

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM 2025

I cannot believe that we are at the end of yet another busy term; we have achieved so much as a school community!

As you will know, Sporting Stars Academy has been awarded 'outstanding' judgements in all areas in our latest Ofsted inspection. As you will see from the report available on our website, the overall conclusions are extremely positive. Please rest assured that our determination to ensure that every child can thrive and achieve a brighter future will continue. Our standards are, and will remain, high for every member of the school community.

Students have immersed themselves in their learning and in the opportunities available to them this term; I hope that you enjoy taking the time to read about what they have been getting up to! It has been particularly busy for our Year 11 students, focusing on their next steps and future goals. Our careers day in November comprised of mock interviews undertaken by a range of professionals and completion of action plans and college applications. Having recently sat mock GCSE exams, students are now preparing for the year ahead.

Additionally, our Personal Development curriculum this Autumn term has seen us celebrate and honour dates such as Remembrance and Black History month. Check out the blogs on our website to find out more. There are a wealth of activities and events planned for the New Year, such as a Healthy Schools week in January...more information to follow!

I wish you all a happy and restful Christmas break. I know that this time of year can be difficult for some; our website provides sources of support should you need it.

With my very best wishes, Katie

Nurture painting their Christmas decorations which they made following a craft session at Wedgewood.



BTEC SPORT

Year 10 Tech Award – Component 1.

Year 10 and 11 students have continued their progress on the BTEC Tech Award in Sport by completing coursework for Component 1.

This has involved exploring the provision of sport across different sectors, with particular focus on the advantages and disadvantages of private sector involvement. Students have also investigated the equipment used in a range of sports, considering how technological developments have evolved over time and the impact these changes have had on individual performance. In addition, they have studied the benefits of warm-ups, learning about the effects on both the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems during the pulse raiser. To consolidate their understanding, students have delivered warm-up activities to their peers, demonstrating both knowledge and practical application.

I would like to extend a special commendation to Aleeza, Mustafa, and T-Jay, who demonstrated exceptional confidence, clear communication, and outstanding leadership in delivering warm-up activities. Their ability to engage their peers and guide the group through purposeful exercises was highly impressive. The warm-ups they led not only raised the students' energy levels but also ensured that everyone was physically prepared for the session. They incorporated both static and dynamic stretching, which played a vital role in reducing the risk of injury and promoting safe participation. Through their efforts, Aleeza, Mustafa, and T-Jay ensured that the group was not only physically prepared but also motivated and engaged. Their leadership exemplifies the qualities we value—confidence, clarity, and responsibility—and sets a strong example for their peers.



SCIENCE

As we move through an exciting term in the Science Department, students across Key Stage 4 have been making strong progress through a range of fundamental topics. Both Year 10 and Year 11 have shown great engagement, curiosity, and resilience as they deepen their understanding of the scientific principles that form the foundation of their GCSE studies.

Year 10 Science Update

Year 10 have been exploring several core areas that help them build a solid grounding in both physics, chemistry, and biology. They began with the particle model and states of matter, examining how particles behave in solids, liquids, and gases, and how these behaviours explain everyday phenomena such as diffusion, melting, and evaporation. This topic has helped students connect abstract ideas about particles to real-world observations.

In chemistry, students have moved on to atomic structure, where they have learned about the development of the atom, the arrangement of subatomic particles, and how these structures relate to the periodic table. Their understanding of atoms has also supported the work they are doing in physics and biology.

In biology, Year 10 have been studying cells in animals and plants, exploring the similarities and differences in cell structure, the function of organelles, and the techniques used to observe microscopic life. This has included practical work with microscopes, allowing students to apply their knowledge and build essential laboratory skills.

Year 11 Science Update

Year 11 have been working through a demanding but rewarding set of topics as they prepare for their final examinations. In chemistry, they have been studying the periodic table, chemical quantities, and structure and bonding. These topics help students understand the patterns and behaviours of elements, calculate reacting masses, and explain how different types of chemical bonds form. This knowledge supports a deeper understanding of how substances interact and why materials have particular properties.

In physics, Year 11 have been consolidating their knowledge of forces and energy changes, exploring how forces affect motion, how energy is transferred and conserved, and how these principles apply to real-life situations and engineering.



