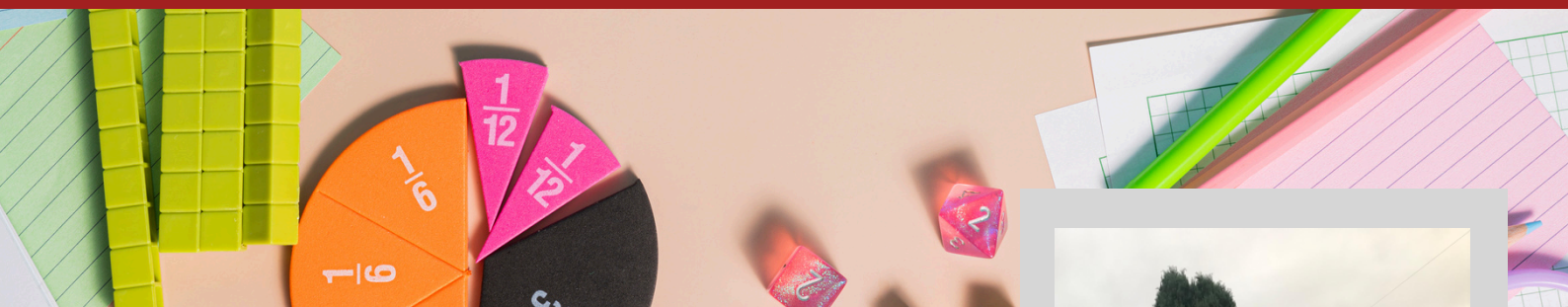


NEWSLETTER

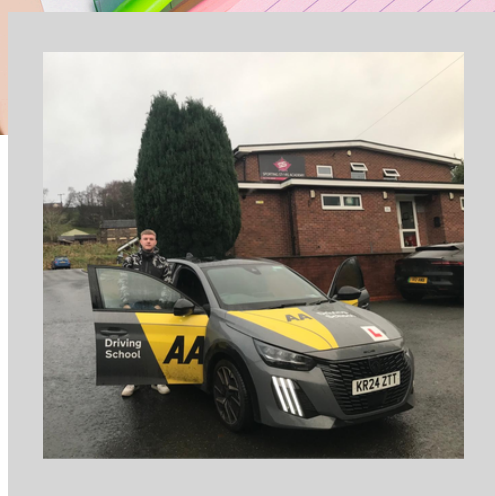
AUTUMN TERM, 2024



Welcome to the latest edition of the Sporting Stars Academy Newsletter. This newsletter marks the end of a busy Autumn term and we have a lot of exciting news to share.

Please join us in welcoming Chris Budrys, Deputy Headteacher for Behaviour and Culture, to the Sporting Stars team. Chris has been instrumental in setting up ClassCharts as a way to track and report on behaviour, whilst motivating students through a positive, rewards based approach.

Our students have embraced the use of ClassCharts and the instant praise and acknowledgement that they can receive. Students have been working towards an end of term rewards trip, based on their ClassCharts points. Remember that by downloading the parent app, you too can also track the engagement and behaviour of your child.



This term also saw the launch of the new Sporting Stars website: www.sportingstarsacademy.com Please visit the website should you require any additional information or for any further updates including what your child is studying or to view recent news blogs. Our blogs offer snippets into the experiences of our students such as the assemblies run by Staffordshire Police, delivered through their new state of the art VR equipment to engage students in their key messages around safety and knife crime in the community.

Our Year 11 students have also had a busy term focusing on their next steps, undertaking their mock GCSEs and completing their career action plans. Next steps for these students will be college applications in the New Year, with us having already completed a number of visits to local colleges in recent weeks.

We have said goodbye and good luck to Art teacher, Alison Harding, who has taken on a new role in the city this term. I would like to thank Alison and wish her all the best in her next chapter.

Wishing you all a wonderful break and we look forward to welcoming students back into the Academy in the New Year.

BTEC SPORT



This term, our students have fully immersed themselves in both the theory and practical lessons.

Year 10 students have made a strong start, focusing on different types of sports provision and technology in sport .

They've recently begun leading warm-ups as part of their assessments, showcasing their understanding of the theoretical content taught within lessons such as stretching, pulse raising and joint mobilisation.

A special mention goes to Jayden, who excelled in his initial assessment.

