

The Eagle



Culcheth High School

Issue 134 – February 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the school's first newsletter of 2026. I hope that the start to the year has been a happy and successful one, to date. The spring term, two half-terms of six weeks, can be described as a 'sprint', with so much going on at Culcheth High School, and it seems like time is going by so fast.

Our Year 11 students are about to start their second round of GCSE Pre-Public Examinations. Following these PPEs, we look forward to reflecting on their performance and making the final arrangements to support every student in the run up to the GCSE examinations.

As Headteacher, over the years, the biggest mistake that I see students and parents make in Year 11, at this time of year, is the assumption that 'there is lots of time before the GCSEs start.' In reality, there isn't. There are only nine and half school weeks left before the GCSE exams begin on Thursday 7th May. Every week, every lesson and every revision session counts. Thank you to teaching staff who have also given time up during the half-term to provide additional Year 11 study sessions. I know that the Year 11 students are very appreciative of this continued support.

Can I appeal to parents and carers of our Year 11 students to encourage their child to attend the revision sessions that take place in school during lunch time, after school and in the school holidays. Staff are giving up their time to put on so many revision and targeted support sessions that complement the lesson content to further support our students' readiness for their PPEs and GCSE exams.

As we start the New Year, I would like to welcome Ms Bardolia (Geography) and Mr Lambert (History) to Culcheth High School. I am sure you will join me in wishing them all the very best at Culcheth High School.

Throughout the start of 2026, I have challenged our staff and students to reflect on what they want to achieve and how they can be the best that they can be to help them achieve their potential in the year ahead. We have asked our school community to continue to live our school values of respect, honesty and excellence, every day, as we strive to achieve the ambitious goals we have set ourselves.

Bon Voyage to the staff and students who will be spending part of the half-term visiting some amazing parts of the world. We have staff and students on separate visits to Iceland and France. I have been fortunate enough to accompany staff and students on the Iceland visit in previous years, so I know that they are going to have an amazing time. Thank you to all the staff who will be giving up time during their half-term break to support these amazing visits. I'm sure we will see some great photographs in the next school newsletter.

As we move into a new year, I would just like to thank the whole school community for their continued support in the last year. We have a strong and committed staff, an enthusiastic student body, fantastic parents and carers and a supportive wider community at Culcheth High School. Working together, we should look forward to making 2026 a very special and successful year! #WeAreCHS

Mr C P Hunt, Headteacher

Holocaust Memorial Week

In late January, we held an assembly for each year group, looking at the historical significance of the Holocaust and its legacy today. We detailed the experiences of many Jews in ghettos such as Warsaw and the eventual transportation of many to the concentration/extermination camps. As well as this, we studied the experiences of two survivors, Susan Pollock and Rudolf Brazda (pictured below), and how they viewed their experiences later in life.

We then began to look at the meaning of 'genocide', looking at how it connected to the Holocaust atrocity as well as more recent examples such as Darfur 1993-present day and the ongoing Israel Palestinian conflict to show that examples of genocide that exist today.

We finished the assembly with a poem written by Charles N. Whittaker and read by actress Olivia Coleman who narrated the poem "Auschwitz". We left the students with the final consideration; your voice is amazing, use it.



Key School Dates

10th February 2026
Safer Internet Day

9th-13th February 2026
Year 11 PPE2

4th March 2026
Careers Fair

5th March 2026
World Book Day

13th March 2026
Year 11 Report sent home

19th March 2026
Year 9 Parents' Evening (A Side)

26th March 2026
Year 9 Parents' Evening (B Side)

Monday Week 2

23rd February 2026

9th March 2026

23rd March 2026

20th April 2026

18th May 2026

8th June 2026

22nd June 2026

6th July 2026

Publication Dates

27th March 2026

22nd May 2026

10th July 2026

Christmas Music Showcase

Our December Christmas Music Showcase was a resounding success! After much anticipation, it was a true joy for our performers and readers to return to the stage and share the magic of live music with a full house.

The evening highlighted the incredible diversity of our Music Department, featuring everything from captivating vocalists and soloists to high-energy bands. As educators and musicians, there is nothing more rewarding than witnessing our students' growth and passion come to life under the spotlight.

We are also proud to announce that proceeds from the event were donated to Leigh Homeless, providing vital support to our community. A huge thank you to the students and staff whose dedication made this night possible. We're already looking forward to our next showcase in April - get ready for some Retro Vibes!



