

# Parents' Post



[www.braunton.academy](http://www.braunton.academy)

Autumn 2 2025

## Thoughts from the Principal's Office

Dear families

Welcome to the winter edition of the Parents' Post. It has been another busy and enjoyable term, culminating with the fantastic Winter Concert on Wednesday night. Thank you to all the parents and those from the wider community who turned up to celebrate the work of the Expressive Arts department. The quality of the performances was extremely high and it was lovely to see the students' long hours of practice paying off in this wonderful celebration.

It has been a very successful half term, we hope you will enjoy reading this edition and celebrating these successes and much more.

Best wishes,  
Mrs Bowler



Year 10 students visited the Aerospace Museum in Bristol - see Page 3

### Reminder of Term Dates 2026

#### Spring Term 2026:

Tuesday 6th January - Friday 13th February

**Half Term:** Monday 16th - Friday 20th February

Monday 23rd February - Thursday 2nd April

**Easter:** Friday 3rd - Friday 17th April

#### Summer Term:

**May day:** Monday 4th May

**Half term:** Monday 25th - Friday 29th May

Monday 20th April - Tuesday 21st July

## THANK YOU

FOR PLANTING TREES

Braunton Academy

This is to certify that your school has planted 690 trees  
by taking part in JUST ONE Tree Day 2025-2026.  
This takes your total forest to 2019 trees.

During the next rainy season, your seedlings will be transported to their carefully selected new homes where they will be planted and nurtured over the coming years. Your entire school's forest will now remove approximately 621.85 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere over the next 25 years.

With your contribution we will be able to help global reforestation efforts clean the air we breathe, clean the water we drink, increase biodiversity, protect against deforestation, improve livelihoods and most importantly combat climate change.



**From everyone at Braunton Academy, we wish you  
all a very Merry Christmas - see you all in 2026!**



## Braunton Academy: Embracing AI for Excellence in Teaching

At Braunton Academy, we are committed to delivering the highest quality teaching and learning experiences for our students. To achieve this, we are embracing the incredible potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education.

AI offers exciting opportunities to enhance classroom practice and provide tailored support for every learner. For students who need additional help, AI can act as a powerful tool—offering personalized resources, adaptive feedback, and innovative ways to engage with learning.

To ensure we make the most of this technology, we've launched an **AI Working Party** made up of staff from across the school. This team will explore and trial practical ways AI can support teaching, streamline workload, and enrich student learning.

We're also proud to announce that we've started using **TeachMateAI**, a platform designed specifically for schools. TeachMateAI empowers educators with tools to plan lessons, create resources, and develop strategies that save time while improving quality.

This is just the beginning of our AI journey, and we're excited about the possibilities ahead. By embracing innovation, we aim to ensure every student at Braunton Academy thrives.



## Armistice Day

It was an honour to participate in the annual remembrance service in the village. I was accompanied by our Principal Students who performed the readings and representatives from our Year 7 students. I would also like to thank one of our parents Mrs Legge who kindly offered to join us to play the last post. Mrs Bowler.

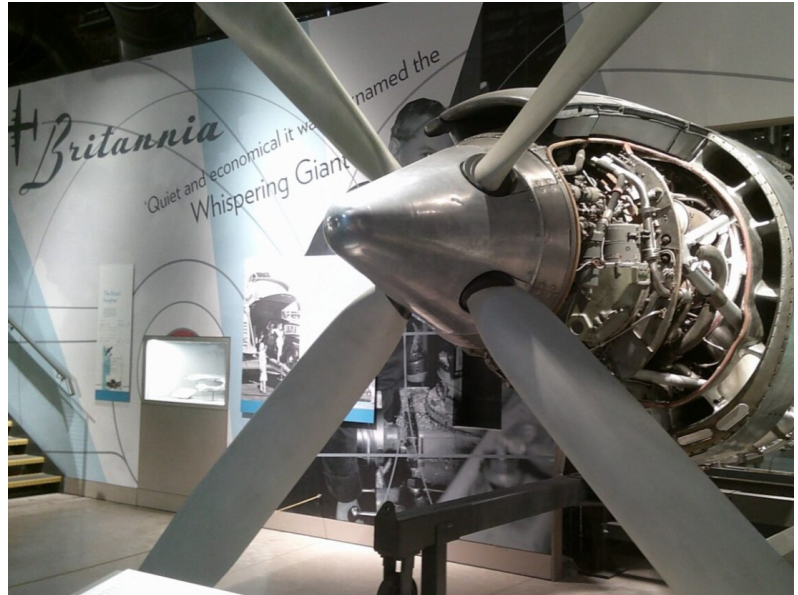
## Aerospace Adventure to Bristol

The DT department had a rare day out with 40 Year 10s from the Engineering and Design, and Technology courses to visit the Aerospace Museum in Bristol. This is now the home of the last British Concord that flew which is housed in a massive hanger on the site. Students gasped out loud at the scale of it as they saw it for the first time.

