Parent, Family & Community Briefing

Thursday 5th November 2026



Welcome to this week's parent, family and community briefing!

Welcome Back After Half Term

A warm welcome back to all our students, staff and families. We hope you have had a restful break and are ready for another busy and successful half term.

A special mention goes to our Year 11 students, who started their mock examinations this week. These exams are an important step in preparing for the summer GCSEs, and we wish them every success. We encourage all students to work hard, remain positive and approach each challenge with confidence.

Present Today, Empowered Tomorrow

Thank you for your continued support in improving attendance at HCC. Last half term saw a significant improvement compared with the same period last year, reflecting the commitment of our families and students. We know that strong attendance has a direct impact on achievement, wellbeing and future opportunities, and we are delighted that more students are benefiting from their education every day.

Mondays Matter!

One area we are continuing to focus on is attendance on Mondays, which remains our lowest-attended day of the week. Starting the week positively is vital to ensuring students make the most of every learning opportunity. Please take a moment to speak with your child about the importance of attending every Monday. If there is anything we can do to support improved attendance, please do get in touch. Further information can be found in this attendance letter – **Attendance Update**

Family Briefing Publication Day

Please note that, from this week, our Family Briefing will be published on Thursdays rather than Fridays. We hope this gives families and staff additional time to read important updates and information before the weekend.

Improving Feedback for Students

We are excited to share that HCC has invested in new assessment technology through Top Marks AI to improve the quality, consistency and usefulness of feedback provided to students following assessments and practice examinations.

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Welcome Back after Half Term cont.

Developed using exam board mark schemes, examiner reports and thousands of examination responses, the software provides detailed, exam-focused feedback that helps students understand their strengths and next steps for improvement.

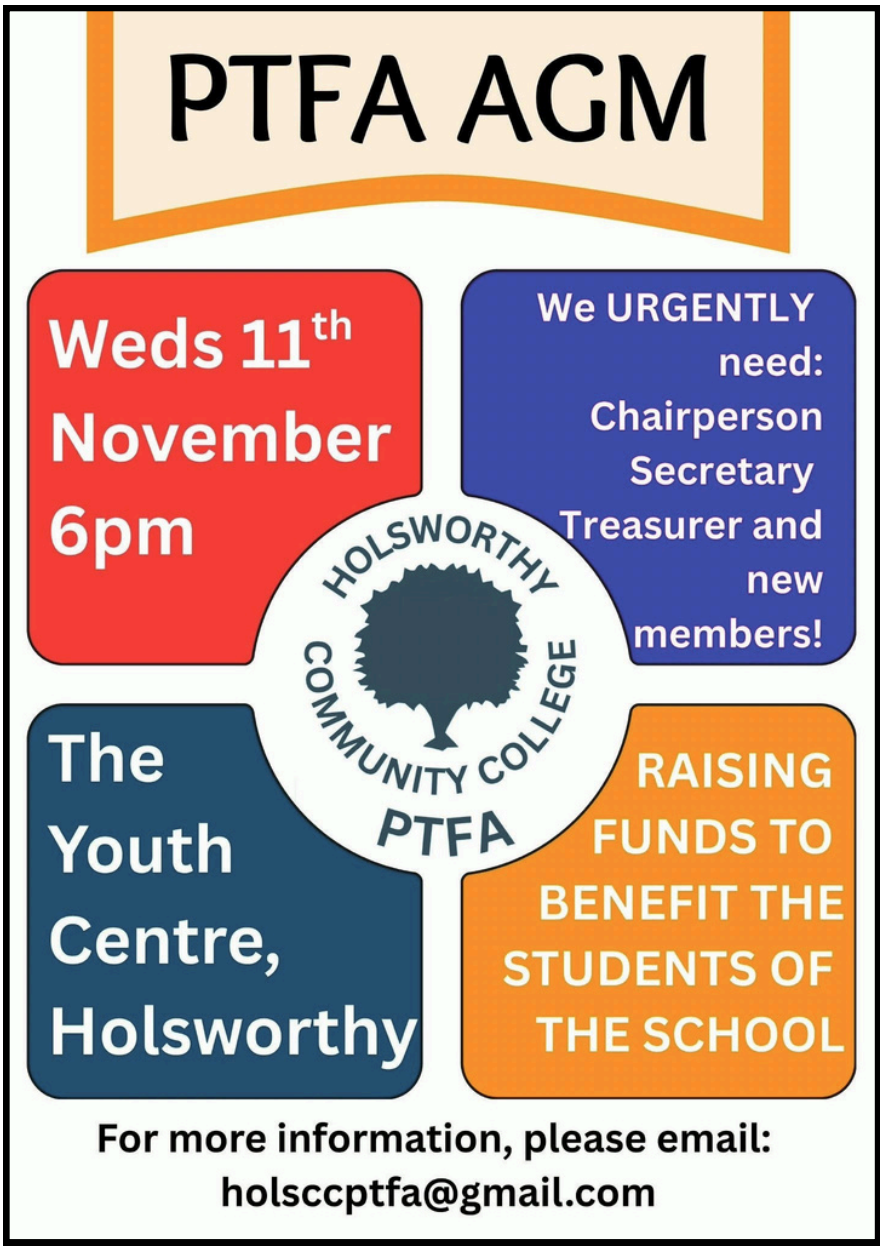
Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with comments including:
"It is easier to read and follow."
"I know what my next steps are."
"I can see what I needed to do to gain those extra few marks."
Following a successful trial within the English department, we are now exploring opportunities to extend this approach across additional subject areas.

