



Northgate Council Bulletin

Improving Northgate by giving pupils a voice

April 2026

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Northgate's Orchard Committee to take part in Gressenhall Earth Day

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse is hosting their annual Earth Day on Wednesday 8th April. The Orchard Committee has been invited to have a stall at the event and to talk to members of the public about the work they are doing in The Orchard. They will be offering hands on demonstrations - making newspaper biodegradable seed pots for wildflower seeds and origami seed packets. The day is aimed at KS2 families so if you have any younger children, please consider going along and saying hello to our students! This will be the fourth year they have represented Northgate.



Upcoming events

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

Throughout April

Year 7 Exhibition at Dereham Windmill (see page 2)

8th April

Orchard Committee at Gressenhall Earth Day - 10am - 4pm

14th April

Summer Term begins - Week A

Year 9 Exams begin

14th - Year 9 EOY Science Paper 1 - Period 4

15th - Year 9 EOY Maths Paper 1 - Period 1

16th - Year 9 EOY Science Paper 2 - Period 1

17th - Year 9 EOY Maths Paper 2 - Period 1

22nd April

Year 8 Parents Evening - 4pm - 7pm

22nd - 24th April

Year 11 GCSE Language speaking exams

27th - 28th April

Year 11A Art, Textiles and Graphics GCSE exams

29th April

Year 7 + 8 Junior Maths Challenge

Year 6 Welcome to Northgate Evening 6pm in the main hall

30th April - 1st May

Year 11C GCSE Art exam

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



Po-e-tree Competition

This World Poetry Day, the Tree Council want to celebrate childrens' love of trees and nature with our own 'po-e-tree' competition.

Taking place annually on 21 March, World Poetry Day celebrates one of the most treasured forms of expression that helps people understand and appreciate the world. The Tree Council wanted to hear childrens' thoughts, feelings and hopes for trees, nature and our environment.

They therefore launched a po-e-tree competition which we opened up to all Northgate students. The poem could take any form and could be about a favourite tree, dreams of a tree-filled future or just capture a beautiful moment.

We had lots of entries from some very talented students, including some from our creative writing group. It was very difficult to judge them, based on such a high standard. All of the poems have been entered into the Tree Council's national competition. Congratulations to our winner, Jessica S (Year 7) whose poem is below and our runners up Lewis E (Year 9) and Saskia O (Year 7). All were awarded with prizes.

You can read all of the fantastic entries on our [website](#).

Childhood

As I lay on the grass,
staring at the sun,
I imagined my childhood,
when I played and laughed for fun...

I watched the leaves fall
and drift from the towering tree
that once shaded me
from the bright flame in the sky.

When I was away,
and the tree was not with me,
my sensitive skin would burn hot
beneath the treeless sky -
almost as painful and cruel
as touching an iron rod.

The tree was my protector,
keeping me safe from harm.
Its lush, emerald leaves
scattered across my garden in
autumn
like dozens of sparkling jewels.

When winter arrived,
the leaves disappeared.
My protector was gone -
yet I knew it would return,
ready and strong,
in the spring.



French Windmill exhibition

We are proud to share that our Year 7 students have displayed their amazing art work, alongside their french descriptions at Dereham Windmill during March. In fact, there were so many examples of superb work that more will be displayed throughout April. Do go and have a look if you have a chance - the windmill is open on the dates below from 11am - 2pm for a small cost. Students with work displayed get in for free!

3rd - 4th April (Mrs Brook's + Mr Everett's classes), 10th - 11th, 17th - 18th and 24th - 25th April (Miss Bila's, Miss Abdouni's and Mrs Oates' classes).



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Students join forces for the Great British Spring Clean

Last month, Northgate took part in the annual Great British Spring Clean campaign, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to caring for the environment and taking pride in our school site.

The event took place during lunchtime, with staff and students generously giving up their break to help tidy the school site.

Together, they collected an impressive five bags of litter.

A huge thank you goes to everyone who gave their time to support this initiative—it was a fantastic team effort that truly showcased our school’s community spirit. All participants were rewarded with merits in recognition of their hard work and commitment.

