

BOWDEN

Life



BOWDEN
HOUSE SCHOOL

WE NOT ME

DECEMBER

2025

WARNING
Do not use vehicle with center cavity midway between wheels.
WARNING
Avoid excessive rocking vehicle while on lift.
WARNING
Keep feet clear of lift while lowering.
CAUTION

CCTV
in
operation

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our sister in the city

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Baby Rudolf...

Poor baby Rudolf, he's lost one of his antlers
can you find all the replacements Santa's Elves
have made him?

Welcome



Dear Parents & Carers

As we come to the end of another busy period, it is a good time to pause and reflect on the wonderful accomplishments and experiences our students have had this term.

It has been a period of hard work and achievement. We are incredibly proud of the resilience and dedication our Yr11 students have shown in their preparation for GCSE exams. They have all sat a series of Mock exams which will help to guide them forward in their learning and build confidence for the final exams in June.

Yr10 students have successfully completed work experience at a local supermarket, serving customers and helping run the shop. They have also participated in their Sport Apprenticeship scheme, which has involved teaching sport to children in a local Primary school.

We have a cohort of students who have signed up to complete their DOE Bronze Award this year, this term they have focussed on fund raising ideas for chosen charity. They are also preparing for a hike and camping experience in the summer term.

It has been an absolute pleasure to get to know our new students over the past few months and watch them settle into learning, form friendships and interact so positively with staff. Successful transitions would not be possible without the strong partnership between our school and our families.

We invited all our students to take part in a Christmas card competition, which was launched by Maggie the Mayor of Seaford. The entries have been incredible, Maggie the Mayor judged and announced the winner during our Winter Fair celebration assembly. Maggie has used the winning design as her official Christmas card this year. We are very proud to have the students' talents recognised in our local community.

Finally there has been a real drive on home learning, students completing work on Century Tech have had their time and effort logged and been recognised and rewarded by the headteacher.

To celebrate all the efforts and achievements our students have made this term, we have put on an amazing array of trips as a reward. Students have enjoyed, go karting, ice skating, a trip to Chessington Zoo and a visit to Winter wonderland!

Thank you for your continued support as we celebrate the milestones our students have reached, both big and small over the last few months. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a restful and enjoyable holiday, we look forward to welcoming our students back in 2026.

Miranda Wells - Deputy Headteacher



Prima

Sapphire

Sapphire class have produced some wonderful writing this half term about their favourite landmarks in London. They researched, planned and wrote their piece, and added beautiful art work too. They also took their annual trip to Canary Wharf ice skating rink. For a few of the children, it was their first time ever taking to the ice! Everybody achieved something - Sami did a complete circuit of the rink, Brooklyn and Jaydaa became more confident using the skate support, Caleb, Mohtadi and Tison developed their skills, whilst Logan had his first fall and bounced back!



Both classes from the Primary visited the Tower of London on a very chilly November day as part of their 'Crime and Punishment' topic. They took part in a workshop led by Lady Katherine Grey herself, and explored the parts of the tower that were actually used as prisons many years ago!

Bowden Primary

ry Times...



Forest School

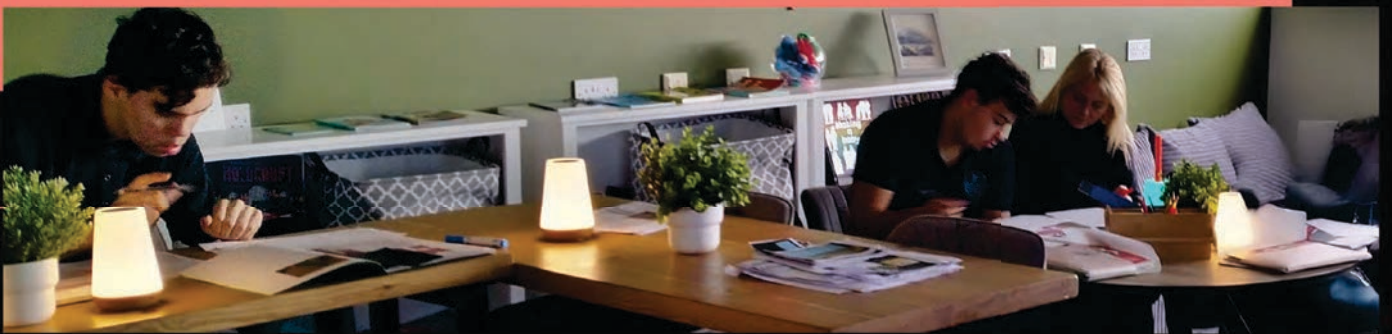
At Bowden Primary we have been continuing with our weekly Forest School sessions including all sorts of activities this term, from making bows and arrows, to building swings, and most recently weaving some "gods' eyes". All the kids have taken part so well in all these activities and have enjoyed spending their Fridays in the forest - even in the freezing cold and torrential rain!

