Coombeshead Academy Newsletter

Spring Term 1 - February 2026

Dear families,

As we come to the end of another busy and rewarding term, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the many moments of pride, connection, and achievement that continue to make Coombeshead Academy such a special community. As always, our students have impressed us with their maturity, kindness, and commitment to learning, and it has been a joy to see them embrace every opportunity this term has offered.

One of the highlights of this term was the wonderful visit from 32 students and their teacher from Beijing, who joined us for a week as part of a Project International exchange. The students, aged between 12 and 17, attended lessons, took part in school events, and immersed themselves fully in life at Coombeshead. They were supported throughout their visit by our Coombeshead buddies—students who applied for and were carefully selected for this important role. The warmth, respect, and enthusiasm shown by our students towards our visitors was truly heart-warming and made me incredibly proud of the young people they are. Alongside this, staff from both schools had valuable opportunities to share ideas about classroom practice and school culture. It was a fascinating and enriching insight into one another's cultures, and we all learned a great deal from the experience.

Our Year 11 students also deserve special recognition. This term saw another round of PPE (mock) examinations, which our students approached with determination and resilience. Their hard work, focus, and positive attitude were evident throughout, and they took the challenge very much in their stride. We are extremely proud of the effort they continue to put into their studies as they prepare for the next stage of their education.

As we look ahead, I would like to ask for your continued support in helping students arrive at school ready to learn. Please ensure that students are wearing the correct uniform and wearing it properly each day, and that they have the full 'Everyday 8' equipment with them. These small but important details make a significant difference in supporting a calm, purposeful learning environment for all.

Throughout this newsletter, you will find many more examples of the achievements, experiences, and successes that make us so proud of our school community. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support—it plays a vital role in helping our students thrive.

Best wishes,

Helen Coulson
Headteacher

Friends of Coombeshead Academy – Everyone Welcome

Friends of Coombeshead Academy is a new group, just starting out, for parents, grandparents and carers who want to support the school community in simple, positive ways — and hopefully have a bit of fun along the way too.

As we're in the very early days, this is all about keeping things friendly, flexible and informal. There's absolutely no pressure to commit lots of time or take on a big role. Whether you can help once a year, once a term, or just stay in the loop, every little bit makes a difference.

Over time, we'd love to:

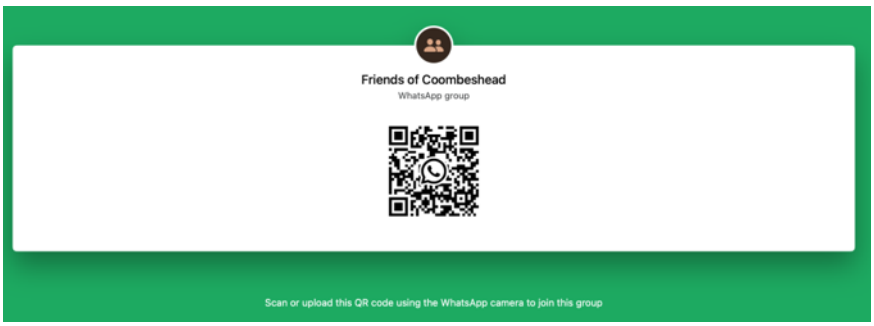
- Support the school and students in practical, helpful ways
- Build a welcoming community for families
- Raise a little extra money for activities and opportunities for students

Some people might help with small fundraising ideas, others might lend a hand at events, and many may simply enjoy being connected to what's happening at Coombeshead. However you'd like to be involved, you'll be very welcome.

If you'd like to be part of this new, growing group — even in a very small way — we'd love to hear from you. It's a great way to support the school and feel part of what's happening there.

To find out more or join in, come and say hello on our WhatsApp group or drop us an email: **friendofcoomb@gmail.com**

Join us on whats app here or by following this QR code.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

At the start of February all students attended an assembly around promoting positive mental health as part of Children's Mental Health Week. The theme was 'This is my place'. The theme is based around belonging and how we can feel a sense of belonging and help others feel like they belong.

