

Christmas Newsletter 2025



Key Dates for next half-term

5th January	Inset Day
6th January	All students return to school
14th January	Year 9 Options Evening
22nd January	Year 9 Parents Evening – ONLINE
2nd February	Year 9 Options Deadline
5th February	Year 10 Parents Evening – ONLINE
13th February	Last day of term
23rd February	All students return to school



Year 9 #ResilienceandResponsibility

What a fantastic term for our year 9 students, they have certainly fitted into our Ferndown family well. So many of them have consistently demonstrated the 'Hicks values', shown amazing resilience and responsibility and have immersed themselves in school life. I am super proud of this 'Turtley' fabulous year group and I am certainly looking forward to next term and finding out what GCSE subjects they are thinking of choosing.

My top students for Attitude to Learning and being 'Turtley' awesome this term are: **Ellie G, Liam W, Charlie F, Adam W, Bethany T and Rosie B.**

Mrs Hicks



LET'S SHELL-EBRATE!





Year 10 – News from the Hive

Wow this term has flown by and it feels hard to believe that we are about to enter 2026!

Year 10 have continued to impress me with their BEE values. Our Hive has been buzzing with success, bravery, resilience and enthusiasm. We have definitely started the year strong in the classroom, with students working hard on their GCSE subjects. They have been **BRAVE** by taking risks, putting their hands up and having a go even when it was hard. They have been **ENTHUSIASTIC** in their lessons, asking lots of questions, diving into their GCSE subjects and there have been lots of examples of students being **ENCOURAGING** to each other – whether this is getting a friend to go along to a club, helping someone or asking someone who is on their own if they want to sit with them at lunch. This makes them a true Barrett Bee and I am so proud to have celebrated so many students showing these values already.

The year 10 team want everyone in our Hive to be kind and do the right thing, just because it is right, so our Hive is happy and thriving together. This year group are so awesome, whenever they are set a challenge, they rise and I hope they will continue to do this. I bee-lieve in all of them and know that they will smash it!

My top Bee's from this term are:

Elliott S – top positive points scorer with 356 points so far, Elliott has really matured over the summer, coming back to us with the most fantastic attitude to his studies, his behaviour has been impeccable since September, and he definitely gets the award for most improved student.

Verity H – not only did she average an ATL of 1 – which means an 'excellent' ATL in EVERY subject, Verity is the most helpful, friendly and amazing student. Nothing is too much trouble, she works incredibly hard in all her lessons, and her BEE values make her an invaluable member of our Hive.

Lily B – always a pleasure to teach, excelling in her subjects and her recent tests have shown her BEE values shine – incredible success in English and smashing down those barriers Lil, proving your inner strength and hard work will pay off, well done!

Oshith G-R – one of our most polite, helpful and hard-working students Oshith is a pleasure and asset in our Hive. He is always a pleasure to talk to and cannot do enough to help his peers or teachers. Oshith always asks how your day is going and always wishes you well and it's this ethos that encapsulate our BEE ethos. Keep shining Oshith, you make the world a better place!

On behalf of the whole year 10 team, I want to wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas holiday and a wonderful New Year, see you in 2026!

Kind regards,

Rachael Barrett – Head of Year 10





Year 11 Autumn Term Update

We are delighted with the way Year 11 have started their GCSE year and have built on the fantastic progress made at the end of Year 10, both academically and personally.

From an academic standpoint, Year 11 have continued to impress staff with their commitment to bettering themselves ahead of the recent mock exams. Many subject staff have reported record-breaking numbers at their weekly revision sessions, while we have also been thrilled to see many go above and beyond by organising extra time with staff to work through knowledge, skills and practice, alongside their existing commitments. Consequently, it's no surprise that staff have been sharing many positive comments with the team regarding the level of engagement from our cohort.

Alongside this, there have been a wide array of activities involving Year 11, including the History trip to London, a number of guest speakers from our Boys' programme, visits from external post-16 providers and even our own mock results assembly, in which students collected an envelope containing their results to replicate the GCSE results day experience.

