

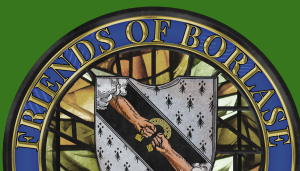


Headteacher's Letter: 17 October 2025

Upcoming Events

Mon 1 November	Return to school
Tue 4 November	Year 11-13 Careers trip to Sky Studios
Thurs 6 November	Year 11 English theatre trip to Macbeth, RSC Stratford-upon-Avon Year 12-13 Spanish Study day, British Film Institute - Almodóvar on the Edge Year 12-13 Drama to Hamlet Workshop, National Theatre
Fri 7 November	Year 13 Politics to the US Conference, British Library
Tue 11 November	Year 12 Politics to Westminster Remembrance Service Poppies and Badges will be available at school on 3 November
Wed 12 November	Year 12-13 French Study day, British Film Institute
Thurs 13 November	Year 12 EMC Literary Conference, Friends House, London
Fri 14 November	Year 12 Biology in Action, Emmanuel Centre, London The Friends of Borlase Hockey - Quiz Night - tickets
Sat 22 November	Year 10 German Exchange, German students in UK, 22-28 November
Wed 26 November	Year 10 German Exchange joint trip to Warner Bros Studios

Festive Fun at Borlase...



Friends of Borlase Wreath Making Workshop

The Friends of Borlase have organised a Christmas Wreath Making Workshop presented by Anya Lautenbach, author of *The Money-Saving Garden Year* ✨ 🌲

Join us in Centenary Hall for a wonderful evening of creativity and festive cheer on Wednesday, 19th November, 7-9pm. Your ticket includes:

- ✨ A glass of mulled wine or prosecco
- ✨ Mince pies and hot drinks
- ✨ Bar available to purchase extra drinks!

Tickets are £50 per person, available to purchase [here](#).

Borlase Boat Club Christmas Tree Sale

After last year's success, the Boat Club are once again offering 4' to 7'6" premium Norman Fir Christmas trees for sale. With 60 trees already secured and the largest size already sold out, you need to place your order [here](#) before October 30th.

Pick-up is from the Borlase car park on Oxford Road, 11am-2pm, on Sunday 7 December or local delivery is available for £5. Questions to swbgsxmas@gmail.com

Information and Reminders

Whole School

- **School Photographs are ready to be collected from reception:** If you have ordered anything from a print to a snow globe they are ready to be collected by either parents/carers or students any time up to 4.14pm during the week next week
- **Parent help with the 'Bar Mock Trial Competition':** If there are any parents who are qualified in the legal sector, as barristers or solicitors and are willing to help give up an hour or two of time to mentor a Borlase team for a national competition then please get in touch! rholmes@swbgs.com.
- **The Old Borlasian Club Curry Night:** For any parent who is also a former member of the school, the Old Borlasian Club is holding their annual curry night on 15 November. Tickets are available via Ticket Source on the Web Site [here](#)
- The window for late entry into year 8 and 9 will close on 31 October. From September 2026 we are increasing our Pupil numbers in year 9 by six places. Interested parties should visit the website [here](#) Enquiries should be directed to cocoates@swbgs.com
- **Social Media Safety Guide:** A quick look guide from The Children's Society [here](#)

Year 7

- A number of parents are still using year7transition2025@swbgs.com - this is now closed. Please do use parents@ or year7enquiries@swbgs.com
- An impressive opening half term for our new years 7s gathering nearly **3000** house points between them. Well done for all the hard work and enthusiasm that has got us to this point.
- **Meet the tutor afternoon** (25 November) letter
- and information on how to book your appointment will come out shortly after half term
- **PSHE** - After half term we will begin watching some episodes of **Ask Lara** - a BBC animation that was originally broadcast on the BBC2 Learning Zone. The episodes are only available now on YouTube and we may from time to time ask students to watch them at home for homework - we promote watching them downstairs so that you can have eyes on your child's screen - parents may enjoy watching episodes with their child. An example episode is linked in [here](#) to give you a flavour of the series.

