

Respect**Inspire****Achieve****Stoke High School–Ormiston Academy**

NEWSLETTER

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 Ormiston Academies Trust
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Principal's Message

As I write this, the temperature is beginning to rise and, understandably, many of you are wondering whether schools may need to close due to the heat. I am very mindful of the impact that any closure would have on

families, and I want to reassure you that I will always carefully consider the needs of our community. As a school, we pride ourselves on being a community school, and that means working together to support our young people.

Learning remains our priority, and I will always endeavour to keep the school open unless there is a serious risk to the safety and wellbeing of both staff and students. Thank you, as always, for your understanding and ongoing support.

As we move towards the end of this academic year, it is a natural time for reflection, as well as forward planning. While there is still much to do, we can take great pride in all that has been accomplished. Our students continue to be at the heart of everything we do, and it will be a pleasure to celebrate their many achievements at our upcoming celebration evenings.

I am incredibly proud of our school and of our students. That pride grows stronger every year as I see their resilience, kindness, and determination to succeed. You will be aware of our recent Ofsted visit; we are still awaiting the final report. However, when the lead inspector left us saying he felt overwhelmed by how amazing our young people are, and how clearly he could

Key Dates and Events—Autumn 2026

Tuesday 1st September	Inset Day
Wednesday 2nd September	Year 7 Only
Thursday 3rd September	Whole School Return
Thursday 24th September	Open Evening
Thursday 8th October	Post-16 Evening
Friday 23rd October	Inset Day
Monday 19th October—Friday 6th November	Year 11 PPEs
Monday 26th October—Friday 30th October	Half Term
Friday 27th November	Inset Day
Thursday 3rd December	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Monday 21st December—Friday 1st January	Christmas Holidays

see the commitment of the school to ensuring every student can strive for success, it was a powerful validation of everything we are working towards.

We know we are not the finished article, but we firmly believe that together we can achieve greatness.

Many of you will also be aware that during the Ofsted visit we experienced a significant flood on site. Since then, we have been working closely with our insurers and contractors to restore all facilities as quickly as possible. In addition, the building works already planned for this summer will be going ahead as scheduled.



Principal's Message continued...

At all times, we are striving to create a school environment that is responsive to our students' needs — a place of learning of which the whole community can feel proud.

I very much look forward to seeing many of you at our celebration evenings as we mark the successes of this year together.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your continued support throughout the year and wish you all a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer break.

Ms. K Baldwin, Principal

Message from the Head Boy and Head Girl

We are honoured to have been appointed the role of Head Girl and Head Boy, and we are excited to approach the responsibility with pride, respect, and dedication. We believe a great leader is someone who listens, supports others, and leads by example. Therefore, throughout this upcoming year, we will work hard to make every student feel valued and included. We hope to strengthen the sense of community here at Stoke by encouraging teamwork-through teambuilding activities. We will work hard to create a kind environment by creating opportunities for students to share their ideas and any concerns they may have. Our goal is to be positive role models supporting both staff and students and help to continue making our school an even more welcoming and inspiring place for everyone.

Lily, Head Girl and Sherif, Head Boy

Message from Parliament

As we reach the end of this academic year, it is a great opportunity to reflect on the work and achievements of our Student Parliament. This year has been one of collaboration, leadership, and meaningful change, with students playing an active role in shaping our school community.

Our Student Parliament representatives have shown real commitment to ensuring that student voice is heard. Through meetings, surveys, and feedback sessions, they have gathered opinions from across the school and worked closely with staff to bring about positive improvements. Their dedication has helped ensure that decisions reflect the needs and ideas of the wider student body.

Throughout the year, Student Parliament has led and supported a range of initiatives. From contributing to improvements in the school canteen and the learning environment, to promoting inclusivity with the Equality and Diversity Team, their impact has been significant.

We would like to thank all Student Parliament members for their hard work, enthusiasm, and dedication. They have been excellent role models and have made a real difference to school life.

Looking ahead, we are excited to build on this year's success. The foundations laid by this year's Parliament will ensure that student voice continues to grow and thrive.

Well done to everyone involved—and thank you for making such a positive impact.

Mrs. C Welsby, Assistant Principal

English Faculty

A New Chapter for Key Stage 3 English

Summer reading and our new curriculum

As we look ahead to September, we are excited to introduce our new Key Stage 3 English curriculum. Our aim is simple: to help every student become a confident reader, thoughtful writer, and curious thinker. We have chosen a rich range of texts that will take students on journeys across time, place and culture, while also building key language skills.

