

WEST GRANTHAM UPDATE



Friday 18 July, 2025

WEST GRANTHAM
Church of England Secondary Academy

Enrichments, Experiments, Expeditions and End-of-Year Excitement

A slightly longer newsletter this time, as it's our final one of the year!

As we reach the final days of what has been a wonderfully full and vibrant term, it's the perfect time to reflect on the whirlwind of activity that has made this summer one to remember. The Year 11 prom was a true highlight, transforming our courtyard into a twinkling, unforgettable celebration of everything our leavers have achieved. With fairy lights overhead and pizza ovens firing on all cylinders, students and staff alike danced, laughed and reflected on a journey that has shaped so many futures. It was a night full of sparkle, not just from the decorations, but from the pride we feel in every student heading off to their next chapter. Good luck to all of our departing year 11s.

Open Evening for Year 6 families saw us opening not just our classrooms but our entire community. So many visitors poured through the gates we had to open the tennis courts for extra parking - and the feedback spoke for itself. Whether families were marvelling at science demos, chatting with students in maths, or toe-tapping along to our musicians, the message was clear: West Grantham is a place where young people thrive. Clubs and enrichments have continued to thrive right to the end. Footballers across KS3 have been training hard and showing real teamwork and progress, while our Junior Lionesses are proving themselves to be a sharp-shooting, committed squad to watch. Boccia have been busy preparing for the annual Sports Day Boccia Tournament, honing their skills with precision and focus. Meanwhile, in STEM Club, students have been testing out exciting new robot-making kits — with plenty of bubble-fuelled explosions still keeping things lively! Speaking of which, Mr Davies from our science department has written up a few easy, exciting science experiments for students to try at home over the summer break - these will be included later in the newsletter, so get your lab coats and curiosity ready!

Elsewhere, Table Tennis has kept its steady rhythm with fast-paced rallies and impressive control, and Gardening Club has hit a green-fingered milestone onions grown in our very own gardens have been used in the school canteen's soup of the day! What began with muddy boots and B&Q donations has now grown into something blooming marvellous. Our Knitting & Crochet Club has continued to click along at a relaxing pace, providing a quiet creative outlet and some very cosy-looking results. In Science enrichment, methane bubbles turned into flames in a spectacle that was equal parts safe and spectacular, while in Chess Club,

intense matches between our budding grandmasters proved the game of kings is alive and well at WGSA.

New enrichments launching next term promise to add even more colour to our school days. Students can look forward to mastering the art of Origami, folding intricate creations from cranes to cubes, and capturing their likeness in incredible detail through Portraiture. Ballroom Dancing will offer the chance to glide through the basics of the cha-cha, waltz and more, while the Wellbeing and Mindfulness Club will provide a calm, reflective space to reset during a busy week. Those with a flair for music can raise their voices in Choir as they prepare for future performances, and anyone who loves a challenge can get stuck into Crosswords, Sudoku and Puzzles - the perfect workout for the mind.

There's also been a fantastic effort in our latest creative competition as students entered pieces into the Refugee Week Art Competition. Responding to the theme "Community as a Superpower," the entries were thoughtful, moving and bold. Winning entries will be proudly displayed in the Humanities corridor next term. And in the kitchen, some of our Year 9s took part in Jamie Oliver's Guinness World Record cooking lesson attempt - aprons were tied, ingredients weighed, and a whole lot of pasta was made!

