

Respect

Inspire

Achieve

Stoke High School-Ormiston Academy

NEWSLETTER

[OAT]
Ormiston Academies Trust
ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the autumn term, I want to take a moment to reflect on what makes our school community thrive. Creating a great school is never

the work of one person—it is built on effective partnership, listening, and working together, even when challenges arise. Everything we do is rooted in one purpose: to support the young people in our care so that they can be successful.

Recently, a student asked if we could move the late gate by five minutes to make things easier for those arriving close to the start of the day. While I appreciated her thoughtful suggestion, I explained that punctuality is a key life skill—one that we are committed to teaching. In assembly, we shared the analogy: *if you want to catch the 7:15 train to London, arriving at 7:16 means you've missed it.* At Stoke, we always strive to narrate both positive and poor choices, helping students understand the impact of their decisions.

This term, we are proud to share that over 25,000 Stokies have been awarded for demonstrating our virtues and values—a testament to the hard work and character of our students.

Looking ahead, we are excited to extend our Big Breakfast tradition to include a festive meal together on Wednesday, 17th December. We hope students, staff, and visitors will join us in celebrating the season.

Since becoming a mobile phone-free school, the canteen has transformed into a lively hub of interaction. It's wonderful to see students playing cards, inventing games, and simply enjoying each other's company. It

Key Dates and Events—Spring 2026

Monday 5th January	Inset Day
Tuesday 6th January	Return to School
Thursday 22nd January	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Monday 9th February	Yr 11 PPEs
February—Friday 27th February	
Thursday 12th and Friday 13th February	School Production
Friday 13th February—Monday 16th February	French Trip
Monday 16th February—Friday 20th February	Half Term
Monday 23rd February	Inset Day
Thursday 12th March	Year 9 Options and Parents'
Monday 30th March—Friday 10th April	Easter Holidays

truly feels like children being children—and that is something worth celebrating.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we are shaping a community where every child can flourish.

Warm regards,

Ms. K Baldwin, Principal



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Message from the Head Boy and Head Girl

We returned to school in September with bundles of excitement to start our next chapters at Stoke High School. For Year 7s, it is the beginning of their journey, and for us Year 11s, it is reaching the end. We have a fantastic team of Prefects and Aunts who have helped Year 7s feel welcome and safe as part of the Stoke community. As students who have been here from the very start, we wish the Year 7s an experience they will cherish.

The school has encouraged and promoted student achievement. We have been fortunate to take part in rewards such as Golden Tickets, the Stoke Exchange and specific events from the Heads of Year. This has created a lot of joy and excitement in what has been a long term.

It was a privilege to speak at this year's Open Evening and see new faces who may be a part of our school community in the upcoming future. The evening was busy and lots of activities were held to showcase our amazing school. This was evident in the many smiles we saw in all the corridors.

Academic outcomes have also been at the forefront of our school journey. Year 11s had their PPEs in November, and we wish all of our peers the greatest of luck when they receive their results. #6 and coming in on Inset days has helped us improve our knowledge and potential outcomes.

As we approach the holidays, we would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Harry, Head Boy and Solaf, Head Girl

Message from Parliament

This article will be a short summary of what we at Parliament have done since the election.

- We have gathered a team of applicants to decide on the Senior Roles, Year Representatives and Junior Roles.
- We have begun the process of creating an action plan with main goals for the 2025/26 Parliament to achieve.
- We have held one meeting as an introductory to Parliament.
- We have held student voice meetings with year groups to gather plans on the canteen and are planning big changes already.

This Parliament is going to create changes that will affect every single student and make Stoke High School the best school in Ipswich.

Rio, Prime Minister and Oscar, Deputy Prime Minister



**Stoke High School
PARLIAMENT**

English Faculty

From the Page to the Big Screen

Watching films can be more than just entertainment—it can support children's reading development. Movies expose kids to rich language, help them understand story structure, and build comprehension skills in a fun and engaging way. When paired with discussion or subtitles, films become a powerful tool to spark curiosity and encourage a love of stories, making the transition to books feel natural and exciting.

1. Builds Vocabulary and Language Awareness

Films expose children to new words, phrases, and sentence structures in context. When they hear language used naturally, it reinforces what they encounter in books. Subtitled films are especially powerful because children see the written words while hearing them spoken.

2. Improves Comprehension Skills

Understanding a film requires following a storyline, predicting what might happen next, and interpreting characters' emotions—skills that are directly transferable to reading comprehension. Discussing the plot afterward strengthens these abilities.