YEAR 11

Year 11 students are diving deeper into theoretical knowledge around the human body, including the functions and structure of the skeletal system and how this affects sporting performance. Their ability to link classroom content to real-life applications is impressive and prepares them well for further study or career pathways.



NURTURE

For our nurture students, tailored lessons have provided opportunities to grasp foundational concepts while building confidence in applying their knowledge in small group activities.

The pictures here show year 10 students working on their BTEC coursework.



SCIENCE

YEAR 10 SCIENCE UPDATE: FOCUSED STUDIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Year 10 students have had a productive term so far, their recent studies have focused on biology and physics, with an ongoing exploration of human anatomy and physiology.

Completed Topic: Cells in Animals and Plants Earlier in the term, year 10 covered the intricate structures and functions of cells, the fundamental units of life. Students explored animal and plant cells, comparing their components and roles. In physics, students have mastered the principles of waves, including their types, properties, and behaviours. They examined the differences between transverse and longitudinal waves, with practical studies on sound, light, and other forms of energy transfer.

Current Topic: Human Body Systems Building on their knowledge of cells and biological processes, we are now focusing on human body systems. This segment encourages students to appreciate the complexity and interdependence of these systems, highlighting their importance to overall health and wellness. This topic introduces students to the structure and functions of key systems that sustain life.



Year 10 students taking part in a science experiment. The students observed a dissection of the heart to further their biological knowledge.

YEAR 11 SCIENCE UPDATE: FOCUSED STUDIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Year 11 students have been diligently advancing their scientific knowledge, tackling a variety of complex topics this term.

Completed Topic: Chemical Quantities Students began the term by studying chemical quantities, focusing on concepts like the mole, molar mass, and balancing symbol equations. This topic equipped them with the tools to quantify substances in chemical reactions accurately.

Completed Topic: Forces and Energy Changes In physics, they explored the relationship between forces and energy changes, delving into topics such as work done, energy transfer, and the principles of conservation of energy. This included practical experiments and problem-solving exercises to apply these principles in real-world contexts.

Completed Topic: Structure and Bonding Year 11 also delved into the intricacies of atomic structure and chemical bonding. They examined ionic, covalent, and metallic bonds, understanding how these interactions determine the properties of substances.

Mock Exams: Following these studies, Year 11 applied themselves with great effort to their mock exams. These assessments provided valuable practice and highlighted areas for improvement, preparing them for their final exams. I was impressed with their determination and the progress demonstrated during this period.

Current Topic: Forces and Motion Building on their earlier work on forces, Year 11 is now studying forces and motion. This includes: Newton's Laws of Motion, Kinematics, and Dynamics. This topic challenges students to integrate mathematical and conceptual skills, fostering a deeper understanding of how physical principles govern the world around them.

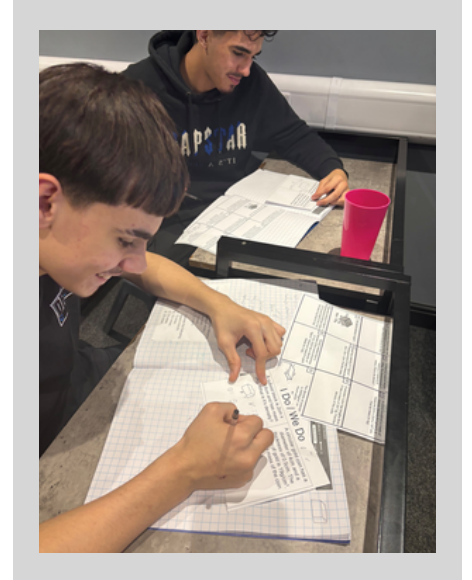
MATHS

This term has been a productive and engaging period for students across all year groups. Here's a summary of the fantastic work completed in Maths lessons.

YEAR 10: EXPLORING ALGEBRA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Year 10 have been hard at work building their skills in introductory algebra and data handling. Through the Graphs, Tables and Charts unit, students explored how data can be presented and interpreted in different formats. A particular focus has been on scattergraphs, where students learned how to identify relationships between variables and draw conclusions based on correlation.

Similarly, the class mastered pie charts, gaining insight into representing and comparing proportions effectively. These skills have not only deepened their understanding of mathematics but also highlighted the practical applications of data analysis in everyday life.

