor Shaw School Lunch Survey

Taylor Shaw
Seeing food differently

Help Shape Our School Lunch Menu

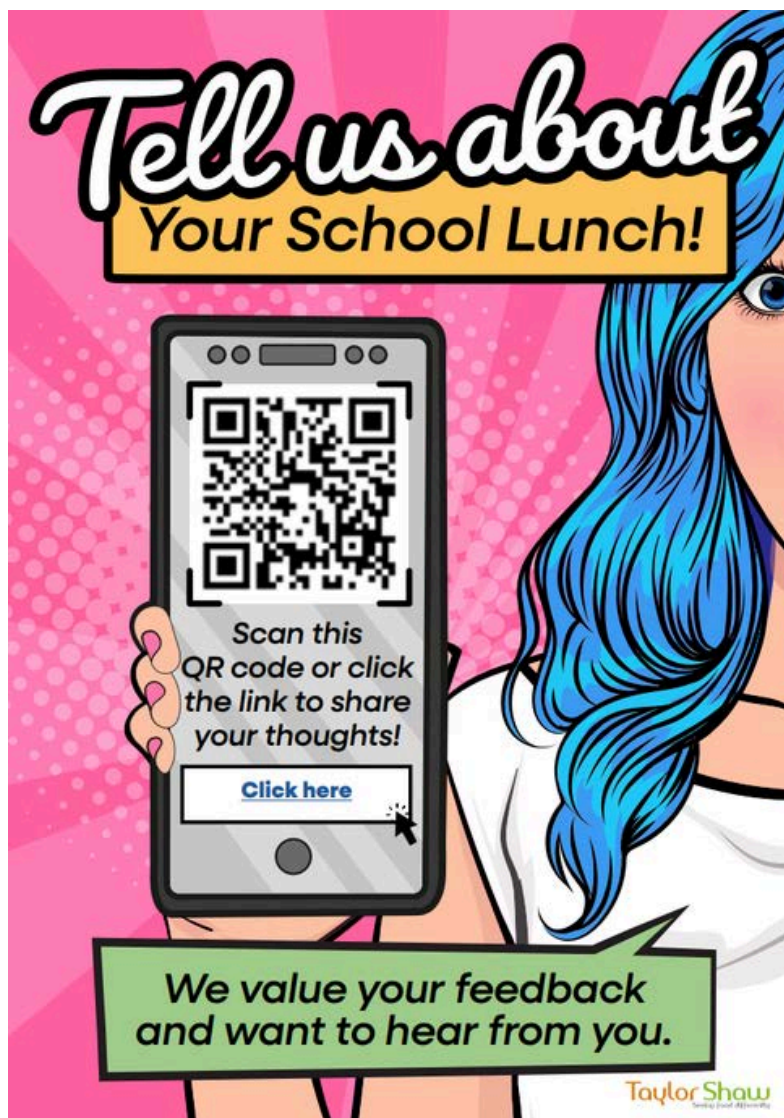
Our catering provider, Taylor Shaw, would like to hear from parents, carers and students about what you would like to see on the school lunch menu.

By scanning the QR code below, you can complete a short survey to share your views and preferences. Your feedback will help them plan future menus that better reflect what our students enjoy and want to eat.

We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete the survey as soon as possible, so we can gather accurate results and useful ideas for future menus.

Thank you for supporting our school catering service.

Scan the QR code below to take part.



Colne Primet - Catering Survey



Personal Development:

This week in Personal Development students have been looking at:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
National Careers Week	National Careers Week	National Careers Week	National Careers Week	National Careers Week
Discovering Parliament	What is the Monarchy	GCSE Options	Exploring Work Experience	Considering a Gap Year

Next week they will focus on:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
PET Career Fair	PET Career Fair	PET Career Fair	PET Career Fair	Youth Parliament Elections
Youth Parliament Elections	Youth Parliament Elections	What is STEM? Youth Parliament Elections	Work Experience Planning Youth Parliament Elections	National Careers Service

Mrs Bielby
Head of Personal Development



Primet's Got Talent

Our year 11 prefect team have been working hard on organising an exciting event for all year groups at Primet... Primet's Got Talent!

This event will be open for all students to take part in and everyone will be able to come to the Hall on Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th March in the Hall at lunch time.

We are asking students who are coming to watch to pay £1 cash on the door (prefects will collect at the doors). This will contribute towards their Prom in June.

