



# Castle Mead Academy | Autumn Newsletter 2025

## Message from the Principal

**Dear scholars and families,**

As we reach the end of our first half term of the year, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a fantastic start to the academic year. I've been incredibly proud of the way our scholars have returned to school with focus, ambition, and a real commitment to our shared values, such as kindness and excellence. Every day, I see calm corridors, classrooms full of magic, and really strong relationships.

At the start of the year, our staff wrote their 'stories' to share with both scholars and colleagues. They did so in tutor time, in lessons and in assembly; it was extremely powerful. Through sharing their own personal journeys, passions, struggles, and dreams, staff reflected the idea that - at Castle Mead - we are humans first. It has been really special hearing our scholars share all of the interesting facts they've learnt about their teachers!

A highlight of the year so far has most definitely been the launch of our Rewards Store, where merits mean prizes! Our scholars work so incredibly hard and it's absolutely right that they get rewarded for this. If you haven't had a browse of the catalogue yet, perhaps you can do so together over the break.

Another highlight for me was our recent Family Forum, where we welcomed parents and carers into school to share their thoughts and feedback, particularly around some of the changes and developments we have introduced this year. I am always so grateful for the honest and constructive conversations we are able to have with our families – your voice is such an important part of how we continue to grow and improve as a school.

As we head into the break, I want to thank you all for your ongoing support. The encouragement you give behind the scenes means that our scholars arrive at school every day raring to go, and this contributes so much to the strong sense of community that makes CMA so special.

Wishing you a restful and enjoyable half term with your families – and hopefully some time to recharge ahead of the busy weeks to come!

**Miss French**

Principal



## Merits Update

Our top five performing year groups for merits!

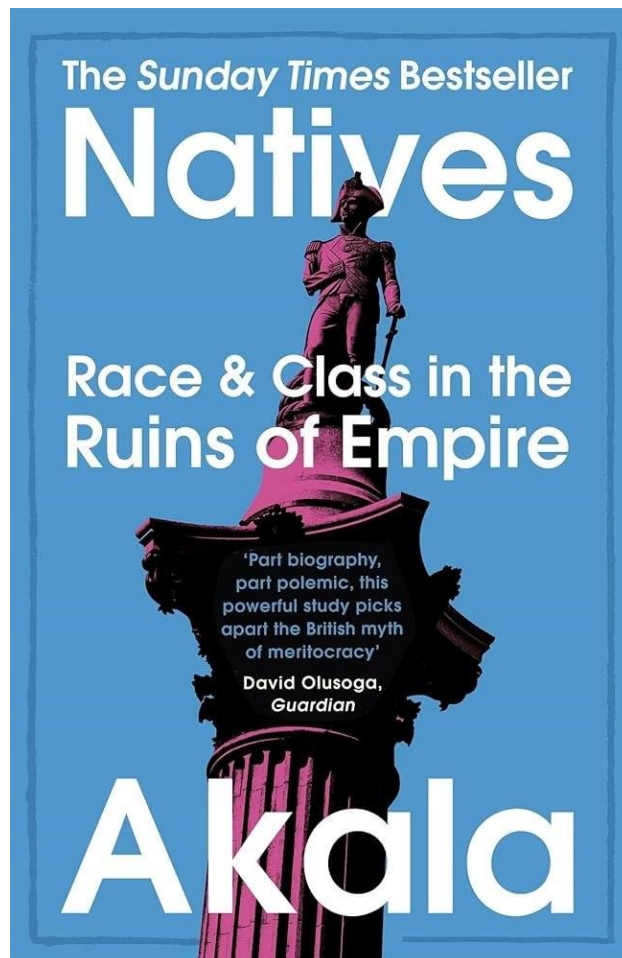
## Merits

- **Year 7** - 94,108
- **Year 10** - 76,970
- **Year 9** - 76,796
- **Year 8** - 75,613
- **Year 11** - 60,790

Congratulations to Year 7, for the most amount of merits received since the start of this academic year!

Well done, scholars!

