

news

SUMMER 2025



Leavers' Prom 2025

At NCW, we love prom – and this year did not disappoint!

Students from Years 11, 12, 13 and 13+ dressed to impress and celebrated in style at the beautiful Bank House Hotel Spa and Golf Club. We welcoming families and guests to NCW for pre-prom drinks and photos before the party

began so they could share this special moment with their young people.

From a red-carpet arrival and refreshing mocktails to a delicious three-course meal, hand-crafted, personalised and brailled awards and a packed dance floor – it was truly a night to remember!

Leading Parent Partnership Award

This year, we have been working hard to achieve the Leading Parent Partnership Award. This award is designed to give schools a framework to work within to ensure that parents and carers, as well as students, are at the heart of what we do.

Led by Rachel Perks, a working party has been formed, comprising Award Co-ordinators Lorna Phillips and Tracey Smith plus a team of staff from around the school and parents of both residential and day students. In July the Awards

Assessor visited and confirmed we are on track to achieve the award, with some key areas to develop. We are hoping to be able to evidence completion of the award objectives by the end of the year in December.

Thank you to all the parents, carers and staff who are supporting the project.

Welcome to **Kate Lindsay**

We are delighted that Kate Lindsay has joined NCW as our new Director of Residential.

Kate has already begun her role and brings with her a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills from the residential care sector, spanning both educational and private settings. Her passion for creating supportive, nurturing environments and her strong

leadership background make her an excellent addition to the NCW community.

To introduce Kate and share more about her role and vision for boarding life, Ed from Year 7 conducted a thoughtful and engaging interview – complete with a few light-hearted questions (including the ever-important pineapple on pizza debate!) – available on the NCW website.



Go Orange for NCW! 6th – 10th October



Our Go Orange campaign running the 6th – 10th October, is all about coming together at home, in School or at work to have fun, get creative, and raise vital funds to help support blind and visually impaired young people at NCW

Whether you host your own

orange-themed event, dress in your brightest shades, bake orange cakes, organise a quiz, or take on a fundraising challenge – every bit of orange makes a difference!

By getting involved or donating to Go Orange for NCW, you'll be helping to create opportunities, independence, and brighter futures for our students.

Wear it. Bake it. Smell it. Paint it. Light it Up. Have fun and GO ORANGE!

Find out more <https://www.ncw.co.uk/event-directory/go-orange-for-ncw/>



Chez NCW

This term, Madame Molina opened a pop-up café in the MFL Department – welcome to Chez NCW!

Students explored French culture with braille, large print and Euros in hand, putting their language skills to the test with real menus and roleplay.

So... what would you have ordered? Une glace, une crêpe or des frites?

Celebrating Connections: NCW Alumni Support the Next Generation

At NCW, we take pride in our network of former students who once walked the halls of NCW, Worcester College for the Blind and Chorleywood College for Girls with Little Or No Sight.

Our alumni provide meaningful insight into how their time at NCW has shaped their lives, and we remain committed to maintaining and nurturing strong relationships with them.

This year, the Former Student Association (FSA) invited our Sixth Form students to apply for a special bursary opportunity – offering financial support to a student with a clear vision for a project that would benefit others within their community. During Leavers' Assembly, former student Anthony Clements joined us to present the NCW FSA Bursary Award. This year's recipient is Jake, whose compelling proposal



to support his new transcription business truly impressed the panel. Jake was thrilled to be given the opportunity – a clear example of how our NCW community continues to support and uplift one another across generations.

Outdoor Film Night

We proudly hosted our first outdoor cinema event this term, organised entirely by our Arts Award students!

The Arts Award course helps students develop key leadership skills – such as collaboration, problem solving, critical thinking, research, and reflection – also boosting confidence and communication. A major part of this involves planning, delivering and reviewing an arts event to put their leadership skills into practice.

Bringing the event to life required close coordination with the Senior Leadership Team, the Catering Team, Residential and Curriculum staff, the Premises Team and many others. They also reached out to the Bruce Green Foundation, which gives children with special needs the chance to enjoy cinema experiences. The students also contacted their local Tesco community champion, who kindly provided popcorn for the event. On the night, the weather was perfect for "The Greatest Showman!". Chairs and bean bags



were arranged on the front lawn and everyone settled down to watch the audio-described film on a large inflatable screen.

Congratulations to Lawson, Kyla and Leo for all their hard work in making the event happen and thanks to Mrs Blake for helping bring their idea to life.

Fundraising News

Thank you to the Ulverscroft Foundation!

We're incredibly grateful to the Ulverscroft Foundation for a generous award which will help us create inclusive and enriching outdoor spaces for our students.

With their support, we have been able to enhance our outdoor play equipment, develop a new bushcraft area, build a greenhouse and improve our outdoor spaces – all designed to help our students explore, learn, and connect with nature in meaningful and accessible ways.



