

Staying

Connected

Parent / Carer Bulletin



October 2025



ROOKS HEATH SCHOOL
Strive to be your best



Mrs Manderson

We. Did. It. – Rooks Heath is a Flagship School for Inclusion!

It is with immense pride that I share the news: Rooks Heath has officially been awarded *Flagship Status for Inclusion* by the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM), a recognition we achieved at the end of the summer term.

Since I joined Rooks Heath in 2019, it was clear from the outset that this school is built on a foundation of care, collaboration, and commitment to every student's success and wellbeing. Our journey began with immediate recognition through the IQM award, followed by our upgrade to *Centre of Excellence* status in 2022. Achieving Flagship status is the culmination of a rigorous three-year process, and we are now proudly among a select group of secondary schools to hold this prestigious title. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our staff, who work tirelessly to ensure every student feels valued and supported as part of the Rooks Heath family. It reflects the inclusive ethos that runs through everything we do.

As we celebrated this milestone, we also said farewell to several valued colleagues and welcomed a new cohort of staff. Each new member has been carefully selected for their expertise, passion, and commitment to enhancing student outcomes and experiences. I am confident that parents and carers will appreciate the importance of appointing only the very best to guide your children through their educational journey. We wish our new staff every success. We also celebrated the achievements of our Year 11 and Year 13 students. This summer, 90% of our Year 13 cohort received university offers, with 75% securing places at their first-choice institutions. These outcomes reflect the hard work of our students and the unwavering support of our staff and families.

In this edition of the newsletter, you will find a vibrant snapshot of school life—from educational visits and guest speakers to impressive examples of student work, both in and out of the classroom. I hope it gives you a deeper insight into the enriching experiences we offer at Rooks Heath. As always, I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming parent-contact events. Your partnership is vital—parents and carers are the most important ingredient in every child's success, working hand-in-hand with high-quality teaching in the classroom.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we are shaping a truly inclusive and aspirational future for every student at Rooks Heath.

Enjoy this edition of the newsletter!



Mandarin Excellence Programme trip to China

Ms Sun

Before the summer our Year 9 students (now in Year 10) returned from an unforgettable 12-day adventure in Dalian, China—a stunning coastal city, rich in culture and history. Hosted by a local university and joined by another UK secondary school, Rooks Heath students truly shone throughout the trip.

From punctuality and Mandarin proficiency, to presentation and behaviour, Rooks Heath students consistently outperformed their peers. This is a direct reflection of the high standards each of them all upheld every day in uniform, conduct, and learning. Their hard work made this achievement possible—thank you!

A special thank you to Mrs Subra and Mr Parkinson who worked together, along with the host university, to ensure smooth management of student behaviour, Mandarin lessons, cultural workshops, excursions, meals, and daily routines. Their dedication and hard work helped make the trip both successful and enjoyable for students and all three staff.

We also extend heartfelt thanks to our colleagues in the Finance, Careers & Trips, and Print Room teams for your unwavering support behind the scenes. Your contributions were vital to making this experience happen.





“When I visited China, I was overwhelmed by the different aspects of life and the nature of the population. The fact that China was incredibly advanced and well organised, the way everything felt perfect the way it was and the generosity and incredibly gentle nature of the residents of China. But the thing that intrigued me the most was how beautiful a country it was. The alive and bustling Dalian was hugely contrasting to the striking looks at night, lights blinded me, and skyscrapers just shocked me.

A journey that changed my life and views towards something that I thought was just a subject at school.

This educational trip not only awakened an admiration towards China but also gave me a vast boost in motivation towards learning Chinese, yet also getting to know about the history and culture of this beautiful country. The short trip brought me long term curiosity and the urge to keep on learning Mandarin in the hope of one day maybe settling in China and using my hard learned language skills to thrive in China. It gave me another reason to pursue Mandarin even further and to passionately participate and absorb any knowledge I receive in our lessons. I want to show deep gratitude for opening my eyes to value learning such a wonderful language and getting to know such a wonderful country in depth that often gets overlooked.

This wasn't just a trip; it was the turning point to peak my interests. I would deeply like to thank everyone who made it happen”.

Rian, Year 10

Bertha Earth launch — September 2025

Ms Samms

What a fantastic Bertha Earth launch day we had! Thank you to all the staff, students, and organisers who made it such a huge success.