Parking Around School

A note for parents who drive students to school and use the school car park, Withington Avenue and Culcheth Hall Drive. If you drop your child off or collect them from school, please use the drop-off bay in the school car park or, if using Withington Avenue or Culcheth Hall Drive:

- Please drive slowly – children are crossing to and from the ginnel
- Please park considerably so that driveways are not blocked and grass verges are not damaged
- Please do not use residents' driveways to turn

Please also be reminded not to use the primary school car park

School Uniform 2025-26

School uniform for 2025-26 has not changed, however there are a number of points that parents/carers need to be aware of:

1. The 'School Shoe Guidance' that remains applicable for 2025-26 is available on the school website, along with the 2025-26 uniform statement and the **3G Pitch Footwear and Guidance**.
2. Hairstyles must be suitable for school. (Extreme hairstyles including patterns, lines or indentations shaved or sculptured onto the hair are not acceptable. Other examples include 'Mohicans', 'Skinheads' and inappropriate use of natural coloured dye to create clashing and/or extreme hair colour patterns. Non-natural colours are not acceptable.)
3. Excessive make-up is unnecessary and inappropriate and must not be worn; this includes false eyelashes and fake tan

School Gates

A reminder to all parents/carers that the school gates open at 8.15am. Students arriving on site before 8.15am will be unable to enter the school site until this time.

Parent Code of Conduct

Unfortunately, Culcheth High School has had to adopt a 'Parent Code of Conduct' following an increase in incidents of inappropriate behaviour, from parents, towards members of staff in school. It is a simple code that outlines the school's expectations of parental conduct when communicating with school, examples of behaviour that will not be tolerated and the steps the school will take if inappropriate behaviour, from parents, takes place. The 'Parent Code of Conduct' can be found on the home page of the school website and also in the school policies section.

Student Possessions and Belongings

Students' possessions and belongings that they bring into school are their own responsibility and, as such, students must take care of them. We provide every student with a locker where they can store their belongings and possessions throughout the school day.

Given the expense of some of the items that students now bring into school, they do so at their own risk. The school can accept no responsibility or liability for loss, damage or theft of personal items. Often students bring expensive items into school that are not required for school; we discourage this, but we also encourage students to look after their personal possessions such as coats, phones, watches etc. ensuring that they don't misplace them or leave them unattended. It is not the responsibility of school staff to search for missing items, due to the impact this would have on missed learning time.

Please be aware that, from September 2025, CHS is a 'phone-free school' and mobile technology should be placed in the students' Yondr pouches all day.

CHS in the Community – Year 8

My name is Zavia, I am 13 years old and I play for Manchester City Academy U13. I have played football from a young age and have always loved sport and exercise. I have played for several teams over the years, but I now proudly play for Manchester City.

I have had the opportunity to travel internationally with the academy, including trips to China and Spain. I recently won a tournament in Abu Dhabi which was an U14 tournament and my U13s team won the tournament! I have also represented my county multiple times.

Football is a huge passion of mine and I am always working to improve and challenge myself.



FOCUS ON PUPIL PREMIUM

Christmas Hampers – A Huge Thank You

Huge thanks (again!) to Ms Nikki Potter and the residents of Twiss Green Lane, who, in another stunning display of generosity and Christmas spirit, have worked together to support a range of our families by providing them with a full Christmas dinner package and hamper containing all the ingredients and accompaniments needed to make full Christmas feast for all of the family.

We're so proud to have such thoughtful people supporting our school community!



Year 11 Update

With the completion of the first round of PPEs, we are incredibly proud to celebrate the grit and determination shown by our Year 11 cohort. These exams serve as vital preparation for the summer, and the results have highlighted some truly exceptional individual success stories. Beyond the grades themselves, we are celebrating the progress made by students who faced their nerves head-on and treated these mocks with the gravity they deserve. It is this culture of hard work and excellence that defines our Year 11 community as they begin the final sprint toward their GCSEs.

As we look toward the next round of PPEs and the final exams, it is vital that we address a key area for improvement: attendance at after-school revision sessions. While some students are attending regularly, there are still many who are missing out on these crucial opportunities to bridge gaps in their knowledge. We want every student to feel confident when they walk into the exam hall, but that confidence is built not only in the classroom, but also after hours. We are calling on all our Year 11s to make a renewed commitment to these sessions.

Pupil Premium Booster Update

We would also like to extend our congratulations to our first term of Booster students. Their commitment to the additional English and Maths sessions has been exemplary. The attendance and focus during the sessions have been brilliant. The dedication the students have shown in Term 1 has set a high standard for the rest of the school, proving that with the right support and a positive mindset, no topic is too difficult to master.

