

SPOTLIGHT NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025



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TOP NEWS

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S H A R E D

SERVICE	HEALTH & HAPPINESS	AMBITION	RESILIENCE	EQUITY	DIGNITY
'The action of helping or doing work for someone'	'A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing' 'Pleasure, contentment and joy'	'A strong desire to do or achieve something'	'The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness'	'The quality of being fair and impartial to everyone'	'The state or quality of being worthy of honour or respect'

01

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

As we approach October half-term, I am delighted to share our academy news from this first eight weeks of the academy year. The year has started very well, and we have already seen students securing significantly more positive points than at the same time last year. The improved attendance we achieved last year has also continued into this academic year to date. This is very pleasing and will directly impact learning and outcomes, as lost learning is significantly reduced.

Two weeks ago, we had our Trust review where one of our Co-CEOs and members of the Central Team reviewed the academy over the course of two days. Students were excellent, showing real engagement with their learning, as well as politeness, maturity and ambition. This excellent climate for learning demonstrates our culture of high expectations and the desire our students have to do well.

I have been very proud of our young people's achievements in a number of areas this half-term. Those who volunteered to help out at Open Evening in September were excellent ambassadors for the school, and we received much positive feedback about them following the event where we had the best turn out to date.

Last week, Mrs Watson, Head of Health and Personal Development, was invited to deliver an oracy workshop at the Great Oracy Exhibition in Birmingham to share our good practice and the ways we teach our young people to talk fluently and with confidence. Four students accompanied Mrs Watson and Mr Cross, and they were an absolute credit to the school, demonstrating great speaking skill and maturity.

This week, all year groups have benefited from a motivational talk delivered by Andrew Jenkins who was a finalist in the reality television show, 'Traitors'. He spoke to them about resilience, the importance of having a growth mindset, and how they too can overcome 'failure' and trauma to achieve their very best. It was an excellent opportunity to reflect and reconnect with ambition and self-awareness.

There are many achievements you will be able to read about in this half-term's newsletter. As always, I am proud of our young people and feel privileged to be Head of Lightcliffe Academy where we have such amazing young people and staff. I would like to wish everyone a restful and enjoyable half-term and to end by thanking all parents, carers and families for their ongoing support. It is very much appreciated.

Mrs J Hackett
Head of School

Year Group Updates

Year 7

It's been wonderful to see our new Year 7 students settle so well into life at school over the past few weeks. They've approached their first term with enthusiasm, curiosity and a fantastic attitude towards learning.

From navigating new routines to building friendships and getting involved in school life, they've shown real maturity and positivity. Teachers have been very impressed by their engagement in lessons and their willingness to take on new challenges.

Well done to Anna G for 100% attendance and Noah B for over a 100 positives in the first 4 weeks!

We're incredibly proud of how smoothly they've transitioned into secondary school and are excited to see them continue to grow in confidence next half term. Well done Year 7!

Miss Almas - Year 7 Leader

Year 8

It has been lovely to welcome the Year 8's back to school this term.

We've had a very positive start to the year, with an extremely positive approach to learning.

The Year 8's have come back very level headed this year, being outstanding role models to the new Year 7 students and being very helpful showing them where to go when needed.

I am very proud of the Year 8's for showing resilience, confidence and maturity starting this new year.

Well done to all students who are currently on 100% attendance and a special well done to Billy K, Leo C and Ruby W for achieving over 100 positives so far this term. What an amazing achievement, keep it up!

Miss Halliday - Year 8 Leader

Year Group Updates

Year 9

It's been a fantastic start to the year for our Year 9 students! They've settled back into school life brilliantly and are showing growing maturity as they begin to think ahead to their GCSE years. Lessons have been full of energy and enthusiasm, with students really starting to take ownership of their learning. Tutors have been impressed by their positive attitudes and the support they show one another.

As we look ahead to next half term, we'll be encouraging students to continue building good study habits, keep up their excellent attendance, and make the most of every opportunity. Well done, Year 9 – keep it up!

Miss Grogan - Year 9 Leader

Year 10

It has been lovely to welcome the Year 10's back after the summer holidays. They have adapted well to their new option subjects as well as core subjects. Overall, this half term has been a productive and positive period for our Year 10 students and there is clear evidence of resilience and engagement in all aspects of their curriculum. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching students take on new skills in the kitchen, draw some fabulous portraits and engage well in learning about the human development across the different life stages.

It's good to see our students be committed in taking on the role of Form Captain as well as our school values and student leadership roles. These roles bring fabulous opportunities to embed the ethos that we are proud of at Lightcliffe Academy as well as providing unique roles and responsibilities to the students. Such opportunities also look great on CV's in years to come.

