



Holmer C of E Academy – Monthly Newsletter

Value of the month: **Service**

June 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,
June has been a truly delightful month, filled with sunshine and smiles across the school. Our Year 4 and Year 6 pupils have thoroughly enjoyed their residential trips, returning with wonderful stories, new friendships, and a real sense of achievement. We've also been lucky with the weather for our sports days, which were a great success – full of energy, teamwork, and school spirit. It's been a joy to see everyone making the most of the outdoors and enjoying all that this busy month has to offer. As the warm weather continues, we kindly remind parents to apply sun-cream before school and ensure children come in with a hat to help keep them safe in the sun.

MAT Update

Thank you to those of you who attended our parents' consultation back in January and provided feedback on joining The Orchard MAT. At this moment in time, we will not be joining the MAT and will remain a stand-alone academy but look forward to continue to collaborate with other schools locally.



Each week, we share a new big question for pupils to think about and discuss with others. This week, our big question has been: **What would happen if everyone thought in the same way?** Take a moment to discuss how this might look different to different people. We would love to hear their thoughts!



Inspiring us all to create a better world

Mrs. Maund Honoured with National Award!

We are absolutely thrilled to share the fantastic news that our incredible Headteacher, Mrs Maund, has been awarded the *Bronze Award in the Pearsons National Headteacher of the Year Awards!* Out of thousands of entries across the country, Mrs Maund has been recognised for her outstanding leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to our school community.

Those of us lucky enough to know Mrs Maund won't be surprised by this well-deserved accolade. Holmer has always been more than just a school to her — she often refers to it as her *baby*, and it shows in everything she does. From the moment you step through the gates, you can feel the care, passion and drive she brings to ensure Holmer is the best it can be.

Mrs Maund goes above and beyond every single day. In addition to navigating us through highly successful Ofsted and SIAMS visits this year, she remains the beating heart of our school — guiding us with vision, kindness and unwavering support.

Whether it's donning her wellies to tackle the floods, wiping down tables at lunchtime, or pacing the sidelines in full voice cheering us on at sports fixtures — you can bet Mrs Maund will be there. She's always ready to celebrate our successes, lift us when we fall, and encourage us to keep going, no matter what. Her compassion, energy, and belief in every single pupil and staff member is what makes her a true force of nature — a superhero in every sense of the word. Our school vision is 'Inspiring us all to create a better world,' and this is something Mrs. Maund does everything day. We've always known she had super-powers, and now the rest of the country does too!

Congratulations, Mrs Maund — what an incredible achievement! We are so proud of you and so lucky to have you leading our Holmer family.



Year 3

What a budding lot of actors we have in Year 3!

Over the last 7 or so weeks, Year 3 have been taking part in a Roald Dahl Project set up by the Courtyard Theatre. The children have thoroughly enjoyed drama workshops based on two of Roald Dahl's stories where they have explored characters, facial expressions, creating mini-sketches and voice projection.

In Literacy, the work continued with the children writing their own plays based on the book they were studying. This then culminated in an amazing day at the theatre where the children carried out a range of workshops then performed their plays on the stage to a sell-out audience. Mrs Jackson and Mrs Stevenson were incredibly proud of each performance and it was a joy to see many children's self-confidence develop. Well done everyone!



Computing and All Things Digital @ Holmer

As technology continues to weave its way into our daily lives, we find ourselves at the forefront of a new digital era, particularly with the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). While AI can offer numerous benefits, it's essential to understand its implications, especially for our children.

Firstly, it's vital to note that AI tools are generally not appropriate for children under the age of 13. At Holmer, we fully support the Government's commitment to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', ensuring that our students navigate this landscape with care and awareness. A major challenge of the digital age is deciphering what's real and what isn't. Even as adults, spotting altered images, misleading videos, or false reports can be daunting. That's why we encourage our young learners to always question what they see online. Fact-checking is crucial; we advise using trustworthy sources like the BBC to confirm information. By fostering a healthy skepticism, we can empower our children to become discerning consumers of information.

