



— The Cooper School —

Parent Bulletin

NO 28 - FRIDAY 1ST MAY 2026

Next week w/c - Monday 4th May 2026 - Week B

Headteacher Update - Nathan Thomas - CEO

This week we saw a fantastic community event with our cake sale, which raised an impressive £410. There was a wonderful atmosphere across the school, and the effort and creativity from both students and staff were exceptional. A special thank you to Claire Dean for organising, to our Student Council for their support, and to everyone who contributed. These moments really do matter for our community, our culture and, most importantly, for our students.

A huge congratulations to the English Department, who took the top spot as the winners!



We also launched our new Book of Distinction this week, recognising students who are demonstrating exceptional effort and achievement. Thank you to staff for the large number of nominations, a brilliant start. It was a pleasure to see so many students celebrating their success, with Elise Giddy in Year 13 being the first recognised. You can see all those in the Book of Distinction later in the newsletter.

It was great to welcome so many of you yesterday. We hope you enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the progress and potential of our fabulous Year 12's. In addition we have begun important internal conversations on how we support students who may find certain aspects of school life more challenging. This is part of our ongoing mission to ensure every child is known, supported, and able to succeed.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our Business and Enterprise students, who achieved multiple awards this week in the Oxfordshire Showcase, an excellent accomplishment.

With the long weekend ahead, I hope you and your families have a restful and enjoyable break.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Nathan Thomas

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Key Dates and Upcoming Events

Monday 4th May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BANK HOLIDAY
Tuesday 5th May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art A Level Exam• Yr 7 & 8 Assessments
Wednesday 6th May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art A Level Exam• Yr 7 & 8 Assessments
Thursday 7th May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art A Level Exam• Yr 7 & 8 Assessments
Friday 8th May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Y9 Bronze DofE from 6pm

End of year assessments

Thank you in advance to all of our school community for their kindness and consideration towards these students at this important time and the very best of luck to all of our GCSE and A level students.

End of year assessments are coming up over the next 6 weeks and the preparation advice is linked below.

Year 7 & 8 start theirs on Tuesday - good luck!

[Year 7 Assessment Week 3 Preparation advice - April 2026](#)

[Year 8 Assessment Week 3 Preparation advice - April 2026](#)

[Year 9 Assessment Week 3 Preparation advice - April 2026](#)

[Year 10 Assessment Week 3 Preparation advice - Summer mocks 2026](#)

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YOUNG ENTERPRISE

Our three Young Enterprise teams made it all the way to the Oxfordshire showcase. This is an opportunity to allow the students to show off their products, present their business plans and ideas to regional judges, and to network with other students enrolled on the program.

One of our teams, Cooper Clothing, won the award for 'Best Interview' and another team 'Full-time Slime' won 'Best Marketing and Trade stand'. Considering the amount of competition, this is a brilliant result!

Full-time Slime were also the big winners on the night and are now Regional Finalists and are set to compete against Young Enterprise teams from the home counties at the University of Hertfordshire next month. This is a fantastic achievement and the team ought to be very proud of themselves. You can find Full-time Slime selling their award winning product at Heyford's Spring fete this Sunday...

Well Done!!
Mr Green



DEBATE TEAM

DEBATE

We wish our Senior Debate Team the very best of luck for the Rotary Public Speaking Final in Cambridge this Saturday! After winning both the Local and District Rounds earlier this year, the team are now representing the area in the Cluster Final with their winning debate: 'This House believes space exploration is a waste of money'. This weekend's speakers are Rose B (Y10), Ieve A (Y11) and Noah D (Y12) who have been supported brilliantly by the rest of the team, Aylin and Mae. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with these talented individuals!

Debate takes place every Friday lunchtime in SF6 and anyone from Y9 up is welcome to attend!

We are also delighted that work completed by LFB as part of the Tools for Change Project was shared at the recent Social Sciences Impact Conference at Oxford University. Laura Coryton, MBE and Dr Hannah Yelin and Dr Michele Paule attended the conference with examples of the students' project that ensured better access to period products here in school.

LFB are continuing to work with Laura on a project to get school uniforms banned in pornography and sex shops. They meet Wednesday Week A after school in SF6, all are welcome!

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DofE AWARDS

Congratulations to the following students who have completed their SILVER DofE certificates and badges:

Iva Zlatkova, Dylan Webber, Charlie Wells and Freya Jimmi.

Congratulations to Tilly McMillan for completing her BRONZE DofE award.

Congratulations to Madison Joiner who has completed the Supporting Participants with DofE module as part of their Young Leader learning. Madison is able to support all students with their DofE programme. This can count towards Madison's volunteering section, but she has done this in addition to volunteering at Bardwell School.

Congratulations to Emily Durrant who has completed her GOLD DofE Award. As Emily was a direct entry to the gold award, one of her sections had to be done for 18 months. Well done on persevering with it Emily. All gold participants need to do a 5 day residential, which Emily completed during the Easter holidays. Emily will be invited to attend the Gold Award Presentation at Buckingham Palace in May 2027.



