



December 2025

## A message from The Headteacher

As yet another busy and eventful term nears an end, it is a good opportunity to review and share some of the highlights from this academic year to date. As with each of my previous Christmas newsletters, I have scrolled through our social media to reminds us of just some of the excellent opportunities and experiences our students have had and of the superb achievements and contributions they have made. Some of the highlights include:

- Supporting charities including Brain Tumour Research, Young Minds, Save the Children, Children in Need, The Royal British Legion and RSPCA.
- Participation in The High Sheriff's Youth Awareness Day (including radio phone in, community event at Ellesmere Library and podcast workshop).
- Afternoon Tea with the Memory Café at Our Space.
- 'Vibrant Arts Shropshire' two-day workshop for Year 8.
- House of Lords Q and A session with a Baroness.
- Our excellent school performance of Oliver.
- The Scholastic book fayre.
- Every child in Year 7 being gifted a book.
- Harry Potter Day.
- An educator, employer and employee event plus other careers.
- Hosting an excellent Year 11 revision strategy workshop with Positively You.
- A range of sporting participation and achievements.
- A range of guest speakers to support curriculum areas.
- A number and range of trips and visits.
- Inter-House chess, Christmas Bake-Off and netball.
- GCSE presentation and awards evening with special guest Martha Lily Thompson.
- Rewards Assemblies.

We are also able to reflect on a successful 2024-25 and first term of 2025-26. Following the previously shared national attendance awards, Barclay's girls' football equal access award and our nomination for a national award with The Attachment Research Community, we have recently received the following additional accolades:

- National School Attendance Award for 2024-25 – Top 25% of ALL Schools in England.
- National School Attendance Award for 2024-25 – Top 25% of SIMILAR Schools in England.
- The highest attendance of all Secondary Schools in Shropshire for 2024-25.
- The Alex Timpson Attachment Research Community Award 2025-26 (to recognises and celebrate the best attachment and trauma aware practice in schools and settings nationally) – nominated.

There's even more good news! Whilst it seems a long time ago that our Year 11 cohort of 2025 received their GCSE results, we are still awaiting the finalised headline data from the government. This is expected in February but I wanted to share that we do know our results show a significant improvement on recent years and that the upward trajectory compares favourably with local and regional data for a number of measures.

In everything they have done, your children have continued to be a credit to themselves and their families throughout this first term of 2025-26. They have consistently displayed our core values of *safe, smart, responsible, kind* and have been rewarded handsomely for doing so. In addition to their personal reward point totals, they continue to contribute towards their House total which are updated weekly on our website [our website \(Lakelands Academy\)](http://LakelandsAcademy). In addition to these reward points many have also received 'Golden Tickets' (which sees them receive a card to be entered into a prize draw to win an Amazon voucher), 'Subject Commendations' and 'Thank You Friday' postcards as well as Form Tutor, Year Leader and Headteacher awards.





# FLAKELANDS NEWS

December 2025



We look forward to awarding our new bronze, silver, gold and platinum rewards badges as students hit the key milestones.

As you are aware the governing body, after stakeholder consultation and the subsequent significant due diligence, formally voted in favour of merging Lakelands Educational Trust with The 3-18 Education multi-academy trust. An application was made to the Department for Education and we have recently received their support for the proposal. A target transfer date has been set for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 with the time between now and then allowing for the required legal work to be undertaken.

At the end of this term we are saying a huge thank you and goodbye to Miss Evans who has done a wonderful job of supporting our students in her role as Pastoral Support Officer. At the same time, we welcome back Mrs Stephens (Pastoral Support Officer) following her maternity leave. Mrs Jarvis will also be joining the team as a part time Pastoral Support Officer in the new year. This week, we have also welcomed back Mrs Davies (Richards) following maternity leave.

Our board of Governors has also seen some change in recent months and we must say a big thank you for the significant contributions of Peter Cartledge, Terry Lowry and Debbie Simmonds who have all now retired from their voluntary roles with Lakelands Academy. I am delighted to welcome our new Governors; Geoff Renwick, Philippa Burrows and Dani Samuel and look forward to working closely with them as we move forwards.

Finally, I would also like to say thank you to all of you who took the time to complete the recent parent/carer voice survey. The responses demonstrate a steady, or in some cases vast, improvement in many key areas when compared to the most recent prior survey and/or the last 'like-for-like' survey in February 2024. Highlights in terms of improved positive responses include:

8% increase (from June 2025 survey) in those who strongly agree that school makes its students behave well and an overall increase in agreement of 18% compared to February 2024.