Social media presents its own set of challenges. Bullying can manifest online, and we teach our pupils the importance of calling it out. If they witness any form of bullying, they should report it to a trusted adult. Remember, just because it's happening in the virtual world doesn't mean it doesn't have real consequences.

In our curriculum, we follow the principles set out in 'Education for a Connected World', highlighting eight key areas that impact online safety. From privacy to cyberbullying, we equip our pupils with the knowledge they need to thrive safely in a digital environment.



Copyright and Ownership



Health, well-being and lifestyle



Managing online information



Online bullying



Online relationships



Online reputation



Privacy and security



Self-image and identity



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) SOLUTIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AI solutions are trained on a large dataset of text to learn patterns and relationships in the data and generate text, images, sound or even video based on the data they are trained on. As such, users can ask a question, provide a prompt or provide other source material, and the AI solution will then provide a response.

ACCURACY

AI language models such as ChatGPT, generate their responses based on the data they have been trained on. This is often drawn from the internet and therefore may include incorrect facts, leading to responses which contain errors and inaccuracies.

BIAS

AI Language models, including ChatGPT, can perpetuate existing biases present in the data they were trained on. This could lead to biased responses and the reinforcement of stereotypes.

SENSE

AI solutions do not have the ability to understand the context or meaning behind a question or prompt. This could result in inaccurate or irrelevant or even non-sensical responses, whether that be in text, image or other responses.

ACCOUNTABILITY

AI solutions do not have the ability to take responsibility for the responses they generate. This could cause confusion or misunderstandings in language models if the AI's responses are taken as fact and the truth. With generative AIs that create images, it can lead to output derived from other people's content but without any attribution of the source artist's work.

LACK OF CREATIVITY

AI solutions are not capable of independent thought and rely on the data they were trained on. This may potentially produce a lack of creative thinking and problem-solving abilities if students come to be heavily reliant on AI solutions.

Advice for Parents & Carers

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Empower children and young people to use the various AI models in a safe environment and with appropriate content filtering/supervision, and to raise any concerns or questions as they arise.

ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

Encourage children to use AI solutions as tools to help them research and learn, but remind them to not take the model's responses as the truth. Emphasise that they should question, verify and think critically about the information they receive.

DISCUSS BIAS

Discuss with children the potential biases that may be present in the responses generated by AI language models and encourage them not to simply accept the responses that it gives them at face value.

MONITOR USAGE

It is important for parents to monitor their children's usage of AI solutions (as with technology use in general) to ensure that they are utilising it responsibly and to provide opportunities to discuss its use, if needed.

ENCOURAGE HUMAN INTERACTION

Help children learn how to use AIs in conjunction with other resources, such as books and the internet, but also humans such as teachers, relatives and friends. Emphasise the importance of human interaction as part of life and as part of learning.

SCHOOL GUIDANCE

Be aware of school rules or other guidance in relation to the use of AI solutions in relation to a child's education and discuss appropriate and inappropriate with young people accordingly.

Meet Our Expert

Gary Henderson is the Director of IT in a large UK boarding school having previously taught in schools and colleges both in the UK and in the Middle East. He has a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security believing that it is important that we are all more aware of not just the benefits of technology, but also the risks.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://openai.com/index/chatgpt/>

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Website:
www.holmeracademy.co.uk



Contact:
01432 273301



Email:
Admin@holmer.hereford.sch.uk

Holmer C of E Academy Named Voice 21 Centre of Excellence – A First for Herefordshire!

We are absolutely delighted to announce that Holmer Church of England Academy has officially been recognised as a *Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence* — and we are proud to say we are the **first school in Herefordshire** to receive this prestigious honour!