Bertha Earth is a youth-centred environmental organisation, and the team was highly impressed by the incredible involvement and enthusiasm of our Year 7 students.

A big thank you goes to our Year 9 alumni from the 2023 programme, including Caydon, Deep, Vyom, Vishnu, Sibusan, Divya and Renee. Your support was a great help and truly appreciated. The closing date for our 2025 Ambassadors has now passed so look out for future updates!



Rooks Heath Poets Laureate for 2025 – 2026

Mr Hutchinson

Thursday 2nd October was National Poetry Day, and to mark the occasion Rooks Heath announced our new poets laureate for 2025-2026:

Malak (Year 9), Afnan (Year 11), and Reshteen (Year 13).

Well done to the terrifically talented trio, and to all the lyrically-gifted students who entered poems for the competition.

An excerpt from Time

The clock ticks, seconds pass by –
It's a weird and mysterious thing, time.
When you're having fun, time goes quickly.
When you're not, it drags by slowly.
When you need more, there is none.
When you was it away, before you know it –
it's done.

...

People are starving or are living through
war,
In many continents or countries.
Each second is torture and punishment,
In their homes or cities.

In this very minute,
While you're reading these words,
There is someone, somewhere out there,
Feeding the tweeting and beautiful birds.
And there is someone, somewhere out
there,
Stressed about their upcoming exams.
And someone, somewhere out there,
Focused on their health, weighing their
food in grams.

In this very hour,
There are people studying and writing.
And somewhere else,
There are people fighting.

Malak - Year 9



Wait 'Til You're Older

Wait 'til you're older,
Don't step in – just hold
her.
Be a hard shoulder,
Hide your tears, be colder.
Don't speak your mind,
You're not that wise.
Grow up fast, but
Stay in line.
You're too young to
choose,
Too old for excuse.
Don't play, don't cry,
Stand tall, act right.
Watch, don't speak
Just stay polite.

Too old for more
Too young for less
Just open your doors
And say that your blessed
Don't slouch. Don't sway
Don't laugh too loud
Don't be the prey.
Blend in with the crowd.
Flex your chest
Look the part
Hope they're impressed
Try and look smart.
No one cares what's in your heart.

You're too young to lead
Too old to fall
Too soft to fight
Too hard of a call
Don't be greedy
But hope for it all
You're not that needy
You're still too small.
Just hope you're ready
When you get the call
Watch. Obey.
Stay Polite.
Hold your breath.
Get it right.

Afnan - Year 11



70km Peak District hike for The Mark Evison Foundation

Ms McCutcheon

Over the Summer, six of our Year 13 students travelled to the Peak District to hike 70km. This was part of the challenge they planned and undertook in order to be awarded funding from The Mark Evison Foundation. The Mark Evison Foundation was established in memory of Margaret's son; Mark Evison who was part of the British Army and sadly lost his life. He was an adventurous man and the mission of the charity is to provide groups of students with funding to take on new challenges and experiences, equipping them with life-long skills.

The group was very successful and had a memorable experience. They are hoping to raise funds in the value of what the foundation has provided them, and are hoping for some extra funds in order to secure a Gold Award!

If you are willing and able, please visit their donation page to make a contribution:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/70km-for-opportunity?newPage=true>