We would also like to extend our thanks to Dereham Community Litter Pickers, who earlier this year donated 24 litter pickers and 8 hoops to Northgate. Their support has made it possible for even more students and staff to get involved.

We are grateful for their dedication to keeping the local area clean, and we hope our efforts will inspire more students and families to take part in future clean-up projects. Together, we can make a difference!



Good luck Miss Williams!

Miss Williams, one of Northgate’s teaching assistants is taking on a huge challenge in April. Here she tells us all about it! ‘I’m running the London marathon to raise money for the Royal British Legion in memory of my brother Lewis Hendry who was killed in action whilst serving in Afghanistan in 2011. Lewis was a former pupil at Northgate High School. The Royal British Legion is a great charity who supports veterans and their families. I wanted to raise money for them whilst pushing myself out of my comfort zone to honour my brother. My training has been going well, although it’s been a tough few months training through a very wet winter! I recently ran 18 miles and my training will now taper down after my next long run ready for the big day. I want to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported me so far on my journey. The pupils and staff have been a great support always checking in to see how my training is going.

The London marathon takes place on Sunday 26th April. If you would like to support Miss Williams’ efforts, you can donate here: <https://2026tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/stacey-williams> or scan the QR code.





Year 10 look to the future

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On March 5th, Year 10 students and tutors visited the Norfolk Future Careers Expo at the Norfolk Showground. The event, run by the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, gave our Year 10 students a chance to explore real career pathways and see the range of opportunities open to them. Our students enjoyed a range of hands-on activities, including handling a prison service dog, learning how to perform CPR and flying a drone on a simulator. They also spoke to a range of employers and further education providers. Student comments included, 'I thought it gave everyone a good opportunity to explore new careers and get an insight into what future they could consider.' 'I enjoyed being able to see different career paths and learning what could happen during them.' 'I had the chance to speak to the professionals about what they do and how I could potentially be in their position in the future.' Mrs Graves, Head of Year, commented on how polite and engaged students were with the exhibitors. Well done Year 10!



Year 7s blast off on Science trip

As part of Science Week, Year 7 students enjoyed an exciting trip to the National Space Centre in Leicester. They explored interactive exhibits, learned about the solar system, and discovered the science behind space travel. The visit offered a fantastic opportunity to bring their classroom learning to life and sparked plenty of curiosity about the universe. A big thank you to Mrs Hartley for organising such an exciting trip!





Science Week at Northgate

There was lots going on at Northgate during Science Week with activities to spark plenty of interest. The hands-on activities brought learning to life and encouraged students to think creatively.

Students got active whilst exploring the science behind exercise, investigating how their heart rate changes during physical activity and what this tells us about fitness and performance. It was a great way to link science with everyday life and sport.

Creativity and problem-solving were on full display during the paper flight engineering challenge, where students designed, built and tested their own paper aircraft. There was plenty of competition to see whose design could fly the furthest or stay in the air the longest, showcasing some impressive engineering skills!

Meanwhile, Craft club took a colourful scientific turn with chromatography butterflies and flowers. Using simple materials, students discovered how colours separate whilst creating beautiful pieces of art, proving that science and creativity go hand in hand.

Overall, it was a fantastic week full of curiosity and discovery, with something for everyone to enjoy, which also included an escape room in the library, trip to the Space Centre, Orchard Committee meeting and more - thank you very much to Mrs Hartley for organising all the activities!

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World Book Day

There were lots of fantastic character outfits from students and staff on World Book Day. Here's just some of them.