We have commenced rehearsals for our annual production in school and it gives me great pride to see so many of the year group taking part, with some having a leading role. We have one student in particular who deserves a mention - Liz C, who is not only taking part in our school production but is also appearing in a TV production. Well done Liz, we are all extremely proud of you. Another student who deserves a mention is Scarlett C who will be representing England at Cheerleading next year in USA! Amazing.

I do hope that you all have a lovely half term holiday and look forward to sharing further updates with you all later in the year.

Mrs Rothery - Year 10 Leader

Year Group Updates

Year 11

Welcome back to the start of what promises to be an important and exciting year for our Year 11 students! The final year of secondary school is here, and it's all about focus, ambition, and preparation for the future. We're delighted to see students return with great energy and determination after the summer break.

This first half term has been all about getting back into routines, revisiting key topics, and setting high expectations. Students have responded brilliantly - their maturity and focus are clear to see. Staff are working closely with students to ensure everyone starts the year strong and confident. Year 11 can be a challenging year, and it's important that students balance study with rest and wellbeing.

- Our pastoral team is always available for support
- Please encourage healthy habits - sleep, nutrition, and time away from screens are key!

We're already seeing some fantastic achievements in the year group. Well done to everyone showing commitment and positivity. Keep it up - every effort counts this year.

Mrs Richardson - Year 11 Leader

ACHIEVEMENT DIRECTORS

KS3

KS3 students have made a great start to the year, especially our Year 7s who have been exemplary, as I mentioned at the settling in evening.

We have had a few things happening this half term with Black History, introduced by Ms Lamb in assembly.

We have started most of the after school clubs now which range from art, debate and sport activities. Students have been shown the clubs available during form time and we hope to get lots of them signing up!

The rehearsals for the school show, Little Shop of Horrors also started this half term, and we are already excited about seeing this production next year!

Finally, thank you for your support with ensuring your child is in school, on time and dressed smartly. It really does have an impact and KS3 students have on the whole started the year positively.

Ms Storah- KS3 Achievement Director

KS4

KS4 students in both Year 10 and Year 11 have made an excellent start to the academic year. Year 10 are settling well into their GCSE courses, showing a positive attitude towards their learning and building strong foundations for success.

Year 11 have demonstrated real focus and commitment. Many Year 11 students are making the most of after-school intervention sessions, taking responsibility for their progress and preparing thoroughly for their upcoming mock examinations. This dedication is a great reflection of their determination to achieve their best.

Year 11 have taken an active part in Ambition Week, attending daily assemblies and workshops designed to support them in planning for their future. They have engaged with talks from a range of Sixth Forms, Colleges, Universities and Apprenticeship providers, gaining valuable insights into the different pathways available to them after GCSEs. These sessions have encouraged students to start thinking carefully about their next steps and aspirations, helping them to make informed choices about their future education and careers.

Miss Kanue - KS4 Achievement Director

LITERACY AND ORACY

Oracy

Over this half term we have been using talk tactics to support and develop student talk in the classroom, these are designed to help students instigate talk and probe each other to challenge and develop discussion.

Next half term we will be focussing on a different strategy called a Bullseye, this will support students to use sophisticated language when discussing and debating a variety of topics.

Reading

So far this academic year students have been engaging in a variety of texts through Faster Read Fridays in form time. Year 7 have been reading Echoes of Reflection which was written by a past student of Lightcliffe Academy and Year 8 have been reading Cirque Du Freak.

In addition, we have had a launch of our new Lightcliffe 100 words which are designed to develop students' vocabulary. Over the past few weeks, we have looked at: adept, advocacy, affirmation, aesthetics, allure, altruistic, ambiguous, ambitious, aspire, avarice, beguiled, benevolent, bias, boycott and chagrin. Every week there are 3 new words that students are tasked with learning and using in both their written and verbal work.

Ms Ashworth - Assistant Principal for Curriculum Implementation

CATERING

Free School Meals

- Save up to £450 per child per year by taking up the Free School Meals offer.
- Some families are entitled to Free School Meals. Once registered, your child's dinner card would be topped up automatically each day.
- Totally private, totally automated.
- Even if you do not wish to use the Free School Meal Service, being registered allows the school to access more funding per student.

[Free School Meals | Bradford Council](#)

[Free School Meals - Calderdale](#)

[Lightcliffe Academy catering](#)

Upcoming Events



SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

As we reach the end of our first half term at Lightcliffe Academy, we wanted to share an update on how we continue to make sure that all our students feel safe, supported, and cared for in school.