Increase in parents reporting their child has not been bullied.

91% of you say that we make you aware of what your child will learn during the year (increase of 54% compared to February 2024).

Continued increase in those of you who agree or strongly agree that our communication is effective and timely.

22% increase (compared to February 2024) in parents who say that 'My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed.'

Continued increase in those who say school has high expectations of their child.

10% increase (compared to February 2024) in those who feel that the school lets them know how their child is doing.

18% decrease (compared to June 2025) who say that lessons do not have a calm, orderly environment which helps their child to learn.

Increase in parents who report that their child can take part in clubs and activities at school.

As part of our analysis of our parent/carer surveys, we also compare our results to the national Ofsted parent/carer survey data. For the fourth survey in a row (since November 2024), our results compare very favorably. Particularly pleasing this time is the improvement in you reporting that your child is able to take part in clubs and activities at Lakelands. In response to previous survey outcomes, we have worked really hard to listen to your children in On behalf of all the staff and Governors at Lakelands Academy I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Mr Hignett, Headteacher



# Attendance



National School Attendance Award

2024/25 Academic Year



National School Attendance Award

2024/25 Academic Year



We are delighted to share that our students had a wonderful afternoon celebrating their remarkable achievement of 100% attendance at school. The festivities included Christmas-themed fun, hot chocolate, and biscuits, which were thoroughly enjoyed by all.

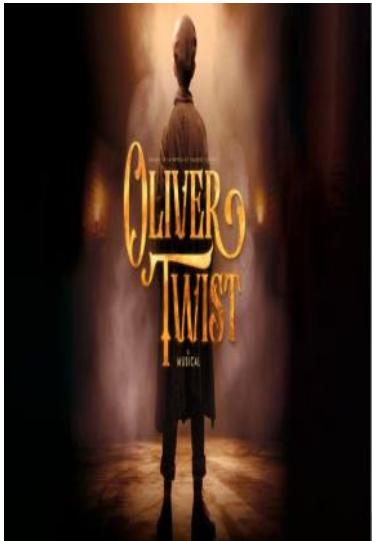
We are incredibly proud of our students and their families, who have been a key driving force behind this outstanding accomplishment. Consistent school attendance is crucial for ensuring that our students receive the best possible education, which will support them in realising their hopes and dreams for the future.

We are thrilled to announce that an impressive 181 students achieved 100% attendance during the Autumn Term. This is a testament to the dedication and commitment of our entire school community.





# Drama



In November our fabulous cast and crew put on a spectacular performance of Oliver! They all worked together as an amazing team and the Creative Arts and Technology facility are very proud of them all.



*A huge well done to all the pupils*



## PE - NEWS - PE - NEWS - PE - NEWS

The 1st photo is the year 8s (the ones in the blue football shirts) playing against Telford Langley school in the Presidents Trophy. They battled well throughout the game but unfortunately lost 5-2. Ryan Fuller scoring both goals.



The year 10 inter house competition that was played last week. They all enjoyed the competition, playing with good spirit. Blakemere came 4th, Newtonmere 3rd, Whitemere 2nd and the winners were Colemere.



# PE - NEWS - PE - NEWS - PE - NEWS

Our U13 and U15 netball teams played at North Shropshire netball tournament. Both teams showed determination and outstanding teamwork. 🏀 ❤️



Our Year 7s had a fantastic day at Lilleshall National Sports Centre, building confidence and self-belief through sport.

Their enthusiasm throughout was fantastic and they were a credit to Lakelands and themselves!

Well done all

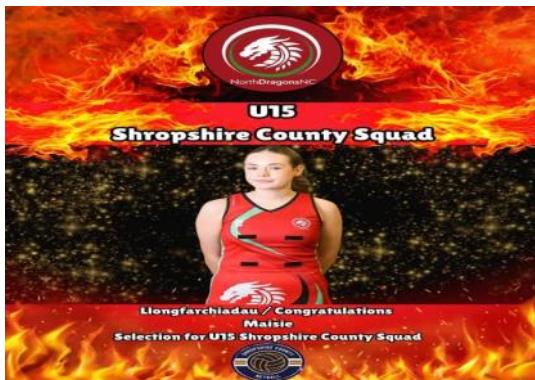




# Congratulations



## Students Performing and Excelling in Out of School Activities



A huge congratulations to our wonderful student, who has successfully gained a place on both the Shropshire U15 county netball squad and the North East Wales regional academy for the 25/26 season! 🎉



