

# Head of School UPDATE

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026



Dear parents/carers and students,

It is that time of year when our Year 11 students receive their PPE results and their AOL2 data set. This set of PPE results has provided our students with a realistic picture of what they may expect to achieve in the summer. During our practice results sessions, many students were pleased with their progress, while others experienced a helpful reality check about the areas they now need to concentrate on ahead of the summer examination season.



Our Year 11 Parents' Evening will take place online on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026 from 4.30pm to 7.30pm, and parents are required to book their online appointments in advance. Year 11 is a crucial year, with GCSE exams and coursework to complete, so this Parents' Evening will focus on discussing progress, current grades, and areas where students should prioritise their learning to achieve their best outcomes in the summer.

As we approach these critical months, we remain committed to providing every student with the tools and support they need to excel in their GCSE examinations. To that end, we offer a range of intervention strategies designed to target areas where students may benefit from additional guidance or encouragement. These include lunchtime and after-school revision sessions with specialist teachers, opportunities for students to engage with GCSEPod, subject-specific afternoon registration sessions, and assemblies that focus on how to plan and organise effective revision. We are also pleased to share that once again we will be offering subject-specific sessions during the Easter break. Year 11 parents should look out for further information regarding these opportunities. We kindly ask for your support in encouraging your child to make the most of the intervention and support available to them.

PSA sessions have begun for Year 10 vocational students, they have shown excellent attitude and focus throughout the programme so far. It is vital that attendance remains high to ensure progress continues and students stay on track. Well done to all students so far.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind all students and families about the importance of good punctuality. Being on time to school each day ensures that students begin their learning promptly, are fully prepared for lessons, and do not miss essential teaching. Punctuality is also an important life skill that supports responsibility and independence - qualities that are especially crucial as students approach their GCSE examinations. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that your child arrives to school on time every day.

For students in Years 7 to 10 I would like to remind parents and students about our Aspire challenges reward programme. Every student has their individual Aspire passport which outlines tasks to complete to achieve their first, or next Aspire badge. It would be fantastic to be able to reward students with their new Aspire badge this term!

Last Saturday, a team of our dedicated STEM students proudly represented Bourne Academy at the IET First Lego League Regional Final. They took part in this international STEM challenge, which encourages young people to develop confidence, teamwork, creativity and problem-solving skills. The team consisted of Joseph Brackley (Team Leader), Bosco Mo (Chief Coder), Jack Child and Ollie Christie (Project Managers) and Elliott Squires (Robot Design Lead). Since September, they have devoted countless lunchtimes and after-school sessions to preparing for the competition. This year's theme was 'Unearthed' and this inspired the students to design an imaginative concept of a mobile X-ray machine capable of scanning dinosaur fossils to help palaeontologists identify species and determine ages.



With guidance from Dr Poulter (Teacher of Science), their hard work was rewarded with the Project Concept Trophy, accompanied by praise for a 'very innovative and well-researched project'. Throughout the event, the students demonstrated outstanding professionalism, teamwork and enthusiasm. They also gained valuable experience, enjoyed the challenge, and are already determined to return even stronger next year.

Our A-level Psychology students in Years 12 and 13 had a treat this week (if you like reptiles and insects!) when Zoolab who specialise in animal encounters and therapy visited the Sixth Form. Students came face-to-face with Buttercup the Snake, Jarvis the Cockroach, Honey the Gecko, Gloria the Frog as well as Elvis the Tarantula and had the opportunity to safely hold and stroke the friendly visitors. Our students have been studying the psychology of phobias as part of the A-level content and the different treatments such as 'flooding' where you face your phobias to overcome them. There was no tears or shrieks despite some of them admitting they were scared of spiders and snakes. Everyone was very calm and embraced the opportunity to overcome any fears they made have had - and it looks like 'flooding' really works.



Year 11 have truly been shining in Food Preparation and Nutrition this term, filling the kitchens with creativity, focus, and some truly mouth watering aromas. As they work towards their final assessments, students have been producing an impressive array of dishes, each one reflecting their growing confidence and independence. Their precision knife skills, thoughtful preparation techniques, and assured use of equipment have been wonderful to watch. Even more striking has been their attention to portion control and presentation, transforming simple ingredients into beautifully finished plates. We are incredibly proud of the dedication they have shown and the culinary flair they continue to develop. We can't wait to see what delicious creations they bring this term.



Finally, I wanted to share an important update about our Trust Board. Our Chair of Trustees, Will Hawkins, retired from the Board in December after many years of dedicated service. We are incredibly grateful to Will for his leadership, commitment, and the positive impact he has had across our Trust. We are pleased to let you know that John Stokes has now been appointed as our new Chair of Trustees. John brings a wealth of experience to the role, and we look forward to working with him as we continue to move the Trust forward. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with your Head of School or Mrs Curson in the first instance. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katie Belcher', written in a cursive style.

**Miss Katie Belcher**

Head of School, Bourne Academy

## For the latest news

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