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do at Lightcliffe. Our aim is to ensure that every child is happy, feels listened to, and knows who they can turn to if they ever need help or support.

Over the past few weeks, we have:

- Provided refresher safeguarding training for all staff to ensure everyone knows how to recognise and report any concerns quickly and appropriately.
- Updated our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in line with the latest national guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025).
- Placed a strong focus on attendance and wellbeing, recognising that good attendance is closely linked to feeling safe, settled, and ready to learn.
- Supported our new staff through induction sessions that cover all safeguarding procedures and expectations.
- Promoted online safety through assemblies and tutor activities, helping students understand how to stay safe and make positive choices online.

Our Safeguarding and Pastoral Teams have worked closely with families and outside agencies to provide early help and additional support when needed. We are very grateful for the strong partnership we have with parents and carers—your communication, trust, and vigilance all play a vital role in keeping our young people safe.

Next half term, we will be focusing on:

- Continuing to monitor and support attendance and punctuality.
- Encouraging kindness, respect, and positive friendships across the school.
- Gathering student feedback on how safe they feel in different areas of school life.

If you ever have a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our Safeguarding Team. Together, we can ensure that every student at Lightcliffe Academy continues to feel secure, valued, and ready to succeed.



ATTENDANCE

As part of the Department for Education's working together to improve school attendance guidance we have been working closely with the Local Authority and other agencies to help support our young people and their families to help improve school attendance.

As we reach the end of our first half term, we are delighted to celebrate the strong start we have made as an academy. Many students have shown fantastic commitment to attending school every day, arriving on time, and making the most of every learning opportunity.

Good attendance is vital to success. Students who attend regularly achieve better outcomes, build stronger friendships, and feel more connected to school life. We'd like to thank all our parents and carers who continue to support us in ensuring their children attend every day and on time.

While attendance across the academy has started well, we are still seeing too many term-time holidays and unauthorised absences. These absences have a real impact on learning and can quickly lead to gaps in progress. Over the next half term, we will be looking closely at patterns of absence, including students who are regularly missing Mondays and Fridays, to provide additional support and, where needed, take further action.

We understand that sometimes children are unwell, and we will always treat each child as an individual. Absence due to illness will be recorded as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If a child's attendance is low (regular attendance is classed as above 95%), has frequent illness-related absences, or often misses the occasional day, we may ask parents or carers to provide medical evidence. This could be a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or another suitable form of confirmation. Please be assured that we will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily, but it may be required if a pattern of absence becomes concerning.

Any child who has multiple instances of illness-related absence is likely to fall into this category. If the school is not satisfied that the illness is genuine, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

We remain committed to supporting all our students and families to improve attendance and ensure every child can reach their full potential. Thank you for your continued support in helping make Lightcliffe Academy a place where every day counts.

Mr Drury - Vice Principal for Pastoral and Inclusion

ATTENDANCE

As part of the Department for Education's working together to improve school attendance guidance we have been working closely with the Local Authority and other agencies to help support our young people and their families to help improve school attendance.

Holidays in Term Time

Students are not allowed to take holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is very rare that any holiday would be authorised. Good attendance is key to students making good progress and taking time out to go on holiday can significantly hamper progress. Therefore, we request that no child takes holiday during term time.

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission.

For the DfE statutory guidance on school attendance, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>



SPOTLIGHT ON...

Each half-term we give updates on a range of subjects. For this half term, it's Mathematics, Geography and Art

Mathematics

What's new in Maths 2025!

We have been very fortunate to have a new refurbished Maths area. There are new carpets in the corridor and a newly carpeted Maths workroom. The Maths workroom is to be used by both staff and students. We will be using it for small Maths intervention groups to support those learners who need that level of support.

Homework

As you know this time last year we made a move away from online homework. The online homework providers really are very impressive, but it is at the same time often fraught with issues. Online homework relies on a good internet connection, remembering logins and passwords, and particularly a good size screen. A number of our students found that a smartphone screen was sometimes too small and difficult for working on calculations especially within algebra topics.

Therefore, we now issue a sheet of A4 paper once a week. We rotate the focus every fortnight. On week A it is a generic retrieval homework focussing on AO1 topic skills essential to further progress. Week B homework is specific to the topic the students are studying in class and chosen by the teacher to either consolidate or extend learning. For any students experiencing difficulty with homework the Maths team are happy to help and support them during lunchtime or after school.

Calculators

A calculator is a very important piece of equipment. Students need to bring a calculator to school every day as they are used in Science, Geography and Computer Science as well as in Maths.