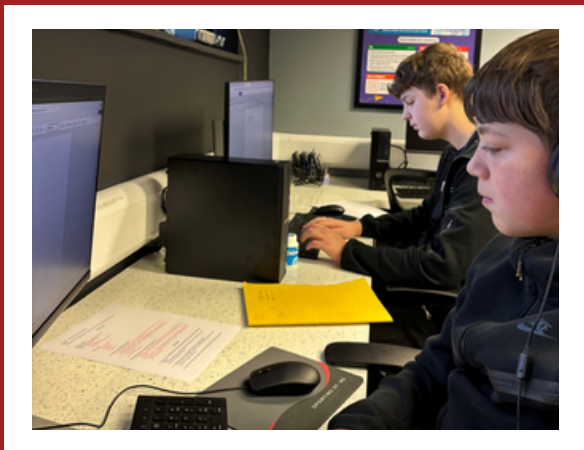


YEAR 11: MOCK EXAMS AND FINANCIAL MATHS

Year 11 students have completed their first set of mock exams, an important milestone in their GCSE journey.

The mock process allowed students to showcase their strengths while also identifying areas for improvement. As a result, every student now has a personalised revision checklist, tailored to their individual needs.

This tool will be invaluable as they prepare for their summer exams.



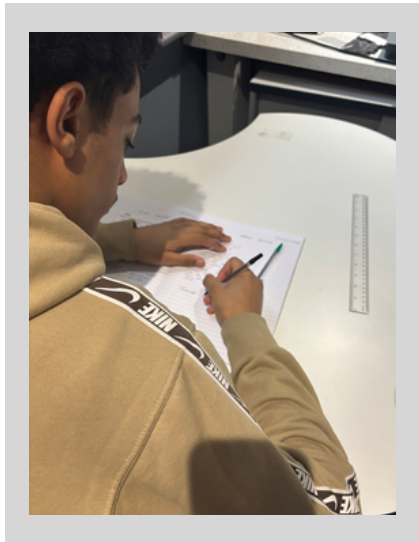
I am proud of the hard work and dedication demonstrated by many students, with several achieving a grade 4 – a strong foundation to build upon in the coming months.

In lessons, Year 11 have also been studying compound interest and its applications in real-world financial contexts. By exploring topics such as savings, loans, and investment growth, students are gaining practical financial literacy skills that will benefit them long after school. This has been an eye-opening topic, sparking discussions about the importance of managing money wisely.

As we approach the next term, I encourage students to keep up their enthusiasm and engagement.

Well done to all!

ENGLISH



The students have all worked very hard this term and I am proud of the dedication which they are showing to their learning.

YEAR 10: 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' AND LANGUAGE PAPER 1

Year 10 have prepared for both their language and literature exams this term. We started the term by reading 'A Christmas Carol'. The students engaged well with the story. They were able to write extended paragraphs on different characters in the novella. We had some lively discussions when we talked about how and why Scrooge changed and whether we can ever forgive someone.

This half term the students have been preparing for language paper 1 -fiction reading. We have read and studied a variety of different fiction extracts, the students have then answered

questions about what we have read. We have also discussed how to develop fiction writing skills. The students have learnt how to use similes, pathetic fallacy and and powerful adjectives to improve their writing.

YEAR 11: POETRY ANTHOLOGY, UNSEEN POETRY, MOCK EXAMS AND 'MACBETH'

Year 11 students have worked very hard this term preparing for their final exams.

We started the term learning about the key poems needed for the poetry component on literature paper 2. We remained on the theme of poetry and looked at unseen poetry after that.

Here the students are given a poem which they have never seen before, they will be expected to understand the poem and explain its wider message to the reader.

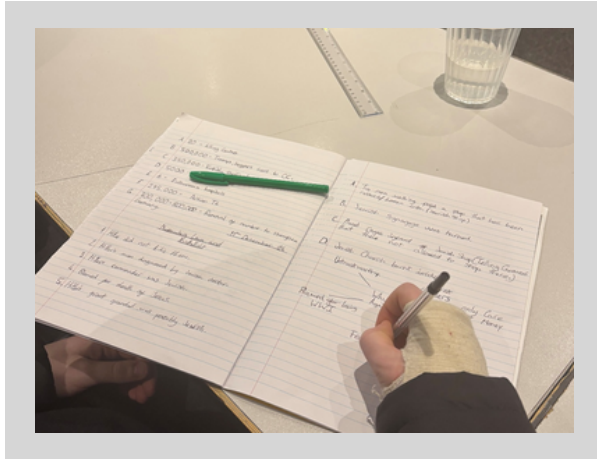
Following poetry, year 11 students have completed their first set of mock exams, this has given them an important indication for their next GCSE steps. Each student is now aware of the revision focus needed for literature paper 2 and language paper 1.