Authors visit Northgate

Students at Northgate are fortunate enough to experience talks and workshops from a range of different authors over the year. During World Book Week, our readathon participants and Year 7s were treated to a fantastic author visit. Mitch Johnson joined us to talk predominantly about his book *Toxic*, the same title many Year 7s received as their book gift from school just before Christmas. Mitch shared fascinating insights into the research behind *Toxic*, including the environmental themes that inspired the story. Students were captivated by his talk, which included plenty of intriguing facts about frogs and the rainforest. His visit perfectly linked our celebrations for World Book Week with Science Week following the week after, sparking curiosity and conversation across both subjects. It was a brilliant opportunity for students to hear directly from a published author and to see how reading, writing, and science can connect in creative and meaningful ways. We were delighted to welcome Ashley Hickson-Lovence, our Writer in residence, back to Northgate in March. Ashley spoke to our Year 7 students about his verse novel *Wild East* and led inspiring writing workshops with Year 9 and Year 11 students. His enthusiasm, creativity, and passion for storytelling left a lasting impression, encouraging our young writers to explore their own voices and ideas.



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Science mystery solved



During Science Week, the library was transformed into a crime scene after a terrible murder had been committed! Students were challenged to investigate the mystery of who killed Miss Terry, using clues and witness statements hidden around the library. It wasn't as easy as it looked, solving the case required sharp detective skills, logical thinking, and plenty of teamwork. Many students spent their breaks and lunchtimes piecing together the evidence and testing their theories. Congratulations to Jacob and Morganne, who successfully identified the culprit and presented clear evidence and reasoning to crack the case! Thank you to Mrs Gill who organised such a fun event.



World Book Week fun at Northgate



Wow, what a jam packed World Book Week we had! There was so much going on, it was great to see lots of students get involved. From the readathon and literary cake bake, to a Wizard of Oz themed escape room and dressing up on World Book Day itself, there really was something for everyone. Thank you to Mrs Gill for organising all of the events.

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40 Year 7 and Year 8 students took part in a readathon, raising money for Read for Good. During the day, the library was transformed into a cosy reading haven, with students setting up their own "camps" complete with blankets, fairy lights, and even a blow-up airbed! There was a wonderful atmosphere as everyone got lost in their books.

A huge well done to everyone who took part in the literary cake bake - we definitely have some Bake Off-worthy bakers here at Northgate. The originality, presentation, and flavours were absolutely outstanding and certainly made the judge's decision very difficult.

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Our winning cakes were both inspired by Matilda by Roald Dahl, with Roxanne H-G (Year 7) taking first place and Emily S (Year 8) coming second. Evelyn T (Year 7) impressed the judges with her Very Hungry Caterpillar creation, earning third place.

They cut it fine, but all of our teams managed to escape from The Wizard of Oz after solving a series of clues that took them on a journey through Oz. From cracking Morse code and popping balloons, to making it through the field of poppies, finding the Tin Man, and piecing together the Scarecrow - this escape room had it all! There was some fantastic teamwork on display and plenty of fun along the way. Well done to all our brilliant escapees.





Updates from The Orchard

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It has been a busy and exciting month for the Orchard Committee, with plenty of hands-on learning and opportunities to explore the natural world.

They were delighted to welcome back Master Composters Carl and Glenis Watling for two special sessions. During their first visit, they introduced students to the fascinating world of composting by bringing along a working wormery. Students had the chance to observe a variety of minibeasts up close using a digital microscope, gaining a real insight into the organisms that help break down waste. They also took part in an interactive game, sorting items into what can and cannot be composted, an activity that sparked lots of discussion and learning.

In their second session, Carl and Glenis visited the Orchard itself to take a look at our composting systems. They were impressed with the progress being made and offered valuable advice, not only on improving our compost but also on the next steps for developing our tree nursery. Their support and expertise have been hugely appreciated and we look forward to further visits.

As part of Science Week, Mrs Hartley led a session exploring the structure of leaves. Students used a range of equipment, including traditional, handheld and digital microscopes, to examine leaves in detail. This provided a brilliant insight into how leaves are structured and how they function, bringing science to life in a very real way.

For the final session of the term, the Orchard Committee were joined by the Craft Club for a collaborative activity. Using recycled materials such as tin cans from the canteen, cardboard tubes, pine cones, sticks, moss and leaves, students created their own bug houses. These will provide important habitats for insects and help support biodiversity.

There is lots more planned for the summer term, and we are always keen to welcome new members. Orchard Committee meetings take place every Thursday after school, starting in MA6. come along and get involved!



