

# Summer 2026



Be Kind, Be Brave, Be Ambitious, Collaborate

## Stour Valley Community School

NEWSLETTER



# Social Media & Communications

1

## [INFO@STOURVALLEY.ORG](mailto:INFO@STOURVALLEY.ORG)

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

2

## [SAFE@STOURVALLEY.ORG](mailto: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 we reach the end of another busy and rewarding school year, I wanted to take a moment to simply say thank you.

To all of our parents and carers, thank you for the encouragement, trust and support you have shown throughout the year. Educating young people is always at its best when home and school work together, and I feel incredibly fortunate to be part of a community where that partnership is so strong. Whether you have supported your child through homework, attended one of our many events, cheered from the sidelines at sporting fixtures, or simply encouraged them to give their best each day, you have played an important part in their success.

This newsletter celebrates many of the wonderful enrichment opportunities that have taken place during the summer term, but it is only a glimpse of what has been another remarkable year at Stour Valley. Looking back, our students have embraced every opportunity that has come their way. From unforgettable international visits to Madrid, the Netherlands and our ski trip to Austria, to Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, performances, sporting competitions, STEM events, enhancement days, charity work and so much more, they have represented our school with enthusiasm, curiosity and pride. Alongside these memorable moments, there have been countless quieter successes in classrooms every single day as students have grown in confidence, resilience and character. If you have followed our website or social media throughout the year, I hope you will agree that there has been so much to celebrate.

One of the greatest privileges of my role is seeing our students step forward to lead others. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to our outgoing team of prefects, who have carried out their responsibilities with maturity, kindness and integrity. They have been wonderful ambassadors for the school and excellent role models for our younger students. At the same time, I am delighted to welcome our new team of prefects, who have already begun their leadership journey this term. The number and quality of applications we received for student leadership roles was genuinely inspiring and speaks volumes about the character, ambition and commitment of our students.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognise the incredible people who make Stour Valley such a special place. Our staff continue to give so much of themselves, often behind the scenes, to ensure every student is supported, challenged and encouraged to achieve their very best. Their care, commitment and willingness to go above and beyond never ceases to amaze me. I am equally grateful to our governors, whose unwavering support, thoughtful challenge and steadfast commitment help to shape the continued success of our school.

As we head into the summer break, I hope every member of our school community has the opportunity to slow down, spend time with those they love and enjoy a well-deserved rest. To our Year 11 students, thank you for everything you have contributed to Stour Valley. We wish you every success as you begin the next chapter of your journey and look forward to celebrating with you on Results Day.

Finally, thank you once again for allowing us to play such an important part in your children's lives. It is a privilege that we never take for granted. I am immensely proud of everything our students, staff and families have achieved together this year, and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in September for another year filled with opportunity, challenge and success.

Until then, have a wonderful, safe and restful summer. Students return on Thursday September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Before the part of the newsletter where we share highlights of the term, some staffing updates.

## **Staff Farewells**

At the end of this academic year, we say goodbye to a number of valued colleagues who have each made a significant contribution to the life of Stour Valley. We thank them all for their dedication and service and wish them every happiness and success for the future.

### **Mrs Mayes, Head of Art and Photography**

An outstanding teacher and form tutor, she has played a huge part in shaping the creative life of our school. Alongside Mrs Tibbles, she has helped create the stunning artwork displayed throughout the school, leaving a lasting legacy that is admired by all who visit. Mrs Mayes is pursuing a change of direction from teaching and we wish her well with her next steps.

### **Mrs Tibbles – Art Technician and Teacher of Art**

Mrs Tibble's hard work, creativity and expertise in ceramics have enriched our Art department and inspired countless students. Her contribution to the school's vibrant learning environment will be greatly missed.

### **Mrs Brown – Spanish Teacher and Health & Safety Union Representative**

We thank Mrs Brown for her commitment to the school and, in particular, for the support she has provided to colleagues through her role as Health and Safety Union Representative. We wish her every success in her new union role.

