

THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

SHANGHAI EXCHANGE TRIP: A WEEK TO REMEMBER

Over the October half-term, 30 students took part in an unforgettable exchange trip to Shanghai.

Accompanied by Mr Sexton, Mr Jones and Mrs Forster, the group flew out on Friday 24th and were greeted by our guide, Iris, who led us straight to the Bund for stunning views of the city skyline. After settling into the hotel, we enjoyed a relaxed evening of shopping before an early night.

Highlights of the week included the Shanghai Museum, the tranquil Yu Gardens and a spectacular night-time cruise along the Huangpu River. Food quickly became a favourite part of the trip, with students enthusiastically tackling everything from Peking duck to hot pot—and even mastering chopsticks.

We spent three fantastic days at Jinrui School, where our students embraced every opportunity: attending lessons, learning Wushu, reading to primary pupils and forming strong friendships with their buddies. The school's hospitality was exceptional, from cultural activities to memorable excursions.

The goodbye concert was a standout moment. The performances were outstanding: Isaac impressed on the drums, Sophie sang beautifully with Anna accompanying on the piano (and performing her own solo alongside Gideon and Amy). The whole group showcased their Wushu routine to an enthusiastic audience. Franek, Cian, and Nekka spoke confidently about what they had learned, and Aaditya was interviewed about his experience. It was a wonderful evening that captured the camaraderie and confidence that had grown throughout the week.

After emotional farewells, we visited the ancient water town of Zhujiajiao for a peaceful final day before flying home.

This exchange was far more than a week away—it strengthened friendships, deepened cultural understanding and showcased the best of our students. Their enthusiasm, maturity and positivity made us immensely proud. What a week, and what a credit to our school community.



BATTLEFIELDS TRIP

Over the half-term break, 40 students and 4 staff embarked on a deeply moving Battlefields Trip to Belgium and France, tracing the footsteps of World War One soldiers along the Western Front. The group visited key sites of historic battles including Passchendaele, Vimy Ridge, and the Somme, gaining powerful insights into the realities of war.

Highlights included exploring the medieval city of Bruges and visiting renowned museums such as In Flanders Fields in Ypres. Walking through preserved battlefields at Beaumont Hamel and Sanctuary Wood brought history vividly to life, offering a tangible connection to the past.

A central focus of the trip was to honour the memory of Old Blues former students of the school who lost their lives in WWI. Starting with the names engraved on the war memorial in the school chapel, students spent six months researching the personal stories behind them. During the trip, they located several graves and memorials, where they paid heartfelt tributes on behalf of the school.

This research project will continue in the coming months, with students preparing to share their findings with the wider school community. It's a journey of remembrance, discovery, and respect—one that has left a lasting impression on all who took part.



THE GREAT BLUE COAT BAKE OFF

Our Great Blue Coat Bake Off was a fantastic success, raising funds for the charities Kind and Whitechapel.

With such impressive entries, the judges had a tough job choosing the winners.

Congratulations to Hiqma, Lily R, and Stephanie for their outstanding bakes!



BLUE COAT PUPILS EXPLORE GREEN CAREERS AT LIVERPOOL HOPE

This week, Year 9 and Year 10 pupils attended the Liverpool Hope Green Careers Day on Wednesday and Thursday. The event gave students an exciting insight into the fast-growing world of green careers—jobs focused on protecting the environment and building a more sustainable future.

What Are Green Careers?

Green careers can be found in many fields, including:

- **Environmental science and conservation**
- **Renewable energy** such as wind, solar and hydro
- **Sustainable engineering and construction**
- **Climate policy, education and community action**
- **Green technology and innovation**
- **Recycling, waste reduction and the circular economy**

A Valuable Experience

Throughout the day, pupils took part in workshops, listened to experts and explored how school subjects can lead to future roles that benefit the planet. The event left students inspired and better informed about the many pathways into sustainability-focused careers.



Student Voice at Blue Coat: How Our School Councils Shape Our Community

At Blue Coat, we believe every pupil should have a say in the life of our school. Our school councils ensure that student voice is heard, valued and used to improve our community.

What Are School Councils?

School councils are groups of pupils elected by their peers to represent their views. They provide a space for students to share ideas, raise concerns and influence positive change.

Why Do We Have Them?

Councils help pupils feel involved, respected and included. By giving students a platform to contribute, we build confidence, leadership skills and a stronger sense of belonging.

How Do They Work at Blue Coat?

Our councils are rooted in the **House system**. Each House has a team of House Prefects who gather ideas from pupils across year groups. These prefects meet regularly with the Headteacher to share feedback and discuss improvements. Their input genuinely shapes decisions, helping us create a school that reflects the needs and voices of all pupils.