MATHS

Year 10 Maths

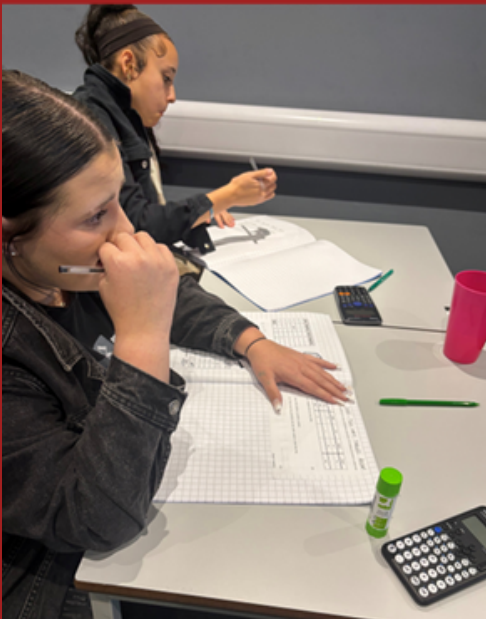
Year 10 students have been developing their understanding of the key principles of the number and algebra skills required to tackle the GCSE content. This includes gaining an understanding of the importance of prime numbers and the role they play in everyday life, from coding social media messages to keeping bank details safe over the internet. More recently, you've been exploring algebra methods, including expanding and factorising brackets through the completion of a tarzia puzzle. Future topics involve the use of data and fraction/percentage methods.

Year 11 Maths

Year 11 have been working hard to complete their first mock exam and start to build their revision areas as they work towards the GCSE exams. This term, they've focused on ratio, reasoning and probability – all essential areas for your upcoming exams. The mock exams have also provided a great opportunity to practise under exam conditions. A little and often approach to revision will make a huge difference by the time the exams start.

Post-16 Maths

Our Post-16 learners have been concentrating on number skills, particularly looking at selecting appropriate arithmetic methods and applying mathematical methods used to solve real world related problems.

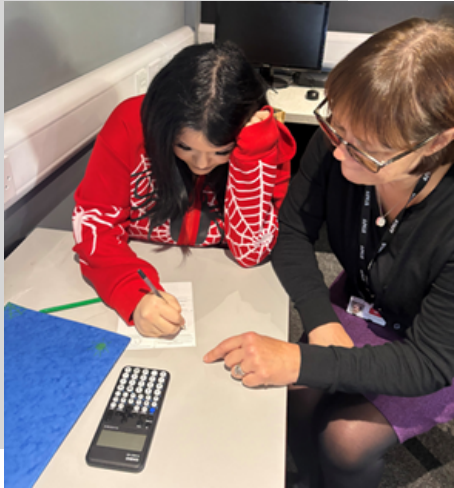


ENGLISH

YEAR 10: 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL'

Year 10 have continued to work hard this term preparing for their GCSE Literature by reading the first of our required texts, 'A Christmas Carol'. The students have really enjoyed reading the text and discussing what messages Dickens has for our lives today.

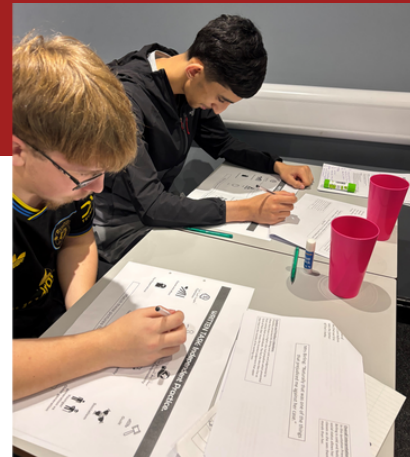
We are currently working on Language paper 1 in lessons. This exam paper tests the student's skills on fiction reading and writing. The students have studied the 5 questions in class together by reading a variety of fictional stories before spending time preparing and writing their own piece of creative writing.



YEAR 11: FINAL GCSE EXAMS

At the start of this year, students finished the literature course by studying the required poetry component. The students studied 15 poems around the theme of 'Power and Conflict'. These poems encouraged the students to discuss such themes as immigration, poverty and PTSD.

More recently, year 11 students have prepared themselves for their final GCSE exams. The students have completed mock exams on Literature Paper 2 and Language Paper 1.



POST-16 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

The students have been working hard on the skills needed to prepare themselves for their Functional skills assessments later on in this academic year. The students have completed a variety of groupwork and independent tasks teaching them the basic grammar and punctuation skills needed for life.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

GCSE

Both Year 10 and Year 11 students have really been focused when learning about Health and Social Care this year.

They've been working hard to understand the basics and get to grips with the key ideas that are required for the end of topic coursework that is set. They have covered physical, intellectual, emotional and social developments of different life stages as well as the factors they impact on an individual. They've been using all the skills and knowledge to produce some good quality coursework. It's been great to see their enthusiasm and progress.