To support you in choosing the right one we advise that the calculators are scientific, this means to look for the Sin, Cos and Tan buttons. All the major supermarkets sell their own brand scientific calculators for approx. £5-£6. This is half and sometimes a third the cost of the big-name calculator manufacturers. The supermarket own scientific calculators are more than good enough to use all the way until the end of Year 11 and beyond.

All the Maths teachers are happy to support your choice and guide you through the options, plus we can support the students in school on how best to use the calculators.

Mr Long - Achievement Director of Mathematics

SPOTLIGHT ON...

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Geography

It's been an exciting and busy start to the term in the Geography Department! Our students have been exploring a wide range of fascinating topics, deepening their understanding of the world and developing key geographical skills along the way.

This Half Term's Topics

Our curriculum is designed to inspire curiosity and help students make sense of the complex and ever-changing planet we call home. This half term, each year group has embarked on a different geographical journey:

- **Year 7** – Wild Isles: Discovering the amazing geography of the UK, from dramatic coastlines to mountain landscapes and unique ecosystems.
- **Year 8** – The Development Gap: Exploring why some countries develop faster than others and what can be done to create a fairer world.
- **Year 9** – Unfair World: Investigating the causes of global challenges and conflicts, and considering how cooperation and sustainability can make a difference.
- **Year 10** – The Economic World: Beginning their GCSE studies with a deep dive into how economies grow and why inequality persists between nations.
- **Year 11** – Natural Hazards: Understanding the power of our planet through studies of volcanoes, earthquakes, and extreme weather events as they prepare for their GCSE exams.

Upcoming Guest Speakers

We're delighted to announce two special events this term that will bring geography to life beyond the classroom:

- Monday, 10th November – A representative from Cromwell Bottom Nature Reserve will visit to talk about the importance of local conservation and the amazing biodiversity right on our doorstep.
- Wednesday 10th of December – A guest from Chatsworth Forestry will speak to students about how Geographical Information Systems (GIS) are used in environmental management and how geography skills open doors to a wide range of careers.

Inspiring Future Geographers

These events aim to help students see the real-world impact of geography and the exciting career paths it can lead to—from environmental science and urban planning to data analysis and sustainability work. We're incredibly proud of our students' enthusiasm and curiosity this term and look forward to sharing more of their successes later in the year.

Miss McCabe - Head of Geography

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Each half-term we give updates on a range of subjects. For this half term, it's Mathematics, Geography and Art

Art

Students visited Manchester art galleries and the Museum of Illusions. They took photos and gathered research evidence that can be used in their Art and Photography projects and in their individual creative work. All of the students who attended the trip were a pleasure to spend the day with. They behaved with maturity and dignity throughout and were excellent ambassadors for the school.



SHARED

2025-2026 PSHE Learning Journey

PSHE

Autumn 1

Autumn 2

SHARED focus is
Service

SHARED focus is Health
and Happiness

Year 7

Transition and safety

To know how to transition to secondary school and keep safe.

Health and puberty

To understand healthy routines and what happens during puberty.

Year 8

Emotional wellbeing

To know about mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Drugs and alcohol

To understand alcohol and drug misuse.

Year 9

Peer influence, substance use and gangs.

To understand about peer influences, substance misuse and gangs.

Healthy lifestyle

To understand about healthy choices.

Year 10

Mental health

To understand mental health and ill health, including during periods of change.

Exploring influence

To understand the influence and impact of drugs, gangs, role models and the media.

Year 11

Independence

To understand how to make responsible health choices and keep safe.

Building for the future

To understand self-efficacy, stress management and future opportunities.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

As the new Year 7 Student Leaders at Lightcliffe Academy, we are really excited to introduce our SHARED Values Committee. These values are at the heart of our school and guide how we work together to make Lightcliffe a happy, welcoming, and inspiring place to learn.

Here's what SHARED stands for and how we're putting it into action:

S – Service

This focuses on helping others and making a difference through sustainability. We're looking at ways to make our school more eco-friendly — from recycling and saving energy to running awareness projects about protecting our planet.

H – Health and Happiness

Everyone deserves to feel healthy and happy. We're developing ideas that encourage positive lifestyles like fun fitness activities, healthy food choices, and mindfulness moments to support mental wellbeing.

A – Ambition

Ambition is all about setting goals and supporting each other to succeed. A big focus for us is helping new students — both those joining from Year 6 and those transferring during the year — to settle in confidently and feel part of our school community.

R – Resilience

Resilience means not giving up, even when things are tough. This value links to attendance and mental health, encouraging everyone to keep going, show up, and support each other through challenges.

E – Equity

Equity is about fairness and inclusion. We're celebrating our differences — whether that's culture, background, or ability — and making sure everyone has the same opportunities to thrive.