### **Mrs Chester – Assistant Headteacher and SENCO**

Mrs Chester has been at the school for fourteen years and in that time has led the RS department and been a Year Leader. Most recently she has transformed SEND provision at Stour Valley through her expertise, compassion and unwavering commitment to our students. A highly respected member of the senior leadership team, she leaves an exceptional legacy, and we wish her and her family every happiness for the future.

### **Mr McSweeney – DT Technician**

After many years of dedicated service, Mr McSweeney retires with our heartfelt thanks. His kindness, generosity and willingness to help everyone have made him one of the most valued members of our school community.



### **Mrs Pearson – Pastoral Team and ELSA**

Mrs Pearson's creativity, energy and compassion have made a lasting difference to so many students. Her work as an ELSA and in supporting primary transition has been invaluable, and she leaves with our sincere thanks.

### **Mrs Cichorska – Learning Support Assistant**

Mrs Cichorska has been a wonderful support to many of our students, making a real difference through her kindness and encouragement. We are delighted that she is embarking on teacher training to become a Maths teacher and wish her every success.

### **Miss Cooper – English Teacher and Raising Standards Lead**

Miss Cooper has brought energy, enthusiasm and unwavering commitment to every aspect of school life. An excellent teacher and dedicated Raising Standards Lead, she has made a significant impact on both students and colleagues, and we wish her every success in the future. Miss Cooper is relocating.

### **Mrs Bowyer – Inclusion Manager**

Mrs Bowyer has been with us since January this year. In her short time with us, she has supported many students and refined a number of our systems in school. She leaves to go to a non-teaching Year Leader position in another secondary school, a role to which she will be well qualified and suited. We wish her well and thank her for her contribution.

### **Mrs Roberds**

We also say a fond farewell to our Site Manager, whose care, dedication and pride have helped make our school such a welcoming place. We are incredibly grateful for her loyalty, kindness and unwavering support, and we wish her every happiness and success in the future.

New Staff in September

In September we will be welcoming:

Mrs Carlton, as Head of Art and Photography

Miss Thorne, as Teacher of Art and Art technician

Miss Roujansky, as Teacher of Spanish

Mrs Cullen, as Assistant Head SENCO

Mr Stirling, as DT Technician

Mrs Hearn and Miss Abrey and Student Support Officers

Mr Hisscott, as Site Operations Manager

# Celebrating Our School Values

## First Annual Headteacher Awards for School Values

This year, we were delighted to introduce new annual Stour Valley Values Awards to recognise students who have truly lived our school values throughout the year.

While academic success is something we are incredibly proud of, we believe that character, resilience and the way we treat others are equally important. These awards celebrate students whose actions have inspired those around them and who have consistently demonstrated the values that make our school community so special.

Nominated by staff, our award winners have shown exceptional ambition, kindness, collaboration and resilience. Whether overcoming personal challenges, supporting others with compassion, leading by example or striving for excellence in their learning, each recipient has made a lasting impact on our school.

We are immensely proud of every student recognised this year. Their achievements remind us that success is measured not only by what we accomplish, but by the difference we make to others.

Congratulations to our inaugural Stour Valley Values Awards recipients. You are outstanding ambassadors for Stour Valley Community School, and we hope your example inspires many others in the years to come.



### **Be Brave award – Amelia Frost, 8W**

During Year 7, Amelia was diagnosed with a brain tumour and spent several months away from school receiving cancer treatment. Although her treatment was successful, she returned with a significant visual impairment that has changed her everyday life.

Coming back to school in Year 8 was incredibly challenging. Amelia had to adapt to vision loss, continue her recovery, attend medical appointments and rebuild her confidence. There were many difficult days, but she never gave up.

Through courage, determination and resilience, Amelia has become increasingly independent, developed strategies to manage her vision and grown in confidence throughout the year. Amelia's strength, perseverance and positive attitude in overcoming such extraordinary challenges make her a truly deserving recipient of the Be Brave Award. She is an inspiration to us all.







### **Be Kind award – Amelia Poore, 8W**

Amelia has shown extraordinary kindness, compassion and friendship by supporting her friend Amelia Frost throughout an incredibly challenging year.