Roche, Topic, Bütz

Bobcats

This term, the Bobcat boys have been seriously busy! In English, they've explored a range of powerful texts, including *The Boy in the Tower* by Polly Ho Yen, showing real empathy as they thought deeply about other people's lives and experiences. During maths, teamwork has been the name of the game, with brilliant problem-solving and lots of true "We not Me" moments on display.

In Topic, Bobcats have travelled from studying topography and the impact of weather erosion on our planet to learning about the causes of the Second World War and what life was like on the British Home Front — including how families coped with food rations. On top of all that, they've been thinking about what makes a true friend and, even better, showing it through their everyday actions. A fantastic term of learning, teamwork, and kindness — well done, Bobcats!



The Core...

Partnership &

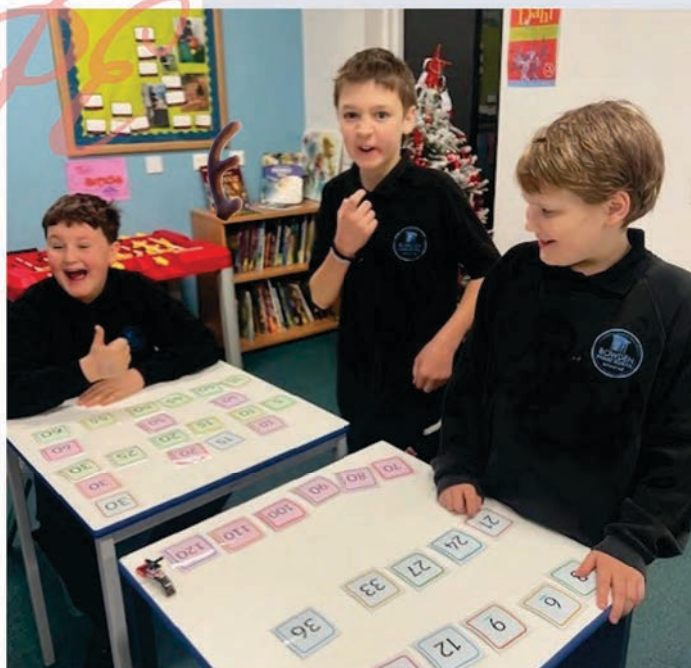
Citizenship & RSHE

So far this year, students have focused on the topics of Self-Awareness, Identity and Managing Feelings, followed by The World I Live in, the UK and International Organisations.

Bobcats and Lions have done an incredible job discussing rights and responsibilities, before practising how to budget money, showing great independence as well as teamwork skills. They have also learnt about different religious festivals and what light symbolises.

Panthers have worked towards an AQA Unit Award on knife crime, before moving on to learn about money and budgeting. Cougars have been learning about identity, migration and crime and punishment and have even begun to apply this learning to some GCSE-level content and questions! Pumas and Tigers began by studying GCSE course content on identity, migration and diversity, before moving on to crime and the UK judiciary. The Tigers worked amazingly hard on their learning checkpoint exam papers and should be incredibly proud.

Well done to all students and I hope you have a wonderful break over the holidays.



English

What a whirlwind this term!

Let's start with the Tigers...our wonderful Year 11 students returned full of beans, determined and focused, with their eyes firmly on the goal of smashing their GCSEs. Their resolve has not waned...even in the face of preparing for Component 2 of the syllabus...the most difficult element of the qualification. We are so proud of the way they tackled their mock exam.

Elsewhere, the Cougars and Pumas explored texts that were written many moons ago and then used their contexts to make links with the world that we live in today. Orwell's "Animal Farm" and Priestley's "An Inspector Calls" have inspired compelling discussions amongst our students about inequality, power, corruption and justice. Maybe future politicians and world leaders are in our midst?

The Cougars have also discovered the joy of the New York Times daily "Wordle" puzzle which has left us perplexed but driven to work hard as a team to keep our perfect streak!

The Panthers have worked tirelessly towards their goal of achieving a Functional Skills in English qualification next summer. They have cost Miss Scott a fortune in RKP cards ("Reading = Knowledge = Power!") and have really enjoyed reading The Curious Incident of the Dog at Night-time as a break from the drudgery of practice exam papers.

We need Santa, his reindeer (and all his elves) to arrive so that we can take a well-earned break. The New Year will see the longed-for return of Miss Grace (who briefly took a pause to have her lovely baby son!)

