



# Holywell News



Issue No: 180  
May 2025

## *Headlines from Mr Simpson:*

It has been a short but busy half-term, crammed with lots of activities: we've had trips to 'Lifepath', to Newmarket Racecourse, and to France; we've celebrated VE Day; we've had our PSHE Day; we've had our annual Values Day; and Year 6 have been magnificent completing their SATs tests ... with many of them getting ready to go on a PGL adventure trip! ... and all this whilst doing wonderful work on a day-to-day basis and enjoying the sunshine!

**REMEMBER STUDENTS  
ARE BACK TO SCHOOL ON  
MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> June  
HAVE A GOOD HALF-TERM**



We have just had a fantastic and thought-provoking Values Day. Our Value of the Month is SERVICE and this year, we have all been reflecting on how we can 'conSERVE our planet'. Each subject area created a lesson around sustainability. Staff devised some creative and ingenious lessons:



- In English, we looked at single-use plastics and students wrote a persuasive speech to one of the top three polluter companies, urging them to take action and to act responsibly
- In Maths, students explored how Maths in Nature can help to develop the technology that we need to look after our environment. Mathematicians, scientists and engineers have looked to nature to help them understand the world around them and in turn that has inspired them to learn from nature to solve real world problems.



- Science had a lesson about the future of plastic, focussing on future alternatives such as biodegradable plastic - its advantages and disadvantages ... and getting to create some bioplastic!
- Geography explored Sustainable Fashion exploring the rise of 'fast fashions' and the impact this has on the planet and on the people who make the clothing.
- In History, we explored when in history was best for the human race and when was best for the planet ... all leading to students making pledges of what they can do to improve sustainability
- RE lessons explored the concept of stewardship – God made us all as custodians and stewards of the planet – how can we look after the earth and keep it safe?
- In Music, students discussed the effects of deforestation and watched a performance of a choir creating a rainforest rain storm with body percussion ... students were challenged to compose their own rainforest compositions in small groups using percussion instruments and body percussion.
- DT explored sustainable materials and, in particular, how to reduce packaging or use more sustainable materials for packaging.
- PE looked at the use of hard plastics in PE and students planned alternative lessons without equipment.
- Art got creative by reusing plastic bottles to create art installations.
- In MFL, we looked at types of transport and how to travel in an eco-friendly way; we also explored France and Germany's transport as they are leaders in sustainable transport (e.g. Germany's Bahn Card, France's high-speed rail network, cycle-friendly cities).
- In Drama, Hogwarts went green!!! The Ministry of Magic had reported severe environmental problems at Hogwarts: the Black Lake was polluted, the Forbidden Forest was disappearing, and magical creatures were endangered. The students devised a short scene with a magical solution to make Hogwarts more sustainable.
- PSHE lessons explored what sustainability means and students thought about "why does it matter?"

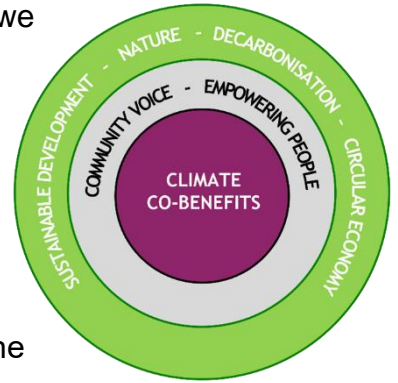
By the end of the day, students were all keen to do something different to help conserve our planet ... I'm sure they will all have come home wanting to get rid of all single-use plastics and wanting to think more ethically about sweet and biscuit wrappers! Some simple swaps could make a huge difference ... eg. a biodegradable or metal water-bottle can be refilled and refilled (much better than single-use plastic bottles); replacing bags full of snacks in individual wrappers with lunchboxes brimming with fruit, healthy snacks ... or even portions of corn or potato snacks instead of packets of crisps. What will you pledge to do as a family?







In our worship, we have also been exploring how we can conserve our planet and we have been using the materials devised by The Diocese of At Albans. We started with the creation story and took time to have 5-minutes of 'WOW'. Interpretations of the Creation Story led to a debate as to whether we are 'Earth Tourists' or "Earth Pilgrims" – Earth Tourists exploit the planet, whilst Earth Pilgrims are part of the planet ... do you have the heart and generosity to be an Earth Pilgrim?



