



Headteacher's Comment

#ProudToBeChase

As we reach the end of a busy and successful first half term, I would like to thank our pupils, staff, parents and carers for their continued support. This week, pupils have enjoyed valuable experiences through our Year 10 Careers Day and the Future Ready Programme, alongside celebration assemblies recognising their achievements.

It has also been another busy week for school sport. Congratulations to our Year 9 girls' netball team, who continued their excellent run of form with an impressive 22–3 victory against Thorpe Hall. I am equally proud of all the pupils who represented Chase across football, netball and basketball this week, demonstrating **Ambition** and **Resilience** regardless of the final result.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the importance of communicating with members of staff in a polite, calm and constructive manner. We understand that parents and carers may sometimes have questions or concerns, and our staff will always listen carefully and work with families to find a positive way forward.

Kindness is one of our core values, and it applies to every member of the Chase community. By treating one another with courtesy and respect, even when discussing a concern or difference of opinion, we model the behaviour we expect from our pupils and create the best conditions for working together.

I hope that all our pupils, families and staff have a happy, restful and safe break and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in two weeks' time.



Year 10 Careers Day

This week, Year 10 pupils took part in a drop-down day focused on preparing for their work experience placements. Throughout the day, pupils researched possible placements, contacting employers and learnt how to write professional emails.

Pupils also attended a talk from South Essex College Group about T Levels, providing insight into another option available after Year 11. It was a useful day, helping pupils take the next steps towards securing their placements and thinking about their future options.



Poppy Appeal

Ahead of our Remembrance Event taking place on Wednesday 11 November, we will be selling poppies to raise money for the Royal British Legion. Members of our Junior Leadership Team will be visiting tutor groups, asking for a small donation in exchange for a poppy. Wearing a poppy is a way of showing appreciation for the service and sacrifice of our armed forces, veterans and families, both past and present.



Spook Fest Rewards Event

Chase High was filled with spooky excitement as pupils enjoyed our Halloween SpookFest! From thrilling games and challenges, to plenty of Halloween fun, it was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate our pupils' achievements.

We are incredibly proud of everyone who earned their invitation, with a **huge well done to Ruby House** and all pupils who demonstrated excellent attendance!



We hope everyone had a **fang-tastic time!** 🍁 🍊 Keep up the amazing work, and we look forward to celebrating even more successes at our next rewards event!



Future Ready Programme

This week, our Year 9 pupils involved in the Future Ready Programme spent the day at the Civic Centre. Throughout the day, pupils explored different workplaces, employment opportunities, and career paths. They learnt about a range of job sectors and how their school subjects link to careers and the skills needed in the workplace. It was a valuable day that encouraged pupils to think about their future options and develop their understanding of the world of work.



Celebration Assemblies

This week, each year group came together for our Celebration Assemblies, recognising the fantastic achievements, progress and dedication of our pupils. From those who have gone above and beyond, to those who have shown incredible growth, resilience and determination, these assemblies were an opportunity to celebrate everyone who has succeeded, progressed, and flourished.

We are incredibly proud of all our pupils who received recognition and continue to demonstrate our **ARK values of Ambition, Resilience and Kindness**.

A huge congratulations to all our award winners! Keep striving for success and making Chase High proud! ✨



Lego Donations

We're excited to announce that we will be starting a Lego Club in the library and are hoping to gather some Lego to help get it up and running!

If you have any spare Lego at home that you would be happy to donate, we would be incredibly grateful.



SPORT ROUND UP!

The Year 9 girls' netball team continued their good run of form, beating Thorpe Hall 22 - 3. Imogen was awarded Player of the Match. Great performances girls, keep up the good work!



Our Year 9 boys' football team played well against Southend High School for Boys. They were 4 - 3 down with 5 minutes to go, conceding only a couple of late goals after pushing numbers forward in an attempt to find an equaliser. Aiden was awarded Player of the Match. This was a very encouraging performance; well done boys!



There was a narrow defeat for the Year 7 boys' football team to Eastwood Academy, with Toby awarded Player of the Match. The Year 8 netball team also lost to Thorpe Hall, with Phoebe receiving the Player of the Match.

In preparation for the upcoming basketball season, our Year 11 boys' basketball team beat the Year 10 team by two points in double overtime. Sam was named the Year 11 Player of the Match, while Thomas was the Year 10 Player of the Match.



Our Sixth Form Academy football team lost 2 - 1 away to a strong St Bonaventures team. The Player of the Match was Marshall.



Our U13 girls' football team played very well in their first football match vs Shoebury High School. Jolie was named Player of the Match. Our Year 7 football team lost to a strong Shoebury High School team, with Raphael awarded Player of the Match.



This week, our Year 7/8 boys' cross country team competed in the first round of the National Schools Cross Country Cup. The school has never finished in the top three teams qualifying for the regional final, but the boys performed superbly to finish in second place! This qualifies them to compete against the top schools in Essex and Suffolk at Felsted School on the 5th November. The boys have worked so hard for this, training in all conditions every Monday and Thursday morning. We are so proud of their achievement!



Dates for your Diary

19.10.26 – 30.10.26 - Half Term Break



DISCOVERY
EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Chief Executive Officer: Mr R Duff

Chase High School is proud to be part of the Discovery Educational Trust



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 18+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school – such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 1111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book *Ethical AI and Education*, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2026 by Taylor and Francis.