The Year 11's have also been fantastic in their most recent mock exams, with the majority of the class achieving grade Level 2 Distinction!

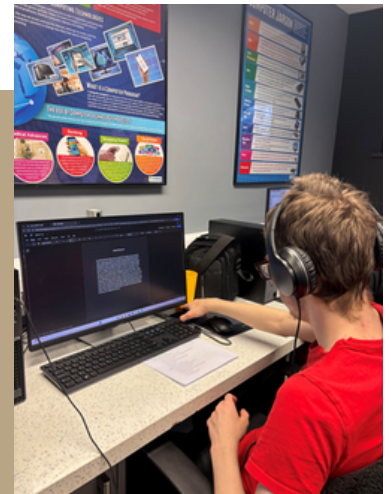
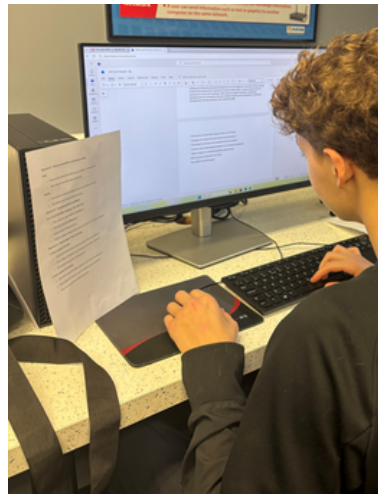
POST-16

Post 16 students have been working to understand detailed topics in Health and Social Care such as Human Growth Development around infants and early adulthood.

They've shown great commitment and have developed a deeper understanding of the subject.

Now, they're wrapping up their coursework, and it's clear they've put a lot of effort into doing well. They should be proud of everything they've achieved so far.

Top learner within Post-16 has been Jamie: he's tried super hard to learn the skills required to pass Health and Social Care



NURTURE – ENRICHMENT

FOREST SCHOOL

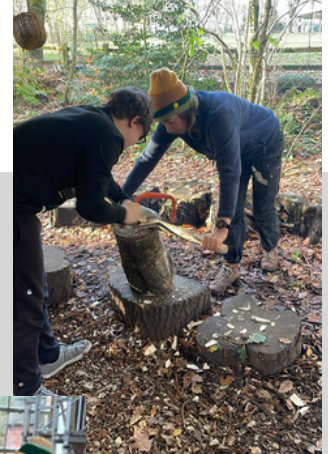
Forest School remains a favourite among our nurture group, with students eagerly asking, “What are we doing in Forest School this week?” As always, Forest School offers unique experiences and challenges that are unavailable elsewhere in the curriculum. Our pupils have been busy making fires, creating art, and cooking a variety of foods. Lorna has continued to teach the students how to use tools and supervise their work.

As part of our outdoor enrichment programme, Nurture continue to attend the John Hall Wellness garden. Currently, they are helping the gardening team clear an area of overgrown scrubland in Brough park. Once cleared, the students will work with the gardeners to design the area and help lay the new plants and shrubs.

Waymaking has provided the students with fantastic opportunities this term to work with a variety of professionals. One of the highlights this term was the opportunity to work with Jason Singh, a professional sound artist. The students created their own music track using nature for inspiration. If you wish to listen to this track, please head over to our website and look up the blog on Jason.

ENRICHMENT

This term, the nurture group has participated in a variety of enrichment activities aimed at enhancing their teamwork and individual skills. The group is known for its competitive spirit, which they have learned to express in a respectful and appropriate way. Their favourite activities include playing football on Fridays and darts on Mondays. As we look forward to the new year, the group will be taking on more competitive enrichment activities, with the hope of enjoying more outdoor opportunities as the weather improves.



ENRICHMENT & AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

This term, students at Sporting Stars have enjoyed a wide range of enrichment activities designed to support both physical development and wellbeing:

- **Golf** - Students learned the fundamentals of golf, including grip and swing techniques. They also participated in a "Longest Drive" competition using tracker machines to record distances.
- **Pilates** - A number of students attend Divinity Pilates studio on a Friday now. They have been taught the importance of breathing techniques and moves which can support strength and agility.
- **Marrow House** - Post-16 students and year 11 students are now volunteering at Marrow House dementia assessment centre on a weekly basis. This is invaluable training for those students who have applied to do Health and Social as a post-16 course in college. This is an excellent opportunity for our students and we are really grateful that Marrow House have welcomed our students.
- **Colosseum Gym** - has opened its doors to our GCSE students on Tuesday and Thursday. Upon arrival, the students are given the option of boxing, grappling, cardio and weights. As the students split into small groups, they are given focused training and guidance by the qualified personal trainers who work in the gym.
- **Wedgewood** - All students have visited the Wedgewood Museum this half term to create Christmas decorations and seasonal gifts, which they have been able to take home. The students enjoyed this opportunity to be creative and make something special.

