NEWSLETTER

CROWN HILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
A Specialist Sports College

Autumn 2026









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Mrs Duis wins Silver Award for Teacher of the Year in Pearson National Teaching Awards!

We are incredibly proud to announce that Mrs Duis, our outstanding Art and Design teacher and Personal Development and Community Leader, has been named a Silver Award Winner in the Teacher of the Year in a Secondary School category at the prestigious Pearson National Teaching Awards.

This national award recognises Mrs Duis's exceptional contribution to education, her unwavering commitment to young people, and the significant impact she has had on students, colleagues, families and the wider Crown Hills Community College community.

Mrs Duis is one of only 6 education professionals and organisations across the country to receive a Silver Award in this category this year. This achievement places her among the very best educators in the UK and means she will now be considered for a coveted Gold Award, which will be announced later this year at a national awards ceremony in London.

During her time at Crown Hills Mrs Duis has consistently demonstrated extraordinary dedication to teaching and learning. Through her creativity, expertise and belief in every student's potential, she has inspired countless young people to achieve beyond their own expectations.

Mrs Duis is equally passionate about working with families and the wider community. Through regular engagement events and her approachable, caring nature, she has built strong relationships with parents and carers.

Those who work alongside Mrs Duis describe her as an inspirational educator who embodies everything that is exceptional about teaching. Her passion, humility, kindness and relentless commitment to improving life chances for young people make her a truly deserving recipient of this national recognition.

We are immensely proud of Mrs Duis's achievement and would like to congratulate her on this well-deserved award. We are sure you will join us in celebrating this wonderful success for both Mrs Duis and the entire Crown Hills Community College community.





Year 8 Trip to Peak District

As part of our #6YearJourney all 300 of our Year 8s went on a paid trip to Chatsworth House in the Peak District. This was a wonderful opportunity for them to experience the countryside and a different environment. There were lots for our students to see there. They went on a walk in the grounds and enjoyed seeing and learning about new things. They enjoyed a picnic and some of them even managed to spot deer.





AMBASSADORS

This half term, we were delighted to recruit a new team of Student Ambassadors who will play a key role in representing our school throughout the year. Following an application process, students were invited to submit written applications before being shortlisted for interview. From this process, we appointed a Head Ambassador, two Deputy Ambassadors and a team of Ambassador Helpers.

Our newly appointed ambassadors were officially introduced to students during assemblies, where they shared their aspirations for the role and explained how they will help support school events and promote student voice across the school community.

The team has already made a fantastic start. They have been instrumental in supporting our recent Open Day tours, welcoming prospective families and helping visitors gain an insight into daily life at our school. Their enthusiasm, confidence and professionalism were evident as they guided guests around the site and answered questions about their experiences as students.

We are incredibly proud of all the students who applied and congratulate those who were appointed. We look forward to seeing our ambassadors continue to make a positive contribution to our school community throughout the year.

PILOT PROGRAMME

We are excited to announce a brand-new enrichment opportunity for students in Years 7-9. In partnership with British Young Pilots, Crown Hills will be launching a Young Pilots Club in January 2027.



Over ten weekly sessions, students will learn about aviation through a combination of classroom-based theory and hands-on flight simulator training led by experienced instructors and pilots. Topics will include how aircraft fly, navigation, weather, flight planning, aviation systems and the wide range of careers available within the aviation and STEM sectors.

The programme is designed not only for aspiring pilots but also to help students develop valuable skills such as confidence, teamwork, communication, resilience and problem-solving. Following the course, students will have the opportunity to experience a real-life flight at a British Young Pilots partner airfield.

Look out for a leter from Ms Russell-Smith with more information!

FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERS

Several of our Year 8 students recently volunteered at a local food bank, where they helped to serve food and support members of the community in need. The students worked alongside staff and volunteers, gaining valuable insight into the importance of community support and kindness.

Their compassion, maturity and willingness to help others were a credit to the school. We are extremely proud of their efforts and grateful for the positive impact they made on the lives of others. Well done, Year 8!



LITTER PICKING VOLUNTEERS

A group of dedicated Year 7 students recently volunteered their time to help keep our local community clean and tidy. Equipped with litter pickers, gloves and plenty of enthusiasm, the students spent their morning collecting rubbish from the surrounding area.

Their hard work not only helped improve the local environment but also demonstrated a strong sense of community responsibility. We are incredibly proud of their positive attitude and commitment to making a difference. Well done to everyone involved!



READING

AUTHOR VISIT- TAMSIN WINTER

Our Year 9 students were delighted to welcome award-winning author Tamsin Winter for an inspiring and engaging author talk at the end of September. Students gained an insight into the writing process, explored the themes behind her stories, and had the opportunity to ask some fantastic questions.