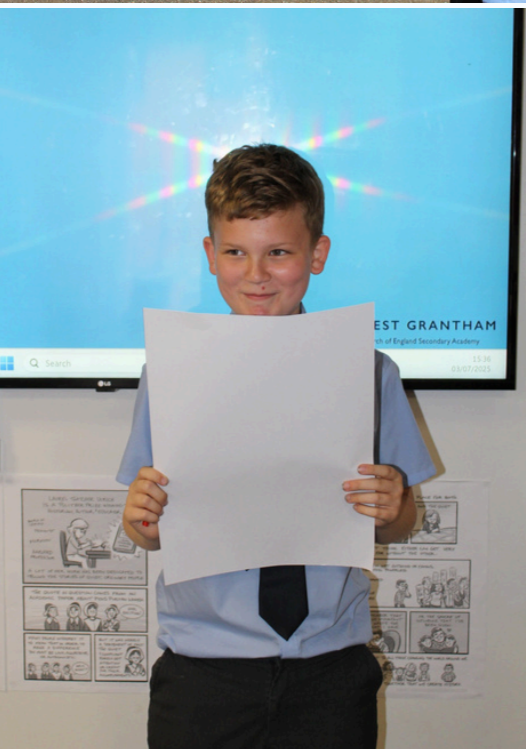
Our Duke of Edinburgh students completed their Bronze expedition this term with determination and good humour. Their teamwork and resilience were on full display as they navigated their routes and cooked up a storm outdoors. A huge congratulations to them.

As we prepare to welcome our biggest ever Year 7 cohort in September, excitement is already building. New clubs will include a Christian Union, launching Tuesday after school from the autumn, and our staff have already been hard at work preparing for the transition. Our students have been a credit to the school, and the sense of community and growth is clear across every corner of the academy.

We'd like to thank every student who has thrown themselves into enrichment this term, every parent and carer who has supported from home, and every member of staff who has made the magic happen. We wish you all a relaxing and joyful summer - and we look forward to seeing you again in September, refreshed and ready for more. Stay safe, stay curious, and keep an eye out for Mr Davies' summer science fun, coming up later in the newsletter!







Dear Parents and Guardians,

Why not have a fun time by making **oobleck** with your child: a fascinating mixture that acts like both a liquid and a solid!

What Is Oobleck?

Oobleck is a **non-Newtonian fluid**, which means it doesn't behave like water or oil. When you apply pressure, it feels solid—but let it rest, and it flows like a liquid! This strange behaviour is perfect for additional understanding of scientific concepts such as states of matter, pressure, and viscosity.

Why Try It at Home?

- It's a great hands-on science activity.
- It encourages asking questions and experimenting.

How to Make Oobleck

You'll need:

- 1 cup of cornflour (cornstarch)
- About ½ cup of water
- (Optional) Food colouring

Instructions:

1. Mix the cornflour and water in a bowl. Add food colouring if you like.
2. Stir until the mixture feels solid when pressed but drips like a liquid when lifted.
3. Explore! Try tapping it quickly, squeezing it slowly, or letting it run through your fingers.

Tip: Clean up with a cloth, and don't pour it down the drain—bin it instead!

Share Your Fun!

We'd love to see photos or hear how it went. Send us your oobleck stories and help us celebrate science beyond the classroom!

Warm regards,

Mr Davies



Fun Science Experiment: Making a Bouncy Egg!

Making a bouncy egg is an exciting way for kids to explore chemical reactions, and it only takes a few everyday ingredients. This experiment is perfect for a weekend project and will leave you with a fun, squishy egg that can bounce! Let's get started!

What you'll need:

- 1 raw egg
- White vinegar
- A clear container (like a glass jar or bowl)
- Water (optional)
- Paper towel for drying



Step-by-step instructions:

1. **Place the Egg in the Container:** Carefully place your raw egg into the clear container.
2. **Add the Vinegar:** Pour enough vinegar over the egg to completely submerge it. You will see bubbles forming on the surface of the egg; this is the reaction between the vinegar and the egg's shell.
3. **Wait and Observe:** Leave the egg in the vinegar for about 24-48 hours. Over time, the vinegar will break down the calcium in the eggshell, and you'll notice the shell starting to dissolve.
4. **Remove the Egg:** After the waiting period, carefully remove the egg from the vinegar. You should now have a rubbery, bouncy egg with no hard shell! Rinse it gently under water to remove any remaining vinegar.
5. **Bounce the Egg (Gently!):** Try gently bouncing your new bouncy egg on a soft surface (like a towel or pillow). Watch how it bounces but be careful as it's still fragile inside!

