



Farewell Message from Diana Townshend, Principal

As I prepare to retire at the end of this term, I find myself reflecting with immense pride on the journey our school community has taken over the past five years. It has been an extraordinary privilege to serve as Principal of The Featherstone Academy, and I am deeply grateful for every moment spent working alongside our remarkable students, staff, families and wider community.

During my time here, we have seen our student numbers grow steadily, reflecting the trust and confidence that families place in our school. Alongside this growth, our students have continued to achieve increasingly strong academic results, demonstrating not only their hard work but also their determination to succeed.

I am especially proud of the expanding opportunities available to our young people beyond Year 11. More of our students than ever before are securing excellent post-16 placements — whether in sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeships or specialist pathways — which in turn are opening doors to exciting future careers and life choices. Watching our pupils step confidently into the next stage of their lives has been one of the greatest joys of my role.

I will deeply miss working with the young people who bring laughter, inspiration and, very often, a fair number of challenges every single day. Their spirit, honesty and energy have shaped my time here in ways I will always treasure.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the unwavering commitment and professionalism of our staff. Their dedication, care and belief in every student have shaped a school culture built on responsibility, aspiration and pride. I have been privileged to lead a team that consistently goes above and beyond.

To our parents, carers and community partners, thank you for your ongoing support, collaboration, and trust. Together, we have created an environment where young people are valued, nurtured and encouraged to flourish.

And most importantly, to our students: thank you for inspiring me every day. Your energy, creativity, humour, and incredible capacity for growth have made my years here truly special. I leave with great confidence in your future and in the future of this school.

As I step into retirement, I carry with me a deep sense of gratitude and pride. This community will always hold a very special place in my heart.

With warmest wishes for the years ahead.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

27 MARCH 2026

SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR EASTER

13 APRIL 2026

SCHOOL REOPENS

20 APRIL 2026

GCSE FRENCH SPEAKING EXAMS

23 APRIL 2026

YEAR 9 PARENTS EVENING

1 MAY 2026

GCSE EXAMS BEGIN

4 MAY 2026

SCHOOL CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY

19 MAY 2026

YEAR 9 DTP/MENINGITIS VACCINATIONS

25 MAY 2026

SCHOOL CLOSED – BANK HOLIDAY

26 MAY 2026

SCHOOL REOPENS

4 JUNE 2026

YEAR 7 PARENTS EVENING

12 JUNE 2026

SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR HALF TERM

CONGRATULATIONS!



We are thrilled to share some wonderful news: **Y9 student, Nikola, has been shortlisted for the prestigious title of West Yorkshire Young Poet Laureate** with their powerful poem *Lock and Key*. This is an outstanding accomplishment and a moment of great pride for our school community.

Nikola is one of just 20 students selected from across the region, chosen from an exceptionally strong field of entries. Reaching this stage is a remarkable achievement and reflects both their talent and dedication to the craft of poetry.

All shortlisted poets will now move forward to the next stage of the selection process, where they will be considered for the role of **Young Poet Laureate for West Yorkshire**. The chosen Laureates will act as creative ambassadors for poetry throughout the coming year. In addition, every shortlisted student will have their poem published in a celebratory anthology and will receive their own copy—a wonderful keepsake and recognition of their success.

About the Young Poet Laureate Role

Two Young Poet Laureates are appointed in each region. This year-long ambassadorial role offers an exciting range of opportunities, including:

- **Championing poetry** within schools and local communities
- **Performing at events** and taking on **writing commissions**
- **Receiving mentorship** from professional poets
- Contributing to national poetry initiatives alongside **UK Poet Laureate Simon Armitage**



Change your story

Nikola's winning poem is on the next page



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CONGRATULATIONS!

LOCK AND KEY

We learned love through glowing screens.
Through typing dots and disappearing acts.
Through "I miss you" sent at 2am.
And deleted by morning.

We learned that silence can be louder.
Than slammed doors ever were.
Love used to be letters folded carefully.
Ink smudged by shaking hands.
Now it's read receipts
And last seen time stamps.
Measuring devotion in minutes and replies.