3. Encourages Storytelling and Narrative Thinking

Films have beginnings, middles, and ends, just like books. Watching movies helps children understand narrative structure, which makes it easier to grasp how stories work when reading.

4. Motivates Reluctant Readers

If a child enjoys a film based on a book (e.g., *Harry Potter* or *Matilda*), they're often curious to read the original story. This creates a natural bridge from screen to page.

5. Supports Visualization Skills

Reading requires imagining scenes and characters. Films provide visual models that can help children learn how to picture stories in their minds, which is essential for deeper engagement with texts.

Family Films

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

Percy Jackson & The Olympians by Rick Riordan

A Series of Unfortunate Events by Lemony Snicket

The BFG by Roald Dahl

Coraline by Neil Gaiman

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

YA Themed Films

Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli

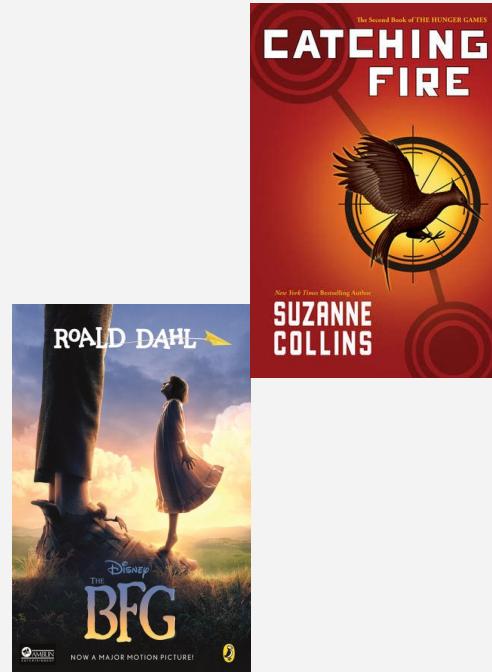
The Hunger Games Series by Suzanne Collins

The Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

The Maze Runner Series by James Dashner

His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman



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Maths Faculty

This term in Maths students have made a great start to the year and have worked hard on several topics.

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Year 11 have just completed their first set of PPEs. Well done to all those who are working hard and making progress!

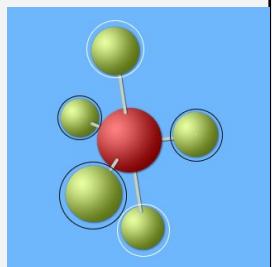
The Maths Homework Club continues to be a successful place for students to come and ask for help on any questions that they are unsure about.

As we move into the new year students will be taking part in the UK Maths Challenge and we look forward to seeing them succeed in this national competition.

Mr. J Abbott, Curriculum Leader of Maths

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Science Faculty



The Key Stage 3 students have made an impressive start to the year with the implementation of the curriculum. Science lessons are rich in information regarding careers and local issues, alongside traditional experiments and subject-specific content.

Year 7 students are exploring the cellular composition of the human body, examining atomic structures, and uncovering fascinating facts about space. Year 8 is focused on the digestive system, analysing food components, and studying atmospheric elements while tracking particle behaviour during heating and cooling processes.

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Year 9 has delved deeply into the digestive system, learned about the development of the periodic table, and investigated the classification of elements, culminating the year with experiments involving magnets and motors.

All students will undertake summary tests in preparation for their upcoming reports.

In Year 10, students are progressing through Paper 1 GCSE topics across the three scientific disciplines, currently focusing on the chemistry topic related to relative atomic mass calculations. Revision PowerPoints are accessible to all students, who are encouraged to consult their teachers for effective revision strategies.

Year 11 have recently completed their penultimate set of practice exams and are eagerly awaiting results, utilising techniques discussed in the Maximise presentation and accessing a variety of revision materials on The Hub, their class Teams page, and popular Science platforms like freesciencelessons.co.uk and senecalearning.co.uk. If you didn't pick up a revision strategies sheet at parents' evening, please see your Science teacher.

As the final set of practice exams approach, all students are invited to attend after-school revision sessions on Tuesdays during week B, as diligent effort often leads to success.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas from the Science team.

Humanities Faculty

History

It's been a busy and exciting term in History! Each year group has been exploring big enquiry questions about the past and developing their skills as young historians.

Year 7 have been investigating how William became the Conqueror, analysing the key moments of the Battle of Hastings and using evidence to judge why William emerged victorious in 1066.

Year 8 have travelled across the globe studying the British Empire, thinking critically about its impact, legacies, and the stories often left out of traditional narratives.

Year 9 have taken a close look at life during the First World War and explored the fight for women's suffrage, examining how the experiences of ordinary people helped shape major social and political change in the 20th century.