We have ended the term revising literature paper 1. We are currently revising 'Macbeth', reminding ourselves of the key plot links, characters and quotes.

I am really proud of the hard work and effort which the students have put into their work this term. I am sure that this will continue into the new year, when we will revise the rest of literature paper 1, 'A Christmas Carol' and language paper 2.



HISTORY



YEAR 11 CURRICULUM

Year 11 are undertaking the Elizabethan England unit in GCSE History with myself and are especially skilled at interrogating primary sources and applying the skills needed, such as what is convincing and believable about the source and what are its limitations.

We have recently completed learning about the Spanish Armada and will finish the year learning about Bess of Hardwick and how the purpose of this house and the land have changed over time.

YEAR 10 CURRICULUM

Year 10 have started the year well and are also undertaking GCSE History and are completing a unit on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust.

The class engages well and have completed several types of questions regarding the message of a source, the impact of an event and essay style questions.

NURTURE CURRICULUM

Nurture have worked well this term.

They are presently learning about rebellions in Elizabethan times, as they have previously studied governance in Elizabethan times.



NURTURE – ACADEMIC

MATHS

We have been working on a variety of topics within maths this term. The nurture group have learned how to multiply and divide by powers of ten, how to round decimals up and down depending on the number of decimal places and they have recently been working on fractions including how to add and subtract these with different denominators. The nurture group show a great desire to learn in Maths and consistently work hard and demonstrate fantastic work in their books.

BTEC PE

This term in BTEC PE we have completed two units. We have completed a unit around being organised and this has helped students to organise their work in school better, recently we have completed a unit on delivering a practical warm up to peers. The group have shown great confidence whilst delivering their warm up activities, The group always show a desire to work hard and push themselves. As we move into the spring term we need to make sure that the group continues to work hard and keep up their high standards they set every day

ENGLISH

This term we have read a variety of text types, including instructions, explanations, and persuasive writing. We have learned to identify key information, infer meaning, and evaluate the effectiveness of different texts. We have also began to write a variety of texts based on the audience and purpose including emails, letters, reports and leaflets.

SCIENCE

This term, students have been completing a biology unit about the Human Body. They have explored how organs are organised into systems that carry out essential life processes. Students studied how organ systems deliver nutrients and oxygen to cells, remove waste, and are coordinated by the nervous and hormonal systems. They also examined how a balanced diet, exercise, and a healthy lifestyle maintain health.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

In RE this term, we have concentrated on Paper 1 Catholic Beliefs, Teachings and Practices. We have covered beliefs about The Trinity, Creation and the life of Jesus. We have also investigated Catholic Practices such as the Eucharist.

VOCATIONAL STUDIES

vocational Studies is a BTEC Level 1 Introductory Award. This term we have completed 2 units – Being Organised and Exploring Local Visitor Attractions. Being Organised is a core unit and helped provide students with key organisational skills such as creating a schedule and a to do list. Exploring Local Visitor Attractions develops knowledge of Travel and Tourism and IT skills. In PSHE this term we have completed a 'Health and Wellbeing' unit. We have explored topics such as resilience, confidence and first aid.

STAR CURRICULUM

The Nurture class are currently completing their unit on Health and Wellbeing and they have recently completed work on areas such as Cancer Awareness, Smoking and Vaping and Anti-Social Behaviour.

NURTURE – ENRICHMENT

FOREST SCHOOL

Nurture have taken part in forest school every week during the winter term. They have done numerous activities throughout.

Pupils have cooked round the campfire, crafted different items, learnt how to use a knife safely and had the opportunity of taking part in the first ever Waymaking course.

This involved numerous dates from September to December and finished with a celebration party, pupils loved the experiences that they experienced during the Waymaking course and it brought out so many qualities that the group have, you could see confidence increasing every week, teamwork improving all the time and the desire to be outdoors and communicating with each other grew every week.

