



Anthony Gell
School

SUMMER 2026

ISSUE 72

NEWSLETTER



DIARY DATES

- Tues 8th Sept- Year 7 & Sixth Form students return to school after the Summer break
- Wed 9th Sept- All year groups back to school
- Thurs 10th Sept- Whole School Photographs
- Wed 30th Sept- Yr 6 Open Evening
- Fri 23rd Oct- INSET day
- 26th-30th Oct- Half Term
- Wed 4th Nov- Sixth Form Parents' Evening
- Wed 11th Nov- Y11 Parents' Evening
- Thurs 12th Nov- Careers Fair
- Fri 18th Dec- Break up for Christmas
- Fri 12th Feb- INSET day

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Welcome from Mr Kelly

Welcome to the final newsletter of this academic year and my final newsletter as Headteacher of AGS. I hope you enjoy finding more about the selection of events which have made it to print this time. These are a small sample of the wonderful activities that have made this term another memorable one. Our students continue to impress us every day and continue, with the help of an incredible group of adults, to make AGS the school it is. Thank you to all of the students, past and present, who have contributed so much to AGS during my time as Head and thank you to all of the staff I have had the privilege of working alongside. We have cared, aspired and achieved together!

KS4 Careers week

Years 10 and 12 enjoyed a wide range of exciting opportunities during Careers Weeks in 2026, which included a variety of visitors coming into school to deliver careers talks and showcase different professions and career pathways.

Staff from the Department for Work and Pensions visited to provide information on apprenticeship routes and deliver CV-writing workshops. The Army led sessions exploring careers in STEM, while Collis Engineering delivered an engaging workshop in the hall, during which students collaborated to create some impressive structures. Year 10 students took part in a virtual work experience programme, allowing them to explore a broad range of career pathways tailored to their individual interests. Meanwhile, Year 12 students spent a week at a work experience placement of their choice. Both opportunities provided valuable insight into the world of work, helping students to develop key employability skills, gain a greater understanding of different industries, and make more informed decisions about their future education and career aspirations.

All Year 10 students also had the opportunity to visit either a local college or university to explore potential next steps in their educational journey. We thoroughly enjoyed taking students to Derby College, the University of Derby and the University of Sheffield. These visits enabled students to experience different learning environments, explore a variety of post-16 and higher education pathways, and gain a deeper understanding of the skills and qualifications required for future careers.

Finally, a visit to 'Skills Street' in Rotherham gave students the chance to participate in a range of interactive activities designed to develop employability skills, explore different career sectors and increase their awareness of future opportunities. This interactive experience helped students make meaningful connections between their education and the workplace.

The 2026 Careers Weeks were a great success, and we look forward to continuing to support all of our students as they take these important next steps towards their future.

If you feel you could contribute to next year's Careers Weeks by sharing your experiences, profession or expertise, please contact me at jgrindey@anthonygell.co.uk.

Miss Grindey - Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning - Aspire Faculty



Year 7 Residential

21st & 22nd April 2026



In April 2026, around 100 Year 7 students from AGS set off on an exciting residential trip to PGL, Dearne Valley, eager for a few days of adventure, challenge, and fun. For many, it was their first time away from home with school, making the experience both thrilling and a little daunting.

From the moment we arrived, students were immersed in a busy programme of outdoor activities designed to build confidence, teamwork, and resilience. Over the course of the trip, they tackled a wide variety of challenges, including Jacobs Ladder, laser tag and raft building. The activities encouraged students to step outside their comfort zones, with many overcoming fears to achieve things they never thought possible. The raft-building challenge was a favourite, as teams worked together to design and construct a raft strong enough to take them across the water. There were plenty of laughs, especially when some rafts didn't quite stay afloat!

Evenings at the centre were just as enjoyable, with a large campfire bringing everyone together. These moments allowed students to relax, socialise, and build friendships in a new environment.

Throughout the visit, students demonstrated excellent behaviour and a positive attitude. They supported one another, showed determination, and represented the school with pride. Staff were impressed by their willingness to get involved and try new things.

The trip to PGL Dearne Valley was a fantastic success, providing lasting memories and valuable life experiences for all involved. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to grow in confidence, develop new skills, and strengthen friendships—all while having a great deal of fun





*A short story written by
Grace Bean, Year 9. The
winner of the Junior
Writing Prize at
Wirksworth Book
Festival..*

SONG SHIELD

My name is Apollo.