Year 10 have focused on their GCSE studies, Crime and Punishment through time, tracing how laws, policing, and attitudes to justice have changed from the Anglo-Saxons to the modern day.

Year 11 have been working hard on their Cold War topic, unpacking the tension, rivalry and diplomacy that defined international relations after 1945.

This month we also marked Remembrance Day. Students from across the school contributed to a powerful display exploring why remembrance matters. Their work reflected on sacrifice, community, and the importance of learning from the past to build a better future. It was a thoughtful and moving contribution to Remembrance Day!



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Geography

In Year 7 this term, students have been introduced to some important key skills in Geography that will set them up for success for the rest of their learning at Stoke High School. They started by looking at what Geography exactly is, before looking at some fantastic places around the world such as the seven wonders of the world. They have then moved on to learn key geographical map skills and will move on to looking at development and India next term.



Year 8 students have been learning about the formation of Earth, first by looking at earthquake and volcano formations. They applied their learning by looking at two varying case studies on the Haiti and Japan earthquakes and discussed why the impacts varied in these two countries. They have since moved onto weathering and rock formation, before moving onto migration as we go into the next term.



The curriculum in Year 9 started by looking at climate change, focusing on the evidence, causes, impacts and solutions. This learning will prepare them well for potential studies in the subject next year. Students moved onto learning about Australia and its physical and human geography, discussing why large parts of Australia are sparsely populated. Year 9 will move onto dangerous destinations in the next term, focusing on Afghanistan, Somalia and Russia.

At GCSE, our Year 10 students have started their new course well, with enthusiasm and a drive for progress. They have already completed our living world topic, studying about rainforests and deserts, before moving onto the hazards topic as we studied about earthquakes, volcanoes and tropical storms. After Christmas, Year 10 will move on to look at urban issues around the world, with a focus on the growth of Rio in Brazil.

Year 11 have been hard at work preparing for their PPE exams, as they have learnt about weather and climate around the world. We have now started to look at ecosystems, learning about rainforests, grasslands and why climates vary across the world. They have had plenty of opportunities to apply their learning to exam questions, which will support them to make progress towards their next PPEs.



Mr. A Knuckey, Curriculum Leader of Humanities

Religious Studies

Our RS curriculum in the autumn term has explored the Founders of the Faiths in Year 7. Students have been learning about Abraham, Moses, the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) and the Buddha. In doing so, students have been able to explore a broad range of different world religions and analyse the importance of each religious founder. This has provided our students with a solid basis for future study in the subject across the remainder of Key Stage Three.



Year 8 have been studying the importance of justice for Christians. They have spent time exploring the life of Desmond Tutu and how he fought against the apartheid in South Africa. Students have applied their knowledge of justice to the problem of poverty and the work of Christian Aid in trying to combat this injustice.

Finally, Year 9 have been investigating the issues of prejudice and discrimination. They have explored what racism is, including studying what happened to Stephen Lawrence in 1993 and Anthony Walker in 2005. Students have also learnt about real-life issues such as human trafficking and radicalisation- topics which are unfortunately a part of our world today.

Students can look forward to many more religious, ethical and philosophical ideas being explored in the spring term.

Mr. J Clarke, Lead Teacher for Religious Studies and Raising Attainment Progress Leader

Performing Arts Faculty

Drama

The Year 7s have made a great start to the world of Drama. They have been exploring and applying the essential performing skills needed to create characters and performances. We have some excellent performers, and we look forward to continuing working with them. Year 8s have been hard at work on creating their comedy mime performances and Mrs. Beacham and I have enjoyed watching their creations. Continuing with this comedy trend, our Year 9s have been working on their mask skills. We have been using Trestle masks to create focused physical performances. The students have been adapting well to wearing these and have treated the equipment with respect.



At Key Stage 4, the Year 10s have begun their GCSE Drama journey. They have had an incredible start and their inquisitiveness into the world of Drama has been commendable. We have just completed a mock exam of their first component which will be completed in full by the end of the academic year. Year 11s are currently working on their Component 2 exam which is fully practical and based on a script. This will be their final practical exam before they focus on their written exam in May.

Beyond the classroom, we are currently underway on our annual school production. This year, the students will be putting on the musical 'Annie'. We have a great cast who work well as an ensemble and we look forward to showing you the final outcome on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th February 2026.