## Holywell September 2026 ... Transition to Secondary

Next year, 2025-2026 will be our last year as a Middle School and we are looking forward to welcoming our final cohort of new Year 5 students. From September 2026, we will start our transition to becoming a Secondary School. We are looking forward to this exciting development in the school's history. We are hoping that many of our current Year 5, 6 and 7 students

stay with us ... from Cranfield, Wootton, Marston, in other nearby villages or beyond.

Staff are hard at work preparing for the change and we still have lots to do in preparation ... whilst still ensuring that our current students continue to get the best support they can.

Particularly for our current Year 7 students, we are organising an information evening after half-term for parents about the transition and all of the associated issues - everything from practical issues (such as applications/places/transport) to our curriculum plans and site development plans. This is all new territory for us and we are still in discussion with Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and the Diocese about a number of issues - transport has been particularly challenging ... both authorities have been very clear on their policy of only providing transport to 'the nearest school'. We are very keen to work with families and local bus companies to find a solution. There are still lots of things to be put in place and we know that there are lots of questions – if you have specific questions, please let us know what information you need so that we can answer all of your queries (drop an email to [office@holywellschool.co.uk](mailto:office@holywellschool.co.uk) ... and watch out for a date for an information evening after half term.

Thank you for your continued support and we wish all students a restful half-term break.

*MG Simpson*

Mike Simpson  
Headteacher

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

2nd June	Students return to school after half term
1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 6 PGL Trip
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Sport Day 11am – 1pm
27 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 6 Harry Potter Trip
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Year 8 Take-your-child-to-work Day
1 <sup>st</sup> – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Year 4 transition students in Holywell Year 8 students to Wootton Upper School
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Year 7 Language Festival
10 <sup>th</sup> July	Dance Showcase
15 <sup>th</sup> July	Summer Concert
17 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 8 Awards Evening
18 <sup>th</sup> July	Charity Fayre
21 <sup>st</sup> July	Year 8 End of year trip
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	End of Summer Term

## **Term Dates for Next Academic Year 2025 - 2026**

<b>AUTUMN TERM 2025</b> <b>Closure Days:</b> Monday 1st September and Tuesday 2nd September 2025 <b>Term Starts for all students:</b> Wednesday 3rd September 2025 <b>Half term:</b> Monday 27th October - Friday 31st October 2025 <b>Closure Day:</b> Friday 28th November 2025 <b>Term Ends:</b> Friday 19th December 2025 <b>SPRING TERM 2026</b> <b>Term Starts for all students:</b> Monday 5th January 2026 <b>Half term:</b> Monday 16th February - Friday 20th February 2026 <b>Term Ends:</b> Friday 27th March 2026 <b>SUMMER TERM 2026</b> <b>Closure Day:</b> Monday 13th April 2026 <b>Term Starts for all students:</b> Tuesday 14th April 2026 <b>May Day:</b> Monday 4th May 2026 <b>Half term:</b> Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May 2026 <b>Term Ends:</b> Friday 17th July 2026 <b>Closure Day:</b> Monday 20th July 2026
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***Dates are correct at the time of printing. Please note that dates may differ from other schools.***

## **If your child is away from school**

**A telephone call, email or WEDUC notification  
is required on the  
first day of absence, before 8.30 am**

## **WEDUC Communications from School**



**Please note that we use WEDUC to communicate with families.**

**We STRONGLY RECOMMEND that at least one parent / carer downloads the WEDUC app.**

If parents/carers need an enrolment code, please email Miss Watson on [awatson@holywellschool.co.uk](mailto:awatson@holywellschool.co.uk) who will be able to supply one. Thank you.

## **Attendance and Holidays in Term Time**

Parents / Carers should be aware that under current government guidelines **we can NOT give permission for any holiday in term time.** Holidays will be classed as **unauthorised absence** for your child. There may, however, be events that a student takes part in out of school which require him / her to miss a school day – we will continue to consider that sort of request. However, it is clear that the government and external authorities will want a very persuasive argument for us to be allowed to record any absence as a permitted time out of school. **No leave will be authorised during the first two weeks of the school year or during exam periods.**

**Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence are required to fill in a Leave of Absence Application Form at least 4 weeks in advance of the planned absence** and before making any travel arrangements (available from the school office and to download from the school website). We always take a reasonable, supportive approach to requests (especially with regard to fines) however, taking 'the odd day' here and there can have a HUGE impact on learning.

## **Emergency Contact Details**

**Please remember to inform the school office of any changes to your contact details.** This includes **change of your home address, telephone numbers** (even temporary changes) **and doctors' details.** This is very important, as it enables us to reach you in case of emergency. Thank you.