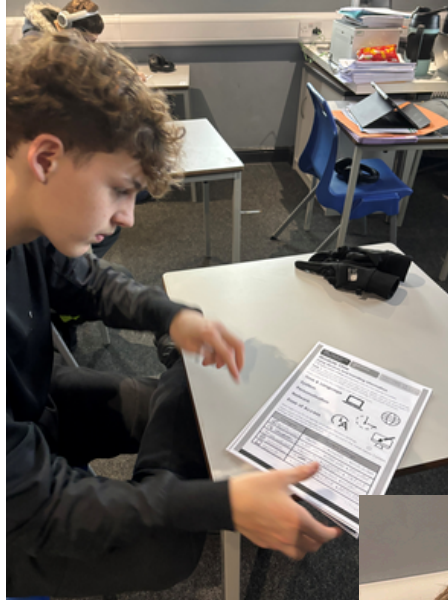


STAR CURRICULUM

Our Post-16 students have worked hard this term, continuing their academic studies in mathematics, English and Health and Social.

Careers Assemblies this term have seen a visit from a manager in a care home giving advice on careers in the care sector. We have also welcomed a visit from a local coach company giving information on careers in the transport sector.

An exciting new course which our post-16 students have started is Digital Functional Skills. The students are really engaged in this new course and enjoying developing their skills. Our students have also begun a Foundation Project Qualification. This involves the students completing research and then creating a presentation on a topic of their choice.



Congratulations to Sam who has recently passed his driving test. He is our first student to have passed his driving test with our driving instructor. Sam is currently completing a multi-skilled training course to support Sam with his future career aspirations.

STAR CURRICULUM

Form time has been changed this academic year and increased to 30 minutes. This has ensured that a variety of activities can be covered during the lesson. All students start the morning by watching Newsround. This often prompts interesting discussions about the new headlines of the day. The students then move onto completing a 4 grid Wordle to task before finishing with Summle, a daily maths challenge where the students are given a number and are challenged to see if they are able to complete the sum.



'Fun Friday' brings out students' competitive streak across the school. A variety of board and card games are shared in each class.

The current favourite in Year 10 is Uno, whilst 11A are really enjoying Mount Cleverest. This random game of chance sees the students' general knowledge skills pitched against each other.



Nurture read together as a class twice a week; they are currently reading the fictional novel 'Wonder', about a young person born with a facial disfigurement following his journey in school.

Post-16 students spend every morning focusing on their independent reading from a book in our library.

On a Monday morning, all students complete their weekly reading task on Bedrock. This computer software programme stretches and develops the student's reading skills as the software programme will adapt as it understands the student's strengths and areas of development.



STAR CURRICULUM

All classes have studied the same over-arching themes this term. They have explored topics around Physical and Sexual Health and participating in discussions about important national events like Anti-Bullying Week, Children in Need, Mental health week and Black History Month.

Nurture Group

The Nurture group has been actively involved in PHSE lessons this term. The sessions have helped them develop confidence and a better understanding of themselves and others, creating a supportive environment for learning and growth.

Year 10

Year 10 students have been really engaged in PHSE lessons. These activities have helped them understand more about themselves and the wider world while developing important life skills.

They have also taken part in the Careers Drop Down Day where they took a trip to Port Vale FC to discover jobs that are required for a whole football club to run, including maintenance, media, and coaching in the community.



Year 11

One of the highlights was our Careers Drop Down Day, where students applied for college courses; started to create CVs and career action plans, looking at what they needed to do in the short and long-term to ensure they were successful once leaving Sporting Stars Academy. Stoke City FC supported us with the delivery of this day as they came in and gave students 1-1 time where they went through practice interviews and interview techniques.



Post 16

Post 16 students during PHSE lessons, they've been focusing on building their CVs and applying for jobs. It's been a useful way for them to prepare for life after school and gain some practical skills for their future careers. They have also been covering the important topics of Physical and Sexual Health, including personal hygiene.



