Friday 13 November 2026

NEWS & VIEWS

Ambition – Resilience - Kindness

Headteacher; Mr Suttenwood



Headteacher's Comment

#ProudToBeChase

This week has been a reminder of just how fragile our modern, interconnected world can be. When something as seemingly simple as email stops working, even for a short period, we quickly realise just how dependent we have become on technology. The global Microsoft disruption presented challenges for schools, businesses and communities across the world. I would like to thank our staff and pupils for the resilience and adaptability they demonstrated, alongside the patience and understanding shown by our parents, carers and wider community. It is also worth remembering that whilst technology can fail and emails can be switched off, kindness is a value that should never be switched off. The way we respond to challenges, and the respect we show one another when things do not go to plan, are what really matter.



The most poignant moment of the week was undoubtedly our Remembrance Event on Tuesday. Despite the damp weather, our pupils demonstrated exceptional respect, maturity and dignity throughout the service. The weather certainly did not detract from the significance of the occasion or the powerful message of remembrance. It was a privilege to welcome representatives from the Leigh-on-Sea Royal British Legion, and I was particularly proud to hear their comments about the politeness and respect shown by our pupils. My thanks go to everyone involved in organising the event, particularly our cadets, readers and those who contributed to such a moving tribute.



Remembrance is about more than looking back. It is about recognising the sacrifices made by generations before us, understanding the freedoms we enjoy today and ensuring that the lessons of history are never forgotten. In a world that can sometimes feel increasingly divided, the importance of remembrance, peace, compassion and mutual respect cannot be overstated. I was equally proud of the pupils who represented Chase High at the Southend Cenotaph on Sunday, laying a wreath on behalf of our school community.

Looking ahead, we have another busy week, including our Sixth Form Parents' Evening and a visit from author Christian Foley. These opportunities, alongside the many achievements celebrated throughout the school, continue to remind us of the importance of providing enriching experiences for our young people.

This week has brought our school values of **Ambition, Resilience** and **Kindness** into sharp focus. Whether demonstrating respect during a moment of remembrance or showing patience and understanding when technology lets us down, our pupils and staff continue to show what it means to be part of the Chase High community.

SPORT ROUND UP!

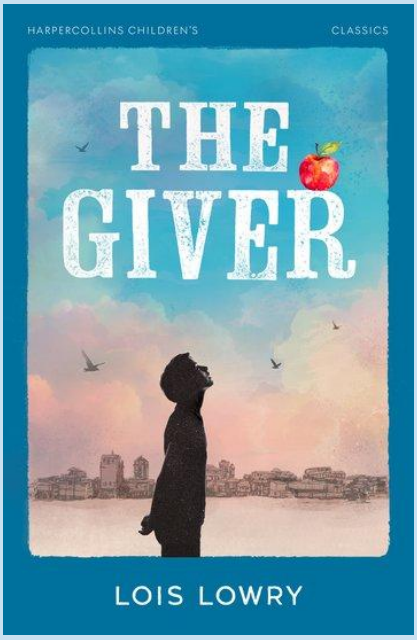
This week, the Year 9 boys took part in the Essex Rugby Tournament, convincingly beating William Edwards and losing to St Clares and Redden Court. The Year 10 boys' basketball team lost their Essex Cup game to a strong St Thomas More side. Both the U13 and U15 girls' football teams experienced unlucky losses this week, however, both teams made progress throughout their games.

On Wednesday, pupils took part in the annual Borough Cross Country Championships. We saw some fantastic individual performances from Tom (7th), Keyan (9th), Jenson (12th), Travis (14th), Dexter (17th), Florence (18th) and, Peyton (25th). The best performance of the day came from the Year 8 boys who secured bronze! Well done to all our runners for showing fantastic levels of resilience.

BOOK OF THE WEEK!

The Giver by Lois Lowry

The Giver is a thought-provoking dystopian novel about Jonas, a twelve-year-old boy who lives in a seemingly perfect community where everything is controlled to create peace, order and equality. When Jonas is chosen to become the community's new Receiver of Memory, he begins training with the Giver, who passes on memories of the world as it existed before suffering, love and choice were removed. As Jonas discovers the truth behind his society and the dark sacrifices made to maintain its perfection, he begins to question everything he has been taught and must decide whether to accept the rules or risk everything to change his world.



Dates for your Diary

17.11.26 Year 10 and 11 Flu Vaccinations/ Year 12 and 13 Parents' Evening

18.11.26 Author Visit – Christian Foley

25.11.26 Lion King Trip

CHASE HIGH SCHOOL
AMBITION - RESILIENCE - KINDNESS

SEND Parents Coffee Morning

We would like to invite parents and carers of SEND pupils to our coffee morning.

This is an opportunity to ask any questions or queries you may have, as well as sharing our next steps and plans for the year.

Your questions
A chance to ask any questions or raise any queries you may have about SEND provision at Chase High.

Share and discuss
We will be sharing our next steps and plans for the year for our SEND provision.

Connect
An informal and friendly opportunity to meet, chat and work together.



Friday 18th December
9:00am
Main Hall

We look forward to seeing you!