What will students study?

Across Years 7–9, students will explore texts from *The Odyssey* (Homer) – an ancient adventure story about courage, identity and home, to *Journey's End* (R.C. Sherriff) – a powerful play set in World War I; from *Wuthering Heights* (Emily Brontë) – a dramatic novel about relationships and emotions, to *Animal Farm* (George Orwell) – a short novel that explores power and fairness.

These texts have been carefully selected to give students both challenge and support. Teachers will guide students closely, helping them understand vocabulary, context and ideas at every step.

Summer reading: a great start

Reading over the summer is one of the best ways to prepare for September. It builds confidence, improves vocabulary, and helps students feel ready for new challenges.

We recommend that students choose at least one book to read over the summer, ideally something they enjoy as well as something that stretches them.

Suggested reads:

For adventure: *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* (Rick Riordan)

(A great link to Greek myths like *The Odyssey*)

For thoughtful stories:

The Boy at the Back of the Class (Onjali Q. Raúf)

For developing language:

Short stories or graphic novels can be an excellent choice

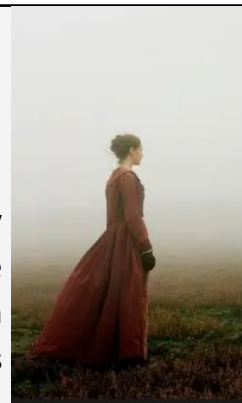
Looking ahead

Our new curriculum is designed to build both knowledge and confidence. By studying these important texts together, students will develop their ability to think deeply, express ideas clearly, and enjoy reading for life.

We look forward to welcoming students back in September, ready to begin this exciting journey.

Happy reading and enjoy the summer!

Mr. O. Wells, Curriculum Leader of English



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Maths Faculty

This term in Maths, Sparx has once again been a key part of students' learning. Students have worked hard to complete almost 1.3 million questions! Overall, students have completed 12000 hours of learning! This is double the amount that was completed last year. Well done to all who are taking ownership of their learning and trying their best!

The following students have earned the most XP on Sparx this year:

Year 7: Victor

Year 8: Dillan

Year 9: Dorcas

Year 10: Ella

Well done to all completing their homework and supporting their own learning. If you need support with your homework, come along on a Tuesday or Wednesday to 209 where the Maths team can support you with any questions you might have.

Well done to all Year 11s for completing their Maths GCSEs. They have worked really hard and we can't wait to see them in August to celebrate their results.

Mr. J Abbott, Curriculum Leader of Maths

Science Faculty

As the summer term draws to a close, we are excited to share some of the highlights and achievements from the Science Department. It has been a vibrant and productive term filled with hands-on learning, exciting experiments, and student success across all year groups.

At KS3 we have completed end of year assessments with students working hard on revision strategies tailored to scientific concepts. Students have shown their dedication to proactive revision and we are spending the last few lessons identifying areas where improvement is needed.

In Year 9, Mrs Pashler took a group of students to a Physics competition over at Ormiston Endeavour. The group did really well, coming 2nd and 3rd for individual task medals. It was a really engaging day that stretched students and allowed them to explore unfamiliar situations within Physics.

By the end of term students will have complete their first 5 GCSE modules and are living up to expectations required for a successful KS4.

Year 10 have completed their first set of PPEs in Science and as a team we are looking forward to supporting them in their final year.

Summer revision material will be available for Year 10 students on Teams for them to access over the summer break. Just a reminder if students are using online resources we follow the AQA trilogy syllabus.

Wishing all students and their families a restful summer.

Mrs. J Tankard, Second in Science Faculty

Humanities Faculty

History

This half term, students in the History department have been exploring a range of fascinating topics across all year groups. Year 7 have been learning about Henry VIII, examining his reign, his marriages, and the impact of the English Reformation. Year 8 have been investigating revolutions, comparing causes and consequences of major historical upheavals and considering how ordinary people were affected. Meanwhile, Year 9 have been studying the Cold War, developing their understanding of superpower tensions, key events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the wider global impact of this period.

We would also like to praise our Year 10 students, who have shown excellent commitment and resilience during their PPE exams this half term. Their hard work, revision efforts, and positive attitude have been truly impressive, and they should be very proud of themselves as they continue their GCSE journey.

