

FLORENCE FOCUS



A Message from Mrs Clewlow

As we come to the end of our first half term, I would like to thank all of our students, families and staff for the wonderful start we have made to the new academic year.

It has been a particular pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 students to Florence. They have begun life at Florence with pride, quickly settling into Academy life, building new friendships and embracing the opportunities available to them. We have been incredibly impressed by the confidence, enthusiasm and maturity they have shown during their first few weeks with us.

It has also been lovely to welcome our Year 8 and Year 9 students back to the Academy. They have returned with real purpose and have settled quickly back into the routines and expectations that make Florence such a positive place to learn. Seeing our students grow in confidence, take greater responsibility and continue to demonstrate Pride, Ambition, Care and Excellence has been a real highlight of the half term.

Alongside the busy start to the school year, we have also enjoyed welcoming many prospective families to Florence. Our Open Evening, parent tours and Year 6 taster mornings have given families the opportunity to experience life at the Academy, meet our staff and students and see what makes our community so special. It has been wonderful to share Florence with so many current Year 6 pupils and their families as they begin thinking about the next stage of their education.

Thank you, as always, to our families for your continued support and to our staff for the care, commitment and hard work they show every day. We are extremely proud of the start we have made together and look forward to building on this throughout the year ahead.



Attendance Spotlight

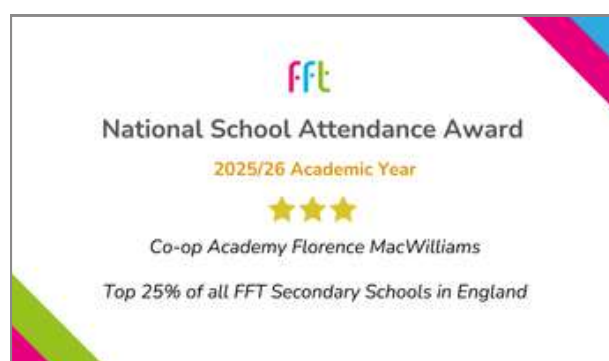
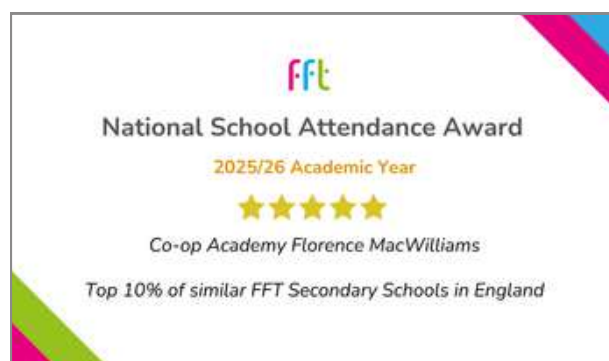
Every day matters. Celebrating attendance and building the routines that allow every student to thrive.

We are proud to begin the year by celebrating some fantastic recognition for attendance at Florence. Following the 2025/26 academic year, we received four FFT National School Attendance Awards, placing Florence amongst the top 25% of secondary schools nationally and, even more impressively, within the top 10% of similar secondary schools in England.

These awards belong to our whole Florence community. Thank you to our students for showing up ready to learn and to our families for the important role they play each morning in making sure students are in school and on time.

Our Florence Student Dashboard, available to every student through their academy chromebook, helps students take ownership of their attendance and see the impact of being in school every day.

