Braunton School and Community College Academy Trust

Parents' Post

www.braunton.academy Autumn 1 2026

Thoughts from the Principal's Office

Dear Families,

Welcome to the first Parents' Post of the year. It has been an amazing first half term with lots to celebrate. It has been lovely to see the recent press articles sharing how well our Year 11 students did in their GCSE results and the school achieving the Parent Partnership award. We have also been extremely impressed with the new Year 7 students who have had a brilliant start to the year.

As always, the first term is a very busy one, with Year 7 'Meet the Tutor' Evening, information events for all our GCSE students, Post-16 Information Evening, and Open Evening. Again, these were extremely well-attended by families, and it was lovely to engage with so many of our wider community.

The sporting season is also in full swing with all year groups participating in extra-curricular clubs and the usual round of competitive matches.

As well as the usual return to school events we have been lucky enough to have had an international author visit us as part of the Appledore Book Festival, hosted an amazing international dance company on behalf of Beaford Arts and our students are well under way with rehearsals for this year's Drama performance of Matilda Junior.

I hope you enjoy celebrating this term's achievements with the rest of our school community.

Enjoy the half term break!

Best wishes, Mrs Bowler, Principal



ICO Success!

Mason (Year 9) attended the ICO (International Combat Organisation) world championships in Thonon-Les-Bains, France from October 14th-18th. Mason did incredibly well, achieving 1 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals in 6 categories. Massive congratulations Mason...we hope you continue to progress and have many more great achievements on your karate journey.



Welcome to New Staff

This term we say a warm 'welcome' to the following new members of our staff:

- Miss Overton, Second in Charge of English Dept
- Mrs Ovey, Teacher of Spanish and English
- Ms Stevens, Teacher of Drama
- Mrs Lain, Teacher of English
- Mr Cochrane, Assistant Head of Year
- Miss Boutle, Senior Science Technician
- Mr Blannin, Mrs Parsons, Mrs Springett, and Dr Hinnells - Supply Teachers
- Mr Spear, Teaching Assistant
- Mrs Plumb, Admin/Reception Team
- Miss Sampson, PE Technician

Farewell to Staff Leavers

We also said 'goodbye and good luck' to
- Mrs Lee De Fernandez
- Mrs Maxey
- Mrs Begley
- Mrs Edwards

Who have all moved on to new roles outside of the Academy. We would like to thank each one of them for their positive contribution to life at the Academy and wish them the very best in their new roles.

Amigos Update

Our sponsored trainee with Amigos, Henry is midway through what Amigos call 'Entrepreneur Fortnight' - an opportunity to put into practice the business skills they have been learning.

Working in groups of three, each team has been given £13 of starter capital to develop a business idea and try it out in the community to see if they can make the money grow!
It's a tough challenge. They're trading in an unfamiliar community, among strangers, often across language barriers.

The task mirrors life outside the Kira Farm gates: small businesses make up over 90% of Uganda's private sector, yet young entrepreneurs struggle to access capital, markets and networks. With youth unemployment around 16%, being able to build something of your own, rather than waiting for a job that may never come, matters more than ever.



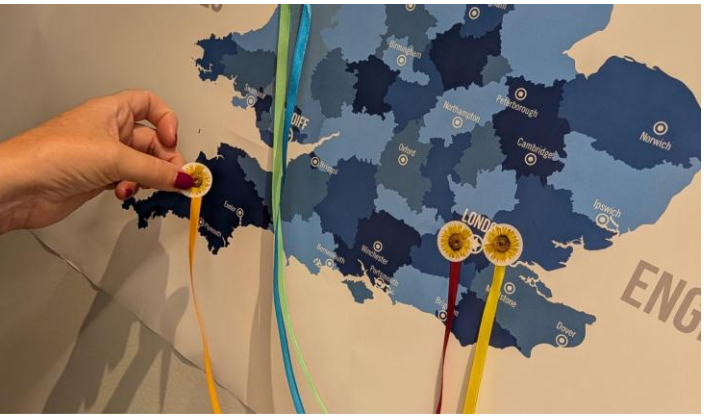
We hope that Henry and all the other trainees that Amigos are developing use this time to overcome the fears that come with stepping into the unknown and carry home a seed of confidence: proof that they can build something real, even when the odds feel stacked against them. We will let you know how Henry gets on!

