



Northgate Council Bulletin

Improving Northgate by giving pupils a voice

February 2026

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Issue 86

time to talk day
05/02/26

Take time to talk this February.

What is Time to Talk Day?

Time to Talk Day is the nation's biggest mental health conversation. It's a day for all of us to come together to talk, listen and help change lives. Friends, families, communities, workplaces and schools can all take part. Whether it's texting a friend, chatting over a cuppa, going for a walk with someone, or sharing a message on social media, there are lots of simple ways to start a conversation.

Why is talking important?

Talking openly and honestly can be the first step towards better mental health for everyone. It helps reduce stigma and can make people feel more comfortable seeking support when they need it.

You don't need to have all the answers to be a good listener. Sometimes a friendly ear and a safe space to share is all someone needs. Even a small gesture can make a big difference — a quick check-in or a cup of tea and a chat can turn a difficult day into a better one.

We encourage everyone to take time to check in with friends and family. Remember, by starting a conversation you're not only supporting yourself and others in that moment, but also helping to break down barriers so more people feel able to talk about their mental health.

Students are reminded that they can talk to a trusted adult in school if they are worried about themselves or someone else — you don't have to deal with things on your own.

Upcoming events

Make sure you know what is coming up at Northgate. Please note these dates are subject to change.

Throughout February

Different Library events - see page 9 for further details

5th February

Time to Talk Day

6th February

Year 7 Number Day

9th - 15th February

Children's Mental Health Week - look out for activities run by the Well-Being Team

13th February

Break up for half term

23rd February

New half term begins - Week B
Year 11 Core Mock Week

Want to keep up to date with all the goings on at Northgate?

'Like' our Northgate High School Facebook page (@northgatedereham)



Follow us on Instagram:
NgateDereham



Northgate News

Missed our last Northgate Bulletin? Follow this link to read about all the exciting activities and news from last month.

[January Bulletin](#)

Celebrating success

We were proud to recently hear of the successes of Northgate students who are part of 1249 Dereham Squadron Royal Air Force Air Cadets. They held an annual presentation evening where Dereham Town Mayor Cllr Ray O'Callaghan and Cllr Hugh King handed out trophies and awards.

Congratulations to Amelia B (Year 10) who won Best Junior Cadet and was promoted from Cadet to Corporal. She said, 'I feel very happy and grateful that I got chosen for the award. I enjoy the activities and learning things that I wouldn't in school. I have developed skills like communication and leadership during my time at cadets.'

Congratulations also to James A (Year 11) who won the award for Best effort in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and was also promoted from Cadet to Corporal.

Congratulations to Malachi B (Year 11) who was promoted from Corporal to Sergeant.

Finally, congratulations to Jude B (Year 10) who won the Cadets' Cadet Award and the Tracey Allan Shield as well as being promoted from Corporal to Sergeant.



Jude answered some questions related to his experiences and time in the Air Cadets.

When did you first join the Air Cadets and what made you want to join?

I joined cadets two years ago during the autumn term, after my old football team disbanded. I was in search of something that would not only capture my attention but also my devotion. Similar to football I was welcomed to the cadets "team" as soon as I stepped through the door, cadets also offered more opportunities for my future.

What new responsibilities do you now have as a Sergeant that you didn't have as a Corporal?

Since being promoted from Corporal to Sergeant in the Air Cadets, I now have greater leadership responsibilities. I support and supervise junior cadets, help lead training activities, and ensure standards are maintained.

I am also expected to set a positive example, make decisions more independently, and assist in the smooth running of the squadron.

Which skills have you developed the most during your time in the Cadets?

Teaching. I was given the role of teaching the new T-flight from the September entry. Although I was second in command, I found myself taking more responsibility in this role, teaching myself at the same time, in terms of classroom management and learning, but also leadership and confidence in front of an audience.

What's been your proudest moment in the Air Cadets so far?

My proudest moment was when I had the opportunity to go flying. Once up in the air with the pilot, I was given control and had the chance to perform aerobatics by myself, including a loop, multiple barrel rolls and a stall turn. This was the proudest moment for me because I was given the controls and overcame the fear and did it anyway.

Do you have any future goals within the Air Cadets?

As for further goals I only aspire to teach and help others gain the opportunity I have, so they too can find themselves learning new skills and develop their personalities, that will not only help now but for their future as well.