The National College

See full reference list on our website

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CAREERS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a collation of all the opportunities we have heard about from employers and universities. Please use the links included to read more information and apply to anything you are interested in. Links are underlined.

 [Listen to this newsletter](#)

OPPORTUNITIES



National T Levels Week takes place from 19th to 23rd October 2026 to celebrate technical education achievements and highlight student, teacher, and employer successes. You can find out more by searching the hashtag #TLevelsWeek on social media.

In these student stories, you can hear directly from students who are taking a T Level course about why you might like to consider them when thinking about your next steps.



Here is everything you need to know about T Levels, including what subjects they're offered in, how they're assessed and what the grading equates to.

Considering a T Level but unsure what the workload or placement is actually like? This Springpod programme helps you explore how T Levels work, combining classroom learning with a substantial industry placement, so you can decide if this route suits your learning style before choosing it. You'll know what to expect - and whether it's the right next step for you.



These handy posters show you which Springpod industry programmes link well to which T Level subject, allowing you to try the industry before signing up to the T Level course.



Sainsbury's are running a series of Virtual Career Experience Days, as part of their KickStarter Experiences, taking place during the October half-term. You can explore exciting career opportunities, develop new skills, meet members of the Sainsbury's team, and gain a better understanding of careers in retail and the supermarket industry.

The Foot Anstey work experience opportunities are designed to give you a genuine feel for life in a commercial law firm. You'll learn more about the variety of career paths available, develop key professional skills and connect with people across the business. From legal careers to the many teams that support our clients and colleagues, you'll discover what it's really like to be part of Foot Anstey and take the next step in your career journey. Their next event is Mon 26th October.



Future Doctors have 4,000 free places for students aged 14-18 to join a free online course designed for students interested in careers in medicine and healthcare. All students receive a signed certificate from their doctors for taking part. Upcoming events are on; Oct 11, Oct 18, Oct 25, and Nov 1.



JOB OF THE WEEK



Building Control Surveyor

They review architectural drawings, structural calculations, and technical specifications before work starts then visit properties at key stages - such as foundations, damp-proof courses, and structural completions - to verify safety and compliance.

Every new build property in the UK must be signed off by a Building Survey before it can be sold or lived in.

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION FACT

Education and Early Years T Levels pathway attracts the highest number of enrolled students and completers in England.

There were nearly 3,780 results for the Education & Early Years T Level Course in the 2025/26 academic year alone.

Source

If you have any questions or need support, please email careers@chasehigh.org

CAREERS NEWSLETTER

OPPORTUNITIES



Join [this live session](#) on 20th October at 4pm to learn more about what it's like to study a Politics, International Relations or International Development degree at the University of Portsmouth. You'll find out about our course highlights, modules, placement opportunities and careers support, as well as plenty of time to get your questions answered.



Need help navigating the UCAS application process? Applying to university can feel overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. Join the University of Roehampton on 22nd Oct at 530pm for a [practical, step-by-step guide to the UCAS application process](#), designed to help you understand what's involved and feel more confident about applying. They'll break down each stage of the application, share helpful tips and advice, and highlight key things to consider when completing your UCAS application.



Interested in finding out more about careers in pathology? The Pathology Training Leads are hosting a [Virtual Pathology Work Experience Day](#) on 28th October, from 9:15am to 4:30pm. The day will provide an opportunity to hear from professionals working across a wide range of pathology disciplines, alongside careers information and opportunities to ask questions directly to those working in the field. The event will be delivered via Microsoft Teams and is open to anyone interested in finding out more about careers in biomedical science and pathology.



Imagine the year is 2029 and you are about to graduate with a degree in business management and a GREAT idea for a new business start-up! Join [Associate Professor David Steinberg](#) from Heriot-Watt University on 3rd Nov at 7pm and discover how current research is helping to shape the business world of the future. In this highly interactive session, you will be asked to make decisions on the development of your company from incubator to global success! How will your Intelligent Virtual Store Design (IVSD) provide products and services to bring the in-store shopping experience into the home? Will your company flop or will you take over the emerging metaverse?



Numerous universities run Open Days in October, be sure to register and attend the ones you're interested in. Open days are the best way to get a feel for a university, their course offer and facilities. You can see the dates here: [UCAS](#), [OpenDays.com](#) and [UniTasterDays](#). On UniTasterDays, you can also look at [incentives and deals](#) to help with the cost of travel, hotels if required and food to attend open days.

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

[Balfour Beatty](#) is a major infrastructure and construction company helping to build and maintain the systems people use every day, from roads and railways to buildings and energy infrastructure. Early career routes include apprenticeships, placements and graduate opportunities across engineering, construction, project management, quantity surveying and business. Students interested in seeing real projects develop from ideas into finished structures may find this sector particularly rewarding.

UNI SPOTLIGHT

[King's College London](#) is a large university with campuses across central London. It offers courses spanning health and medicine, law, humanities, social sciences, sciences, business and technology. Students benefit from being close to major hospitals, businesses, government and cultural institutions.

King's could particularly appeal to students looking for a busy city experience and opportunities to connect their university studies with organisations and careers across London.

If you have any questions or need support,
please email careers@chasehigh.org



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