Mr. L Eversley, Assistant Principal and Teacher of Drama



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Year 11 Drama Workshop

The GCSE Drama group in Year 11 were very lucky to have Oliver O'Shea from Pilot Theatre Company come in for a 2-hour workshop to support their understanding of the GCSE Drama set text 'Noughts and Crosses'. Pilot Theatre are currently touring their production of the play that can be seen at the New Wolsey Theatre.

We were really keen to engage with the company as they have been actively involved in producing the play for a number of years and were able to offer practical insights and activities to support the understanding of the themes, issues and staging complexities within the play. Students undertook activities based on the given circumstances and different ways to stage the play that will support their response in the written exam. This included practical and discussion activities based around the different staging configurations and how we can use the facts of the scene to support our staging decision – all information that can be used in the written exam.

It was really nice to see the students engaging with an outside practitioner and working together during the workshop to create some engaging images that showed off their knowledge and understanding. The next step is how we take this information and translate it to the written word ready for the exam!

One key piece of advice from Oli – read the play, then read it again, then read it again!



Mrs. T Beacham, Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts

PE

Netball

The Year 7, 8, and 9 netball teams continue to play in the South Suffolk School League this season. All three teams have completed another tournament this half term, where there have been up to 8 teams involved in each evening.

Year 7 played at Ormiston Endeavour and showed much improvement in their game play from the previous tournament. For some of the girls it was their second time of representing the school, whilst for others it was their first time. We have been keeping a core group of girls to allow for consistency whilst rotating around others to give everyone the chance of match time.

Year 8 played at Northgate. A special thanks to Mr Tankard for taking the team this time, due to staff illness. I think the opposition thought he was part of the cheering squad rather than the teacher, and the girls told me his supporting was far louder than mine! There were some amazing performances from all of the girls involved.

Year 9 played at Kesgrave. The girls are really coming on this year and are now managing to regularly convert and score. Some awesome team work from everyone involved.

Year 10 are playing in a league this year. Results are mixed with some close games and the odd one where the score has just run away from us. However, no one has given up and they all continue to put in 100% effort at every match.

Netball Continued...

Training continues on Tuesdays, when there are no matches. ALL girls should have a training schedule detailing when training is on, and when their matches are. Please see me if you do not have one or need a new copy.



Mrs. D Simmons, Teacher of PE

Sport Fixtures

Year 9 Boys Shine in the Suffolk Cup

Our Year 9 football team faced a challenging Suffolk Cup fixture against Claydon. Despite a difficult start and determined opposition, the boys showed outstanding teamwork and perseverance.

Their hard work paid off with a brilliant 4-2 win, securing their place in the next round of the competition. Well done, boys!

Cross Country Success from Years 7–9

This term also saw our Year 7–9 students take on the cross-country course at the Royal Hospital School, delivering some remarkable results. With tough conditions and strong competition, our runners demonstrated grit and determination from start to finish.

Eight runners finished in the top 100, an impressive achievement given the size and standard of the field.

Even more exciting, three of our students qualified for the Regional Competition finishing inside the top 50.

A special mention goes to one exceptional runner who secured a phenomenal 19th place, showcasing not only natural talent but excellent discipline and preparation.

Year 10 vs Holbrook Football

Our Year 10 boys faced a tough challenge against Holbrook, who fielded an incredible England star. Despite the loss, the team showed determination and spirit throughout. Special mentions go to Ethan, Tevon, and Calum for their outstanding performances and commitment.

Year 8 vs St Albans Football

Year 8 battled hard against St Albans but unfortunately came up short. The highlight of the match was a wonderful goal from Jeremiah, who showed great skill and composure. Kayden, Austin, Jacob and Gerrard in Year 7 stepped up to support our Year 8s in this fixture. Although the boys were defeated by a superior team, their effort and teamwork were commendable.



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Sport Fixtures Continued...

Year 8 vs Northgate Football

In another fixture, Year 8 took on Northgate. The opposition stormed ahead with three early goals in the first half, but our boys came roaring back in the second half to make it 3–2. In their search for the equaliser, they conceded again, ending the match 4–2. If the second-half

We are incredibly proud of every student who took part and represented the school with such enthusiasm and dedication.

Mr. J Stevens and Mr. P Tankard, Teachers of PE

Technology Faculty

3-D



The Year 11 students have been getting well and truly stuck into their 'Storage' project this term. They have been experimenting with a range of finishing techniques, such as wood burning, graffiti and acrylic bending.

They have been preparing for their exam in December, and in order to get ready for this, they have been re-creating some smaller scale items of storage, including Canopic Jars and Inuit Ivory Boxes.

The Year 11s have been working really hard and we are looking forward to seeing their final pieces from their exams in December. Good luck 3D'ers!



