

Our ref: MMC/NWI

30 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been another exceptionally positive and inspiring week at the academy, celebrating outstanding student achievement, rich learning experiences and a strong sense of community. From impressive sporting successes to vibrant enrichment activities, careers opportunities and upcoming events, our students continue to demonstrate ambition, resilience and talent across every aspect of school life. This newsletter highlights the many ways our young people are being supported to thrive academically, creatively and personally, and we thank families for their continued partnership and support.

A special mention must go to our superb Badminton Champions who won the KS4 Doncaster Championship for the fourth time in a row. The boys have played together in the competition each year from year 8 onwards winning each year they have entered. What is particularly lovely about this achievement is the true sense of togetherness that the boys display. As KS5 do not have a Doncaster Championship it was effectively their last time representing the academy, what a fitting end to a group of Champions.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### Year 11 February Half Term Achieve

Over February half term, we'll be hosting a number of Achieve sessions to support students' preparations for trial examinations which start the week after half term.

Over the last four years, students who attended these sessions found them to be incredibly beneficial and they performed significantly higher than students who did not attend the sessions. Students are not expected to attend in uniform, but they will need to bring equipment and refreshments.

To support with resourcing the sessions, we'd like to request students sign up using this form: [Year 11 February 2026 Half Term Achieve – Fill out form](#)

### Tassomai

Students' investment in Tassomai continues to go above and beyond, with students in years 10 and 11 completing over 330 hours of quizzing and answering over 96,000 questions last week!

In year 11, we are running a number of rewards linked to Tassomai:

- If students answer 200,000 questions this month, they will win a photo booth at their Prom.
- The student who gains the most points between January and May will win a Prom VIP table.
- Students who quiz for 90 minutes on Tassomai this week will be rewarded with the Mr Stamp Stag acadimal.



## Sparx

As an academy, we have completed over 5,200 hours of personalised learning, answered a half a million questions correctly and over 270 students have improved their times table fluency this year. We thank every parent for their support and encouragement in completing Sparx mathematics tasks.

For years 7 to 10, homework is set every Friday and due the following Thursday.

Students will soon be able to access "fix up" work. This is based on their most recent assessments and will give every child bespoke feedback and improvement work. We look forward to student's demonstrating their gains in knowledge!

## **Fixtures**

### Year 8/9 Girls Football

On Thursday 29 January, our year 8/9 girls football team played against Armthorpe Academy and McAuley Catholic High School. We had two teams playing and both competed positively and represented the academy extremely well.

### Badminton Premier League

Last week our KS3 Badminton team were crowned Doncaster Champions, this week it was the turn of our KS4 team. Yesterday, our KS4 team represented the academy away at Hayfield School in the Premier League final. We came away with the trophy after being **crowned Doncaster Badminton champions again - four years in a row!** Well done to Mr Webb and the committed students who have dedicated their time and worked incredibly hard over the past four years at the academy - We are very proud of them all!

## **Events**

### NEXUS 2026

Thursday 29 January was an unforgettable evening for our dance club, as 16 of our talented students took to the stage at the Nexus Dance Festival at Hall Cross Academy, proudly presented by ICA!

The Nexus Festival is a fantastic celebration that brings together Doncaster dance schools and local schools to collaborate, connect, and share their passion for dance — and our students truly shone. They performed two stunning pieces, one modern and one lyrical, and completely wowed the audience with their immaculate timing, expressive movement, and outstanding performance skills.

Their confidence, commitment, and enthusiasm were a joy to watch, and they represented our academy brilliantly. We couldn't be prouder of them!

### John Heeley Visit

On Friday 30 January our students received an inspiring visit from John Heeley, Secretary of State for Defence, who delivered an assembly to our year 10 cohort about his role and responsibilities in government.

Following the assembly, he met with members of our Student Parliament to discuss their mental health mentoring programme and sustainability plans which were launched during his previous visit. He was genuinely impressed by the thoughtfulness, ambition and impact of their work and commented on the maturity and leadership shown by our students.

At the end of the visit, he spent time speaking with two of our students who have been elected as Youth Councillors for Doncaster, Ava and Sophie and offered his support for their campaign, recognising their



commitment to representing young people's voices in the community and will be attending the second meeting to help promote and drive their manifesto campaign.

The visit was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the strength of our student leadership and the many initiatives taking place across the school that help to drive and capture student voice.

### Indoor Athletics

On Thursday 5 February, STWA will host the Doncaster indoor athletics event at the EIS. All Doncaster schools compete to take home the title of Indoor Athletics champions! We have four teams representing our academy at this event from years 8 and 10. We wish them good luck!