Over the summer, there are some fantastic local opportunities to bring history to life. Families might enjoy visiting Christchurch Mansion and Ipswich Museum to explore local and national history, or a trip to Sutton Hoo to discover the famous Anglo-Saxon burial site. Framlingham Castle and Orford Castle also offer great days out, allowing students to connect with medieval history in a hands-on way. We encourage students to take advantage of these experiences to deepen their understanding and enjoyment of history beyond the classroom. Have a wonderful summer break!

Miss K Griffiths, Head of History

Geography

This half-term, students have been learning about a wide range of geographical topics. Year 7 have been learning about the Middle East, and how their abundance of resources such as oil has created opportunities for development and conflict. In Year 8, students have moved onto the cold environments topic after recently learning about rivers. They have learnt how animals adapt to such harsh conditions, and the opportunities and challenges for human development. Year 9 have engaged well in our recent China topic, evaluating the success of the one child policy in limiting population growth.

We would particularly like to highlight the incredible hard work that Year 10 have been putting into the first half of their GCSEs. The students so far have been incredibly successful and are striving to achieve their targets in Geography, working hard to prepare for their first set of PPE exams which look promising.

The Year 10s were also amazing on their fieldtrip to Felixstowe, completing their fieldwork to use in their Paper 3 exam at the end of next year. This is despite the set back we had on day one of the trip with the cancelled train! We look forward to welcoming back our Year 10 students as they finish their GCSEs next year.

Mr. A Knuckey, Curriculum Leader of Humanities



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Religious Studies



Our RS curriculum in the summer term has explored Islam in Year 7. Students have been learning about the key beliefs and practices within this faith. They have explored what the mosque is and the importance of the Five Pillars of Islam. Students have also completed their core knowledge assessments which has showcased the impressive work studied in their first year at Stoke High School.

Year 8 have continued studying the key beliefs and practices within Judaism. They have spent time exploring the importance of Shabbat for Jews and how this is celebrated by many members of the faith. In addition, they have looked at the importance of the Jewish dietary laws with many students finding it difficult to believe that a Jewish person should not have a cheeseburger because meat and dairy is forbidden within the faith!



Year 9 have continued investigating the rights and wrongs of whether it is acceptable to go to war. They have explored whether it is ever acceptable to possess or even use weapons of mass destruction. This has included writing an extended response whereby students weighed up the arguments for and against and reached an overall concluding viewpoint. This practice is something that many students within Year 9 will fine tune and eventually master as they begin their GCSE studies in September.



Finally, it is really pleasing to report that in September, GCSE Religious Studies will officially re-launch as an optional subject at with over fifty students undertaking further study within the subject. We are incredibly impressed at how our students have responded to the changes within the Religious Studies curriculum this year and this is clearly mirrored in the increased uptake for GCSE study.

It is obvious to see that Religious Studies has an exciting future ahead at Stoke High School!

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

Performing Arts Faculty

Peripatetic Music Lessons

This year we have seen an increased number of students taking peripatetic music lessons in singing, guitar, violin, drums, brass and piano. The feedback from the teachers who come into the school has been amazing and our students have made positive progress in their instrument learning and playing.

If you are interested in learning an instrument, please either email Mrs Beacham directly or collect an expression of interest form.

If there is an instrument that you are interested in that is not on the list, please let us know and we will see what we can do!

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Mrs. T Beacham, Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts

Athletics

We started the season by taking some of our Year 10 students to the area athletics competition. This is a competition traditionally aimed at GCSE students where they can be assessed for their practical grade. Even though we do not offer GCSE PE as a subject, a small group of Year 10's expressed the desire to attend. The 12 students who joined us were simply amazing, competing at a very high standard.

A special mention goes to Jaden and Albert who gained 1st places in Javelin, and 1st in 100m and long jump respectively, against a very strong field. They should be congratulated on this. They have now set the standard for all Year 10 athletes of future competitions!

The Year 9 and Year 8 athletics competitions were rained off due to poor weather. At this time we are still awaiting confirmation of a new date for Year 9, however, the Year 8 competition has been rearranged for Wednesday 1st July. The Year 7 competition is taking place this week.