POETRY COMPETITION

Our library was filled with creativity and confidence at lunchtime this half term as students took part in a poetry competition open to all year groups. Participants had the opportunity to perform a poem of their choice or share an original poem they had written themselves, in front of an audience of staff and peers.

The event showcased an incredible range of talent, with students delivering their poems with passion, expression and courage. Whether performing a well-loved classic or presenting their own work, every participant contributed to a wonderful celebration of poetry and creativity. Congratulations to all who took part and helped make the competition such a success.



WHOLE SCHOOL COUNCIL

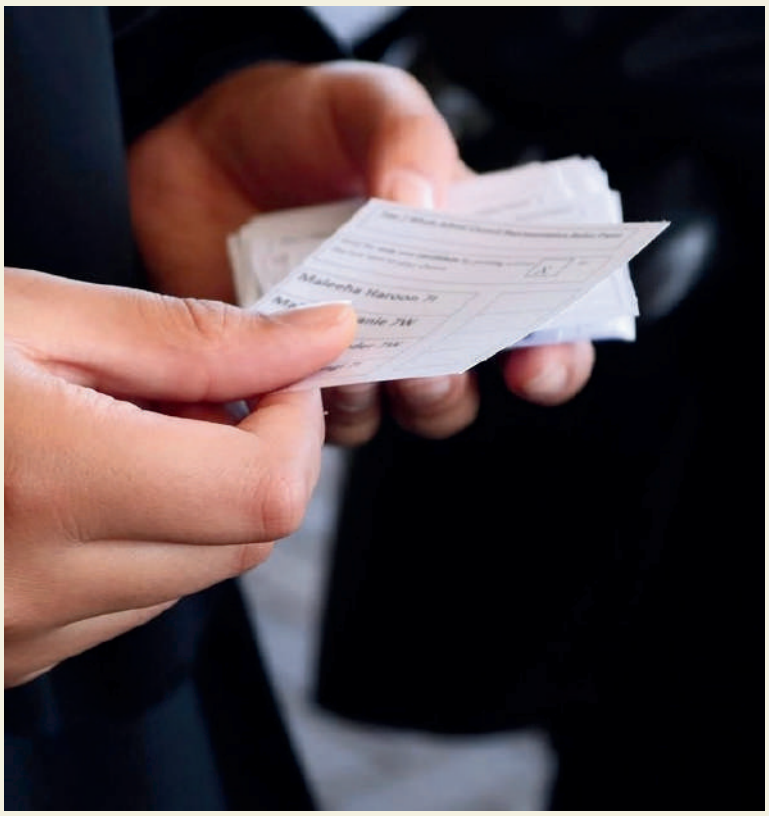
ELECTIONS

This half term, students across the school have taken part in our annual Whole School Council elections. During lunchtime voting sessions, students from each year group had the opportunity to cast their votes and have their say in choosing their representatives.

Every year group elects two Whole School Council members who will act as the voice of their peers, helping to share ideas, discuss important issues and contribute to future school developments. The elections have been a fantastic example of student democracy in action, with candidates putting themselves forward and students engaging thoughtfully in the voting process.

We would like to thank all students who participated, whether by standing as a candidate or by taking the time to vote. The enthusiasm and engagement shown throughout the election period demonstrates our students' commitment to making a positive difference within the school community.

The successful representatives for each year group will be announced in the coming weeks. We look forward to working with the newly elected Whole School Council members and hearing their ideas for the year ahead.







PARENTAL GATHERINGS

Each month, we host Parent Gatherings that are open to all parents and carers. These friendly and informative sessions cover a range of topics designed to support families, including homework strategies, online safety, study skills and student wellbeing.

The gatherings also provide a valuable opportunity for parents to meet members of staff, share experiences and get to know other families within our school community. We are delighted to see so many parents taking part and working together to support the success of our students. We look forward to welcoming even more families to future sessions.



Parental Gathering Topics

Our parental gatherings are very popular each month. It is lovely seeing familiar and new faces each session. For the first session this half term, we asked parents to chose from a list of topics which they would be most interested learning about throughout this academic year.

Topics included:

- Internet Safety
- Summative Assessments
- Health and Wellbeing
- Environment
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Revision Support
- Cooking Classes
- Sewing Classes
- Behaviour and Rewards
- Parent Classes/Courses

We will collate the information and base our gatherings around the most popular topics.



OPEN EVENING AND TOURS

Tours

Every year we run several Open Day Tours for prospective Year 5 and 6 parents. These run alongside our Open Evening.

Our tours give parents a chace to see our school in action. When they arrive, they get to see our morning and afternoon routines, which include our line ups. They then have a short talk from our Principal and the chance to ask any questions. After which, they then take a tour of the school. They are shown round by our student ambassadors and even have the chance to go into some classrooms to see some live teaching.