## MFL News

### Our MFL Monthly Celebrities

Let's start with congratulations and a huge WELL DONE to our May 2025 MFL celebrities



### Year 8 Languages Residential Trip to France

Our recent Year 8 residential trip to Château du Broutel in Rue, France, from the 6th to 9th May 2025, was a fantastic success and a memorable experience for all involved.



Accompanied by Mrs Morey, Mrs Shirvington, Mr Smith, and Mrs Sillett, 35 excited students embarked on their journey early Tuesday morning. Spirits were high as the coach departed Holywell School. After arriving in France, the group settled into the beautiful grounds of Château du Broutel, where they were warmly welcomed and enjoyed an evening of team games to kick-start their adventure.

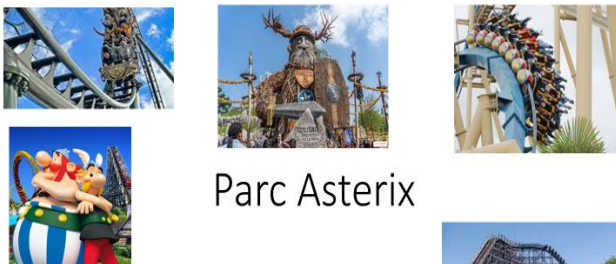


## Berck-Sur-Mer



Day two offered cultural immersion with a visit to the traditional market in Berck-sur-Mer, giving students a chance to practise their French and explore local delights.

The afternoon brought a delightful experience at a local boulangerie, where students watched a bread-making demonstration and sampled fresh French croissants. The day concluded with a lively disco, bringing lots of laughter and dancing.



## Parc Asterix

Thursday was all about excitement and thrills with a full day at Parc Astérix, a theme park filled with rollercoasters and attractions inspired by the famous French comic series. It was undoubtedly a highlight, with students returning to the Château full of stories and smiles.



Before heading home on Friday, the group made a fascinating stop at a snail farm. Students discovered the fascinating world of heliciculture: the farming of snails. They learned about the snail's life cycle, habitat needs, and how these tiny creatures are raised for food and cosmetics.

A big **THANK YOU** to the parents who supported this enriching trip, and to the students and staff who made it such a success.

We look forward to more adventures ahead!

## Arabic competition



A huge well done to Yasmin, Elyas, and Thamer in Year 7 who proudly represented our school in The Arabic Teachers' Council of London and Southern England competition!

They were a true credit to the school — demonstrating outstanding dedication, effort, and passion. The organisers were extremely impressed and full of praise for their performance.

We are so proud of them and can't wait to hear the results. Winners will be announced in June.

### **How Can Parents/Carers support language learning at home?**

By incorporating these simple habits listed below, parents/carers can make language learning more interactive, enjoyable, and effective at home! ✈

☑ **Make Vocabulary Stick** – Encourage your child

to use flashcards, apps like Quizlet, or sticky notes around the house to reinforce new words.

🎧 **Immerse in Listening** – Suggest listening to podcasts, music, or watching TV shows in French/German to improve comprehension and pronunciation.

🗣 **Practice Speaking** – Engage in simple conversations using basic phrases, even if you are not fluent. Consistent practice builds confidence!

🌐 **Use Online Resources** – Support learning with platforms like Duolingo, BBC Bitesize, or other language-learning websites.

📖 **Encourage Reading** – Borrow or buy books, magazines, or graded readers in French/German to make reading enjoyable and accessible.

📅 **Create a Study Routine** – Set aside regular time for French/German homework and revision to maintain consistency.

🎬 **Explore Culture** – Watch films, documentaries, or YouTube channels like *Easy French* / *Easy German* to connect language with real-world contexts.

❓ **Be a Quizmaster** – Help your child review vocabulary, grammar rules, or key phrases by quizzing them in a fun and engaging way.

### **Duolingo**



duolingo

NETFLIX

All French and German students have access to Duolingo. Their username and password details are recorded at the front of planners. We encourage students to access the app regularly to further develop their foreign language skills. Duolingo is an app and website that uses a gamified approach to language learning, with lessons that incorporate translating, interactive exercises, quizzes, and stories.

### **Watching Movies & Shows**

Netflix, Amazon Prime or any other streaming service offer a variety of French and German films and shows with subtitles, helping language learners absorb the language naturally. Start watching your favourite films or shows with English subtitles, then switch to French/German subtitles, and gradually move to watching without them.