On the topic of mocks and results, we are planning to share more information with the students about quadrants and their current situation with ATLs and progress against their DfE targets. On the right are the names of our brightest diamonds who are leading the way in their attainment and their ATL. For those that aren't where they want to be yet, there has been (and will continue to be) a focus on reflection, self-improvement, and making incremental improvements, while staff will also be shaping their next steps for the new year.

As we approach Spring term, which will be the last full term of their main school careers, we ask that you continue to be as supportive and communicative as possible with your child and with the Year 11 team, so that we can continue to strive for the best possible outcomes for each and every member of the year. Things are only going to get more exciting the further into the year we go and we can't wait!

We hope you have a relaxing and wonderful Christmas break.

Best wishes,
Mr R. Howard and the Year 11 team

Top Progress	Top ATLs
Maisie S.	Harriet B-W.
Daisy P.	Smaranda R.
Matthew H.	Toby D.
Ebony G.	Joe G.
Elizabeth L.	Amelia S.
Amelia S.	Tom B.
Harriet B-W.	Joshua E.
Kiera C.	Daisy P.
Hannah B.	Erica R.
Bella B.	Onaya P.



Christmas Dinner

Our amazing kitchen team served over 300 Christmas dinners, bringing festive cheer to our school community.

It was so lovely seeing our students sat together, chatting, laughing and enjoying the festive spirit.





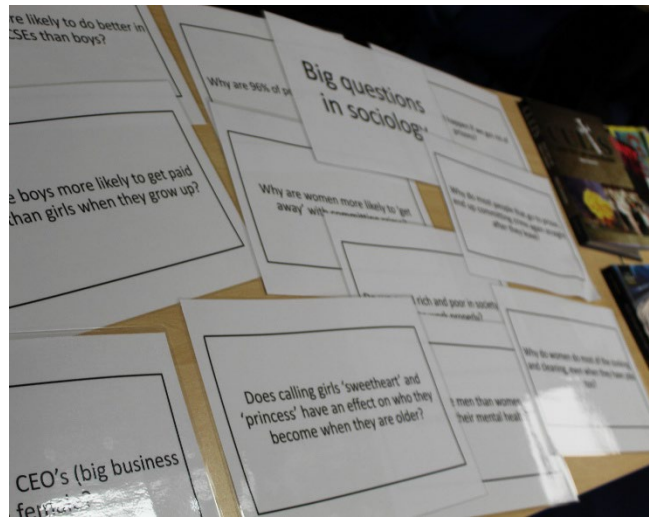
FUS Christmas Concert

The 2025 Ferndown Upper School Christmas Concert was a huge success. A great variety of music, ranging from traditional carols, original arrangements, new pop songs and some good old rock'n'roll. Students' performances filled the church with joy and fun, with students from all year groups performing. This year marked the first time a concert was directed by a student, Zack in Year 13.



St Mary's Church was filled with the biggest audience we have had so far and we thank the church for welcoming us for another year and supporting this great Ferndown Upper School event.





Sixth Form Open Evening

A huge thank you to all of the students and parents who joined us for our Sixth Form Open Evening – it was brilliant to see so many of you and share what makes our Sixth Form such a supportive and inspiring place to learn.

Applications are now open.



MP Visit – Simon Hoare

- Our Year 12 Politics students were fortunate to have the MP for North Dorset, Mr Simon Hoare visit on the 14th of November.
- Mr Hoare gave the students an insight into life as an MP, as well as some of the roles that he has performed as an MP over the last decade.
- The students had a fantastic and in-depth discussion with Mr Hoare, exploring some of the challenges that MPs face, but also gaining insight from an experienced constituent MP about contemporary issues facing the world and British Politics today.



A level Biology Live



On Friday 21 November, we took twenty sixth form students to see A Level Biology live in London.

They had the chance to see some of the top scientists in the UK speak about their work, including using thermal camera to spot sign of stress in captive animals, why laughter is contagious, how everyone in the UK is descended from royalty and how obesity can as inheritable as height.



