

Stour Valley Community

NEWSLETTER

School



BE KIND, BE BRAVE, BE AMBITIOUS, COLLABORATE

Issue No.002

Spring 2026



Social Media & Communications

1

INFO@STOURVALLEY.ORG

Please use the above email address to contact the school during the Easter Break, this inbox continues to be monitored on a regular basis.

2

SAFE@STOURVALLEY.ORG

If you have an urgent safeguarding concern that you need to raise, please use this email address in the first instance.

3

[WEBSITE](#)

Letters, news, term dates, curriculum information and much more available via our website.

4

[FACEBOOK](#)

Regular Facebook posts available keeping you updated with news, events and more.

5

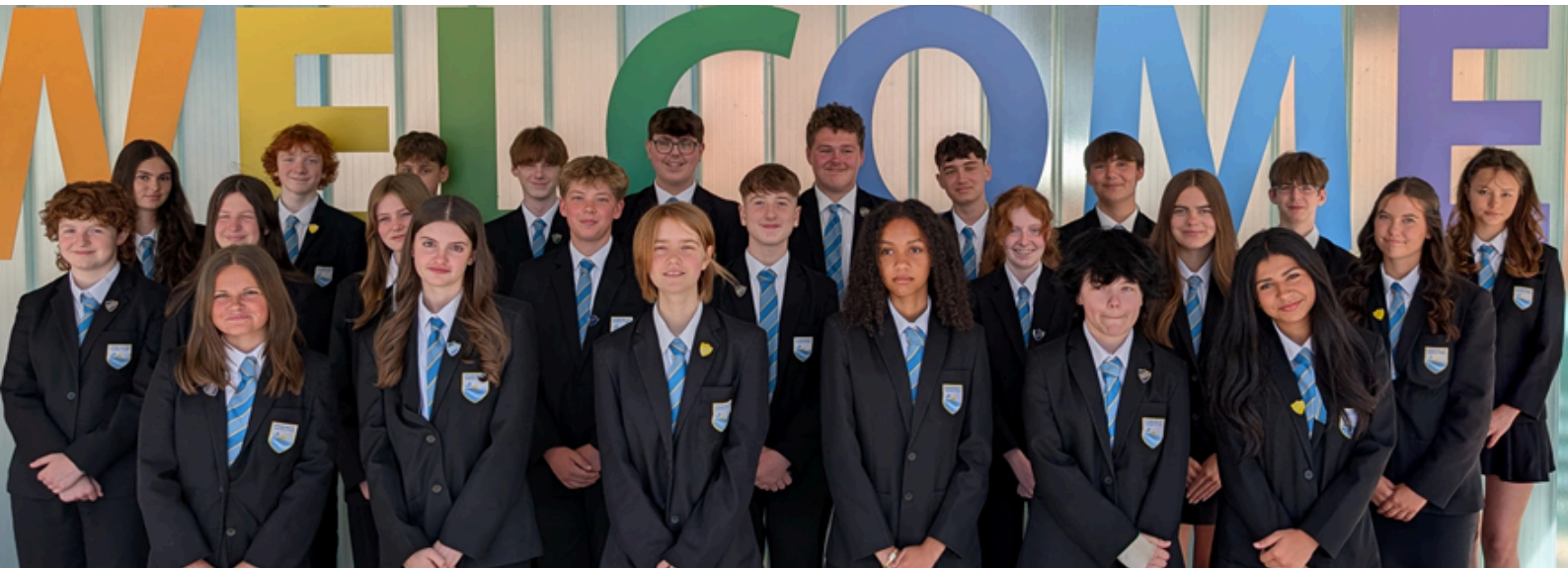
[INSTAGRAM](#)

Follow our main school account to keep up to date with the latest photos and events.

6

[ENGLISH INSTAGRAM](#)

Updated by our English Department. Follow them via their page to keep up to date with news and events in English.



Mrs Kelly's Head Lines



As the Spring Term got underway, I spent time with each year group in assembly reflecting on new beginnings and what it really means to live out our school values: Be Kind, Be Brave, Be Ambitious, and Collaborate.

Rather than thinking about a “fresh start” as a push for perfection, we spoke about it as a chance to build positive habits gradually. One message I emphasised was simple but powerful: showing up matters. Being in school every day, fully present, and giving your best in each lesson is where success begins.