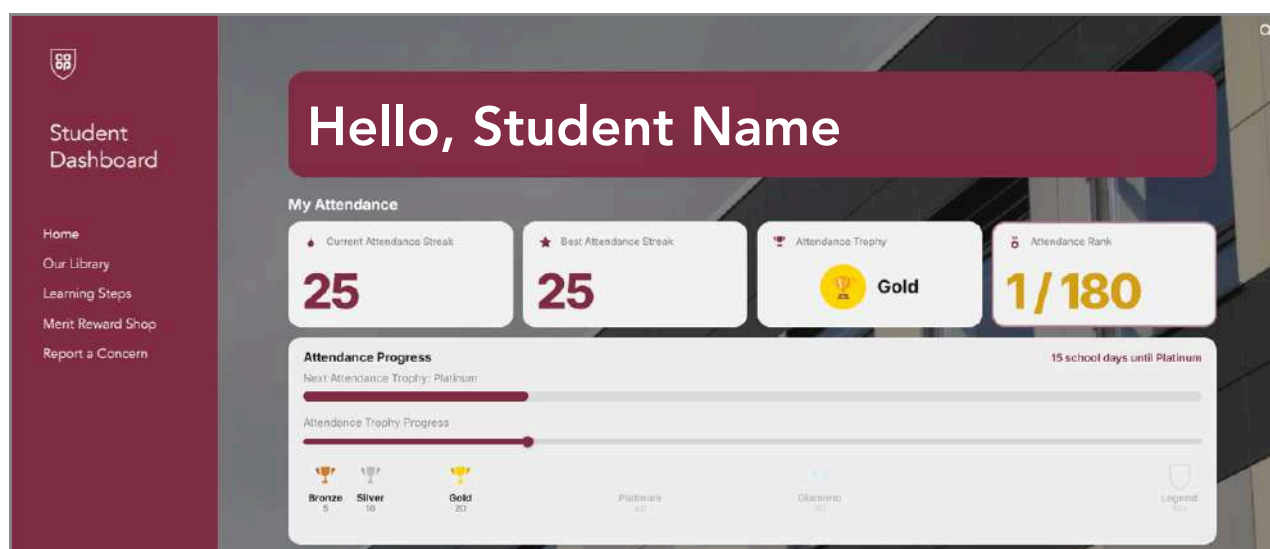
Students can use their Chromebook to view their attendance, follow their progress and build their attendance streak. Each day they arrive at Florence and are ready to learn, they keep that streak going and work towards earning trophies and milestones within their dashboard.



Attendance Spotlight

Every day matters. Celebrating attendance and building the routines that allow every student to thrive.

Good attendance is about much more than a percentage. Being in school means being part of lessons, spending time with friends, taking part in electives and experiences, and making the most of everything Florence has to offer. The Student Dashboard helps make that progress visible and encourages students to take pride in the positive habit of being at school, on time, every day.



We know that deciding whether a child is well enough for school is not always straightforward. The NHS provides clear guidance to help families make that decision.

Your child can usually still attend school if they have:

- a slight cough or common cold
- a runny nose
- a mild sore throat
- a headache

If they are otherwise well and do not have a high temperature, the NHS advises that they can usually continue to attend school.

Your child should stay at home if:

- they have a high temperature – they should return once this has gone.
- they have vomiting or diarrhoea – they should remain away from school until their symptoms have passed.
- they have an infectious illness where NHS guidance recommends a period away from school, such as chickenpox, measles or scarlet fever.

If your child is genuinely unwell, their health comes first. However, where they are well enough to attend, we want them at Florence, learning alongside their friends and continuing to build those positive attendance habits.

Year 7 Take Their First Steps

We are all so proud of our new Year 7 students and how well they have settled into life at Florence.



Starting secondary school is a significant milestone, and we have been incredibly proud of the way our Year 7 students have settled into life at Florence. From learning new routines and navigating a new environment to having the confidence to try new things, they have approached their first half term with maturity, enthusiasm and pride.

Our Year 7 students have already become superb ambassadors for our Academy community, demonstrating Pride, Ambition, Care and Excellence in the way they conduct themselves each day. It has been particularly encouraging to see students building new friendships, growing in confidence and beginning to make Florence feel like home.

A successful transition relies on the care and support of many people. We would like to thank our Year 7 Homeroom Tutor team, our Pastoral Support team and Miss Twigg, our Year 7 Head of Year, for the care, reassurance and guidance they provide every day to make



sure that every child feels known, supported and well cared for.

Thank you also to all of the families who joined us for our recent Year 7 Settling-In Evening. These conversations provide an important opportunity to celebrate what is going well and to share any worries or concerns at an early stage. Prompt communication and working in partnership with families remain key to ensuring that every student has the strongest possible start to their secondary school journey.



Year 7 Take Their First Steps

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Opening our Doors

Welcoming Year 6 students and their families through Open Evening, parent tours and taster mornings as they prepare for the move to secondary school.

This half term, we have been delighted to welcome prospective students and their families to Florence through a wide range of transition events designed to give them a genuine feel for life at the Academy.

Our Open Evening provided families with the opportunity to explore the academy, meet staff and discover more about the experiences available to students at Florence. We were particularly proud of our Co-op Young Leaders, who played an important role in the evening by hosting tours of the Academy. They spoke confidently about academy life, answered questions and represented Florence superbly throughout the event.