We look forward to seeing what the students (and staff) have to offer!



Curriculum update : Humanities

It is almost time for Year 9s to select their GCSE subjects. This is a really exciting chance for them to shape future, and humanities subjects—such as History, Geography, Religious Studies, and Languages—are some of the most valuable choices they can make. These subjects don't just teach facts; they help develop skills and understanding that last a lifetime.

One of the biggest strengths of humanities is that they teach students to think critically. Whether they are evaluating causes of historical events or analysing global challenges like climate change, they learn to weigh evidence, form arguments, and make informed decisions. These skills are essential in many careers, from law and journalism to business and public services.

Humanities subjects also help develop an understand the world and the people in it. Topics such as culture, politics, ethics, and the environment encourage students to look beyond their own experiences and consider different perspectives. This builds empathy, open-mindedness, and confidence when discussing complex issues—qualities that employers value highly. Studying the humanities also boosts communication skills. Students will learn to write clearly, explain ideas effectively, and present arguments with structure and purpose. These are vital abilities for further education and for any future job.

Finally, humanities subjects keep a student's options open. Because they develop such a wide range of transferable skills—analysis, communication, problem-solving—they support routes into sixth form, apprenticeships, university, and a huge variety of careers.

In short, choosing humanities at GCSE isn't just about enjoying interesting topics—it's an investment in becoming a more thoughtful, skilled, and adaptable person. They help you understand the world, express yourself confidently, and prepare for a successful future.

Information about the options process will be sent to students and parents/carers later this term but if students want to discuss any aspect of taking a Humanities subject at GCSE they can chat to Mr Adams or any of the Humanities team.



Mr Adams
Head of Humanities & MFL

Year 11 Mock Results

Thursday 12th March will be an important milestone for our Year 11 students as they receive their mock examination results and take part in activities designed to help them prepare for the months ahead.

Morning Personal Development Session

During morning Personal Development (8:50–9:00), form tutors will distribute sealed results envelopes to students. This provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their performance in a supportive environment.

Following this, students will attend a short assembly in the hall from 9:00–9:15, where they will receive key messages about next steps, revision strategies, and how to make the most of the time remaining before their final GCSE examinations.

Afternoon Personal Development

In the afternoon PD session, students will begin work on their reflection booklets. These booklets are designed to help them analyse their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and set realistic goals. Tutors will retain the booklets so students can continue working on them during Friday's PD session.

Year 11 Parents' Evening – 3:45pm to 6:15pm

We invite all Year 11 parents and carers to attend our Parents' Evening from 3:45pm to 6:15pm. This is a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress with subject teachers and gain practical advice on how to support them in the run-up to their final exams.

During the evening:

- Progress trackers will be handed out to help families monitor performance.
- Exam information will be available, including revision guidance and key dates.
- Representatives from external agencies will be present to offer information on Post-16 opportunities and additional support pathways.

Students Make Menstrual Cycle Bracelets

As part of their work on the Reproduction topic, pupils have been getting hands-on with a creative and memorable revision activity. To help them learn and recall the different stages of the 28-day menstrual cycle, students designed and made their own menstrual cycle bracelets.

Each coloured bead on the bracelet represents a specific stage of the cycle, allowing pupils to visualise and remember key biological processes in an engaging, accessible way. This practical approach not only supports their understanding of the curriculum but also encourages confidence and open discussion around an important aspect of human biology.



The activity has been a great success, giving pupils a fun, meaningful tool to support their learning and revision.

Year 8 Netball: Strong Start to the Season

The Year 8 netball team got their league campaign off to a fantastic start this evening with a confident performance against Park. Building on the momentum from last year's tournament victory, the girls demonstrated just how much they've continued to grow as a squad.

From the first whistle, Primet showed excellent skill and determination. The defensive unit was rock solid, making sharp interceptions and breaking down Park's attacks with real composure. In the shooting circle, the attackers were equally impressive, converting opportunities with accuracy and teamwork.

A special well done goes to Evin, who was voted Player of the Match by the Park team—a brilliant achievement. However, every player contributed to a superb team effort that showcased both talent and team spirit.

The final score ended 8-4 to Primet, a well-deserved win and a promising sign for the matches ahead.

Well done, girls what a fab display of netball!



Year 7 Netball Team Shine in Their First Matches

A huge well done to our Year 7 netball team, who have proudly represented the school in their first two competitive matches of the season.