If my life was a story, it would be a musical. I would tell my tale in glorious song, twirling and dancing through the dark, dusty streets, spinning faster and faster until I reach a dramatic climax, reaching up towards the spectral, dying sunlight that comes through the Cracks.

But life isn't a film, and there are barriers to keep us away from the Cracks. The Rebels broke these crumbling holes through the Dome to try and break into the city. It is odd to see the strange, gaping cracks in the fragile eggshell of protection around the city, see the weak sunlight beaming through. The Dome is here to protect us, keep us safe from the violent Rebels and their songs of defiance and hatred. If I listen hard enough, the strained ears of my overwrought imagination can hear the first golden fragments of the melody.

With a jolt, I realise that in my daydreaming of musicals and rebels, I have strayed too close to the Cracks. As I move to leave, a horrifying sound reaches my ears. A song. Slowly, I turn to see a person, if you can call it that. An emaciated figure, pale as a goblin. The woman must have come from the parts of the Dome where the bright UV lights that light our way and nourish us like sunlight does cannot reach so easily, a Darklander.

Pity flashes through me, but not enough to cancel out the sheer revulsion that comes with hearing a song hummed. Nobody would dare to sing, or even hum or whistle in the city centre, my home. Everybody knows that singing is the mark of being a Rebel. The strains of song are growing now, more and more Darklanders joining in. I've only heard the tales of Flashmobs, but I never imagined that it would be so... strange. I begin to run, because to be caught near to a Flashmob is as good as declaring yourself a Rebel. I almost make it to the dilapidated alleyway.

Almost.

William Tebb also got a special mention for a 'Highly Commended' entry in this year's Festival.



EVE'S MEMORIAL BENCH



Eve

Remembering Eve Shipley

Eve Shipley was a much-loved student who showed incredible bravery and positivity throughout her long battle with cancer. First diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2020, Eve faced years of treatment with strength and determination, always remaining kind, caring and full of spirit. Sadly, she passed away in November 2024 at the age of 13.

Even during her illness, Eve inspired those around her and brought people together. Her family, friends and wider community have continued her legacy through a range of fundraising efforts, raising money for charities that supported her, including organisations that help children and families facing cancer. These events and challenges reflect Eve's generous nature and her wish to help others.

At school, we have honoured Eve's memory with a memorial bench — a quiet place where students can sit, reflect, and remember a truly special girl who touched so many lives. Eve will always be a part of our school community, and her courage and kindness will never be forgotten.

**Eve's Mum and Nan
on Eve's bench in school**



Year 11 Celebration Day

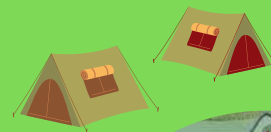


Our Year 11 students recently enjoyed a memorable Celebration day as they marked the end of their time in Key Stage 4 here at AGS. The day was filled with laughter and reflection as students signed each others shirts, shared happy memories from their school journey, and took part in a friendly game of football. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate their achievements, friendships and the many experiences they have shared over the years. We wish all of our year 11 students every success as they begin the next chapter of their journey.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Students in Years 9 and 10 successfully completed their Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition programme, with 35 Bronze participants and 30 Silver participants. The expedition took place within the local area of the Peak District surrounding Wirksworth, Carsington Water, and Fenny Bentley. This provided students with an opportunity to demonstrate the expedition section requirements through route planning, navigation, teamwork, campcraft, and self-reliance.

Weather conditions throughout the expeditions were generally favourable – if not starting a little bit wet for some. These conditions enabled participants to complete their planned routes safely while still experiencing the challenges associated with multi-day expedition.



Thirty Year 10 students from Anthony Gell School successfully completed their silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition in the Peak District. The route began at Monsal Head, travelling through the stunning landscape of Lathkill Dale before returning to Anthony Gell School. Throughout the expedition, students demonstrated excellent teamwork, resilience, and determination while navigating a varied and challenging route. Participants successfully used map and compass skills to follow their planned journey, working together to overcome navigational challenges and maintain good progress throughout the day. Students showed a positive attitude and strong commitment to the expedition aims, supporting one another and developing valuable life skills including communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and self-reliance. The expedition was a highly successful experience, allowing students to build confidence, independence, and teamwork skills while enjoying some of the Peak District's most spectacular scenery. All participants should be congratulated on their achievement and the mature way they represented AGS.