The group looks forward to continuing their forest school experiences in the spring term.



MUSIC

During the winter term in music students have been focusing on creating their own band lab song remix on the computers.

They have engaged and made some fantastic songs that really demonstrated the enjoyment they have for music. They have also had weekly treats of different musical instruments coming into school for them to try, they love this and often make a whole lot of noise!

NURTURE – ENRICHMENT



POTTERIES MUSEUM

As part of our vocational studies course, students recently had the exciting opportunity to visit The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery. This local treasure in Stoke-on-Trent provided an enriching experience, blending education with exploration.

The visit offered students a chance to gather valuable information for their coursework, enhancing their understanding of various subjects. The museum's diverse exhibits on Stoke-on-Trent's rich history, wildlife, and art inspired curiosity and creativity, making learning truly come to life.

From the fascinating displays of pottery that showcase the city's heritage to the engaging wildlife exhibitions, students gained a deeper appreciation of their local community and its cultural significance. The art galleries, filled with vibrant works, encouraged thoughtful discussion and analysis, further supporting their academic journey.

This hands-on experience highlighted the importance of connecting classroom learning with real-world environments. The students left the museum not only with notes for their coursework but also with a sense of pride in their local history and inspiration for future studies.

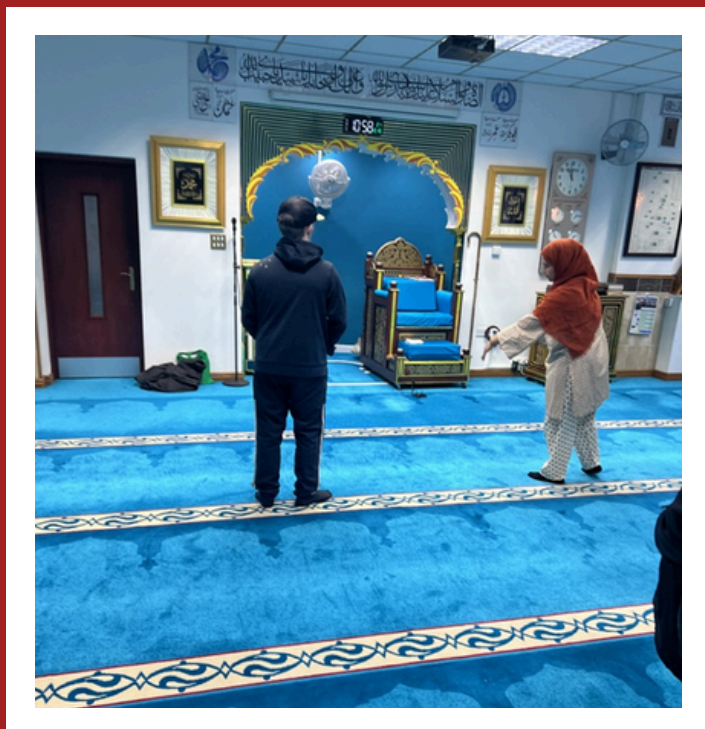
FAITH WALK

A highlight of this term was our faith walk in Derby, where students had the opportunity to visit and learn about three different places of worship: a Mosque, a Mandir, and a Baptist church.

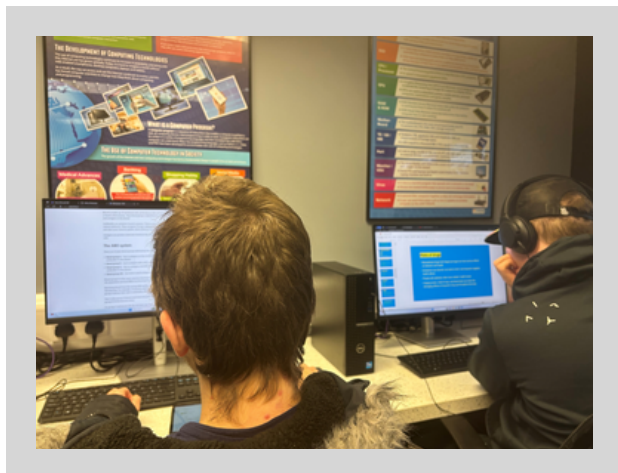
At each location, students were warmly welcomed by faith leaders who shared insights about their beliefs, practices, and community roles.

