

news

AUTUMN/WINTER 2025



Leading Parent Partnership **Award**

We are absolutely delighted to announce that after a year of very hard work, we have been awarded The Leading Parent Partnership Award.

A working party comprising staff from across the campus and several fantastic NCW parents has worked extremely hard to achieve this wonderful accolade. The project has involved parent surveys, evaluation of systems and processes, instigating new ideas and evidencing all the work and progress. Thank you to all the parents and carers who took the time to complete a survey, give their feedback or attend one of

the events across the year to take advantage of opportunities to engage with their young person's life and learning at NCW.

Going forward we will be focusing on further developing the ideas and processes, maintaining the good practice that we have found and continuing to build our ever-strengthening relationships with parents and carers.

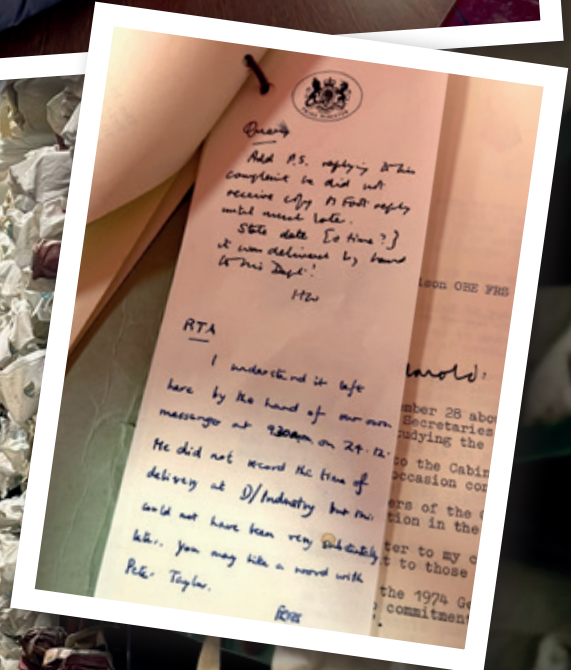
National Archive Visit

NCW students again benefitted from the experience of visiting the National Archives in Kew. Year 11 and Sixth Form History and Politics students went into the Repository and saw the shelves containing maps and boxes of other materials, as well as a large lump of rock salt (from the former salt mine Cheshire store).

They discovered the processes underlying how Government documents are preserved and stored. They then took part in a workshop studying primary source material on Elizabeth I. We were pleased again to meet George Rhodes of All Able Ltd who, with the advice of Kate Antolak, had 3D printed some visual sources and this added to the understanding of representations of the past.

Two of the Politics group came along, with one of them, and a member of staff who acted

as reader, really enjoying looking through a file of Harold Wilson's letters around the Common Market referendum of 1975 to aid his Extended Project Qualification on the career of the British Labour politician Tony Benn; it definitely had echoes of 'Yes Minister'. Kyla said it 'blew her mind' to touch a document touched by Elizabeth I. Liv said the whole day was fascinating and she loved connecting with the past. Thanks to the Education Team at the National Archives for providing us with such a valuable experience.



Columbian Adventure



This term, the Mobility Team and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Department took three of our Sixth Form language students to Francini's, a vibrant Colombian restaurant in Worcester.

Len, George and Kacey enjoyed an immersive cultural and linguistic experience in the heart of the city, where the atmosphere was warm, welcoming and full of authentic Latin American flavour.

The visit was an opportunity to step outside the classroom and put their learning into practice.

Gift ideas for VI Youngsters

Ms Emanuel donned a Christmas tree outfit for social media to share some ideas for stocking fillers from the Independent Living Skills team, but her brilliant list of ideas is good for gifts all year round! Here are her top tips!

- Ring pull opener
- Brightly coloured nylon knives
- Bamboo tongs with magnet to stick to the toaster
- Bagel/hot cross bun cutter
- Talking Thermometer
- Tactile Rubix Cube
- Pan Pickle (to secure a saucepan)
- Magnetic measuring spoons

They embraced the challenge of speaking Spanish with native speakers, ordering food in the target language and engaging in real conversations that tested their vocabulary and confidence. Alongside the linguistic benefits, the students broadened their cultural horizons by trying traditional foods such as arepas and pandebono and learning about their origins.

Cesar, Francini's owner, was delighted when our students offered to Braille the menu in both Spanish and English. This is a unique skill — very few people master both Braille codes, which differ significantly between the two languages. It's a wonderful example of how NCW students combine language learning with accessibility and inclusion.

