



NEWSLETTER

OCT 2026



Headteacher Welcome

We returned to school in September full of excitement for the year ahead. We have welcomed new members of staff and our new Year 7 cohort. Students have settled back into school life really well. You will read in this edition of the newsletter just a few of the many exciting opportunities students have been involved in this half term.

Dolly Day Delights

On 25 September (9 -25, of course!), Corley Academy came together for a very special celebration of reading, inspired by Dolly Parton and her incredible literacy legacy. Dolly, affectionately known as the Book Lady, founded her Imagination Library in 1995 in honour of her father, who never learned to read or write. What began as a local programme in Tennessee has grown into a global initiative, gifting millions of free, carefully selected books to children and families and helping to inspire a lifelong love of reading. Dolly's own words capture the heart of the day perfectly: "You can never get enough books in the hands of enough children."

We are fortunate to have made a connection with the UK Chief Executive of the Imagination Library who offered his support and appreciation for the celebration as well as sending us- watch this space- some merchandise and books for our students to enjoy.

From pink sparkly attire, comfortable reading clothes, favourite book characters and Western-inspired outfits to pink cupcakes and a beautifully imagined butterfly and floral-themed library space filled with inspirational reads, every corner of Corley embraced the spirit of Dolly Day.



Staff reading signs appeared across the academy, with the kitchen celebrating Dolly's favourite recipes, PE exploring Fatima Whitbread and her story in *My Bright Shining Star* and staff across curriculum and non-curriculum areas weaving literacy and Dolly-inspired activities into their lessons.

Students explored everything from Dolly the sheep and cloning in science, the subtext of 9 to 5 lyrics, imagination stories and Dolly Dollars maths problem-solving, theme-park design and budgeting...just to name a few.

We were also privileged to welcome Richard Chapman, CEO, and Craig Bennett, Deputy CEO of Thrive Educational Partnership, who visited the academy and saw first-hand the enthusiasm, creativity and commitment behind the day. They were incredibly impressed by the way reading had been woven through the whole academy and by the way staff had come together to create such a memorable experience for our students.

A huge thank you goes to every member of staff who contributed, whether through a lesson, a reading activity, a display, a conversation, a cupcake or simply getting involved. Inclusion, independence, perseverance and aspiration were at the heart of the day and our students did us incredibly proud. It was a joyful celebration of books, stories, imagination and the belief that every reader has somewhere they can go and something they can become.

Year 7 Coffee Morning

Our Year 7 Coffee Morning was a lovely opportunity for parents to meet with Year 7 staff and discuss how their children have settled into life at Corley Academy. We welcomed around 20 sets of parents, who shared some fantastic feedback, including reports of improved attendance and positive changes in their children's mood and wellbeing. It was a really positive morning, filled with meaningful conversations and fantastic interactions between parents and staff. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make it such a success!

School Gardening Award

We are proud to announce that we have been awarded a Level 1 Award by the RHS School Gardening Awards. The award signifies students' understanding in the uses of a garden in a public environment and the benefit to nature and mental health.

The certificate explains that our growing space is accessible and can be used by all members of our school community. Since we started the Horticulture project 3 years ago, it has 'grown' so much and become part of where we work and play every day. Students are respectful and interested in the progress of the plants (and enjoy the fruits of their labours literally!)

We are hoping to achieve the next level very soon- watch this space!



Homework Heroes

Congratulations to four students who were winners of the homework raffle prize last term. They each took home an Amazon voucher for the quality and quantity of the tasks completed from the homework menu! Well done all of you!

Homework menus for Year 7 and Year 8/9 are available on our website. Tasks can be brought into school or emailed to homework@corley.thrive.ac. Each completed task is worth 5 compass points and a raffle ticket into the termly Amazon voucher prize draw.

Guinea Pig Celebration



Gary and Pumpkin, our resident Guinea Pigs, enjoyed a delicious birthday cake to celebrate their first birthdays this month.

Thank you to one of our students for bringing this in for them to enjoy.