Students experienced the serenity of prayer spaces, learned about symbolic rituals, and gained a deeper understanding of how faith influences daily life. Head coverings were worn as a sign of respect.

This enriching experience encouraged respectful dialogue and broadened their perspective on the diversity of religious traditions.



BESPOKE PROVISION AND POST-16



Post-16 students are continuing to work hard on their BTEC Public Services and Personal Growth and Wellbeing as well as Functional Maths and English.

On a Monday Post-16 students also have the opportunity to work towards a qualification in music production.

The students enjoy the flexibility and freedom that Post-16 brings.

The pictures here show the students working independently on their BTEC coursework.

Our final, exciting offer, for students are driving lessons with Griff. Two students are currently taking part in this offer. Griff is teaching the students both the practical and theory aspects of being a safe driver.

As part of our provision for Year 11 and Post-16 a group of students continue to spend their day on a Thursday at the go-karting facility in Burslem.

Through Fast-Forward training the students will achieve and Advanced Level 1 Motor Vehicle studies. At the end of the morning's lessons the students are allowed to practice their racing skills on the track. This is a very popular activity with the students.

Fast-Forward have particularly praised Damian (Year 11)



Well done to everyone who takes part.

ENRICHMENT & AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

This term, our enrichment activities have focused on badminton, football, and pool, alongside a wide range of other engaging opportunities.



One of the most exciting developments this term has been the increased participation from our female students. The girls have engaged well with the enrichment activities, and we have seen the development and formation of new friendships.

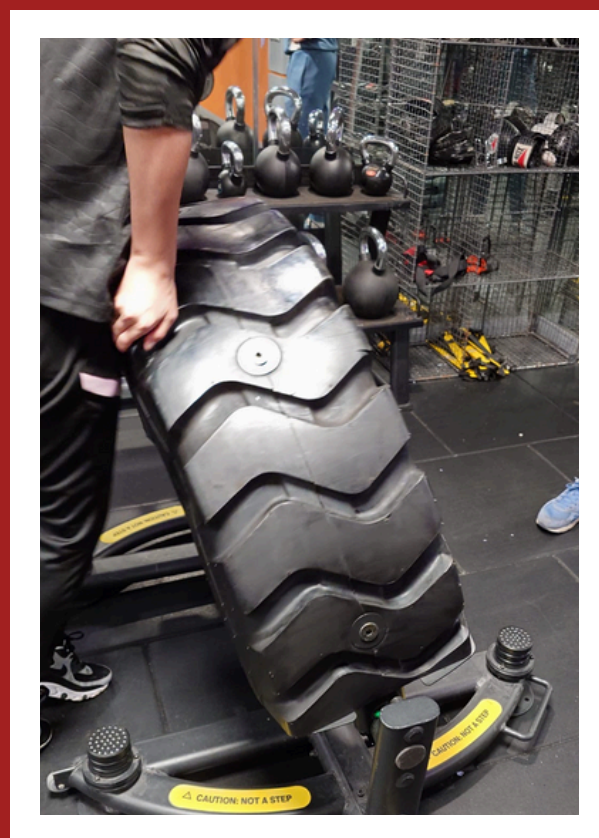
These bonds have created a supportive atmosphere, with students encouraging each other to step out of their comfort zones and actively participate in sports.

The girls have particularly enjoyed badminton sessions on a Thursday afternoon.

Friday is also very popular, Lindsay Joy, from the company Breath Therapy, works with the girls.

She has been teaching the girls breathing exercises which can be used to support relaxation and meditation exercises to help combat stress.

We're proud of the enthusiasm and dedication shown by all students and look forward to seeing the programme continue to flourish!



STAR CURRICULUM

The STAR curriculum has been developed specifically for our students and creates meaningful, calm learning during our 15 minutes of form time and the timetabled lessons. It helps to build relationships between the students and staff.

Form time continues to be an engaging start to the day. The students enjoy discussing a social or political issue to start their day. As well as 'Thought for the Day', students complete a literacy or numeracy activity to support their learning in the classroom.

As well as form time activities, Years 10, 11, Post-16 and Nurture are undertaking a Level 2 BTEC for Personal Growth and Wellbeing.