What's Happening?

When vinegar (an acid) reacts with the calcium carbonate in the eggshell, it dissolves the shell and leaves behind the soft membrane that once held the egg. The result is a "bouncy" egg that you can lightly bounce without breaking! It's a fun way to explore chemical reactions and the properties of different materials.

Tip for Extra Fun:

Try dropping the egg from different heights to see how it bounces differently and if it breaks! You can also experiment with soaking it for longer or shorter periods to see what happens.

Have fun!

Mr Davies

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

STAYING SAFE IN HOT WEATHER

As temperatures rise, it's essential to take proactive steps to ensure children and young people stay safe and healthy. Hot weather can pose serious risks such as dehydration, heatstroke and sunburn. This guide provides practical tips for parents and teachers to protect children during sunnier spells, helping them enjoy the summer safely.

1 STAY HYDRATED

Ensure children drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if they don't feel thirsty. Encourage them to carry water bottles and take regular sips. It's better to drink small amounts to counteract the effects of sweating. Even if children replenish lost fluids with equal amounts of water, they may still be dehydrated due to salt lost from the body. Avoid sugary drinks and caffeine, which can contribute to dehydration.

2 APPLY SUNSCREEN

Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30 on all exposed skin and reapply every two hours or after swimming. Don't forget often-missed spots like the ears, back of the neck and tops of feet. Sunscreen needs around 20 to 30 minutes to be absorbed by the skin, so make sure you leave plenty of time to apply it.

3 WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Dress children in light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing made from breathable fabrics like cotton. Ideally clothing should cover as much skin as possible. Shoulders should always be covered as they can easily burn. Wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses with UV protection are also essential to shield them from the sun. Be sure to check your school's dress policy, as uniform rules may be relaxed during amber or red Heat Health Alerts (HHAs).

4 SEEK SHADE

Covering up and seeking shade are the most important sun protection measures. Encourage children to play in shaded areas, especially during peak sun intensity between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Use umbrellas or canopies if natural shade is unavailable.

5 AVOID STRENUOUS ACTIVITIES

Children shouldn't take part in vigorous physical activities in very hot weather. Limit these during the warmest parts of the day. Schedule any outdoor games or sports for early morning or late afternoon when it's slightly cooler.

6 KEEP COOL Indoors

If it's safe and appropriate, open windows early in the morning to allow stored heat to escape from the building. Use fans or air conditioning to maintain a cool indoor environment. Close curtains or blinds to block direct sunlight. Switch off electrical equipment like computers, monitors and printers when not in use: don't leave them in 'standby mode' as this still generates heat.

7 TAKE COOL BATHS OR SHOWERS

Encourage children to take cool baths or showers to lower their body temperature. Alternatively, use damp cloths on their skin to provide relief from the heat. When heading out of the house, consider filling up a spray bottle to cool everyone down on the go.

8 MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF ILLNESS

If sensible precautions are taken, children are unlikely to be seriously affected by hot conditions – but teachers, assistants, school nurses and all child carers should watch for symptoms of heat exhaustion, such as heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea or fainting. If any signs are present, move the child to a cool place, make sure they drink some water, and seek medical advice if needed.

9 MAINTAIN A COOL SLEEPING ENVIRONMENT

Ensure children's bedrooms stay cool by using fans or air conditioning. Use lightweight bedding and consider letting them sleep in the coolest part of the house. Older children can have more choice over what they wear to bed. Some children may prefer to sleep without pyjamas, while some may prefer to opt for a light cotton t-shirt and shorts.

10 EDUCATE CHILDREN ON SUN SAFETY

Teach children the importance of sun safety and encourage them to take responsibility for their health. Explain the risks of sunburn and heatstroke and the value of following these safety tips.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is an experienced health and safety expert who is a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. He provides services to educational settings (and other industries) to help them maintain a safe working environment.



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