



Parrs Wood Pigeon Summer 2025

Issue no. 9 July 2025

Parrs Wood Hits all the Right Notes!



This term has seen more musical talent on display than ever before at Parrs Wood, and we're so proud of all the students involved!

We started the term with a gig put on by some of our 6th form students, to raise money for Mermaids UK. The performances were some covers and some original material, and we were so impressed by their dedication and professionalism in the performances. Mermaids is a UK charity working to support transgender, non-binary and gender diverse children, young people and their families. Mermaids' vision is a safe, inclusive society where trans children and young people are empowered to live their best lives. The students raised £200 and counting, and they would greatly appreciate any donations possible:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/thomas-barton-1?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

Choir performed as part of the secondary schools' Vocal Showcase with One Education at the historic Victoria Baths. We had songs from all over the world across multiple genres, and

it was great to see them working with schools across Manchester to raise the roof with their brilliant singing.

Jazz Band performed at Band on the Wall as part of their Big Band event. It was great for our students to be back in such an iconic Manchester venue, especially as it was the last concert with us for several of the performers. We wish them all good luck in their future musical journeys.

Some of our current and future GCSE Music students went for some workshops at Loreto 6th form college to experience some of the GCSE Music set works. They got to participate in performances of everything from using a harpsichord, to the witches of Oz, and had a brilliant day performing and exploring the pieces. Well done to all involved!

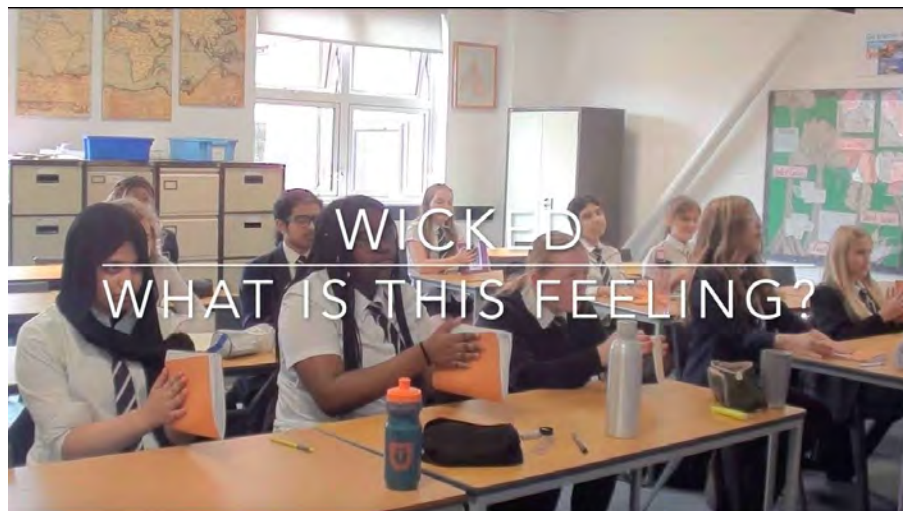
Keyboard club performed in a recital to celebrate the diversity of the pieces they've been working on, including some of their own compositions as well. They are a group that is incredibly creative and supportive of each other, and it was wonderful to see all their hard work come together at the end of the year.

Musical Theatre Club have been working in Oz on a performance of 'What is this Feeling?' from 'Wicked!' this term. They've worked so hard bringing this to life, and we hope you enjoy their fabulous performance!

And that brings us to another big project that we've been working on...our production of Beauty and the Beast! There are no words to describe how proud we are of each and every student and member of staff that were involved in the cast and crew. It was beyond the best production we've put on as a school. The hard work, enthusiasm and talents of all the students were such a joy to behold, and we cannot express how good the final results were.

See you in 2027 for the next one!