We also reflected on resilience. Learning isn't always easy, and part of being brave is having the confidence to try, to ask for help, and to keep going when things feel challenging. Ambition is not about being the best, but about wanting to improve and taking pride in your efforts. Kindness and collaboration, meanwhile, are about lifting one another up and working together so that everyone can succeed.

I shared a personal example of how these values shape my own life. Ten years ago, my sister and I made a New Year's resolution to take part in Parkrun together. Earlier this year, we marked that ten-year milestone by running on New Year's Day, and last Saturday I completed my 350th Parkrun. I am certainly not the fastest runner, but that has never been the point. What matters is the routine, the commitment, and the willingness to keep showing up — even on the days when it feels difficult.



STOUR VALLEY
— COMMUNITY SCHOOL —



This term, I have been incredibly proud of how our students have embodied our values. There has been much to celebrate: the quality of work in lessons, the wide range of trips and events, and the enthusiasm with which pupils have embraced new opportunities. What stands out most is the way they support one another and represent the school with such positivity. I am equally grateful to our staff, who consistently go above and beyond to make these experiences possible.

Many of these moments are captured on our website and in this newsletter, offering a glimpse into the energy, commitment, and strong sense of community that make Stour Valley such a special place.

As we move further through the year, our Year 11 students are focusing on their upcoming GCSE examinations, and we wish them every success in the weeks ahead. After Easter, we also look forward to interviewing our next team of prefects as we begin to develop the school's future student leaders, while thanking our current prefects for the excellent contribution they have made.

Finally, thank you, as always, for your continued support. I would also like to wish all of the staff and students departing today on the ski trip a safe and enjoyable visit — we look forward to hearing all about their experiences on their return. I wish all our families a happy and restful Easter break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for a successful Summer Term.

R Kelly

Headteacher
Stour Valley Community School



Madrid Trip 2026

During February half term, twenty Year 10 students enjoyed a fantastic five-day trip to Madrid with Mrs Magowan, Mrs Brown and Mr Mansfield.

They arrived just as the city's long spell of rain ended, giving them dry days—and even warm sunshine—for the miles of walking they packed in!

A guided tour on the first full morning took them through Plaza Mayor, Puerta del Sol and the famous Kilómetro 0.



They spotted the world's oldest restaurant, explored El Rastro flea market and spent the afternoon wandering through the magnificent Royal Palace before ending the day at a vibrant Flamenco show.

The next few days were just as memorable. They explored the beautiful Retiro Park, visited the Reina Sofia art gallery to see Picasso's Guernica, and took part in a brilliant cooking class where they learned to make paella, Spanish omelette and Tarta de Santiago—followed by a very tasty meal. They also discovered a bustling covered market full of fresh produce, where some of us got a little carried away buying fruit!

A major highlight was their visit to the Bernabéu Stadium, which was a particular treat for Mr Mansfield, and the gift shop proved very tempting for many. The final day was spent souvenir shopping before heading back to the airport and returning home to a very rainy England.



For the full Madrid 2026 photo gallery, please use the following link: [Madrid 2026](#)

Spring Term Enhancement Day 2026

Our Spring Enhancement Day was a great success, with thanks to the volunteers and staff who delivered a wide range of engaging sessions across the school.

Year 11 focused on revision and spent the afternoon in activities designed to support their wellbeing. Year 10 took part in sessions on effective revision, careers and health, followed by practice interviews with visiting volunteers, before enjoying an escape-room challenge. Year 9 explored careers in health with Medical Mavericks, learned about GCSE and post-16 pathways, took part in a session with It's on the Ball, and completed an enterprise task. Year 8 either worked brilliantly towards their CREST award or participated in an RS trip to St Peter & St Paul's Church, alongside enterprise and team challenges. Year 7 expanded their understanding of AI, explored puppetry, completed a STEM raft-building challenge and attended a wellbeing session delivered by OM Health.

Throughout the day, students, staff and providers demonstrated kindness, bravery, ambition and collaboration in everything they did.