Northgate News

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

[March Bulletin](#)



SPARX Maths Stars



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Our students have continued to impress with their dedication to SPARX Maths this half term, particularly in Years 9, 10 and 11. The platform remains a key part of supporting learning beyond the classroom, providing personalised questions that adapt to each student's progress and help build confidence over time. It has been fantastic to see so many students going above and beyond—aiming for full completion, tackling XP Boost and Target tasks, and using SPARX as a valuable revision tool in the lead-up to assessments.

We are especially proud of our SPARX Maths Stars, who, despite it being a short half term have achieved an outstanding 3,000 XP or more. This is a real testament to their hard work, resilience and commitment to improving their maths skills.

Congratulations to:

Year 9: Austin B, Edwin R, Robyn W, Phoebe L, Emmi P, Lilly A, Julia C, Noah P, Daisy R, Gracie M, Ellis E, Elizabeth H, Henry G

Year 10: Oliver C, Harry B, Yi Han G, Jasmine T, Milly D, Talli B

Year 11: Dana H, Mirren W, Paige W, Tatenda N, Chloe T, Freya N, Brigita Z, Ore O, Setaita K, Layla M, Jake T

Particular mention goes to Paige W (Year 11) who has now levelled up to level 100 - the first ever student at Northgate to do this!

Since September, our students have achieved some remarkable milestones:

830,376 questions answered correctly

7,584 hours of personalised learning completed

299 students have strengthened their times tables recall

Hundreds of students have progressed to new levels in their SPARX journey

Over 750 virtual certificates have been shared with families to celebrate outstanding progress.

We are incredibly proud of the dedication and enthusiasm shown by our students.

Year 10 Geographers head to Winterton-on-Sea

Year 10 students recently took part in an exciting Geography field trip to Winterton-on-Sea, where they investigated whether human activity has affected the natural sand dune succession. As part of their enquiry, students measured vegetation from the front to the back of the dunes to determine whether it followed the expected succession model. This hands-on experience allowed them to apply their classroom knowledge to a real-world environment. During the visit, two volunteers of the trip commented that this year's group was the best they had seen. They highlighted not only the students' excellent behaviour but also their strong understanding of sand dune ecosystems, making the trip both enjoyable and highly successful. Well done Year 10!





Sporting updates

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The Year 10 boys played their latest fixture against Neatherd at Dereham Rugby Club, as part of an initiative to promote more opportunities for young people to play rugby in the town beyond the school environment. Northgate showed great teamwork and determination throughout the match, scoring three excellent tries courtesy of Freddie, Jacy, and Jamie, with Ben successfully converting two of them. Equally impressive was the team's strong and improving defence, which limited the opposition to just one converted try. Final score: Northgate 19 – 7 Neatherd.



A fantastic performance and a great example of teamwork and commitment. Well done, boys! Last half term, the Year 11 boys competed in the League Finals, drawing Framingham Earl in the first semi-final. Despite being the stronger side, the boys were narrowly defeated 1–0, with strong winds making playing conditions tough. They bounced back brilliantly in their next game, creating plenty of chances but unable to find the winner in normal time. Showing great composure, they went on to beat Archbishop Sancroft 5–3 on penalties to secure 3rd place overall.



A fantastic effort and a fitting end to five years of representing Northgate – well done, boys! At the end of the term, girls from Northgate and Neatherd enjoyed a fantastic game of rugby hosted by Dereham Rugby Club. For many, it was their first-ever match, but the standard of play was incredibly impressive. There were plenty of strong tackles, brilliant tries, and lots of smiling faces throughout the afternoon.

A huge well done to all the girls who took part! Any pupils interested in playing rugby in Dereham are welcome to join training sessions at Dereham Rugby Club on Wednesday evenings from 7pm.



The Year 7 boys played in the South Norfolk League Finals last week, having qualified top of their league. The team were superb throughout the evening, winning all three of their matches to be crowned South Norfolk League Champions, finishing 1st out of 14 teams! Results: Beat Attleborough 3–0, Beat Diss 4–0, Beat Neatherd 8–0.