Art

On Monday 17th November Tanisha, Alana, Michal, Ferenc, Keyzi, Saachi, Shannon, Krzysztof, Charlie and Emily took part in the Wolsey 550, Youth led Art trail. They created designs showing their future aspirations and drew them onto shop windows in the Butter Market and surrounding shops. Each design showed the high aspirations of each pupil and it was really impressive to see their dedication and drive being expressed and shared to the community.





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Food

The Year 10 chefs have settled into GCSE Hospitality and Catering, really well. They did their first 'Free Cook' before October half term, and they shone with their dishes. They will be completing another 'free cook', at the end of term. The theme this time will be 'Festive Dishes'. They have recently cooked up a storm with their Biscoff Cheesecakes. Presentation of their dish was a very important part of the cook. They did a triumphant job- well done Year 10 chefs!

The Year 11 Chefs have been working hard, cooking up some of their chosen exam dishes in preparation for their big practical exam in January. The chefs have been practising elements of their dishes, or in their double lessons, they have been managing to cook one course from their menu. They have been working really hard to perfect their dishes in time for January. Alongside the cooking element of the exam, they have been keen to work on their presentation too.



Miss Z Button, Curriculum Leader of Technology

Computing

Exploring the World of Programming Across Year Groups

This term, our students have been diving into the exciting world of coding and game development, each year group tackling unique challenges and building essential digital skills.

Year 7 students began their programming journey using Small Basic, a beginner-friendly language designed to introduce core programming concepts. Through creating simple programs, they developed logical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and an understanding of how instructions translate into actions on screen. These foundational skills set the stage for more complex projects in the future.

Moving up, Year 8 students embraced creativity with Kodu Game Lab, designing and building their own playable games. This project encouraged them to think like game developers—planning storylines, designing environments, and programming interactions. Alongside technical skills, they honed their creativity, teamwork, and iterative design processes, learning how to test and refine their ideas.

Finally, Year 9 students advanced to writing programs in a high-level programming language, tackling more sophisticated tasks that required precision and logical structure. They



Computing Continued...

explored concepts such as variables, loops, and conditional statements, gaining confidence in creating functional programs. These experiences not only strengthened their computational thinking but also prepared them for real-world applications of coding.

Across all year groups, students have demonstrated resilience, creativity, and critical thinking—skills that are invaluable in today's digital world. We are proud of their progress and excited to see how they continue to innovate and grow as budding programmers.

Mr. J Oliver, Assistant Principal and Teacher of Computing

French

Plans for the French Trip 2026 are well underway and an inspection visit took place during October half term, in order to assess the accommodation, meet the organisers and walk through the itinerary.

It was a real pleasure to meet the NST staff who will be hosting our school group in February. They were professional and keen to make our visit as interesting and fun as possible. The accommodation is simple and ideal for us, as we will be in a private, self-contained area where students will be able to participate in organised activities as well as being able to relax in groups, with staff members at hand.

A visit to Lille is a key part of our itinerary and we found it to be a very attractive historic city, with large pedestrianised areas, making it easy to get around. It is famed for its Christmas lights, so we are also hoping that they will leave them up for us to see in February!

We are also planning trips to Boulogne, where we will visit the impressive aquarium as well as the old fortified town, and to St Omer and its lively weekly market.

Snail tasting is still one of our activities, and we had hoped to visit a snail farm, as well. However, it turns out the snails are hibernating at that time of year! Instead we are booked into a local boulangerie, where we will see a demonstration of how to make 'pains au chocolat' and then have the opportunity to make our own.

A French Trip meeting for parents is being planned for Thursday 29th January, where we will provide all the final details of the trip.

In the meantime, Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année.

Mrs. C Howe, Curriculum Leader of French

Year 7

It seems such a long time ago that I met the new year 7s for the first time. This term has certainly flown by. As their Head of Year, I am so proud of how well they have settled into Stoke and the courage and resilience that they have shown whilst navigating the huge changes that come with starting a new school.

The most important thing for me is that the students have a





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Year 7 Continued...

real sense of belonging and feel part of the Stoke Community. In order to create this, we have had regular interform competitions and assemblies focussing on us working together as a team. Form groups are currently taking part in an advent challenge, competing to win a celebratory breakfast. As a school, we are providing all students with a free Christmas dinner to allow year groups to celebrate with Tutors and Heads of Year.

We have a wide variety of extracurricular opportunities on offer at Stoke. So far, approximately 50% of Year 7 students have taken part in a club. Now students have settled into Year 7, I would like to see more taking up the opportunities offered. If your child would like to attend a club that is not on our list, please encourage them to speak to me and I will see what I can do.