As part of the Sport and Coaching Principles course our Year 10 cohort have been busy practising teaching their coaching sessions. The students become 'coaches' for a lesson, teaching their session to a small group of Year 7, 8 or 9 pupils. It takes a huge amount of confidence to complete this task, and once again we have been amazed by some of the lessons we have seen.

A special mention goes to Lily and Sherif who have produced lessons that were as good as any sessions we have seen with previous cohorts.

Mrs. D Simmons, Teacher of PE

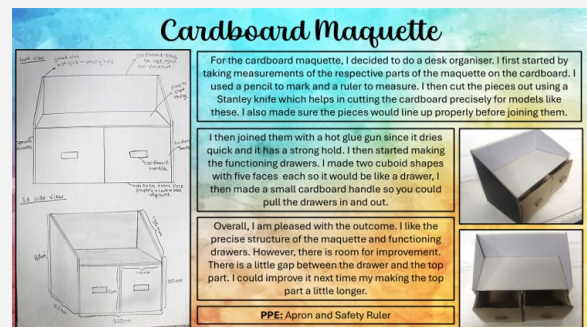
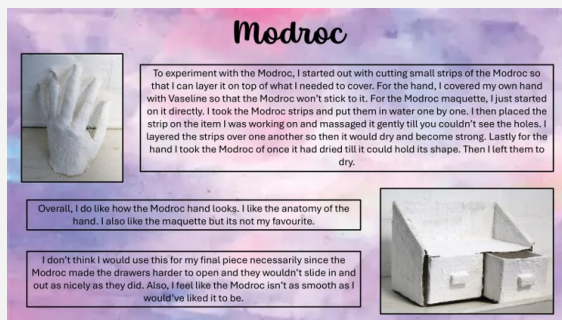




Technology Faculty

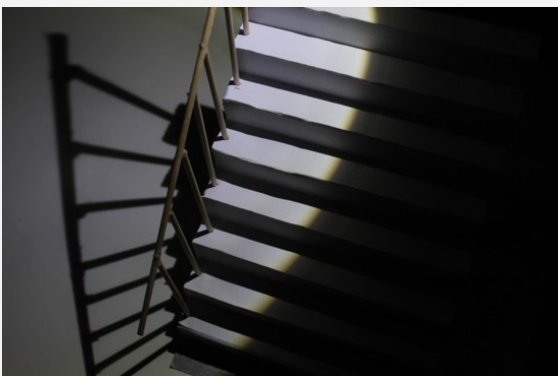
3-D

Year 10 3D students have been working exceptionally hard during practical lessons as they develop their final pieces for the theme of Storage. Throughout the project, students have explored a range of materials, techniques, and design ideas, carefully refining their concepts to create functional and visually engaging outcomes. Their creativity, problem-solving skills, and attention to detail have been evident in the progress made so far, and it has been fantastic to see their confidence grow as they bring their designs to life. We look forward to showcasing the completed pieces and celebrating the impressive work produced by the group.



Photography

This year, KS3 students have shown excellent creativity, technical skill, and engagement throughout their photography projects. Inspired by artists such as Christopher Boffoli, André Kertész, and Andy Goldsworthy, students explored a range of photographic techniques including still life, composition, and natural forms. They demonstrated growing confidence in developing original ideas, experimenting with visual storytelling, and reflecting on the work of influential artists.

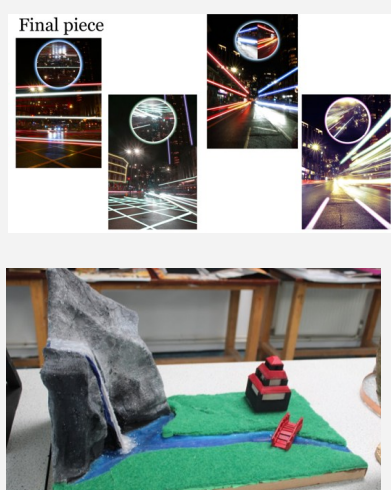


3D, Art and Photography Exhibition

In Technology we have put together this year's showcase of the amazing Year 11 GCSE work from 3D Design, Photography and Art.