Speak Out Challenge with Speaker's Trust



*Year 10 Shine in Speak Out Oracy
Workshop*

On Monday 23 March, we were delighted to welcome Teresa Dukes from Speaker's Trust to deliver an inspiring oracy workshop for 31 of our Year 10 students as part of the Speak Out Challenge.

The day offered pupils a valuable chance to build confidence in public speaking, develop key speech-writing skills, and learn how to express their ideas with clarity and impact.

Through a range of practical activities, students explored how to structure a compelling speech and deliver it with purpose.

Our Year 10s rose to the challenge brilliantly, showing bravery and ambition in their final speeches, as well as great collaboration and kindness in supporting one another throughout the workshop.

A huge well done to everyone who took part — and congratulations to our seven finalists, who now progress to the next round.

Ethics Committee & Peer Mentors Give Talks at the University of East Anglia



Miss Howard took the Ethics Committee and Peer Mentors to the University of East Anglia on the 26 January. The Ethics Committee participated in a presentation to PGCE students about the Code of Ethics.

We are incredibly proud of these students for their kindness, bravery, ambition and collaboration.

The trainee teachers and their lecturers said our students were incredibly impressive.

Afterwards the whole group went on a tour of the university and were fantastic.



National Year of Reading

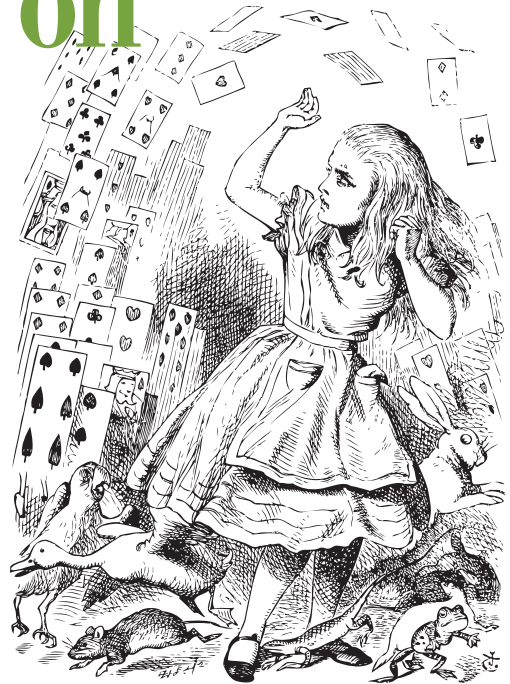
This term, we wholeheartedly celebrated the National Year of Reading with a lively non-uniform day on Thursday 5 March, inviting students and staff to dress as their favourite literary characters. The school was filled with everything from The Mad Hatter and Gangster Granny to Paddington Bear, along with a brilliant mix of dystopian heroes, fantasy favourites and classic figures from our curriculum texts.

Staff took part in a friendly vote for the best costume, and competition was fierce. In joint third place were Miss Wright and Mrs Tompkins as Elphaba and Glinda. Runner-up went to Miss Kornasova, who embraced the role of Cruella De Vil with style. Our winner was Miss Cooper, whose bright orange hair, bold patterns and playful accessories made her Mad Hatter a wonderfully colourful standout.



Students Bring Characters to Life on World Book Day

A huge congratulations to our World Book Day Hat Competition winners: 8K and 11W. 8K impressed us with their Wizard of Oz-inspired creation, featuring a magical Emerald City scene. Our Year 11 winners served up a nostalgic delight with their charming Hungry Caterpillar hat.



Our Best Costume winner was.....

- Kali as the White Rabbit from Alice in Wonderland, congratulations!

Our Best Costume runners up were.....

- Oscar as one of the Men in Black.
- Rory as the Mathmagician from Phantom Tollbooth.
- Chloe and Etta as Thing 1 and 2 from the Cat in the Hat.