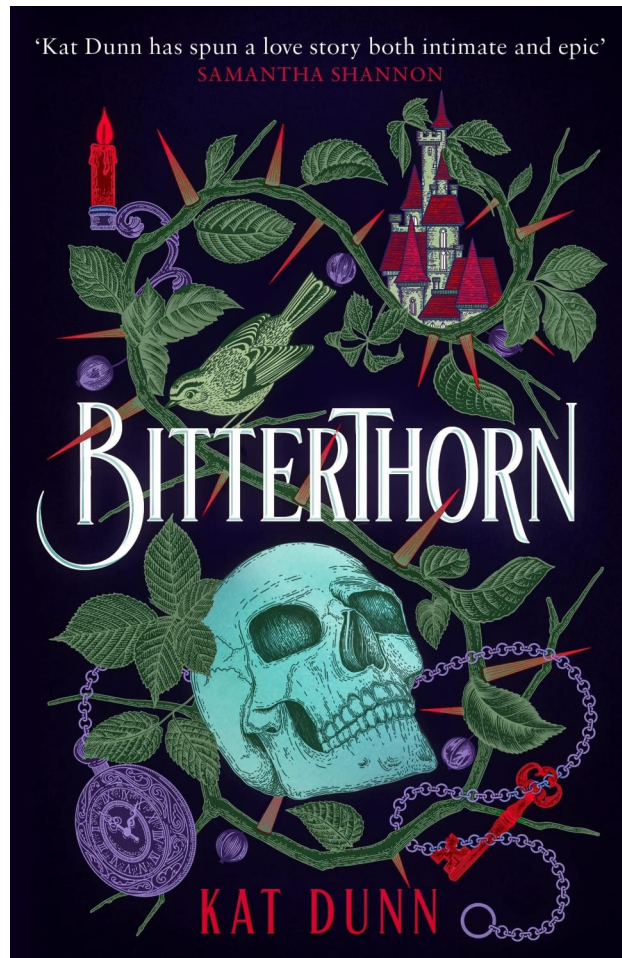
## Recommended Reads for October Half-Term



## 'Natives' by Akala

Watch British rapper, author, and activist, Akala, read an excerpt from his bestselling book *Natives*. Akala speaks of his experience as a Black British man born in the 80's, and how race and class have shaped his life.

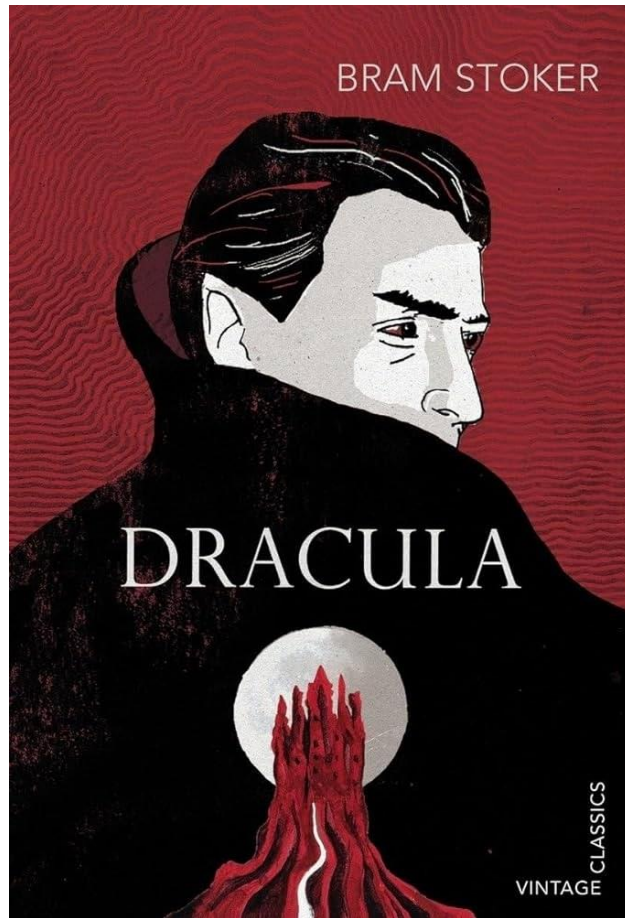
[https://youtu.be/2QjtRjC09jA?si=C\\_F\\_KnYL4ds5gGmh](https://youtu.be/2QjtRjC09jA?si=C_F_KnYL4ds5gGmh)



## 'Bitterthorn' by Kat Dunn

Blumwald is a town overshadowed by an ancient curse; in a sinister castle in the depths of the wild wood lives a monstrous Witch. Once a generation, she comes to claim a companion to return with her, never to be seen again. Now that time is drawing near once more...