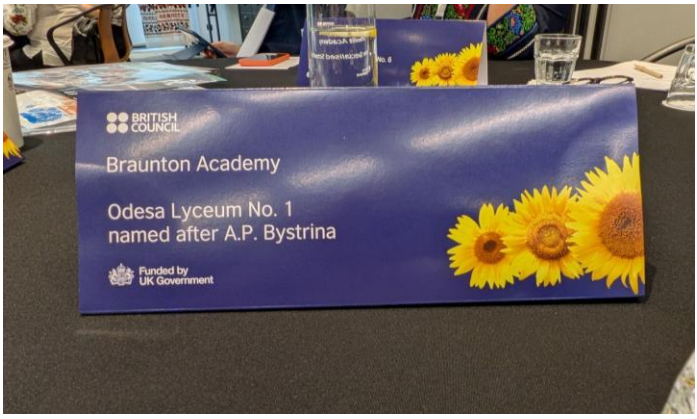
UK/Ukraine British Council Project

I was delighted to represent Braunton Academy on a recent visit to Krakow as part of a British Council project linking UK and Ukrainian schools. The trip provided an exciting opportunity to meet fellow educators, share ideas and begin building meaningful partnerships across countries.

This visit marked the starting point of a year-long Reading for Pleasure project with our new partner school in Odesa in Ukraine. Through collaboration, discussion and the sharing of experiences, we have begun planning activities that will encourage students to develop a love of reading while fostering international connections and cultural understanding.

I am excited to see how the project develops over the coming year and the positive impact it will have on students in both schools. Mrs Haines.





Eco Club News

The school's Eco Club planted over one hundred crocus and daffodil bulbs this term in the new raised beds by Isaac Hall. Massive thanks to Andy, Steve and Clive who built them. Well done Eco Club - another area of school with increased biodiversity!



Appledore Book Festival

On Friday 2nd October, 90 students across Years 9 and Year 10 had the exciting opportunity to take part in a writing workshop with author Luke Palmer, as part of the Appledore Book Festival 2026.

Luke's workshop focussed on 'destructive writing', using a combination of observation and slow-writing techniques to build energy in the students' work. The students were asked to think about objects that could be destroyed, the actions that their character would take to destroy the object and the emotions behind the destruction. Through a combination Luke's modelled planning, group work, and independent ideas, the students then had the opportunity to create their own piece of 'destructive writing'.

The students showed great enthusiasm in their planning and writing and were offered brilliant writing tips that they could take away with them to use. It was clear to see that the students left feeling inspired by the workshop and ready for their next writing venture.

Luke also read extracts from his books, including his latest book, 'Big Words' and 'Live' which each student was given a signed copy of at the end of the workshop.

Copies of 'Big Words' and other titles by Luke Palmer are available to borrow from the school library.

Miss Overton - English



Inspiration and Connection: Year 10 Art Students Explore Cornwall

Our Year 10 Art students recently returned from an incredibly successful residential trip to the Eden Project and St Ives. The journey provided a brilliant opportunity for our cohort to bond, helping students get to know each other much better outside the classroom and building a strong sense of teamwork for their GCSE years.

The trip provided endless inspiration for their current project on Nature. Students fully immersed themselves in their surroundings, filling their sketchbooks with primary drawings inside the spectacular botanical biodomes at the Eden Project, and sketching directly from professional exhibits at Tate St Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden.

The wealth of sketches and visual ideas gathered last week will form the foundation of their coursework back in the school studios. My sincere thanks go to Mrs Rudman, Mr Ong, Mr De Groot, and all of the other staff involved behind the scenes for making this fantastic experience possible. Mrs Bateman.