Author Julian Sedgwick Visits

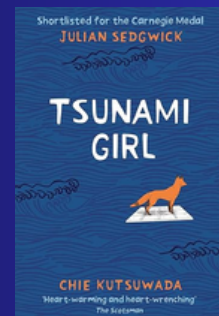


Miss L Savage, Julian Sedgwick & Mrs Z Milburn
SVCS Library

Julian Sedgwick delivered an inspiring creative writing workshop for selected Year 8 and 9 students, guiding them through idea-generation, character development and the craft of shaping a compelling story. Students threw themselves into the activities with real enthusiasm, asking thoughtful questions and experimenting boldly with their writing, with a special mention to Logan, Ethan and Claudio in Year 9, whose collaborative story was praised by Julian as “the best work of the day” — a fantastic achievement that reflects their creativity and teamwork. Meanwhile, the Library was buzzing as students queued eagerly to meet Julian, chat about his books and have their newly purchased copies signed. The energy was brilliant, with Year 8 and 9 showing genuine excitement about reading and storytelling, and it was wonderful to see so many students engaging with an author first-hand.

We're grateful, too, for the support parents and carers give in encouraging reading for pleasure.

“Never say just before you
say the word imagination.
Never. It gives us power...”



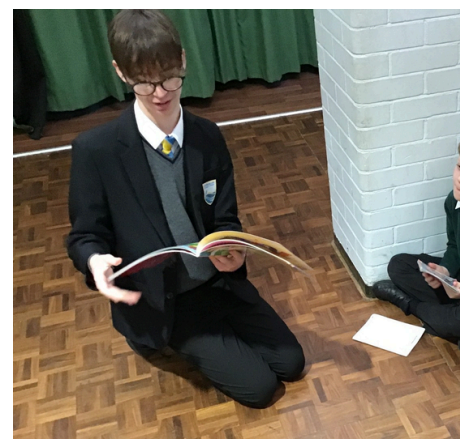
Tsunami Girl

Year 9 Reading at Kedington Primary School

National Year of Reading celebrations continued on 25 February, when a group of Year 9 students from Stour Valley Community School visited Kedington Primary School to support younger pupils with their reading.

Demonstrating kindness and collaboration, they read aloud to children from Reception to Year 4 and listened attentively as the younger pupils practised their own reading skills.

Staff were incredibly proud of the maturity the students showed throughout the visit. Their bravery in stepping into a leadership role, paired with their ambition to be positive role models for younger learners, perfectly reflected the values at the heart of our school ethos.



Performing Arts Report

This term has been an exceptional one for Performing Arts at Stour Valley Community School. Students across the department have embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm, maturity and a genuine passion for the arts. It has been inspiring to see them consistently embody our core values of kindness, bravery, ambition and collaboration in rehearsals, classrooms and creative workshops. Through character work, group improvisation, script exploration and shared stagecraft decisions, students have supported one another with kindness and shown true collaboration in their team efforts. Their willingness to take creative risks demonstrates real bravery, while their determination to refine their skills reflects their ambition to achieve excellence.

In early March, Keaton and Darcey represented the school at Ormiston Sudbury Academy at a Performing Arts event. They were excellent, exemplifying bravery and collaboration.

Our Year 11 GCSE Drama students have been a real source of pride this term. They completed their Component Exam on 25 and 26 March, demonstrating months of preparation, focus and thoughtful creative work.



Back to the 80s Rehearsals Underway

Rehearsals for our school production of Back to the 80s are now in full swing, our cast and crew have been working incredibly hard as they prepare their musical numbers, choreography and character work, bringing huge energy and enthusiasm to every rehearsal. The backstage team has also been busy developing props, planning scene changes and supporting the creative process behind the scenes. It has been wonderful to watch their confidence grow and see the production taking shape. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to all parents and carers for your continued support—whether that's helping with rehearsal schedules, providing transport, or encouraging students at home. Your involvement makes an enormous difference to the success of the production, and we are truly grateful.

Tickets for Back to the 80s are live via ParentPay, showing on 29 April, 30 April, and 1 May 2026. With the hard work and talent our students are putting into the show, it promises to be a wonderful celebration of creativity, fun and school spirit!



Spring Sports Report



This term has been an impressive one for sport at Stour Valley, with students across all year groups showing determination, teamwork and a wonderful sense of school spirit. Their achievements on and off the pitch have reflected the very best of our community, and we could not be prouder of the way they represent the school.

Our Year 7 teams made a fantastic start at the Sports Hall Athletics event at Mildenhall College Academy. Both the boys' and girls' teams competed brilliantly in a range of indoor events, with the girls securing a strong third place and the boys tying for first—only missing out on progression through countback. It was an afternoon filled with energy, effort and some standout individual performances, and it was great to see the group's early collaboration shining through.