Millie and Pete's 24-Hour Fitness Fundraiser!

A huge well done to Sports Therapist Pete and senior student Millie for taking on and achieving an epic 24-hour fitness challenge raising money for NCW and Alström Syndrome UK! 24 different activities in 24 hours of pure determination and endurance!

From 7.30pm on Sunday, June 22 to 7.30pm on Monday, June 23, the unstoppable duo powered through day and night, completing everything from rowing to football. They raised awareness and vital funds to support students with vision impairment and rare condition Alström Syndrome.

Millie described the challenge as a rollercoaster. "It started off easy but at around 2.30am I really hit a wall. I was struggling to stay awake," she said. "Going outside at sunrise to play football gave me such a boost and seeing people come to support us near the end was amazing." Peter and Millie have raised almost £1,000 through their efforts. "The funds raised will go directly towards enriching student life at NCW and supporting the work of Alström Syndrome UK, helping to provide specialist equipment, experiences and opportunities for young people to thrive." You can still donate online via <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/24hourchallenge>





Celebration Day 2025:

Melissa Johns Joins NCW to Honour Student Success



Over 150 guests attended Celebration Day this term, an event dedicated to recognising the outstanding achievements of our students. The day was filled with music, inspiration, pride – and the joy of bringing our NCW community together.

We were honoured to be joined by a very special guest: actress and disability advocate Melissa Johns, known for her roles in *Coronation Street*, *Grantchester* and BBC's *LIFE*. Melissa gave a powerful keynote speech, sharing her personal journey and the importance of representation and inclusion for disabled people both on and off screen.

Celebration Day began with a musical

showcase, where several students – including this year's leavers – performed for one final time at NCW. The community then gathered for a celebratory lunch in the dining room, followed by an energetic rock concert. In the afternoon, guests explored a variety of student showcases around the school, where they could see the wide range of work produced throughout the year.

We were proud to welcome back former NCW student Eddy Eyad, who left NCW ten years ago, going on to graduate with a First-Class degree in Business from the University of Birmingham. He has since built a successful career in financial services and consulting, while also releasing music under the name *shy ink*, achieving over 10 million streams on Spotify.

We were delighted to be joined by several distinguished guests, including The Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Mrs Beatrice Grant; The High Sheriff of Worcestershire, Ian Smith; and The Mayor and Mayoress of Worcester, Matthew Lamb and Zoe Cookson.

The day ended with a prize-giving ceremony honouring individual student achievements, and a special send-off for our NCW Leavers.

Transition Training in Action: Alejandro's Mobility Trip to University



As part of our commitment to preparing students for life beyond NCW, we recently supported Year 13 student Alejandro on an incredible transition training experience.

Just before breaking up for the summer, Alejandro took part in a full-day mobility trip to Birkbeck, University of London, where he'll be starting his degree this autumn. The trip was planned and led by Katie Simkins, NCW's Mobility Officer, in partnership with Sarah from Guide Dogs, who has been working closely with Alejandro at home.

The visit included train and bus travel, navigating Birkbeck University's campus, and managing key tasks like route planning, requesting Passenger Assist services and confidently self-advocating. These are all part of the essential independence skills students develop at NCW.

Students Represent at Worcestershire Children's Book Group Summer Event

This term Leo, Olivia and Keziah joined Mrs Holmes and Mrs Rosoman on a trip to the Worcestershire Children's Book Group Summer Event at The Hive in Worcester.

The event brought together students from high schools across the county to compete in a series of book-themed challenges, all in the hopes of winning titles from the Federation of Children's Book Groups (FCBG) Book Award.

NCW students made a unique contribution with their own display table, where they spoke enthusiastically to others about Braille and Large Print books. Students gathered to hear from the guest author, Lauren (Wren) James, who spoke about their work as a scriptwriter on the hit Netflix series *Heartstopper*.

The Q&A session that followed offered students a rare glimpse into the different facets of being a professional writer. It was a day filled with learning, laughter and literary inspiration.



Sports **NEWS**

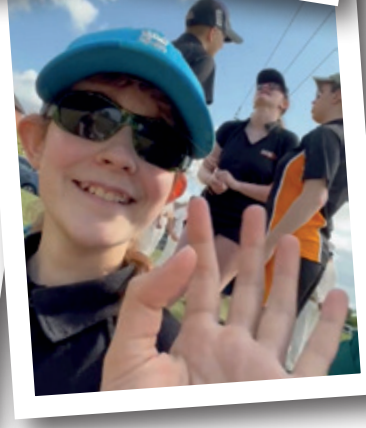


MCC Cricket

There are many school events that our community eagerly anticipates during the summer, but one of the true highlights is the annual MCC vs NCW Cricket Match!

Every year the world-famous Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) visits to take on our NCW team in a spirited game of visually impaired (VI) cricket. United by their passion for cricket, the MCC team is dedicated to making the sport accessible to all.