Mina, daughter of the duke, is grieving and lonely. She has lost all hope of any future for herself in Blumwald. So when the Witch demands her next companion, Mina offers herself up – though she has no idea what fate awaits her. Stranded with her darkly alluring captor, the mystery of what happened to the previous companions draws Mina into the heart of a terrifying secret that could save her life, or end it.



**'Dracula' by Bram Stoker**

When Jonathan Harker visits Transylvania to help Count Dracula with the purchase of a London house, he makes a series of horrific discoveries about his client. Soon afterwards, various bizarre incidents unfold in England: an apparently unmanned ship is wrecked off the coast of Whitby; a young woman discovers strange puncture marks on her neck; and the inmate of a lunatic asylum raves about the 'Master' and his imminent arrival.

# Introducing our Pupil Premium Team for 2025-26



## Meet the Pupil Premium Champions

We are the team dedicated to ensuring that every child who receives Pupil Premium funding has the support, opportunities, and encouragement they need to thrive. Each year group has its own PP Champion and some year groups have Assistant PP Champions. Our Line Manager is Ms Vaughan who is also the Curriculum Leader for Maths.



### Year 7 - Miss Szemis

I am Miss Szemis and I am Pupil Premium Champion for Year 7 scholars. Please get in touch with me if your child is in Year 7 and needs any help with uniform, school equipment, attendance etc. I am also 8 Monmouth Form Tutor and Teacher of French. I am also leading on Family Communication and I will be getting in touch with you regarding any relevant information related to Pupil Premium.

• My email: [rszemis1@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:rszemis1@castle-tmet.uk)

• Where to find me: classroom 1.19 (Modern Foreign Languages)

### Year 8 - Miss Kooner

My name is Miss Kooner, and I am the Year 8 Pupil Premium Champion. In this role, I will also be leading on staff communication to ensure all colleagues receive regular updates on scholars' progress.

Alongside my responsibilities as Pupil Premium Champion, I am also a Design and Technology teacher and tutor for 10 Elvaston. This year, I will additionally be overseeing scholar rewards, a role I am particularly enthusiastic about.

• My email: [hkooner@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:hkooner@castle-tmet.uk)

• Where to find me: room 0.32 (Design and Technology classroom)



Year 8 - Miss Kooner

### Year 9 - Miss Brighton

My name is Miss Brighton, and I'm the Year 9 Pupil Premium Champion. I will also be leading on the Peer Mentoring strategy, which means that we will be helping the older scholars in school to learn how to mentor their younger peers, in order to help them with issues that they have overcome in their time as a CMA scholar. We are also going to invite our CMA alumni scholars back to do some mentoring, so look out for some familiar faces!

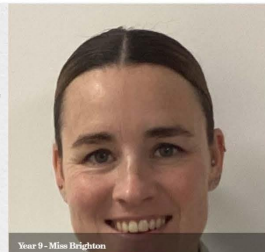
In addition to my role as PP Champion, I am a PE teacher and tutor to 10 Ashby.

For those who need to find me, I work Wednesday to Friday. Miss Buswell is the Y9 PP Assistant, so you can also contact her for anything Year 9 PP.

My email :

• Where to find me: PE office

• Phone extension: 751



Year 9 - Miss Brighton

**Year 9 Assistant - Miss Buswell**

My name is Miss Buswell, and I'm the Year 9 Assistant Pupil Premium Champion. I will be supporting Miss Brighton with the Peer Mentoring strategy. This will help scholars create admirable role models, boost confidence, improve study habits, and foster positive friendships. I am delighted to support our Year 9 scholars on their journey toward confidence and success. Alongside this role, I'm assistant curriculum lead of RE and tutor to 9 Tintagel.