Sofia came 1st place in her Equestrian Vaulting competition and 1st place with her pairs partner! Very proud of her achievements and hope she continues on her competitive journey! 🎉



Our wonderful student took part in the North Midlands Championships in Nottingham, in Tae Kwon Do. She graded two weeks ago and moved to Blue Tag/5th Kup, and competed this weekend in Pattern, Individual Sparring, Speed Kick and Flying Side Kick.



We are happy to report back that our wonderful student now holds the Title of The Ibiza Under 14 beginner Freestyle Championship of 2025. Not only that, she went on to win the title of Top dancer of all ages in her category. The prize is a £250.00 voucher towards a dance costume. She also placed 2nd in under 14s Street so you can imagine how proud of her we are.



## Students Performing and Excelling in Out of School Activities



What a hero



Tom Parkhurst in Year 10 represented Shropshire Schools in the 200m at the Mason Trophy event held at the Northwood Athletics stadium in Stoke

Tom won the gold medal in both the 100m and 200m competing against other schools in North Shropshire



What a huge achievement Ben F was awarded with the Best Young Steamer Award 2025, for his dedication to learning , operating and the preservation of steam engines.

# Year 10 Trips

## Cadburys World

## Shrewsbury Prison



Year 10 students had a great time out at Cadbury World. They had a fantastic marketing talk that helped boost their understanding of how business make use of these techniques. They enjoyed a tour of the site seeing some traditional methods for making chocolate before getting hands on writing names, drawing pictures and various twirls and patterns with the liquid chocolate, before having fun on the 4D cinema and explorer rides. Pupils behaved marvellously, there were no meltdowns and we received several compliments from members of the public on how polite the students had been. A fun day all round. ❤️❤️❤️





In November, a group of our Year 10 History GCSE students visited Shrewsbury Prison. Built in 1973 and operating all the way through to 2013, Shrewsbury Prison allowed out students to learn about how prisons have changed over time in a local context, and we were able to discuss the weighty issue of the morality of the death penalty. We had a brilliant, if chilly, time!





# Library News

Every student in Year 7 has been gifted a book. The students chose their books from a list of 16 amazing titles as part of the Book buzz scheme a few weeks ago, and it's been wonderful to witness their excitement at seeing their books delivered. We hope they all enjoy reading them!



BookTrust  
Bookbuzz



Congratulations to the students who won these lovely festive reading hampers! All our KS3 students have a target to read for 15min a day, and everyone who achieved this target was entered into the prize draw to win a hamper. Congratulations to everyone who achieved their target and to our prize winners:

**Y7: Florence Thomas**

**Y8: Tilly Smith**

**Y9: Ariana Rowley**

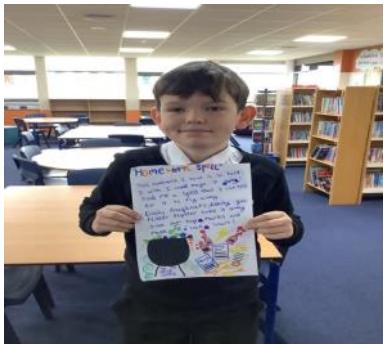


We're thrilled to announce our first Word Millionaires of this academic year! Natasha Van Kooten, Philippa Bloor-Playford, Euan Butler, Jake Lancaster and Isaac Waldron have all read over a million words since term started in September. What a fantastic achievement! We're delighted to see these students showing such dedication to reading – and we look forward to welcoming more members into the Word Millionaire club soon.

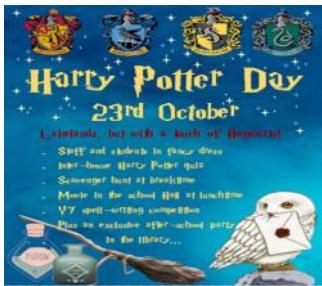
This week, our paired reading programme drew to a close for this term, and we celebrated the achievements of all involved. The paired reading programme matches some of our Y7 readers with reading mentors in Year 10 and gives them the opportunity to read together a couple of times a week. The sessions have been a great success, with all students saying that they enjoyed the paired reading scheme, and 92% reporting that they felt more confident as a result of it. Well done to all the students involved – your dedication and hard work has been wonderful to see.