We don't ask, "how are you?"
We ask "why didn't answer?"

In this generation, love is cautious.
It walks with its hands in its pockets.
Keys clenched like weapons.
Ready to leave at the first sign of danger.
We love like we're rehearsing an exit.
Just in case staying hurts more.

Everyone is afraid of being honest too much.
Too caring.
Too attached.
Too honest.

So we pretend we don't feel it, even when our hearts are screaming.
We say, "I'm chill" while quietly drowning in unsent messages.

Love is complicated when everyone is broken in different, unspoken ways.
We carry past ghosts into new beds.
Old betrayals into fresh beginnings.
We punish people for crimes they haven't committed yet.
And still – we crave it – we crave someone who stays when it's no longer exciting.
Someone who chooses us on the days when we're quiet and heavy and tired.

But commitment feels like a risk in a world that glorifies leaving.
We are the generation of the almost loved.
Almost forever.
Almost saying, "I love you"
But swallowing it like a secret because exposure feels like losing.



FOCUS ON YEAR 11



Featherstone High Fliers is our motivational programme for Year 11 students, aimed at bringing focus, fun, and tailored support in the crucial final eight weeks before GCSEs.

The sessions run every Tuesday from 2:35pm to 3:00pm and involve small group mentoring, with groups of 6–8 pupils working closely with a member of staff who coaches them in the lead-up to their exams.

Progress Passports

Each student receives a Progress Passport, where they collect stamps from subject teachers during lessons and after-school sessions such as Prep, MyTutor, masterclasses, and Period 7s. Additional bonus stamps may be awarded for exceptional effort in home learning and revision. Teachers track stamps in every lesson, and totals are collected every two weeks. These results are then shared with staff and students during the Featherstone High Fliers assemblies, where the programme celebrates progress and achievements.

Awards and Prizes

Prizes are presented in the following categories:

- Most improved team
- Winning teams
- Top-performing individuals
- Most improved individuals

Round 1 winners who enjoyed a pick 'n' mix sweet shop at lunchtime were



**THE SKY'S
the limit!**



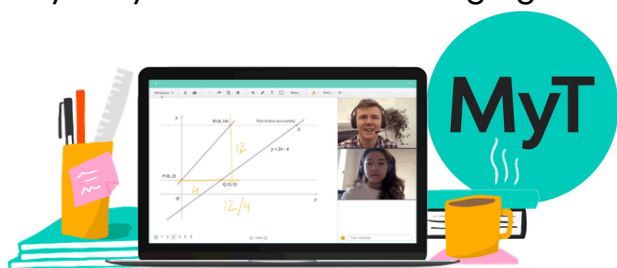
FOCUS ON YEAR 11

MyTutor Programme

Year 11 students have been working incredibly hard as they enter the final stretch before their GCSE exams this summer. As part of this preparation, **MyTutor** is partnering with schools nationwide to deliver personalised one-to-one online tuition to support students within their formal curriculum.

MyTutor's online platform enables schools to pair students with highly qualified tutors who help them make meaningful progress towards their target grades. This year, our focus has been on providing additional support in **maths and science**, and student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Sessions take place after school every **Tuesday and Wednesday**, and engagement has been excellent.

The programme allows students to revisit and strengthen their understanding of concepts they may have found challenging in class. Teachers identify key topic areas, ensuring tutors can tailor sessions to each student's needs. We are incredibly proud of the dedication and effort our Year 11 students have shown.



A huge well done to all of them from us – keep up the fantastic work!

PREP

Year 11 Prep is a targeted support initiative held every Tuesday from 3:00–4:30pm, giving students the opportunity to study with a subject teacher and complete independent revision in a focused environment.