The Year 11 GCSE Art, 3D Design and Photography Exhibition is a remarkable celebration of creativity, dedication and talent. Each final piece reflects months of hard work, experimentation and personal development, showcasing the students' ability to transform ideas into thoughtful and visually striking outcomes. From imaginative artworks and expertly crafted 3D designs to powerful photographic portfolios, the exhibition highlights the individuality and artistic maturity of every student. The high standard of work on display demonstrates not only technical skill and creative vision but also resilience, commitment and a willingness to take risks throughout the creative process. The exhibition is a testament to the students' achievements and provides a fitting showcase of their outstanding efforts and accomplishments. Well done Year 11.

Miss Z Button, Curriculum Leader of Technology



Computing

Year 7 Students Develop Essential Digital Communication Skills

Year 7 students in Computing have been building valuable digital communication skills through a recent unit focused on creating purposeful and meaningful documentation.

As part of their learning, students explored how to design documents with a clear audience and intention. They developed an understanding of how effective documentation is not just about presenting information, but about communicating ideas in a way that is clear, engaging, and appropriate for its purpose.

A key focus of the unit has been on sourcing and selecting copyright-free materials. Students learned how to responsibly search for images and content that can be legally used, reinforcing the importance of digital citizenship and respecting intellectual property.

In addition, students have gained practical design skills, including:

- Choosing suitable font styles to enhance readability and tone
- Selecting images that convey meaning and support the message of their work
- Structuring content so that it is visually clear and engaging



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Computing continued...

Through these activities, students are not only improving their technical computing skills but also developing an understanding of how to communicate effectively in a digital world—an essential skill for both their education and future careers.

Well done to all Year 7 students for their creativity and thoughtful approach to their work!

Year 8 Students Build Confidence in Spreadsheet Skills

Year 8 students in Computing have been developing essential skills in spreadsheet design, equipping them with tools that are widely used in both education and the workplace.

Throughout this unit, students have explored how to create effective and well-structured spreadsheets. They have focused on key skills ranging from formatting data clearly to using a variety of functions to perform calculations and analyse information.

A central part of their learning has been understanding where and why spreadsheets are used. Students have examined how this software supports individuals and organisations in making informed decisions based on data, from budgeting and forecasting to tracking performance and trends.

As part of their work, students have learned to:

- Apply formatting techniques to improve clarity and presentation
- Use formulas and functions to process and analyse data
- Organise data in a logical way to support interpretation
- Understand how data can be used to inform decision-making

This unit has helped students see the real-world value of spreadsheets, developing both their technical skills and their ability to think critically about data.

Well done to all Year 8 students for their effort and growing confidence in this important area of computing!

Year 9 Students Begin Their Journey into Web Design

Year 9 students in Computing have recently begun an exciting unit on HTML and web design, taking their first steps into the world of website creation.

So far, students have explored the fundamental building blocks of web pages, learning how HTML is used to structure content and bring websites to life. This early stage has focused on developing a strong foundation, which they will continue to build on as the unit progresses.

A key aspect of their learning has been understanding the importance of writing clean, well-organised code. Students are beginning to recognise how clear and structured coding not only makes websites easier to create, but also easier to maintain and improve.

In addition, students have been encouraged to think carefully about audience and purpose when designing web pages. They are learning that effective web design goes beyond technical skills—it also involves making thoughtful decisions about layout, content, and usability to ensure the site meets the needs of its users.

Computing continued...

During this unit, students have started to:

- Use basic HTML tags to structure web content
- Develop an understanding of clean and readable code
- Consider how design choices impact the user experience
- Think about how websites are tailored for different audiences and purposes

As they continue this topic, students will further develop their creativity and technical skills, gaining valuable insight into how websites are designed and built in the real world.

Well done to all Year 9 students for their enthusiasm as they begin exploring this important area of computing!

Mr. J Oliver, Assistant Principal and Teacher of Computing

French

We are coming to the end of our French curriculum for this year, and we have been delighted to see how well students have prepared for their recent Speaking Assessments in Years 7, 8 and 9. We know students can find this a little daunting, so their resilience and courage have been all the more impressive. All students have made good progress and some are now even able to answer questions in two, three or four tenses, as well as adding detail to their answers and giving their opinions.

We are now in the process of completing the Core Knowledge Assessment which assesses their understanding of all the French we have been learning this year. However, the final part of our curriculum is created around 3 different award-winning French films; we are watching 'Une vie de chat' in Year 7, 'Le petit Nicolas' in Year 8 and 'Les choristes' in Year 9. Each lesson focuses on a different aspect of the film, which we watch in stages. We explore the language used, the historical context and cultural aspects of the films. Students will have the chance to use the French they have learned this year to describe the characters, the story and what they think of the film. It is also a valuable opportunity for students to be immersed in the French language. We know they will enjoy this experience and we think it is an important part of their learning.