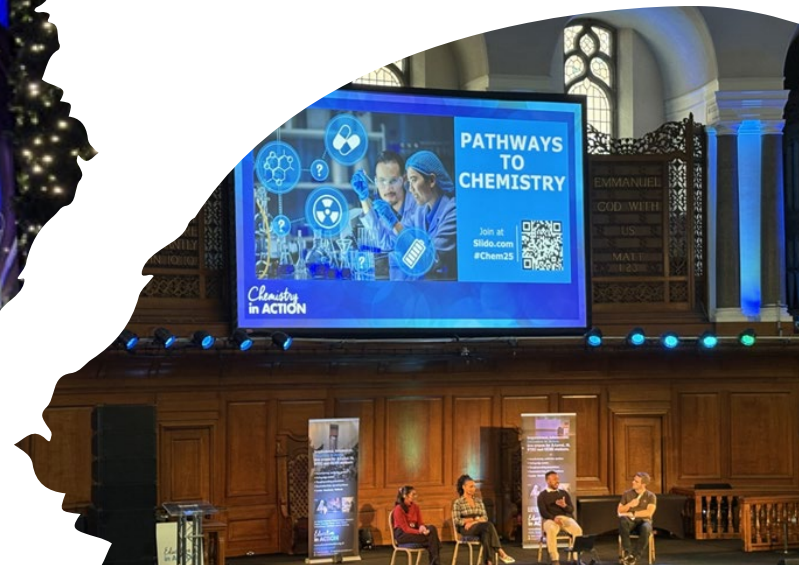
Chemistry Trip to London

13 Year 12 students visited London on Wednesday last week to hear lectures on The Role of Metals in Modern Medicines, Can Nuclear Science Change the World and When the Drugs Stop Working.

They explored different pathways into becoming research sciences, both in the workplace and at university.

After the lectures, the students headed to Oxford Street to see the Christmas lights and this year's Selfridges window displays - each inspired by a different Disney movie.

Can you guess the films?



Year 11 History Trip to London

50 students, 2 nights and a jam-packed itinerary exploring History, Science and culture!

Students were fortunate enough to visit The Imperial War Museum, Convent Garden, Globe Theatre, Golden Hinde, Hamilton, Millennium Bridge and the Old Operating Theatre.