You can read more from Jude in our [blog](#) and keep a look out on Northgate's social media for information about an upcoming open event for potential new Air Cadet recruits.



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Celebrating success

Next, we are celebrating the successes of Northgate students who are part of Dereham Runners AC. Congratulations to George M (Year 8) who won an award for his achievements in cross country and to Jamieson C (Year 10) for his achievements in track and field. Finally to Imogen O (Year 10) who won the coaches award and completed the 50 club award. Here she tells us about her running journey:

What got you into running and when did you join Dereham Runners?

I always used to go out for runs at the weekend and eventually started to enter races like race for life, so I wanted to improve my times and get into more serious and competitive races.

What were the awards for?

The awards were for reaching 50 club points (for races and running events outside of the club), and I also won the coaches award for my hard work and dedication to the club.

What do you enjoy most about running?

I enjoy the community you feel when you are a part of an association, it never feels like you are running on your own even if you are running half way across the world because of the branded t-shirt you get when you join, reminding you about everyone supporting you and your progress.

How often do you train and what does a typical session look like?

I personally train for an hour and a half every Thursday because I have prior commitments on Monday. In the summer we do sprints and athletics, in the winter we do more distance and endurance training!

Do you have any goals in mind when it comes to your running?

My only goal is to improve my pace and times and enjoy race days. Also to be able to do bigger races like the London marathon in the future!



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Norfolk School Cross Country Finals

On Tuesday 20th January, 9 Northgate students competed in the Norfolk School Cross Country Finals at Wymondham College. The course is a big step up from the Mid Norfolk round with the distances between 2.4Km (Year 7) to 5.6Km (Year 10 - 13) so is always a challenging course. In a change to the norm it was a reasonably sunny morning and with over 100 runners lining up to race in each age group competition was going to be very high. The aim, to finish in the top 12 in order to qualify for the next round - the Anglian Schools Finals. In the Year 7 boys race, their first ever experience, Maddox and Cole toughed it out to finish in a respectable 42th and 44th place respectively, with Charlie showing great resilience to complete the course and finish in 84th place.

In the Year 8/9 boys, which had so many runners they ran out of finishing tickets, a great team performance from the boys saw Isaac finish 22nd, George 31st, Cameron 34th and James 35th.

In the girls race Sophia battled hard to complete the race in 77th and was commended by organisers for her efforts. A huge well done to all who qualified and took part in the finals.





Creativity shines through

The Art and Design Department have updated us on recent highlights from our talented Northgate artists and photographers. If you want to see more from the department and the work being created, follow @nghsartdesignsfc on Instagram.

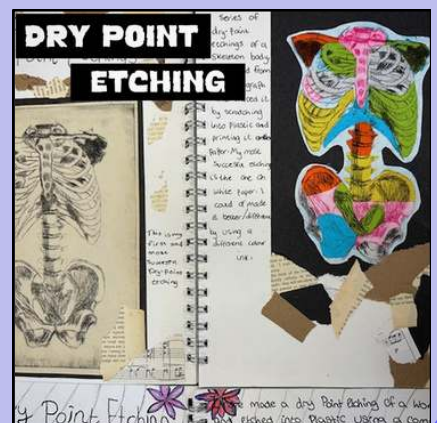
Mrs Wright said, 'Our Year 10 GCSE Photography students have been diving deep into the theme of identity, producing ambitious and highly creative outcomes across both digital and traditional processes. Inspired by contemporary photographic artist Bruno Del Zou, known for his striking fragmented photo sculptures, students explored how identity can be constructed, disrupted and re-imagined.'

Using professional equipment such as ring lights and soft box lighting, students captured high-quality, studio-style portraits of their peers, carefully considering lighting, mood and composition. These images were then transformed into photo negatives and taken into the traditional darkroom, where students experimented with fragmentation through hands-on photographic techniques.

Alongside this, they pushed their ideas further using the latest version of Photoshop, creating completely unique digital outcomes that reinterpreted their portraits in bold and inventive ways. The combination of darkroom experimentation and digital practice has resulted in a diverse and exciting body of work that truly reflects the complexity of identity.

An inspiring project showcasing creativity, technical skill and fearless experimentation — well done, Year 10!

