

16<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Headteacher

Responsible, Resilient, Ambitious

Another very busy time in terms of visitors to Ixworth this week. On Wednesday, we were visited by the Deputy Director of Education Skills and Learning for Suffolk, Julia Grainger, who was accompanied by Jonathan Taylor our CEO. Julia was briefed about the progress the school has made since her last visit in January 2024 and visited several lessons. On Thursday, we were visited by the Deputy CEO Andrew Robinson in preparation for our termly report to Trustees. It was a pleasure to show off our school to all visitors.

We have interviewed this week for a new Cover Supervisor but not yet appointed. We have also interviewed candidates as Bank Supply Teachers. Supply staff are a significant cost to the school; by having our own this would reduce the cost overall; they would be aware of our systems and processes in the school and provide a familiar face for students.

We are making progress in a range of areas at Ixworth, but our student attendance is an area where we are increasing our focus. We have a significant number of students that have been able to achieve 100% attendance or have attendance above 95%, (acceptable). In some cases, this is good fortune, but a big thank you to parents that ensure the time missed at school is the absolute minimum when a student is unavoidably absent.

There is a clear link between school attendance, attainment, and future earnings. This is obvious, if a student is not in school, they are missing out on vital learning, there will be gaps in their knowledge for exams and assessments, and so they cannot fully achieve their potential. A gap created by a short absence can be made up, but the greater the absence, the less chance this will occur.

The government has published guidance to help schools maintain or reach high levels of school attendance. It outlines our duties and ensures that we must maintain accurate records of attendance including the reasons for absence. We must offer support to families, and pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so. We must question why students are absent, and from these questions, we can offer tailored support.

I do not doubt that most parents and students understand the importance of good attendance, and I am sure this is an area that together we will be able to positively impact, and ensure every student achieves their full potential at Ixworth.

Please find a link below to our 2026 Parent Survey. Any feedback is useful to us to see where parents recognise the strengths of our school, areas where we could improve and all points in between. The data is also visible to Sapientia Trust and is used to triangulate against their visits and data from the school. Every parent/carer's opinion is important to us, so we would be grateful if you could complete this.

[Ixworth- Parent View 2026 – Collaboration](#)

Wishing you a restful weekend.

**Mr Gibb**

Key Dates

**Week beginning 19th January is Week B on our timetable**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January** Year 10 Progress Evening

**26<sup>th</sup> January- 6<sup>th</sup> February** Year 11 Mocks

**12<sup>th</sup> February** Year 9 Progress Evening

**16<sup>th</sup> February** Half Term

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2026-2027

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**Sapientia Education Trust- Term Dates 2026/27****Autumn Term:**

- Starts: Thursday 3rd September 2026
- Half-Term: 19th October - 30th October 2026
- Last day: Friday 18th December 2026

**Spring Term:**

- Starts: Tuesday 5th January 2027
- Half-Term: 15th February- 19th February 2027
- Last Day: Thursday 25th March 2027

**Summer Term:**

- Starts: Monday 12th April 2027
- Bank Holiday/ School Closed: 3rd May
- Half-Term: 31st May - 4th June 2027
- Last Day – Friday 23rd July 2027

**Uniform**

Ixworth is very proud of its uniform, the students look superb and many of our visitors have commented on how professional students look in their uniform, how well presented they are and how impressed they are with their interactions.

While we recognise that items get damaged or lost, it is expected that all students arrive to school with their full uniform from the first day back. Please ensure that items are in line with the schools' expectations (This can be found on our website with useful guidance around the specific items and their appearance).

Link to website: [Uniform - Ixworth High School](#)

**Careers**

Year 10 Work Experience placement forms must be completed by **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March**.

Careers Week begins week commencing Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March! If there are any businesses interested in supporting, please contact [d.heath@ixworthhighschool.org](mailto:d.heath@ixworthhighschool.org)

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Pastoral Notices

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**Student Related Enquiries**

General enquiries about students or student-related incidents should always in the FIRST instance go to their Tutor. If for any reason this does not resolve the issue, please then contact the Head of Upper or Lower school, whichever is relevant to your child.

**Student Absence**

Student absences should still be registered with the School Office Team- [aaa@ixworthhighschool.org](mailto:aaa@ixworthhighschool.org) by 9:00 am.

**Lost Property**

Items of lost property will be kept at the school Office. Please ensure you have all school uniform and sports kit clearly marked with your child's name on the inside of the item.

**Safeguarding**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Miss Burgess, she is contactable via the school office. We continue to push on high levels of attendance for our students across the school and in Forge. Thank you to the parents and carers in our community who support their children to make the right choice every day. Research tells us that 95% plus attendance adds one grade, on average at GCSE.

Below you will see the link to our Attendance and Punctuality Policy. This can be accessed on our website under Policies.

<https://www.ixworthhighschool.org/assets/Documents/Attachments/Attendance-and-Punctuality-Policy-2024.pdf>

The following students have been working extremely hard in humanities recently.

Please see Miss Ellis for your prize.

Well done!