SUPPORT BOOKLETS

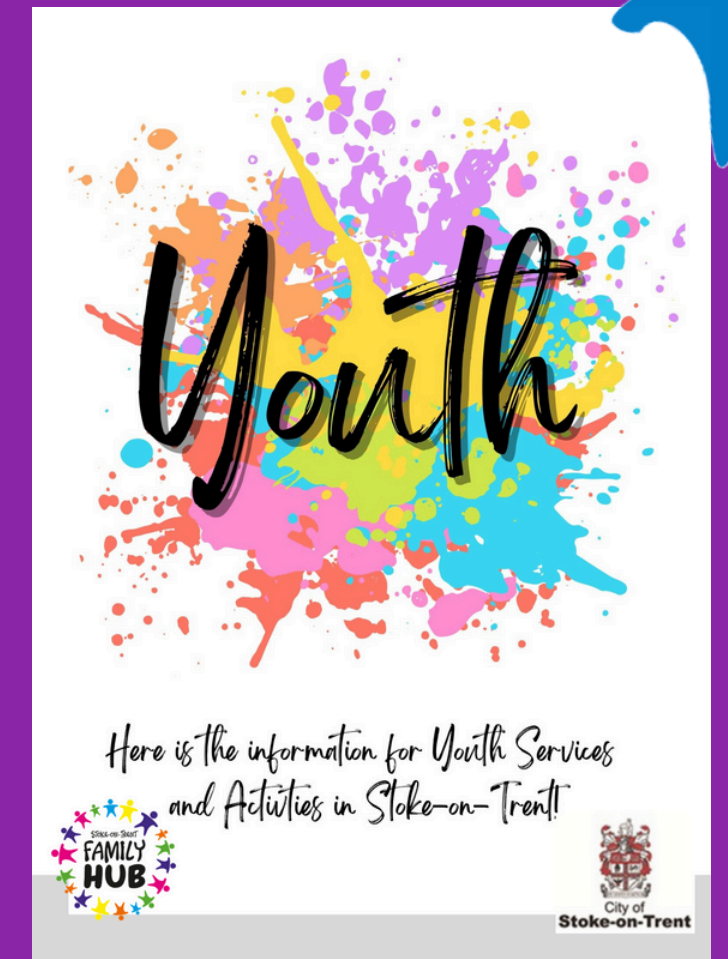
IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND



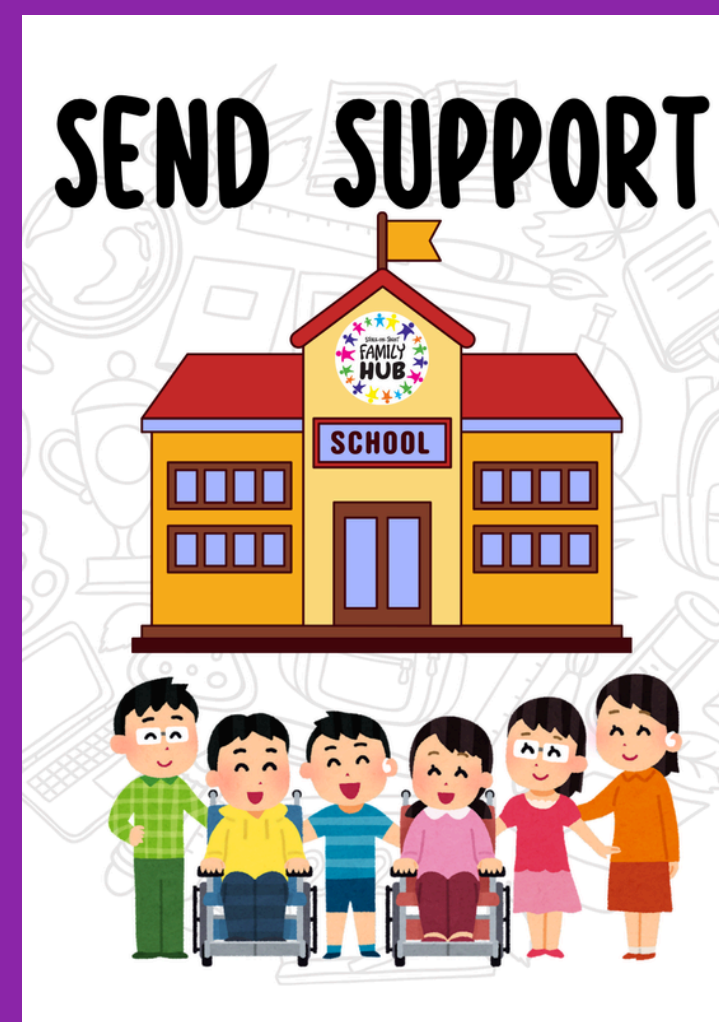
WINTER 2025



SEND



YOUTH SERVICES



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