

>>> ELLESMERE COLLEGE

Autumn 2025
Edition No. 1



ELLESMERE INSIGHTS

SENIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



As another exciting academic year unfolds, this issue celebrates the spirit of Ellesmere — where ambition meets opportunity and every young person is known, supported, and inspired to do their best. Inside, you'll find highlights of recent achievements, House successes, and upcoming events that showcase the energy and community that make Ellesmere so special. From the classroom to the stage and the sports field, our students continue to shine.

FROM THE HEAD

As the first half term of this new academic year draws to a close, it has been a privilege to be immersed in and welcomed by the Ellesmere community.

One strong impression is the friendliness and courtesy of all pupils who say hello in corridors, hold doors open for each other and can chat confidently with me in the lunch queue. This is not something that happens everywhere and says something very positive about our community.

The global outlook is another important element that I have valued; the IB and the rich diversity of learning with students from across the globe is something that marks Ellesmere apart. Whether it is performing in house plays together, hitting balls in the tennis centre or working with the prefect body, it is fabulous to see the integration of all nationalities within the school community.

And finally, I have been bowled over (to use a very English expression) by the commitment of Ellesmerians to their sport, to their wider activities and to their studies. There has been a whirlwind of activity over the last few weeks; the choir rehearsing on a Sunday afternoon, the swimmers training at an unearthly hour of most mornings and the equestrian teams starting even earlier for competitions, all reflect the commitment pupils (and parents) give to their various pursuits. This dedication is reflected throughout the school community in so many different pursuits and is something of which we should be very proud.

Well done to everyone on a positive and uplifting first half term.



MIDDLE SCHOOL UPDATE

The new term has begun with the familiar buzz of excitement and activity. Students have been quick to settle back into routines—early mornings, packed timetables, and the steady rhythm of lessons. Classrooms have been filled with the focus as everyone gets down to the serious business of work, whilst outside, sport has come alive once more. Activities are in full swing, offering chances to try something new or develop a skill and passion in which to be fully immersed during expedition week.

Students have been fully involved with the creative side of school taking place in The Last Night of the Proms, which was a glorious event with so many of our talented musicians. The House Plays added another burst of energy, as rehearsals were filled with laughter, creativity, and collaboration. It's a busy start, but one full of purpose and promise—a time to reconnect, challenge ourselves, and make the most of every opportunity school life has to offer.

Mrs Phillips

SIXTH FORM UPDATE

As we reach the midpoint of the autumn term, it's been a reflective and rewarding start for the Sixth Form. Our first three assemblies hopefully set a thoughtful tone, focusing on Suicide Awareness Month, Child-on-Child Abuse and the Everyone's Invited initiative, and World Mental Health Day and Month. I hope these sessions have helped reinforce our commitment to wellbeing, respect, and safeguarding across the College. I am delighted with how well all our new Lower Sixth Form pupils have settled in, thanks to the fantastic support from our Upper Sixth. Their enthusiasm and maturity have already made a strong impression, particularly through the outstanding contributions to our recent Open Day, where they joined the Upper Sixth Form in showcasing the very best of Ellesmere.

Looking ahead, the second half of term promises to be busy but enjoyable as we approach the festive season—always guided by our core ethos: Be Kind, Work Hard and Enjoy!

Dr G

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ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS



Academic curiosity has been flourishing this term, with students from Years 9–13 engaging in a wide range of intellectual and creative opportunities. The first in our Michaelmas Term Lecture Series saw Marco Wong open with a thought-provoking talk, “What do Hong Kong Parents Expect?”, exploring cultural perspectives on education and ambition. This was followed by Maria Magalhaes McKown, who presented “Do No Harm: Can Modern Medicine Still Uphold the Hippocratic Oath?”, prompting lively discussion around medical ethics and the pressures of modern healthcare.

The Academic Lecture Programme continues to offer pupils the chance to research, present, and debate topics beyond the classroom, developing confidence, oracy, and independent thought. During the recent House Debating Competition, students tackled the motion: “This House believes the UK should re-join the European Union as a full member.” It was a truly inspiring event, with outstanding performances from our Year 11–13 debaters and brilliant support from the audience across Years 9–13. The atmosphere was electric — full of confidence, teamwork, and persuasive flair!