TATE ST IVES

eden project

BARBARA HEPWORTH ST IVES CORNWALL STIVESBYTHESEA.CO.UK

Year 10 Trip to Aerospace Bristol

Year 10 Engineers and Design & Technology students enjoyed a great day out to the Aerospace museum in Filton, Bristol. After travelling up by coach in some biblical weather, we first saw the awe-inspiring and iconic Concorde. It's hard to believe whilst standing underneath it that it travelled at 1320mph at 60,000 feet! One student commented "How did it get that high up in the air, it's so big?"

We moved to the main museum space (which answered that question) that shows through exhibits the early years of the Bristol factory when it was a coach builder in the early 1900s, working through the companies transition to aeroplane engine builders, up to their modern-day involvement in the aeronautical and space industries. We then visited the restoration section of the museum to see how retired volunteer engineers give their time and expertise to renovated classic aeroplanes that originated from the Filton factory.

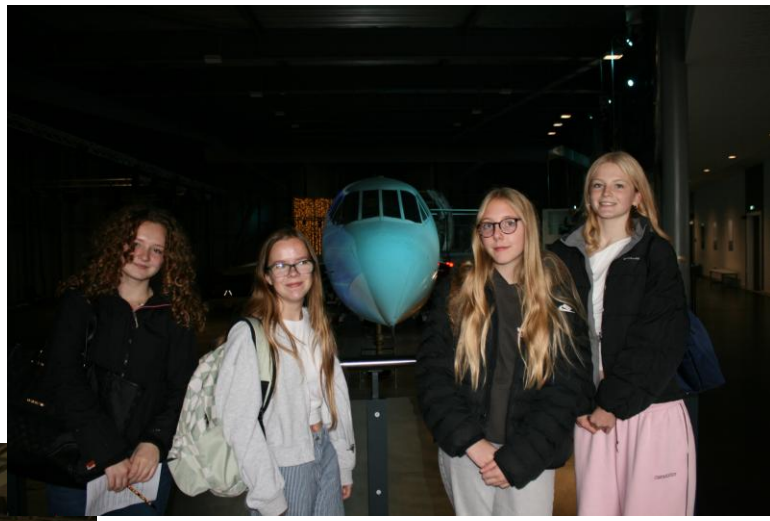
After a short lunch break and a shop visit to purchase souvenirs, we all took part in a workshop to create a housing for a spherical gyro to search for and find a magnetic rock from Mars - teamwork in action with the fastest retrieval time of only 19 seconds!

During the day students also completed a quiz with the results being hotly discussed on the bus home before the prizes of sweets were awarded on our return back to school.

All in all, an excellent day out embedding new subject knowledge beyond what we normally learn in the classroom. Our Braunton Academy students presented themselves impeccably well. Many thanks to Stewart the driver, Mrs Pearce and Mr Ong for being excellent supports.

We all look forward to running the trip again next year for the new group of Design & Technology and Engineering students. Ms Britton.









U14 Girls Make History



Our u14 girls stepped foot into the National Cup this year after being crowned County Champions last year. So far they have played St James School (Exeter) and today they played West Somerset College. Results have been as follows:
Won 16-0
Won 10-0

Our Under 14 girls beat Torquay this week 4-0. They still haven't conceded any goals and are through to the 4th round. Only 64 teams from around the country left in the competition. Well done!



U14 Girls collect 2nd place in the Netball

Well done to our girls who took part in the north Devon Netball tournament this week! The girls played brilliantly and managed to place 2nd!

Well done girls!

1st Team experience for Danny

Danny L in Year 11 was part of the Match Day squad with Argyle at the weekend! An unbelievable experience for the young shot stopper and we have no doubt it will not be the last!



Martial Arts Gold



Over the summer Holidays Year 11 student Ash B competed in the European Martial Arts games representing Team GB which was held in Berlin.

Ash finished the competition with a gold in kumite (fighting) and twin bronzes in kata and forms(weapons).

A massive well done from us all at the Academy!



