

Our ref: MMC/NWI

6 February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

This week, we enjoyed welcoming parents to the Creative Arts Elective Special Event that allowed students to showcase the cooking that they have been doing, whilst our budding Musical Theatre group performed for visitors. Our electives programme was designed to allow students the opportunities to find a passion that they might not have had or develop an interest that they have been unable to explore. The students are learning so many skills, and they are so engaged in Wednesday afternoon activities.

As we enter the period whereby our post 16 students will receive university or higher-level apprenticeship offers, I am incredibly proud that more young people than ever are going on to University of higher level apprenticeships. They serve as real aspirational role models to our school community. Whilst the hard work of achieving the entry requirements will continue, I remind all young people that any university would be lucky to have them, not the other way around. These young people belong at top institutions and will go on to achieve great things.

## **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 340 hours of quizzing and answering over 100,000 questions last week!

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

- Students in year 11 surpassed their target of 200,000 questions to win a photo booth at Prom.
- The student who gains the most points between January and May will win a Prom VIP table.
- Students who answer 500 questions on Tassomai this week will be rewarded with the Mr Woodhouse acadimal.



## Sparx

As an academy, we have completed over 5,400 hours of personalised learning, answered a half a million questions correctly and over 275 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!

## **Events**

### Indoor Athletics

On Thursday 5 February, STWA hosted the Doncaster Indoor Athletics event at the English Institute of Sport (EIS), where 18 schools competed to be crowned Doncaster Champions 2026.

Although we did not secure any overall winners, our students represented the academy superbly and they demonstrated great effort, determination, and sportsmanship in all of their events.

### An Audience With

On Friday 6 February, award winning children's author; Sally Nicholls visited the academy to deliver an inspiring talk to our year 7 students, followed by a writing workshop to 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.

### **Attendance**

We are very proud that our overall attendance continues to sit **above the national average**, reflecting the strong commitment of our pupils, families and staff. In a national context, where schools are working hard to rebuild attendance following the disruption of recent years, this is a real achievement for our whole community.

Regular attendance is a key focus across the country, as being in school every day has a clear and positive impact on pupils' learning, wellbeing and long-term outcomes. By attending consistently, pupils benefit from high-quality teaching, stronger routines and positive relationships with peers and staff.

We would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in prioritising attendance, including avoiding term-time holidays and ensuring pupils arrive on time each day. We will continue to work closely with families to support good attendance and to provide help where challenges arise, so that every child can make the most of their time in school

### **Standards**

High standards are central to life at our school and reflect the British Values we promote every day. Clear expectations around behaviour, effort and respect help pupils understand **individual responsibility** and **the rule of law**, creating a calm and positive environment for learning.

We encourage pupils to take pride in their work and show **mutual respect and tolerance** towards others. These shared standards help pupils develop strong character, make positive choices and prepare for life in modern Britain.

We are proud of how our pupils meet these expectations and thank families for their continued support in upholding our high standards.



## **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**