As the MCC players donned their variety of Sim Specs, spectators took their places ready for what always proves to be a fun but fiercely contested match. NCW's team captain, Khadijah, faced her final game before heading off to university in September. She led her team with confidence and spirit while the MCC players quickly learned the importance of communication and teamwork, especially while wearing Sim Specs, guiding each other around the field. The match was played with great skill and sportsmanship and, as tradition dictates, ended with a classic cricket tea enjoyed by all. This year, NCW emerged as narrow victors!



Sports **NEWS**



Sports Day

After five long years of unpredictable weather and pandemic disruptions, we were over the moon to finally hold a traditional summer Sports Day!

The weather was kind – warm and pleasantly overcast – creating the perfect conditions for a day full of fun, competition and community spirit.

The entire school came together for a fantastic celebration of accessible and vision impaired friendly sports. Students were divided into teams and teaching staff dusted off their favourite sports gear to

join in on the action. Staff also provided live audio commentary throughout the events, ensuring everyone could stay engaged and informed.

Events included vortex, darts, football, paddle boarding, shot put, medicine ball, long jump, standing long jump, golf and the ever-popular NCW welly wanging. To top off the day, participants enjoyed a swimming gala in the NCW pool to cool down! Congratulations to team “Zimbabwe” who topped the athletics score table!



Celebrating 80 Years of Peace: Year 8 Student Zaki Raises Funds for the Royal British Legion



Earlier this term, to mark 80 years since VE Day, Year 8 student Zaki arranged and hosted a cake sale in support of the Royal British Legion.

Zaki organised the entire event with great enthusiasm which was an opportunity for the school community to reflect on 80 years of peace, something students and staff had been exploring in PHSE and lessons.

Catering Assistant Karen was so impressed by Zaki's initiative that she informed her local branch of the Royal British Legion and presented Zaki with a special badge from the Legion in recognition of his hard work and passion. Bill Davison, Chair of the Royal British Legion in Worcester, personally reached out

to thank Zaki too and joined us for a weekday lunch, where they had the chance to chat with Zaki about the Royal British Legion and life at NCW.



Enterprise Group support Worcester Street Kitchen

Earlier in the year, the Sixth Form Enterprise Group got into the Valentine's Day spirit with a fantastic fundraising initiative selling single red roses and beautifully crafted tactile Valentine's Day cards.

The group was keen for the money to go to a meaningful cause and decided that buying supplies for a street kitchen helping those in need would be the perfect way to give back. This term, the students and Mrs Rosoman visited Tesco selecting several bags of non-perishable food items for Worcester Street Kitchen. Mrs Rosoman delivered the donations to the charity, which provides meals for up to 60 homeless people in Worcester every week. A fantastic effort that shows the power of giving back.



BBC Radio 4 radio show shines spotlight on specialist school funding



An episode of BBC Radio 4's In Touch programme was dedicated to shining a spotlight on the vital role of specialist education for vision impaired students.

Presented by Peter White through a powerful set of interviews, the programme explored the benefits of specialist education and the difficulties in obtaining funding to access specialist provisions.

Interviewees included Rachel Perks, Principal of NCW; Suzanne Hollinshead, a parent of a current NCW student; and other guests including former students—among them, Peter White himself.

The feature explores how specialist schools like NCW can be transformative for the life chances of young people with vision impairment—and why funding and policy support are urgently needed to ensure all students can choose and benefit from the



right education for them.

Visit the campaign page on the NCW website to find out more.

Sound Bath Experience

A Sound Bath Experience is coming to NCW this September, delivered by the amazing Deya Wellbeing.

This is more than just relaxation – it's an energetic reset, a system rebalance,

and a gateway to deep healing. Rewire your brain, restore balance, and tune your energy field. All you have to do is lie down and let the sounds do the rest!

25th October at 7pm

Outstanding Music Results

We are fortunate to have a wealth of musical talent among our student body.

Following the recent round of music exams, our students have achieved outstanding results, showcasing not only their technical skill but also their dedication and passion for music. From classical piano to contemporary vocals, and everything in between, our students have demonstrated a remarkable range of ability across instruments and styles.

A huge congratulations to every student who took part.



May Court Dinner

We are always honoured to be invited to the annual May Court Dinner, a prestigious event hosted by the Worshipful Company of Lightmongers.

Each year, Head Students from affiliated schools are recognised for their exceptional contributions with the Exceptional Achievement Award. This year, the spotlight was on Head Student Asal, who had the honour of attending the dinner alongside Principal Rachel Perks and Head of Habilitation Emma Moody.

In addition to promoting excellence in lighting and fostering fellowship within the

industry, the Company actively invests in the future through education and training initiatives. The Lightmongers Charitable Trust provides meaningful support to organisations working with individuals affected by sensory loss, helping to improve lives through education and innovation.