We have also welcomed pupils from local primary schools for a series of Year 6 Taster Mornings. During these visits, students have taken part in practical PE and Science activities, giving them the chance to experience lessons in a secondary school environment, meet Florence staff and begin building their confidence ahead of the move to Year 7.

For families who wanted to see the Academy during a normal school day, our Prospective Parent Tours have offered another opportunity to visit Florence. Hosted by members of the Senior Leadership Team, these tours have allowed families to see lessons taking place, experience the atmosphere of the Academy and ask



questions about what daily life at Florence is really like.

Transition is about much more than one event. By opening our doors throughout the year, we want prospective students and families to feel informed, reassured and excited about the next stage of their education. We are grateful to everyone who has visited Florence so far and to the students and staff who continue to make these events such a positive reflection of our Academy community.

Breaktime, levelled up!

Our new outdoor pool and table football tables are giving students even more ways to relax, connect and enjoy time together during the school day.

Our new outdoor pool and table football tables have quickly become a popular addition to breaktimes at Florence. Whether students are challenging their friends to a game, cheering from the sidelines or simply spending time together, the new equipment has brought plenty of energy and friendly competition to our outdoor spaces.

Break and lunchtime are an important part of the academy day. Alongside giving students time to recharge, they provide opportunities to build friendships, socialise with students from different year groups and enjoy being part of our wider Academy community. It has been particularly good to see students taking responsibility for the equipment, playing fairly and making sure that everyone has the opportunity to get involved.

The tables have already become a regular meeting point for many students, with plenty of discussion about who currently holds the Florence pool or table football bragging rights!



Silverstone STEM Visit

Exploring the science, technology and careers behind Formula 1 at the home of British motorsport.



Our Year 9 students visited Silverstone this half term for an exciting opportunity to explore the wide range of careers available across the motorsport industry.

The event brought together more than 1,000 young people and gave students the chance to connect with employers, further and higher education providers, and industry suppliers. Throughout the day, students were able to learn more about the different pathways into motorsport and the breadth of roles that exist both on and off the track.

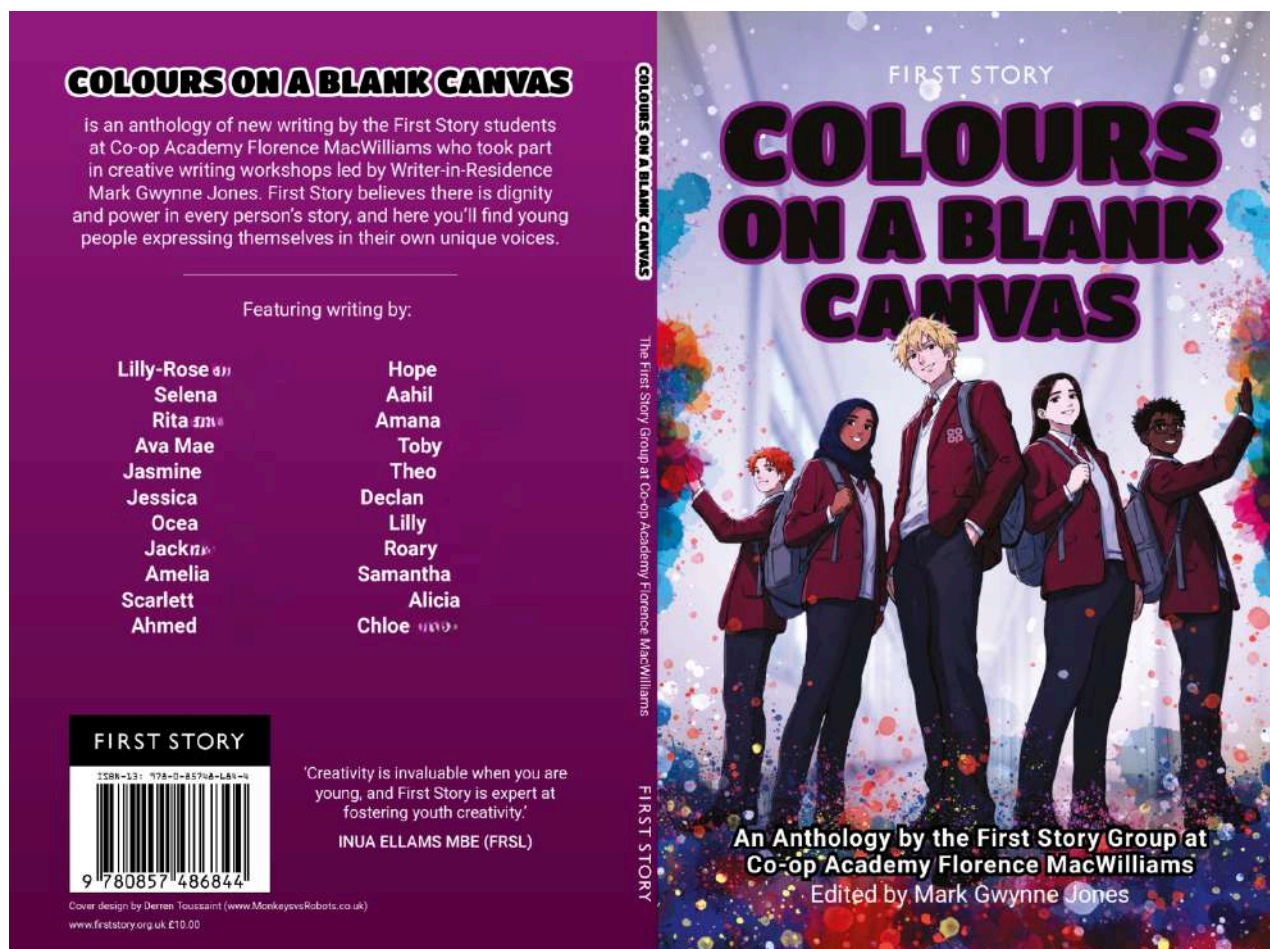
Visits like this are an important part of helping students to broaden their horizons and think ambitiously about their futures. By meeting people already working and studying within the sector, students were able to see how subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics can open the door to a wide range of exciting opportunities.

