13th November 2026

VERULAM SCHOOL

VERUNews

EDITION 009



Headteacher Highlights

It feels that winter has arrived this week. Happily, our Sports Hall now has a new heating system that doubles as an air conditioning system in the summer months. This will make temperatures more comfortable year-round and particularly support Year 11 who will be undertaking their mock exams for the next two weeks. Thanks to parents who attended the talk given by expert on learning Dr van der Spoel this week.

I was very proud of the whole school on Remembrance Day, where all 1000+ students and staff remembered the fallen in the world wars and those who have served more recently. The theme this year was 'Sacrifice' and head of history, Mr Coughlan, has led assemblies on how we can all give to support others. Our annual Abbey Service is coming up on the 26th November and we would appreciate the students bringing donations for our collection to support the student's chosen charity, St Albans Child Contact Centre for separated families. A reminder to parents and carers that Friday 27th November is our Hertfordshire Occasional Day and the school will be closed. A complete coincidence that this is the Black Friday shopping event!

I would like to thank staff who organised a range of activities on our recent Curriculum Enrichment Day. A range of activities happened in different year groups, from education on the Holocaust to inter faith issues, digital citizenship, STEM, house sports and a revision skills workshop. These days are tiring for all concerned, but the chance to come off timetable for a day allows a deeper understanding to be developed and the students enjoyed the experience.

On White Ribbon day on 25th November, I am proud to be representing Verulam, alongside our Head Girl and School Captain, at a conference in St Albans Town Hall on preventing domestic violence against women and girls. Given the recent news about celebrity abuse of women, it feels particularly timely that we are talking to our boys about the prevention of abuse. Our recent visit from Talk Consent was timely and we continue to avail of opportunities to talk to our boys and young men on positive masculinity. Next week is also anti-bullying week and our sixth formers will lead assemblies and don't forget 'odd socks' day to show support!

Fergal Moane, Headteacher

Fortnightly Focus

Click for Term Dates

- Movember Mens Health Awareness Month (November)
- 16 Nov - Year 11 Mock Exams begin
- 16 Nov - Odd Socks Day
- 16 Nov - Anti Bullying Week
- 16 Nov - Maths Week England
- 16 Nov - Geography Awareness Week
- 18 Nov - Senior Kangaroo Maths Challenge
- 18 Nov - Year 11 Oaklands College Trip
- 18 Nov - Debate Trip
- 18 Nov - Year 10 HPQ Trip
- 19 Nov - Year 12 Parents Evening
- 26 Nov - Abbey Service - ALL YEARS
- 27 Nov - OCCASIONAL DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED

VERUFocus

Verulam Remembers

On 11th November, our school community gathered outdoors in quiet reflection to mark Remembrance Day, honouring the bravery, service, and sacrifice of those who came before us. Marking this occasion remains vital for our young people, offering them a dedicated moment to pause, reflect on history, and appreciate the shared freedoms we enjoy today.

The observance featured student-led readings centred on the theme of remembrance, including traditional readings such as *In Flanders Fields* read by School Vice-Captain, Jago A and Head Girl, Lexi A. This was followed by our House Captains and our Year 8 House Representatives laying their House wreaths as a mark of respect and thanks to all those who have served and are currently serving.

We are immensely proud of how maturely and respectfully our students conducted themselves throughout the observance. Standing together as one unified school community during this period of national remembrance is important and gives our students the perfect opportunity to demonstrate our core values: Excellence, Character and Respect.

Mrs Avery, Assistant Headteacher







Remembrance Day in the Library

We kicked off November by honouring Remembrance Day with commemorative activities, reading challenges and dedicated library displays. A massive well done to everyone currently taking part in a challenge or finishing a war themed book this month!

Special recognition goes to Noah F. (Year 7), Flynn S. (Year 8), and Nilesh P. (Year 9) for submitting some thoughtful poppy book reviews for our display.

Word of the Week (09/11/26): Commemorate - Verb: to recall and show respect for someone or something in a ceremony or display.

Miss G Pettitt, Literacy Coordinator





VERUNews

Year 10 Art Trip

On Thursday 5th November the Art Department took Year 10 students to the Royal Academy in London to see the Paintings of The French Riviera exhibition. Students had the opportunity to do observational drawings from some of the most famous impressionist artists such as Renoir, Monet and Cezanne.

Students were seen in the gallery using oil pastels recreating the paintings as they will develop these further at school this half term. They took part in discussions about how to observe the artwork from a distance and up close, exploring how Impressionist artists used a variety of colours and tones to create depth, texture and atmosphere within their work.