# Harry Potter



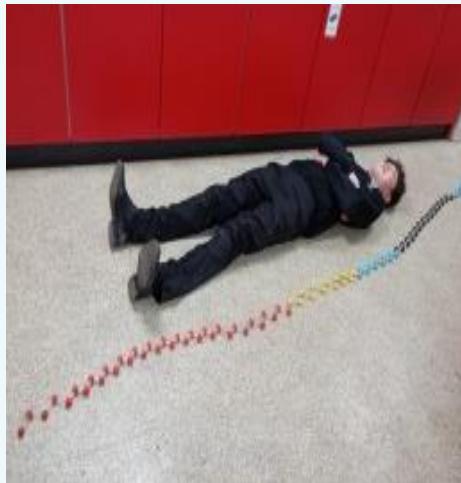
Congratulations to all the Y7 students who entered but especially to our competition winner Henry C, and our runners up Jacob H, Fred S, Malakai M, Ivy W and Florence M.



Students enjoyed a scavenger hunt at break time, a Harry Potter quiz in form time and a chance to chill out and watch one of the Harry Potter films at lunch. Our top readers also enjoyed a special Harry Potter Party in the library after school, where they enjoyed a few Butterbeers, took a trip to the Honeydukes sweetshop, got sorted into their Hogwarts Houses and took part in a range of games and quizzes. A truly magical time was had by all!

# Science

Here are some of the year 10 Triple Chemistry class, revising at the structure of some Carbon Nanoparticles, including Fullerenes and Diamond, as well as considering the bonding between atoms. Here is Sam T with his model of Diamond, Oliver W with a Fullerene, and Mark C with a long model showing some bonding..



# Kindness



Year 8 have undertaken a project looking at kindness. Lakelands values encourage all pupils to make smart, safe, responsible and kind choices. Pupils have had an assembly and completed work within their form groups looking at what kindness means and how they can show kindness to one another. Each form showcased their work which is on display in the long corridor.

# THE GREAT BRITISH BAKE OFF®



Bake off was a huge success with all 4 houses submitting some amazing bakes to be judged for the Lakelands festive bake-off.

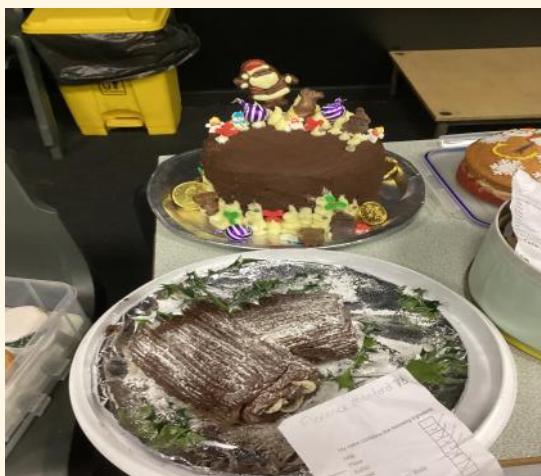
B— Lottie Carter

C—Abbie Humphreys

N— Katarina Perks

K—Scarlett Conover

The Winning bake was : Lottie Carter



# Belonging Workshop



Year 8 had two days off timetable earlier this December to take part in a creative workshop exploring Shropshire and belonging to the community. Virtual Arts Shropshire facilitated poets, artists ,rappers and media artist to work with students to create some great pieces of work.

# CHOIR



This half term representatives of the choir performed at the town hall to some of the elderly residents of Ellesmere. A great time was had by all.





We recently held our annual presentation evening in the school hall. It was lovely to see last year's Year 11 students and hear all about their new lives in college or training. During the evening, various awards were presented by our guest speaker, Martha-Lily Thompson . This was followed by the presentation of GCSE exam certificates.

Congratulations to all the class of 25 and we wish them every success in their future lives and careers.





# Charity

Poppy appeal  
raised £111.47

A huge thank  
you



# Shoe box appeal



As part of our community and charity commitment to support this year we took part in the Teams4u shoebox appeal. Staff and students made close to 40 boxes which are now in Ukraine and Moldova waiting to be distributed to children on Christmas Day.

Thank you to all who supported this appeal.