This museum documents the transformation from a tram builder in the early 1900s to becoming the Bristol Aeroplane Company in 1910, then diversifying into developing the engines that powered these amazing early pioneer flights and is now known as BAE systems. Students looked around the many exhibits of planes, engines, development of flight, international and space travel and everything connected in between.

As part of the day, we took part in a workshop to design and create a way to move an app-directed gyroscopic ball across the surface of Mars (obvs not the real Mars) to collect a precious cargo. This gave students the chance to work in teams to develop and test a prototype, a small insight into the challenges that real designers and engineers face.

A few lucky students even took part in a smaller tour of the conservation hanger, where a Bolingbroke freighter and a WW1 Bristol Fighter are being restored by volunteers. It was a very interesting and informative day for all of us.



## Welcome to New Staff

### Miss Unstead, Reception

I have grown up in North Devon all my life spending lots of time at the beach, even competing in surf lifesaving. I am a keen swimmer, having qualified for regionals growing up, and netball player but most of my free time is spent with my dog Maple-Jayne. She is a two-year-old border collie, and we regularly attend dog shows together, most recently winning second prettiest lady at a local show. I have a degree from the University of St Mark and St John in Sports Psychology and fun fact: I have a partially metal knee!



### Mr Mackenzie, Cover Supervisor

Mr Mackenzie studied English and Creative Writing at university before completing a master's degree. He went on to spend two years writing copy for national newspapers, honing his skills as a storyteller. Inspired to make difference beyond the newsroom, he chose to move into education, where he could share his passion for words and creativity with young people. Now, he is dedicated to helping the next generation discover their own voices.



### German Music Club

A few students from Y9 have been meeting up regularly to listen to German music and discuss the songs together. We started with a song by Namika, Lieblingmensch, a touching and catchy ode to a lifelong friendship. Then we followed our ears through lots of random songs and paused every so often to look up lyrics and discuss our favourite words.

From November onwards, the club members voted to find German Christmas songs. We have been watching a compilation of many Christmas songs for children, funny animation and subtitles included, so we've been trying hard to sing along at various speeds, which has been loads of fun ahead of the Christmas season. And so, dictated by the season, Fröhliche Weihnachten euch allen!



### French Penfriends

We're keen to re-establish links with our former partner school in Nice, in the South of France. To this effect, we've gathered a healthy mix of students from Y7 to Y10 to meet once a week and prepare our first batch of French letters, which were sent in late November to my colleague in L'Éganaude in Nice! Once they've received and distributed our letters, their students will write back to us in English, and so a lovely epistolary friendship shall begin! While we're awaiting replies, we are playing dictionary games and pronunciation challenges.

New joiners are more than welcome for both clubs, the more the merrier!





A group of year 7 girls travelled to Bideford for a rugby taster session a few weeks back and thoroughly enjoyed their experience



Our year 8 rugby team had a pre season friendly against Kingsley and won



Both Kush and Mahi took part in the North Devon Schools climbing contest a few weeks ago and placed 2nd overall



Our girls football teams played in a North Devon tournament and won all of their games



The year 9 girls competed in the county netball competition in Exeter; they won their pool, not losing a game, and narrowly missed out in a final spot, then losing the semi-final by just one goal, placing third overall. The girls were fantastic throughout the day and played excellently as a team, doing the Academy proud.



Our year 9 boys were crowned North Devon Plate Champions for football after beating a resilient Chulmleigh in the final! Well done boys.



Our Year 7 boys were crowned North Devon Champions after beating a strong Pilton team in the final! What a first year this group of students are having now they have joined the Academy.



Our Year 8 boys were crowned North Devon Plate Champions tonight after beating a strong Bideford team in the final! They have now won three trophies for the Academy! Outstanding.





Introducing our new netball team wear for 2025 onwards. Thank you to [@vx3apparel](#) and our sponsors [@brauntoncaenrotary](#) for kindly supporting our girls with this!



Introducing our new Athletics team wear for 2025 onwards! Thank you to [@vx3apparel](#) and our sponsors [@squiresfishrestaurant](#) [@sqbraunton](#) for kindly supporting our teams for the upcoming years!



Our Year 11 boys took part in the annual rugby tournament which was held at West Buckland. They went through the entire tournament not conceding a try and winning the tournament! The Year 11 team have been an absolute credit to the school, and they have gone through their time with us being undefeated within North Devon!



Our year 11 netballers played in their final tournament which was held at Park School; the girls played brilliantly and finished their last netball tournament with us placing third in North Devon!



Braunton have retained the Stephen's Shield once again after another successful day at Torrington! Well done to all our runners and we look forward to the next competition at West Buckland after half term.



Year 7 have made Round 4 of the Schools National Cup reaching the same stage as Year 10! The boys beat Torquay Boys Grammar School 4-3 today. Well done Team Braunton.



## 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 of 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.