Meanwhile, creativity has been equally encouraged through the House Creative Writing Competition, inspired by The New York Times’ “Tiny Memoir” challenge. Pupils were invited to craft a true story in just 100 words — a task that tested their precision, imagination, and emotional insight. Submissions promise to reveal an inspiring range of voices and experiences, reflecting the individuality and talent at the heart of Ellesmere’s academic life. The winning entries will feature in the next newsletter!

SPOTLIGHT ON... YEAR 12 IB

The start of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme has been an exciting challenge and an inspiring opportunity.

This two-year course offers a broad and engaging range of subjects, including the specialised Theory of Knowledge course, which encourages students to question knowledge and explore different ways of interpreting the world. Although the IB is known for its academic excellence, it also develops crucial skills for life. It strives for independence, sharpens communication, enhances organisational skills, and deepens global awareness.

My favourite aspect so far has been connecting with new friends from diverse cultural backgrounds and learning their perspectives about the world. The programme has already significantly influenced my academic and personal growth, preparing me to become the best version of myself.

I cannot wait to see where this course will take me!

Maxwell Peloquin



HOUSE INNINGS & OUTINGS



St Aidan's House Outing

Year 9 and 10 enjoyed karaoke, disco, ice cream and party vibes in the Arts Centre. Year 11 went out for the evening into Shrewsbury. All enjoyed the opportunity to relax and have fun at the start of the new term.

St. Bede's House Outing

To welcome back the Yr13 and welcome in the Yr12 boys St. Bede's went off to Cheshire Oaks for their House Outing with a choice of activities; ten pin bowling or going to the cinema. Boys had a choice of films with "The Fantastic 4 – First Steps" being the most popular. After both activities the boys had a "good social" at the fast-food restaurants available with Five Guys being the clear winner. A good time was had by all and it was a real pleasure to see the boys mixing and getting to know all the new faces as well as a reacquaintance with the "old".

St. Cuthbert's House Outing

Years 9 and 10 visited the cinema while Year 11 released their inner warriors in a paintball arena. A great time was had by all!

St. Luke's House Inning

St Luke's House Outing was a variety of team and individual sports and games such as croquet, pool, golf and darts as pupils competed as tutor groups for the Dafydd Craven-Jones trophy. This year, the winners were 12MPC.

St. Oswald's House Inning

What a night! 50 girls and 10 staff came together for an unforgettable boarding house event — pool competitions with fizz & snacks, an epic escape room challenge, followed by fresh pizzas from a local van and ice cream to finish! Laughter, teamwork, and amazing food — the perfect evening to celebrate our brilliant 6th Form community.

St Patrick's House Inning and Outing

The St. Patrick's House outing was a fantastic way to kick off the new academic year! Years 9 and 10 headed to Hollywood Bowl in Shrewsbury for an epic game of ten-pin bowling. Meanwhile, Year 11 had an exciting evening with two gaming vans parked at the college. Everyone fuelled up with tasty takeaway pizza or burgers, creating the perfect atmosphere for bonding and making new friendships. It was a great way for the boys to get to know each other!

COMPETITIVE HOUSE PLAY FESTIVAL

Recently our Competitive Houses — Meynell, Talbot, Wakeman-Lambart and Woodard — took us on a fantastic journey through time and space with their own creative takes on Doctor Who!

It was an evening full of imagination, laughter and incredible performances. Well done to all our talented students and staff involved — we all had such fun watching!



STUDENT VOICE/SCHOOL COUNCIL



Students across the school are feeling the positive effects of having their voices heard, following the recent student survey and ongoing Student Council discussions. The survey gave everyone a chance to share their ideas and opinions, and the feedback has already begun shaping change — most notably, the updated uniform policy now allows students to wear their hair down at all times. This has been a particularly popular change, with many appreciating the increased comfort and sense of freedom it offers.