Year 9 students are designing their own streetwear brands, creating logos inspired by Shawn Stussy and experimenting with bold, expressive typography. Influenced by David Carson, students are exploring grunge collage and printmaking techniques before transforming designs into eye-catching posters to advertise their brand. Big ideas, bold type and serious creative energy! Our Year 10 students have been exploring dry point etching, a traditional printmaking technique that lets them carve directly into a plate to create beautifully detailed lines and textures. They etched their own acrylic plates, applied ink, and then used the press to pull a series of striking prints. Each student produced unique outcomes that show off their creativity, precision, and growing confidence. The results are fantastic — bold, expressive, and full of character. A brilliant effort from everyone involved!



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by Point Etching... to make a dry point etching of a... etched into plastic using a com...

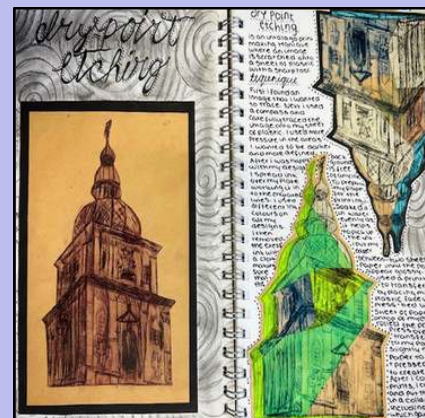
Creativity shines through

Here are further examples of the impressive work from the Year 10 Art and Design students.



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Celebrating success



Well done to Cameron N (Year 9) who recently competed again in the Ryston Runners AC Norfolk Cross Country at Shouldham Warren near Downham Market. He represented Dereham Runners and came first in the U15 boys 3Km run with a great time of 11:40. There are 2 more cross country events this winter that he will compete in, and along with the success for Dereham Runners, Cameron is also counting these activities towards the fitness element of his bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Here he tells us about his running:

How did you first get into running and cross country?

The Tough Mudder at Northgate over the past 3 years has shown me that I can run fast and consistently and running with similarly able school friends makes it fun and competitive. I always enjoyed running around as a child and entered into several primary school cross country events.

What do you enjoy most about running?

Running gives me a 'freeness' and lets me clear my mind. I can just focus on the process of running and forget everything else.

What does a typical training week look like for you?

On Monday and Thursday evenings I run with Dereham Runners juniors either at Neatherd High School or in the Breckland Council carpark. On Saturday mornings I run with my family at the Dereham Parkrun. I also like to keep fit at home with stretches and weights.

What's the toughest race you've done so far?

The Year 9 Cross Country event at Wymondham towards the end of January was tough. There were over 100 runners, it was wet and cold and a few were clearly heading for the Olympics!! In Year 7, I went to Lincolnshire to run for Norfolk against the eastern counties.

What motivates you to keep running, especially on tough days?

Before starting a run, it's always an effort to get out, especially in the cold and wet, but after the run it's always a reward to know that I achieved it and put in my best.

What's been your proudest running achievement so far?

Running the Ryston Runners Shouldham Warren Cross Country under 15s and coming in 1st place this year.

What advice would you give to someone your age who wants to start running or cross country?

Practice, join a club or run with friends, just get out there and start running!



Po-e-tree Competition

Are you a budding poet? Fancy entering a competition? Then this is the challenge for you....

The Tree Council have launched their Po-e-tree competition for World Poetry Day in March, giving you plenty of time to enter.



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Taking place on 21st March 2026, World Poetry Day celebrates one of the most treasured forms of expression that helps people understand and appreciate the world. This World Poetry Day, we'd love to hear your thoughts, feelings and hopes for trees, nature and our environment. To enter, write a poem of up to 500 words – one entry per person. The poem can take any form and could be about a favourite tree, dreams of a tree-filled future or just capture a beautiful moment. In your poem, you may want to explore:

- How trees make you feel
- How we depend on them
- How we care for them
- What they mean in your life or community

There are two age categories – Under 11 and 11-16.

All poems must be written by you – not AI.

Deadline for submission is 12th March via Satchel or email ktheobald@ng6.unity-ed.uk or vwoodier@ng6.unity6.unity-ed.uk.

We will pick a winner and runner up at Northgate and submit all entries to the Tree Council national competition where the prize is a certificate, medal and £25 National Book Token.