D – Dignity

Finally, Dignity is about kindness and respect. We're exploring ways to connect with our local community, support others, and build our journey towards becoming a recognised School of Sanctuary — a place where everyone feels valued and safe.

As a committee, we believe the SHARED values help us create a school where everyone belongs and can be their best selves. We're proud to represent these values and can't wait to see how they grow across the school this year.

Year 7 Student Leaders, Lightcliffe Academy

PERFORMING ARTS UPDATE

KS4

Students in KS4 have returned from the summer and quickly settled back into their Tech Award coursework. Pupils in Year 10 have started to work on their first component, which forms 30% of the course. The assessment for this work takes place at different points through the year. Media students will complete this work before Christmas, and those studying drama and music will hand this in later in Year 10. For all three subjects (drama, media and music) this component puts in place the foundations of the key elements that will be studied over the next two years.

The pupils in Year 11 have all started work on the third component of the course. They worked on the first two components in Year 10 and their work this year builds upon this. Having looked at the skills needed across the two years they will begin to study these in more depth over the coming months. This will lead to a mock assessment before the Christmas holiday and then continue with the final piece of assessed work which will be completed between January and the start of May.

KS3

Students in KS3 have all completed the first couple of lessons of the new topics they are studying. These topics will be studied over the coming term, leading to an assessment in November and December. The topics being studied are:

Drama – Witchcraft (Year 9)

Music – Music for Computer Games (Year 9)

Performing Arts - Chords and the Elements of Music (Year 7); Film Music (Year 8)

Little Shop of Horrors: School Production

Congratulations to all those who auditioned for roles in the school production, Little Shop of Horrors. After two great audition sessions on Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd October we are delighted to announce the cast below.

We look forward to seeing you all during the show run on the 26th, 27th, and 28th February 2026. Tickets will be on sale later this year. We will share details of how to purchase tickets nearer this time.

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS - CAST LIST

CHARACTER	CAST
SEYMOUR AUDREY MUSHNIK AUDREY II (PLANT) ORIN (DENTIST) CHIFFON (URCHINS) CRYSTAL (URCHINS) RONNETTE (URCHINS) ESTELLE (URCHINS) TALLEY (URCHINS) URCHIN SINGER URCHIN SINGER BERNSTEIN SNIP MARTINA CUSTOMER 1 CUSTOMER 2 SKID ROW 1 SKID ROW 2 INTERVIEWER	George P Theah A George W Jakey A Jake B Liz C Ruby R Summer G Libby-Rae L Lillie Wring-S Freya N Aimee D Ava B Riley W Elizabeth H Lucy A Jessica B Ryan J Kelsey Bagshaw-K Lilly S
AUDREY'S CREW - Zeenat B, Megan D, Poppy H, Grace H, Rose H, Daisy W SKID ROW RESIDENTS - Jaxon A, Lacey B, Isabella C, Kaitlin F, Charlotte P Scarlett R, Emily W CUSTOMERS - Lola M, Lily P, Eva-Jane R, Abigail S, Elena S, Elijah S	

COMMUNITY NEWS



Please click the posters to view full size

COMMUNITY NEWS



Thinking of training to be a teacher?

GORSE SCITT RECRUITMENT EVENTS



PLACES
AVAILABLE
FOR
**SEPTEMBER
2026**

Training primary and secondary teachers

Drop into our city centre training base or join us online to find out more about our training programme and the application process.

WEDNESDAY 01 OCTOBER

INFORMATION EVENING

Online | 5.30pm to 6.30pm

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER

ONE-TO-ONE APPLICATION SUPPORT

Online | 10.00am to 2.00pm

THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER

INFORMATION EVENING

City Centre Training Base

5.30pm to 6.30pm

THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER

INFORMATION EVENING

Online | 5.30pm to 6.30pm

FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER

TASTER DAY SECONDARY

The Ruth Gorse Academy

10.00pm to 2.00pm

MONDAY 01 DECEMBER

INFORMATION EVENING

City Centre Training Base

5.30pm to 6.30pm

To attend one of our information evenings, please register at www.gorsescitt.org.uk or contact us directly by emailing info@gorsescitt.org.uk

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 23 rd October	School Closes
Friday 24 th October	Staff Training Day
Monday 3 rd November	School Reopens
Monday 17 th November	Start of Year 11 Mock Exams
Thursday 27 th November	School Closes
Friday 28 th November	Staff Training Day
Monday 1 st December	School Reopens
Thursday 18 th December	School Closes
Friday 19 th December	Staff Training Day