The most recent Student Council meeting built on this momentum, with representatives discussing the survey results, exploring further uniform flexibility, and brainstorming ways to create a more inclusive and supportive school environment. The atmosphere was positive and productive, with students clearly engaged and motivated to make a difference.

Another area of improvement that's been well received is the recent upgrade to school food options. Healthier and more varied meals have been introduced, and many students have commented on how much more energised and satisfied they feel throughout the day.

We are really excited to see what the rest of the year at Ellesmere College has to offer and we hope everyone keeps taking advantage of all the opportunities.

Harry and Eve, Head Boy and Girl

STUDENT SUPPORT

Ellesmere College provides pastoral, mental health and well being support from our Medical Centre. The Wellbeing room was opened four years ago and is a private space where pupils can receive professional support from our qualified school counsellors Mrs Jo Smith, Sister Jenny Howard and Mr Alex Murphy. Three sessions are initially funded then private if more are required.

The Wellbeing room is also a quiet area if children need some down time to help process their problems or become overwhelmed during lessons or school events.

All the other nursing staff and health care assistants can offer 'Time to Talk' sessions for the children. These provide immediate help and support or they will sign post them to see one of the school counsellors.

We encourage our children to be able to openly express their emotions and build up strategies when they maybe experiencing difficulties within friendship groups, exam stress, injuries and attaining sporting achievements.

Tutors and House staff will refer pupils to come and speak to one of the nursing team. We are very happy for parents to make referrals too when they feel their child needs some talk therapies and support at school.

Please contact us on sisters@ellesmere or 01691 626 529 to discuss therapeutic support at school.



This welcoming and cosy space is the students' 'Wellbeing Room'
It is found around the corner from the clinic - "Sick Bay"

CHAPLAIN'S REFLECTION



Pizza and Prayer meets weekly for a short Eucharist, shared pizza, and discussion — recently exploring practical strategies for coping with sadness from Psalm 42. The Psalm encourages us to begin by recognising our "thirst" for God, remembering that He alone meets our deepest needs. When faith feels stretched, try reframing the struggle as an opportunity to grow in relationship with a living God.

Be honest about your emotions — it's healthy to cry and to "pour out your soul," but balance this with gratitude for past blessings and good times. Practise mindfulness by separating who you are from how you feel: say "I feel sad" rather than "I am sad," and be curious about why. Speak kindly to yourself — remind your soul to "hope in God" and reassure yourself that sadness is temporary. When you feel low, remember the power and presence of God even in chaos, and use music or hymns to lift your spirit. At night, choose a psalm or gospel story to reflect on, allowing the darkness to become a time of calm and closeness with God. And when hope feels out of reach, pray simply to want to hope again — a small but powerful step toward peace and renewal.

DO YOU SPEAK 'ELLESMERIAN'?

In this First Edition, we thought it might be useful for those new to Ellesmere to have a glossary of some of the rather unusual names we can take for granted!

The College

Motto: Pro Patria Dimicans – “Striving for one’s Country”. Originally St Oswald’s College, Ellesmere, the foundation stone was laid in September 1879 and the College opened in September 1884.

Woodard Schools: an organisation of about 23 Incorporated schools and 17 Affiliated schools.

Geography

Top Gate: the automatic gate on the drive (Top Drive) past Lower School.

Bottom Gate: locked about 6.30 pm most nights, on Bottom Drive past the Sports Hall.

Parry’s Field: the field over the Techhill road where most sports pitches are placed.

Pitch names on Parry’s: on entering the field, bottom left is “Long Corner,” diagonally across the field from you is “Far Away,” the far right is “Pamps” and to your immediate right is “Road.” The pitch in the centre is called “Middle.”

Road running: “Short” – out of College by one gate, in at the other via Tetchhill Bridge (near end bridge crossed on the way to Ellesmere); “Middle” – out by one gate and in at the other via Techhill; “Long” – out and back via the same gate so having run around the entire College.

Commonly Misspelled / Mispronounced / Misunderstood Names at College

Hodson Block (not Hudson) – Chemistry and Biology.

New Block – the far-from-new, apart from the windows, classroom block behind St Luke’s House.