Year 7 and the Norman Feudal System

Ms McGinnes

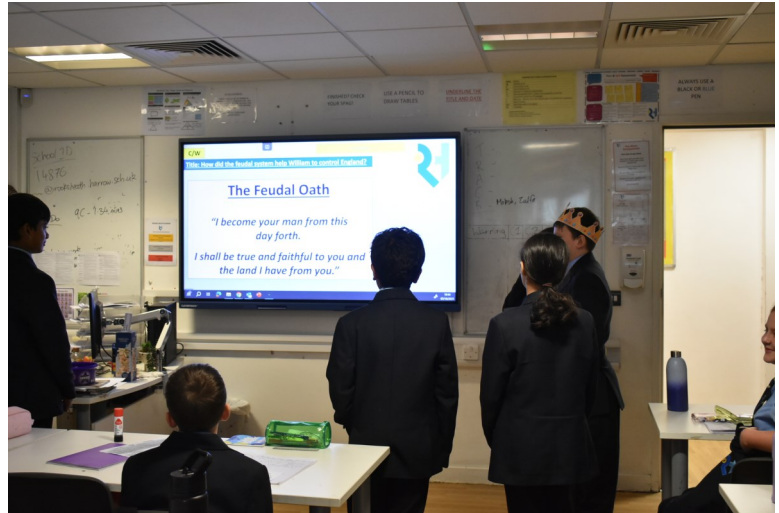


The Year 7 history classes have been learning about the Norman Feudal System, a hierarchical system of land ownership and service used by William the Conqueror to control England after his 1066 conquest. However, the people objected to this and chose to be rebellious towards their new King.

We re-enacted this idea within a class.

In 7 Yellow, a King was crowned, Lords chosen, Knights sired, all while the peasants watched the spectacle.

Here you can see 7 Yellow swearing allegiance to their King and liege Lords!



Year 7 The Riot Act — Road Safety

Ms Capper

On Friday 10th October, Year 7 had the pleasure of an hour long session delivered by an education theatre company, The Riot Act, focusing on road safety. The students were not informed of the theme beforehand, and so were very intrigued! They listened intently to the facts and figures shared and thoroughly enjoyed the short play demonstrating the importance of being safe when travelling. The students commented on how thought provoking the session was and how this relates to everyone in everyday life.



Year 8 and 9 Trip to the British Museum and Chinatown

Ms Sun

Just before half-term our Mandarin students embarked on an exciting cultural excursion to London as part of our Intensive Chinese Study Days.

Accompanied by their teachers, 40 Year 8 and 30 Year 9 students explored the British Museum and Chinatown, diving deep into Chinese history, culture, and cuisine.

The trip was a brilliant opportunity for our students to put their language skills into practice. They confidently conversed with Chinese tourists and sharpened their reading abilities by recognising Chinese characters on shop fronts and restaurant menus.

A highlight for many was the hands-on culinary experience. Students learned how to use chopsticks and enjoyed a delicious, authentic meal of dim sum, a classic Chinese dish.

This is what our students thought about their trip:

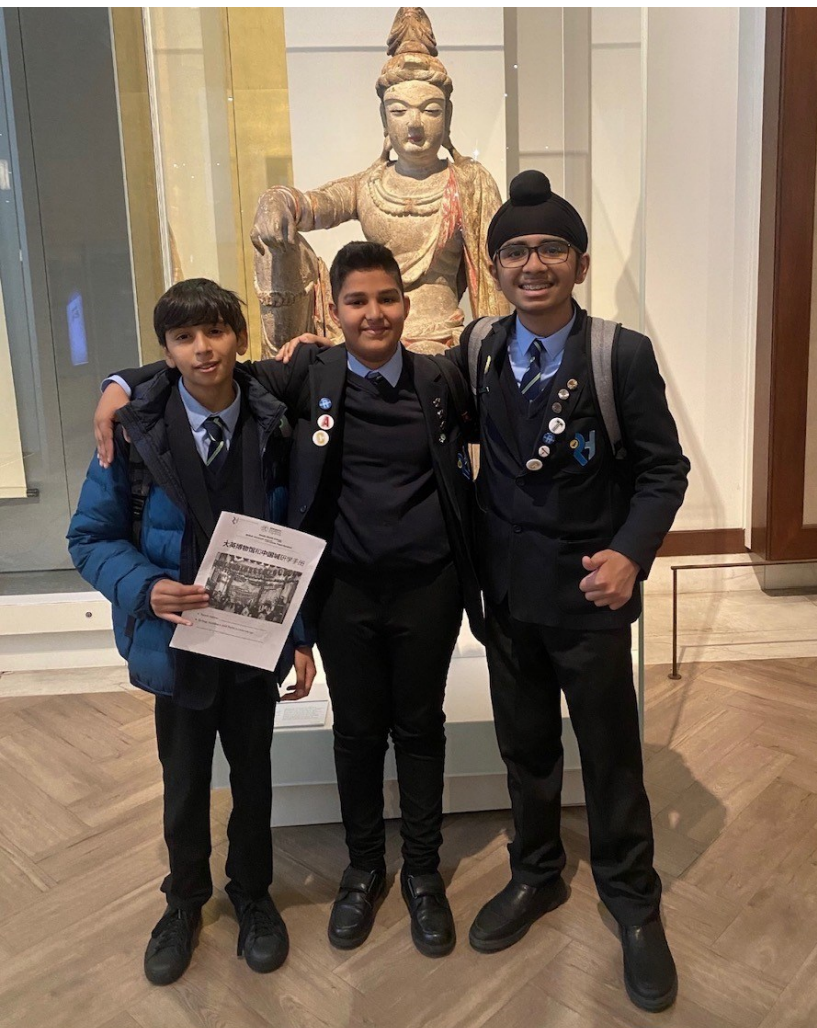
I really enjoyed the Chinatown trip because of many reasons! We firstly went to the British Museum which was very interesting learning more about China's history and also seeing ancient artefacts found and used in China. After, we went to Joy King Lau which was a wonderful and an amazing restaurant. The food was delicious and mouth-watering, and the staff were very nice and kind. We ate many appetizing meals such as shrimp fried rice, chao mian, calamari, spring rolls and more! In conclusion, the trip was very fun as everyone was laughing and enjoying the trip, and I will cherish many memories of the day. This will help me understand more about China's history and how it correlates to our topic.