Thank you to all parents who have helped students with their French this year and congratulations to all students!

Bonne fin de semestre!

Mrs. C Howe, Curriculum Leader of French



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Year 7

I can not believe that we are rapidly coming to the end of Year 7. Just one year ago, I was welcoming students for the first time, supporting them to navigate the massive change of moving to high school.

This term has been a busy one. I was lucky enough to be able to join our year group at the Inter School Athletics competition. As always, I was incredibly proud of the resilience and camaraderie shown by the students.

Looking back we have achieved so much this year. Students have demonstrated remarkable dedication to their learning, consistently rising to new challenges and striving for excellence. From outstanding classroom achievements to creative performances, sporting successes, and enrichment activities, it has been inspiring to see so many talents flourish. Just as importantly, students have shown resilience, kindness, and a willingness to support one another—qualities that define our community.

As the summer term draws to a close, I am proud of all that Year 7 have achieved this year. Year 8 is just around the corner; I am excited to hand over the baton to Mr Durrant. He is new to the school but an experienced Pastoral Leader who is excited to get to know the year group. I will continue to have a vested interest in this amazing group of students and cannot wait to see them thrive in the coming years. As always, I would like to thank you all, parents, friends and family for your continued support.

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

Year 8

Year 8 Summer Term Update

As we reach the end of the summer term, I am delighted to reflect on what has been a fantastic period for our Year 8 students. It has been a busy and successful term, with students continuing to demonstrate excellent attitude, resilience, and enthusiasm across all aspects of school life. I am incredibly proud of how the year group has represented the school and supported one another.

Sports Day Success

Our Sports Day was a real highlight of the term. The atmosphere throughout the day was fantastic, with students showing great energy and team spirit. Year 8 performed incredibly well across all events, with many students stepping up to represent their forms and giving their best effort in every activity. It was particularly pleasing to see the encouragement and support shown between students, creating such a positive and competitive environment on the track.

A huge well done to everyone who contributed to their form—it was a brilliant day, and we look forward to revealing the winning form very soon!

Athletics at Northgate

Our selected boys and girls also had the opportunity to compete at Northgate in the district athletics event. They performed incredibly well and represented the school with pride. There were several standout performances throughout the event with students showing determination, resilience, and real athletic ability. It was fantastic to see such dedication from our athletes, and they should be extremely proud of their efforts.

NEACO Trip to Suffolk University

We were also fortunate to take part in a NEACO trip to Suffolk University this term. This experience gave students a valuable insight into what university life may look like in the future.

Year 8 continued...

Throughout the day, students engaged well, exploring the campus, learning about different courses, and beginning to think about their future pathways. It was great to see them asking questions, getting involved in activities, and making the most of the opportunity. Feedback from the trip has been extremely positive, and it was clear that students found the experience both enjoyable and inspiring.

A Positive End to the Year

As we finish the academic year, it is important to recognise how far Year 8 have come. Their approach to learning, involvement in school activities, and overall conduct continue to show real maturity.

Whether in lessons, on trips, or during events such as Sports Day and athletics competitions, students have represented themselves and the school extremely well. They should be very proud of their achievements this year. We now look forward to seeing them return in September as confident and motivated Year 9 students, ready for the next stage of their journey.

Mr. J Stevens, Head of Year 8



University of Suffolk

Year 9

As we approach the end of Key Stage 3, it is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the achievements and growth of our Year 9 students. This has been a year of hard work, ambition, and excitement as our students begin to shape their futures and look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of GCSEs and their chosen Options subjects.

A special highlight this term was the participation of some of our students in a NEACO event at the University of Suffolk. Our winning debate team also brought home a trophy—an incredible accomplishment that reflects their dedication, teamwork, and confidence.

Sports Day was another moment to remember, as students demonstrated outstanding spirit, determination, and sportsmanship. Our form tutors were exceptionally proud of every participant, and a special congratulations goes to 9DS for winning overall!

As Head of Year, I am truly excited to move into Key Stage 4 alongside such a fantastic group of students. Our wonderful tutor team continues to provide unwavering support and care, ensuring every student has the guidance they need as they embark on the next stage of their educational journey.