St Aidan’s (not Aiden’s) – Middle School girls’ House.

Wakeman-Lambart (not Lambert) – Competitive House.

Meynell (not Meynall) – pronounced “Men-ell” – Competitive House.

The Arts Centre (not the Art Centre) – Music and Drama departments.

Ante-Chapel (not anti-chapel) – the area immediately outside the (west) doors of Chapel.

Big School (not The Big School) – the place for assembly and Big School classrooms (maths).

Common Room (not staff room or teachers’) – this is the name for BOTH the body of people and the room they meet in.

Ante-School – the area outside the entrance doors to Big School and Common Room.

Main Corridor – the corridor from Big School to the Chapel.

Founder’s Gate – the Reception area.

The Cloisters – the corridor running alongside Big School.

Derry Quad – the quad outside the Cloisters.

Nankivell Quad – the main quad outside Reception.

Flagpole Quad – the grass quad with the flagpole.

The Old Sports Hall – the hall under the Dining Hall

The Old Gym – between the squash courts and the cricket pavilion, now the Gym/Fitness Room.

Study Wing – linking the Cloisters to the Library (contains the entrance to the Sixth Form Club).

Thatcher Wing – from the Library end of Study Wing out to the end of St Hilda’s; Sixth Form study area (Sixth Form Centre) and IT Technicians’ area.

Lower Sixth: pupils in the first year of the Sixth Form (Year 12).

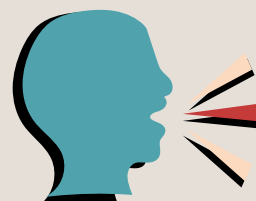
Upper Sixth: pupils in the second year of the Sixth Form (Year 13).

Sixth Form: collectively U6 and L6.

Middle School: pupils in Years 9 to 11 (historically Shell, 4th Form and 5th Form).

Lower School: up to and including Year 8 (academic year + 5 = age pupils become during the year).

Senior School: same as Upper School; Middle School and Sixth Form combined.



SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

The Autumn Term has been a thrilling showcase of Ellesmere talent, teamwork, and determination across a wide range of sports.

The season began in impressive style at Southview Arena on 14th September, where Jake Stockton won the 1.10m class, Jasmine Newsam took second, and Immy Spencer-Blow finished fifth — all qualifying for the National Championships. At the NSEA Championships (17–20 October), Ellesmere riders continued their success: amongst the many excellent results, the 70cm team placed 3rd, the 100cm team 7th, and Ben Francis, Jasmine Newsam, and Jake Stockton all achieved top-six individual finishes, with Lucy Rayner scoring over 65% in dressage.

On the golf course, the Academy enjoyed a major triumph, being crowned ISGA Northern Cup Champions, with Ben Steventon also winning the individual title — a superb achievement for the team.

The tennis players have been equally impressive. Alfie Edwards dominated the county scene over the summer, winning both Shropshire U16 and U18 titles, while VV Alkureishi represented Ellesmere on the grass courts at Wimbledon. Gwen Klu's exceptional performances on the international stage earned her a place in the Ghana National Squad. More recently, Ellesmere's Year 7–9 girls and Year 10–11 boys qualified for the LTA Regional Finals in Nottingham, while the Year 10–11 girls prepare for their own qualifying round in October.

Hockey has been particularly strong this term. The U18 girls started their campaign at Cardiff Met with two pre-season wins before the 1st XI went on to beat both Whitchurch Ladies and Shrewsbury Ladies 1st XI. Captain Isabella Moore led the team superbly as Ellesmere stormed to victory at the Wrekin 7s Tournament, securing the title in a dramatic penalty shootout. At the County tournament, the 1st XI beat Wrekin College 5-0 and only lost narrowly 0-1 to Shrewsbury School. They now progress to The Midlands Regional Finals. The 2nd XI were named Joint County U18B Champions, and the U14s and U16s both lifted County Tournament titles, reflecting the depth and promise within the squads.