Miss Gocher

















The Sound in the Woods



An excellent piece of creative writing assessment:

The sun is shining down on me too brightly as I skip along the path, chatting to my friends. The back of my neck is soaked with sweat – I knew I should have remembered a sun hat! As I am about to tell Hollie and Yvonne about the new song I heard yesterday, I hear an eerie noise coming from the woods to my left. It sounds like a wind chime in running water. Or something like that. My gaze and focus are locked in towards it – my mind and body frozen in a feeling I can't quite name. My self shuts down and I forget everything I'm supposed to do. The noise rings out again and before I know it, I'm running full pelt towards it. I can faintly hear people calling my name – my teacher yelling at me to stop – but the noise washes over me and I forget it all.

My brain swings left so I swing right and even though I feel blood dripping everywhere on me, the leaves and trees tearing through my skin like paper in a shredder. I don't stop. The sound is controlling me like I'm a marionette or a puppet on a sting. It's hypnotic – my heart and head are pounding in me – telling me to leave. It's reshaping my instincts with every step I take away from where I'm supposed to be. I feel terrified and exhilarated all at once. Or like I'm a smoothie in a blender and someone's added too many ingredients.

All of a sudden, I trip and lose my footing as my hands fly about, trying to grab onto something, anything. The trance sound had on me is broken and all I'm left with is the feeling of disorientation as I stumble down into a hole in the ground with no apparent way back up. My head feels split – like an axe is grinding through it. My left wrist is bent the wrong way and every slight touch sets it aflame. Luckily, I'm right-handed.

I can't believe this. What the hell was I thinking? Who runs away from a school trip when they hear a noise? Me, I guess. As my eyes adjust to this living nightmare, I work out that I must have fallen at least ten feet down into a - clearly man-made - hole. The roots of trees and plants hang out of the sides and dirt is crumbling everywhere.

Suddenly, there is a noise up top. I can see two people there. One girl and one boy. I scream at them in desperation, "HELP! HELP!! I'm stuck down here!" Their emotionless faces turn into sky grins and snickers and I suddenly know that this was them. They led me here. They dug this hole. Mulch starts to rain down on me and I scream. They're gonna bury me alive! I try to utilise my good hand by clawing at the sides of where I am, but I slip and fall. Their laughs are the only thing I hear before I am left here, murdered by my own curiosity. (And mountain of dirt.)

Georgiana Kerr

[Parrs Wood Art Showcase](#)

This term's showcase features artwork from Years 7–11, highlighting the creativity and talent of our students. Many of the pieces were displayed in our pop-up exhibition, which returned this year alongside *Beauty and the Beast* after a few years away. It was a fantastic celebration of artistic skill, and we're already looking forward to the next one in 2026!

Mr Davison





















The MMU Degree Show

Year 12 students visited the MMU degree show to see work from a range of creative courses including game design and filmmaking. This gave them insight into potential careers connected to creative subjects while also inspiring their own projects. It was a fun day enjoyed by all the students.

Mr Davison





Year 10's Recipe for Success

Food preparation and nutrition Year 10 pupils have completed a practical assessment to showcase their skills ahead of Year 11's practical exam. All the products are made from scratch – the pastries, breads, pastas, sauces and more – we are excited to see what they achieve in Year 11. Well done Year 10!

Ms Lyons





George Finch
Para Wood High School
1606



Oscar Miller
Para Wood High School
1607





Sammie Southern Santos
Parrs Wood High School
1661



Christopher Vassiloulis
Parrs Wood High School
1707



Ellian Lee
Parrs Wood High School
1726







Tyler Standley
Penn Wood High School
1882



Amirah Ramsay
Penn Wood High School
1858







Our Time in France

We started the day with a delicious continental breakfast, including fresh pastries and warm hot chocolate. Shortly after, we headed to a snail farm to learn about—and even try—escargot! We discovered that snails produce special juices that are surprisingly good for your skin, and we were even allowed to apply some ourselves. It was odd, but interesting!

Next, we got to try three flavours of escargot: feta and tomato (fantastic), shallot (an acquired taste), and garlic butter (absolutely delicious). After that, we enjoyed our homemade baguettes for lunch—simple but perfect!