This incredible performance sees the boys finish the season undefeated, with eight wins and one draw, a fantastic achievement and a testament to their teamwork, skill, and determination.

Finally, well done to all the Year 11s who took part in a friendly game of netball - boys vs girls. It was great to see so many getting involved and enjoying the sport as well as all those cheering on from the side! The girls came out on top with a 12-7 victory.





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Celebrating success

Last month, we were delighted to learn that two of our students have achieved the prestigious Gold Chief Scout Award - the highest honour a Scout can earn. A huge congratulations to Tyler, Freddie and George in Year 9 on this outstanding accomplishment. To reach this impressive milestone, Tyler completed nine separate challenge awards alongside six activity badges. These included areas such as entertainer, environmental conservation, fundraising, and survival skills, demonstrating a wide range of talents and a strong commitment to developing new skills both independently and as part of a team.

Freddie also successfully completed all nine challenge awards, along with six activity badges of his own choosing. His dedication and perseverance throughout the process are a testament to his hard work and positive attitude.

George completed his Gold award at 1st Dereham Scouts recently. He has completed a number of different activities over the years and was also given the role of patrol leader. It is great to see our students show resilience and

leadship in their outside of school activities

The Gold Chief Scout Award is a significant achievement that recognises personal growth, leadership, resilience, and commitment over an extended period of time. It requires not only practical skills, but also teamwork, initiative and a willingness to take on new challenges. We hope the achievements are an inspiration to others who may be considering getting involved in activities outside of school.

Well done once again to Tyler, Freddie and George on your success.

Talented writers have their work published

A number of our students have recently had their poems or stories published. Some took part in the Stranger Sagas Young Writers creative writing competition, which challenged them to craft a 100-word story featuring a strange, mysterious, or unexpected theme. We're delighted that many of our talented writers were selected to have their work published, a fantastic achievement! Well done to everyone who took part and showcased their exceptional writing and imagination.

A huge well done also goes to some of our talented Year 9 students who entered the 'I Have a Dream' poetry competition and have been selected to have their work published!

This is a fantastic achievement and a wonderful recognition of their imagination, and writing skills. We're so proud to see their voices and ideas celebrated in print — an inspiring accomplishment for our young writers.



Celebrating success



We are always proud to celebrate the achievements of our students and so wanted to share some recent successes. On Friday 6th March, Isla-May N (Year 7) competed at the Pipers Vale Pre-Grades Gymnastics competition in the Development 3 category. She delivered an excellent performance, placing 3rd on floor, 2nd in range and conditioning, and 2nd overall. A fantastic achievement—well done, Isla-May!

At the end of February, Amelia S (Year 10) had an incredible weekend at the Three Counties Dance Competition in Wisbech, achieving outstanding results. She placed 1st in her Modern solo and 1st in her Ballet solo. A brilliant achievement—well done, Amelia!

Also towards the end of February, Poppy C (Year 8) took part in the United Twirl England National Qualifiers at UEA and achieved remarkable success. She came away with an impressive collection of trophies, earning 1st place in each of the following categories: Solo, 2 Baton, Artistic dance, Dance strut and Pom strut. What an outstanding achievement—well done, Poppy!

We love celebrating the success of our students. If you would like to share an achievement, please contact our Communications Manager, Mrs Hosier, via email: mhosier@ng6.unity-ed.uk.

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Attendance matters

Congratulations to 7SE, 7IP, 8AH, 8DNI, 9CG, 9AGR, 10RP, 10JLL, 11SO and 11SC who have all won the fortnightly attendance competition so far this half term.

We have recently purchased some brand new trophies and these, along with 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.

Congratulations to Grace R (Year 7), Charlotte B (Year 8), Harry B (Year 9), Rowan P (Year 10) and Jake G (Year 11) who won the Spring 2 raffle.





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Celebrating success

Elsa, in Year 7, has had a fantastic couple of months competing with her Cheerleading team at two major national events. At Legacy Cheer held at Wembley Arena, the team were crowned 1st Place Division winners, an incredible achievement on such a



big stage! They followed this up with another brilliant performance at Cheer City at Warwick University, where they secured 2nd Place.