Updates from The Orchard

The weather has not been great for the Orchard Committee in January so they have used the time in their meetings to find out a bit more about the trees in The Orchard and ones they are also trying to grow. In one of their meetings they created a handy pocket guide about the trees with information about their leaves, flowers, fruit and bark as well as some interesting facts. They also had a go at sorting leaves into their own categories and naming them. All of these activities relate to one of the awards they are currently working on with the Woodland Trust.

They were also fortunate enough to have been donated several packets of spring bulbs from The Range, Dereham, which have now been planted at the front of the wildflower area. We can't wait for future springs to see a burst of colour from the snowdrops, daffodils, allium and tulips.

At the end of January, students also took part in the RSPB's Big Schools Birdwatch (more to follow in a future bulletin).





Year 11 Revision Sessions

After successfully completing their mock exams before Christmas, Year 11 students have thrown themselves into further revision, making the most of the numerous lunch time and after school sessions on offer. We have also been impressed with how students have embraced the new PART lesson intervention groups. Lots of focussed revision is taking place every single day. Students are being rewarded for their attendance at the



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revision sessions: every 8 sessions attended gets you entry into a prize draw. Congratulations to our winners so far who have walked away with £10 vouchers and an extra 8 hours of revision!

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With further core mock exams coming up this term, starting the revision process early is recommended. See our timetable of sessions below so you can make the most of this time. Please collect a reward card from the Office or Mrs Kaufmann-Ward and keep collecting those signatures to be in with a chance of winning!

Day	Subject	Room	Timings
Every Day	The library is open every day before and after school as well as lunchtimes. Wednesday lunchtimes (after Oct half term) the library is open exclusively for Y11 revision		
Monday	Science	SC4	3.15-4.15
Tuesday	French Maths	CO4 CO2	12.30-1 3.15-4.15
Wednesday	Computing (Papers 1&2) English History	CO1 EN7 HI2	12.30 - 13.00 3.15 - 4.15 3.30 - 4.30
Thursday	Philosophy Design Technology Art & Design GCSE Club PE (starts 27th Nov)	RE1 TE6 ART2 PE1	12.30-1 3.15-4.15 3.15-4.15 3.15-4.15
Friday	Geography (starts 7th Nov)	GG1	3.30 - 4.20

Attendance matters

Congratulations to 7NA, 7WVO, 8ARO, 8JC, 9AGR, 9TD, 10VE, 10RP, 11YC and 11SC who have all won the fortnightly attendance competition so far this half term. Trophies and certificates have been proudly on display in tutor rooms. Don't forget that every two weeks a student has 100% attendance, they gain a virtual raffle ticket for the half termly draw to win an Amazon voucher.





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Duke Of Edinburgh’s Award - launching soon

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DofE) is a nationally recognised programme that gives Year 9 students the chance to challenge themselves, learn new skills and gain confidence outside the classroom. The Bronze Award is made up of four sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skills, and an Expedition.



You choose activities that suit your interests and goals. This could include volunteering in your local community, improving in a sport or fitness activity, learning a new skill such as cooking, music or photography, and taking part in a team expedition where you’ll plan a route, navigate and camp overnight with friends. Along the way, you’ll develop important life skills like teamwork, problem-solving, organisation and resilience.

Completing DofE is a great achievement that is highly valued by colleges, universities and employers, as it shows commitment, independence and determination. It’s also a fantastic opportunity to make new friends, boost your confidence and have fun while challenging yourself in new ways.

Look out for a flyer and a launch assembly coming soon, or speak to Mrs Norman if you’d like to find out more. In the meantime, visit www.dofe.org to explore this exciting programme and see what DofE could offer you.

Norwich Science Festival

This year marks a thrilling milestone for Norwich Science Festival – ten years of curiosity, creativity, and community. Now one of the UK’s leading science festivals, they’re proud to celebrate a decade of discovery. The 2026 theme, Your World, Reimagined, invites you to explore bold ideas for a greener, fairer future. From the power of our hearts and innovative space travel to sustainable living, they’re shining a spotlight on science that empowers change.

Taking place over half term (Saturday 14th - Saturday 21st February), tickets are selling quickly. There are lots of events and free shows going on, alongside workshops at a small cost, that may interest some of our students and families. Find out more on Norwich Science Festival’s [website](#) and get involved in all the fun!