Our Year 9 students represented Florence brilliantly throughout the visit and embraced the experience with curiosity and enthusiasm. It was a valuable opportunity to see where their learning could take them and to begin thinking more confidently about the possibilities ahead.



First Story Publication

Celebrating our young writers as their creativity is published and shared beyond the classroom.



We are delighted to celebrate an exciting milestone for our young writers as Florence prepares to publish its first anthology through the First Story Programme.

Titled *Colours on a Blank Canvas*, the anthology brings together writing created by our students and marks a significant first step in Florence's work with First Story. The final proofs have now been prepared for publication, bringing months of creativity and hard work one step closer to becoming a finished book.

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Having their work published gives students the opportunity to see themselves as genuine writers and to share their ideas, imagination and voices with a wider audience. It is a real achievement to take a piece of writing from its earliest ideas through drafting and editing to a professionally published collection.

We are incredibly proud of every student who has contributed to *Colours on a Blank Canvas* and look forward to seeing the finished anthology in print. It is a fitting celebration of their creativity, confidence and ambition, and an exciting beginning to Florence's First Story journey.

Canada 2027

An unforgettable opportunity to experience Quebec in winter, immerse ourselves in Canadian culture and build connections with students across the



Excitement is already building for our upcoming trip to Canada next February, with students invited to apply for what promises to be a memorable international experience.

The visit will take students to Quebec, where they will have the opportunity to experience the city at one of its most exciting times of year. A highlight of the trip will be the Winter Festival, giving students the chance to experience local traditions, celebrations and the atmosphere of a Canadian winter first-hand.

Students will also visit a local Canadian school, providing a valuable opportunity to meet young people of a similar age, experience a different education system and discover what school life is like on the other side of the Atlantic.

Throughout the visit, students will be encouraged to immerse themselves in the local culture, explore new surroundings and make the most of an experience that will take them well beyond the classroom. Trips like this help students develop confidence and independence while broadening their understanding of the wider world.

The response from students has already been exceptional, with applications flooding in since the opportunity was announced. We are pleased to see so many students showing the ambition to challenge themselves, try something new and represent Florence internationally.

We look forward to sharing much more about the Canada trip as February approaches.

Key Dates and Events

A look ahead at important events, experiences and opportunities taking place at Florence.

October

- Friday 16th : Last day

November

- Monday 2nd : We return
- Monday 16th : INSET Day (Academy closed to students)
- Tuesday 17th : Flu vaccination (Year 7 - 9)

December

- Wednesday 9th & Friday 11th : Y7 Stoke Ski Centre Tubing
- Monday 14th : Manchester Snow Centre (Y8)
- Friday 18th : Last day
- Y9 Christmas Trip TBC

January

- Monday 4th : Progress Day
- Tuesday 5th : We return

Noticeboard

- As we enter the colder months, please make sure that your child brings a suitable coat with them to school each day.
- Can students please bring a waterbottle each day.
- Children have been reminded over the past weeks to collect any items from lost property that may be theirs. At the end of each half term, our lost property will be disposed of.