- My email:
- Where to find me: room 2-23 (RE)



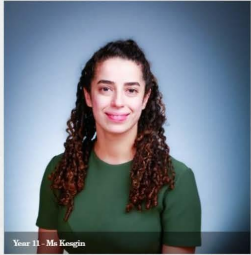
**Year 10 - Miss Appleby**

My name is Miss Appleby, and I am the Year 10 Pupil Premium Champion. I will also be leading on Enrichment and Community, which means I'll be working to create exciting opportunities and experiences both inside and outside of school for our scholars. These will help build confidence, develop new skills, and strengthen our links within the community.

Alongside my PP Champion role, I teach PE and Dance and I am proud to be the form tutor of 10 Appleby.

- My email: [lappleby@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:lappleby@castle-tmet.uk)
- Where to find me: PE office.





**Year 11 - Ms Kesgin**

Hi everyone! I'm Ms Kesgin, a teacher of science and the Pupil Premium Champion for Year 11.

My role is to support you in any way I can — whether that's with attendance, homework, uniform, or exam preparation.

I look forward to working with you and helping you achieve your best this year!

- Where to find me: Room 2.06 (Sciences)
- My email: [GKesgin@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:GKesgin@castle-tmet.uk)

**Miss Yates - Year 10 and Year 11 Assistant**

My name is Miss Yates, and I am a Maths teacher and form tutor to 9 Corfe.

I'm the Assistant Pupil Premium Champion for Key Stage 4 (year 10 and 11). I will be working with individuals and groups to support them to aim high for their GCSEs and beyond Castle Mead into post-16 options.

- My email is: [yates@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:yates@castle-tmet.uk)
- Where to find me: room 2-24 (Maths)



## Update | PE

This half term has been packed with action, energy, and fantastic team spirit across all year groups at CMA. We've had an incredibly busy and successful few weeks, and we're so proud of all our scholars who have represented the **CMA Dragons** with commitment, enthusiasm, and sportsmanship.

## **Netball Success**

Our **Year 7 to Year 11 netball teams** have been on top form this term! With a string of strong performances and some impressive results, it's been brilliant to see teamwork, communication, and determination shine through on the court. Every team has shown real progression, and we look forward to building on these results in future fixtures.

## **Football Highlights**

The **Year 8 to Year 11 boys' football teams** have also been in action, competing in various fixtures and putting in some strong performances. From solid defensive displays to exciting attacking play, the boys have worked hard and shown real passion in every match. Well done to all involved!

## **Handball Competition**

Handball has been a real highlight this term with both **boys' and girls' Year 8 teams** getting the chance to compete, as well as a fantastic showing from our **Year 10 boys**. The matches were fast-paced and full of energy, and it was great to see scholars trying their best in a sport that's growing in popularity.

## **Badminton Talent**

Our **boys' and girls' badminton teams** have also had the chance to shine. The level of skill, focus, and sportsmanship on display was excellent, and it was great to see so many students enjoying competitive play while developing their technical abilities.

## **Looking Ahead**

We've got lots of exciting sports opportunities coming up next half term, including more fixtures and tournaments across a range of sports. As always, we encourage all scholars to get involved and represent the CMA Dragons with pride!

Thank you for your continued support — we truly appreciate your child's valued contribution to our sports teams.

– The PE Department





## Update | Scholar Leadership

Our Scholar Leaders have had an incredibly productive half term! The Scholar Council came together to discuss key ideas and initiatives around the Rally Park, while our Kindness Ambassadors are preparing to attend Anti-Bullying Ambassador training this Wednesday—an important step in continuing promoting a culture of respect and inclusion in our school. Meanwhile, our dedicated Year 10 Senior Prefect Team made a fantastic contribution by supporting our recent Careers Evening. Looking ahead, we're excited to announce that in

January, our Eco Team will be meeting with the solar panel provider to support the rollout of renewable energy here at CMA.