Feedback

It was lovely to meet so many prospective parents and carers, especially hearing their favourite parts about the school.

“I’m amazed how quiet it is as you walk round even though you have 1,500 students.”

“The building is so bright and colourful, it really sets the children up for learning”.







Art Corner







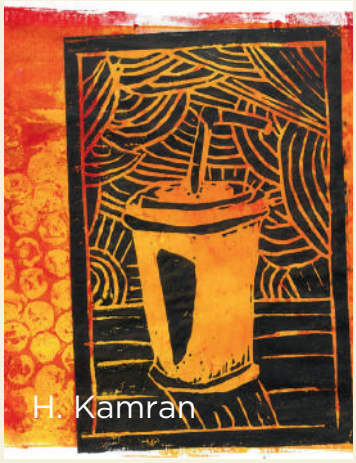


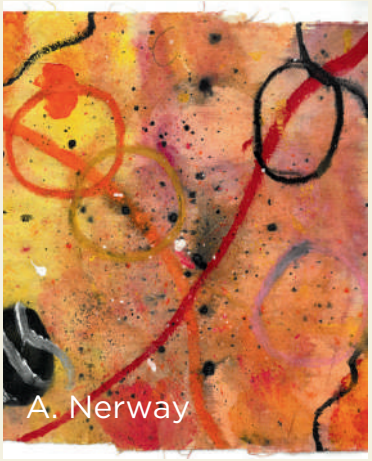








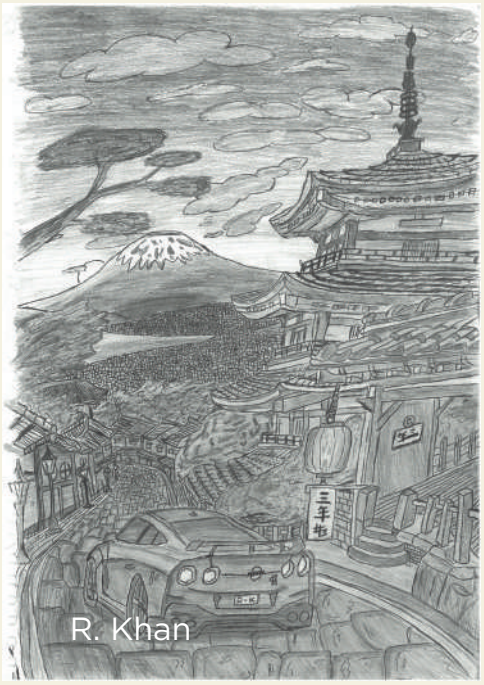






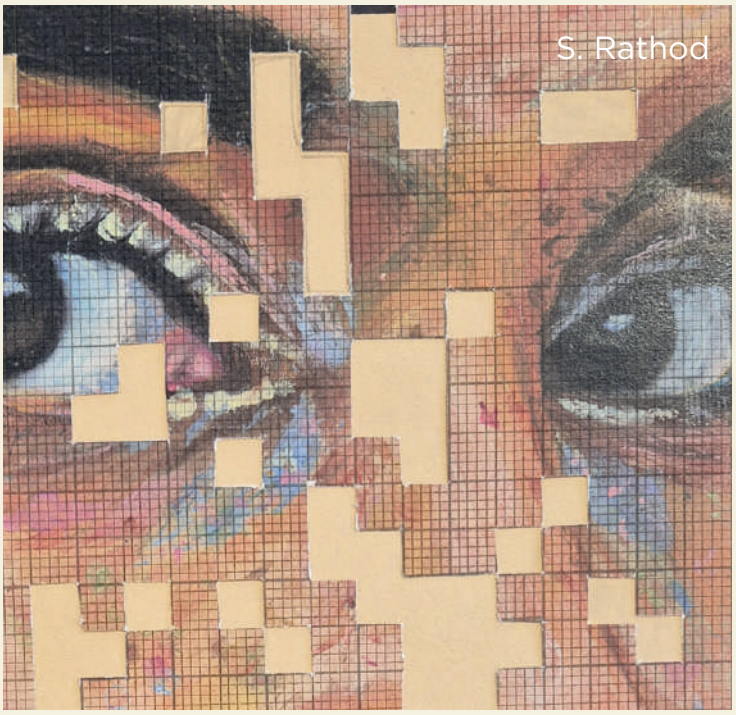
This half term in Art our Year 9's have been busy creating reduction lino prints in the style of pop artist Howie Green and Year 8 have painted on canvas created in response to Abstract Expressionist themes.

Art Corner


R. Khan


M. Ikhariya


F. Sheikh


S. Rathod



F. Ismail

Here we highlight work that has been submitted to be part of the Open Exhibition as well as some pieces from our Year 11 leavers.