The assemblies were delivered by our wonderful NHS colleagues who form part of the Mental Health Support Team. To support students at Coombeshead, we have NHS trained Mental Health Ambassadors made up from our 6th Form students who are happy to work with students who are struggling with their mental health.

We have also set up an email address specifically for students who may be struggling with mental health. The email goes directly to the mental health ambassadors who will be able to respond to the student and arrange to catch up to talk through the issues that they are struggling with. The email address is:

mental.health@coombesheadacademy.org.uk

We have attached the Children's Mental Health Week resource for families on the school website under the Newsletter section which contains some hopefully useful information on how to support your child with their mental health.

The contact details below are useful if any young person is struggling with mental health issues over the half term break.

Young Minds - is the UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. Please follow the link below to find out more about the work that Young Minds does and the support it can offer to young people and their families.

https://youngminds.org.uk/

KOOTH - The Kooth team provide free, safe and anonymous online support and counselling. The whole team are made up of friendly and experienced individuals who want to help. **www.kooth.com**

SHOUT/ Crisis Text Line - Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. **Free text 85258**

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

NHS Mental Health Support Team

Mental Health & Me

February 2026

Children's Mental Health Week

Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week

The theme of Children's Mental Health Week 2026 is 'Belonging: This is my place'.

What is belonging?
Belonging is emotional safety. Being yourself without being judged.

Belonging is participation: Having access to activities, conversations, decisions, and rituals that shape the group.

Belonging is recognition: Being known for who you are and having that matter to others.

Belonging is not the same as fitting in. Fitting in asks you to change to match the group. Belonging asks the group to change so you can be yourself.

(Place2Be, 2026)

Examples of what other young people think belonging is:

- 'Feeling that you have a place where you are always welcome and valued'
- 'It's like a place, your home, you belong with your family and friends.'
- 'Belonging means feeling a connection with something, feeling like I am meant to be there with no stresses or worries.'
- 'Feeling like you fit in and feeling comfortable.'
- 'Having friends, being part of local clubs and groups'

(Place2Be, 2026)

'Belonging' signposting:

The Hub

Intercom Trust

PROUD 2BE

SPACE

YOUNG DEVON

DEVON CARERS at WESTBANK

Asperations

How can I support myself to feel like I belong?

- Be authentic
- Join clubs to find peers with similar interests
- Talk to and be with trusted people
- Follow your interests
- Embrace your uniqueness
- Practice self-compassion
- Listen to yourself: pay attention to your feelings and what you need. E.g. If feeling lonely, consider what you may need to feel more connected

(Place2Be, 2026)

If you need further support for your mental health, please speak to a trusted adult in school. You could also contact 111 and select option 2 for mental health support and advice. In an emergency, call 999.



SWIFT Teacher Training

Primary & Secondary QTS / PGCE Courses

Applications to train to teach starting in September 2026 are open

To find out more and apply visit www.swiftteachertraining.org.uk

THE ONLY SUBJECT YOU DESIGN

NEW GCSE LOADING...

GAME AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

CREATE CREATIVE ARTS ACADEMY

COOMBESHEAD ACADEMY

YEAR 7 TALENT FOUNDRY WORKSHOP

This half term, our Year 7 pupils took part in an award-winning Talent Foundry workshop as part of their Life Skills curriculum.

Throughout the session, pupils were introduced to a range job roles and practical skills, encouraging them to think about future careers, ask questions, and work confidently with one another. The workshop was carefully structured to balance listening, discussion and hands-on activities, which helped to keep everyone involved and motivated.

What stood out most was the way in which the students approached the various work-related challenges they were set. Many showed excellent teamwork and creativity, it was encouraging to see pupils growing in confidence as the session progressed. By the end of the workshop, there was a real sense of achievement. Feedback from both students and staff has been extremely positive. Pupils spoke about enjoying the chance to try something new, while teachers were impressed by the level of focus and engagement shown throughout the day.

We are delighted with how successful the workshop was and with the learning that took place. Opportunities like this play an important role in supporting our pupils' personal and academic development, and we look forward to building on this experience in class.