A huge well done to Elsa and her teammates for their dedication and success — and fingers crossed for more great results when they compete at the NEC in Birmingham in June!

Northgate hosts Reading Champions quiz

Last month, Northgate hosted the National Literacy Trust Senior Reading Champions quiz for the East of England, with 25 teams proudly representing their schools in a lively and competitive event.

After several challenging rounds, the competition ended in a three-way tie. Two tie-breakers couldn't separate the teams, but on the third, Ipswich School Team B were narrowly eliminated, leaving Kings Ely Team B and Wymondham High Academy Team A in the final. Kings Ely Team B claimed victory, coming just three words away from the correct answer in a word-count challenge, and will now represent the region in the national finals in London. Springwood High School Team A received the Best Participation Award, while Lynn Grove Academy were named Best Newcomers. Thank you to all participating schools, our Northgate teams, and our student librarians for their excellent support throughout the event.

Jessica J, Year 7 took part in the quiz and said, 'In the 25 teams, 2 were from Northgate. In each team there were 4 people who worked together to answer each question. In each round there were 10 questions and 8 rounds in total. Every round had a different theme such as: picture rounds, movie rounds and a selection of riddles. It was a positive environment and was lovely to meet all the other schools. Also, our mascot, Paige the library fox, was a massive morale boost during the harder questions. In addition, thank you to all the people who made it possible like

quiz master, Mrs Gill, the adult supervisors who brought the schools down, the student librarians and the markers, who made the whole experience very enjoyable.'



Outstanding artwork



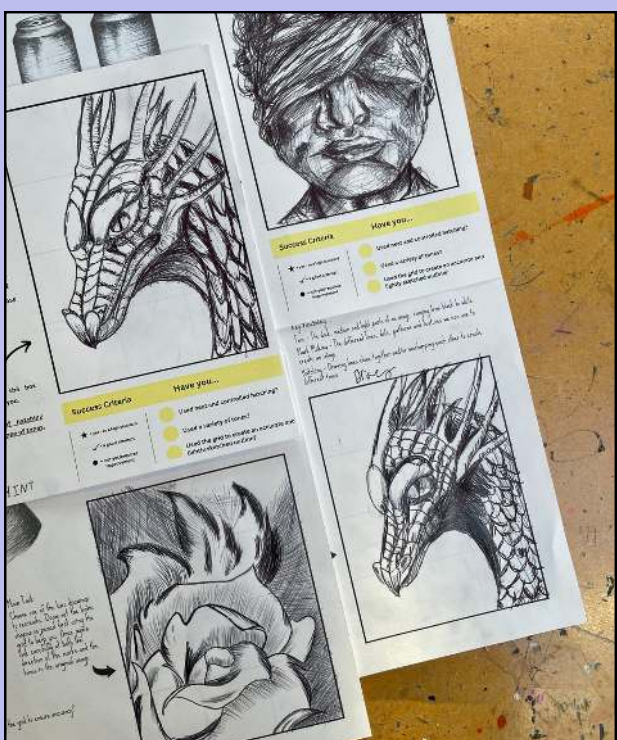
We love to showcase the amazing work of our students from the Art and Design department and so would like to share some of the work produced over the last half term. We hope you'll agree, we have some very talented students at Northgate!

Year 7 sunset paintings focussed on warm and cool colours, Year 8 packaging paintings focussed on tints and shades, Year 8s produced some Moroccan tile inspired lino prints, Year 9 biro drawings focussed on tone and mark making and finally, Year 10 produced some lino prints as part of their GCSE course. You can see more of our students' work on our [website](#).

We look forward to sharing more work with you in the coming months, particularly when our Year 11s showcase their GCSE coursework and exam pieces.