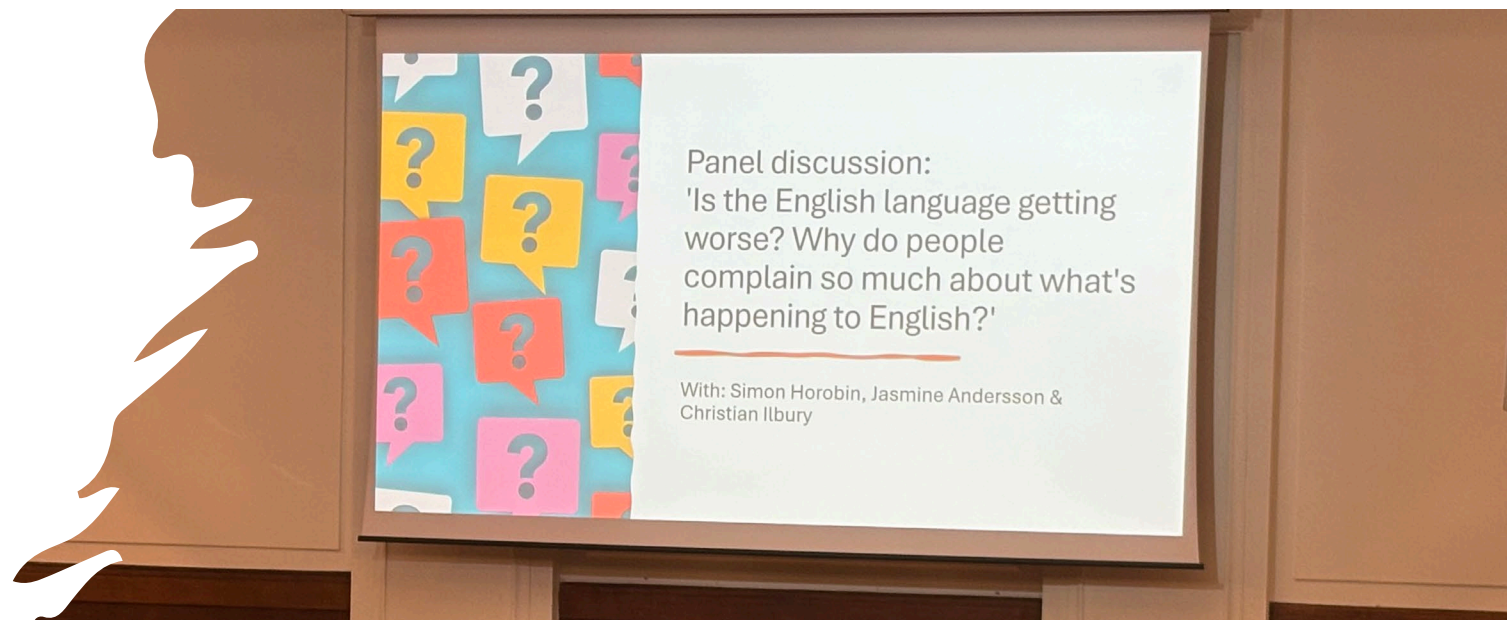


A Level – English Language Conference

Our Year 12 and Year 13 A Level English Language students attended an EMC conference in London this half-term.

This gave our students the experience to listen to accredited experts in their field, as well as getting some fantastic studies for their future exam answers.

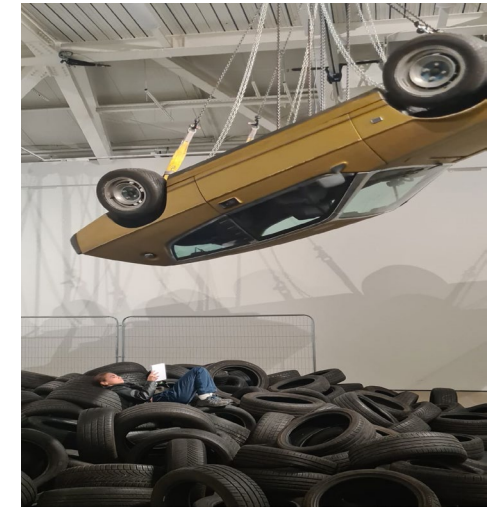
It was a brilliant day, and we look forward to taking advantage of this opportunity again in the future!



Level 4 Foundation Art, Design & Media practice: London 2025

Marie Antoinette style, V&A

From Tracey to Turner, Hockney to Hirst our undergraduate diploma art students enjoyed a magical mystery tour of London's thriving art scene. Covering a wealth of art movements and historical periods - museums and galleries visited included Tate Britain and Modern, Saatchi, National Portrait Gallery, Taylor Wessing Photography, V&A, Hayward Gallery, British Museum, Welcome Collection and the Barbican.



British Museum

Alan Kaprow: Yard, The Long Now



Bobbi Essers: "Nothing makes me feel as good" 2025 Saatchi

Street Art, Brick Lane

Gilbert and George, Hayward Gallery

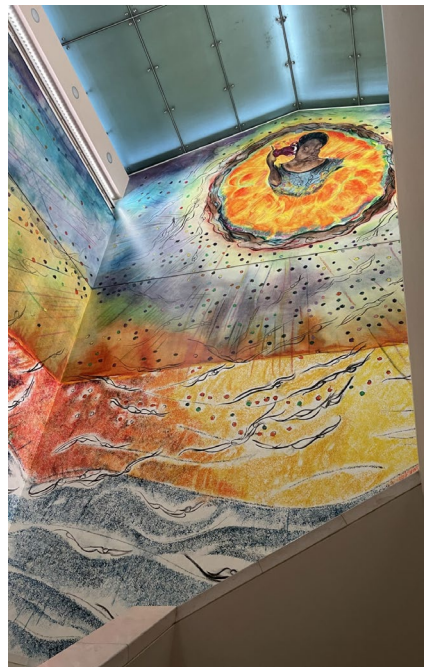
Banksy, Basquiat, Barbican

Yr. 14 Art students gained insights about the world around them through connections with artists who confront issues around corruption, greed, gender inequality, poverty, race, genocide, climate change, politics, colonialism, popular culture, global communities, Britain, migration, displacement, war, peace, protest, diversity, consumerism, life, death, sexuality, class and hierarchies across society.