Building Our Community Together

Through the House system and active student leadership, Blue Coat ensures that every pupil can help shape our school. When students speak, we listen—and together we build a community we can all be proud of.

Peer Mentoring at Blue Coat: Supporting Each Other to Thrive

At Blue Coat, we are proud of our strong culture of support, kindness and community. One of the most important parts of this is our **Peer Mentoring Programme**, where trained Year 12 students work with younger pupils to help them feel confident, supported and ready to succeed.

Peer mentoring is when older students offer guidance to younger pupils who may need someone to talk to, help settling in, or support with day-to-day challenges. It creates a safe, friendly space where pupils can share concerns with someone who understands school life from a student's perspective.

Selected Year 12 students volunteer to become Peer Mentors. They take part in a structured training programme that teaches them active listening, confidentiality, problem-solving and how to support pupils sensitively and responsibly. They also practise communication skills and learn when issues need to be passed on to staff.

Once trained, Peer Mentors are matched with younger pupils or are available during dedicated mentoring sessions. They meet regularly to talk through concerns, celebrate successes and help pupils stay positive and organised.

Peer Mentors support a wide range of everyday challenges, including:

- Settling into secondary school
- Friendship issues or worries about relationships
- Organisation, homework and study routines
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Managing stress, nerves or low mood
- Feeling overwhelmed or unsure who to talk to



While mentors are not counsellors, they offer a listening ear, reassurance and practical strategies. If a concern is more serious, they are trained to pass this on to staff who can provide further support.

The Peer Mentoring Programme helps pupils feel heard, valued and supported. It also gives Year 12 students a chance to grow as leaders, role models and positive influences within the school. Through mentoring, Blue Coat continues to build a community where pupils care for one another and where everyone has someone they can turn to.

GLOBAL SCHOOL ALLIANCE ROUNDTABLE: TECHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING



Blue Coat has taken part in a Global School Alliance roundtable with partner schools in Argentina and the UK, focusing on how technology can enhance teaching, learning and international collaboration.

The discussion on November 5th was attended by Ms Bermejo Albinana and Mr Sexton, as part of our ongoing work to promote language learning at KS4 and A Level.

Together, staff explored how digital tools can:

- support language learning through real communication with overseas peers
- strengthen global links and cultural understanding
- help teachers share resources and innovative practice
- build pupils' confidence and independence as learners

Our partnership with Argentinian schools helps bring Spanish to life and encourages more pupils to pursue languages at higher levels. The roundtable marks another step in developing meaningful international opportunities for our students.

SUPPORTING THE POPPY APPEAL AND HONOURING REMEMBRANCE

As we approach Remembrance Day, Blue Coat encourages everyone in our community to support this year's Poppy Appeal. Buying and wearing a poppy is a simple but meaningful way to honour those who have served and to recognise the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces. 6th formers are going around school every day selling n the poppies.

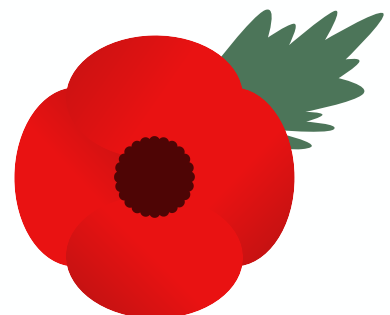
Money raised through the Poppy Appeal goes directly to the Royal British Legion, providing vital support for veterans, serving personnel and their families. This includes:

- financial assistance
- rehabilitation and recovery support
- help with housing, employment and wellbeing
- guidance for families during challenging times

Every donation contributes to life-changing support.

This year, our Student Leaders and staff will represent Blue Coat at the Liverpool Remembrance event, joining other schools, community groups and civic organisations across the city. Their attendance reflects our commitment to remembrance, respect and service, and we are proud of their contribution to this important occasion.

We invite all pupils, families and staff to wear their poppy with pride and to join in Remembrance Day services wherever they can—whether in school, locally, or at home. Taking a moment to reflect allows us to honour the courage and sacrifice of those who fought for the freedoms we value today.



YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS: REFLECTING, RESPONDING AND PREPARING FOR SUMMER

In the first two weeks back after half term, our Year 11 pupils have been sitting their mock examinations. These mocks are an essential part of their GCSE journey, giving students a realistic experience of exam conditions and helping them understand where they are in their learning.

How Should Pupils Use Their Mock Results?

Mocks are not just about grades—they are a chance to learn. Once pupils receive their papers back, they should:

- **Identify strengths** and recognise where progress has already been made.
- **Spot gaps** in knowledge or areas that were challenging.
- **Reflect on revision strategies** to see what worked well and what needs adjusting.
- **Seek support** from teachers where clarification or extra practice is needed.