In the afternoon, we visited a bakery where we learned all about how bread is made. We even had the chance to roll out our own croissants. Afterwards, we were allowed to buy some tasty baked goods.

Finally, we headed to a picturesque old town for some free time to explore and pick up souvenirs. I bought a ring to remember the trip, and thanks to our lovely bus driver, we had a fun journey back listening to music.

Today was full of unforgettable memories. My favourite part of the trip was spending time immersing myself in French culture. It was challenging to speak French so frequently, but by the end of the trip, we were doing great!

Lucy Humphrey

During our last day in France we had an extraordinary experience at Nausicaa in Boulogne-sur-mer! We went to an immersive room that educated the group on global warming and its effects on the environment. My favourite part of the aquarium was the seal show. It was very entertaining! Soon after, we explored the 1,600 different species of sea life through tunnels and exhibitions. This was truly a mesmerising experience. After all, Nausicaa is the biggest aquarium in Europe!

Once we finished in the aquarium, we went to a sunny beach to play a game of rounders in the warm sand. Even though it was competitive, it was incredible and energetic. The group then decided to go into the lovely seaside town nearby to indulge in a cooling ice cream (mango sorbet was a popular choice). When purchasing our ice creams, we spoke in French to practise our language skills. It was nerve wracking at first but felt easier towards the end of the trip, since we had been using our French so frequently.

Once we got back to the Chateau, we ended the day doing a cheese tasting activity where we tried many different types of authentic French cheeses. There were many mixed opinions! Overall, today was an excellent day out on the French trip.

Elizabeth Mulliss





Sunshine, Spanish, and Sagrada Família!



From 20th to 24th June, a group of excited Year 8 and 9 students set off for an unforgettable cultural and educational trip to Barcelona. The adventure was packed with sunshine, Spanish flair, and plenty of learning experiences beyond the classroom.

Highlights of the trip included a visit to the stunning Sagrada Família, a walk through the historic Gothic Quarter, a hands-on visit to Picasso's Museum, and a tour of the city visiting Gaudí's colourful architecture. The group also had the chance to visit the beach, soak up the Mediterranean atmosphere, and enjoy traditional tapas and churros.

Language practice was a key part of the journey. Students embraced every opportunity to use their Spanish—from ordering food and navigating the metro to chatting with local shopkeepers—boosting both their confidence and communication skills.

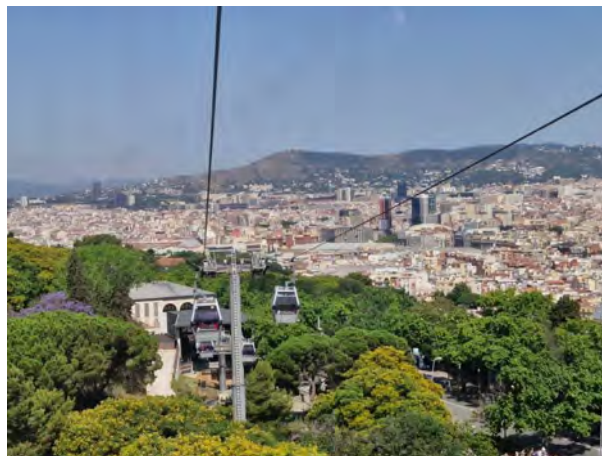
Evenings were filled with group activities that encouraged teamwork, friendship, and fun, including a quiz night and a traditional flamenco show that brought Spanish culture to life.

Staff were incredibly proud of how students represented the school—showing curiosity, respect, and enthusiasm at every turn. It was a joy to see friendships grow and language skills flourish in such a vibrant and inspiring city.

¡Gracias, Barcelona! We're already looking forward to our next adventure.