YEAR 7 TALENT FOUNDRY WORKSHOP





CREATE CLAY AFTERSCHOOL CLUB

Create Clay after school club, runs Tuesdays week B only, located in the Clay room. Students and staff have the opportunity to explore the qualities of Clay and develop their throwing skills on the wheel! All welcome.









SCHOOLS PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION SUCCESS

We're so proud of the amazing work created by students from Coombeshead Academy, Newton Abbot College, Teign School, and South Dartmoor Community College at this year's collaborative Schools Photography Exhibition!

The students produced a stunning range of images — from creative portraits to bold landscapes — each one showing real imagination, skill, and personal vision.

A huge shout out to the Newton Abbot Photographic Club for their support and inspiration throughout the project.

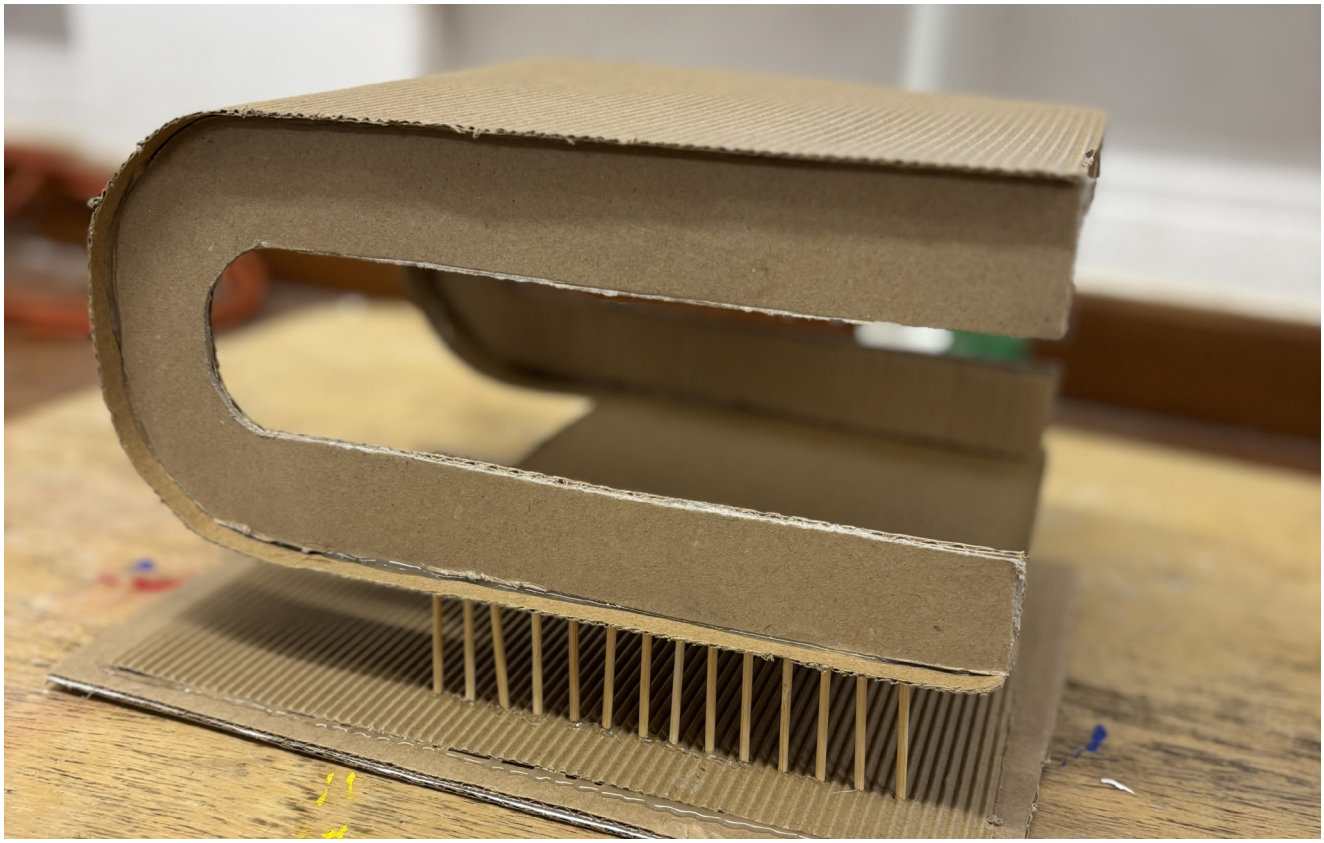
Thank you to everyone who came along to celebrate our young photographers. Your support means so much!