In the Schools FA Cup, our U13s delivered a committed performance against St Joseph's College Ipswich. After finishing the first half at 1-1, the team fought hard despite second-half injuries, eventually bowing out of the competition. They can look back with huge pride on their journey to the fourth round, especially after receiving warm praise from opposition staff and parents for their attitude and conduct. Their resilience and willingness to keep going to the final whistle were a true demonstration of bravery in sport.

Our boys' basketball team delivered an excellent performance in their area competition after weeks of committed lunchtime training. Their hard work paid off as they progressed confidently from the pool stages, earning an impressive semi-final win against Samuel Ward Academy. They narrowly missed out in the final to a strong OSA side, but their determination, teamwork and skill throughout the tournament were outstanding.



Our Year 7 basketball team also enjoyed a fantastic introduction to competitive fixtures. Despite a narrow early loss to Castle Manor, they responded brilliantly in their second game, securing a convincing win over Samuel Ward Academy. Their enthusiasm, progress and growing confidence made it a hugely encouraging first set of fixtures and a great start to their basketball journey at Stour Valley.

Another highlight came from our sports leaders, who supported a girls' primary football event at AFC Sudbury. They took responsibility for setting up pitches, officiating matches and helping to run the event smoothly. Their professionalism and encouragement towards younger players showed genuine kindness, and they were brilliant ambassadors for Stour Valley.

Our cross-country runners in Years 7 and 8 also impressed at the annual Dickens Dash at Stoke College. Competing against strong fields, they secured top positions in both the boys' and girls' categories, with notable first- and second-place finishes. Their strong performances—and smiles at the finish line—were even more impressive given the challenging conditions faced earlier in the season.

The U14 football team enjoyed success at the area central venue development tournament, going unbeaten across all their fixtures. With confident wins over both TGS teams and OSA, they closed their season with great momentum and plenty to celebrate. Finally, our Year 7 team showed real progress in their first ever fixtures. After a narrow early loss, they bounced back superbly to secure a convincing win against Samuel Ward Academy. Their enthusiasm, improvement and enjoyment were clear to see, and it marked a brilliant start to their sporting journey at Stour Valley.

Across all competitions this term, our students have demonstrated skill, teamwork and an impressive willingness to push themselves—all while representing the school with maturity and pride. Their commitment has been inspiring, and we look forward to seeing what they achieve next.



Harley Barfield Project

The Harley Barfield Project donates lifesaving bleed kit to SVCS

Representing the Harley Barfield Project, Darryl Barfield, Harley's dad, visited Stour Valley Community School in January to deliver a bleed kit, marking the anniversary of the tragic event that claimed the life of his son.

The visit was deeply personal. During the session, he spoke about the importance of bleed kits, explaining how they can save lives in critical situations by providing immediate access to life-saving equipment. His wish is that if he can save one life, then his work will have made a difference. As part of his visit, Darryl met with Mr Lee, Harley's former Year Leader, Mr Leppard, his tutor at the time, and Mrs Kelly, the headteacher. Together, they reflected on Harley's time at the school, sharing memories of his character and his hopes for the future.

Mrs Kelly, the headteacher said the visit served as a powerful reminder of the importance of community, compassion, and action in the face of tragedy. "Harley's loss, three years ago, was felt deeply across our entire school community. We are profoundly grateful to Darryl, Harley's dad, for donating this bleed kit and for the courage he continues to show in campaigning tirelessly to educate young people about knife crime. This is a powerful and meaningful contribution that will help keep our community safer."

Darryl, Harley's Father said, "The consequences of carrying knives just isn't worth it. Not for you. Not for your friends and definitely not for your family. Please, please think twice before carrying a knife. " In the photo, Mrs Kelly, Headteacher, Mr Lee, Harley's former Head of Year and Mr Leppard, Harley's Form Tutor.



Mr R Lee, Mrs R Kelly,
Mr D Barfield &
Mr N Leppard

SEND Area Sparks Spring Joy



Inclusion Matters

The SEND area continues to be a calm, welcoming and beautifully decorated space that supports student wellbeing throughout the school day. Designed to feel safe, settled and inclusive, it is a valued environment for many of our students.