Miss Lopez









ES ✨ Year 10 Take on Spain! ✨ ES



Our Year 10 students have just returned from an unforgettable adventure in Murcia, Spain – the beautiful hometown of Miss López! From splashing around at a water park 🌊 to soaking up the rich history of Cartagena and Murcia 🏰, every day was packed with culture, fun, and new experiences.

A few highlights: 🎭 Flamenco masterclass – students stepped into the rhythm of Spanish tradition

🌲 Night hike – a magical trek under the stars to a charming local village

🌊 Water park thrills – laughter, slides, and sunshine all day long!

We're so proud of how our students embraced the culture, challenged themselves, and represented our school with pride. ¡Gracias, Murcia, for the memories – and thank you Miss López for showing us your amazing hometown! ❤️ ES

Miss Lopez







Linguists at Manchester University

On Monday 16th June, our Y10 linguists went on a trip to the University of Manchester for a languages programme event. They took part in a creative subtitling task and a language taster session where they learnt Mandarin! Pupils also had a tour of the campus and were told about all the exciting opportunities on offer at the university if you take languages. Well done to all the linguists who attended 😊

Miss Burnham



Sweet Rewards for Year 7

Miss Lyons and I did a reward lesson for an outstanding Year 7 Spanish class. They have had a consistent positive attitude to learning and deserved a treat.

They got the chance to make churros *and* practise their Spanish in the kitchen! They worked brilliantly as a team and learnt some new cooking-specific vocabulary at the same time. Their favourite bit was dipping their churros in melted chocolate and tasting them for the first time! Fue muy sabroso 😊 Bien hecho Year 7! And thank you to Miss Lyons for helping with this cross-curricular activity!

Miss Burnham



A Slice of the Tropics in Greater Manchester

As part of our Outdoor Skills programme, Kit Walker, our longstanding volunteer at the Environment Centre, set us the task of pruning and harvesting some sugarcane. A large clump of *Saccharum officinarum* (striped sugarcane) had become overgrown and needed cutting back.

Using the right tools for the job, students sawed through the base of the stalks with a hand saw and cut the canes into smaller chunks using loppers. They then peeled away the tough outer skin to reveal the sweet inner core, a delicious sugary treat that can be chewed but not swallowed. Each student was allowed to take home a few pieces, which resembled sticks of seaside rock. Most pupils really enjoyed the sweet juice, with some saying it reminded them of times in Egypt, Iraq, and the Caribbean.

Originally from Asia, sugarcane is now grown in tropical and subtropical regions around the world, and even in greenhouses here in Greater Manchester. It dates back to prehistoric times and was famously described by the Ancient Greeks, who encountered it in India, as

“the reeds that produce honey without bees.” In addition to being a natural sweetener, sugarcane is used in drinks, animal feed, and increasingly as a biofuel.

Sugarcane is just one of the more unusual plants grown at the Environment Centre here at Parrs Wood. In our greenhouses, you will also find giant agave, hibiscus flowers, peace lilies, and one slowly ripening pineapple, which we are all keeping a very close eye on.