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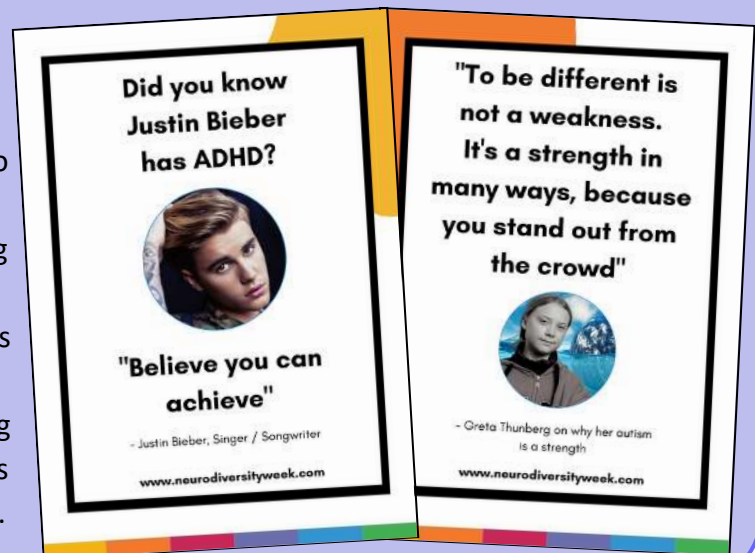
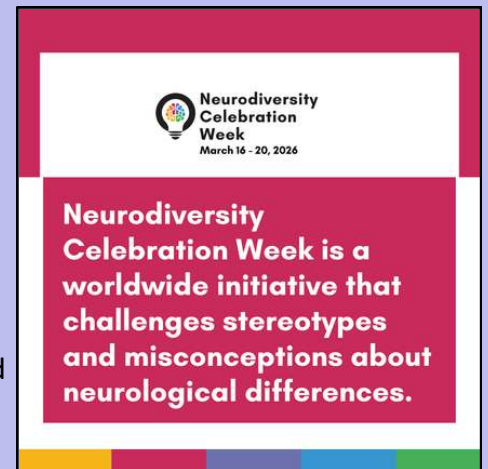
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Northgate celebrates Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Northgate proudly marked Neurodiversity Celebration Week (16–20 March 2026) with assemblies focused on recognising and valuing the different ways our brains work. Students explored the concept of neurodiversity, learning that just like biodiversity strengthens ecosystems, a diversity of minds strengthens our school and society. Around 15–20% of people are neurodivergent, and there is no single ‘correct’ way to think, learn or communicate.

The assembly highlighted the unique ‘superpowers’ associated with different neurodivergent conditions:
ADHD – creativity, energy and the ability to hyperfocus
Autism – strong attention to detail, logic and memory
Dyslexia – big-picture thinking and problem-solving skills.
Students were also inspired by well-known figures who are neurodivergent, including Lewis Hamilton, Greta Thunberg, Steve Jobs and Lucy Bronze, showing how different ways of thinking can lead to incredible success. Posters put up around the school celebrated those who are neurodivergent.

The key message was clear: differences are strengths. Neurodivergent individuals bring valuable skills such as problem-solving, empathy and authenticity - qualities that benefit the entire school community. The assembly also encouraged students to be supportive and inclusive by: Avoiding judgement of behaviours such as fidgeting or using headphones, communicating clearly and directly, celebrating differences and valuing diverse perspectives. As a school, Northgate is committed to creating an environment where every student feels understood, supported and able to thrive.



Merit Update

Students have now earned over 50,000 merits since September - an incredible achievement! Over 1300 virtual certificates have been sent home celebrating merit milestones, with more on their way. 9 students have now achieved 150 merits and 121 have earned over 100 merits. Many badges and certificates have been awarded and more will be given out after Easter.

Bonus merits have recently been awarded - 610 for those with an average of >4.5 for their autumn AP2 attitude to learning/effort, 510 for those with an average between 4 and 4.5, 1770 for those with 100% attendance for the second spring half term, 543 for those with >95% attendance and 1525 for those who gained no negatives for the second spring half term.

Merit cashing in continues to take place on Mondays, in the main hall from 12.30pm - 12.50pm, returning on Monday 20th April.

The House merit competition is still all to play for at the moment so every merit counts.

Well done to Rowling who have maintained their lead since Christmas.

Rowling	Holmes	Attenborough	Hawking
63.88	62.53	61.85	60.74