Season's greetings and much love to you all!

Bowd

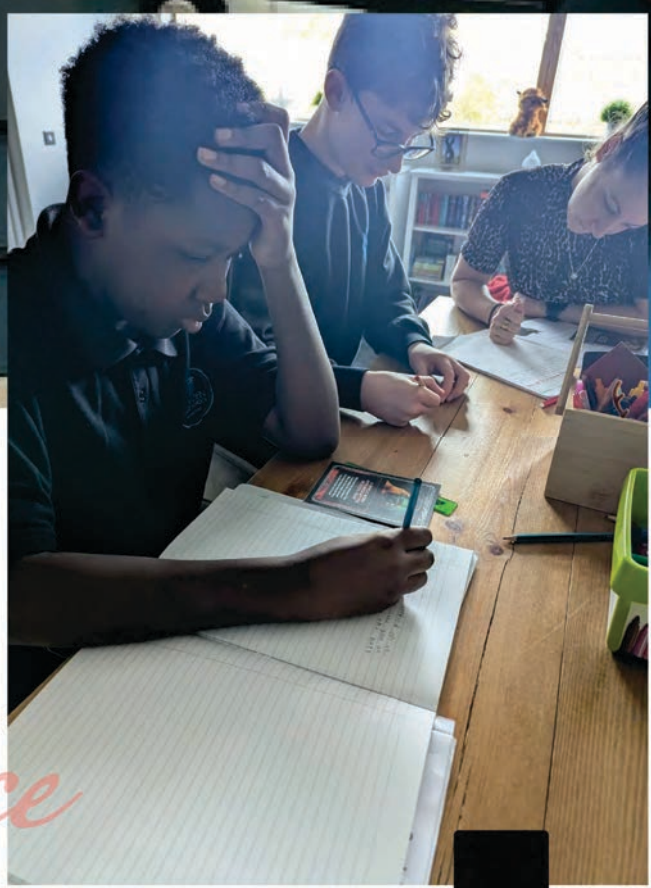


Maths

Maths is inescapable in life, so it is no surprise to see maths front and centre at school. From measuring to weighing to speed and distance, numbers and patterns are everywhere. In 'The Core' (actual Maths classes) we have been focusing on percentages, factors and algebra (bruh!) across Key Stage 3. Our year 10's have been getting to grips with what their GCSE' papers will look like next year and the year 11's have been completing past papers as part of their 'Learning Check-Points' (also known as Mocks!)

English, Maths & Science

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Science

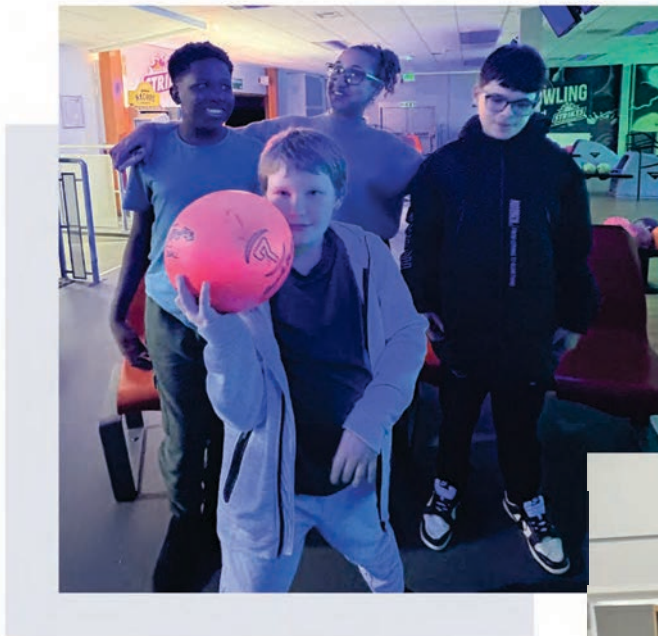
Science

This term in science we have been learning about light, sound and vision in physics with some students dissecting eyes to really see how vision works. We have also been learning about chemical reactions, making potions with unicorn horn and other fantastical substances (disclaimer, all reactions were real, the substances may have been renamed).

The year 11s completed their first assessment check points in excellent form, really showing determination and effort. I am very proud of all of them for their focus. It seems like it has been a really long term but so much learning and fun during the last 3 months that I'm already looking forward to welcoming all the students back in the lab in the new year. Happy 2026, stay curious!