Students showed a particular interest in Claude Monet's oil painting The Bay of Antribes, they were drawn to the variety of colours and textures achieved through his use of oil paints. The interest in colour and art materials provided an interesting link to Monet's involvement in the development of oil pastels with the Paris based art material store Magasin Sennelier, the store continues to supply artists 139 years on.

As the students were enjoying the exhibition, a student commented "*I was surprised by what I saw. There was a lot more than I expected.*" Another student added that they "*felt really inspired by the variety of the artwork*", highlighting the importance of seeing famous artwork first hand.

Students also explored a contrasting artwork through Yves Klein's Untitled Anthropometry. They discussed what shapes could be seen in the painting such as crab claws to human figures! The visit provided students with the opportunity to explore a wide range of artistic styles, develop their observational skills and gain inspiration for their own artwork at school.

Miss Talukdar, Trainee Art Teacher





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Please remember.....

IF ABSENT please contact:

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01727 754101

VERUNews

Year 11 Mock Exams Reminder

Monday 16th November is the start of the Year 11 Mock Exams. The students have been working very hard before, during and after school. Students should attend school as normal. Exams will be formally invigilated in the Sports Hall benefitting from our new heating and air con system which was recently installed.

The full timetable can be found on our website here: https://verulamschool.co.uk/Learning/Exams/

This week we also welcomed Dr van der Spoel to talk to our Year 11 parents on building exam success. Revision interventions continue to be very busy and the walking talking mock sessions on Curriculum Enrichment Day means the students are in a great space to perform to their full potential.

Good Luck!

Mr Halsall, Head of Year 11

VERUFocus

Hertfordshire Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2026

At Verulam, supporting the health and wellbeing of our students remains a core priority, and listening to their voices is essential to ensuring our pastoral care is as effective as possible. With this in mind, we are pleased to share that our school is taking part in this year's Hertfordshire Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey (YPHWS).

Run every two years by Hertfordshire County Council alongside NHS partners, Services for Young People, and #JUSTTALK, the survey gives young people aged 11–19 across the county a confidential platform to share their experiences and views. In 2024, more than 14,500 Hertfordshire students took part, providing vital insights into the real-world issues affecting teenagers today.



The survey takes around 20 minutes to complete and covers a broad range of everyday topics, including mental health, physical activity, healthy eating, relationships, and online and personal safety. Students will complete the questionnaire during designated time in school between Monday 9th November and Friday 18th December.

Taking part brings direct benefits to our school community. Because we anticipate over 100 responses from our students, Verulam will receive an individualised school report highlighting overall trends and themes. This data helps our Pastoral and Safeguarding Teams tailor assemblies, RSHE lessons, and targeted support to address the specific needs of our boys. On a wider scale, the county's Health Intelligence team uses the findings to plan and improve youth services across Hertfordshire.



Key Points for Parents and Carers:

- Completely Anonymous: Individual students cannot be identified from their responses; the data is only used to look at broader school and county-wide patterns.
- Completed in School: Students will be given time during the school day to take part, so no action is required from parents or carers at home.
- Further Information: While there is no need for families to fill anything in, anyone wishing to learn more about the county-wide initiative can visit www.hertshealthevidence.org/yphws or contact the Public Health team at yphws@hertfordshire.gov.uk.
- You can also watch the Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2026 Video (2.5 mins) and view the Survey Link to see what the students will be exploring.

By giving our students the opportunity to share their perspectives in a safe, anonymous way, we can continue building a supportive environment where every voice is heard.

Mr Holding, Lead Practitioner for Pastoral and Safeguarding

VERUSport

School Sports Roundup

What a busy few weeks it has been again!

As part of Curriculum Enrichment Day, our Year 10s took part in a House Sport tournament. It was an excellent effort from all the boys who participated, with Park emerging as the overall winners—congratulations!

Our teams have also had a fantastic run in local and national competitions:





🏉 Rugby

Last week, we hosted the U13 County Rugby League tournament at Sandpit Lane, and our U13 team took home the trophy as county champions! On Saturday, we also hosted a full set of friendly Year 7, 8, and 9 rugby fixtures against Sandringham.

⚽ Football

National Cup: Our Year 9s have successfully progressed to Round 5, and our Senior squad had an impressive 3–0 win over Richard Hale to advance to the next round.

County Cup: A mixed bag of results, but plenty to celebrate! Our Year 7s secured a dominant 4–0 victory against Chauncy, and our Year 10s put in an outstanding performance to beat Beaumont 4–0 to progress. Unfortunately, our Year 11s missed out on penalties against Queens after a hard-fought match.



🏸 Badminton

Our team fought hard in the National Cup but unfortunately bowed out against a very strong Parmiter's side, which featured the top-ranked player in the country.