Year 8

- **Uniform:** Year 8s should only come to school in kit on the days they have Dance (not Games or P.E).
- **Year 8 UKSA Isle Of Wight residential activity week, 30 June - 3 July 2026:** [letter](#)
- **Well done to S2** who have maintained a winning streak of 0 uniform infringements every week in assembly since the start of term! Massive team effort! Well done!

Year 9

- **GCSE and A Level Dance trip to Matthew Bourne's Red Shoes, 5 December 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Uniform reminder:** Year 9s should attend school in school uniform and changing Dance, P.E & Games

Year 10

- **GCSE and A Level Dance trip to Matthew Bourne's Red Shoes, 5 December 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Year 10 theatre trip to A Christmas Carol, 9 December 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Year 10 German exchange 2025/26:** Please attend a briefing giving full details about the exchange on **Tuesday 4 November at 5.00 - 5.45 pm** in the Stuart Lever Room
- **Support your Child's Mental Health Years 10/11:** [here](#)

Year 11

- **GCSE and A Level Dance trip to Matthew Bourne's Red Shoes, 5 December 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Year 11 Subject Specific Guidance October- November 2025:** [link](#)
- **Year 11 formal Practice Exams:** Monday 24 November - Friday 5 December - [Handbook Timetable](#)
 - On the Year 11 Google Classroom, there are revision materials, such as a revision timetable, checklists for their GCSEs and a guide on *How to Revise*.

- **NEA Subject Specific Internal Dates 2025/26:** [here](#)
- **Year 10-13 Parent webinar *Revision Mastery*:** supporting your child with their revision - Tuesday 4 November 6-7pm (online) [letter](#)
- **2026 Summer Exam Series Letter:** [here](#)
- **Support your Child's Mental Health Years 10/11:** [here](#)
- **Slides from Sixth Form Open Evening :** Click [Here](#) to view slides.
- **Sixth Form Admissions 2026 :** Applications to join the SWBGS Sixth Form in September 2026 are now open. Please click [here](#) to access the application process via our school website. Entry Requirements: A minimum of 8 GCSEs achieved in one sitting, an average GCSE score of 6.4 or above across all subjects, at least Grade 5 in both English and Maths, Grade 7 or above in facilitating subjects intended for A Level study. *Deadline for applications : Monday 2 February 2026.*

Sixth Form

- **Y12 & 13 UKLO Linguistics Olympiad Exam, 5 November 2025**
- **A Level and GCSE Dance trip to Matthew Bourne's Red Shoes, 5 December 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Year 12-13 Physics workshop and careers talk at RGS, 20 November 2025:** [letter](#)
- **Year 10-13 Parent webinar *Revision Mastery*:** supporting your child with their revision - Tuesday 4 November 6-7pm (online) [letter](#)
- **2026 Summer Exam Series Letter:** [here](#)
- **Mock bar trial competition:** inviting Sixth Form students to prosecute and defend cases against other schools. Students should complete [this form](#) to express interest in taking part.

Year 12

- **Year 12 Geography Field Course at the Cranedale Centre, 2-6 March 2026:** [letter](#)
- Students were given [this](#) presentation about the use of Unifrog. They have been asked to complete two tasks in Unifrog: 1) Course 101; 2) Record current post-18 intentions. The deadline is Monday 3 November.
- **Year 12 Work Experience:** Students are invited to complete up to three days of work experience between 3 November 2025 and 4 July 2026. Placements should be arranged independently, ideally using personal or family contacts. The school will also share opportunities through the weekly Sixth Form briefing. Where possible, work experience should take place during school holidays, however, leave of absence during term time may be granted if necessary; please ensure a request form is completed in advance. All placements must be recorded and approved on Unifrog at least three weeks prior to beginning a placement. Parents are also asked to ensure that students share any relevant health or personal information, such as allergies, injuries, disabilities or diagnoses with employers, so that appropriate workplace adjustments can be made. If necessary, please contact Mrs Wingrove, our Career Lead, for guidance on how to complete the process.