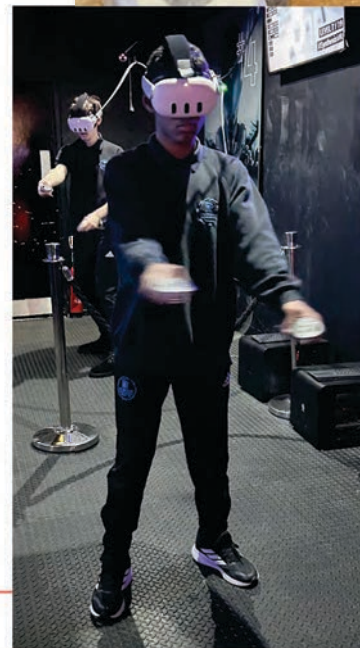
Life...

Residential



Time in our residential groups is precious, friendships are formed which, the rich history of the school tells us, often last a lifetime. At the same time there is a frequent cycle of change. We bade farewell to some students back in the summer, others have moved up into new groups, former year 11's have literally risen (upstairs!) to our Post 16 apartment. As always with each new academic year, new students have joined the school.

All the students have adapted well to these changes and with more social activities shared across the groups, Residential Life goes from strength to strength.



Lime, Purple,

Post 16

Post 16 have made a fantastic start this term. They have settled in incredibly well and have thrown themselves into every activity with enthusiasm, maturity and a great sense of teamwork.

This group has been especially focused on upcycling projects, taking old or unwanted items and giving them a completely new life. From fixing and restoring to repainting and redesigning, their creativity and effort have really shone through. The pride they take in their finished pieces has been brilliant to see.

They have also been working hard on independent cooking skills. The lads have planned their own meals, shopped for ingredients, and prepared everything themselves, learning safe kitchen routines and gaining confidence with every session. Their cooking has been impressive, and they are becoming much more independent in the kitchen.

Alongside this, the group continues to develop a wide range of life skills including budgeting, cleaning routines, organization, and working together to support each other. Their teamwork and positive attitudes have made a huge difference to the success of their sessions.

We are really proud of how well they are doing and the young men they are becoming. Keep up the amazing work, Post 16!

Blue &



Post 16!

Lime

What an incredible term it's been in Lime Group! Our students have been busy learning, growing, and making wonderful memories together. We kicked things off with a fantastic Halloween party, where the boys enjoyed games, music, and plenty of treats. The atmosphere was full of excitement, and it was a great way to start the term on a fun note.

A definite highlight was our trip to the Jump-In Inflatable Park. Students bounced, climbed, and raced through the inflatables, burning energy and sharing lots of laughter. It was a brilliant opportunity for them to relax and have fun together. We followed this with an ice-skating adventure, where students of all confidence levels took to the rink. Whether they were holding the rail or gliding across the ice, everyone gave it their best and enjoyed plenty of giggles along the way.

We also spent an enjoyable day at the cinema, complete with popcorn and a great film. It offered a calm, cosy break from the busy term and was appreciated by all. To round off the term, we celebrated with a festive Christmas meal. The students shared good food, warm conversation, and lots of holiday cheer, making it a lovely way to end our time together.

The students should be proud of everything they've achieved this term—both inside and outside the classroom. We're already looking forward to all the adventures and achievements the next term will bring!



Fun & Friendship, Throughout

Opportunities...

Purple

In Purple we often lay claim to being the most active group in Residential, this term has been no different!

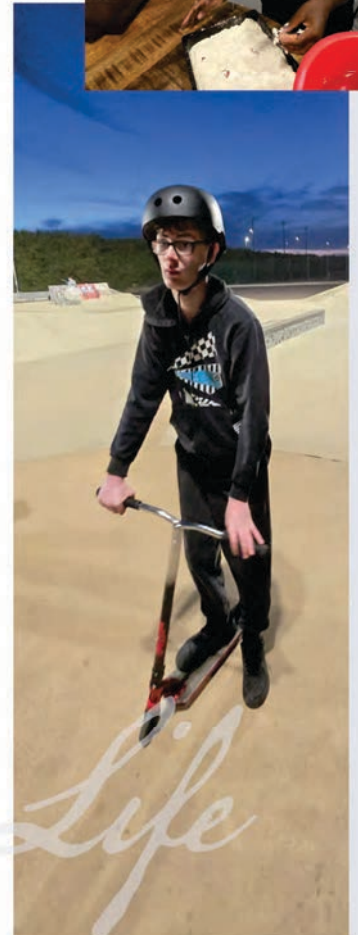
Wet or dry, hot or cold we have been out and about the length and breadth of East Sussex and Beyond. The students have engaged with every opportunity and had great fun along the way.

From after school football training, to bowling and cinema trips, or simply walking along the beautiful coastline on our doorstep, we have done it all.