📢 **Important Notice**

Please note that there will be no indoor sports clubs over the next two weeks due to Mock Exams taking place in the Sports Hall.

Mr Errington, Director of Sport





VACANCIES

We are delighted that you are considering applying for a role at Verulam School.

We currently have one external vacancy available at Verulam School:

- Teacher of English

Apply by midday Wednesday 18th November 2026.

For further details or if you wish to have a tour of the school or ask any questions, please contact Roberta Williams on HR@verulam.aetrust.uk or 01727 766100

Anti-Bullying Week:Break the Silence & Odd Socks Day

Anti-Bullying Week 2026: "Break the Silence" (Monday 16th to Friday 20th November).

At Verulam School, we are proud to support this year's national Anti-Bullying Week campaign, themed "Break the Silence".

To kick off the week, we invite all students and staff to celebrate Odd Socks Day on Monday 16th November!

Wear any pair of odd socks! it's fun, there's zero cost or fuss and let's stand together against bullying.



VERUSixth

Inspiring Guest Lectures & Essential Life Skills

It has been a busy period for our Sixth Formers, packed with inspiring guest speakers and vital real-world learning!

Our Year 12 EML programme hosted two outstanding lectures. First, we welcomed Billy Perham, former Royal Marines Officer and Operations Director for Mission Spiritus. Billy delivered a powerful, awe-inspiring talk on resilience, character, and finding purpose after striving in the world's most challenging environments.

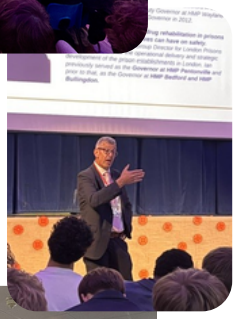
Later, we were delighted to welcome back Ian Blakeman for his third annual visit. Drawing on his distinguished career as Director of Commissioning at the National Offender Management Service, Ian gave an engaging insight into real-life prison operations, addressing hot topics like early release schemes, drone threats, and drug control, which sparked a non-stop Q&A session.

Meanwhile, Year 13 CED focused on crucial life safety through the Split Second road safety campaign. The session highlighted how a single moment behind the wheel can alter lives forever, focusing directly on the 'Fatal Five' causes of serious collisions: speeding, drink and drug driving, careless driving, failing to wear a seatbelt, and using a mobile phone.

Thank you to all our speakers for giving our students such valuable insights!

Mr Base, Director of Sixth Form







Residential Reminders

Confirmed residential trips are shown below.

Upcoming residential trip reminders:

- Nothing Upcoming

Further ahead (2027/28 dates):

- 19 Feb - Geography Field Trip Iceland*
- 27 Jun - 01 Jul - Yr 7 Lake District Trip*
- 28 Jun - 01 Jul - Yr 8 Battlefields Trip* - FULL
- 28 Jun - Yr 12 New York All Humanities Trip* - FULL
- 28 Jun - Barcelona Football Trip* - FULL
- 05 Jul - 09 Jul - Yr 9 North Wales Trip* - FULL
- **11 Feb - 19 Feb 2028** - Yr 7-9 Ski Trip (open for expression of interest)

* some payments are still outstanding

VERUSixth

Year 12 Curriculum Enrichment Day

Throughout the world, minority groups still suffer disadvantage and persecution. In our first Year 12 Curriculum Enrichment Day, our pupils worked in groups of 3 to represent one of the member nations of the United Nations. They represented their country in the committee responsible for achieving "international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex language, or religion."

Working together, they researched how their countries accept or tolerate different religious beliefs in their countries. In the middle section of the day, we reconstructed the United Nations chamber in the 6th Form cafe, with each group stating how their country could work with others to improve religious acceptance, and where changes would go against that country's beliefs.

Using this information, each country produced a draft UN resolution. These were debated, and ultimately the resolution provided by Switzerland was the final choice.

Thank you to all the students who threw themselves into the day and developed their presentation skills.

Mr Bint, Deputy Director of Sixth Form

VERUNews

Smoothwall Online Safety Hub

Digital safety is a top priority for our school. Thank you to our parents and carers who joined the online safety workshop held virtually on the 11th November 2026.

To support our entire community—parents, carers, staff, and students—we encourage you to explore the hub here:

https://smoothwall.com/solutions/online-safety-hub

Created by leading child safety, technology, and mental health experts, this free resource offers up-to-date guidance to help navigate the digital world safely.