Nischal Year 9



In Chinatown we went to an authentic Chinese restaurant called Joy King Lau which had some amazing and delicious dishes. We ate noodles, cheung fun, rice, tofu, dumplings and more. My personal favourite was the cheung fun because of the chewy outer skin and the flavourful filling! I really enjoyed this trip and would love to go to Chinatown again. I think this trip benefits my Mandarin education because there were lots of Hanyu characters on shops and menus which helps my reading and writing skills.

Ayeh Year 8



Year 11 Geography Trip

Mr Simpson

Year 11 Geography Residential Trip to Swanage

On Thursday 11th September 2025, a group of Year 11 students embarked on an exciting field trip to the coastal town of Swanage for three days: an unforgettable adventure.

Day 1: Thursday 11th September – We gathered by the minibuses bright and early in the morning, eagerly chatting to our friends. Boarding the minibuses, we set off, everyone's eyes instantly glued to their phones. After a short stop at the services, filling our hungry stomachs, we resumed our journey to the coast.

Arriving at the glistening sea, we took a short ferry across the calm blue water, reaching Shell Beach, where some enjoyed lunch, whilst others enjoyed a game of volleyball. Dejected that we had to leave the beach, we reluctantly dragged ourselves back to the minibuses.

Finally, we pulled into the town of Swanage, stopping at the youth hostel. The teachers then introduced us to the town and took us around on a short walk, where the weather took a turn for the worse. After the rain ceased, we had some free time exploring Swanage. Rushing to the ice cream shop, we made the most of the bright sunshine. Then, followed by a short stroll through the streets, we eventually made our way back to the youth hostel.

Discovering our amazing rooms, we spent some time inside, before coming downstairs for dinner. After dinner, we made our way to a classroom, refreshing our map skills by answering some questions. As soon as the classroom ended, everyone rushed outside to explore the silent, deserted town at night, visiting some shops and returning, knowing tomorrow was a big day to come.

Day 2: Friday 12th September – After a night that felt endless, being awake for hours, we were awoken by a loud knocking, and Mr Simpson telling us to get up. Getting dressed, we trudged downstairs for breakfast. Next, rapidly grabbing our lunch, we set off to Knoll Beach in Studland Bay. Here, we carried out surveys on the environment and facilities at the beach and measured wind speeds and marram grass cover as we walked up the beach. Earning some well-deserved free time, we enjoyed the beach before heading back to Swanage, this time, by foot.

The hike was more tiring than it looked. We walked through an ancient World War 2 observation bunker, squeezing through the narrow pathways of what was once a defence against German invasion. Ultimately reaching the Old Harry rocks, we carefully approached the edge of the cliff, awestruck by the view of Old Harry. Taking some pictures, everyone sat down to draw a sketch of Old Harry. Walking through green fields, up hills and down narrow wooden steps, we trekked back to Swanage. Walking alongside the beach, we admired the scenery. Tired, we made our way straight to the youth hostel resting before dinner. In the evening classroom lesson, we created a poster in groups, encouraging tourists to visit Knoll Beach. Once again, we ventured down into Swanage, experiencing the freedom at night, before coming back with dozens of new memories.