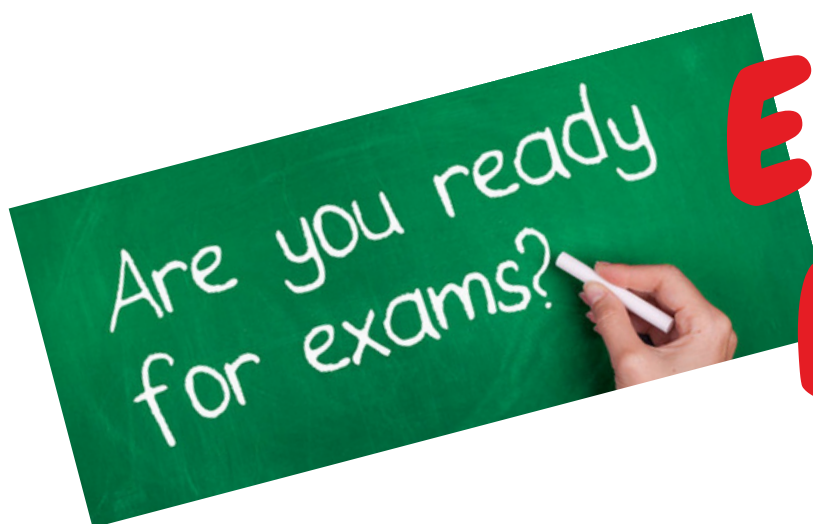
Over the past three weeks, students have taken part in **Masterclasses in Maths, English, and Science**, led by the Heads of each Department. These sessions are designed to help students strengthen their knowledge and maximise their grades ahead of their final GCSE exams.

The programme provides a distraction-free space for after-school study and enables teachers to address any gaps identified in students' mock exams. Attendance and engagement have been excellent, and students are recognised for their commitment through the Featherstone High Flyers reward system.



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EXAMS INFORMATION



Exam Prep Evenings

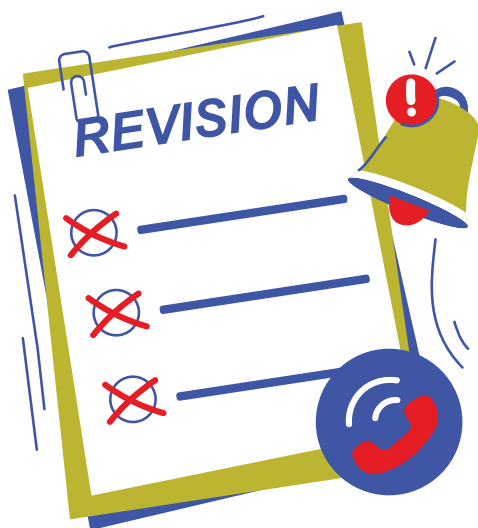
YEAR 11 AND YEAR 10

Our recent Exam Preparation Evenings were exceptionally well supported by parents and carers, whose engagement made the events a real success. It was wonderful to see so many families taking the time to learn about the revision strategies, resources, and routines that will help our students feel confident in the months ahead. Your involvement plays a vital role in supporting effective study habits at home, and we are grateful for your continued encouragement and partnership.

REVISION TIPS

Students have been taught a variety of methods to use to ensure exam success but here are some **top tips**:

- **Start revising early** – don't leave your revision to the last minute. Many of you are already revising for your exams (and have been for a while!)
- **Plan your revision timetable** (and stick to it!) – remember, revision is best when it is in manageable chunks. Don't just say you will revise a subject, be specific about which topic you will revise.
- **Don't spend time making your revision notes look pretty** – this is a waste of time! It is more about processing the information.
- **Choose a quiet, tidy space** – this is important! Put that phone away while you revise too!
- **Vary your revision** – your revision guides are great for making lots of different types of revision tools, but also spend time completing practice questions.



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EXAMS INFORMATION

SUMMER GCSE EXAM TIMETABLE

Below is the **finalised** GCSE Exam Timetable for Summer 2026. **Please refrain from booking any holidays between Friday 1 May 2026 and Wednesday 24 June 2026.** The exam timetable continues into our Summer Mid-Term holiday.