Mr Largan











River Bollin Field Trip

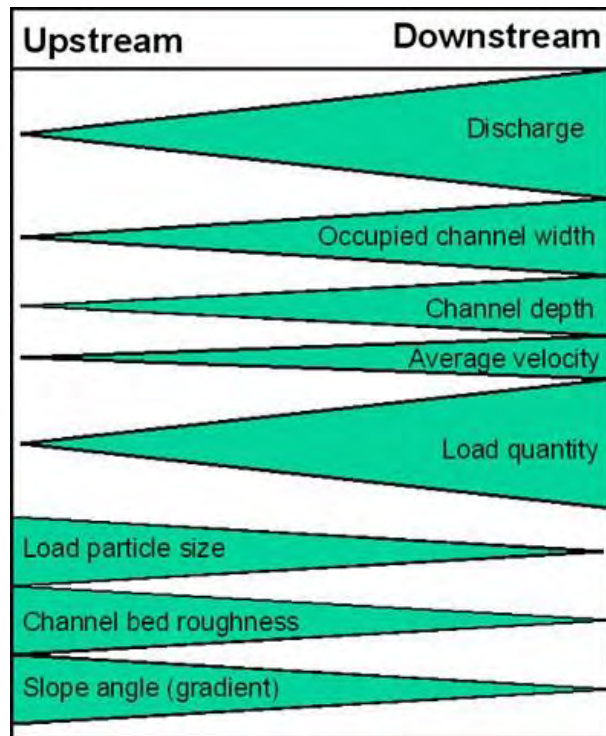
The Year 10 Geographers had a wonderful time on the 2025 physical geography field trip. There were several groups, each going on different days from the 2nd to the 4th of June. The groups went to a rural location on the River Bollin in the Peak District National Park, a picturesque part of the world. The principal focus of this trip was to collect river data e.g. river width, velocity, depth and bedload size and compare it to the Bradshaw Model.

We learnt how to collect this data using field work equipment such as ranging poles and calipers whilst also mastering the ability to look stylish in our wellingtons and waterproofs. Lunch would have been idyllic if it wasn't for the interesting smells produced by the local farm yard!

Overall this trip was a great experience for the students while also providing knowledge of how to collect primary river data which they will use in their future GCSE exams.

Emilia Smith and Lois Day





Year 10 GCSE Citizenship Moot Court at MMU



At the end of June, our students stepped into the shoes of judges, barristers, solicitors, ushers, clerks, and police officers during an unforgettable mock trial experience at Manchester Metropolitan University.

They explored:

⚖️ Types of law and how courts work

📊 The surprising fact that 95% of crimes are dealt with in magistrates' courts – not crown court, busting myths from TV dramas!

🚫 Why UK judges don't use gavels (despite what movies say!)

📖 The seriousness of giving an oath in court – and the consequences of lying

The case revolved round a stabbing that took place during a fight between rival gangs. The jury had to decide if the accused had carried out the attack or could it have been someone else? Our young legal teams did a fantastic job fighting a fierce case, leading to a guilty verdict (10–2) and a tough sentence of 7 years 8 months announced by the Judge– perhaps reflecting real-world issues around rising youth knife crime.

The students said:

💬 “I never thought I’d want to go to university – but I want to come to this one!”

💬 “I want to be a barrister now – it was so fun and showed me what uni could be like!”

We wrapped up with a tour of MMU’s inspiring campus – because ambition isn’t limited to the courtroom!

There will be another opportunity for Year 10 Citizenship students to visit the court next year.

Mr Wallace





Year 10s Crack the Case!