AGS Adventurer

Throughout this academic year, students in Years 7 and 8 have taken part in the AGS Adventurer programme, an exciting initiative designed to build confidence, resilience, and teamwork through outdoor activities. The programme has provided students with a wide range of experiences, encouraging them to step outside their comfort zones and develop new skills.

Over the course of the year, students have participated in a variety of adventurous activities, including bushcraft, canoeing, climbing, sailing, and archery. Each activity brought its own challenges and rewards, helping students grow both individually and as part of a team. From learning how to light fires in bushcraft sessions, to developing water confidence through canoeing and sailing, the programme offered something for everyone.

Climbing sessions proved particularly popular, with students pushing themselves to reach new heights—both physically and mentally—while archery required patience, focus, and precision. These experiences allowed students to discover new talents and build self-belief in a supportive environment.

Throughout the AGS Adventurer programme, students demonstrated excellent determination and enthusiasm. They supported one another, celebrated successes, and persevered through challenges. Staff from 'Adventure Unlocked' and AGS, were impressed by their positive attitudes and willingness to try new activities. The AGS Adventurer programme has been a fantastic success, providing memorable experiences and valuable life skills that students will carry with them into the future – year 6 and 7 students, keep your eyes peeled for what is to come from September 2026!





CELEBRATING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE

WELL DONE TO OUR WONDERFUL YEAR 11S WHO ACHIEVED 100% ATTENDANCE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE GCSE EXAM GUIDED REVISION PROGRAMME PERIOD, THUS DEMONSTRATING THEIR COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO DOING THE VERY BEST THEY CAN IN THEIR EXAMINATIONS. EACH PERSON EARNED A REWARD IN THE FORM OF A COMPLIMENTARY ICE-CREAM FUNDED BY GELL FRIENDS - A WELL DESERVED TREAT ON A SUNNY DAY TO MARK THE END OF GCSE EXAMS.



2026 Well Dressing



In 1576, a school in Wirksworth opened for the first time. This school eventually became Anthony Gell School. This means we can highlight and celebrate our 450th anniversary!

Our Year 7 students designed this year's AGS Welldressing as part of a homework competition. The winning design was the work of Ava, William, Charlotte & Edie.

Students together with staff collaged the materials onto the Well over a period of a week.

The money raised from our 2026 Welldressing will go towards 'Wirksworth Ivanhoe Football Club' programme.

Football has been at the heart of life in Wirksworth since the early 1900s, with football having been played on the Recreation Ground since 1921.

From young players pulling on their boots for the first time to supporters gathering on the touchline, the Recreation Ground is a place where memories are made, and community spirit thrives.



But the facilities now need significant improvement to support the growing game and to provide the welcoming environment our players, volunteers and supporters deserve.

Wirksworth Ivanhoe are raising funds to make several vital improvements, including:

- Upgrading the changing facilities
- Building a new hospitality clubhouse
- Improving disabled and general access
- Creating hard standing for spectators
- Improving the pitch for the future of football in Wirksworth

Year 13 Leavers' Celebration

On 22nd May, Year 13 students gathered in the Sixth Form Centre for their Leavers' Celebration, marking the end of an important chapter in their school journey at Anthony Gell School.

The event provided an opportunity for students to come together and spend time with one another before heading in different directions following their examinations. Everyone enjoyed pizzas, kindly provided by Gell Friends, while sharing memories and reflecting on their time at school.

A highlight of the afternoon was a presentation featuring photographs of the Year 13 students throughout their years at Anthony Gell School. The collection of images prompted laughter, reflection and plenty of fond memories as students looked back on their experiences together.

Mrs Moseley and Mr Kelly addressed the students, speaking about what an exceptional year group they have been. They congratulated the students on their achievements and wished them every success in their forthcoming examinations and future endeavours.

Following the speeches, students gathered with friends to take photographs, creating even more memories to mark the occasion and celebrate their time together at Anthony Gell School.

On behalf of everyone at Anthony Gell School, we would like to wish all Year 13 students the very best for their exams and for the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

Written by Jake McGuire, Year 12

STUDENT TELEVISION SURVEY 2026

To celebrate 60 years since the original 1965 television survey which was done by students at AGS and published in that year's copy of 'Wirksworthian', we have revisited parts of that survey with our current students and staff. Students across the school were asked about their television viewing habits, favourite programmes and favourite television personalities. The results on the next page show how viewing habits have changed over six decades.