Following that success, we are delighted to report that the Term 2 Boosters are off to a flying start. The next round of students have settled into their groups well. We are confident that this term will yield great results as these students continue to build their confidence in their core subjects.

Pupil Premium Education Voucher and Uniform

Pupil Premium students have access to a £75 Education Voucher to use for the academic year. Should you wish to use your child's Educational Voucher to purchase any uniform, you need to visit the school website. You will find the order form under 'Curriculum - SEND and Pastoral - Pupil Premium Uniform Order'.

If you have any questions regarding the use of the Educational Voucher, or wish to use the balance against educational items other than uniform, you can contact the PP team here:

- PPteam@culchethhigh.org.uk (the PP team as a whole)
- KMC@culchethhigh.org.uk - (PP Progress Leader - Miss. McFadden)

Year 8 Art

Year 8 students have produced amazing A3 colour and tonal studies of natural forms, exploring the capabilities of oil pastel, whilst reflecting on the work of artist Dawn Eaton.

Take a look at the video to see the fantastic work produced by our very talented Year 8.

<https://culchethhigh.org.uk/Whats-New/>

Senior Citizens' Christmas Party

At the very end of last term, the staff and students of Culcheth High School were honoured and delighted to welcome the wisest residents of Culcheth and surrounding areas to our annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Dinner. It is always a pleasure to see the return of familiar faces and welcome new ones.

The staff from Catering Academy provided a wonderful Christmas dinner with all the trimmings and a lovely dessert, and our very own musicians, singers and musical theatre group performed a medley of uplifting songs. Once again were able to give away hundreds of pounds worth of bingo prizes, thanks to the incredible generosity of CHS staff, students and parents.

A fabulously festive day was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thank you to everybody who contributed and thank you to our wonderful guests!



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Navigating the AI Revolution: A Guide for Parents and Carers

Our recent school assembly focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its growing role in our students' lives. With 72% of students now using AI weekly, it is vital that we work together to ensure they use these powerful tools safely, ethically, and effectively.

The Benefits: AI as a "Personal Coach"

AI offers transformative benefits for learning when used as a support tool rather than a replacement for thinking:

- **24/7 Tutoring:** Students use AI for instant feedback on practice answers and to explain complex subjects like Electrolysis in simpler terms.
- **Organization:** AI can help turn messy class notes into structured revision timetables or flashcards.
- **Accessibility:** New speech-to-text software provides greater independence for students with specific access arrangements during exams.

The Risks: Safety and Academic Integrity

While AI is a "super-helper," it carries significant risks that require adult guidance:

- **Deepfakes and Safety:** Under 2026 laws, creating or sharing sexually explicit "deepfake" images is a criminal offence. We urge parents to discuss the permanence of images shared online, as AI can use faces from social media to create hyper-realistic fakes.
- **The "Hallucination" Factor:** AI can be confidently wrong. For example, an AI-generated presentation about our school incorrectly claimed we have a slide in the Independent Learning Centre (ILC)!
- **Exam Disqualification:** The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has strict rules. Students may use AI to *plan* or *understand* concepts, but copy-pasting AI text into coursework or using "AI spinners" to hide plagiarism can lead to total disqualification from GCSEs.

The Environmental Cost

Many see the internet as "weightless," but AI has a significant physical footprint:

- **Energy Consumption:** A single AI query uses 10x more electricity than a standard Google search.
- **Water Usage:** Training models and cooling data centres is water-intensive; just 10–50 AI queries "drink" approximately 500ml of water.

How You Can Help: Digital Citizenship

We are encouraging students to be "Sustainable AI" users by following these tips:

- **Search vs. Chat:** For simple facts (e.g., "What time is the football?"), use a standard search engine. Save AI for complex tasks to save energy.
- **Avoid Over-generation:** Don't create ten versions of an AI image if one is enough.
- **Be the Master, Not the Tool:** Remind your child that while AI can "reimagine" art or draft an email, it lacks a human "soul" and history. It should help them reach their goals without replacing their unique voice. *"Be the best that you can be, not the best that AI can help you to be."*

Fundraising to Change Lives

I have been given the opportunity to go to Brazil in July 2026 to support a charity called LifeImpactBrazil. This charity helps children who are victims of child trafficking and exploitation by educating them and giving them a safe place to hang out and help to change their futures for the better. During this trip, we will help to run a holiday club and spend time with the children. I believe this trip will be a great way for me to learn how to care and support the people who are the most vulnerable.