**HUMANITIES  
STARS**

**Geography**

Sophie C Yr 7

Riley F Yr 10

**History**

Seren O Yr 9

Layla P Yr 11

**RE**

Arthur S Yr 7

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## Subject Spotlight- RE

**Why is your subject important in this key stage?**

KS3 RE is hugely important at this stage as it offers students the opportunity to learn about the world through the lens of culture, religion and philosophical views. Pupils will build a range of transferable skills such as deeper thinking, literacy, oracy and analytical writing.

**Any teaching methods/strategies that would help people understand how teaching is taking place (implementation of curriculum)?**

In KS3 RE there will be regular questioning that will look to boost pupils' knowledge and address any misconceptions they may have. Students will have new skills/concepts modelled for them to ensure they see an example of what a good one looks like. Extending tasks will have scaffolding such as sentence starters to help students reach their potential and provide them with support to complete the work independently.

**What are students covering in the Key stage/course? Any overarching themes, skills, concepts that are trying to be achieved.**

The new KS3 RE syllabus now covers Religion, Philosophy and Ethics. Key themes we cover are what happens when we die, human rights, beliefs, morals and practices. Currently, we are covering many of these themes with the current units. Y7 are looking at Judaism while Year 8 are focusing on Hinduism. Year 9 however, are looking at Human Rights and if everyone receives them.

**How this fits into the wider curriculum?**

The current units KS3 students are doing are part the wider KS3 curriculum which looks to give students a variety of modules around the 3 strands of: Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

**Any competitions/House comps/ Homework you are running/have run and their results or aims.**

Homework this term will see Y7 revise for an assessment on Judaism. The revision will need to focus on the origins of the religion and the 'promise of the Messiah'. Y8 will be doing a task where they look at Hindu festivals such as Diwali. Year 9 will do a task where they will look at the issue of Child soldiers. The current cohorts are making good progress in learning new concepts ranging from Human rights to Karma, from Ramadan to Atheism.

**How can parents support or extend their child in your subject?**

Have discussions with pupils at home about religion and ethics. Encourage pupils to review lesson PowerPoints and do some independent research.

**Anything current in the news, new books or research links to websites etc. that students might find interesting/useful to access their studies or provide wider context and skills.**

Being aware of current affairs through the news will be a real asset to those studying RE as the courses pupils are doing involve looking at religious practices and concepts and how this is applicable to the world today.

**Careers links/ties to post-16/university etc.**

RE qualifications are highly desirable as they provide lots of transferable skills that employers and higher education providers are looking for. These skills include deeper thinking, written analysis, research skills and presentation skills. Some key careers links for RE are:

Housing support officer, Police officer, GP, Environmental officer, Diplomatic service officer, social worker and Hospital chaplain.

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## Subject Spotlight- Photography

**Why is your subject important in this key stage?**

Photography allows students to express themselves creatively while developing critical visual literacy, an essential skill in today's image-driven world. It encourages observation, reflection, and communication, helping students to see the world differently and tell stories through visual means. It also builds transferable skills such as problem-solving, independent thinking, and digital competency.

**Any teaching methods/strategies that would help people understand how teaching is taking place (implementation of curriculum)?**

Students learn through a combination of practical workshops, guided projects, and independent experimentation. They explore both digital and traditional photography methods, including composition, lighting, editing, and presentation. Lessons include research into artists and photographers to inspire creative outcomes and contextual understanding. Assessment focuses on process as well as final outcomes, encouraging reflection, refinement, and development of personal ideas.

**What are students covering in the Key stage/course? Any overarching themes, skills, concepts that are trying to be achieved.**

Students are currently exploring themes such as Distortion, Reflection, and storytelling through imagery. They are learning key camera skills, photo editing using software like Photo pea, and developing slide shows that document their creative process. Emphasis is placed on analysing visual work and understanding how meaning is communicated through photographic choices.

**How this fits into the wider curriculum?**

Photography builds on core Art and Design principles such as composition, colour, form, and visual analysis. While also developing digital and contemporary media skills. It complements other creative subjects and supports cross-curricular links with English, Media Studies, and ICT. Students also gain a deeper appreciation of culture and history through studying influential photographers and visual movements.

**Any competitions/House comps/ Homework you are running/have run and their results or aims.**

Homework often involves taking photos around a chosen theme or researching photographers. Local photography competitions are often highlighted and encouraged for students to participate in.

**How can parents support or extend their child in your subject?**

Parents can support by encouraging their child to take photographs regularly, exploring different lighting, angles, and subjects. Discussing images in magazines, newspapers, or exhibitions together can develop critical thinking. If possible, visiting local art galleries or online photography exhibitions can greatly enhance visual awareness and inspiration.

**Anything current in the news, new books or research links to websites etc. that students might find interesting/useful to access their studies or provide wider context and skills.**

The Guardian Photography section (regularly updated photojournalism and visual stories). Another interesting source is the Royal Photographic Society website where there are a variety of resources, exhibitions, and competitions. The Tate Photography online collection also has an extensive artist research and inspiration section to explore. Online there is BBC Your Pictures which is themed galleries that invite submissions. There are also recent discussions in the media about AI and digital image manipulation which provide an interesting debate for students.

**Careers links/ties to post-16/university etc.**

Photography opens a wide range of creative pathways including fine art, commercial photography, graphic design, media, marketing, journalism, and film. At post-16 level, students can progress to A-Level Photography, Art & Design, or Creative Media courses, and later into university degrees or apprenticeships in creative industries.