Despite it being their debut on the court, the team have shown remarkable progress in all areas of the game—from their teamwork and positioning to their confidence and communication. Each match has demonstrated their growing skill, determination, and fantastic team spirit. We are incredibly proud of every member of the squad and look forward to seeing them continue to develop and enjoy their netball journey.

Keep it up, Year 7!



Year 11 Pastoral Update

With the countdown on for year 11, the students have been working extremely hard in their lessons to make the most of the time they have left in school before their GCSE exams.

On Thursday 12th March, the students will receive their mock exam results in the morning and will have an opportunity to discuss those grades at Parent's Evening on the same day. We are working closely with the students to arrange appointments with subject teachers, and we look forward to seeing Year 11 parents that evening.

Attendance is paramount at this stage in the academic year – it will give students the opportunity to address gaps in knowledge, identify areas for improvement for them to focus on in the lead to their GCSEs in May. It is so important that students are in school every day now and attending all of their lessons and Period 6 sessions.

Finally, we have officially launched Prom! Letters have been given out in form time and everything has been set up on ParentPay. Students are being asked to complete an online form shared on their Class charts to select their food choices and transport to and from the venue. We are so excited for Prom 2026, and I know it will be the best one yet!



Mrs Lake
Head of Year 11

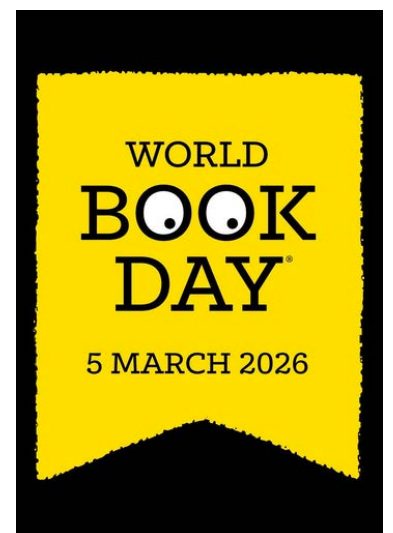
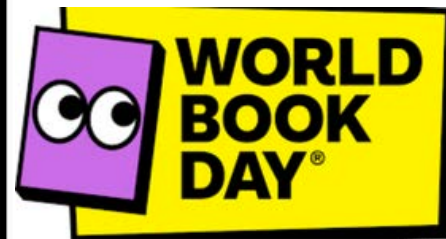
World Book Day

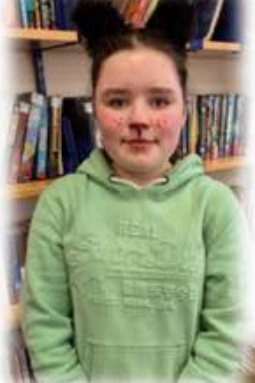
Staff and students had great fun dressing up for World Book Day this year! 📖✨

From classic characters to modern favourites, it was fantastic to see so many creative costumes across the school.

The day was a wonderful celebration of reading and storytelling, with everyone coming together to share their love of books. Thank you to all staff and students who took part.

Please enjoy the photos below of some of our fantastic book character costumes! 📖💚💜





PRIMET SUPERSLEUTHS

As part of World Book Day celebrations, students clamoured to Oracle to solve a new Sherlock Holmes' mystery every dinnertime, and received 5 positives for correct answers, and a treat.



SOLVE A CRIME AT DINNERTIME

Mystery of A Question of Rooms

Holmes and Watson are interviewing a witness to a theft that took place in a school. The witness has a hazy memory and only remembers a few facts about which room it took place in.

- It was not in a room that shares an entrance with the music room.
- The room had more than one entrance.
- The room was not next to the office.
- It did not happen in a room which connects to the auditorium.