As a year team (myself and the Form Tutors), we continue to work together to support our students as they navigate their high school journey and I would like to thank you, parents and carers, for your continued support too.

Mrs. C Welsby, Assistant Principal and Head of Year 7

Year 8

As we reach the end of this term, I am delighted to share some of the highlights and achievements of our Year 8 students. It has been a fantastic start to the academic year, and I could not be prouder of how the year group has embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm and maturity.



Clip and Climb Activity Day

Some of our Year 8 students took part in an exciting team-building day at Clip and Climb. The day was filled with climbing challenges, problem-solving activities, and plenty of laughter. It was wonderful to see students encouraging one another, building confidence, and working together to overcome obstacles. Many discovered new strengths and left with a real sense of achievement. Feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive—they loved the experience and represented the school incredibly well.

Suffolk New College Careers Fair

Later in the term, a selection of Year 8 students attended the Careers Fair at Suffolk New College. This was a valuable opportunity for them to explore future pathways, meet employers, and think about their aspirations. Students engaged thoughtfully with the event, asked insightful questions, and came away inspired about the possibilities ahead. It was encouraging to see them already considering how their interests and talents might shape their future careers.



Extracurricular Involvement

Beyond academics, Year 8 have thrown themselves into extracurricular life. From sports teams to drama productions, music clubs to student leadership opportunities, participation has been high. These activities not only enrich their school



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Year 8 Continued...

experience but also help them develop confidence, creativity, and teamwork skills.

Homework Support

This term has seen a rise in students not completing their homework. We know that homework plays a vital role in consolidating learning and building independence. To help students succeed, here are some strategies we encourage:

- Establish a routine: Set aside a regular time each evening for homework.
- Create a quiet space: A distraction-free environment helps students focus.

I would also remind students that teachers are available for support if they are struggling, and lunchtime homework clubs provide extra help when needed.

A Strong Start to Year 8

Beyond the events mentioned, the students have settled into Year 8 incredibly well. Their attitude to learning, participation in lessons, and contributions to school life have been exemplary. Whether in the classroom, on trips, or in extracurricular activities, they continue to impress with their commitment and positivity. I look forward to the New Year and another great term.

Mr. J Stevens, Head of Year 8

Year 9

Having embarked on a new academic year, we are thrilled to celebrate the remarkable start made by our Year 9 students. Their dedication and enthusiasm towards learning has been truly commendable, setting a positive tone for the year ahead.

One shining star in Year 9 has already accumulated over 320 positive points. This incredible achievement is a testament to their hard work, determination, and exemplary behaviour both in and out of the classroom.

The entire Year 9 group deserves to be celebrated for their growing maturity and focus. It is evident that they are embracing their educational journey with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment. With such positive energy, it is inspiring to witness their willingness to engage and excel.

We are proud to support Year 9 in their continued growth and achievement. We are confident that with their dedication and our collective guidance (from those within the home and school), this year will be filled with success and meaningful learning experiences. Please do keep an eye on communications from school, as we will begin to explore their Options in February.

Wishing all of our students and their families a relaxing break and best wishes for the New Year.

Mrs. V Spearman, Head of Year 9

Year 10

What a fantastic start Year 10 have had! They have began their GCSE journey with maturity and enthusiasm, there have been so many teachers who have praised the quality of work that year 10 are producing along with their fantastic attitude to learning. Our Welcome to GCSE event was well attended which shows how much we all care about their outcomes.



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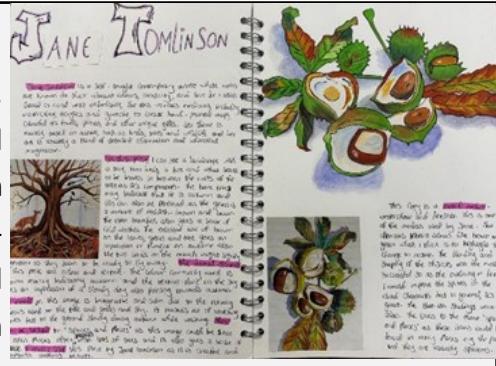
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Year 10 Continued...

Not only have Year 10 embraced the beginning of GCSES, we have also had teams represent the school in football and netball showing resilience and perseverance in sport. We have celebrated being part of the school community with having interform competitions in football and will also have a interform basketball competition on the 17th of December.



There have been curriculum trips for both Art and Photography where some amazing work was produced.