Watch this space for more updates as our young leaders continue to make a real impact!

## Introducing Our New Celebration Station!

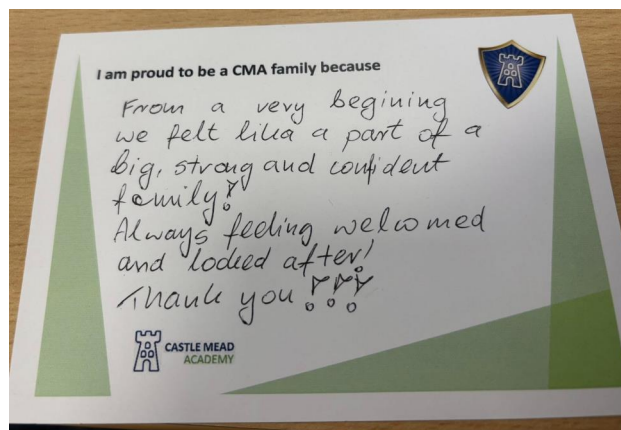
After half term, we're launching an exciting new *Celebration Station* in Scholar Services!

As part of our work on being proud and sharing our successes, we want to celebrate scholars' achievements both in and outside of school. Whether your child has achieved something amazing in sports, music, volunteering or any other area, we want to hear about it!

Please send a photo and short description to [proud@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:proud@castle-tmet.uk) so we can showcase their success as part of Team CMA!

## 'Welcome to Year ...' Family Events

The families of our Year 7, 10 and 11 scholars have been invited to some 'Welcome to Year ...' events over the last few weeks. It's been a privilege to meet with you and celebrate the scholars' many achievements from their first weeks.



I am proud to be a CMA family because



IT SHOWS HOW MUCH IT TAKES TO  
APPRECIATE OUR CHILDREN, AND  
THE REWARDS ARE A GREAT  
IDEA. IT FEELS LIKE A SUPPORTIVE  
FAMILY.

I am proud to be a CMA family because



X I have heard that everyone at this  
school is taught to be kind, respectful  
and well-mannered to others so I  
am proud that my daughter got a  
placement at CMA.

I am proud to be a CMA family because

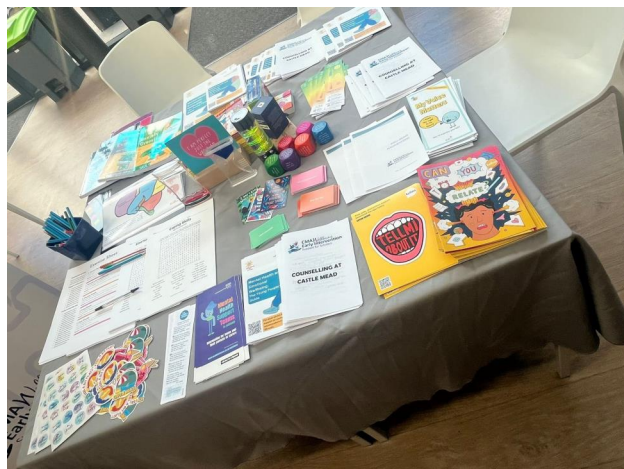
I am proud to be a CMA scholar because

I am happy to say that I  
belong at CMA



## CMA Open Evening | 26th September 2025

We were blown away by the turnout at our Open Evening last month. Thank you to our amazing scholars and staff for making it such a special event, and to all of our prospective scholars and families who came to see our wonderful school in action!



## Update | Inclusion

### **SEND update**

We've had a busy but successful start to the new academic year. Our Year 7 scholars have settled in well and made a positive start. Staff have been working hard to strengthen provision for our scholars with additional needs. Interventions are up and running, including - ELSA, Switch on (reading), homework support, gardening, Talkabout and many more.

### **Did you know??**

All scholars on the SEND register have a named keyworker (parents have received an email) that checks in with them. They also have a Scholar Passport that is accessible to all staff. These are working documents that are updated throughout the year and used to support planning. It is vital that the inclusion department (through keyworkers) are informed of any changes/updates of your child's needs so that we can support them in school.