She arrives at school early to make sure Amelia feels safe and supported, happily spending her social time together—often singing along to the latest Taylor Swift album!

Every day, Amelia helps her friend carry equipment, navigate busy corridors and stairs, and get safely to lessons. She does it all with patience, kindness and a smile.

Amelia's selflessness, empathy and unwavering support have made a huge difference to her friend's life. She is an outstanding role model and a wonderful example of how one person's kindness can change someone else's world. Congratulations, Amelia!



### **Be Ambitious award – Lara Folwell, 10O**

Lara is an exceptional student whose hard work, determination and love of learning shine through in everything she does.

In her Year 10 exams, Lara achieved an incredible 5 Grade 9s and 5 Grade 8s—a fantastic reflection of the dedication she shows every single day.

Across all her subjects, Lara gives every opportunity to learn her very best. She asks thoughtful questions, tackles challenging Maths and Physics problems with resilience, goes beyond the curriculum in Computer Science, and produces outstanding work in Graphics with exceptional attention to detail. In Statistics, she works hard to apply her learning to real-life situations and is already challenging herself with ideas from A Level Mathematics. She is also diligent in her revision and always checks her work carefully to deepen her understanding.

What makes Lara truly special is her humility. She quietly sets incredibly high standards for herself, never seeks recognition, and simply lets her hard work speak for itself. She is a wonderful role model, showing that success comes through curiosity, perseverance and determination.

Lara is a truly deserving recipient of the Be Ambitious Award. Congratulations!





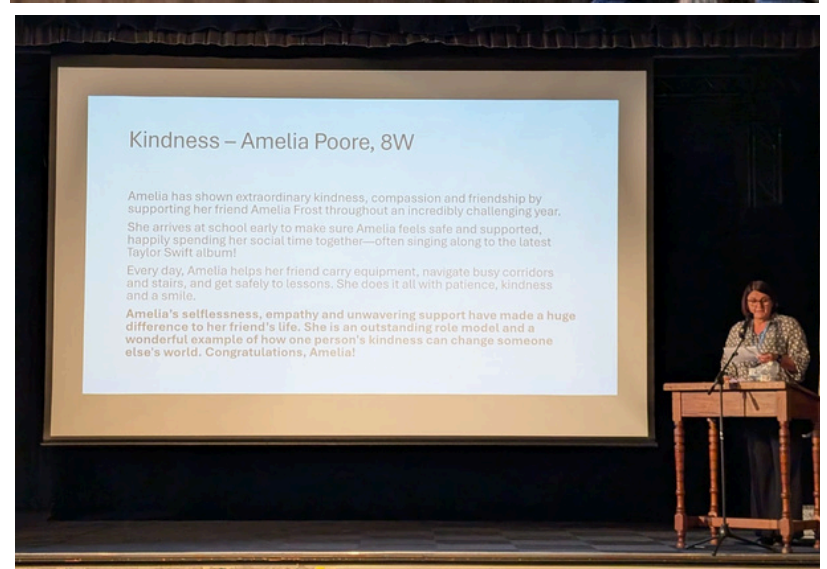
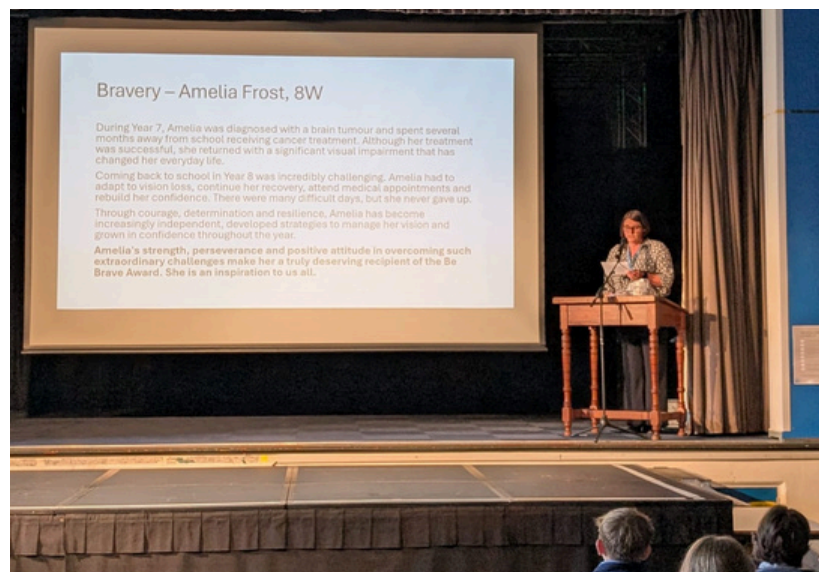
## Collaborate award – McKayla Beukes, 10D