TELEVISION QUESTIONNAIRE

	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Staff
Number questioned ...	208	185	53	23
Percentage with Television sets ...	97½%	100%	100%	87%
Preference for I.T.V. ...	25%	38%	11%	20%
Preference for B.B.C. ...	30%	19%	54%	70%
No Opinion concerning channels ...	45%	43%	35%	10%

OPINIONS CONCERNING COMMERCIALS

	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Staff
Number of people thinking there should be more commercials on I.T.V. ...	9%	2%	5½%	8½%
Number of people thinking there should be fewer commercials ...	81%	86%	70%	72%
Number of people who think there should be same number ...	10%	12%	20%	11%
Number of people who think there should be none ...	0%	0%	4½%	0%
Number of people with no opinion ...	0%	0%	0%	8½%

AVERAGE HOURS OF VIEWING

	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Staff
Number of hours watched per weeknight ...	3½ hours	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour 20 mins.
Number of hours watched per weekend ...	8-10 hours	9½ hours	4 hours	4½ hours

MOST POPULAR PROGRAMMES

Junior	Intermediate
1. Man from U.N.C.L.E.	1. Top of the Pops
2. Top of the Pops	2. Man from U.N.C.L.E.
3. Steptoe and Son	3. Crossroads
4. Crossroads	3. Steptoe and Son
5. Coronation Street and Thunderbirds	5. Danger Man
Seniors	Staff
1. Top of the Pops	1. Panorama
2. Steptoe and Son	2. Man from U.N.C.L.E. and Steptoe and Son
3. Man from U.N.C.L.E.	3. Danger Man
4. Ready, Steady, Go	4. Wednesday Play
5. The Fugitive	5. News and Perry Mason

MOST POPULAR T.V. PERSONALITIES

Junior	Intermediate
1. David McCallum (<i>Ilya Karyakin</i>)	1. David McCallum (<i>Ilya Karyakin</i>)
2. Roger Moore (<i>The Saint</i>)	2. David Janssen (<i>The Fugitive</i>)
3. Patrick McGeehan (<i>Danger Man</i>)	3. Roger Moore (<i>The Saint</i>)
4. Wilfred Brambell (<i>Steptoe</i>)	4. Robert Vaughn (<i>Napoleon Solo</i>)
5. Jimmy Saville	5. Jimmy Tarbuck
Senior	Staff
1. David McCallum	1. "One of the news readers"
2. Harry H. Corbett (<i>Steptoe's Son</i>)	2. Jimmy Tarbuck
3. David Janssen, Robert Vaughn	3. David Janssen
4. Fred Gwynne (<i>Herman Munster</i>)	4. Sweep
5. Wilfred Brambell	5. "Is it Bill or is it Ben"

MOST UNPOPULAR PROGRAMMES

Junior	Intermediate
1. Panorama	1. Panorama
2. Party Political Broadcasts	2. Party Political Broadcasts
3. Love Story	3. This Week
4. This Week	4. News
5. News	5. Love Story
Senior	Staff
1. Panorama	1. Juke Box Jury
2. Emergency Ward 10	2. Take Your Pick
3. This Week and Stars and Garters	3. Weather Forecast
4. Come Dancing	4. Steptoe and Son
5. Quiz programmes in general	5. Coronation Street



These are the results of our 2026 survey...

	HOURS OF TV WATCHED IN A WEEK	FAVOURITE TV PERSONALITY	FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME
STAFF	6-10	BOB MORTIMER	RACE ACROSS THE WORLD
STUDENTS	2-5	BRADLEY WALSH	SUITS
SIXTH FORM	6-10	CLAUDIA WINKLEMAN	TASK MASTER

The results show that whilst television still remains popular, viewing habits and taste have changed significantly over time. Modern programmes and personalities have replaced many of the favourites from the 1960's which shows the growth of streaming services and a much wider choice of entertainment. It has been very interesting to compare today's results with those from six decades ago, and see how TV preferences have evolved.



Comic Relief: A Fundraising Success!