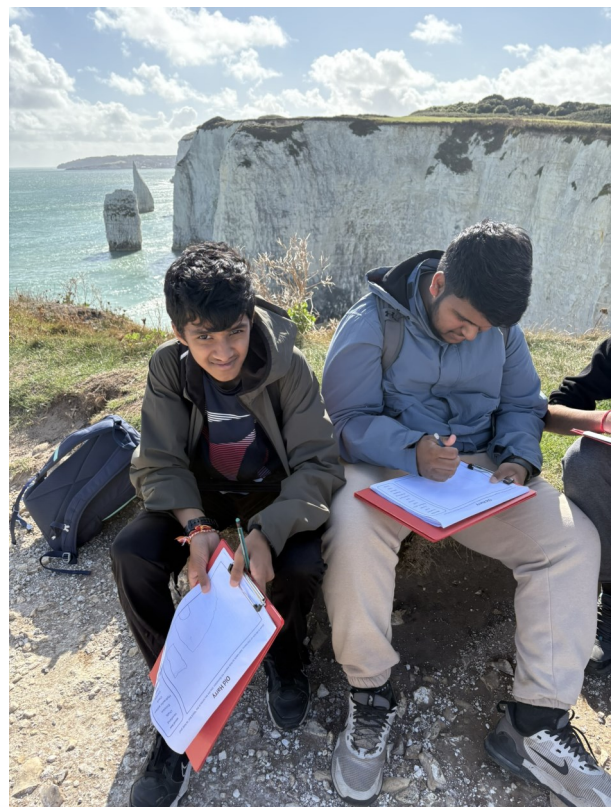




Day 3: Saturday 13th September – Once again woken up by loud knocking, we rushed downstairs to breakfast, knowing this was the last day of our trip. Checking out of our rooms and loading the bags on the minibuses, we headed to Durdle Door. Following a rain delay, we all headed up a steep hill to grasp a view of Durdle Door. It was spellbinding. The ocean was a clear turquoise and the sun shone vibrantly. We then descended on a pebble beach, the limestone arch stood behind, and everyone gazed in awe. We then walked back to Lulworth Cove, where we learnt how Stair Hole and Lulworth Cove were formed and what they would look like in the future.

Finally, it was time to go. We hopped onto the minibuses, concluding an incredibly fun trip. We all learnt new things and had fun with our friends, building an unforgettable experience. Thank you to all the teachers who organised it: Ms Rockell, Mr Wright, Mrs Wright, and Mr Simpson.

By Yash Year 11



Cameron Parker Visit

Mrs Manderson

What an inspiring beginning to October at Rooks Heath School! We had the privilege of welcoming a motivational speaker, Cameron Parker, into school, and he absolutely captivated our students. Engaging, warm, and completely relatable – he connected with them instantly. The response was incredible: students flocked to him afterwards, full of energy and admiration.

A huge well done to Year 10 (and the Year 9s who joined us) – you were brilliant, showing Cameron the utmost respect he deserved. You made us proud!

Cameron, you were fantastic – so much so that staff immediately asked: “When can he come back for the other Year Groups??” That says it all. Keep shining, Cameron, and let’s definitely keep in touch!

If you’re looking for a motivational speaker who keeps it real and makes a lasting impact, reach out to Cameron Parker – you won’t be disappointed.





Important dates for your Calendar

Friday 17th October	Finish for the half-term holiday
Monday 20th to Friday 31st October	2 week half-term holiday
Monday 3rd November	Return after half-term holiday (Week 2 timetable)
Tuesday 11th November	Year 9 Options and Choices Evening
Thursday 13th November	Sixth Form Open Evening
Monday 17th November	Year 11 Mock Exams begin
Monday 1st December	Sixth Form Mock Exams begin
Thursday 4th December	Autumn Concert
Wednesday 10th December	Half-day for students (1.15pm finish)
Friday 19th December	Last day of Autumn term (students finish at 12.30pm)
Monday 22nd December to Monday 5th January	2 week Winter holiday
Tuesday 6th January	First day of Spring term (Week 1 timetable)