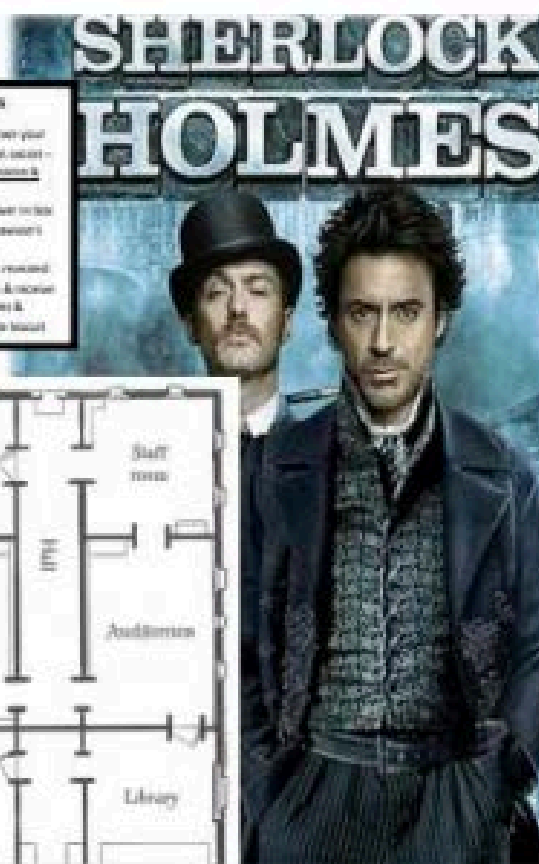
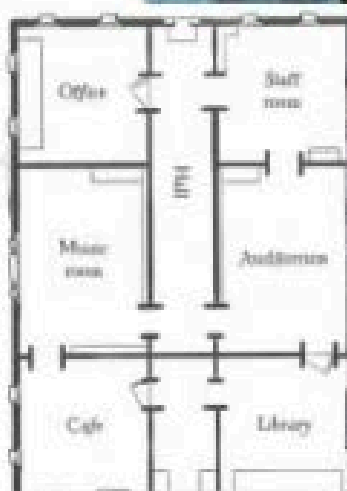
Using the map of the school, can you work out what room the witness saw the theft take place in?

THE TASK

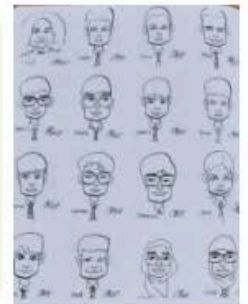
1. Write down your answer to each of the four clues.

TIPS

2. Pay attention to the clues about the witness's look.
3. Witnesses recalled what they saw and heard, but not what they thought.



Writer and illustrator Kev Sutherland brings his Comic Art Masterclass to Primet as part of World Book Day celebrations.

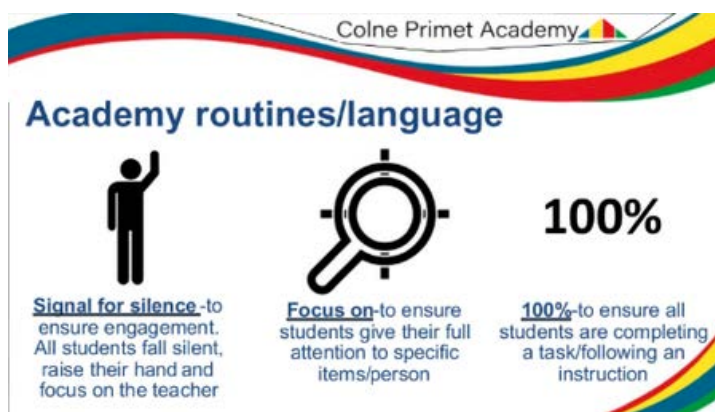
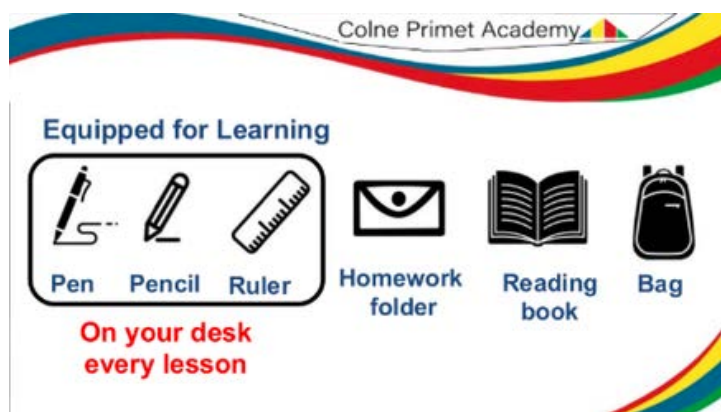


Year 7 and Year 8 made their own class comics, and Kev drew everyone's caricature!