Village Underground, Shoreditch

Chris Ofili: Requiem: Grenfell



Rafael Gomezbarros: House Taken



Turner & Constable at the Tate Britain



Inspiration in Action

Our Foundation Art and A Level Art & Textiles students were treated to an incredible workshop with artist Christine Allison – whose work has featured in national galleries and local press.

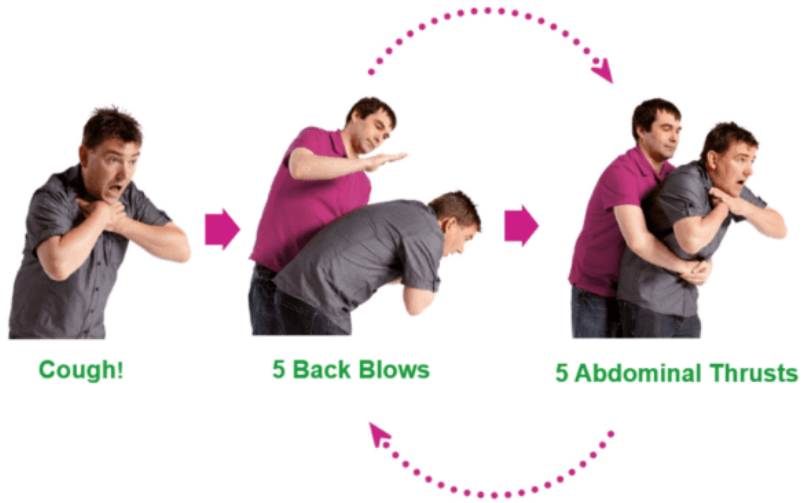
Taking inspiration from the Dorset Coast and found 'treasures' in Lyme Regis, Christine shared her creative journey and guided students through an experimental large-scale drawing session in mixed media.

Students loved exploring her sketchbooks and discovering the stories and techniques behind her stunning artwork.



Skill Section: D of E Award

First Aid



What Does DRABC Stand for?

D Danger

R Response

A Airway

B Breathing

C Circulation

On Monday 1st December 2025 our Duke of Edinburgh Year 10 students were put through their paces by Brett our first aid trainer and learnt a whole host of new first aid skills to aid them in their expedition training. They studied everything from CPR, to choking, to how to use a defibrillator correctly. The course was very practical and the group follow up with their minor injury training in January 2026.

Well done to all the 65 students involved – they learnt many new skills and should be proud of themselves!

Mrs Pemberton: Duke of Edinburgh Award Coordinator

Boys Programme

We were visited by Ben Mercer and Lachlan Moorhead (Commonwealth and UK Judo Gold Medallist) who discussed themes of masculinity and role models within literature.

Some of the boys in Year 10 and Year 11 were able to hear from both Ben and Lachlan about the impact that reading has had in their successes and careers as well as having an opportunity to reflect on literature that has been influential to them.





Proud to Support Taking Boys Seriously

Be a part of our award winning Boys' mentoring programme!

- We are looking for ex-students and members of the wider community who would be interested in being involved in an expansion of our Taking Boys Seriously mentoring programme.
- This programme has worked so well for many of our boys over the past few years and has helped to secure employment and support progress in many subject areas. This programme has a proven track record and is a really tangible way to improve the lives of young men.
- * Full training will be given alongside supervision but we ask if you are interested to get in contact before the beginning of January
- olivermcveigh@fernup.dorset.sch.uk
- deneenkenchington@fernup.dorset.sch.uk



Year 9 Boys Theatre Company

National statistics are highlighting the lack of male representation within the arts, with fewer boys entering into professions linked to them. At Ferndown, we have decided to combat these statistics by creating a company of 10x Year 9 boys who are going to be trained by leading professionals and have experiences across a range of theatre performances.

This group of boys then got to visit the West End and were given a backstage tour and had conversations with actors, directors and theatre technicians as well as being able to stand on a London West End Stage



Library Project

We're launching our Library Project to upgrade our school library into a welcoming, engaging space that encourages every student to pick up a book, explore new ideas and nurture a lifelong love of reading.

