

7th November 2025

Headteacher

Responsible, Resilient, Ambitious

Welcome back after our half term break.

There is much in the news this week regarding planned changes to the National Curriculum, additional Year 8 testing and GCSE exams. The latest release from the Department for Education says that the new National Curriculum will be published in Spring 2027, and schools will start teaching it from September 2028. AQA have said that for GCSEs, teaching of the first phase of GCSEs will begin in 2029, and the second phase in 2030. These timelines would suggest that no current students at Ixworth would be affected by changes to the National Curriculum or GCSEs. The first students that would see some of the changes would be Year 7s joining the school in Sept 2026. As decisions are finalised, we will keep you fully informed.

The Year 11 Mock exams are in full swing, the responsibility, ambition and resilience being shown by our students is clear, and we are seeing a marked improvement in the grades from Year 10. Exams and qualifications are stressful for students, but are a necessary part of education, and provide us with choices not just in the next stage of our education but also later in life. Increasingly, we hear from FE providers that Ixworth students are known for demonstrating our values consistently in their studies. It is pleasing to hear that they stand out from other students in colleges and sixth forms.

For the GCSEs in May 26, we will only be interested in the outcome for our students, but our mock exams serve other purposes. Of course, it gives an indication of the grades a student might achieve if they sat the exam now with no further teaching or self-study. Students will also want to know this grade to seek the reward for their hard work. This is also used to provide indications of where teaching needs to be adapted and where there are common gaps in knowledge or misconceptions. We analyse our exams down to individual questions and assessment objectives to ensure we have covered each topic in sufficient detail and identify these gaps. We will also provide individual feedback to students so that they can tailor their self-study to cover any personal gaps in their learning. Finally, by being in the environment of exam conditions, we familiarise students with the process to try and reduce the stress associated with this.

There are still a few spaces on the trip to France during our Summer Enrichment week in July 2026, but it is filling up quickly, bookings can be made via Bromcom.

Wishing you a restful weekend.

Mr Gibb

Key Dates

Week beginning 10th November is Week B on our timetable

3rd – 14th November	Year 11 Mocks
11th November	Remembrance Event
13th November	Presentation Evening (invite only)
4th December	Year 11 Progress Evening 4-7 and Year 11 Mock Handouts
5th December	PD Day STAFF ONLY
18th December	Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day
19th December	Panto Performance by British Pantomimes- <i>Tickets available on website</i>

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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 by 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 so if you do misplace anything it can be returned to you quickly.

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>

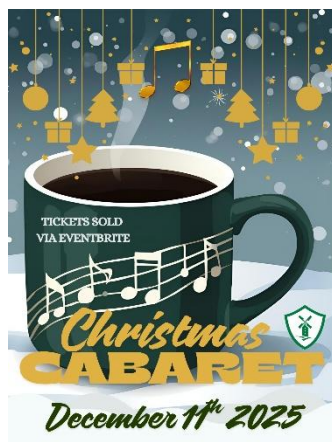
Christmas Cabaret

The Christmas Cabaret is on December 11th at 5pm- Tickets available on Eventbrite and the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ixworth-high-schools-christmas-cabaret-tickets-1964845225963>

Love Christmas? Love performing? Or just love a good laugh? Then don't miss out on our first ever Christmas Cabaret! Whether you sing, dance, act, play an instrument, or just want to bring some festive fun to the stage — we want YOU! Students to sign up with Mrs Dungey on **Monday, November 10th** to be part of the show. All years and talents welcome — as long as it's Christmas themed! Any questions, please email

j.dungey@ixworthhighschool.org





Subject Spotlight- English

Why is your subject important in this key stage?	KS3 is where students build the foundations for all future learning in English. It develops critical reading, analytical thinking, and communication skills that underpin success at KS4 and beyond.
Any teaching methods/strategies that would help understand how teaching is taking place and implementation of curriculum?	• Annotating texts for language and theme. • Group discussions on character motivations and themes. • Writing alternative endings or diary entries from character's perspectives. • Word banks for archaic or descriptive language in Tolkien's text.
What are students covering in their key stage/course? Any overarching themes, skills, concepts that are trying to be achieved.	Core Text: <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R.R. Tolkien. Themes: Heroism and courage. Good vs evil. Friendship and loyalty. Skills Developed: Inference and interpretation. Analysis of language and structure. Narrative writing and descriptive techniques. Concepts: Genre conventions (fantasy). Authorial intent and context.
How this subject fits into the wider subject curriculum.	• Builds narrative and descriptive writing skills for KS4 creative writing tasks. • Introduces literary analysis that will be essential for GCSE Literature. • Encourages reading stamina and appreciation of classic texts.
Any competitions/house comps/ homework you are running.	Homework this half term will be: • Educake (online). • Reading for pleasure. • Fortnightly Spellings.

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How can parents support or extend their child in your subject?	• Encourage daily reading (20 minutes) and discuss the story. • Encourage spelling practice. • Watch adaptations (e.g., The Hobbit film) • Support homework by asking open-ended questions: "Why do you think Bilbo changes throughout the story?"
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.	Websites for Wider Context: • BBC Bitesize KS3 English. • National Literacy Trust.
Careers links/ties to post-16/university etc.	Skills developed in English lead to careers in: Publishing, Journalism, Creative Writing, Law, Marketing, Teaching. Post-16 pathways: • A-Level English Literature or Language. • University degrees in English, Creative Writing, Media Studies.



TASSOMAI TOP 10

1.Sophie Cook
 2.Sophie Lewis
 3.Edie Watson
 4.Fifi Catchpole
 5.Freya Bennett

6.Imogen Foreman
 7.Carter Meekings
 8.William Hodge
 9.Viktor Piskala
 10.Ethan Eggleston

Over **28,000** questions were attempted by our students last week! Well done for showing how ambitious you are with your science homework!

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Get ready for a magical journey this festive season as Cinderella comes to life from the award-winning team at British Pantomimes. A dazzling family pantomime filled with laughter, sparkle, and a sprinkle of fairy dust! Join Cinderella, her hilarious best friend, the charming Prince, and of course her Fairy Godmother, in this fun-packed adventure that's perfect for all ages. With toe-tapping songs, belly-laugh comedy, stunning costumes, and magical moments, it's the perfect treat to kick off your Christmas season.

Experience a Pop-Up Pantomime like no other! At British Pantomimes, we have consistently set new standards with our groundbreaking productions. We are looking forward to hosting Cinderella at Ixworth High School in Suffolk.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cinderella-british-pantomimes-tickets-1768337608389?aff=oddttdtcreator>

British Pantomimes