The end of October brought a spook-tacular evening with apple bobbing and pumpkin carving, and the end of term has seen our traditional Christmas meal out.

We are extremely proud of how the students have conducted themselves all term, we have had several new faces join the group and they have settled in very well.

We hope you all have an enjoyable and well earned break and look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2026!



Bowden Life



Blue

This term in Blue Group has been excellent, marked by strong enthusiasm and participation from all students. The positive energy they brought each week set the tone for a fun and productive term, with everyone embracing new challenges and supporting each other along the way. Their teamwork and willingness to get involved have truly stood out.

One of the highlights of the term was our House Cup treat, where students enjoyed an exciting session of go-karting. The competitive spirit was high, but so was the sense of camaraderie, as everyone cheered each other on and celebrated both big and small victories. It was a wonderful reward for all their hard work.

Throughout the term, students also engaged in a wide range of activities that kept them active and motivated. Swimming sessions allowed them to build confidence in the water, while bowling and pool encouraged friendly competition and social interaction. Each activity offered something different, helping students develop new skills and enjoy time together.

We also explored more adventurous outings such as the driving range and ice skating, giving students the opportunity to try something new and step outside their comfort zones. Their enthusiasm during these experiences reflected their growth, resilience, and willingness to learn.

Overall, it has been a fantastic term full of memorable moments, and we look forward to continuing this momentum next term.



Art & Design, Digital Vocational

Art & Design

Art and Design has always been a success story at Bowden House and the department has recently been enhanced with the addition of Mr. Lundie who joins us 3 days per week.

This year we have a significant number of new students, and we have been amazed by their ability. Some of our youngest students are showing artistic maturity, way beyond their years, we are excited to see where their talents lead.

For the first time, this year the Mayor of Seaford asked the school to hold a competition for the students to design her official Christmas Card. The standard of entries was exceptionally high and the top 3 designs are shown here, featuring Seaford's iconic cliffs and locally famed multicoloured beach huts. Well done to everyone who took part.



Music & Construction FOCUS...

Construction

Crafting Confidence: A Term of Achievement in Woodwork

This term has been nothing short of extraordinary for the boys in Construction, particularly in their woodwork and outdoor projects. From the very first week, their enthusiasm, determination, and creativity have shone through and the results are truly inspiring.

We began the year with a deceptively simple yet beautifully traditional project: the Japanese toolbox. This task became the perfect introduction to the fundamentals of woodwork. The boys learned how to measure, mark accurately, cut safely, shape purposefully, fix securely, and finish confidently. They quickly discovered that carpentry doesn't have to be complicated, sometimes it's as straightforward as cutting and fixing pieces together to create something functional and uniquely their own.

Armed with these new skills, they moved on to a far more ambitious challenge: a group pergola project. What started as a stack of raw timber has now risen into a stunning garden structure, complete with an internal bench seat. The boys have carried out first-fix joinery tasks with impressive skill, creating a solid, well-made pergola that will stand proudly for years. It is a testament not only to their craft skills but also to their ability to collaborate, communicate, and support one another.

Their practical learning didn't stop there. The boys have also experimented with basic bricklaying, creating the groundwork quite literally for our next goal, building a pair of

matching brick planters to frame the pergola. These additions will complete the garden space they are so thoughtfully shaping.

What has been particularly heartening is how deeply the boys have engaged in the whole process. They are beginning to see their collective efforts take shape, transforming an outdoor area into a calm, inviting space where they will be able to relax, reflect, and perhaps even host some outdoor cooking sessions when spring arrives.

As ever, we couldn't be prouder, not only of their practical achievements, but of the way they have committed themselves to their individual Si's and to each other as a group. Their perseverance, teamwork, and growing confidence have been wonderful to witness.

We warmly invite you to come and see their hard work for yourself. Take a moment to enjoy the atmosphere of the garden space they are creating. It stands as a reminder of what our boys can accomplish when they are given the tools, trust, and opportunity to thrive.

Here's to their outstanding efforts this term and to the exciting projects still to come.

Digital Music

This year has started off with real excitement in Music Tech, as our Year 10 & 11's became the first students to start the RSL Level 2 Qualification in the Creative Music Industry. During this qualification they will be able to learn about the theory behind music production, rehearsing and performing music live and the industry itself, as well as a whole other range of available units.

Some of our KS3 students have been fine tuning their mixing for a collaborative live DJ set at the Christmas show, which will be the perfect way for them to show off their skills, we hope you got a chance to watch them!