## Memory Café

On the 8th December the year 9 house captains supported the Memory Café. The Memory Café is supported group for local people with Dementia & Alzheimer's students took the winning cakes from the Lakelands festive bake off for the support group to judge. The students were a credit to the school. We hope to return in February to continue our multi generational community work.



Our year 8 reading mentors head down to the primary school once a week to support the children with their reading. The shared reading program provides the opportunity for our reading mentors to develop their confidence and fluency, while the younger children gain vital language skills.



The art department would like to take this opportunity to thank Tesco's, parents, pupils, and the local community for supporting Lakelands's Clay Bid. A group of year 9 pupils have been taking part in a clay session and using the resources provided by the bid. Pupils had lots of fun making a wide range of items including decorative plaques and coil pots.





# Charity



## Christmas Jumper Day 2025



Foliage kindly donated by Leaton Forest  
for the Staff Christmas Wreath-making  
event on Thursday 4th, to raise funds  
for our local charity Save the Children



Save the Children



# Social Media



Instagram



<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559753621024>



[https://www.instagram.com/lakelands\\_ellesmere](https://www.instagram.com/lakelands_ellesmere)



<https://www.instagram.com/lakelandsacademype/>



<https://x.com/lakelandsacademy>

Do you follow us on Social Media?

We post daily, so please give us a like and a follow on one or all of our platforms



<https://www.lakelandsacademy.org.uk/>

Have you visited our website? 

## SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD.

### Samaritans

Call: 116 123

Free confidential support for anyone, available 24/7, 365 days a year

### SHOUT

Text: 'STW' to 85258

Free confidential text support for anyone, available 24/7, 365 days a year

### Papyrus Hopeline

Free confidential support for children and young people under the age of 35, available 24/7, 365 days a year

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 88247

### Shropshire Rural Support

Free confidential support delivered by people with a farming background, available 24/7, 365 days a year

Call: 0300 123 2825

Text: 'SRS' to 85258

### The Silver Line Helpline

Free confidential support for older people, 24/7, 365 days a year

Call: 0800 470 8090

### Call NHS 111, Option 2

Urgent Mental Health Crisis, available 24/7, 365 days a year

Talk to someone wearing an Orange Button.  
They know how to help.

FOR MORE ADVICE VISIT



## COPING AT CHRISTMAS

The Added Pressures of Christmas can be Tough, but it's important to know there's always Someone you can Talk to...

### NHS

111 online

### PAPYRUS

Call 111 & select option 2 to speak to the NHS Mental Health Crisis Response Service 24/7  
[Nhs.uk/mental-health](http://Nhs.uk/mental-health)

Under 35s can Call 0800 068 4141, Text: 88247 or Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org) 24/7

[Papyrus-uk.org](http://Papyrus-uk.org)

### SAMARITANS

Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans, or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) for a reply within 24 hours  
[Samaritans.org](http://Samaritans.org)



mind

Call MIND's Mental Health Helpline 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday on 0300 102 1234

[Mind.org.uk](http://Mind.org.uk)

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line, or text "YM" if you're under 19

[Giveusashout.org](http://Giveusashout.org)



Mental Health Forum & Chat for Men from 5pm - midnight every day Call or WhatsApp 0800 585858

[Thecalmzone.net](http://Thecalmzone.net)

[ChristmasCountdown.uk](http://ChristmasCountdown.uk)



## TITANS LEARN TO SWIM

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- \* VERY SMALL CLASSES
- \* HIGHLY QUALIFIED, DBS CHECKED SWIM TEACHERS
- \* LESSONS HELD AT THE ELLESMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL POOL ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS

Contact Steffi Bircher:

[steffibircher@gmail.com](mailto:steffibircher@gmail.com)  
or  
[www.titanslearntoswim.co.uk](http://www.titanslearntoswim.co.uk)  
or  
find us on Facebook  
Ellesmere Titans Learn to Swim

That's about it from all of us....  
except to wish you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year...

# UNIFORM REMINDER

A reminder of the uniform code is in your child's diary.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation and for helping us to support the strong values of Lakelands Academy.

Please label all uniform and belongings.

This really helps us when trying to reunite lost property with its owner.