There are a range of subjects that will have practical components and coursework. Teachers of these subjects will inform students when these dates and deadlines are. Subjects include; Art, Construction, Child Development, Hospitality and Catering, Media, PE (including an external practical moderation day), Performing Arts and Travel & Tourism.

Monday 27 April	Tuesday 28 April	Wednesday 29 April	Thursday 30 April	Friday 1 May
4 May – Bank Holiday	5 May 1:00 Construction and the Built Environment	6 May	7 May	1:00 Travel and Tourism 8 May
11 May 9:00 English Literature P1 1:00 Business Paper 1 1:00 Mandarin – Listening and Reading	12 May 1:00 Biology P1	13 May 9:00 Geography P1 1:00 Computer Science P1	14 May 9:00 Maths P1	15 May 9:00 History Paper 1
18 May 9:00 Chemistry P1 1:00 Media Studies P1 1:00 Mandarin – Writing	19 May 9:00 English Literature Paper 2 1:00 Computer Science P 2 1:00 Child Development	20 May 9:00 French – Reading and Listening	21 May 9:00 English Language P1 1:00 Business P2	22 May 9:00 PE P1
25 May – Bank Holiday	26 May	27 May	28 May	29 May
1 June 9:00 PE P2	2 June 9:00 Physics P1 1:00 Media P2 1:00 Polish - Listening and Reading 1:00 Russian - Listening and Reading	3 June 9:00 Maths P2 1:00 Geography P2	4 June 9:00 History P2 1:00 French - Writing	5 June 9:00 English Language P2
8 June 9:00 Biology P2	9 June	10 June 9:00 Maths P3 1:00 Russian – Writing	11 June 9:00 Geography P3	12 June 9:00 Chemistry P2 1:00 Polish – Writing 1:00 Hospitality and Catering
15 June* 9:00 Physics P2	16 June*	17 June*	18 June*	19 June*
22 June	23 June	24 June ! Contingency Day	25 June	26 June

*June Half Term Holiday – Please contact the school before booking holidays if students are in Year 10 or 11. **! All students must be available for Contingency Day**

If your child misses an exam on a given day due to being on holiday, they will receive a score of zero for that paper. Additionally, Wednesday 24 June 2026 serves as the contingency date for exams, so it is essential to keep that date available as well.



[CLICK HERE](#) to access all the Exam Information required for your child



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NEWS ROUNDUP



The
Featherstone
Academy



WELCOME YEAR 7

CLASS OF 2031



Congratulations to all Year 6 students
who have been offered a place at
our academy for August 2026!

More information will follow soon!



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NEWS ROUNDUP

NETBALL
FRENZY

Year 9 embraced a superb afternoon of netball in the sunshine as they took to the courts for a lively tournament in Ackworth against some very strong opposition, including several well-established private schools. Throughout the day, the team showed **excellent determination and teamwork**, giving their all in every match. Despite facing tough challengers, they celebrated two impressive victories and came incredibly close in four closely contested games. **Every player should feel proud** of their resilience, sportsmanship, and positive attitude — both on and off the court.

Well done, girls!

Our Year 8 netball team enjoyed a fantastic day at the Wakefield Girls High School tournament, making the most of the sunshine and the chance to grow together as a squad. The girls showed real **determination and courage**, trying new positions and building strong combinations on court — especially impressive with several new players in the team. Their **hard work** earned them a well-deserved win and a draw, alongside a few tough matches. Throughout the day, they demonstrated resilience, teamwork, and a consistently positive attitude. **A brilliant display of effort and sportsmanship — credit to the team!**



NEWS ROUNDUP



Year 7 have also been in action this term. A sunny but very windy day at Kettlethorpe set the stage for a brilliant netball tournament. **The team worked incredibly hard**, with some players stepping onto the court despite not having played much netball before. Through determination, resilience and fantastic teamwork, they secured **3 wins and 1 draw** in the group stages. The final games were incredibly close, resulting in 3 narrow losses, but **the effort and spirit shown by everyone was outstanding.** Super proud of the whole team for the resilience, teamwork and positivity they showed throughout the day.