As we approach the end of our second year as a Voice 21 school, we couldn't be more proud of how our pupils, staff and even parents have embraced oracy. At Holmer, we firmly believe that every child's voice matters, and we are determined to equip all our learners with the spoken language and listening skills they need to thrive — not just in school, but in life.

The report praised Holmer for our ambitious and deeply rooted vision for oracy, calling it “a pathway to opportunity, a driver of change, and a means of creating a better world.” Our commitment is clear: we want every child to develop confidence, clarity and the ability to communicate effectively in any set



We are thrilled that our efforts have been recognised nationally, and even more excited about the exclusive opportunities this award brings — from sharing our practice with other schools to speaking at national events. This award isn't just a recognition of excellence — it's a celebration of the culture we've built together at Holmer. A culture where every child is heard, every voice is valued, and every opportunity to speak, listen and grow is embraced.

We
all

Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence
Report for Holmer C of E Academy



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Year R

In EYFS this summer term we have been looking closely at amazing animals, and we were very fortunate to have 'Roaming Reptiles' come into school and talk about their amazing animals. The children learnt all about where the animals originate from and how they live in the wild. The children were very brave and held each animal with enthusiasm and care. It certainly has been a highlight of our term so far!



Year 4

Year 4 had the best time on their residential at Oakerwood! They conquered their fears when they took on the high ropes and the rafting, they developed their cooking skills with the pizza making and worked on their team building as they solved challenges with their friends. It was a lovely few days for the children to spend time with their classmates and experiencing a little bit of independence. We loved seeing them achieve, learn and most importantly...have fun!



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Sports Day Successes

This month, the children had an absolute blast representing their houses during Sports Day. The field was a rainbow of yellow, red, green and blue T-shirts and flags as pupils paraded in with pride, accompanied by the ever-popular school mascot, Rory.

With super speed and determination, the children ran, jumped, and balanced eggs and spoons down the track, all in an effort to earn precious points for their house. They also worked hard as a team during their playground challenges—scoring basketball shots, dribbling with hockey sticks and even knocking down skittles in exciting bowling tasks.

From Reception right up to Year 6, every child gave it their all. Whether they were competing, cheering on their friends, or helping to organise equipment, the sense of community and teamwork was wonderful to see.

The atmosphere was electric, with cheers echoing across the field and plenty of smiles all round. Teachers and staff were incredibly proud of the children's enthusiasm, perseverance and sportsmanship throughout.

A huge well done to all our pupils for making Sports Day such a fantastic event—and thank you to the staff and families who helped make it so memorable!

Overall winners to be announced via the school twitter on Monday 7th July!



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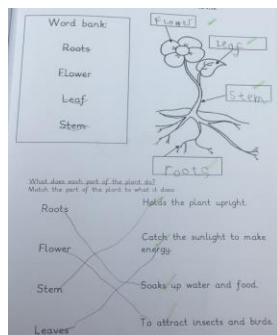
Year 2

This half term in our science lessons, Year 2 have been exploring the important topic of reducing, reusing and recycling. To support our learning, we went on an exciting trip to EnviroSort to see how recycling is sorted and processed in real life. We learned about the journey our recycling takes after it leaves our bins, and the children were full of thoughtful questions about how we can help reduce waste. One of the highlights was spotting familiar items—like yoghurt pots and cereal boxes—on the conveyor belts and thinking about how they could be reused or recycled into something new. From the safety of a large viewing platform, we were able to watch the busy facility in action. The children were fascinated as they saw huge machines and conveyor belts separating different materials like plastic, paper and metal. It was amazing to see how technology and people work together to sort items that might otherwise end up in landfill. Back at school, we followed up our trip by discussing what we had seen and thinking about ways we can reduce waste in our daily lives. The children shared fantastic ideas such as using reusable water bottles, creating art from recycled materials, and reminding their families what belongs in each recycling bin. It was a brilliant, hands-on way to deepen our understanding of recycling and how we can all make a difference. Well done, Year 2—you've shown great enthusiasm, curiosity, and care for our planet!