PTFA Needs You!
Our PTFA plays a vital role in enriching opportunities for all students through fundraising and community events.

We are currently looking for new members and would welcome support from anyone who can spare some time, whether regularly or occasionally.

The PTFA Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th November. If you would like to learn more about the PTFA or are interested in getting involved, we encourage you to attend. Please see the poster in this briefing for further details.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to another positive and successful half term at HCC.



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Local History Brought to Life

During the half-term break, Gracie and Amber took part in the Coasts in Wiki Archaeology Workshop at Barnstaple Library. The project encouraged young people to become history detectives by exploring archive materials, researching local heritage, and creating digital resources about historic sites in the local area.

As part of the project, Gracie and Amber researched The Bridge Chambers, one of Barnstaple's historic buildings. They investigated the building's history using a range of sources and worked alongside heritage professionals to develop their understanding of local archaeology and historical research.

Their hard work resulted in a detailed write-up about the building, helping to preserve knowledge of an important part of Barnstaple's history. Even more impressively, they created a digital 3D model of The Bridge Chambers, allowing people to explore the building virtually and gain a greater appreciation of its architectural features and historical significance.

The completed model has been published online through the CiM (Coasts in Mind) Map project, making their work accessible to a much wider audience. By contributing to a public heritage resource, Gracie and Amber have helped ensure that local history can be enjoyed and studied by future generations.

Bridge Chambers

Congratulations Gracie and Amber on this fantastic accomplishment - We look forward to seeing what historical discoveries they make next!

Mrs Sampson
Academic Director





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Devon and Cornwall School Age Immunisations Service

We are pleased to share details of upcoming School Age Flu Immunisation Clinics. These are drop-in clinics between the times stated, so no appointment is needed.

These sessions are designed to support children who may have missed the opportunity for vaccination at school, either due to absence or other reasons.

If these venues and times are not suitable, please note that other flu clinics are available locally. You can book these directly via the link previously sent to you, or by calling us on 01392 342678











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Vacancies at HCC

We are currently recruiting for a number of roles and would love to hear from enthusiastic individuals who would like to join our thriving school community. Please share these opportunities with friends, family and colleagues who may be interested. Full details of our current vacancies can be found here.

HCC Cover Supervisor - closing 11th November 2026
HCC Data Manager - closing 16th November 2026
HCC Teaching Assistant - closing 25th November 2026
HCC Catering Manager - closing 30th November 2026



Key Dates

- **Tuesday 3rd November to Friday 13th November** - Year 11 mock exams
- **Wednesday 11th November** - Armistice Day
- **Wednesday 11th November** - PTFA AGM
- **Friday 13th Novembe**r - BAE Systems visit to school
- **Tuesday 17th November** - Year 11 Safeguarding and relationship workshop
- **Wednesday 18th November** - Year 8 parents evening
- **Tuesday 24th November** - Year 10 Careers fair
- **Wednesday 25th November -** Year 9 parents evening
- **Wednesday 9th December** - Year 11 parents evening
- **Tuesday 15th December** - HCC Winter Concert
- **Wednesday 16th December** - Christmas lunch
- **Thursday 17th December** - Year 7 Christmas Service
- **Monday 21st December to Friday 1st January** - Christmas break
- **Friday 18th December** - Students finish at 1pm
- **Monday 4th January** - Non pupil day

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