### An Audience With

On Friday 6 February we will be hosting our next An Audience With event for all year 7 students. We will be welcoming Sally Nicholls, **a prize-winning children's British author; Sally's first novel won the Waterstone's book prize** and she has additionally been shortlisted for several other awards with The Guardian, Costa and the Carnegie Medal. We have yet to have an author visit us for An Audience With, let alone a prize-winning one, so this will be a **great opportunity to invigorate both reading and writing** for all of our year 7 students! Sally will be delivering an inspiring talk, followed by a writing workshop for a smaller group of students based on her book: Things A Bright Girl Can Do.

### London Question Time

On Tuesday 10 February, 15 of our sixth form students will be attending Westminster's Abbey Question Time where they will be presented with the opportunity to meet with various political figures. Throughout the session, students will be able to pose questions and participate in a live debate amongst the politicians.

### University of Cambridge Visit

On Thursday 12 February, selected year 12 students will visit the University of Cambridge to attend a talk about the Oxbridge admissions process, a Q&A session with current students, and a tour of Corpus Christi College. Students will also get the chance to experience a guided punting tour on the river Cam. The trip aims to ensure that students interested in applying to highly competitive universities are well equipped and informed ahead of the admissions process in October 2026.

### The Lecture Programme

Friday 13 February sees the return of the Lecture Programme. A programme for sixth form students aimed to broaden their knowledge beyond their core courses, whilst developing university style study skills, preparing them for higher education.

We will welcome Dr Katie Mellor from The University of Oxford who will deliver her lecture 'Beyond the Blood Test: What Really Matters to Patients'.

Students will have sessions preparing them for lecture style learning, pre/post strategies and effective note taking strategies for during the lecture, building on prior Character Education input in KS3/4.

### University of Cambridge Schools Tour

On Friday 13 March, from 2:00 – 3:30 pm, we are hosting the University of Cambridge Schools Tour for the second year. This session is aimed at students in years 10 to 12 who are interested in studying at Cambridge or Oxford.

During the session, the following areas will be covered:

- The benefits of going to university



- Financing university
- Teaching, social life and careers afterwards
- Studying at the University of Cambridge
- KS4/KS5 qualifications and subject choices
- Making a competitive application (including writing a personal statement and interviews)

If your child is interested in attending this session, please express your interest by completing this form by Monday 9 February, 5:00 pm: [University of Cambridge Schools Tour 2026 – Fill out form](#)

Students should see Ms Shaw for more details.

### Gym and Dance Spectacular Showcase

On Thursday 12 February, STWA will be holding its annual Gym and Dance Spectacular Showcase - 'The Icons.' Students are working exceptionally hard, both in and out of lessons, to ensure their routines are flawless and I am sure they would appreciate your support! Tickets are on sale now for those who plan on coming to watch.

### **House Updates**

This term, we have launched the third instalment of our Extended House Project which focuses on Misty Copeland. Throughout the week, students can earn their house points for entering into our: weekly wins, box tasks, online quizzes, awareness days and participating in our house sporting events.

For our term two house reward, students will be invited to attend a matinee performance of STWA's very own Little Shop of Horrors. In order to be eligible for this event, students in the winning house must have a minimum of 40 house points and less than 50 negatives.

Students are competing to earn a place on our end of year house trip to Alton Towers! Students can still take part in all of our house competitions to earn those all-important house points!

### **Attendance**

We would like to say a huge well done and thank you to our students and families for their excellent attendance this week.

Despite the poor weather, students have continued to arrive at school on time, ready to learn, and with fantastic attitudes. Your commitment really does make a difference - strong attendance helps students stay on track, build routines, and make the most of every learning opportunity.

We are incredibly proud of the resilience and determination shown by our school community. Let's keep this positive momentum going as we move into next week!

Thank you for your continued support.

### **Standards**

Over the past two weeks, we have been reviewing the use of medical toilet passes within the Academy to ensure that learning time is maximised and students are not missing significant portions of their lessons.

It is important to be clear that medical toilet passes are intended for use only in very rare and necessary circumstances. The Academy provides regular opportunities for students to access toilet facilities between lessons, allowing lesson time to be used effectively without disruption.

Medical toilet passes are not designed to be used every lesson. Where concerns have been identified regarding frequent use, we have already held discussions with parents to ensure appropriate support is in place.



Moving forward, we will continue to monitor and review the use of toilet passes, particularly for students who are using them on a very regular basis, to ensure they are being used appropriately and that students' learning remains our priority.

### **Parents and Community Advisory Board (PCAB)**

To enable us to reflect on the areas of strength and the opportunities for development within our academy, our Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB) meet once per term with members of staff and the Senior Leadership team. Our next PCAB meeting will be held at STWA on Tuesday 3 March from 5:00 until 6:00 pm – we hope you can join us.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald  
**Principal**