GEOGRAPHY FIELDWORK TRIP VICTORIA GATE, LEEDS

Year 11 geographers participated in a human fieldwork trip to Leeds, as part of their GCSE course, to explore the effects of Victoria Gate's regeneration on the broader city center.

Students conducted **land use surveys, environmental quality impact assessments, and questionnaires** to gather primary data, which will be analyzed for their upcoming Paper 3 exam.

They **showcased their skills** with Voice 21, engaging confidently with members of the public while maintaining a **responsible attitude** throughout the day.

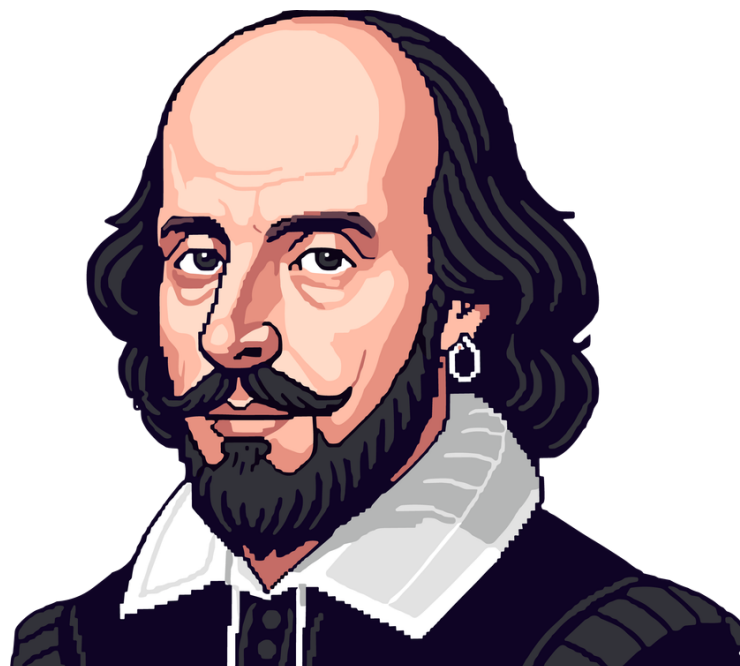
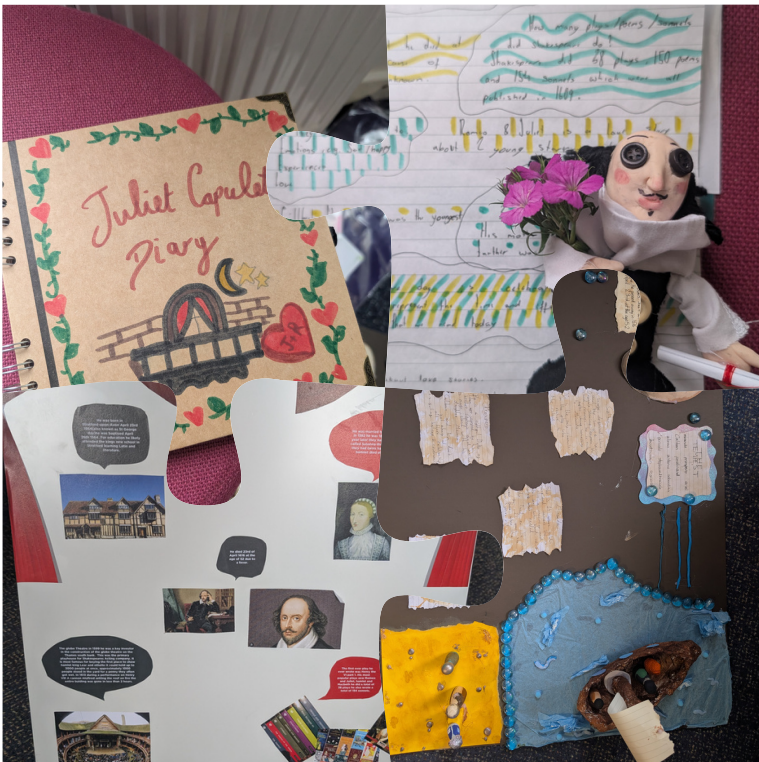
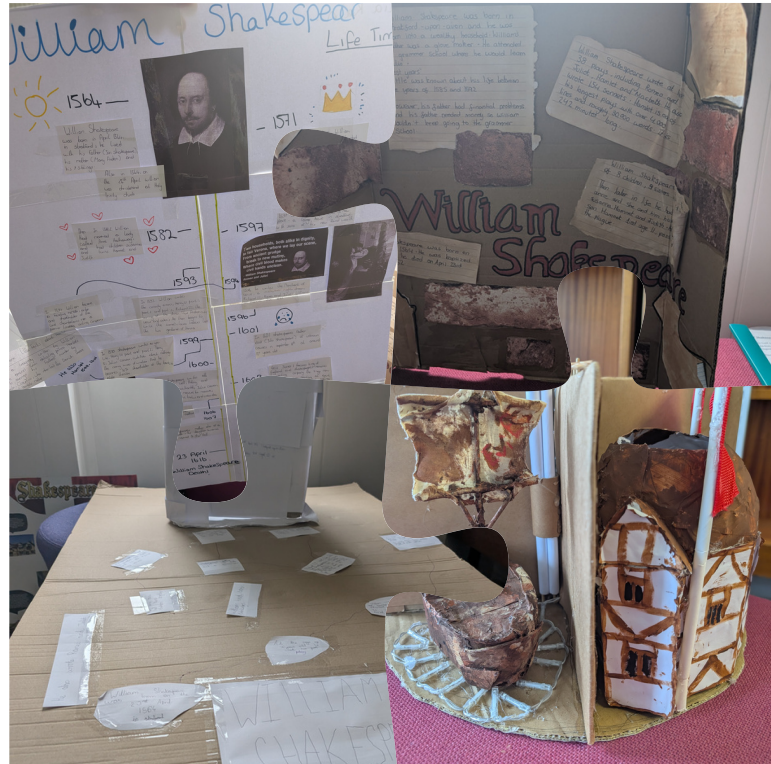