McKayla is an outstanding team player who has made a huge difference across our school community.

As Head Student Librarian, she has helped build a strong team by training new librarians, encouraging them when things are challenging, and making sure everyone's ideas are heard. Her leadership has helped make the library and lunchtime clubs a welcoming place for all.

As an active member of Climate Emergency Committee, McKayla is always eager to get involved. Whether representing Stour Valley at Mock COP, working with volunteers at Clare Community Orchard, or inspiring others to join projects, she leads with enthusiasm, confidence and positivity.

McKayla's leadership, teamwork and commitment to helping others make her a truly deserving recipient of the Collaborate Award. Congratulations, McKayla!





# Summer Honours

## End-of-Term Recognition for Our Outstanding Students

On Thursday 16 July, students and staff from each year group came together in the Main Hall for our end-of-term Honours Assemblies. These celebrations recognised the hard work, commitment and achievements demonstrated by students throughout the Summer Term. The assemblies also featured excellent musical performances.

A huge congratulations to all of our award recipients for their dedication and achievements this term.

Total number of awards presented:

- Year 7: 68 awards
- Year 8: 68 awards
- Year 9: 72 awards
- Year 10: 85 awards





# Farewell Leavers of 26

## Celebrating the End of an Important Chapter

Year 11 celebrated the end of their school journey with a memorable final day, marking an important milestone. We warmly commend all students for their hard work and resilience in reaching this point, and wish them every success as they move on to their Post-16 pathways.

The day included a special leavers' assembly, offering time to reflect on their journey, share memories and enjoy plenty of laughter together. Afterwards, students spent time with friends, proudly wearing their leavers' hoodies and enjoying ice creams in the sunshine.

We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and wish them all the very best for the future.





## Walking the Red Carpet at Year 11 Prom

On the 26 June, celebrations resumed at the Year 11 Prom. Our students arrived in style in vintage cars, tractors and even by horseback! They were dressed to impress, looking smart and sophisticated and this year the red carpet was rolled out for the first time. It was a lovely evening and we were incredibly proud to see them reach this milestone event.

A huge thanks were given to Mrs Hare, Mrs Pearson, Mr Mansfield and Mr Sims, who set up the event on one of the hottest days of the year. Their efforts showed and all attendees enjoyed a wonderful evening.

The complete photo gallery can viewed on our website or using the following link: [Prom 2026](#)