### **Independent travel training**

Mr Shooter (Assistant SENDCo) recently completed his training in 'independent travel' and is looking forward to supporting scholars to be safe, confident and independent whilst using public transport.

### **Support and Signposting for SEN**

[SEND local offer](#) | [LCC Family Hub](#)

## Update | Careers

### **Welcome Back – Exciting Year Ahead for Careers at CMA!**

This term marks the start of another exciting year for careers education at Castle Mead Academy. Our Careers Team has grown, and we have been busy planning a range of exciting activities and events to help scholars explore future pathways and develop scholars key employability skills.

### **Year 11 – Post 16 Applications and Careers Fair Success**

Our Year 11 scholars have made an excellent start to their post-16 journey. The **Careers Fair on Wednesday 8th October** was our busiest yet and a huge success! Thank you to all scholars and families who attended this inspiring evening to discuss post-16 and post-18 options with colleges, training providers and employers. Please continue to encourage your scholar to attend as many open events as possible.

We are also **launching PS16 to Year 11 scholars on Thursday 16th October**. More details can be found on the **Careers pages** of our website. This year's application deadline for scholars is Monday 8th December 2025. For support, please contact [careers@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:careers@castle-tmet.uk).

### **Year 10 – Work Experience Preparation**

Year 10 scholars are now preparing for their **Work Experience Week** in the summer term. A reminder that placement forms were due in on **Monday 29th September**, and a few are still outstanding. Please ensure these are handed in to the Careers Team **as soon as possible**. Work experience offers an invaluable chance to develop communication, independence and time management skills, while gaining real insight into the workplace.

### **Year 7 – Guess My Job**

On **22nd September 2025**, our Year 7 scholars took part in the exciting **Guess My Job** event, where they met 18 fantastic volunteers from a range of sectors including law, architecture, finance, cyber security, social media, and business. This interactive session gave our youngest scholars a real insight into the world of work and the skills employers value. Thank you to all our amazing volunteers for making it such a success!

### **Get Involved!**

We're always looking to build new partnerships with employers, training providers and colleges. If you can support our careers programme through work experience placements, mock interviews, talks and workshops please get in touch via [careers@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:careers@castle-tmet.uk).

### **Useful Links for Parents and Carers**

- [CMA - Careers information for parents and carers](#)
- [National Careers Service](#)

- [Skills for Careers](#)
- [Talking Futures](#)
- [PS16](#)



## Information from the School Nurse Team

The school nursing service is available at your school every Monday. We also offer a lunchtime drop in sessions every 1st Monday of the month. The school nurse can help with things like healthy eating, relationships, smoking, emotional health, bullying, self-harm, anxiety, sleep and puberty.

You can be referred to the school nurse by teachers at the school or you can now self-refer using the following link [Self referral form- School Nursing Service](#). This can be found on posters around school.

The school nurse will then review the referral and assess the appropriate support required.

# Policing Update from the Fosse Ward



Leicestershire  
**Police**  
Protecting our communities

## The Fosse Newsletter

Issue: **September 2025**

### Introduction



PS Joel Tarplin  
PC Kane Sole  
PC Sam Collins  
PC Sally Preston  
PC Abbie Ward  
PCSO Sarah Baker  
PCSO Chris Clark  
PCSO Abby Whitmore

### #YouSaid - What matters to you

Below are our beat priorities -

#### Priority -

Tackling concerns around acquisitive crimes on the ward, including burglary, damage to and theft from motor vehicles, and theft from person offences, particularly in the Newfoundpool, Tudor Road areas and on The Rally park.

#### We did -

We continue to target the issue of robberies in open spaces on the beat. We have conducted countless hours of plain clothes and uniformed patrols, particularly on The Rally. A male arrested last period for these offences has now been removed from the county altogether. We are also conducting additional patrols on The Rally and other local parks, so expect to see even more officers out on foot on patrol, particularly during the hours of darkness.