NEWS ROUNDUP

English

7.2 English have been working incredibly hard on their Shakespeare projects this half-term, building on their study of *The Tempest*. The students have demonstrated **outstanding creativity, impressive research skills, and real pride in their work**, making the competition extremely difficult to judge! A huge well done to everyone involved.

Shakespeare himself would be proud!

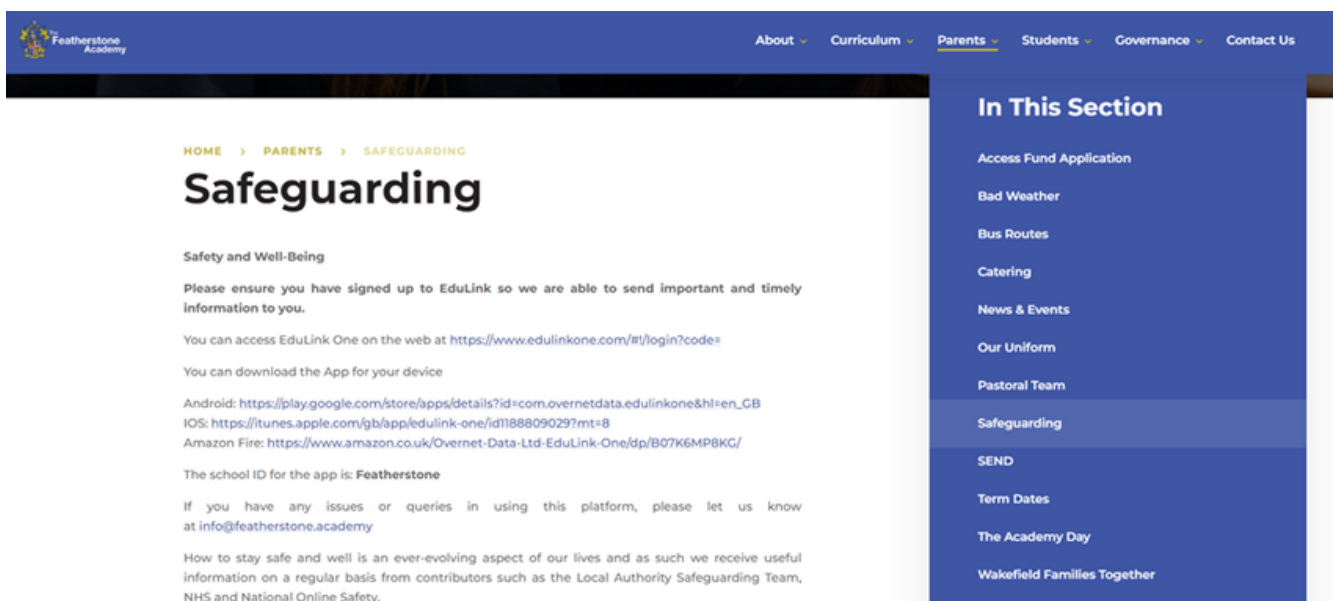


SAFEGUARDING OVER EASTER

Although the school building is not staffed over the Easter holidays, parents and carers can still contact **Wakefield Social Care directly on 0345 850 3503** with any concerns. Social Care will then contact the academy's Safeguarding Team directly during the holiday period. Additionally, if you are looking for some general help and advice there are numerous links available directly on the academy website - please use the link below.



CLICK HERE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



The screenshot shows the Featherstone Academy website. The top navigation bar includes links for About, Curriculum, Parents, Students, Governance, and Contact Us. The main content area is titled 'Safeguarding' under the 'PARENTS' section. It provides information on how to access EduLink One, including links for Android, iOS, and Amazon Fire. A sidebar on the right titled 'In This Section' lists various links such as Access Fund Application, Bad Weather, Bus Routes, Catering, News & Events, Our Uniform, Pastoral Team, Safeguarding, SEND, Term Dates, The Academy Day, and Wakefield Families Together.



CAREERS EVENTS

Your future in the NHS

Careers event for years 8–11

NHS
Mid Yorkshire Teaching
NHS Trust

Thursday 23 April
5pm to 8pm

BOOK NOW



 Pinderfields Hospital · Wakefield, England

We're hosting a **careers event** on site to showcase the 350+ amazing careers available in the NHS — including both clinical and non-clinical roles.



The event is open to young people in **Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 who live or study in Wakefield area**. Parents and carers are welcome to attend as well, however when booking tickets, please only reserve a ticket for the student. **Don't miss out!** This is your chance to explore new ideas, spark your ambitions, and **shape your future with the NHS**.

VOLUNTEER POLICE CADETS

Are you aged 13 – 17? Would you like to make a difference to your local community, learn new skills and make new friends? If the answer is yes, the Volunteer Police Cadet scheme may be for you.



**WEST YORKSHIRE
POLICE**

The next programme will run from September 2026 to July 2028.

**Applications
Open Now**

CLICK HERE

Joining the cadets will give you the opportunity to:

- Learn new skills & enhance your CV
- Gain an insight into policing
- Help your local community
- Complete the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Awards
- Make new friends
- Take part in activities, events and expeditions



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AND FINALLY...

After an incredible **41 years of dedicated service**, Mrs Bates is retiring from the academy — a place that has truly been a second home, having also attended here as a student.

Throughout her remarkable career, Mrs Bates has been a constant source of support, kindness, and commitment, **touching the lives of countless students and colleagues.**



Her legacy of loyalty and care will be felt for many years to come, and she leaves with the **heartfelt thanks and admiration of the entire school community.**

We wish her the happiest and most fulfilling retirement—she has truly earned it.

See you flower!