Little People, Big Dreams

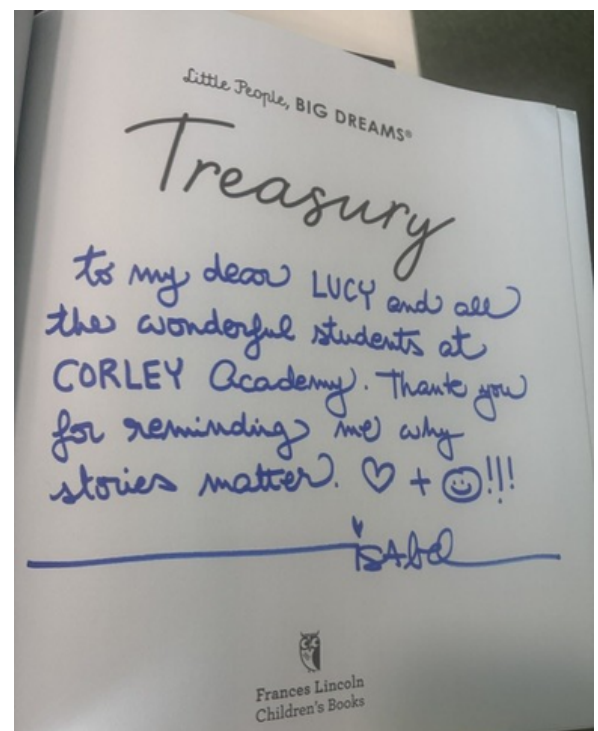
Ms Maddocks has completely embedded the Little People BIG DREAMS series into our PSHCE curriculum. What started with the books she brought in from home has grown into an almost complete collection which students regularly choose to read independently. She has used the lives and stories of the people featured in the books to explore themes such as fairness, equality, identity, belonging, resilience and aspiration.

In the Summer Term, Ms Maddocks emailed the Little People BIG DREAMS team to share the impact the books have had on our students and to explain how they have become such an important part of our curriculum and our approach to reading for pleasure. The response she received was incredibly special...Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara herself replied personally! Maria Isabel is the creator and author of the internationally bestselling Little People BIG DREAMS series and her message was such an amazing recognition of what Ms Maddocks has created here at Corley Academy.

Isabel expressed how inspired she has been by the way the stories are being used to engage reluctant readers and encourage curiosity, aspiration and a love of reading, including reflections linked to the Imagination Library and Dolly Parton's 'book lady' legacy.

Isabel extended her response by sending Ms Maddocks an advance copy of the yet-to-be-published Ten Years Dreaming Treasury, complete with a beautiful personal inscription.

What a wonderful reminder that, as Isabel writes, stories really do matter.



Corley Students Join Readers Around the World

On Thursday 8 October, students at Corley Academy took part in Take 10 to Read, a special global reading event organised by the National Literacy Trust in partnership with the British Council as part of the National Year of Reading 2026.

Throughout the day, different combinations of classes joined age-appropriate online sessions, giving students the opportunity to stop, settle and enjoy ten minutes of reading alongside children and young people from across the world. The event had an exciting additional purpose too: the organisers were aiming to set a new Guinness World Record title for the most people reading online in 12 hours. Schools and readers around the world were invited to contribute to this shared reading moment.

For Corley students, it was a wonderful opportunity to experience reading in a slightly different way. Different classes joined different sessions, creating a sense of shared participation across the academy while also connecting our students with a much wider community of readers.

Reading is an important part of life at Corley. We want our students to develop the literacy they need to access the curriculum and their future lives, but we also want them to discover that reading can be enjoyable, relaxing and something that connects us with other people and new ideas.

A huge well done to everyone who took part and helped make reading such a visible and enjoyable part of the school day.

Pumpkin Carving Competition



It was so lovely to see the 47 pumpkins that were carved for this years' Pumpkin Carving competition. Thank you to everyone who contributed. As you can see there was a lot of creativity and hard work going on. It was very scary working in student support with them all!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

11.11.26 Remembrance Assembly

13.11.26 Whole School Focus Day

16.11.26 - 27.11.26 Yr 11 and Post 16 Practice Exams

20.11.26 Children in Need non-uniform day

25.11.26 KS4 and Post 16 Parents Evening

03.12.26 Orthorptics Screening Check

09.12.26 Year 7 Parents Evening

10.12.26 Christmas Jumper Day

11.12.26 TRAINING DAY SCHOOL CLOSED

16.12.26 Christmas Lunch

18.12.26 School closed from 12.30pm

04.01.27 TRAINING DAY SCHOOL CLOSED