#### Priority -

Dealing with the production of class B drugs in the area, in addition to tackling the use and supply of both class A and B drugs in areas where this affects the local community.

#### We did -

Throughout the end of August and into September we continued to target drugs and those who use, produce and supply them. During this period we located and dismantled an industrial sized cannabis factory on Bonchurch St. arresting, charging and remanding two males and safeguarding the location and wider community. As part of this we seized controlled drugs valued at over £835,000.

#### Priority -

Targeting alcohol fuelled ASB on the ward with a focus on street drinking and youth ASB in open spaces such as The Rally, Glenfield Road East and Hinckley Road near the junction with Kirby Road.

#### We did:

We continue to lobby for an extension of the City Centre PSPD to enable us to seize alcohol from those drinking in the street and engaging in ASB. We are progressing prosecutions against youths who repeatedly commit ASB and crime on the beat. We have raised a problem management plan in relation to a problem hotspot on Glenfield Road East and will be targeting those drinking and committing ASB in that location.

## What we are doing



*A cannabis factory which caused a house fire.*



*Monthly beat surgeries are carried out for residents to come and meet their local beat officers.*

Welcome to the September edition of the Fosse Neighbourhood Team Newsletter.

This month I'd like to use this newsletter as an opportunity to talk about cannabis grows on The Fosse Ward as well as surrounding beats.

These cannabis grows are a cause for concern, not only for the large production of drugs which are entering into our community, but the potential damage that they can SOMETIMES cause too.

On the left of this text you will see a photo of a burnt out living room. This is a property which was used for a grow. When they are set up, electrics are bypassed and numerous electrical components are used to keep the farming going. Because of all the equipment being used and the electrics tampered with, unfortunately what you see in this picture can be the result from this.

As a team, we gather intelligence from local residents' who share information and concerns that they may have with a person or property, as well as our own investigations that we carry out, pin pointing irregularities to a property such as strong heat sources which are picked up using special equipment, and unusual behaviour that we see for ourselves.

If you do have concerns with a property and the behaviour of the person/s at the address, please contact Leicestershire Police on 101, via the Leicestershire Police website, or by attending one of our events and telling us in person. It could be that your concerns don't lead to anything, but you could also be the one who helps us find these illegal grows, close them down and arrest those involved.

Things to ask yourself -

Do persons turn up to the address at unusual times of the day or night?

Is any equipment being taken in or out the property which would indicate a grow? Large quantities of plant pots? Bags of soil? Plant feed? Electrical equipment such as transformers and lights?

Can you hear the sound of machinery going? Reports in the past have been a continuous humming noise from a back bedroom.

Do your walls feel warmer than usual?

With the colder weather fast approaching some of these signs may be more apparent such as heat coming through internal walls.

Lastly I'd like to thank our residents for all the intel you have shared with us. We all want to live in a friendly and safe community and over the years your intel has been vital for us to carry out our roles.

### Confidence Survey



### Your Views Survey



## Upcoming Community Engagements for October

6th - Fosse Neighbourhood Centre toddler time - 10.30 - 11.30

8th - Cops in shops Lidl - 10.00 - 11.00

10th - Fosse Neighbourhood Centre - 12.00 - 13.00

16th - Cops in shops Aldi - 10.00 - 11.00

22nd - Fosse Neighbourhood Centre - 15.00 - 16.00

24th - Cops in shops Lidl - 10.00 - 11.00

25th - Food Bank Empire Road - 10.30 - 11.30

29th - St Pauls Church coffee morning - 15.00 - 16.00

## Dates for Your Diary



- **Half-term holiday** - Monday 20th October - Friday 24th October 2025
- **School closed for SCHOLARS** - Monday 28th October 2025
- **School reopens for ALL scholars** - Tuesday 29th October 2025

All term dates can be found on the Castle Mead Academy website [here](#).

## Contact Details

**FOLLOW US ON:**

X [@CastleMeadAcad](#)

Facebook [@CastleMeadAcademy](#)

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**WEBSITE:** <https://www.castle-tmet.uk/>

**EMAIL:** INFO@CASTLE-TMET.UK