## Year 5 Lifepath

Our Year 5 students had a wonderful time at Lifepath in Elstow this week. We were learning about the life of John Bunyan and his literary classic 'Pilgrim's Progress' to support with our RE work on pilgrimage. Our students were fully immersed in a re-enactment of key moments in his life along with singing and dancing to catchy tunes! There were some great activities for the children ranging from bell ringing, calligraphy and creative prayer to a tour of the moot hall, a guided visit to the church and a session learning about and playing traditional games such as splat the rat and tug of war! Everyone had a great day thanks to Bridgebuilder Trust!



## Art

For Value's Day our young artists recycled single use plastic (SUP) bottles into this incredible sculpture, inspired by the artist Dale Chihuly. We focused on the huge process that goes into creating one single bottle that may only be used for one minute and the impact of SUP's on our environment. Together, we can make a change; refusing, reusing and recycling plastics. And of course...turning it into ART!



## PE Department News

### PE Clubs Timetable - Summer 2<sup>nd</sup> Half Term 2025

	13:05-13:35	13:35 - 14:05	15:45-16:45
Mon	Y7/8 Mixed Athletics (SM/ES/ME) - Field		Y5/6 Mixed Dodgeball (MK) - Sports Hall
Tues	Y7/8 Boys Rounders (ME/ZI) - Field Y5 Basketball (JU) - Sports Hall	Y7/8 Girls Sport & Wellbeing (ES) - Sports Hall	Athletics Fixtures
Weds	Y5/6 Mixed Athletics (ME/CSI/ZI) - Field		Rounders Fixtures Cricket Fixtures
Thurs	Y5/6 Mixed Badminton (MK) - Sports hall	Y5/6 Mixed Rounders (MK) - Field	Rounders Fixtures Cricket Fixtures
Fri	Y7/8 Girls Rounders (CSI/MK) - Field	Y5/6 Mixed Cricket (MK) - Field	All Years Mixed Badminton (MK) - Sports Hall

#### Y6 Boys football

After a fantastic effort to reach the final, our Year 6 boys are waiting to play their District Cup final match...hopefully news of a victory will be in next half-terms newsletter.

#### Y8 Boys Football

Following victory in their semi-final against a strong Goldington team, the Year 8 boys took on Mark Rutherford in the District Cup final. Following an extremely close match, victory was achieved following a last minute winner from Alfie S, making the final score 2-1. Massive congratulations to the whole squad!!



#### Athletics

KS3 are in the process of finishing of their league season with the potential to still reach the final at Bedford athletics track. However, they have also competed in the District Athletics Championships against schools not only from our Partnership but also from all over Bedford. Collectively there were some excellent performances as well as individual victories for Joshua M (200m) and Poppy B (Long Jump), both in Year 7 – well done!

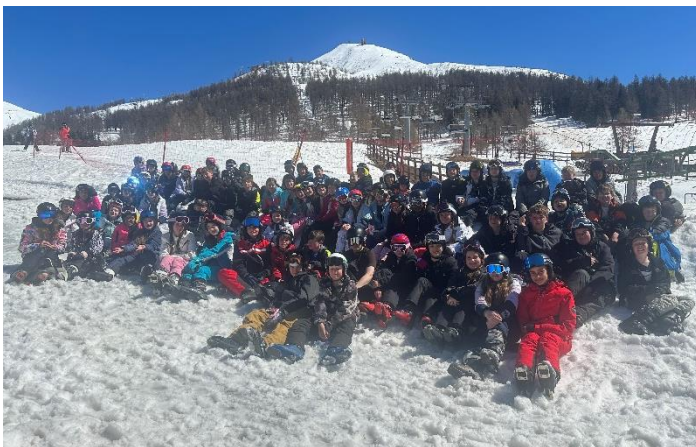




### **Ski Trip**

On 5<sup>th</sup> April we took 76 students from years 7&8 Skiing in Italy. We had a fantastic 5 days on the slopes where all staff and students had so much fun! We saw some amazing skiing and even more spectacular falls but the best time was had by all! One evening we drove across the border to France and had delicious crepes, we also explored the town of Sestriere and took part in one of Mr Jones's famous quizzes and escape rooms.

The students all behaved impeccably and we made some fantastic memories that will last a life time. Many thanks to staff who gave up their Easter break to make this trip possible.