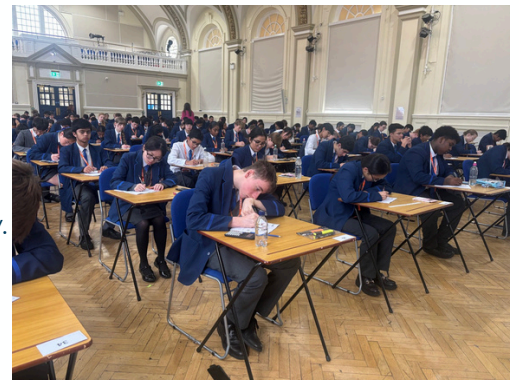
Responding positively and proactively to their results is key. The focus should be on improvement, not disappointment.

Planning Ahead for the Summer Exams

The GCSE examination series begins in May, and the months ahead offer a valuable window for structured preparation. Pupils should now:

- Create a personal revision timetable that is realistic and consistent.
- Break subjects into manageable topics and revise a little each day.
- Use past papers and exam-style questions to build confidence.
- Balance work and rest to stay healthy, motivated and focused.

By using what they have learned from their mocks and planning ahead now, Year 11 pupils can approach the summer exams with confidence and a clear sense of direction.



SUPPORTING OUR STAFF: INTRODUCING THE NEW STAFF WELLBEING ROOM

As part of our commitment to supporting staff wellbeing, Blue Coat is pleased to open the new Staff Wellbeing Room, a calm, restorative space designed to help colleagues take a moment of quiet during the school day. This project has been made possible thanks to a generous grant from the local authority, allowing us to invest in a dedicated environment that prioritises rest, reflection and mental wellbeing.

A Space for Calm and Reflection

The Staff Wellbeing Room has been created as a peaceful retreat away from the demands and pace of daily school life. It is not a social space, but a quiet environment where staff can pause, reflect, practise mindfulness or simply sit in calm surroundings. The aim is to offer colleagues a chance to reset and recharge, supporting both wellbeing and professional resilience.

Caring for Our Community

The introduction of the Staff Wellbeing Room is an important step in promoting a healthy and supportive working environment. We hope it becomes a valued space that strengthens the wellbeing of colleagues across the school and reinforces the culture of care that defines the Blue Coat community.

SIXTH FORM LAUNCHES CHRISTMAS FOODBANK APPEAL WITH WHITECHAPEL CENTRE



From 1st December 2025, our Sixth Form students will once again be leading the school's annual Foodbank Appeal in partnership with the Whitechapel Centre, one of Liverpool's key charities supporting people experiencing hunger, homelessness and hardship.

Christmas is a joyful season for many, but it is also a difficult and stressful time for countless families and individuals across our city. Rising living costs, cold weather and increased pressures mean that support from local communities is more important than ever.

Our students are committed to helping make a difference. By collecting donations, they hope to provide comfort, kindness and practical help to those who need it most during the winter months.

We are asking pupils, families and staff to donate items such as:

Tinned food
Pasta, rice and long-life goods
Toiletries and hygiene products
Warm socks, gloves and winter essentials
Festive treats to help bring cheer

All donations will go directly to the Whitechapel Centre to support people across Liverpool who are struggling at this time of year.

Our Sixth Formers are proud to lead this project and will be collecting items throughout December. With the support of the whole school community, we can make a real difference to many lives this Christmas.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

Next week, we will be celebrating Anti-Bullying Week, with this year's theme is Power for Good.

Throughout the week, students will be encouraged to think about how they can use their actions and words to make a positive difference in the lives of others. As part of our activities, students will contribute to a Power for Good Charter, outlining how they can work together to promote kindness, respect, and inclusion. During lunchtime, students will have the opportunity to take part in reflective activities, including making pledges for our Power for Good Tree, thinking about their daily interactions, and completing a One Kind Thing challenge to support and uplift one another. Together, we'll be celebrating the power we all have to make our school a happier, safer place for everyone.



STAYING SAFE ONLINE: UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS OF AI CHATBOTS

As technology continues to develop rapidly, AI chatbots have become increasingly common in the digital world young people use every day. While these tools can be helpful for learning, research and creativity, it is important for pupils—and families—to understand the risks they can pose and how to stay safe when using them.

What Are AI Chatbots?

AI chatbots are computer programs that can have conversations, answer questions or create content. They are widely used on websites, apps, social media platforms and gaming communities. Although they can be useful, they do not always give accurate or reliable information, and young people may not always know who or what they are talking to online.

What Are the Dangers for Young People?