Year 13

UCAS Deadlines

- Pay and Send for all non-early applicants : 9:00am, Monday 3 November 2025. We aim to submit all applications to Universities by Thursday 18 December 2025.
- Oxford and Cambridge University applicants may receive requests for supplementary information, which will be sent directly by the universities. These requests are not managed by the school, but we are happy to offer guidance on how to respond to them. For more details on the process, follow these links: [Cambridge](#), [Oxford](#).

Conservatoire Applications (Music, Dance, Drama)

- Applications are made either via UCAS or directly to institutions.
- Students should check specific entry requirements carefully.

Important Calendar Dates

Year 13 Mock Exams : Tue 6 January 2026 - Friday 16 January 2026. Study leave is granted during this period. Details of timing of exams, and expectations will be communicated in due course.

Last teaching day : Wednesday 6 May 2026

Leavers' Chapel Assembly followed by Leavers' Celebration : Thursday 7 May 2026

Year 13 Prom: Crowne Plaza, Wed 24 June 2026 - a date for your diary

This Week at Borlase...



It's been a week of late nights ahead of the arrival of half term but the "Survivors' Photo" on the left marks the latest of them all as the Tech Crew finished the Get Out from Rocktober shortly after midnight on Thursday to ensure all the hired staging could be collected and the Theatre could be returned to use for the sessions given by William Wadsworth, the Exam Study Expert, today.



Rocktober itself was a fantastic night, arguably the best iteration in my three years at the school, with brilliant performances augmented by some exciting lighting from the tech desk. A mixture of soulful renditions, Britpop ballads (tapping into this year's House Music theme), classics from the 80s, 90s and 00s, as well as some of the groups' own songs, the entire set list would make a brilliant Spotify playlist.



The bar at the event was run by the indefatigable Friends of Borlase who, themselves, had hosted their AGM on Monday evening in the Stuart Lever Room. The school is indebted to the troop of volunteers who kindly give their time and energy for the benefit of the school community, making events like Rocktober so much more than your typical school concert. If you would consider joining the Friends, please complete their registration form [here](#).



On Wednesday evening we held the Sixth Form Open Evening for our Year 11 students at Borlase and at local schools. Once again we were delighted by the popularity of the evening with 800 people booked into the talks and more coming to visit the different subjects. Expertly marshalled by Year 12 students, proudly showing off their school, the feedback from visitors was glowing (on a dark night).



The previous weekend, the Boat Club had travelled to Bedford Regatta for an early season test of their pace. Coming away with 10 wins in different boat classes and age categories, it is shaping up to be a very exciting year ahead with six of the senior squad having made the cut off for GB selection in their first ergometer test.



Meanwhile, rugby is becoming an evermore popular sport in school. Feeding off the success of the 1st XV, the U15s had a fantastic game against Burnham Grammar School this week while members of the senior squad were taking the U13s through their paces on Thursday after school. Their chorusing of "Ready, ready, ready, ready... NOW!" as they held their defensive line could be heard across the school from Colonel's Meadow.



In the last Chapel assemblies of this half term I have been giving a eulogy to the tandem bicycle that we were gifted as a wedding present, alongside references to Amelia Aerhart and Barnes Wallace. Your children can hopefully explain more if they were paying attention. The message of the assembly: find adventure in your own back yard, don't give up if you suffer a set-back, and together we go further.



Two students who epitomise that sentiment are Leo and Jacob in Year 8 who, together, completed a 23km sponsored walk along the Thames Path between Henley and Cookham in aid of UNICEF. Setting themselves a target of £500, they've already trebled that via their JustGiving link which you can follow [here](#).

And finally, a big THANK YOU for all the donations to the One Can Trust food bank and to all the families who hosted our Spanish Exchange partners.

What will you do this half term? Whatever it is, I hope you have an enjoyable break

Ed Goodall
Headteacher

HERE & NOW
ANNUAL FUND

We are indebted to the generosity of past and present members of our community, without whose financial support we could not provide the opportunities on offer at Borlase. Please click [here](#) to find out what your support helps to provide, and how you could make a donation.