Routines Reminder: Basic Equipment and Lesson Language

We have a series of set routines which we all follow to help keep the academy safe and to make sure we focus on our learning and progress. These are shared regularly with students and displayed around school. This week linked to the Primet value of Motivated, we're reminding ourselves about the basic equipment all students need so that there are no barriers to learning and by having their equipment out on desks it helps not waste lesson time. We're also reminding ourselves about some of the language we use in lessons, which allow us to positively direct what we should be doing. This includes expecting students to be their best Primet S.E.L.F. – Sitting up and alert, having their Equipment ready, Listening carefully to the teacher and to each other, and Focusing on their learning.



Expectations Reminder: Mobile Phones

We have a series of set routines which we all follow to help keep the academy safe and to make sure we focus on our learning and progress. These are shared regularly with students and displayed around school.

Mobile phones and personal electronic devices are allowed in school but must be switched off as they enter the school building and kept out of sight for the duration of the school day. They must be switched off and stored in bags.

If a mobile phone is seen during the school day, it will be confiscated by a member of staff and handed into the pastoral team where it can be collected at the end of the school day. On the first occasion it can be collected by the student. If this happens again, on the second occasion it will need to be collected by a parent/carer afterschool and if this continues to happen you will be invited in for a meeting to discuss the issue of your child not being able to adhere to academy rules.

Mobile devices can be a distraction to learning and pose a considerable safeguarding concern. Students may bring a phone to school with them for use on the way to and from school for personal safety reasons. We regularly review the policy on use of mobile phones to ensure we get the balance right between phones being a part of life in the 21st century and the impact on learning and the school.

Please do not make contact with your child on their mobile phone during the school day. This is encouraging them to break school rules, which is then putting the child in a difficult situation and causing conflicts for them at school. Rarely are these messages urgent, and could easily wait till the end of the school day, and where they are urgent contacting the school directly will be far more effective as we can then support you and your child as needed. If you do need to contact your child, please contact the Main Office who will pass on a message to your child. If your child needs to contact you for any reason, they can speak to a member of the pastoral team who will make arrangements when needed.

PE Extra-Curricular Sport (Spring Term 2 2026)

DAY	TIME	ACTIVITY	ROOM	STAFF
Monday	Lunchtime	Year 7 Pickleball	Sports Hall	LHM/CJO
	After School	Boys Football – ALL YEARS Girls Netball – Year 7 & 8	Sports Hall / Yard Yard	LHM/CJO EDR/KDO
Tuesday	Lunchtime	Year 8 Pickleball Year 7 Pickleball	Sports Hall Sports Hall	KDO/LHM EDR/CJO
	After School	Boys Basketball – Year 7, 8 & 9 Girls Netball – Fixtures (see team sheet)	Sports Hall	All PE staff EDR/KDO
Wednesday	Lunchtime	Year 10 Pickleball Year 9 Pickleball	Sports Hall Sports Hall	KDO EDR / CJO
	After School	Boys Basketball – Year 10 & 11 Dance all years	Sports Hall Gym	CJO/LHM EDR/KDO
Thursday	Lunchtime	Year 10 Pickleball Year 9 Pickleball	Sports Hall Sports Hall	LHM/EDR CJO/KDO
	After School	STAFF MEETINGS Kick & Connect: Girls' Football	STAFF MEETINGS Sports Hall	STAFF MEETINGS CASEY
Friday	Lunchtime	Year 11 Pickleball	Sports Hall	KDO/CJO
	After School	No Club		

New PE Extracurricular Sports – Spring Term 2

We're excited to launch our new range of PE extracurricular clubs for Spring Term 2! Students can now take part in a variety of lunchtime and after-school activities, including pickleball, basketball netball and dance.

It's a great opportunity to stay active, have fun, and develop new skills – so get involved and give something new a try!



Extra-Curricular Programme – Spring 2 (2026)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchtime	Homework Support Club 12.20 -1pm (T12)	Homework Support Club 12.20 -1pm (T12)	Homework Support Club 12.20 -1pm (T12)	Homework Support Club (Maths) 12.20 -1pm (T12)	Homework Support Club 12.20 -1pm (T12)
After-school 3.20pm	Homework Support Club 15.20 - 4pm (Oracle)	Homework Support Club 15.20 - 4pm (Oracle)	Homework Support Club 15.20 - 4pm (Oracle)	Homework Support Club 15.20 - 4pm (Oracle)	Homework Support Club 15.20 - 4pm (Oracle)
	Reading, AR Quizzing, Exchanging books, Chess 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)	Reading, AR Quizzing, Exchanging books, Chess 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)	Reading, AR Quizzing, Exchanging books, Chess 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)	Reading, AR Quizzing, Exchanging books, Chess 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)	Reading, AR Quizzing, Exchanging books, Chess 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)
	Board Games Club 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)	Music Club 3.20-4.15pm Mr Husband (F11)	Choir 3.20 – 4.20pm Mrs Goldie (F11)	Free Film Screenings 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle) See posters for details of dates and times	Board Games Club 3.20 - 4.15pm Ms Dawson Lib1 (Oracle)
	Year 7 Science Club 3.20- 4.15pm Miss Flegg (M11 Science)	Photography Club KS3 F44 Art Room Mrs Holmes		Kick & Connect: Girls' Football 3.20 – 4.15pm Casey S T (Sports Hall)	
	Performance Club 3.20-4.15 Miss Smalley (F13, HALL)				