Mrs K. Huggins, Head of Year 10

Year 11

A big welcome back to Year 11s for what will be their final year at Stoke High School. And the year itself has started at full throttle with a drive on outcomes and Post-16 options.

Year 11 is a crucial year for any secondary school student. This final chapter marks not only the end of their time at secondary school, but also the beginning of a new chapter in their continuing journey of education.



The academic year started with enthusiasm and eagerness as the Year 11 students started their new form groups to help support their academic outcomes and pastoral support. The students have embraced this change and it will be interesting to see the impact these interventions have had on their recent PPE results.

Some of our students have also started their new roles as Prefects and I am extremely proud to say how pleased I am with them. Their willingness to go the extra mile in providing further support around the school and their leadership has been second to none. The Aunts have also been incredibly helpful in setting our high expectations across the Year 7 cohort in which the students have settled in very well. We have such a strong team and I look forward to working with them throughout the year. Head Boy Harry and Head Girl Solaf have been great ambassadors for the school and continue to bring new ideas to the table.



As mentioned earlier, students completed their PPEs in November. It is always a busy time in which stress and anxiety can get the better of some. However, I am very pleased with the Year 11s focus and dedication to their exams. Their attitude and increase in preparation has really helped them and I look forward to seeing their PPE results.

To support the students with their PPEs, we invited the company Maximize in to deliver a two hour workshop. We have used this company for several years to help build student aspiration and self-confidence to help them conquer the written exams. At the



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Year 11 Continued...

end, I spoke our two guest speakers and they were delighted with our students' behaviour and attention. They even added that they were the best cohort of students they have seen in a long time.

Of course, the year group wouldn't be who they are today if they didn't have the extra-curricular activities that help enrich their time at Stoke. To celebrate Children in Need, all students were invited to sign up for a Rowing Challenge. It was set to see how far we could row as a school in the space of a day. The results were staggering, and Year 11 students came second. A special mention to Callum for rowing 1435m in 5 minutes, the furthest in the school. We also had some fantastic sporting events in football with both our boys and girls teams playing. Although the boys weren't able to clinch that win, they were extremely impressive in their comeback, a true testament to their resilience. The girls were equally fantastic and won with a phenomenal score of 8-0! The Year 11s were also invited to a Hide and Seek activity after school if they received 100% attendance over the month of October. This was good fun and very competitive ending with a draw. Let's see what the results will be for the next time. Within this half term, we also celebrated with a Big Breakfast, bringing our whole group together as one. In addition, the school celebrated Mental Health Awareness with hints of the colour yellow. One student in particular, decided to borrow Mrs. Lockett's costume during lunchtime to add a bit of happiness and joviality across the school.

The first term is coming to a close. Prom payments are under way and leaver hoodies will be handed on the last week of term. It is important that our Year 11 students rest over Christmas, as they need to come back prepared and ready to take on their final set of PPEs. Please ensure that some revision and all homework is being completed as this will put Year 11s in a far better position for their studies.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this term and wish you all a fun-filled Christmas and prosperous 2026!

Mr. L Eversley, Assistant Principal and Head of Year 11

Message from the Governors

As we hurtle through December towards the end of term, I look back on a busy few months for the Governing Body and the way the academic year 2025/26 is rolling on.

I was in school at the end of August as last year's Year 11 students collected and celebrated their GCSE results with each other, their parents and their teachers. It's a day that I never fail to enjoy and take pride in the Academy's successes.

Before we knew where we were, some of the Governors were in school again during the Inset Days to undertake our Safeguarding training alongside the staff. All Governors are required to undertake annual Safeguarding training and this year the other mandatory courses were an Introduction to Cyber Security for Governors and an Introduction into Data Protection for Governors. All Governor training courses are available online which enables us to fit them in with our everyday lives.

There are also a raft of other online courses available to Governors which aid and inform our

Message from the Governors Continued...

work as “critical friends” of the Academy and help us to better support Ms. Baldwin as she continues to improve the learning and environment of our students.

Data Protection is a long standing mandatory requirement for Governors but Cyber Security was a new learning curve. I thought that I was reasonably tech savvy, but what is happening out there is really quite concerning, especially the ease with which young people can be drawn into the unsavoury and dangerous side of the internet.

We welcomed our new Year 7s in September and the feedback that I have received is that they have settled in well and are embracing life at Stoke. It’s a big step up as they not only negotiate a new routine and try to learn their way around the Academy, but also develop their independence, many of whom are making their way to and from school for the first time. We have two full Governor Body meetings this term and we established our new roles and responsibilities for the coming year at our first meeting in September.