Food Technology Expressive

Food Technology

Bubbling & Boiling, Sizzling & Smoking, it's all been going on in the Food Tech Kitchen! We have had a wonderful term, with a group of confident young chefs who are keen to try a wide variety of dishes. Classics like burgers and hand thrown pizza's will always be popular, but we have seen new creations such as Korean Curry, a totally original Charred Broccoli dish and surprisingly delicious Cinnamon Chips.

We have encouraged the students to work with greater independence and to support each other with the more mundane tasks of washing up and clearing down at the end of the lessons. Even the most die-hard of procrastinators have finally picked up a tea-towel!

Students in year 10 & 11 are starting to work on the dishes they will be preparing for their BTEC exams in the spring, we have been impressed with their commitment to these qualifications and are confident they will all experience success.

We hope you all have a restful Christmas break and will see you in 2026!



Skills for Life...

Arts & Ace

ACE Outdoor Education

The autumn term has been a brilliant blend of adventure, creativity, and resilience for our ACE Outdoor Education students. As September and October treated us to the last of the mild weather, we made the most of it by squeezing in our final paddleboarding and kayaking sessions of the year. A highlight for many was paddling along the Cuckmere River to visit the friendly horses grazing on the banks — a memorable moment to end the paddling season.

We also took advantage of the dry conditions with some epic bike rides through the forest trails. Students pushed themselves on the hills, encouraged their peers, and enjoyed exploring the woodland while it was still crisp under the tyres. Alongside the action, we also slowed things down with some creative forest-based relaxation sessions, where students designed and crafted their own personalised walking sticks — each one unique and full of character.

As winter crept in and temperatures dropped, we shifted our focus to festive resilience and skill-building. Students have been testing their climbing abilities at High-Sports in Withdean, showing determination and teamwork on the walls. Back in the forest, we warmed up by designing and cooking our own burgers entirely from scratch. The imagination and creativity was impressive — with some combinations that were surprisingly delicious... and some that were certainly experimental.

Throughout the term, the students have been fantastic. They've shown grit, humour, and a brilliant attitude despite the cold weather. We are incredibly proud of their progress, and we're excited to continue our wintry adventures when we return after the winter break.

Happy holidays to you all!



Simply...

