



COWLEY  
ACADEMY

# Head of School

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024

UPDATE

Dear parents/carers and students,

We have had another great week at Cowley Academy.

Over the last few weeks, students have been gripped by 'election fever' as we held a Trust-wide mock General Election to coincide with the actual General Election on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024. As part of our PSHE programme, we hold a Parliament Week in November to provide practical understanding of British democracy. This General Election therefore provided the perfect opportunity for students to get a taste of what it is like to vote as many students will be able to vote next time there is a General Election in five years' time.

Just like how the real elections work, we split each school in the Trust and each year group into separate constituencies with 17 areas up for grabs. We gave the opportunity for students to choose to vote from six political parties, which were represented by 19 exceptional students from the SLAT Sixth Form at Bourne Academy to provide a test of their debating and presentation skills. The Sixth Formers were split across the different parties and travelled to all four schools in the Trust to take part in 17 live hustings that were held in front of each year group where they could campaign on various issues and manifesto pledges.

The topics of 'national service for 18-year olds' and 'allowing over 16s to vote' sparked lively discussions among the students and they were keen to find out the financial and green credentials for each party. This encouraged students to discuss the issues that mattered to them and our society. As well as the campaigning done by our Sixth Formers, students cited that they had taken notice of political information from other sources such as social media, YouTube, TikTok, mainstream media, leaflets in the post as well as conversation within their social groups.

It was encouraging to see that students across all years and in all schools had voted for all of the political parties on offer. The overall majority across the Trust was for Reform UK with the Green Party coming a close second place. It was interesting the three main political parties were not the most popular choices amongst under 16s and it shows that these parties have work to do if they want to engage with future young voters.



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It has been immensely rewarding to see how students have engaged in the political process by discussing key political issues to helping them understand the complexities and responsibilities that come with participating in a democratic society. The mock election has been invaluable in teaching students about the importance of voting, the electoral process, and the role of political parties in shaping the future of our country. By taking part in the voting process they will be better prepared and informed when it comes to put an X in the box for the very first time.

We would like to especially thank the Sixth Form students who campaigned so admirably and in good spirit over the last few weeks. We may even have encouraged some future political leaders – who knows?

Our school is excited to be taking part in the **Matthew Flinders 'Bring Him Home'** event which will be taking place next week. The event has been organised to commemorate and celebrate the 250th birthday and homecoming of Matthew Flinders and involves the whole community of Donington. Please visit [www.cowleyacademy.org.uk/matthew-flinders-celebrations](http://www.cowleyacademy.org.uk/matthew-flinders-celebrations) for further information and a schedule of activities. Today and tomorrow our GCSE Art students supported the Flinders Founders Group working alongside James Mayle sketching their ideas onto a ramp and then using spray paint to complete their graffiti artwork. The students work will be part of the Matthew Flinders celebrations.



This week in Year group assemblies we have been rewarding students who have been entered into the Super Prize Draw for the term. Students are entered based on data in respect of their attitude to learning and assessment data. Well done to all students who were entered into the Prize Draw.

Students in Year 8 took part in a PSHE lessons on Monday and covered these key areas:

- **Pet Costs:** In line with the national agenda, students had to think about whether (especially following lockdown and the cost of living) pets are an affordable feature in their lives. Students focused on animal cruelty and its consequences.
- **Budgeting:** Students increased their understanding to the notion of finance and budgeting to support the wider world of living. Topics such as tax, national insurance, the use of credit cards and the cost of everyday living was a focal point and students focused on budgeting skills with scenarios surrounding planning parties and holidays.
- **Vaccines:** There was a focus on HPV Vaccination to give awareness of the purpose of vaccines and to support the HPV vaccine uptake.
- **Rail Safety:** We know this is a national issue and therefore reiterated the promotion of safe and proper use of crossings, and the dangers posed by rail lines.

And finally, we have informed students this week about the Film Festival event we are holding in the last week of term. The students were informed that they all have access to this reward in school. We felt this was a really important message to give, as our students have worked very hard throughout this academic year. However, we did reinforce that any behaviour which is not acceptable during the last two weeks, will result in them missing out on the treat. We are looking forward to seeing students enjoy their in-school cinema treat!

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr Glenn Martin**  
Head of School, Cowley Academy

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