We've set up a fundraising page to help make this vision a reality, £10,000 is our goal and so far we've raised £870. Every donation will help transform the library for our students – more comfortable seating, updated shelving, inspiring décor, fresh books and digital resources.

Please visit our fundraiser here - <https://gofund.me/67cdfff0c>



PTFA

FERNDOWN Upper School

FERNDOWN Upper School SCHOOL PTFA NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the PTFA Newsletter!

Where Families, Teachers & Friends Come Together to Make School Awesome!

Hello Amazing Families, Teachers, and Staff! 🎉

Welcome to the first edition of our PTFA Newsletter—we're so happy you're here! The Parent, Teacher & Friends Association (PTFA) is all about bringing our school community together, having fun, and supporting our children every step of the way. This newsletter is your go-to place for all the exciting things happening at our school.



What is the PTFA?

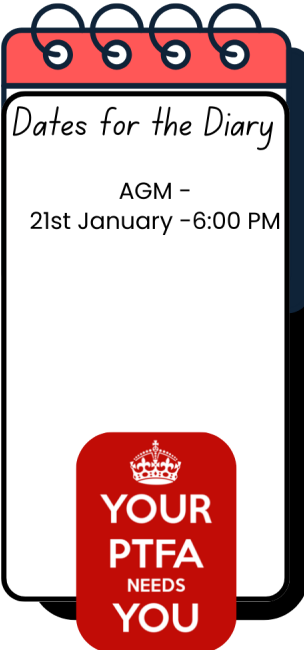
The PTFA is a friendly group of parents, carers, teachers, and friends who work together to:

- 📖 Support learning and enrichment activities
- 🎉 Fund fun events, resources, and experiences
- 👥 Build a welcoming, inclusive school community
- 🗣️ Give families a voice and help every child thrive

Unwanted Gifts Collection

Do you have any unwanted gifts lying around? We're collecting them now to use in fun raffles and prizes in the new year!

It's a great way to declutter and help raise funds for our school. Drop off your items at the school office or bring them to any PTFA event.



PTFA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

We'd love to see you at our AGM on 21st January at 6:00 PM.

This is a great opportunity to hear what we've been up to, share ideas, and help shape the year ahead.

Everyone is welcome—no experience needed! At the AGM, we'll be sharing and confirming some easy, flexible PTFA roles—all designed to fit around busy lives:

- ★ Chair – Helps guide meetings and keep things ticking along (with lots of support!)
- ★ Vice Chair – Lends a hand to the Chair and steps in when needed
- ★ Secretary – Takes simple notes and helps share information
- ★ Treasurer – Keeps an eye on funds and helps us make the most of our money
- ★ Event & Fundraising Helpers – Dip in and out when you can to help with fun events 🎉

Don't worry—no experience is needed, roles are shared, and you only give as much time as you're able.

If you'd like to learn more or have a friendly chat about what's involved, please contact us at PTFA@fernup.dorset.sch.uk—we're always happy to help and answer questions.

Want to join the fun? Reach out to us at PTFA@fernup.dorset.sch.uk or speak to any PTFA member—we promise we're friendly! 😊



Get Involved (It's Easy!)

You don't need lots of time—just a smile and a little enthusiasm!

Whether you help at an event, share ideas, donate a prize, or simply cheer us on, every bit counts.

Thank you for being part of our wonderful school family. We can't wait for a year full of smiles, laughter, and teamwork!

With big smiles,
The PTFA Team 🧡

Ferndown Upper School

Together, we make great things happen! 🌈



We are



**CHICKEN
& BLUES**®

School of the
Month

Those of you who've eaten at Chicken & Blues will know how absolutely yummy their Mama's home cookin' is!

We are their chosen School of the Month, so every member of our school community has been given **£10 off** their next order:

[FUS Unique Link](#)

You have until 25 December to sign up and the offer will be valid for 30 days from registration (you will be asked to download their app to redeem the reward so make sure you are using your phone when clicking the link). Voucher is for dine in or collection.

Restaurants are in Ashley Cross and Winton.