FOR RED NOSE DAY THIS YEAR, SIXTH FORM STUDENTS ORGANISED THEIR ANNUAL BAKE OFF-STYLE CAKE SALE, CONTINUING A POPULAR TRADITION WITHIN THE SCHOOL. STUDENTS FROM THE SIXTH FORM, ALONGSIDE STAFF AND A NUMBER OF KEY STAGE 3 STUDENTS, CREATED AN IMPRESSIVE RANGE OF RED NOSE DAY-THEMED CAKES.

A PANEL OF YEAR 12 STUDENTS TOOK ON THE ROLE OF JUDGES, TASTING AND CAREFULLY SELECTING A WINNER FROM THE HIGH-QUALITY ENTRIES. AFTER MUCH DELIBERATION, THE WINNING CAKE WAS A FANTASTIC 'SHAUN THE SHEEP' DESIGN, WHICH LOOKED BRILLIANT AND TASTED JUST AS GOOD. THE CAKE SALE PROVED TO BE A GREAT SUCCESS, WITH ALL ITEMS SELLING QUICKLY AT BREAK TIME AS STUDENTS AND STAFF ENJOYED A WELL-DESERVED TREAT. IN TOTAL, THE SIXTH FORM RAISED £124.95 FOR RED NOSE DAY.





Madrid Trip



In April, 14 of our Year 9 students joined 14 students from Parkside School, Chesterfield, on an exciting trip to Madrid to deepen their understanding of Spanish culture and develop their language skills.

A highlight of the visit was a tour of the famous Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, home to Real Madrid, which the students thoroughly enjoyed.

On the second day, the group spent time in a local Spanish secondary school, where they attended geography, science and English lessons. They experienced school life in Spain, sampled traditional food in the canteen, and made new Spanish friends. Despite some initial nerves, all students showed great courage and confidence by presenting a short talk about themselves in Spanish to their host classes.

The trip also included sightseeing, with visits to Madrid Cathedral, the Royal Palace and the Temple of Debod. Students explored a local food market, where they enjoyed delicious churros with chocolate, and visited a shopping centre, where they embraced the opportunity to practise their Spanish in real-life situations.

As usual, we were incredibly proud of the AGS students, whose excellent behaviour, manners and enthusiasm were evident throughout the trip.

TUSCANY TRIP

In March, we took 10 Year 8 students from AGS to Tuscany, alongside 10 students from Parkside School, to learn about sustainability.

On the first day, we visited Pisa and took photos with the leaning tower before travelling to our hostel in the Tuscan hills. We went on a hike, looking for signs of wildlife such as wild boars, porcupines and wolves.

We also spent time at a local Italian school, where students quickly made friends despite initial shyness. Our visit was shortened due to an earthquake, which caused school closures and a temporary evacuation from our hostel (everyone was safe).

On the final day, we visited the coastal town of Lerici, exploring the castle, shops and beach.

Throughout the trip, students enjoyed delicious vegetarian food and local vegan ice-cream, supporting the theme of sustainability.



YEAR 13 PROM 2026





On the 23rd of June, we said farewell to our year 13 students in style with the year 13 prom. It was a wonderful evening hosted by Makeney Hall in Milford. The evening was full of photos, dining and dancing to celebrate a fantastic group of students. We wish them all the best for the future and hope they will return to tell us all about their next adventures.



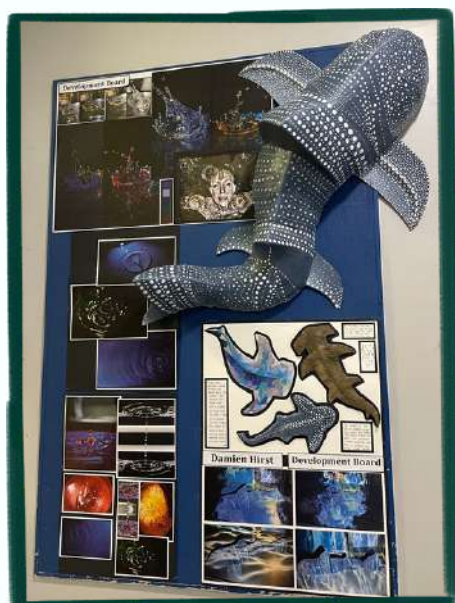
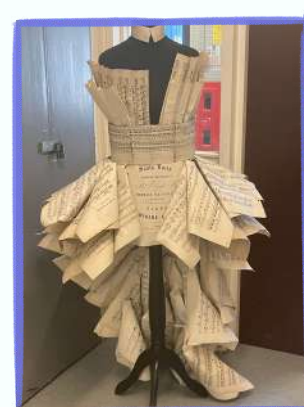
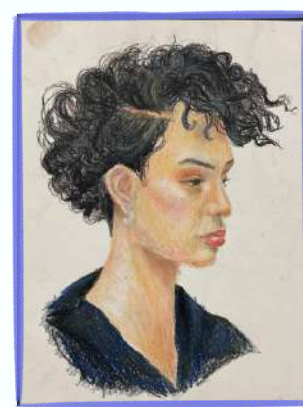
Year 11 Prom 2026