To go on this trip I need £2000 to cover flights, accommodations, and all other expenses. So far I have raised £1300 due to the ongoing support from the students and staff at Culcheth High School, and also family and friends. I'm overwhelmingly grateful to everyone who has donated and I truly believe it's going to change mine and the children's lives in so many ways. If you are able to donate, please scan this QR code. Thank you.

Eleanor, 11I



Focus on 7I

What a fantastic start to the year and new term 7I have made, collecting over 200+ 1s in the first two weeks back alone! Plus, we've had some fabulous, themed presentations from Ava D, Harry B, Sam M and Freya T, sharing their knowledge and expertise to the whole class in football and swimming. A big well done to all four, as it can be an intimidating task talking in front of your class, especially to your friends. We're looking forward to seeing more and learning from each other as the year continues.

Mrs M Schofield, Form Tutor 7I



Focus on 7N

It has been many years since I have had a Year 7 form, managing the transition into high school, but I have certainly been blessed with being 7N's Form Tutor. The students, from day one, have shown fantastic manners, drive and effort, embodying our school values everywhere I see them. Every member of staff who has taught them has relayed this back to me too!

Now that we have completed a full term, it is lovely to have got to know them through their 'all about me' presentations, which were done to such a high standard. Whilst daunting to stand up and talk to a full class of pupils, I think it is the form time activity that I, and the rest of the form, look forward to every week. That, and their Newsround obsession!

Whilst everyone has settled in well, it would be amiss if I didn't give a shout out to: Sophia, Holly, Sam, Violet, Emily and Chanelle who are still going strong with a perfect 100% behaviour score.

I am more than pleased with how 7N have settled in to high school life and long may it continue through their Culcheth High School Journey!

Mr C Hardman, Form Tutor 7N



CHS in the Community – Year 9

Sophie has been a dedicated dancer at Gemstone Cheer and Dance for more than nine years.

In January, Sophie and her teammates had the exciting opportunity to travel to Dublin to compete in the under-16s Pom and Cheers Division Competitions. Sophie and her team received some fantastic feedback from the judges, who praised their facial expressions and striking pom routines.

The team finished second in the cheer competition and first in the pom competition. Sophie and her team are now diligently training for their next competition in the Netherlands. Here, they will face a new challenge as they compete against other teams from across Europe. We wish Sophie the best of luck ahead of her next international competition.



Careers Update

It has been a quieter month for careers activities within school; however, a great deal of work has been taking place behind the scenes to prepare for what promises to be a very busy and valuable Careers Fair. This event will give students the opportunity to meet and speak directly with a wide range of education and training providers, helping them to explore the many pathways available to them after school.

Attendees will include all local colleges, representatives from the armed forces, apprenticeship and training providers, NHS staff, and professionals from the emergency services. These face-to-face conversations will allow students to ask questions, gather information, and gain a clearer understanding of the options open to them as they begin to plan their next steps.

Alongside preparations for the Careers Fair, college interviews are now well underway, with many students already attending meetings to discuss courses and future opportunities. One-to-one careers appointments are also continuing to take place regularly in school, offering personalised advice and guidance tailored to individual needs, interests and ambitions. These sessions provide valuable support for students as they make important decisions about their education and career pathways. Any student who feels they would benefit from an appointment, or who would like further advice or support, is encouraged to get in touch with Mrs Haworth to arrange a meeting.

To Kill a Mockingbird

Recently, a group of Year 9 students had the opportunity to visit The Lowry to watch a powerful stage production of 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. The performance brought Harper Lee's classic novel to life, prompting students to think critically about key themes such as justice, empathy, prejudice and moral courage. Seeing these ideas explored on stage helped students make meaningful connections between the text studied earlier in Year 9 and real-world experiences.

Students were highly engaged throughout the performance and represented the school superbly. The visit not only enriched their understanding of the novel but also highlighted the powerful role that live theatre can play in developing empathy, confidence and cultural awareness.



Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10-15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem: it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

Advice for Parents & Carers

LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same: you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.



Source: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/the-big-ask-big-answers/>
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/childrensonlinebehaviourinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

NOS
National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday



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Lymm Adivas

Be a Part of Our

*Successful
Team*

Lets dance
and shine
together as
one!

Every
Wednesday!

No previous
experience
required!

Lymm Leisure Centre

Infomation

Session Times:

3-7 years: 5:00-5:40pm

8-12 years: 5:40-6:40pm

12-16 years: 6:40-7:40pm

Adults: 7:00-8:00pm

**£3.50 per
session**

More info: 07562837079