Key Features for Families & Staff:

- App & Game Guides: Detailed safety overviews, age ratings, and privacy settings for popular platforms like TikTok, Roblox, and Instagram.
- Expert Advice: Practical strategies for managing screen time, cyberbullying, online privacy, and social media pressure.
- Parental Support: Step-by-step guides and conversation starters to foster open, positive discussions about tech habits at home.
- Educational Resources: Training and trend alerts to keep our team informed.

Together, we can ensure our students stay safe and confident online.

Mrs Thackray, Deputy Headteacher

House Updates

The House leadership team organise many events throughout the school year which are designed to celebrate students' success and keep students motivated. Who will win this year?

BRAMPTON 20623

CHURCHILL 22756

HAMILTON 18845

JENNINGS 17224

PARK 18742

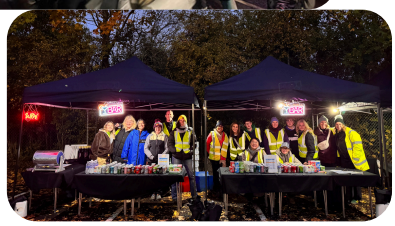
YORK 18641

Verulam PTFA

Storms? Flying gazebos? Nothing could stop this year's Fireworks Festival!

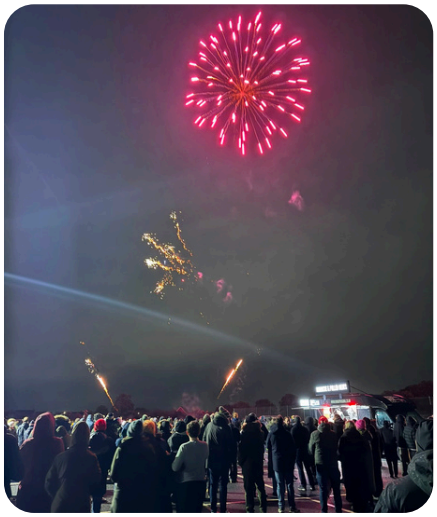
A huge gale swept the UK, three gazebos took flight and the whole site was set up not once but twice. Six months of planning nearly blew away, but our amazing 30 volunteers refused to be beaten, putting up stalls, checking tickets, serving drinks and tidying up all night.





The wind died down, the rain mostly held off, the food vans kept everyone fed, and the fireworks were "the best ever!" according to one pupil. Best of all, we raised over £10,000 for the school!

Huge thanks to our event sponsors - Gymtro, ATW Events and Rol Construction (all Verulam parents!) and everyone who came, helped and cheered. You rock!



Fancy joining the fun next time? Verulam PTFA would love more helping hands. Please contact: verulamschoolpta@gmail.com.



Firework safety update from Hertfordshire County Council

Please read the below link from Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding fireworks safety. Share this information with pupils, parents and carers to help raise awareness of the importance of staying safe around fireworks during the fireworks season.

Firework safety | Hertfordshire County Council

Thank you for your continued support in helping to keep our communities safe.

In the Community

On Saturday 14th November Marshalswick Baptist Free Church is hosting its annual Community Fayre and Charity Car Wash in aid of Children in Need. Everyone is welcome to come down and support this charity event.
This event takes place from 10.00am - 2.00pm.



In the Community

Come and join in with Winter Reads at Marshalswick Library. Pick up your challenge, discover your next great book and enjoy a winter filled with reading, events and prizes. The Winter Reading Challenge will run from 1st November 2026 to 31st January 2027. By completing this year's Winter Reading Challenge you could win tickets to a brilliant Hertfordshire attraction!



In the Community

Potential Kids has plenty of warm, indoor actvities lined up for neurodivergent children and their families. So as the weather starts to feel more wintry, why not head to one of their available sessions. Please see the attached November poster for further details.



In the Community

We are always keen to share helpful local updates, support networks and charity events with our Verulam community. Please take a look at the following links for further information:

- St Albans Child Contact Centre
- Hertfordshire Children's Wellbeing Team - Free Workshops
- Youth Talk
- Carers in Herts
- Potential Kids
- Coram Family Lives Information
- St Albans & District Foodbank
- Verso Care - Food Bank
- DENS Sleepout
- St Albans Sleepout for Herts Young Homeless
- Hertfordshire Community News and Events
- STEP Schools Work

In the Community

Townsend Church of England Schoool is currently consulting on proposed changes to its Admission Arrangements for the 2028/29 academic year. Local families are invited to share feedback.
Please see the attached poster for further information.



In other news.....

Tickets for Verulam's Festive Christmas Showcase are on sale via MCAS. Taking place on Wednesday 9th December 2026 and tickets are priced as follows: Adults £5 and Under 16's £2.50. Doors open at 6.30pm and the show will start at 7.00pm. See you there!