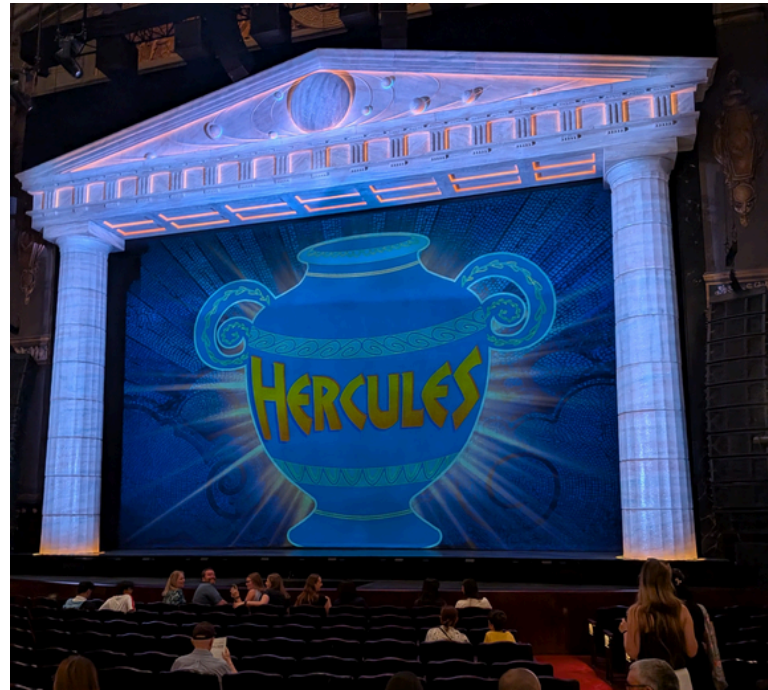
# Performing Arts Report

## From the West End to Our Stage: A Celebration of Talent

This term has been an exciting and inspiring one for our students, with a range of enriching trips and performances that have brought the world of theatre to life.

Year 8 enjoyed the fantastic opportunity to attend a trip to The West End to see Hercules, where they were immersed in a vibrant and energetic production. The performance was a wonderful experience, showcasing creativity, music and storytelling at its very best.

Closer to home, our talented students shone brightly in the school production of “Back to the 80s” which was shown across three evenings. The show was a huge success, full of energy, humour and impressive performances. Students demonstrated incredible dedication both on stage and behind the scenes, making it a truly unforgettable production for all who attended.





## RSC Julius Caesar Workshop & Performance

Students enjoyed the fantastic opportunity to work with a director from the Royal Shakespeare Company as they prepared for their performance of Julius Caesar at The Mercury Theatre. Through a range of practical activities and performance techniques, students developed their understanding of the play, built their confidence on stage and gained valuable insight from a leading theatre professional. It was an inspiring experience that helped them take their performance to the next level.

On Thursday 9 July the students were fully prepared and performed Julius Caesar live at the Mercury Theatre in Colchester - they showed real bravery and ambition, performing on a different stage to an entirely new audience. It was a fantastic evening of theatre, our students should be extremely proud of their performances.

We received some feedback from the Lead Associate School Teacher, here is an excerpt:

*'The feedback from colleagues, audience members and the Royal Shakespeare Company has been incredibly positive, and every student should be immensely proud of what they achieved. More importantly, they have experienced something that very few young people get the chance to be part of, creating theatre together on a professional stage, taking creative risks, building confidence and making memories that I hope will stay with them for a long time.'*



# Sports Report

## QuadKids Success for SVCS

Our Sports Council students led the Primary School QuadKids Athletics event, welcoming five primary school teams for a fantastic afternoon of summer sport. Congratulations to Bures Primary School, who were crowned overall winners. Our Sports Leaders played a key role in the success of the event, demonstrating excellent leadership, organisation and enthusiasm throughout. Active Suffolk staff praised the students, describing them as “the best they have ever worked with” and “a credit to the school.”

It was a brilliant afternoon, and our Sports Leaders should be extremely proud of the positive impression they made.



## U15 Super8s Athletics Team Shines at County Event

The U15 Super8s Athletics teams did a brilliant job on Friday 3 July at the re-organised event in Bury St Edmunds. This is the only athletics event that has been held this summer across the county in what has been a horribly weather affected term, but SVCS students showed great grit and determination in securing a solid 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish in the team event.

There were brilliant individual displays from Isla, Carlito, and Barney who all finished first in their events. The track was hot and the competition was tough, but our students were amazing, stuck to the game plan and should all be congratulated for a brilliant team performance.





## Sports Day 2026

For the second year running, the trophy was lifted by the students in red as Deben House claimed victory once again. Congratulations to Deben and to all of their worthy competitors for making the day such a success. Kennett secured second place, with Waveney taking third. Despite some outstanding performances throughout the day, Orwell narrowly missed out on a podium finish.

Students competed across a wide range of events, including javelin, shot put, hurdles, relay races and football, demonstrating determination, resilience and excellent sportsmanship throughout.

A huge well done to our entire school community for coming together and making the most of the day despite the hot weather. With shaded areas, water stations and regular breaks from the sun in place, students rose to the challenge and delivered some fantastic sporting performances.