CHASE HIGH SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM
TOURS
EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY
9AM – 10AM
TO BOOK, EMAIL:
sixthform@chasehigh.org
AMBITION
RESILIENCE
KINDNESS
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CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

AMBITION - RESILIENCE - KINDNESS

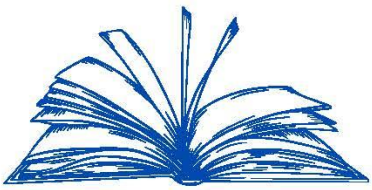
YEAR 12 & 13 PARENT EVENING

Tuesday 17th November
4pm until 7pm

Sixth Form Building

Letters regarding booking appointments via SchoolCloud have been sent.



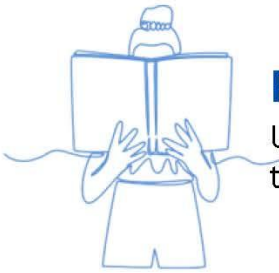


SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH READING

Encourage your child to read

Just a few minutes a day can have a big impact on children of all ages. Try to build towards reading 15 minutes three times a week.





Read aloud regularly

Use different voices, gestures, and pauses to make the stories come alive and encourage interaction.

Read together

Choose a favourite time to read together as a family and enjoy it. Making reading a social event normalises reading for pleasure.





Make use of your local library

Local libraries also offer brilliant online materials, including audiobooks and ebooks to borrow. See Libraries Connected for more digital library services and resources.

Be a Reading Role Model

Children learn by observing their parents, so make sure they see you reading for pleasure. Let them see you enjoying books, newspapers or magazines.





Use myON

As a school, we have invested in a digital online reading platform that gives our students access to over 7,000 culturally diverse titles. You will have been sent a letter on how to login and access this resource.

CHASE HIGH SCHOOL

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AMBITION · RESILIENCE · KINDNESS

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones have become a huge part of young people's everyday lives, but new restrictions on their use in schools and proposed restrictions on social media are changing how children and young people can use them. This guide explores mobile phones, their use by young people, what the evidence tells us, the current and future legal position, and what parents and educators should do.

What are the risks?

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The relationship between smartphone and social media use and young people's mental health is complex, and evidence does not establish a simple cause-and-effect relationship. Some researchers and commentators, however, including Jonathan Haidt, author of The Anxious Generation, argue that increased smartphone and social media use may be contributing to poorer mental health and wellbeing among young people.

LEARNING AND ATTENTION

Mobile phones can distract pupils from learning and make it harder to maintain attention and concentration. Research suggests that learning and attention have improved in schools that already prohibited mobile phone use, particularly among pupils with lower prior attainment. Now that the DfE's guidance on mobile phones is statutory, schools should ensure that the whole-school community understands and follows their policy, while monitoring how effectively it is implemented.

HARMFUL CONTENT AND BULLYING

Mobile phones can be a means of extending peer conflict from the community into schools and from schools back into the community. They also provide easy access to harmful and inappropriate content, including content that is sexually explicit, promotes self-harm or eating disorders, or is violent in nature. Exposure to this content can negatively affect children's mental health and wellbeing, potentially increasing the support they require from schools, parents, and support services.

EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Ofcom research found that 13- to 14-year-olds spend an average of 4 hours 19 minutes online each day across smartphones, tablets, and computers. However, there is considerable variation between children, with some spending significantly more or less time online. Excessive screen time can contribute to disrupted sleep and fragmented attention, both of which can negatively affect children's mental health and wellbeing.

The current and upcoming rules

SCHOOL BANS

As of 1 September 2026, schools are expected to be phone-free environments by default, with any exceptions limited to specific circumstances. Schools can decide how best to implement this. For example, some may provide secure storage or collect phones at the beginning of the school day, while others may prohibit pupils from bringing them onto school premises altogether. Schools can also confiscate mobile phones in line with their behaviour policy, while searches for prohibited phones must follow the relevant legal requirements.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Schools should make reasonable adjustments where necessary for disabled pupils and may allow exceptions in other circumstances, including where mobile phone use is necessary to support a medical condition or an identified need. For example, a pupil with diabetes may use a continuous glucose monitor linked to their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar levels. Schools may also make adaptations where mobile phone use provides agreed support for pupils with SEND. Any exceptions should be clearly reflected in the school's policies and procedures.

ONLINE SAFETY ACT 2023 AND 2026 PROPOSALS

Platforms are required to protect children from harmful content and use age checks to prevent children from accessing pornography and certain other types of harmful content. In June 2026, the government announced that it intends to stop social media companies offering services to under-16s. These restrictions are expected to be introduced in spring 2027, but the precise scope and rules have not yet been confirmed.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

While there is ongoing debate about the relationship between smartphones, social media and young people's mental health, there are steps that parents and educators can take to help reduce the potential risks associated with their use:

1. Delay smartphones. Consider waiting until a child is 14 before giving them a smartphone. Where a child needs a device to contact family, a basic phone may be an alternative.
2. Delay social media. Consider delaying access to social media until the age of 16.
3. Support phone-free schools. Parents, pupils, and staff should understand and support the school's approach to mobile phones.
4. Encourage screen-free activities. Promote independent and outdoor play, alongside other activities that give children opportunities to socialise and spend time away from screens.

Meet Our Expert

Mark Emmerson OBE, CEO – City of London Academies Trust. With nearly 45 years' experience in inner-city education, including 26 years in senior leadership roles, Mark was an early advocate for tackling the risks of mobile phones in schools, introducing a ban as headteacher in 2000. He has also served as a national DfE adviser and held local authority roles, consistently driving improvements in pupil outcomes and Ofsted judgements, particularly in disadvantaged communities.



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