"Quiero agradecer a movilidad y a la señora Molina la oportunidad."

(I want to thank the mobility team and Mrs. Molina for the opportunity.)

George, Year 12



- Two in one kettle and hot water dispenser
- Silly scents scented pens for colouring
- Tactile colouring books from the RNIB
- Talking scales
- Air fryer
- Braille Uno game

Check out the video on our social media pages if you'd like to witness the full experience!



Swimming Gala

Earlier this term, a group of NCW students took part in the British Blind Sport Swim Gala in Birmingham.

This annual event is always a highlight of the NCW calendar, but this year was particularly special as it marked the 50th anniversary of our charity partners, British Blind Sport. We were joined by a wonderful crowd of parents and grandparents cheering on the swimmers. The students competed with determination and joy across a range of events and returning with collections of medals. The gala was a celebration of community, resilience and

partnership. We are proud of every student who took part and grateful to British Blind Sport for continuing to inspire and empower young people through sport.





British Blind Sport 50th Anniversary Festival of Sport

A group of our students and staff had the pleasure of attending the British Blind Sport 50th Anniversary Festival of Sport at Tudor Grange, Solihull Sports Centre.

The event was packed with excitement — from trying out sports like tennis, goalball, archery and cricket in the Activation Zone, to exploring the Partner and Celebration Zones, which our students absolutely loved!

We were also thrilled to meet some incredible Paralympians, including Neil and Lora Fachie, Ben Quilter and Roy Turnham. Students enjoyed holding and wearing their Olympic medals — and were amazed to discover braille on the back!

A huge thank you to British Blind Sport for such an inspiring and inclusive event — celebrating 50 years of empowering people with sight loss through sport.

Former PE Head wins Legacy Award

We are all delighted that Clive Spencer, our former Head of PE, received the prestigious Legacy Award at the British Blind Sport 50th Anniversary Awards Dinner.

Clive was nominated for this award by Jane Price, our current Head of PE, who attended the event as his guest. Her nomination highlighted Clive's lifelong dedication to creating opportunities for people with vision impairments to participate and excel in sport.

As one colleague put it:

"Clive's aim in life has been to teach people as best he could and help them achieve as much as possible in their sport – always in a quiet, unassuming manner."

His knowledge and passion for VI sport have shaped generations of athletes and inspired countless athletic achievements.



Eye Care Support Pathway for children and young people

Braille Teacher, Mrs Williams, recently attended the official parliamentary launch of Guide Dogs' new Eye Care Support Pathway for

children and young people with vision impairment.

It was a wonderful day of celebration of years of work with parents, QTVIs and

medical professionals all working together to create a best practice pathway for those families and children and young people who have a vision impairment. There were speakers such as Andrew Lennox, Guide Dogs CEO, Shockat Adam, MP and Marsha de Cordova MP and Chair of the APPG. A true collaboration to improve the experiences of those navigating the medical and educational system linked to vision impairment.

We're proud to see a member of NCW community represented in such an important milestone for the VI community.



Connecting over the airwaves!

NCW now has its very own radio studio! The new space gives staff and students an engaging way to communicate, share ideas and build valuable skills.

Many of our students are keen budding disc jockeys who jump at every chance to get on the airwaves. With the dedicated studio, they now have the perfect platform to grow their talents.

The radio project began last summer, when BBC sound engineers visited NCW to meet our aspiring DJs. They offered expert advice on setting up the studio, explained the technical specifications and demonstrated the best ways to make it work. Their guidance shaped this exciting new space.

Students Taking the Mic

- Tamzin is working towards her Unit Awards in Radio Production

- Leo and Lawson are running the actual radio station alongside Mr Hinds and Miss Elmes.

This hands-on experience is helping them build confidence, creativity and technical know-how.



England v New Zealand at Twickenham



Autumn Nations Series. Thanks to front row seats, the students were right in the heart of the action as England secured a thrilling 33–19 victory over the All Blacks.

Students shared their excitement: Lawson said, *"The match was so good, in fact it was GREAT! So impressive, worth the really long day."* Ruby, attending her first international rugby match, added, *"We were so close to the pitch we could feel the heat from the flames when someone scored! Amazing!"*

Mrs Price, Head of PE at NCW and originally from New Zealand joined in the fun despite her home team losing to England for the first time at home for thirteen years!

Bad luck Mrs Price!

This term, a group of students and staff had an unforgettable experience at The Allianz Stadium, Twickenham, witnessing England take on New Zealand in the Quilter Cup

NCW Alumni inducted into National Football Museum's Hall of Fame.