AI chatbots can present several safeguarding risks:

- Inaccurate or harmful information – AI may produce incorrect facts, misleading advice or content that is not suitable for young people.
- Lack of accountability – AI tools can appear confident, even when they are wrong, which can influence the decisions young people make.
- Data and privacy concerns – Some chatbots collect personal information that could be shared or stored without the user realising.
- Exposure to inappropriate content – Without proper filters, AI systems may generate language, images or topics that are unsafe or adult in nature.
- Impersonation and manipulation – Not all chatbots are clearly labelled, and some online tools may pretend to be real people, increasing risks of grooming or exploitation.
- Reduced critical thinking – Over-reliance on AI for homework, revision or problem-solving can weaken pupils' ability to analyse, question and learn independently.

How Pupils Can Stay Safe

We encourage all young people to follow these simple safety rules:

- Never share personal details such as full name, address, school, phone number or photos.
- Check with a trusted adult if something feels strange, uncomfortable or confusing.
- Do not use AI tools for health, personal or emotional advice—speak to a parent, teacher or trusted adult instead.
- Use school-recommended platforms only, and avoid unregulated apps found online.
- Treat AI information with caution—always double-check facts with reliable sources.
- Report anything inappropriate to parents, carers or a member of staff.

Working Together to Keep Young People Safe

At Blue Coat, safeguarding remains at the heart of everything we do. We continue to teach pupils how to use technology safely, responsibly and thoughtfully. As AI becomes more widespread, it is essential that young people understand both its possibilities and its dangers.

By working together—pupils, families and staff—we can ensure that technology is used positively and safely, helping our young people thrive in an increasingly digital world.

GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH WOOLTON PICTURE HOUSE



Following on from the community meetings we held over the summer, I now want to look at ways we can get the young people of our community involved, and would like to request your help.

I want to run some small public meetings at the Woolton Picture House for 15-25 year olds – much like we did for the community meetings in the summer, where people could attend, share their thoughts and ideas and ask questions.

It is vitally important to include our young people in the plans for redeveloping the cinema – not just in terms of the programme of films we offer (though for many, this will be their first involvement with the Picture House), but also by asking them directly to share their needs, wants and ideas for activities and events that they would like to take part in. For example, I am looking at developing a Young Filmmakers programme with practical filmmaking sessions, perhaps with seasonal/annual young people's short film festivals. Another idea is a work skills training programme, where young people can come and learn the skills needed to work in different roles within the cinema, and develop practical skills such as customer service or cash handling alongside softer skills such as talking to members of the public and building confidence. I am also planning a 15-25 membership scheme, which will give young people discounted tickets for films.

Of course, there is no point in planning such activities if they are not what our young people want, so I'm asking for your help in reaching out to the 15-25 year olds within our community.

I will be holding young people's meetings at the Woolton Picture House on the following dates/times:
Sunday 23rd November 2025 – 11am and 3pm
Sunday 30th November 2025 – 11am and 3pm

If you are aged 15-25 or know a young person who is – perhaps a family member or friend? – could you please let them know about these meetings and invite them to sign up to take part? You can send them this email for information – they can register to find out more or express interest in taking part by going to:

[Young People's meetings sign up form](#)

The sessions will be small, friendly and informal, and there will be no expectations other than for the young people taking part to be willing to share their thoughts and experiences to better help us make plans for the cinema that work for them. Even if they don't really know what they want from the cinema, they can still help by talking through the ideas we come up with as a group.

UPCOMING EVENTS



WINTER MARKET AND CHOIR REHEARSAL

Tickets are now on sale for the event, priced at £3 – [please follow this link](#)

There are a few stalls available priced at £20 - open to all the Blue Coat community to book

Tombola: Items needed for the tombola, please drop at reception. For example: (new) toiletries, bottles, chocolates, sweets, books, etc

Raffle: Prizes are also needed for our Christmas raffle – vouchers, gifts, experience cards.

If you would like to book a stall or donate a raffle prize please email: seo@bluecoatschool.org.uk

SUPPORT EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We're so proud of the amazing extracurricular and enrichment activities that make Blue Coat life so vibrant — from clubs and competitions to creative projects and performances!

To keep these fantastic opportunities thriving, we're asking each family to contribute £10 per term (£30 per year) per student. Every penny helps us continue offering the broad range of experiences for our students.

Every £10 contribution earns you one entry into our monthly raffle for a £50 cash prize (or equivalent value) — our way of saying thank you for your generosity!

Payment details are on Parentmail, so please check your messages and make your contribution as soon as you can.

Your support truly makes a difference — helping us keep our enrichment programme strong, exciting, and open to every student.