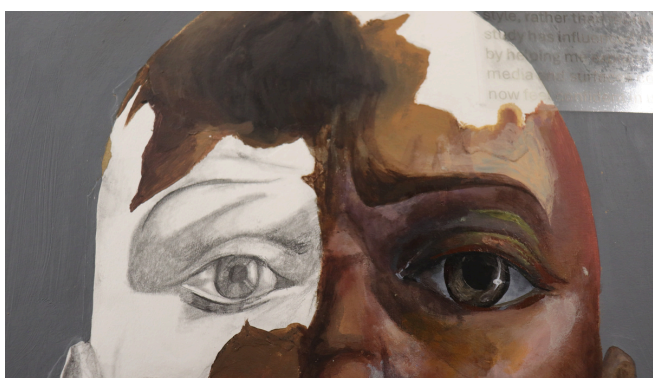
On the rugby field, there has been much to celebrate. The 1st XV defeated Scarisbrick Hall 42–0, overcame Old Swinford Hospital 37–28, and continued their winning streak with a 35–17 victory against Wirral Grammar School. The 2nd XV produced a dominant 66–0 win over Haberdashers' Adams and later beat Wirral Grammar 59–17. The U16s enjoyed an emphatic 59–5 Cup win over St Joseph's College, while the U15s fought bravely in close contests.

In football, the U18s progressed in their cup campaign with a 5–1 win over Priory, while in cricket, Daisy and Holly Cooke impressed at Old Trafford, helping Stockport Georgians win the Lancashire Thunder Women's Final.

The term also saw great success in gymnastics, with Kiri Kilgannon placing second on floor and fourth overall — earning selection for the Welsh Finals in Newport. Meanwhile, our U15 netball team triumphed at the North Shropshire Tournament, winning all their matches and defeating Moreton Hall and The Marches in the final stages.

Across every sport, our Ellesmere athletes have demonstrated commitment, skill, and school spirit. Congratulations to all players and coaches for a brilliant first half of term — a true celebration of Ellesmere's all-round excellence.

ART GALLERY



Autumn Artists (from top left)

Bird's Eye View:	Yankee Wong
Waves:	Holly Cooke
Silhouette Sunset:	Tabby Kimber
Windows and Arches:	Olivia Hamilton
Face:	Anna Polonska
Yellow Rose:	Holly Cooke
Burger:	Loui Henneberry

WRITER'S CORNER

"Witherspoons"

by Joseph Dymond, Year 11

I walked slowly down the pavement, my footsteps reverberating round the cold and empty streets. The whole town seemed empty and deserted as my breath lifted up and unfurled its steamy wings, floating up to the heavens. I saw the discarded remains of the previous night: broken bottles and cigarette butts littering the floor. Slowing my pace, the door came into sight and finally reaching it, I fumbled through my pockets searching for the key. The cold metal connected with my fingertips as I pulled the key from my pocket and slipped it into the lock, hearing a familiar click as it snapped into place. I slowly turned the key and with one more click it opened. Placing my hand on the blisteringly cold door handle and turning it, the door creaked open. I stepped in, closing the door behind me and was met by the sight of Wetherspoons interior: the wooden tables standing petrified, their once glossy surfaces scratched by years of abuse. The chairs clustered vaguely around the tables. As I had done for many years, I turned on the lights, bathing the large room in an orange glow at complete contrast to the cold grey Monday morning lurking outside.

Robotically, I started to sweep, tidying up after other people as I always have to do. I walked round the room remembering the hundreds of times I have done this very task. The mind-numbing work slowly becoming more of an instinct. I brushed all the dirt into a corner bin, dropping the broom with a clatter back where it had rested. There it stood, waiting for tomorrow, and another tomorrow. The sight of that broom reminding me of how I'm wasting my life away. I averted my eyes, trying to forget my problems. I walked behind the bar, taking a small dirty cloth - like me, worn down by the years of service. I did the normal path around the tables, like some minimum-wage-race-car-driver. Lazily I continued wiping down the tables, then as I finished, another person walked in: one of my co-workers. As I saw him, I gave him the same obligatory smile I gave him every day: A smile that doesn't quite reach my eyes.