# Summer Enhancement Day

Our final Enhancement Day of the academic year went beautifully on Thursday 9 July, with Year 9 students taking part in sessions based on the option preferences they selected in March. Some were creating wind buggies and skate parks in Technology, while others were with the Humanities departments (History, Geography and RS) in the Country Park.

Year 8 had sessions with Turning Point Suffolk Drugs and Alcohol Support Service, cancer awareness sessions with Lennox Children's Cancer Fund, Wild Reading with the English Department, and a session on democracy and election processes with two returning students who were members of our Ethics Committee and Peer Mentors. They ended the day with the PE Department for some sports and games.

Year 7 learnt about the different choices available to them on their educational journeys from the Eastern Education Group, the concept of Joint Enterprise with Suffolk Constabulary, e-safety with our Computer Science Department, and the Day of the Dead with our Languages Department. They ended the day by participating in a competition to create our new school safeguarding poster.

We also held some small-group sessions for Years 7 and 8 with our School Nurses to support their understanding of RSE and wellbeing.

We are very grateful to all our external providers and our own staff for running and supporting these sessions. We are pleased that our students took the opportunity to make the most of the day, particularly in the hot weather!





# Year 7 Summer Camp

## Adventure, Collaboration and a Touch of British Weather!

In June, a group of Year 7 and 8 students headed to Brentwood for an exciting two-day camping and adventure trip at the International Scouts Association woodland site.

After settling into camp, students threw themselves into a packed programme of activities including abseiling, crate stacking, axe throwing, water rollers and ziplining. True to British tradition, the rain arrived just as the adventure began, but students showed fantastic resilience, tackling every challenge with enthusiasm despite the wet and windy conditions.

The fun continued with rock climbing, cresta run and pedal cart racing, where teamwork and determination were on full display. After a well-earned dinner, students enjoyed an evening of games and relaxation before settling into their tents—while keeping a watchful eye out for the local foxes, who proved just as curious about our camp as we were about them!

Day two brought more challenges, including orienteering and problem-solving activities across the woodland site. Despite a few wrong turns and some questionable navigation skills, students worked brilliantly together and embraced every opportunity to learn and explore.

Although the rain made one final appearance as camp was packed away, spirits remained high as everyone returned to school muddy, tired and full of memories. Student highlights included the excitement of abseiling, the chaos of water rollers, the challenge of crate stacking and, unsurprisingly, the memorable wet weather!

It was a fantastic trip that showcased our students' resilience, teamwork and sense of adventure—and a great time was had by all.

Click [here](#) for the full Summer Camp photo gallery.





# Year 10 Photography visit Old Felixstowe

## Exploring Light, Texture and Composition by the Coast

Year 10 GCSE photography students enjoyed their visit to Felixstowe this term.

The weather was perfect and the boat yard was a great location for taking photos in preparation for their Year 10 exam.



# Year 9 Science visit Recycling Centre

## Valuable Insights: Waste Management & Energy Production

As part of their Science studies, Year 9 students visited the SUEZ Recycling and Recovery Facility in Ipswich. After learning about site safety and touring the facility, students discovered how non-recyclable household waste is transformed into electricity and construction materials. Back at the education centre, they explored the waste hierarchy through a range of interactive activities, including recycling challenges and energy-generation tasks. The visit was both enjoyable and informative, providing valuable real-world learning to support their studies in the classroom.