This course, introduced this academic year, is a full BTEC (the equivalent of a GCSE). The units for this qualification are:

- Unit 1 Improving Physical Health and Wellbeing
- Unit 2 Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Unit 4 Understanding Sexual Health and Wellbeing
- Unit 7 Developing Resilience
- Unit 9 Financial Awareness

YEAR 10

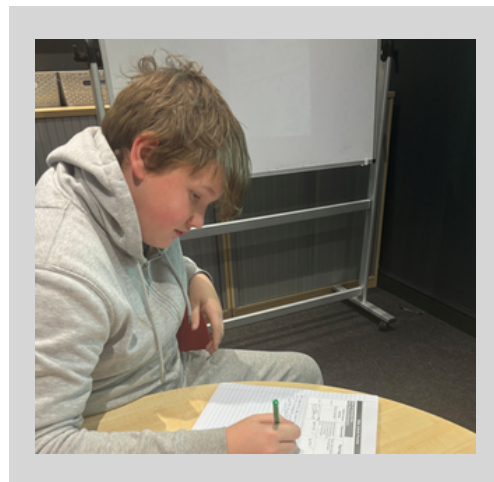
The Year 10 class has expanded recently, but I am most impressed with the new members of the class who are completing their work to a high standard and contribute effectively to class discussions.

They have recently undertaken lesson for Unit 1 of the BTEC in Personal Growth and Wellbeing, which focused on improving physical health and wellbeing. The students have recently studied issues such as body image and self-confidence, where the students have compared perceptions with the reality regarding body image. The students are currently completed their assessment for this unit and will begin Unit 2 in the new year.

YEAR 11

Year 11 are undertaking the BTEC Level 2 qualification in one year and have presently completed their unit 1 assessment and workbook. I have been really impressed with how detailed and complete their responses have been. These booklets address each learning aim for the units in question. These units will then be moderated externally after Easter.

The students have been able to compare issues such as government health guidelines and compare these to their own personal qualities and habits and have created personal development plans addressed the areas where they need to be healthier. The students will then reappraise themselves to see if they have achieved the goals they set in their personal development plans.



STAR CURRICULUM



The students have experienced a variety of assemblies this term in order to support their understanding of the wider world.

The Sexual Health Team visited on the 27th September and gave presentations tailored to each class regarding sexual reproduction, contraception and sexual transmitted illnesses.

On the 6th November the students were given a careers session regarding Apprenticeships delivered by a leader of human resources from Goodwin's Engineering. She explained to the students how they can apply for apprenticeships at both Goodwins and other businesses

The police visited the academy on the 2nd December to explain the causes and consequences of knife crime and the students learn about the real-life impact. The police bought VR headsets which allowed the students to react to a fictional scenario.

Year 11 students have visited the local sixth form colleges in order to support their preparation for their post-16 choices. We have visited Newcastle as well as both Burslem and Caudon campuses.

To end the term, the NHS are visiting the school to give year 11 students an assembly about careers in the NHS beyond the medical field, such as IT support.

GUEST SPEAKER

ARFAN MOHAMMED

Year 10 and 11 students have enjoyed this term a visit from Arfan Mohammed regarding the work he does through his charity helping vulnerable members of the community.

Arfan kindly brought pizzas into the Academy for the students and staff. He spoke to the students about his restaurant, Sizzlers, and his upcoming Indian restaurant. Arfan delivers food parcels to many members of our community in Stoke on Trent. He encouraged the students to think about how they can help in the community.

Moving forwards our plan is to support Arfan with his food parcels and support him with delivery.



REWARDS & RECOGNITION

This term has been a fantastic success for our rewards system! Our students have been actively engaging with ClassCharts, earning points for their hard work, positive attitudes, and dedication. It's exciting to see many of them starting to redeem these points for well-deserved rewards, ranging from hot chocolates to vouchers.



A highlight this term has been the enthusiasm around our Christmas end of term reward trips, which are just around the corner. These trips are a brilliant way to celebrate our students' efforts and commitment, and the buzz among the students is notable. Keep up the amazing work, everyone—your hard work is being recognised!

Students who had worked hard to improve their attendance and have displayed a positive attitude to their learning and behaviour will be rewarded with a trip to the Trafford Centre at the end of term. Well done to everyone!

Well done to everyone!