I walked back to the bar, using the same rag that I just used, to clean some pint glasses. The line between making them cleaner or dirtier blurred as I put them back on the shelf, not really caring either way. Just being willing to pretend that they could be clean was enough at this point. As I continued my mind-numbing soul-crushing tasks, more and more of my co-workers arrived. All looked the same; like they felt like their lives were all one big joke but the joke was starting to get old and my patience was starting to wear thinner and thinner. As the last of my co-workers arrived so did the manager, fashionably late as always, with the same fake smile that everyone here has practised so often. Everything, from how he talked to us, to how he looked at us, made me feel like some kind of workhorse to be worked till it breaks - or dies.

He did his normal round, giving people words of encouragement. I imagined this was like giving an addict just a bit more to keep them going. In some ways this must be abuse. I watched his bloated corpse waddle over to me. He gave me some weak encouragement, but I didn't hear, I had learned to drown it out over the years. After all - I have heard every iteration, every different way of saying "Good work! Keep it up!" that I could fill a book, if I could be bothered... I gave him the same fake smile and he, seemingly happy with the interaction, waddled off to the next person. I watched him go. It was like a balancing act: could he keep everyone just about sane or would someone finally snap and hit him over the head with an embossed pint glass? As I watched him go, it made me feel almost sick - watching this boiled egg of a man try to treat us as equals when he so clearly saw himself as some kind of God who ruled the local Wetherspoons.

I decided that it was time to open up. I walked to the door, picking up the large olive-green sign that like me was once sleek and attractive but has started to fleck and crack. I put it down in the normal spot and leaned against it. The outside seemed cold, distant from the warm, stale, manufactured world inside. I stood there for a moment, thinking about how I could just leave - but then I thought how much I needed the money - or was it that I had been fooled, just like everyone else, into getting comfy and staying still? I turned my back on the real world again, and walked back into the corporate, manufactured world that was, and is, my life.

I strolled in and leaned up against the bar, making small talk that only half-entered my brain, as I have done so many times before, while all the time waiting for the sound of the door opening that signals that real start of another day in this place. As I finished that thought, perfectly on cue, the door opened and it started all over again...

MUSIC APPEAL INFORMATION



The Music School Appeal continues to go from strength to strength, now standing at nearly £30,000 thanks to over £3,000 raised at our first fundraising event for the new academic year.

On 4th October, we presented our Last Night of the Proms Concert which brought together the choirs of Ellesmere College and the Shrewsbury Light Orchestra in an evening of music and celebration. Music included everything from Mozart, Elgar and Coldplay to the film music of John Williams and even a sing-a-long to the music from Oklahoma. The audience joined in with all the traditional songs and we were delighted to be joined by Jane Trowbridge, High Sheriff of Shropshire, who started the night with a few words about the universal nature of music and the importance of creating opportunities for young people in the arts. Our thanks to everyone who performed and helped, and to our wonderful audience who entered into the true spirit of the evening.

Anthony Coupe

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

Sunday 9 th November 10.45am	Remembrance Day Eucharist	CHAPEL
Wednesday 12 th November 6-9pm	Sixth Form Information Evening	ARTS CENTRE/CLASSROOMS
Friday 14 th November 5.30pm (doors)	Fashion Show and Christmas Fair	ARTS CENTRE
Thursday 20 th November 5-7pm	Year 13 ONLINE parent's meeting	ONLINE
Friday 21 st November 5.15-7.15pm	Year 13 IN-PERSON parent's meeting	BIG SCHOOL
Saturday 22 nd November 7.30pm	Nightingale House Christmas Concert	WILLIAM ASTON HALL, WREXHAM
Thursday 27 th November 7.30-9pm	Community Carols Service	CHAPEL
Friday 28 th November 7.30-9pm	TALBOT/WOODARD Carols Service	CHAPEL
Sunday 30 th November 7.30-9pm	MEYNELL/WAKEMAN Carols Service	CHAPEL
Monday 1 st December 9am-noon	ECPS Creativity Morning	OLD SPORTS HALL
Friday 5 th December 4.30pm	END OF TERM	



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