### **London Mini Marathon**

This year we were successful in gaining 25 spaces in the 1 mile mini London marathon, a first for Holywell! We took students from years 5, 6 and 7 down to London on the Saturday before the London Marathon. Students ran the last mile of the course and crossed the finish line that was used in the actual marathon on the Sunday.

Throughout the day 18000 School children aged from 5-12 years old took part from across England. Students ran in waves of 300 children and a huge congratulations goes to Josh Massey who came first in our wave!

All students who took part showed the School values and it was so loved to have so many parents and family members along the course to support us while we ran. A huge thank you goes to Mrs King, Miss Storey and Mrs Burke who ran the course alongside myself and the students and also Mr Eames for his support along the route.



It was a fantastic experience to be part of and we hope that we will be successful in gaining ballot places for 2026!



**Please do make us aware of any sporting success your child has outside of school – they could feature in the next newsletter!!**

### **Sports Day – Inter House Athletics Competition**

Our annual Sports Day is scheduled for **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June, from 11:15 – 13:05**. Students are invited to represent their Houses at traditional Athletics events. Due to the sheer number of events and students taking part, 'Field events' take place the week before, during lunchtime. If you wish to watch your child competing then they will need to sign up to events that take place on Sports Day itself. More info will be given to students and parents/carers after half-term.

As always, we would like to thank all those students who have attended clubs and represented the school this half-term. We would also like to thank all the parents, carers and spectators for your continued support of the department; it is much appreciated!

## Hydration Guidelines

At Holywell we encourage students to keep hydrated and we recognise the importance of drinking water regularly through the day.

### Why is water important?

Water makes up approximately 80% of the brain and is an essential element in neurological transmissions. Poor hydration adversely affects a child's mental performance and learning ability. Dehydration is simply not having enough water in your body. Mild dehydration may include tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and ability to concentrate. Mental performance including memory, attention and concentration can decrease by about 10 per cent, once thirst is felt and continues to decrease as dehydration increases. Thirst is usually felt when dehydration results in 0.8 - 2 per cent loss of body weight lost due to water loss. As children don't always recognise the early stages of thirst, they are at risk of becoming dehydrated. Even mild dehydration can make children irritable, and can cause tiredness, headaches, lack of concentration, reduced mental performance and dry skin. Water consumption also has an immediate alerting and revitalising effect. The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well-hydrated throughout each day (ideally from a personal water bottle within arm's reach).

### Organisation in school

- All students should have a water bottle (labelled) and they are encouraged to take regular sips during the day.
- Bottles must be anti-spill bottles - **NOT GLASS** - with sports tops.
- Water bottles should be carried separately from school books and library books.
- Water bottles are not allowed near electrical equipment.
- Water bottles and drinks must be for personal use only.
- Teachers have the final word in lessons as to when and if they can be used.
- Bottles must contain still WATER! Flavoured still water or sugar-free squash is also an acceptable alternative, however, water is best! (Fizzy drinks – including sparkling water drinks or power drinks – are not allowed in school.)

## Sunhats and Sun Protection Cream

Please ensure that your children are equipped for any hot weather with a sunhat (baseball cap style) and sun protection cream. Students can bring sun cream into school, but must be able to apply it themselves – staff are unable to apply it for them.

**Students are encouraged to have water bottles and sun hats with them during P.E. lessons.**

## Hairstyles, Make-up and Jewellery

Please remember that **extreme haircuts and colours** are not part of our school uniform!

- **HAIRCUTS MUST NOT BE SHORTER THAN A NUMBER 2**
- **'CUT IN' DESIGNS (INCLUDING LINES) ARE NOT PERMITTED**
- **DYED HAIR IS NOT PERMITTED**

If you are in any doubt about the acceptability of a hairstyle, please contact the school beforehand.

**Make-up** (including **nail varnish**) is not allowed.

**Jewellery:** No necklaces or bracelets are permitted unless they are part of your religious faith. One plain ring is allowed. Earrings - plain studs, only one in each earlobe - these must be removed for PE/Games lessons. Nose studs are not permitted, except for religious purposes. To avoid loss and any dangers or accident to the wearer or another student, expensive items of jewellery must **not** be worn.

## Summer Uniform

During the summer term, students have the following two options re: uniform:

- a) **Either continue to wear blazers, white shirts and ties.**
- b) **Wear a white polo shirt (without a tie) and a blazer**

**Shorts:** School shorts are now an option all throughout the year ... however, we know that they are more popular in the Summer Term ... so just a reminder about style and length: The length should be just above the knee to just below the knee. The shorts must be plain grey tailored shorts (ie. no combat style shorts, skinny / cycling shorts, or shorts with pockets further down the leg; no designs / appliqué or stripes; no denims, cord, linen, combats or cropped trousers allowed).