Finally, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all parents, carers, and family members for your constant support and encouragement throughout the year. Your partnership is invaluable in helping our students succeed and thrive.

Here's to a successful end of Key Stage 3 and an exciting start to Key Stage 4!

Mrs. V Spearman, Head of Year 9



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Year 10

As I reflect on the past year there are so many stand out moments that have shown how much the Year 10 students have risen to the challenge and have matured into responsible and kind individuals. We had 48 applications for prefects and 15 to be senior prefects. We interviewed a short list of 8 and appointed two outstanding pupils as Head boy and Head girl, Lily and Sherif. They not only ensure the smooth running of the Prefect team, but they also met Ofsted when they came into school.



We have had taster days at Suffolk One and Suffolk New College, where students threw themselves into subjects and came out proud of their newly learned skills.

The aunts and uncles have supported Mrs Welsby and Ms Spasova with the Year 6s when they came in for their transition days. They did a tremendous job of ensuring the Year 6s were feeling comfortable and looked after in their first day at high school. Mrs Welsby even said they were the best set of aunts and uncles since she has taken on the transition.

Year 10 have also had their first set of PPEs this term. This is the first time they have been in the sports hall to complete practice exams, along with the stress that exams bring. I cannot praise them enough with their resilience and perseverance that they have shown.

Well done Year 10 on a very successful year.

Mrs. K Huggins, Head of Year 10

Year 11

On Monday 15th June, we all said goodbye to our Year 11 students. They have worked incredibly hard over the past few years and we all wish them well in their future endeavours.

The day started with their final exam which was Physics that morning. Our students then returned to Stoke to get their shirts signed. The atmosphere was one of jubilation and pride. There were smiles and laughter as well as tears amongst both staff and students.

At 3pm, the rest of the school community came to meet the Year 11s to say their farewells as their school lives have been positively impacted by their elders. For them, they get to see what the end looks like and the achievement that comes with it.

We ended the day with a final assembly where both the staff body and Year 11s came together in the Drama Studio. Of course, we got to view the before and after school photos, from young fresh-faced Year 7s to taller and maturer Year 11s. Some of the dramatic changes in the photos brought the crowd to laughter and for some, slight embarrassment.

Of course, it didn't end there. I'd like to thank all the parents and carers who contributed photos of their children from a very young age. This added to the fun and further embarrassment for our Year 11s. We also had some lovely messages from our parents and carers which were also displayed.

The assembly was an opportunity to thank all of our staff, in particular the Year 11 tutors. Without them, the Year 11s would not have the necessary intervention and pastoral support to guide them through their final year.

Year 11 continued...

We also had rewards where the Year 11s voted their peers for specific titles. I am pleased to announce the following winners:

Joseph – Class Clown
Georgiana – Drama Queen
Lillie – Sports Star
Kashan – Millionaire
Harry – Return to Stoke

As part of tradition, we also issued our Heart of Stoke award. This prestigious award goes to one student who has demonstrated our core values throughout their time at Stoke High School. This student shows pride in their work, a relentless dedication to succeed and has a personality which shines each and every day. Our winner for 2026 was Francesca. On behalf of myself and the whole school, we couldn't be prouder.

When we reached the end of assembly, the vast majority of students did not want to leave. This said so much. Their second home has been and will always be Stoke High School. And although their time has ended, a new chapter begins. I couldn't be more prouder of this wonderful group of students and I am sure that they will all go on to achieve greater things. We had the Prom on Friday 3rd July (see the next issue for photos) and Results Day will be on Thursday 20th August from 9am. I look forward to seeing them all there for one final time. Year 11, it has been a blast!



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

In Other News...

Children's Book Award: Stoke High Students Pick the Winner

Congratulations to Sheena Dempsey, whose graphic novel about two time-travelling penguins, **Pablo and Splash: Roman Holiday** (Bloomsbury Children's Books), was voted Overall Winner of this year's FCBG Children's Book Award, the only national book award voted for entirely by children.

The success of **Pablo and Splash** reflects the continuing rise in popularity of graphic novels and illustrated fiction amongst young readers: 'Bursting with humour, comic chaos and vibrant illustrations, the latest adventure in the much-loved series proved enormously popular with children across the country,' said the award organisers.