ART

and Media Showcase



On Wednesday 15th July, we held our annual Fine Art, Photography and Media Studies Showcase – a celebration of creativity, innovation and student achievement. The event featured an impressive exhibition of work from our Year 11 and Year 13 students, highlighting the talent and dedication across these creative disciplines. Visitors were treated to a diverse range of projects, from beautifully crafted practical outcomes to expressive artwork.

Photography, one of the newest additions to our curriculum, continued to make a strong impression. Students showcased a collection of powerful and thought-provoking images that reflected both technical skill and creative ambition.

We are incredibly proud of all the students whose work was displayed, as well as the staff who continually encourage, challenge and inspire them. The showcase was a testament not only to the high standards achieved, but also to the creativity, commitment and aspirations that define our school community.

SPORTS DAY

Our Annual Sports Day was a fantastic event, filled with determination, enthusiasm and excellent sportsmanship from all students. Throughout the day, students gave their very best in every event and activity, cheering on their classmates and demonstrating our school values with pride. The competition was incredibly close and after an exciting day of events, we were delighted to announce that this year's Sports Day ended in a joint victory for Fearne House and Gell House, who both finished with an impressive 327 points each. Congratulations to all of our students for their outstanding effort and positive attitude, and a special well done to Fearne and Gell House on sharing this year's Sports Day title!



Founders' Day

Every year, the AGS community gathers for a memorable occasion to honour our heritage and embrace the present day. This year's celebration welcomed AGS governors, AG Foundation Trustees, Gell Friends, former pupils, Freedom Leisure, our partner Primary Schools, and distinguished local guests.

Current students took centre stage, showcasing their talents through musical performances and thoughtful addresses. This year's theme highlighted the milestone of 450 years of there being a school in Wirksworth. Wirksworth Grammar School then evolved into Anthony Gell School, marking the introduction of Comprehensive education to this region of the Derbyshire Dales



GEOGRAPHY



Field trip



Year 10 Geography Field Trip

On the 11th of May, the year 10 geographers embarked on a journey to Burbage Brook to investigate how the river changed over time. The day began with an informative briefing from Mrs Lowe and Mrs Harrison, showing us the intricate art of measuring the river; from bank full width to bed load, we were ready to master measuring. Spirits were high on the bus ride over, after lots of singing and games of eye-spy, we braced ourselves to face the windy conditions of the upper course. We spent an hour collecting all the data which unfortunately required us to actually get into the ice cold river. With lots of giggling, we gathered all the necessary numbers and returned to the bus. Next, we arrived further downstream, just in time for lunch, accompanied by the sun - who luckily decided to make an appearance. It was very interesting to see how the river changed here, we were certain to note this down. Finally we packed away the equipment and walked down to Grindleford beside the river and through the peaceful woodland, which was not disturbed by our group of happy geographers! After arriving at Grindleford station, we enjoyed ice-creams from the cafe and were very satisfied with our new-found river measuring skills. We got back onto the bus for the last time and said goodbye to the gorgeous landscape of the Peak District.

This trip was a fantastic opportunity and a well-loved experience, for both the students and the teachers (despite the bird poo incident...). It is safe to say we are now very well prepared for our field trip exam and are very much looking forward to the urban field trip in year 11.

Written by Alice Lovatt- Year 10

CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY

On 21st July, we held our final 'Celebration Assembly' of 2025-26, during which we said goodbye to Mr Kelly, our Headteacher, who is also leaving the school. It was an emotional yet wonderful assembly, filled with special memories, celebrations, and heartfelt farewells. We would like to thank everyone for their contributions to our school community, and we wish them all the very best for the future.