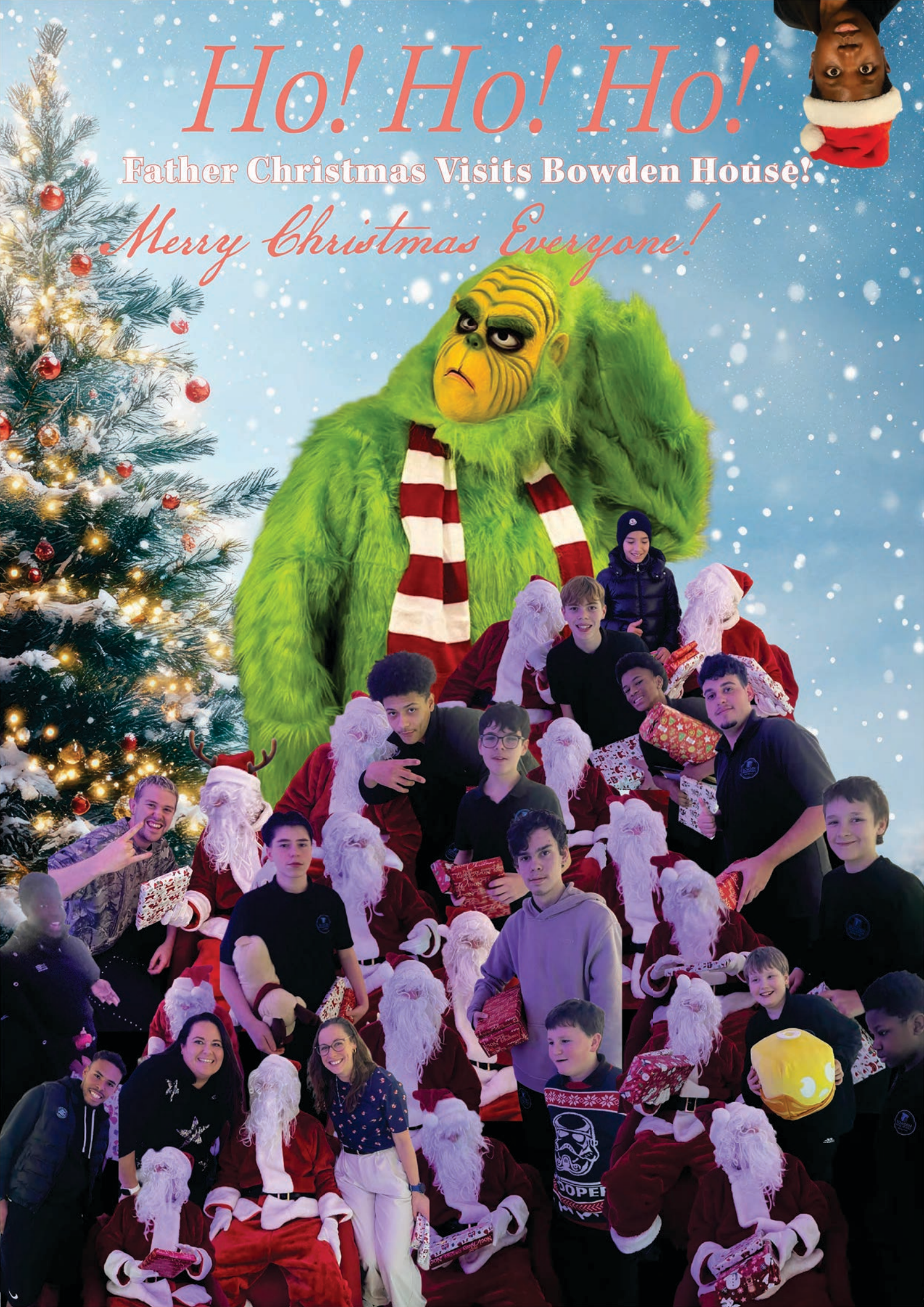


...ACE!

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Father Christmas Visits Bowden House!

Merry Christmas Everyone!



College & Careers, Therapies, Enrichment & Achievement

Bowden

College & Careers

A Busy and Successful Term

It has been a vibrant and exciting term in the Careers and College area, with students embracing new opportunities and gaining valuable insights into their future pathways.

Work Experience at Morrisons

We are delighted to see more students engaging in work experience at Morrisons this term. This hands-on opportunity allows students to explore the world of work, learn about different roles within a supermarket, and build confidence in a real workplace environment. Staff at Morrisons have been incredibly supportive, helping students develop new skills and understand what working life is really like.

Brighton MET 14-16 Programme

Three of our students are thriving on the 14-16 programme at Brighton MET, studying Catering, Construction, and Motor Vehicle. Each student has settled into college life brilliantly and is showing strong commitment to their chosen pathway. This programme provides an excellent stepping stone as they prepare for Post-16 education, offering both independence and practical experience.

College Visits for Year 10 and 11

Our Year 10 and 11 students have also had the chance to visit our three local colleges: Brighton MET, East Sussex College in Eastbourne, and Plumpton College. During their visits, students took part in campus tours and spoke with staff in subject areas they are interested in. These visits gave them a valuable insight into the wide range of courses available at Post 16 and helped many begin thinking about their next steps.

Overall, it has been a highly positive and productive term, and we are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and maturity our students have shown throughout all these opportunities.



Plus...

Speech & Language

Why Talking, Playing and Sharing Language Matters This Christmas

As we head into the Christmas break, many of our boys are looking forward to some well-earned rest, time with family, and a chance to switch off from the busy routines of school life. Among the celebrations, there is something simple — and completely free — that can make a real difference to their wellbeing and development: language.

Language isn't just about vocabulary and grammar; it's about connection. It's how we build relationships, solve problems, manage emotions and make sense of the world. For young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs, these skills are especially important and can make everyday interactions feel easier and more successful.

The Power of Talking Together

Holiday time offers a natural opportunity to slow down and talk in a more relaxed way. Conversations don't have to be formal or forced—some of the best moments happen while cooking together, going for a walk, or sitting in the car.

Simple chats about the day, favourite films, plans for the week, or even the weather help young people practise:

- Turn-taking and active listening
- Expressing feelings and opinions
- Understanding different points of view
- Building confidence to speak up

These everyday skills add up. A few minutes of genuine conversation can boost a young person's sense of belonging and emotional safety—two things that matter hugely for our students.

The Value of Play (Yes, Even for Teenagers!)

Play doesn't stop being important once children reach secondary school. It just changes shape. Board games, card games, video games, Lego, cooking challenges, sports, silly competitions—all of these involve communication.

When we play, we practise:

- Problem-solving
- Negotiation ("Whose turn is it?")
- Strategy and planning
- Managing frustration
- Celebrating success

Shared playtime builds connection without pressure, and it gives young people the chance to use language in real, meaningful situations.

Small Moments, Big Impact

Not every family day during the holidays will be picture-perfect, and that's completely normal. What matters is noticing the small moments and using them to connect:

- Ask a curious question: "Tell me more about that..."
- Talk through plans for the day
- Share a memory or a funny story
- Watch something together and chat about it afterwards
- Let your child teach you something they enjoy

These moments help strengthen communication skills in a way that feels natural and enjoyable

Wishing you all a peaceful holiday filled with conversation, laughter and shared moments.