Spring Term 2 Extracurricular Programme

We are pleased to share details of our Spring Term 2 extracurricular programme, which offers a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs designed to enrich students' learning and personal development. Opportunities available this half term include Homework Support Club, Performance Club, Music Club, Board Games Club and Science Club, alongside many other activities.

We encourage all students to review the full programme and take advantage of the clubs and support available.



Colne Youth Action Group

Address: Colne Youth Action Group Charity Byron Road, Colne, BB8 0BQ
Registered No: 192629

Spring

FAYRE

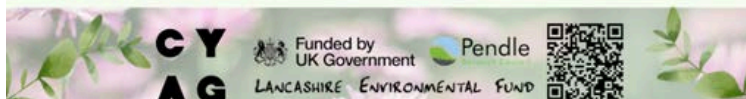
Find us @colneyag



When:
Sunday 22nd March
Time
10am - 3pm
Where:
CYAG, Byron Rd,
Colne, BB8 0BQ

Tombola
Games
Crafts
Cafe with food and drinks
Tuck Shop
Clothes Sale

Table Top Sale:
16 Tables available
£10 per table
Contact Louise to book
07526297991



College Open Events

College Name	What do they offer?	When?
Nelson and Colne College	Vocational A-Levels T-Level Apprenticeship	<i>Thursday 5th February 2026 - 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Careers open event)</i> <i>Thursday 23rd April 2026 - 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Year 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 event)</i> <i>Thursday 25th June 2026 – All day (New student day)</i> <i>Thursday 20th August 2026 – All day (GCSE results day)</i>
Accrington and Rossendale College	Vocational A-Levels T-Level Apprenticeship	<i>Tuesday 3rd February 2026 – 5.30 to 7.30pm</i> <i>Tuesday 28th April 2026 – 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Careers open Event)</i> <i>Tuesday 28th April 2026 – 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Year 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 event)</i> <i>Friday 26th June 2026 – All day (New student day)</i> <i>Thursday 20th August 2026 – All day (GCSE results day)</i>
Burnley College	Vocational A-Levels T-Level Apprenticeship	<i>Wednesday 21st January 2026 – 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Themis careers event)</i> <i>Tuesday 10th February 2026 - 5.30pm to 7.30pm</i> <i>Wednesday 6th May 2026 - 5.30pm to 7.30pm (Year 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 event)</i>
Craven College	Vocational T-Level Apprenticeship	<i>Wednesday 11th February 2026 – 3.00pm to 6.30pm (Apprenticeship and careers fair at Craven College)</i>
Myerscough College	Vocational T-Levels Apprenticeship	<i>Saturday 7th February 2026 - course advice morning</i> <i>Saturday 18th April 2026 - course advice morning</i>
North Lancs Training Group	Apprenticeship	<i>Wednesday 18th March – 1pm to 6pm (Accrington)</i> <i>Thursday 26th March – 1pm to 6pm (March)</i>
Training 2000	Apprenticeship	<i>Wednesday 28th January – 4.30pm to 7.30pm</i> <i>Thursday 29th January – 4.30pm to 7.30pm</i>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



The National College



**Lancashire
Parent Carer Forum**

Lancashire
SEND IAS
Information, advice and support
for Special Educational Needs and Disability



Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person with special educational needs or disabilities?

Join us at one of our

Pendle Family Hub Drop ins

Share your concerns & get answers from:
Lancashire County Council, NHS providers & others.
Also stay updated on what's happening with services

**Don't miss out, come along to
make your voice heard!**

4th Friday of the Month

**@ Nelson Family Hub, Leeds Road,
Nelson, BB9 8EL**

For more information follow LPCF Facebook page