## CORRECT



Top button/  
tie fastened

Shirt tucked in

Black knee length  
pleated skirt /  
smart tailored  
trousers



Single small stud in  
each ear is  
permissible but no  
other piercings are  
allowed

Tie tucked in

Black sensible (flat)  
shoes or plain black  
trainers

## INCORRECT



Tie not  
tucked in

Shirt untucked

Leggings / skinny  
trousers

Logo / Coloured  
trainers



Top button  
undone

Shirt untucked

Jogging bottoms

## LAKELANDS PRE-LOVED CLOTHES SHOP

To make pre-loved school clothing available to our school community we have set up a school shop. All items available will be free of charge.

### How it works!

- Families kindly donate any old, unused or unwanted school uniform they no longer require. If you would like to donate any school uniform please drop it in at reception. Please make sure all uniform has been cleaned and washed prior to donating and any name tags removed.
- Uniform can be ordered using the Microsoft Form below and can also be found on our school website. Please copy the link and paste into your browser.
- You will receive an email confirmation when your order is ready to be collected.
- Orders can be collected from reception by the Parent or the pupil. We ask that orders are collected as soon as possible and will only be held for 5 days.
- If the item is not in stock you will be added to a waiting list and contacted as soon as it becomes available.

Link to form - <https://forms.office.com/r/Z19NqNvuRg>

## SPRING FIRST HALF TERM 2025—2026

6th January - 13th February 2026

- PD Days - 5th January ,2026
- No Bank Holidays

February Half Term - 16th February-20th February 2026

Back on the 23rd February – 27th March,2026

## EASTER HOLIDAYS

Monday 30th March—10th April,2026

Back the on 13th April 2026

## REPORTING AN ABSENCE

If we are expecting your child to be in school and they are unable to attend, please telephone, **not email**.

If your child is absent for more than one day, please note that we require you to phone **every morning**, not just on the first day of absence.

These are safeguarding requirements.

To report an absence please ring 01691 622543

### Reminder

Pupils must arrive at school on time in the mornings and be on site ready for the 8.55am bell.



**Thank you!**

Wow..! Look how lucky our school is ...!!

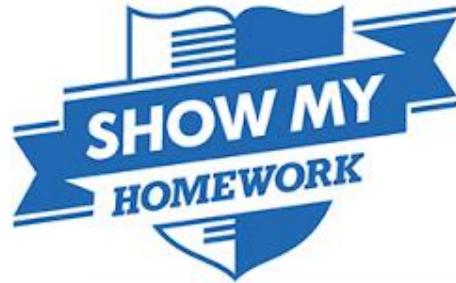
Thank you **Tesco** in Ellesmere for this amazing donation of uniform. This will really help us stock up our spare uniform cupboard.



## THE SCHOOL DAY

- School Opens - 8.55am
- Morning Registration- 9.00 - 9.15am
- Period 1 - 9.15 - 10.15am
- Period 2 - 10.15 - 11.15am
- Morning Break - 11.15 - 11.30am
- Period 3 - 11.30 - 12.30pm
- Lunch - 12.30 - 1.10pm
- Afternoon Registration - 1.10 - 1.30pm
- Period 4 - 1.30 - 2.30pm
- Period 5 - 2.30 - 3.30pm End of the Compulsory School Day

Total Hours provided in a typical week - 34 hours & 35 minutes



**PARENTS/CARERS PLEASE  
REMEMBER TO CHECK SHOW MY  
HOMEWORK. YOU WILL BE ABLE  
TO SEE WHAT HOMEWORK HAS  
BEEN SET AND IN SOME CASES IF  
THE HOMEWORK HAS BEEN  
HANDED IN.**



## Attention All Parents!

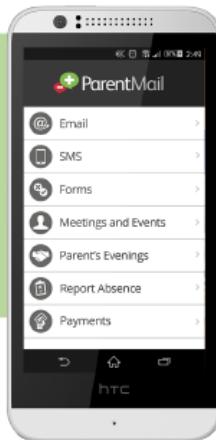


Have you downloaded the new **FREE** parent App?

Receive and respond to school messages from your smartphone instantly!

### You can:

- ✓ Find messages in a clear, uncluttered feed (separate from your busy email inbox)
- ✓ Receive ALL school & club messages on one App
- ✓ Have instant access - no need to login
- ✓ Receive in-App notifications making sure you're alerted each time you're sent a message
- ✓ Read school messages even when there's no Internet connection
- ✓ Preserve your data allowance



To download your **FREE** parent App, simply visit the Apple or Android store and search for ParentMail

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