Kitty C (Year 9) enjoyed an exceptional summer at the Surf Life Saving GB National Nipper Championships held at Holywell Bay. As Club Captain of Woolacombe Surf Life Saving Club, Kitty became UK National Champion in all three individual sea events she entered: the Surf Race, Board Race and Golden Nipper. Across the championships, she achieved five podium finishes from six individual events and scored 110 points, making her the highest-scoring competitor across all age groups. Kitty's performances played a key role in helping Woolacombe Surf Life Saving Club secure the overall National Nipper Championship title. Having been involved with the club since the age of six, her success reflects years of commitment, training and leadership.

Congratulations to Luan! 🌎
We are incredibly proud to celebrate Luan DM, who has been selected as part of the Devon squad travelling to South Africa in October 2026.
This is a fantastic achievement and a huge privilege that reflects Luan's dedication, hard work, and talent. His recent successes include being nominated for Devon Bowler of the Year and producing an outstanding 6-wicket haul against Gloucestershire.
This tour is an exciting opportunity that could help pave the way for a bright future in cricket, and we have no doubt that Luan will represent both Devon and our school with pride.
Everyone at school would like to wish Luan the very best as he heads off to South Africa in two weeks' time. Good luck, Luan!



Summer Holidays Achievements - Henry S (Year 10):
At the 2026 National Championships, the Under 14 Boys category was the most competitive it has ever been, with record numbers of riders and an exceptionally high standard throughout the event. The competition was fiercely contested from start to finish.

On the morning of qualifying, Henry suffered a major setback when he broke both of his wakeboards during final practice. Despite this, he showed remarkable resilience, borrowing a board at the last minute and going on to deliver a fantastic qualifying run that secured his place directly in to the finals without the having to go through additional qualification rounds.

In an extremely closely contested final, Henry produced a faultless run and rode with confidence and composure throughout. The scores were incredibly tight, but he ultimately secured a thoroughly deserved 2nd place overall. While narrowly missing out on the top spot, he was extremely proud of the way he rode and the standard of his performance.

Henry also competed in the Men's Open Wakeskate category, where he once again achieved an impressive 2nd place overall. During his run he successfully landed two new tricks that he had never previously attempted in competition, only missing out on victory by a handful of points to the eventual winner.

As a result of these excellent performances, Henry has once again been invited to train with the GB Wake Board Squad at the Great British Wake Camp, held at the renowned Lunar Cable Park in Spain. This is a fantastic opportunity to continue developing alongside some of the country's top riders and to fulfil his ambition of competing for his country and 2027 Cable wakeboarding team world championships.

To round off an amazing summer, Henry also travelled to Lithuania at the end of August to ride at 313 Cable Park, widely regarded as the number one cable wake park in the world. It was an unforgettable experience, and he thoroughly enjoyed spending time riding with friends while progressing his skills on one of the sport's most iconic facilities.



Why Attendance Matters

Academic Achievement: Students with high attendance rates generally achieve better grades and perform well in exams.

Social Development: Attending school regularly helps students build and maintain friendships, develop social skills and participate in extra-curricular activities.

Consistency and Routine: Establishing a routine od regular attendance helps students develop good habits that will benefit them throughout their lives. It teaches them responsibility, punctuality, and the importance of commitment.

Support and Resources: Being in school ensures that students have access to the support and resources they need, including teachers, counsellors, and learning materials. This support is crucial for their academic and emotional well-being.

Reporting Absences: To report a student late or absent, please notify us by 8.45 am via the ParentMail app.

Missing school... missing out!

Don't let your child be the one to miss out!

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent number of missed:		
	Days	Weeks	Average lessons
95%	9	2	54
90%	19	4	114
85%	29	6	174
80%	38	8	228
75%	48	10	288
70%	57	11.5	342
65%	67	13.5	402

"We are only a few minutes late" - Does it matter?

Being late for school reduces learning time and does not prepare your child or young person for their future working lives.

- Arrival 5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning missed each year
- Arrival 15 minutes late every day = 10 days or 2 weeks of learning each year.