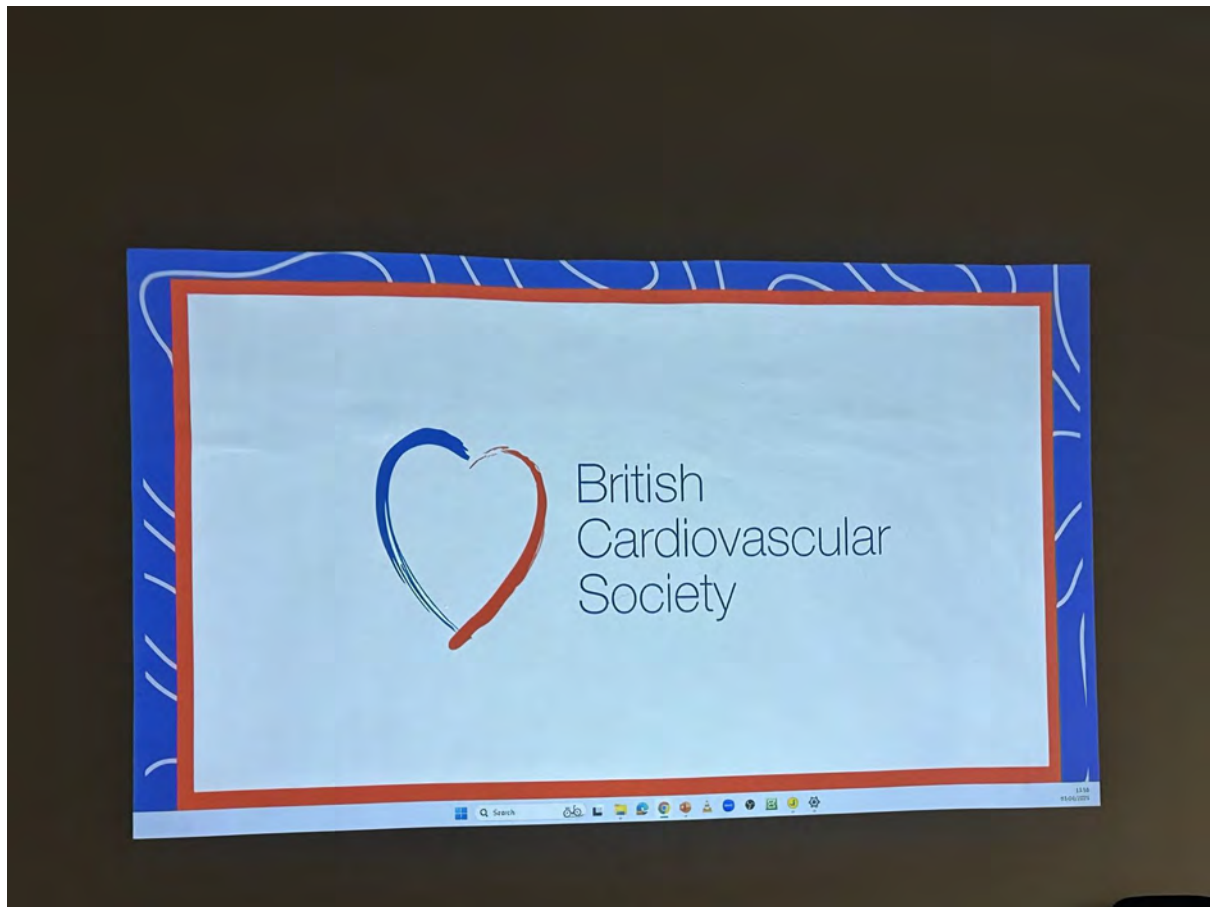


Four year 10 students went to Stockport Grammar School recently to compete in a science competition. Their task was to discover which of the suspects has broken into a lab and stolen valuable chemicals. They had to carry out chemical and statistical analysis, match fingerprints from the crime scene and test biological samples in order to provide the evidence needed to arrest the suspect. The students worked absolutely brilliantly as a team, demonstrating problem solving and ability to work with professional laboratory equipment. With all their excellent work, they managed to come in 3rd place! They did the school and themselves very proud.

Miss Watson



Year 12 Health & Social Care Trip – British Cardiovascular Society 2025



Our Year 12 students had an inspiring day at the ‘Your Heart Hospital’ experience, part of the British Cardiovascular Society’s Annual Conference!

Where they explored:

- ❤️ How the heart works
- ⚠️ Risks and prevention of heart disease
- 🧠 Life-saving knowledge of CPR
- 👩🏻💻 Careers in cardiology and healthcare