Stoke High School Library takes part in the CBA book award every year. We receive free copies from Ipswich Children's Book Group for students to read and review. We also work with our feeder Primary schools, Halifax and Hillside, throughout the year voting on the books for younger readers.

This year's winner of the Books for Younger Children category was **Gozzle**, by Julia Donaldson,



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Children's Book Award: Stoke High Students Pick the Winner continued...

illustrated by Sara Ogilvie (Macmillan Children's Books), a warm and witty story about fatherhood and family.

In the Books for Older Readers category, the top spot went to **My Name is Samim** by Fidan Meikle (Floris Books). **My Name is Samim** is a powerful story of courage, resilience and hope based on the real-life experiences of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the UK.

All the winning titles are available to borrow from the school library.

Mrs. J Riches, Academy Librarian

A Final Message from our Chair of Governors

It is with a lot of sadness combined with pride that I write this article. After forty years as a Governor at Stoke, I shall be retiring at the end of the academic year. Being a Governor and ultimately, Chair of Governors at Stoke, is one of my proudest achievements. We have always had very committed Governors and I have enjoyed working with them all.

I have seen countless students pass through the school and no matter what their academic successes (and so many are outstanding), students leave Stoke as good, rounded individuals who have gone on to have successful careers and very happy lives. The number whose children and grandchildren attend Stoke are proof of this.

Over the years, I've lost count of the number of excellent drama performances and music concerts that I have been privileged to enjoy. I was at Highbury when our team won the national under sixteen F A Cup. Luckily, the sight of the Headteacher, the then Chair of Governors and the Vice Chair hugging each other and jumping up and down like loons was not recorded for posterity!!

I've been lucky enough to accompany our students on a variety of school trips and outings. A particular highlight was a Battlefields Tour in 2014, when nine of our students were sponsored by a variety of local ex-service charities and organisations to lay poppy wreaths at the Menin Gate in Belgium. However, no matter where we visited, or what the students did, they never failed to be excellent ambassadors of Stoke.

Last year, when we celebrated the one hundred and twenty five year anniversary of Stoke and its predecessors, the number of ex-students who returned, alongside retired Headteachers and former teachers, spoke volumes of the affection that Stoke is held in.

I am very proud to have participated in the evolvement of Stoke to the amazing school that it is now. One of the biggest changes of course was becoming an Ormiston Academy, which I was pleased to help lead. Education is very different to what it was in 1986, and the esteem which Stoke is held in locally is proof of how far we have travelled.

Of course, not everything has been happy and rosy. Unfortunately, we have not always been able to enable all students to finish their education at Stoke. Those decisions pain staff and Governors alike and are never taken lightly. Sadly, there were times when I've helped to support staff and students through some very sad days and weeks when we have lost students and staff members. Although not great in number, there have been too many of those.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that I have worked with over the last forty years for all their hard work and commitment to Stoke and wish everyone at Stoke all the very best for the future. I am very proud to be a Stokie – a special school, special staff, special students, special Governors and very special memories. Thank you.

Liz Combes, Chair of Governors

Summer Holiday Safeguarding



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shout
85258

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

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).

childline
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](#).

Where to go for help:

SAMARITANS

Samaritans are available 24/7 and offer a free anonymous non-judgemental listening service. They can be reached by phone on 116 123 or via email at jo@samaritans.org.

THE MIX

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
fighting for young people's mental health

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

NHS

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

Digital resources:

Calm zone | Childline
Activities and tools, wellbeing exercises and interactive games for under 19s.

Mental Health - The Mix
Online articles and discussion forums for 11 – 25 year olds.

Home – Kooth
Online mental wellbeing community for 10 – 25 year olds.

Self-care tips videos for young people - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
Online self-care video library.

**Your mate's in trouble.
Instinct says: jump in.**

Cold water shock hits fast though.
They panic.
They could climb on you to stay afloat.
Now it's two of you in trouble.

What actually saves lives:

- Call 999.
- Tell them to float on their back.
- Throw something that floats.

**Phone, Float, Throw.
Be a mate.**

 ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY UK

WORRIED?
We're here to listen.



Call Childline on 0800 1111
or visit childline.org.uk

Whatever it is – we're here to listen. It's free and you don't even need to tell us your name.

childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Return to School September 2026 Dates

Wednesday 2nd September—Year 7 only

Thursday 3rd September—Whole School

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