NCW is proud to be one of the educational settings supported by this generous and forward-thinking organisation, alongside Mary Hare School for deaf children. We are grateful for their continued support and look forward to future opportunities to celebrate and collaborate.

Work Experience



Leo is Radio Ga Ga!

Sixth Form student Leo is a self-confessed radio enthusiast and has made several appearances on his local station, Vectis Radio.

When the opportunity for a week-long work experience placement came up, Leo knew exactly what he wanted to do – spending six shifts behind the mic at Vectis Radio.

Back at school, Leo has played a leading role in setting up NCW's very own school radio project. He's been hands-on in helping install the newly purchased radio equipment and met with a BBC Hereford & Worcester sound engineer and presenter to get professional advice on launching the station. Well done Leo!

NCW Students Shine at Waitrose Worcester: A Valued and Ongoing Partnership

We are grateful for our continued and growing partnership with Waitrose Worcester, a long-standing supporter of NCW and a shining example of inclusive community collaboration.

Since the store opened, the team at Waitrose has welcomed our Sixth Form students for work experience placements, treating students like full Waitrose Partners: trusted, supported and encouraged to develop essential workplace skills in a real-world environment.

For one week Ghaalib, Erick, Toby and Daniel threw themselves into a variety of tasks including serving customers at the tills, assisting on the Welcome Desk, cleaning crates for home delivery, fulfilling Click and Collect orders, restocking and tidying shelves, merchandising and even pot washing in the café!

Beyond the practical tasks, our students represented NCW with positivity, professionalism and confidence—leaving a lasting impression on both customers and staff.





Political thinking!

NCW student Zac is passionate about politics, both in the UK and globally.

Armed with an agenda of issues important to him, Zac requested to meet his local MP, Mr Blake Stephenson. Mr Stephenson gave Zac lots of time to chat through the things that are important to him, including telling him all about NCW and the difference it has made to his education, his mental health and his future career prospects as a blind young person. As a result of Zac's meeting, Mr Stephenson has agreed to write to the Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson, in support of the recent open letter to the Government that NCW has recently sent. He was also keen to look at tabling specific questions on this topic in the House of Commons! Zac also had the opportunity to talk to Mr Stephenson about the lack of step free access at his local train station, support for investment in the local infrastructure and the plans for a new Universal Studio Park!

A **Royal** Afternoon to Remember!

Dr Moody and Dr Normanton Erry were honoured to represent NCW at a special education-focused Royal Garden Party.

They donned their finest hats and dresses and hit the palace, ready for a memorable day of celebration and connection. They explored the stunning palace grounds — from the fragrant rose garden to the vibrant wildflower areas, sampled the delicious tea, ice cream and plenty of cake and enjoyed performances from the excellent military brass and wind bands. They caught glimpses of Their Majesties the King and Queen and had lovely conversations with fellow guests from Essex, Wales and the Channel Isles. A truly memorable afternoon, celebrating those who work in education!





Year 7 – Out and About

This half term, our Year 7 students have been busy continuing to getting to know their local area through two fantastic trips that combined sunshine, history and hands-on learning.

One outing saw students enjoying a sunny walk from Diglis to Worcester Cathedral and back. Along the way, they explored the canal network, learning about its historical importance in trade and transport, and how it continues to be used today. A highlight of the walk was stopping to observe the flood markers, which gave the students a real sense of the power of nature and the river's history of rising waters. Another trip took Year 7 to The Commandery, a key site in the story of the English Civil War. The students are currently learning about the war in class, so this visit brought the history to life! From trying on replica Civil War clothing

to exploring weaponry and discovering the building's many uses over the centuries, there was something to captivate everyone. It was hard to believe that this now central building was once surrounded by countryside outside the city walls.



Ready for Summer!

As the end of the year approaches, it's a great time to get out and about! With trips to the beach, museums and castles, what a great way to end the term.






The weather was perfect for a Saturday trip to Porthcawl. Students soaked up the seaside fun – paddling in the sea, exploring rock pools and building sandcastles.

The historic buildings museum, Avoncroft, was a hit with Year 10. The main purpose was to experience a working windmill like the one featured in the English Literature set text, *Animal Farm*, but they also learned how to make clay bricks, rode on a miniature railway train, explored a fifteenth century home, identified historical objects by touch, learned about telephone exchanges and discovered the inside of an antique fairground wagon!

On the last Friday of term Year 7 (and Natalie!) set off to Goodrich Castle, spending a fun time exploring the defences, climbing the narrow spiral staircase in the keep and going down into the moat.

On the final Monday Key Stage 3 enjoyed a Humanities trip to Tintern Abbey and Ross-on-Wye. Although it was a fun end of term trip, students found out about monastery life, the Dissolution and the beginnings of British tourism in the Wye valley. All very cultured!



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