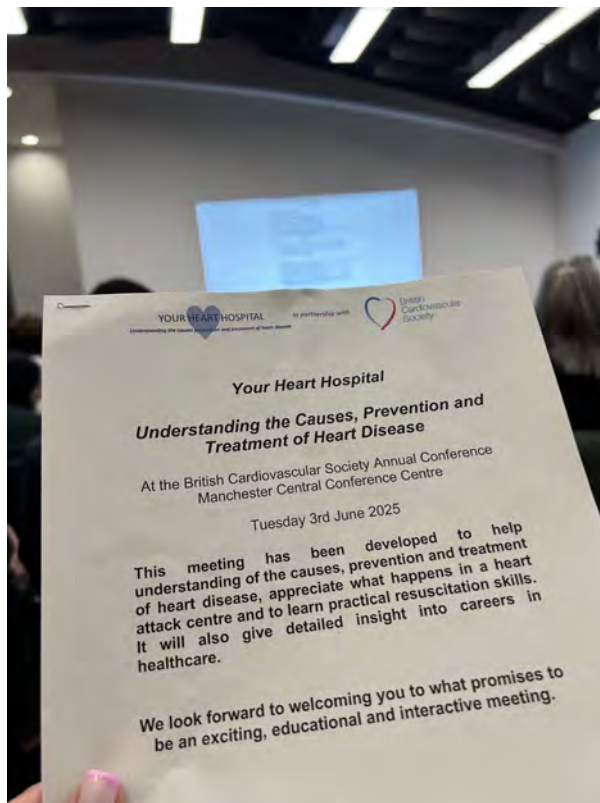
💬 “I loved talking to the cardiac physiologist – now I know which career I want in healthcare!” Amira Year 12

📢 We learnt 80% of cardiac arrests happen at home. The survival rate for a Coronary Arrest outside of hospital in Manchester is only 7% but starting CPR early and using a defibrillator could save 1000s of lives.

✅ Find your nearest defibrillator here: <https://www.defibfinder.uk> – it could save a life.

Miss Woodward





GMET Personal Development Conference



Earlier this month, ten of our amazing Y9 students attended the GMET Personal Development conference at Old Trafford where they spent the day honing their leadership skills. Working collaboratively with pupils from Levenshulme, TEMA and Whalley Range, students focused on exploring, developing and showcasing their communication, speaking and listening, problem solving and time management skills. Our students shone at the Theatre of Dreams and are ready to share what they have learnt with their peers when they return to school in September. Congratulations to all the students involved – you represented Parrs Wood perfectly!

Mrs Catterall and Ms Woodward



FUTURE CHOICES

This Term is all about discovering opportunities after school and beyond.



Year 10 Future Choices Day

Students enjoyed an inspiring day filled with opportunities to explore their future pathways. Highlights included motivational careers talks from a judge (a former Parrs Wood student) and The Army. They also visited a busy careers fair, where they explored a wide range of post-school possibilities. Stalls featured further education colleges, apprenticeship providers, university students, Sixth Form students, a university specialist, and our independent careers advisor. In addition, students took part in a Unifrog computer activity, allowing them to research their Post-16 options in more depth.





Year 10 Work Experience at Tesco

Year 10 students took part in a work experience session at the local Tesco supermarket, gaining valuable skills like teamwork, customer service, and time management. The hands-on experience gave them insight into the workplace and helped prepare them for future careers.



Year 12 Applications Morning

Year 12 students began their university journey by registering for the UCAS Hub, exploring courses via Unifrog, and starting their applications. A talk from Manchester Metropolitan University provided key insights into the application process and what universities look for.



Year 10 Taster Day at Manchester College

Year 10 students explored career options during a Taster Day at Manchester College, taking part in hands-on sessions across industries like construction, computing, animal care, and hospitality. Each student chose three areas of interest, gaining insight into possible future college and career paths



Year 12 Work Experience Week

Year 12 students recently took part in Work Experience Week, gaining valuable insight into a range of careers—from law and construction to healthcare. The experience helped them build workplace skills, boost confidence, and enhance their CVs as they plan for the future.



QA Apprenticeships Visit

Students in Year 10 and Year 12 recently had the opportunity to attend a talk and workshops led by Heather Wheatley from QA Apprenticeships, the UK's largest provider of IT, Tech, and Digital training. Heather delivered an engaging session on career pathways in Digital Marketing and Software Engineering, offering valuable insights into the world of apprenticeships and the growing opportunities in the tech industry.