# Year 8 Science Fair

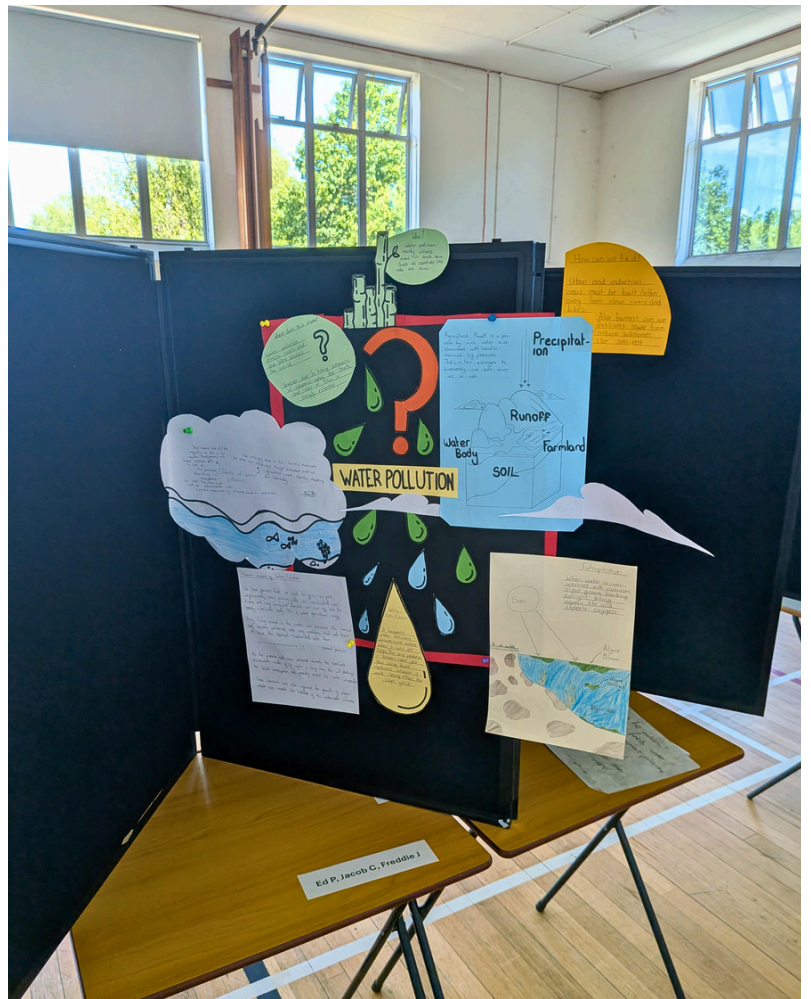
## Environmental Awareness Takes Centre Stage

Our annual Year 8 Science Fair was held on 8 July, where students had the opportunity to showcase environmental issues affecting the world and explain what we can do to help improve them.

The Year 7s were able to come round and ask questions about the different issues and the impact they have on us today. They then voted for the best group using the school values of Kind, Brave, Ambitious, and Collaborative.

The students have worked incredibly hard over the last couple of weeks on these projects, and we hope to have some of their work on display soon!

A massive thank you to Mrs Sedge for organising the event and to the Science Department for helping with the set-up too. We look forward to doing it all again next year.

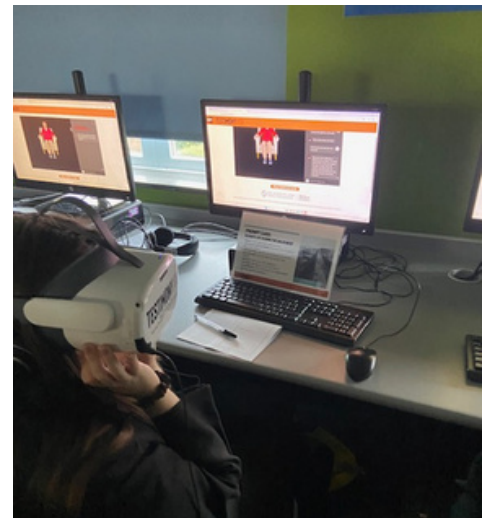




# Year 9 Holocaust Workshops

## Bringing History to Life Through Immersive Learning

In early June, Year 9 students participated in a powerful virtual learning experience. An organisation called 'Testimony 360' came into school and provided virtual reality workshops for Year 9 students wanting to study GCSE History. Two of the Testimony team guided students through workshops looking at the issues and legacy of the Holocaust. Students interacted with Holocaust survivors online and completed a virtual tour of Auschwitz - Birkenau. Thank you to the school's IT Team for their support in making this happen.