Year 1

Year 1 have been working so hard this past month that we don't even know where to begin! We feel incredibly proud of the efforts that the children have put into their phonics and how hard they have been practising at home too. Well done Year 1! In science, we have been learning about the different parts of a plant and the children enjoyed using their magnifying glasses to identify and look carefully at the roots, stem, leaf and flower. They were then able to explain what each part of the plant does. We also had a fantastic D.T day where we discussed, designed and created our very own windmills. The children thought carefully about how they would make the windmill spin in the wind as well as making it look decorative and sturdy. They created some fantastic final pieces and were very excited to take them home! These are but a few of the many wonderful things Year 1 have been getting up to and we are looking forward to many more exciting learning opportunities in the final few weeks of term.



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Year 5 – Enterprise Project

This month, Year 5 have embraced their inner entrepreneurs as part of an exciting enterprise project. With just £5 each, they were challenged to create their own businesses, designing logos, making products, and planning how to turn their small investment into a profit. They conducted market research, carefully considered costings, and found creative ways to produce high-quality items that could be made in quantity. Their products were then sold at the summer fayre, where their hard work truly paid off. The pupils showed fantastic teamwork, problem-solving, and business skills—raising an impressive profit for the PTFA. A huge well done to Year 5!



Year 6 Unleashed : Courage, Climbing, and Canoes!

Year 6 recently enjoyed an unforgettable residential trip to Malvern, setting off on the coach filled with anticipation, excitement, and just a few nerves. Over the course of three action-packed days, the children took part in a fantastic range of activities, including archery, canoeing, zip lining through the trees, and the much-loved king swing! A real highlight was climbing the Worcester Beacon, where the group were rewarded with breathtaking views and a huge sense of pride after completing the challenging hike in the heat. Throughout the trip, teamwork was outstanding, behaviour was exemplary, and every child returned with a greater sense of independence and confidence. Well done, Year 6 – we are so proud of all you've achieved!



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Holmer launches a new Instagram account

We are excited to announce the launch of our brand new Instagram account, - @holmeracademy - where we'll be sharing regular snapshots of pupils' learning, as well as highlights from exciting events and opportunities happening across the school. This platform will give you a vibrant window into daily school life and celebrate the achievements of our wonderful children. If this new way of sharing proves successful and well-received, we plan to gradually move away from using X (formerly known as Twitter) as our main channel for updates. We look forward to connecting with you there and hope you enjoy seeing what's happening in and around school!



Year 6 Unleashed : Courage, Climbing, and Canoes!

We are incredibly proud of our pupils who recently took part in a powerful Net Zero video, created in partnership with the Gloucester and Worcester Diocese as part of a joint project focused on achieving Net Zero by 2030. Our pupils spoke confidently, clearly, and passionately, sharing their heartfelt concerns about the future of our beautiful world. Their thoughtful contributions reflect the importance they place on protecting the environment and making a positive difference. You can watch the full video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S7y2cdXIWg>.



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This month our Christian value has been **Service**. Please discuss how your child can show this value in their day-to-day lives.

TALK ABOUT SERVICE TOGETHER...

Jesus was called the 'servant king'; his mission was to **serve** God and to **serve** all those people he met, through his teaching, his example and the way he led his life.

Who are the unsung heroes who **serve** us?

- at school
- at home
- in our clubs

How do you **serve** others?

- at school
- at home
- in your clubs

THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"There is more happiness in giving than receiving"

The words of Jesus recorded in Acts 20.35 - The Good News Bible



READ TOGETHER...

Queen Esther serves her people

When King Xerxes, the ruler of the mighty land of Persia, was looking for a wife, Mordecai immediately thought of his cousin, the wise and beautiful Esther. Mordecai's family was Jewish, but he warned Esther not to tell anyone about this as he knew that there were powerful people in the land who hated Jews. Mordecai took Esther to the palace gates to be presented to the king, and, sure enough, as soon as King Xerxes saw Esther he fell in love with her, and the humble Jewish girl became a queen.