Celebrating our Students

A look ahead at important events, experiences and opportunities taking place in our local community



We're so proud of Cecylia-Rose in Year 8 who has completed her open water diving qualification and can now legally and safely dive alone. She is taking this further and will be completing her next award to go into a teaching role within the dive school so she can share her knowledge and skills with others. Whilst she completes her qualifications, Ceceylia has the opportunity to travel the world and dive in many exotic locations.

Frey in Year 7 has been promoted at Sea & Royal Marine Cadets to Leading Junior with a Commodores Pennant. This is the highest achievement for a junior cadet. Well done, Frey. We're all incredibly proud of your commitment!



Homework Expectations

Working together to support your child's learning and success.



Homework Expectations for Parents

Working together to support your child's learning and success



Maths

Sparx*

Thursday 8:00pm

- Set:** Friday at 2:00pm
- Due:** Thursday at 8:00pm
- Must be **100%** complete to avoid a detention.



Science

Sparx*

Thursday 8:00pm

- Set:** Friday at 2:00pm
- Due:** Thursday at 8:00pm
- Must be **100%** complete to avoid a detention.



English

Lexia PowerUp

Thursday 8:00pm

- Set:** Thursday
- Due:** The following Thursday at 8:00pm
- 60 minutes per week.



Citizenship (Year 9)



Seneca

Accessed via Google Classroom on your child's Chromebook.



Set: Sunday
Due: By midnight the following Sunday

- 1 hour detention** on a **Monday** if incomplete.

! Detentions



Sparx & Lexia

- 1 hour** detention per subject on **Friday**.
- Maximum 2 hours total (even if all Maths, Science and English aren't complete – school closes at 4:30pm).
- Time in detention can be used to complete the homework with a teacher there.



Citizenship

- 1 hour** detention on a **Monday** if incomplete.



Lexia PowerUp Parent Guide

Lexia PowerUp is an online literacy programme designed to help students develop their reading skills. It adapts to your child's level and provides activities in three key areas:



Word Study

Reading accuracy, fluency and understanding words



Grammar

Understanding how sentences and written language work



Comprehension

Understanding and responding to what they read



How to log in

- 1 Go to www.lexiapowerup.com
- 2 Enter your child's Lexia username and password.
- 3 Download the free Lexia PowerUp app (from the App Store or Google Play) for easier access on mobile devices.

What should my child do once they log in?

- ✓ Follow the activities provided by Lexia PowerUp.
- ✓ They will not necessarily be completing the same activities as their friends.
- ✓ No need to choose work for your child – they simply need to follow the activities on their home screen.



If there's a problem...

Any issues for Lexia (or other subjects), must be reported to the subject lead or main office as soon as possible.



Sparx Email Updates

Parents will receive an email from Sparx so you can see whether your child has completed their homework or not.



If you are not receiving the email, please contact the school office.



Supported Study

Supported Study is for students who need additional support. Teachers will select students for these sessions.



Wednesdays

3:45pm – 4:30pm



Need more help?

For any questions or support, please contact the school office or your child's subject teacher.



Thank you for your support in helping your child develop their reading skills and homework habits.

School Nursing Team

Thank you to the Meir Health Centre for supporting our students drop-in sessions each week



NHS
Midlands Partnership University
NHS Foundation Trust

STOKE-ON-TRENT INTEGRATED 0-19 HEALTH VISITING & SCHOOL NURSING SERVICE

**Call the Stoke-on-Trent City HUB on
0808 178 3374**

You can come along to talk to us at our drop in Clinics throughout the City, or call our HUB about any issues that you are worried about including:

- Sexual Health
- Building Healthy Relationships
- Positive Emotional & Mental Health
- Growing Up
- Bereavement or Loss
- Drugs / Alcohol / Smoking / Vaping
- Self Esteem
- Support with Health Conditions
- Online Safety
- Exercise
- Bullying



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MPFT 0-19 City HV and SN

Check out the Health Visiting & School Nursing Website:



Chat Health Text Line



ChatHealth

**(Stoke-on-Trent):
07520 615723**

Scan the code to complete the feedback survey