The quality of work produced across both year groups has been outstanding, and students should be incredibly proud of the creativity, enthusiasm and dedication they have shown. We look forward to showcasing some of these impressive pieces in future exhibitions and displays around the school.

Physical Education

ACTIVE IN MIND

This half term, we were delighted to launch the Active in Mind programme with our Year 8 and Year 10 students. The programme is designed to support positive mental health and wellbeing by helping young people develop resilience, manage stress and anxiety, and build strategies to support their emotional wellbeing.

Led by GB tennis player Jade, our Athlete Mentor, the programme highlights the important connection between physical activity and mental health. Through engaging sessions and peer mentoring opportunities, students are encouraged to explore how movement, mindset and their environment can positively impact their wellbeing.

We are excited to be working with our students throughout the programme and look forward to seeing the confidence, resilience and leadership skills they develop as part of this valuable initiative.

YOUTH SPORT TRUST





Physical Education



SPORTS ACADEMY SHOWCASE

The Sports Academy showcase event will be taking place on Monday 2nd November 4:30–5:30 pm. This exciting event provides opportunity for parents, guardians and family members to celebrate and observe their child's development within their Sports Academy sport. During the event, pupils will demonstrate their skills and techniques they have developed in Fencing, Badminton and Cricket. This will then be followed by a presentation from the Sports Academy team which will outline the Academy's vision, values, success, aspirations and expectations. The session will allow families to have a deeper understating and standard expectation of Sports Academy. Pupils will then sign their Sports Academy contracts for the 2026-2027 academic year, symbolising their commitment to upholding the Academy's values and striving for excellence.

SPORTS ACADEMY MORNING SESSIONS

Sports Academy Strength and Conditioning sessions have continued to grow in popularity this year, with approximately 30 pupils attending every Wednesday morning from 7:45am-8:15am. These sessions focus on developing their athleticism, movement skills and functional fitness, supporting performance across Fencing, Badminton and Cricket. Activities include exercises such as dive forward rolls, sprints and hurdling over obstacles, to improve agility, coordination, speed and overall physical conditioning. Pupils have found this highly engaging and have shown high levels of enthusiasm and determination and have constantly working hard to develop their physically capabilities.



Physical Education





BADMINTON

Sports Academy Badminton and Fencing sessions take place every Thursday morning from 7:45am-8:15am, providing more competitive practice time to build upon previous skills learned in the after-school sessions during the week. As a result, Badminton players are becoming more confident in applying effective tactics and strategies in both singles and doubles. Fencing pupil continue to develop their sabre footwork focusing on movement efficiency, balance and tactical awareness to enhance their competitive performance.

CRICKET

Sports Academy morning Cricket will be starting soon and is open to pupils of all year groups and genders. The sessions will focus on developing batting, bowling and fielding skills in preparation for the upcoming indoor cricket season. To recognise effort and achievement, a “Trainer of the Week” trophy will be awarded to pupils who demonstrate outstanding commitment, attitude and progress. This has already created a positive and motivating environment, encouraging pupils to strive for their best.

Physical Education



SPORTS ACADEMY AFTER SCHOOL SESSIONS

Sports Academy Badminton has taken place on every Tuesday afternoon from 3pm-4:30pm this half term and has focused on developing pupils' technical proficiency, tactical awareness and overall match performance. Sessions are planned to improve consistency, confidence and competitiveness, ensuring pupils are well prepared for fixtures and tournaments through the academic year. A typical session begins with racket-based warm-up, followed by footwork training, tactical development and game-based practice, allowing them to apply their learning in realistic match situations. Sports Academy Fencing takes place Wednesdays from 3pm-5pm each week with our specialist Fencing coach Graham Stretton. The first hour is dedicated to developing technical skills, tactical understanding and weapon-specific techniques, whilst the second hour focuses on preparing pupils for competition through structured sparring and competitive scenarios. Fencers have demonstrated significant progress showing increased confidence, improved technical execution and a greater understanding of competitive fencing.

EAST MIDLANDS REGION FENCING

We hosted the East Midlands Regional Fencing Competition at Crown Hills Community College on Saturday 26th September; this event took place from 9:45am –12:30pm. 12 of our Fencers competed. For some, this was their first experience of a sabre competition and for others included our more experienced Fencers. Abdullah, Natiq and Tayyibah performed well achieving 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. This competition was added in to the competition schedule to provide an additional experience for our fencers to demonstrate their skills in a competitive setting. The next upcoming competition is the East Midlands Beginner, Intermediate and Junior competition on Saturday 28th November.

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ASPIRATION
Be the best that you can be

COMMITMENT
Do what it takes for as long as it takes

SUCCESS
Be ready to take on the world