On behalf of the Governors, I should like to thank you all for your continued support of the Academy and our work with your young people. I should also like to wish you those of you celebrating Christmas, and those of you who are not, a very happy holiday period and break from routine. I also wish you a very happy and healthy 2026.

Liz Combes, Chair of Governors

In Other News...

Remembrance Day

Stoke High School paid our respects to those that lost their lives during the world wars, and all other conflicts, in the name of service for our country. On Remembrance Sunday, Sophie and Mr Clarke represented the school at the service, with Sophie laying a wreath at the cenotaph at Christchurch Park. Following this, students in Year 9 and 10 (Angel, Sarah, Alfie, Skye, Tarah, Oscar, Nethuli, Rio, Saachi, Zyrene, Lucas, Jesse, Amrit and Ilaria) went to the service on Remembrance Day to lay a wooden cross. The students were incredibly respectful and represented the school to the highest of standards, with members of the public commenting on how good it was to have Stoke High School at the service.



At school, all students had the opportunity to remember those who had lost their lives, with a form time session focusing on Remembrance Day, as well as all students doing a two minutes silence at 11am. In form time, students wrote down why Remembrance Day was important, with these being displayed in the Humanities corridors all week. It was striking to see how important this day still remains within our community.

Mr. A Knuckey, Curriculum Leader of Humanities



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Basketball Tournament

Students from Stoke High School, part of Ormiston Academies Trust, delivered an exceptional performance at the Sport Sense Inter-School Basketball Tournament at the Inspire Sports dome. The event brought together competitive teams from across the region.

A dedicated team of 17 students represented Stoke High School across five games, showcasing remarkable determination, teamwork and resilience throughout the day. In the group stages, the team secured two impressive wins and narrowly missed out in two tightly contested matches, earning themselves a well-deserved place in the semi-finals. Although the semi-final didn't end in the result they hoped for, the team delivered a commendable performance.

Several players in particular delivered standout performances, with Lucas and Ferenc both named Most Valuable Players in the games that led to the team's victories. Their leadership, confidence and composure under pressure were instrumental in driving the team's success and motivating their peers both on and off the court.

The squad was supported throughout by an enthusiastic group of students and staff whose encouragement lifted the team in every match. Coach Nyasha praised the group's commitment and sportsmanship, noting how each player grew in confidence and strengthened their teamwork as the tournament progressed. The day also marked the unveiling of the team's brand-new kit, which players will proudly wear in future fixtures.

Beyond the competition, the tournament provided valuable opportunities for the school to build connections with other teams. Discussions are already underway to arrange friendly, yet competitive, future fixtures.

It was a memorable and enriching day for all involved, strengthening both the team's skills and the school's sporting community spirit. Stoke High School continues to nurture a positive sporting culture that encourages students to strive for continuous improvement, inspire others and respect everyone involved. The experience has set the stage for further success in upcoming competitions.

Karen Baldwin, Principal at Stoke High School, said:

"The team's performance at the Sport Sense Tournament was exceptional, and we are thrilled to see them competing with such confidence and resilience. This experience has strengthened not only their skills on the court but also the sense of community and ambition across our school. We're looking forward to building on this success and ensuring our students aim high, support one another and continue to grow."





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'Teechers' New Wolsey Trip

Year 10 and 11 Drama students were invited to attend a performance of 'Teechers' at the New Wolsey Theatre. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students as this gave them an insight into a professional production of one of the texts they study. The students were provided with a lecture-based workshop in which they were able to explore how the director and cast worked together. After this, we were able to watch the full performance. The students were incredibly well-behaved and a credit to our school.



Mr. L Eversley, Assistant Principal and Teacher of Drama

Safeguarding



Where to go for help:



SHOUT provides free, confidential, 24/7 text message support in the UK for anyone who is struggling to cope and anyone in crisis. Text SHOUT to 85258. This service is free on all major mobile networks.



Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide) provides advice and support for young people who feel like they want to take their own life, and all their advice is confidential. Call their HOPELineUK on: 0800 068 41 41 or text: 07786 209687 (lines are open every day from 9am to midnight).



ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

Childline offers support to young people under 19, and they confidentially call, email, or chat online about any problem, big or small. Their freephone 24-hour helpline is 0800 1111 or students can have a one-to-one chat with an [online advisor](#).



The Mix offers a free helpline for young people under 25 between 4pm – 11pm. Call 0808 808 4994 or you can email or text the Crisis Messenger service 24/7.



YoungMinds Crisis Messenger provides free crisis support and links to a range of support options.



All local NHS 24/7 urgent mental health lines can be found on [nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth](https://www.nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth).



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