Here's to even more creative collaborations ahead!



ARCHITECTURAL 3D SCULPTURE

Inspired by the fluid, futuristic forms of Zaha H, our GCSE student transformed simple cardboard into an architectural 3D sculpture. It's amazing to see the innovation happening here every day at Create Creative Arts Academy!



A LEVEL GRAPHIC DESIGN - EVERY STORY NEEDS A CHARACTER

Our A-Level Graphics students have been busy dreaming up worlds, and the 3D characters you see here are heroes, villains, sidekicks and misfits who live inside them:

From scribbles in sketchbooks to fully modelled personalities with backstories, quirks and secrets, these creations show just how powerful storytelling becomes when imagination meets design.

At the CREATE Creative Arts academy, we bring stories to life.

#creativeartsacademy
#alevelgraphics
#storytellingthroughdesign
#3Dcharacters
#creativestudents

A LEVEL GRAPHIC DESIGN
- EVERY STORY NEEDS A CHARACTER









LGBTQ+ CLUB - WEDNESDAY WEEK A BREAK 2 PE1

Our LGBTQ+ Club is a friendly and inclusive space for students to meet, chat and find support.

We are regularly joined by Hollie Wright, the Devon School Support worker from the charity Intercom Trust, who offers resources and guidance for anyone wanting to talk.

Everyone is welcome, come along!





SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD COMPETITION 2026

Students in Year 7 to Year 11 have been invited to take part in the 'Show racism the red card School competition 2026'. This is a great opportunity to engage with the anti-racism message and showcase the creative talents represented within our school community. The categories are: artwork, creative writing, film, music/song as well as football boot and t-shirt designs.

For the past two years Coombeshead students have won prizes in this national competition, which is a remarkable achievement. We are now eagerly looking forward to this year's entries, good luck everyone!



YEAR 7 NETBALL

Year 7 girls netball team pictures below had a tremendous afternoon at the South Devon Netball tournament. The girls won 6 games, lost 2 and drew one game. The played some great Netball. Well done to all involved!!



YEAR 8 FOOTBALL

The Coombeshead Year 8 Football team won their first round of the Devon cup game10-2. The team played some great attacking football in muddy conditions. Well done to all involved.



COOMBESHEAD AND CHINESE STUDENTS WELCOME, ART LESSONS AND MUSEUM VISIT.

Mrs Parr and Mrs Farleigh organised a packed week to welcome and work collaboratively with our chinese visitiors. Here are just some images of the welcome ceremony, art lessons, and the museum visit.











CHINESE STUDENTS LEARNING HOW TO MAKE A SCONE





CHERRY TREE PLANTING DONATED BY JACKS PATCH WITH A PLAQUE TO BE A LASTING MEMORY OF THE WEEK





COOMBESHEAD AND CHINESE STUDENTS SHARING GIFTS











COOMBESHEAD AND CHINESE STUDENTS CLOSING CEREMONY

The closing ceremony included many heart-warming speeches from all those that took part, it was very emotional. Mrs Coulson was given a gift of thanks (panda bear). The Chinese students put on a traditional dance for us, to share some of their cultural practices with us. Everyone celebrated with a traditional cream tea. There were lots of tears, exchange of correspondences to keep in touch.

It was a hugely successful week, that bought more positivity to the table than we could of imagined!







Thank you to Mrs Farleigh and Mrs Parr for organisng the week of fabulous visits, lessons and events for our Chinese guests.