Mordecai often sat by the palace gates hoping to hear snippets of news about his cousin. For some time, all seemed well. But Haman, a wicked and powerful man in the court of King Xerxes, became angry with Mordecai because he would not bow down and honour him. Haman hatched a cunning plan. He began to tell the King bad things about the Jews living in his land and eventually he persuaded Xerxes that all the Jews should be killed. Queen Esther was beside herself with grief. She loved her people very much but felt powerless to help them.

King Xerxes noticed how terribly sad his queen had become, and begged her to tell him why she was so upset. Esther said she would explain if he and Haman would come to a feast that she prepared the following evening. When the grand banquet was over King Xerxes asked once again. "My dear Esther, you promised to tell me the reason for your sorrow." Esther summoned all her courage in what might be her last act of **service**. She told the King about Haman's plan to kill all of the Jews, which would include herself. King Xerxes was furious at the prospect of losing his beloved and beautiful Esther and ordered Haman to be arrested.

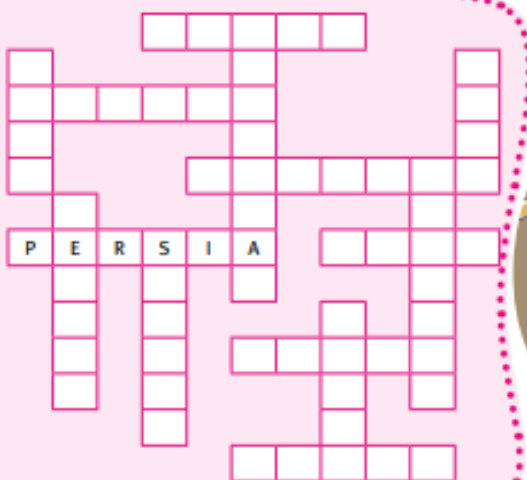
And so it was that Esther's name will be forever be remembered for her willingness to risk everything in the **service** of her people.

Bible story based on Book of Esther

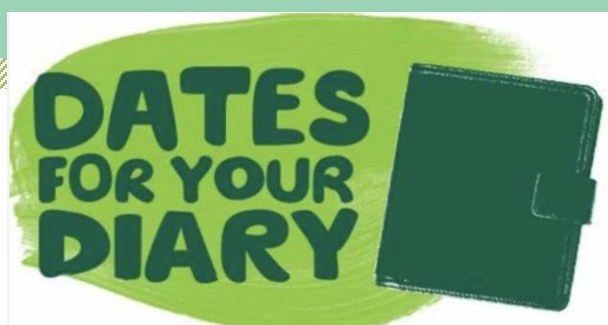


QUIZ Word Fit

- | | |
|----------|---------|
| ESTHER | FEAST |
| XERXES | GATES |
| HAMAN | KING |
| MORDECAI | QUEEN |
| JEWS | SERVICE |
| PERSIA | SORROW |
| CUNNING | WISE |



July 2025	Event
Thursday 3 rd	Transition/Move-up Day
Friday 4 th	Annual Reports sent home for YR-Y5
Friday 4 th	1P Class Worship
Monday 7 th	Y5/6 Sports Day
Wednesday 9 th	Y6 Production 6pm
Thursday 10 th	Y6 Production 6pm
Wednesday 16 th	Y6 Leavers' Family Event
Friday 18 th	Y6 Leavers' Service 2pm
Friday 18 th	End of Term



September 2025	Events
Wednesday 3 rd	Term Starts
Wednesday 3 rd	Y5 and Y2 start swimming lessons
Friday 12 th	Individual School Photos
Thursday 18 th	PTFA AGM
Thursday 25 th	PTFA Colour Run
Friday 26 th	Military Festival

“You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world.”