Former NCW student and Paralympian, Darren Harris, England's most capped and decorated blind footballer, has been inducted into the National Football Museum's Hall of Fame.

Darren made his debut for the country's blind team in 1996 and went on to make 157 appearances, scoring 34 goals while winning 10 world and European medals.

The 52-year-old, from Wolverhampton, took up the sport after losing his sight when he was diagnosed with bilateral retinoblastoma when he was 15 months old. Six years after his England debut, he became captain in 2002 and helped the team qualify for the Athens Paralympic Games in 2004. He switched to training full-time in Judo, competing at the Beijing Paralympics in 2008, before returning to football to play at the London Paralympics in 2012.

Since his retirement, he has worked as a motivational speaker, performance consultant and inclusion advocate, championing accessibility.

Tim Desmond, CEO of the National Football Museum, said Harris was a "remarkable athlete and role model".

"His achievements on the pitch were extraordinary but it is his impact off the pitch, challenging perceptions, empowering others and championing inclusion, that truly sets him apart."

Harris was inducted into the hall of fame at the National Football Museum in Manchester during the Para Sport Awards on 5th December.





Stepping into

The run up to Christmas has never been more exciting, with festivities starting early and building to a crescendo of activity during the last week of term.

As part of the celebrations, staff and students took part in a sponsored Christmas walk to Worcester Cathedral, where they visited the beautifully decorated NCW Christmas tree, displayed as part of the Cathedral's annual Christmas Tree Festival and adorned with stunning handmade decorations crafted by students.

Other events included:

- Wreath decorating, gingerbread house decorating and decoration making
- Festive makes and bakes in Independent Living Skills
- Christmas meals both in school and all of the residential houses
- Christmas parties, activities and quizzes
- Joining with the national PE Santa Dash
- Reindeers on campus!

What a wonderful wintery way to end the term!



Christmas!



Fundraising News

We are delighted to share that the last few months have been a really positive time for fundraising at NCW, with support from our wonderful community making a huge difference to student life.

New Sensory Room

We are thrilled that our new Sensory Room is now complete.

This calm, supportive space has been thoughtfully designed to meet the needs of our blind and visually impaired students, supporting emotional wellbeing, regulation and learning. We are incredibly grateful to The Worshipful Company of Lightmongers, The Powell Family Foundation, and to those who donated so generously in memory of former NCW student Sophie Reily. Their kindness and generosity have helped bring this important project to life, and we thank them sincerely.

New NCW Minibus

Following our 'Step into Christmas' festive fundraising, we are focusing on one of fundraising priorities: a new minibus for NCW. Our minibus plays a vital role in daily school life, enabling students to access curriculum activities, sporting fixtures, work experience, independence training and valuable community opportunities beyond the classroom.

Replacing our current vehicle will ensure we can continue to offer these essential experiences safely, reliably and independently, helping our students build confidence and life skills throughout the year. Any support towards this appeal—whether through making a donation or sharing our festive fundraising message – would be hugely appreciated.

Donations can be made via the NCW website: www.ncw.co.uk/donate

Sound Bath

We are also pleased to announce that another Sound Bath Experience will be taking place at NCW on Saturday 24 January. These popular events offer a deeply relaxing and immersive experience while raising vital funds to support our students. Tickets are now available, and we would love to welcome you to join us.

Dates for more Sound Baths later in the year will be released very soon, so please keep an eye on our website and social media channels for more information.

Get your tickets from:

www.ncw.co.uk/event-directory/sound-bath/





Graduation Day!

Congratulations to Mrs Blake, Mr Swainland and Mrs Cheema on their graduation as fully qualified QTVs (Qualified Teachers of the Vision Impaired).

Completing this demanding two-year course alongside full-time teaching is a remarkable achievement, reflecting exceptional dedication and professionalism. It is fantastic news for NCW to have three more fully qualified specialists on our staff, strengthening the expertise and support we provide to our learners.

Life Beyond School 2025

Considering the future and preparing for adulthood are important parts of the student experience at NCW.

This term, senior students had the pleasure of attending the Worcester Life Beyond School Inclusive Show 2025. Years 9-13 had the opportunity to start really thinking about what their lives could be like after they leave NCW. Getting out into the real world, meeting new people and exploring future opportunities is a huge part of what we do here at NCW.

There were many different organisations at the show for students to talk to, to get ideas and information about what their next steps could look like. A great day out and a lot of food for thought!










In memory

25/09/2011 – 4/11/2025

A wonderfully kind young person taken too soon. Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Layla.



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