- **As with school shorts, skirts must be pleated and just above the knee to just below the knee in length.**
- **Socks must be plain grey, black or white.**
- **Shoes are required as part of our school uniform.**
- **PE Kit to be worn on days when PE lessons are scheduled.**

## No Aerosols Please

Please remember that aerosols / sprays (deodorants, hairsprays, etc.) are NOT ALLOWED TO BE USED IN SCHOOL.

We have students and staff with allergies to the gases and spraying such aerosols can cause severe allergic / medical reactions. Please be considerate.

## YEAR 6 SATs – Well done Year 6!



Year 6 completed their KS2 SATs tests on the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> May. They were very thoughtful, resilient and they all did their very best. Whatever the outcome of the tests, we are proud of our students and the progress they have made.

In preparation for the SATs, students designed Mind Monsters in their Art lessons. These Mind Monsters were representations either of their SATs feelings OR representations of their protector monster ... something to keep them safe and happy through the tests. Since the tests in English and Maths,

they have been working on their English writing which teachers assess (and which is moderated by a team of external experts). All results will be available before the end of the school year.





# Holywell Safeguarding Newsletter

## MEET THE TEAM

May 2025  
Issue 6



**Mrs Stewart-McAlpine**  
Deputy Head & DSL



**Mrs Johnson**  
Family Support / Deputy DSL



**Miss Collins**  
Student Support / Assistant DSL

Welcome to our Safeguarding Newsletter.

We are hopeful you will find it useful.

The Safety and Wellbeing of our students are a priority to us! We hope that we can connect you to local and national support, if you need it for you and your families.

Our focus this edition of our newsletter is signposting activities and holiday clubs available during school holidays – both to give children some fun structure during their free time and support parents to have a bit of a break.

If you have a topic you would like us to cover, or you are in need of support, information or advice, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the team!



### Fun for Young People

offers both after school and holiday clubs in Bedfordshire during school holidays. (bursaries are available, please speak to F4YP staff).

<https://www.f4yp.org/holidayclubs>



**BARRACUDAS**  
ACTIVITY DAY CAMPS

Barracudas run holiday activity camps in Bedford. This year they are offering lots of physical and sport-based activities – they're based at the Bedford Girls School where there is lots of green space and a range of sporting facilities available.

This year they are also offering a short Minecraft coding course (see site for prices and details).

<https://www.barracudas.co.uk/camps/bedford/>



Autism Bedfordshire offers Summer Activity Schemes (or S.A.S) across Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Bedford Borough for both children with higher level support needs where there is 1:1 support within a group setting (if needed) and groups for young people with lower level needs.

Theses schemes operate on a first come first served basis.

<https://www.autismbedfordshire.net/support-for-children/summer-scheme-2/>







Three of Holywell's teams,  
**EAL, SEND** and **Safeguarding**  
are running  
some coffee  
mornings in the coming weeks –  
why not come  
along and speak with staff  
and other parents  
over coffee and treats?



YOU'RE INVITED!

# COFFEE MORNING

Come along for a warm drink, a friendly chat,  
and a chance to connect with other parents  
and staff.



19th May, 16th June, 7 July



9:30am - 11:00am



Holywell School

Whether you're dropping in for 10 minutes  
or staying for the hour, we'd love to see you  
there!

Let's come together to support each other  
and build our school community.





# Holywell Support this Half Term

At Holywell we have been fortunate in accessing some wellbeing support for our students from outside agencies both one-to-one and in small groups.

Holywell have been delighted to welcome back CHUMS who have just started a round of their TACTICS program, with a group of Year 5 students supporting emotions and coping skills through sports, particularly football!

The Link2Change organization just completed a 6 week set of sessions with a group of our Key Stage 3 students this half-term.

This intervention had a focus on healthy relationships and staying safe on social media.



We have been lucky to continue accessing support for students via the Boxing Saves Lives organization.

A small group of our Year 8 students have just begun a series of sessions with a qualified boxing coach this half term

Holywell School is now LIVE across Social Media Pages



@HolywellCoE



Holywell School Bedfordshire



@Holywellcoe



Please like/follow to receive updates



[www.holywellschool.co.uk](http://www.holywellschool.co.uk)