Merit Update

Students continue to work hard in lessons and have now earned over 38,000 merits since September. Already over 1000 virtual certificates have been sent home celebrating merit milestones, with more on their way very soon. Merit cashing in continues to take place on Mondays, in the main hall from 12.30pm - 12.50pm. Take a look at what you can exchange your merits for in our

Notebooks, keyrings, stickers and pizzas appear to be the most popular items so far. The House merit competition is incredibly close at the moment so every merit counts. Well done to Attenborough who have maintained their lead since the start of the term.

Rowling	Holmes	Attenborough	Hawking
44.70	43.69	43.47	43.11

Year 7 Number Day.



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The Maths Department is delighted to be supporting the NSPCC once again by taking part in NSPCC Number Day on Friday 6th February 2026. All Year 7 students will spend one hour out of their normal lessons taking part in a variety of fun and interactive Maths activities in the hall, including number aerobics, a human graph, games and a quiz. The quiz will also contribute to the House competition, with prizes for winning pupils and teams.

As part of the main quiz, students are encouraged to seek sponsorship if they can, with all money raised supporting the NSPCC and Childline. Over the last 16 years, Northgate pupils have raised over £3,500 for the NSPCC, helping to fund vital services for children and young people. All Year 7s will be able to take part in the activities, whether or not they have sponsors.

In addition to the main event, students will be able to take part in a Maths treasure hunt during break or lunchtime, a Maths Escape Room available via Satchel One (with merits and a prize draw), and a special number-based Friday Quiz to earn further House points.

We look forward to a great Number Day 2026, and students getting involved in as many of the activities as possible, with lots of prizes and merits up for grabs!

Well-Being activities

Keep a lookout for activities going on this month organised by the Well-Being Team, including a collaboration with the creative writing group for Children's Mental Health Week. Some of their mental health themed poems will be displayed around the school for you to read.

Gratitude slips will be coming out in PART lesson for you to show your appreciation to a member of staff.

Finally, keep an eye on Satchel One for a Google form to help us name a bunny - that's all we will say for now as all will be revealed before Easter - it looks set to be an exciting activity!

Upcoming Library events

4th February - Read Aloud Day - lunchtime storytelling in the library, hygge style.
Percy Jackson event- 3.30pm-5.15pm. Enter Camp Half Blood for fun activities, crafts and Greek food celebrating mythology Greek Gods.

6th February - Author Julia Edwards British Empire and Slave Trade presentation for all Year 8 students (supporting History SOW).

12th February - Author Tia Fisher talk to Year 9 students (supporting the library class read of Crossing the Line and the Citizenship SOW).

13th February - TOAST poetry performance for Year 7 - building on performance poetry work.



Youth Parliament

We were delighted to hear recently that several Northgate students had the confidence and ambition to apply to become a Member of Youth Parliament. Following the initial application process, a number of students were shortlisted and invited to attend face-to-face or online meetings, giving them the opportunity to meet fellow candidates and Youth Parliament organisers.

After this stage, a second shortlist was created to decide which candidates would appear on the official ballot papers. We are extremely proud to congratulate Jacob B (Year 7) on successfully reaching this stage. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects his confidence, commitment and willingness to represent the views of young people.

We look forward to supporting Jacob's campaign and learning more about what he, along with the other candidates, hopes to offer young people across the Breckland area. All students will have the opportunity to take part in the democratic process by voting for their chosen candidate during PART lessons.

Kids Norfolk Workshops

Here are some workshops for the spring term from Kids Norfolk that may be of interest to some Northgate parents and carers. These workshops are free and take place online.

Scan the QR code to book your place.



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Kids

Disabled children
say we can

Registered Charity No. 275936

Norfolk Parent Carer Service

Spring Term Online Workshops

Friday 13th February @ 11am - Introduction to Neurodiversity

Monday 2nd March @ 12pm - Resilience for Parents

Wednesday 4th March @ 10am - Behaviour that Challenges

Sunday 8th March @ 2pm - Behaviour that Challenges

Wednesday 18th March @ 11.30am - Neurodivergent Teen

Sunday 22nd March @ 2pm - Introduction to Neurodiversity

Sunday 12th April @ 2pm - Resilience for Parents

Sunday 19th April @ 2pm - Neurodivergent Teen

Each workshop is 2 hours long

Scan here for
Eventbrite
tickets:



Join us online -
just scan the code
and choose your
dates!

Email
sally.macgregor@
kids.org.uk for
more info