Our Guinea Pigs, Salt and Pepper, have well and truly made themselves at home too, often relaxing in the seating area and enjoying the peaceful atmosphere alongside the students.



Learn More about SEND at SVCS

For more information regarding our SEND Department and access to polices, reports, contact details etc. Please visit our website here:

[Stour Valley Community School](#)
[Special Education Needs](#)



*SEND Rooms
February 2026*

Spring Fundraising

SVCS Library

5 March 2026

On World Book Day we held a non-uniform event. Our staff and students were encouraged to dress up as literary characters. In total we raised **£267.68** for our school Library. The donations we received will continue to maintain our Library's decorative and welcoming atmosphere as well as fund projects and access to excellent books.

Young Minds

13 March 2026

Miss Woods and our Charity Committee held a cake sale on Friday 13 March. Their delicious selection sold out over the course of one very busy breaktime and raised a total of £ **£86.15** for the charity Young Minds.
[Young Minds Website.](#)

British Heart Foundation

23 January 2026

in the first month of the Spring Term we held a non-uniform event for the British Heart Foundation. By the end of the day, a fantastic total of **£343.18** had been raised for the charity.

[British Heart Foundation Website](#)

*Thank you
for your
support*



Students Receive Honours as Spring Term Comes to a Close

Student and staff gathered for Honours assemblies in our Main Hall during the final week of Spring Term. It was a chance to celebrate our students and commend them for their performances over the past 12 weeks.

Our Year groups totalled amazing figures:

Year 7 with 83 Honours

Year 8 with 88 Honours

Year 9 with 89 Honours

Year 10 with 114 Honours

Year 11 with 102 Honours

Well done to everyone who received an Honour, **your kindness, bravery, ambition and collaboration** are always valued and we are delighted to commend you.



Introducing *Innovate*

YOUR CHILD'S CANTEEN PROVIDER
COMING APRIL 13 2026

From Monday 13 April 2026, Innovate will become our new school catering provider. We are excited to introduce their fresh, high-quality approach to school meals, offering students a wide choice of healthy, freshly prepared dishes each day. Their menus include hot meals, "grab and go" options, street-food favourites and a vibrant salad bar, with thoughtful meal-deal options for students receiving Free School Meals.

Innovate place great importance on student feedback and continually work to enhance their service. A welcome message from their Regional Operations Manager is available via our website, along with further information from the Impact Food Group.

We look forward to this positive new chapter and the benefits it will bring to our school community.

For further information, including a warm welcome from Innovate, Mrs Kelly's update letter, tariffs and menus, please use the following link:



[Welcome to Innovate](#)

A WARM WELCOME FROM *Innovate*
YOUR NEW RESTAURANT PROVIDER



Important Update on Cashless Catering Systems

From 11pm on Thursday 26 March to Wednesday 1 April 2026, the on-site cash loaders will be removed and online payment accounts will be temporarily suspended.

Please do not make any online payments during this time, as any funds added during this time will not be allocated to student accounts. To ensure your child is able to make purchases in the canteen on Friday 27 March, please ensure their account has sufficient funds before 11pm on Thursday 26 March, as account loading facilities will be unavailable throughout the upgrade period.

You will receive a text message from the school once ParentPay payments have been suspended, and another text notification when normal service has resumed.

When students return from the Easter Break, biometric fingerprint scans will ne to be taken in order to enrol them on the new cashless catering system. Please ensure that your child's biometric consent is correctly updated in your EduLink account prior to their return.

Thank you for your support in this matter.



Introducing Carmel Jane Photography

We are delighted to be working with Carmel Jane Photography, one of the UK's leading school photography companies. Known for their exceptional quality, service, and value, Carmel Jane specialise in creating school photos that parents love and students feel proud of.

Their team is dedicated to ensuring photo day runs smoothly, with a highly organised approach that keeps disruption to learning to a minimum and requires very little administrative time from staff.

We look forward to welcoming them into school and sharing their outstanding work with our families.

Year 11 parents and carers are reminded that individual and group photos are currently available for order, please check your email inboxes for order guidance.

Our next session will be for our Year 7 and 9 students (individual photos) this September.



For more information regarding Carmel Jane Photography, please access their website via the following link: [Carmel Jane Photography](#).