Well Done to these students who all received a HEADTEACHERS AWARD and got to sign the famous 'Book of Distinction'

Elise Giddy
Kiara Zapata
Maria Urbianak
Maya Poloczek
Roman Haverly
James Tidmarsh
James Gaffney
Angel Tabolt
Paige Braganca
Gabriella Kirl-Sorian
Jelena Starcevic
Imogen Maxwell
Jake Killen



Lily Hook
Barney Taylor
Jacob Haverly
Luke Sabo
Chelsea Nguyen
Holly Patison
Olivia Krol
Molly Kershaw
Oliver Butler
Sheen Sampson
Lucy Blake
Oliver Springett

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Public Exams

- EARLY LUNCHES FROM WEDS 6TH MAY - FRI 26TH JUNE -

To accommodate nationally set exam start times for yr 11 and yr 13 exams, lunch will be 12:35-1.10pm for all students between these dates. Students will then have two lessons after lunch, finishing at the usual time of 3.10pm



**After school revision sessions are still running for all year 11s every day! We would welcome any donations of biscuits, fruit, pastries/ cereal bars, bread, tea bags, hot chocolate, honey, marmite etc
Also any raffle prizes (eg chocolate, sweets etc)**

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

We want to ensure all our students stay nourished, even when they aren't feeling well enough to be in the classroom.

If your child is currently eligible for Free School Meals and is at home unwell, you are welcome to arrange a packed lunch for collection from the school office.

**Please call or email the school office by 10:00 am
Lunches will be ready for pickup at a designated time (usually during the standard lunch break).**



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

MANAGING EXAM STRESS

At some point in their education, most young people will encounter exam stress, which can affect their mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Mental health charity YoungMinds estimates that 87% of pupils experience exam-related stress. This highlights the importance of supporting young people to manage exam pressure effectively, maintain perspective, and protect their overall wellbeing during these periods.

1 PRACTISE WORKLOAD WISDOM

The build-up to exams can feel overwhelming, with competing demands on time and energy. Encourage young people to reflect on whether their workload is realistic and allows them time to rest and recharge. Support them in creating a manageable revision timetable that includes regular breaks and occasional days off. Remind them that plans can be adjusted if they feel overwhelmed, helping to reduce the pressure and prevent burnout.

2 CLEAR UP THE CLUTTER

A cluttered workspace can reduce focus and increase stress levels. Encourage young people to keep their study area tidy and organised, with clearly arranged notes and materials. A calm, dedicated space can support concentration and create a more relaxed mindset. Adding colour, mind maps, or creative elements can also make revision feel less daunting and more manageable.

3 MASTER THE MATERIALS

Revision can feel particularly stressful if young people are unsure where to begin. Help them confirm key study topics and materials, ensuring they're using accurate and relevant resources. Reducing uncertainty can help them feel more in control of their learning. Reassure them that they don't need to know everything perfectly, as building their understanding over time is what matters most.

4 GET CREATIVE WITH NOTES

Writing out detailed notes, rather than relying only on bullet points, can strengthen their understanding and retention. Encourage young people to turn these notes into flashcards for regular review and repetition. Feeling familiar with their material can boost their confidence and reduce anxiety during exams. This approach can help them feel more prepared and less likely to panic under pressure.

5 USE VISUAL MEMORY AIDS

Visual resources can make learning more effective and reduce their frustration when information feels difficult to grasp. Encourage the use of diagrams, videos, sticky notes, and colour coding to reinforce key ideas. Creating simple mnemonics can also make information easier to remember. Using a variety of methods can help prevent mental fatigue and keep revision feeling fresh and manageable.

6 BUILD A TECH TOOLKIT

Technology can be a valuable supporting tool during exam preparation when used in a balanced way. Educational websites, revision platforms, and subject-specific videos can help explain complicated topics clearly, reducing the risk of confusion or stress. Encourage young people to use these tools to support – rather than overwhelm – their learning, and to take regular breaks from their screens to protect their wellbeing.

7 KEEP REVISION ENJOYABLE

Revision is often more effective when it feels engaging and varied. Encourage young people to incorporate humour, real-life examples, or creative approaches into their learning. Mixing study methods, including light physical activity such as short walks, can also improve their mood and focus. Enjoyable revision experiences can help reduce stress and make the process feel more positive and sustainable.

8 USE ACTIVE STUDY METHODS

Active revision techniques can help young people feel more confident and in control of their learning. Strategies such as spaced repetition and active recall, including self-testing or explaining concepts aloud, can highlight both their strengths and areas for improvement. This clarity can reduce last-minute panic and support a calmer, more prepared approach to exams.

9 USE AI THOUGHTFULLY

AI tools can support revision by making learning more personalised and manageable. Young people can use them to generate practice questions, summarise information, or break down topics into simpler steps. Used carefully, these tools can reduce overwhelm and save time. Remind young people to check AI information with trusted sources to ensure its accuracy and build confidence in their understanding.

10 PRACTISE WITH ONLINE TOOLS

Online revision platforms can help young people test their knowledge and track their progress. Many offer quizzes, flashcards, and practice papers aligned with exam boards. Encourage regular self-testing – including timed activities – to build up familiarity with exam conditions. Becoming more comfortable with the format of exams can reduce anxiety and help young people approach them with greater confidence.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of Social Enterprise UK's 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at a large secondary school.



See full reference list on our website

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