Happy Christmas!

Jane.



Jane Richards is Bowden's in house Speech and Language Therapist



Wellbeing...

Neurodiversity & Christmas

For many of us, the Christmas holiday feels like a chance to pause our busy lives to spend time with family, friends and maybe also catch up with people we don't see every day. Whilst a lovely idea in principle, it can also involve pressure to alter routines, maybe travel to unfamiliar places, show up to social obligations and have a sparkling time whilst doing so! It is unsurprising therefore that for many families, especially with neurodivergent children or adults, Christmas can also be the season for meltdowns, burnout and desperately seeking excuses to stay in pyjamas!

So, for those of us who do celebrate Christmas, how might we enjoy the special bits of the holiday whilst avoiding overwhelm or unnecessary pressure? I think this is about realising Christmas doesn't have to fit into other's expectations and instead, as a mother with neurodivergent children, I try and make it work for us and do precisely what we need to do to help everyone feel safe and comfortable. This is not always an easy task but part of this is understanding why this time of year is difficult for us neurodivergent people and we can then be prepared for any trials and tribulations that may follow.

Change in routine

For those of us with children with ADHD and/or autism, we know that there is often a difficulty in coping with change. All the way through to the build-up to Christmas there are constant changes everywhere, both in our environment but also in the things asked of us. Some of these changes may seem small but to the individual it can feel like uncertainty and chaos.

School closes, routines break (even more so for our residential students), and everything just gets that little bit more hectic. There are things to plan, maybe presents to buy, money to budget and so much to think about. It's a miracle some of us manage to function at times!

The difference in having a neurodiverse family is that we all share these struggles. However, we all experience them in unique ways which adds another dynamic of stress on top. We all have different routines, some strictly followed and some more relaxed. Trying to cater to everyone's needs can be a minefield.

Preparation and having high expectations

There is no such thing as "the perfect Christmas", but it seems the pressure is always on to have the most incredible day, with amazing food and gifts. However, I would go as far to say that having these unrealistic ideas can ruin the day itself. The closer we get to Christmas, the more that pressure builds, and meltdowns may become more frequent.

So maybe we should just acknowledge the expectations and then try to gently lower them. There is no need to set ourselves unrealistic and stressful goals.

Sensory Difference resulting in Sensory Overload

Lights everywhere. New smells. New foods. Loud music in shops and on the streets. The sensory input increases tenfold this time of year. Although it is magical for some, for those with a sensory difference it can be an unpredictable nightmare which adds to any tension already building.

It's draining and it might make you just want to escape and sit in silence in the dark! To be honest, I don't see the problem with doing so. Sometimes the only option we have left is to take ourselves out of the situation. This might look antisocial to some people, perhaps even selfish. However, it is so vital we prioritise our wellbeing and ensure that our own needs are being met.

We can't force ourselves or anyone else to adapt to new sensory experiences, but we can take the measures we need to in order to make it work for ourselves.

Maybe the overall message here is to focus on YOUR version of a good festive holiday and what you can do to make the holiday suitable for your own family's needs. We don't have to conform to the unrealistic standards of having "the perfect Christmas"; we can make it what we want and need.

Perhaps you scrap the roast dinner and order take away? Or decide not to decorate and just celebrate in a calm and familiar environment? Whatever works, works.

Of course, there may and probably will be judgement from some quarters, but every family has their own idiosyncrasies. We should avoid comparing ours to others and just enjoy our own celebrations in whatever shape of form we choose.

Wishing you all a 'well fitted' break,

Lindsey.



Lindsey Harvey is Bowden House's on site Highly Specialist CAMHS Practitioner

Achievement &

Everyone at Bowden House, students and staff work incredibly hard, so it is very important to make sure we set time aside to celebrate success, reflect on challenges and sometimes simply rest. Achievement celebrations and enrichment activities are experiences that make all the hard work worth it. We would like to say a special thank you to all the staff working behind the scenes to support our students, the office and admin team, kitchen and domestic staff and our premises team - as these activities would not happen without them. We thank them all, a very merry Christmas.



Enrichment



Oh No! Baby Rudolf has lost one of his antlers!



But dont panic! Santa's elves have been busy making replacements...

**However as we all know, elves can be mischievous!
They have hidden lots of antlers all over the place -
how many can you find in this edition of Bowden Life?**

**There is a new year prize for the first student
to tell Mr. File the correct answer**