# National Year of Reading

## Inspiring a Love of Reading Through Real-Life Literary Experiences

Celebrations for the National Year of Reading continued this term. Our English department have been rewarding student reading and promoting #Reading for pleasure.

In late May, Miss Savage took a group of Y9 students to the Cambridge Literary festival as a reward for their dedication to reading. Students heard from the inspirational writer Jackie Kay and enjoyed cakes in the Cambridge sunshine before receiving a free book.





## Engaging with Literature and Local Bookshops

To celebrate both Independent Bookshop Week and the National Year of Reading, our Carnegie Shadows group visited Harris & Harris Books to interview Harris and Harris all about the importance of reading, encouraging reading for teens and book recommendations. They also helped Ms Millburn purchase some new books for the Library.



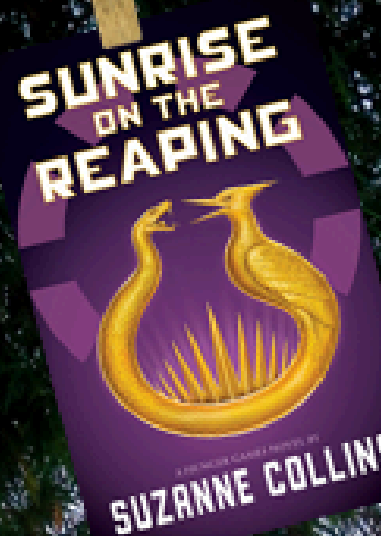
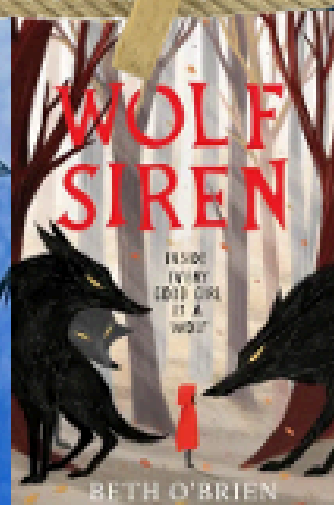
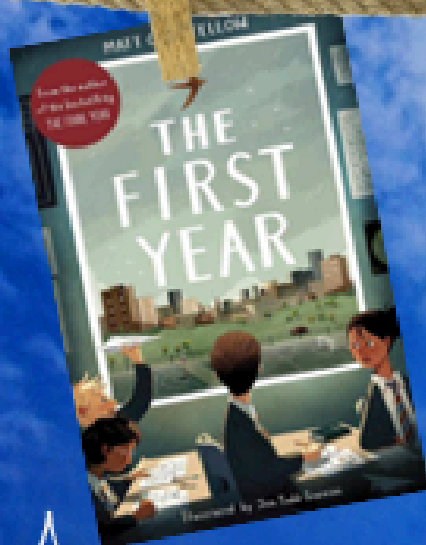
## Joe Dix Foundation

### Empowering Students Through Education and Prevention

In April, We were incredibly privileged to welcome the Joe Dix Foundation to lead our Year 9 assembly this morning. They discussed the dangers and signs of exploitation. We are fortunate we now have a brand new bleed kit not only for our school but for the local community to use in the event of emergencies. We were extremely grateful for both their time and donation.

[Joe Dix Foundation website](https://www.joedixfoundation.org/)

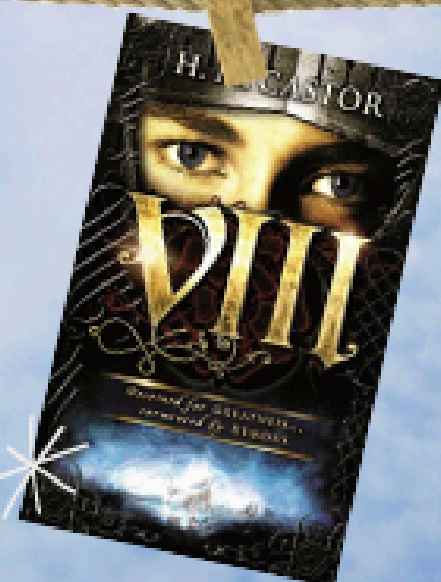
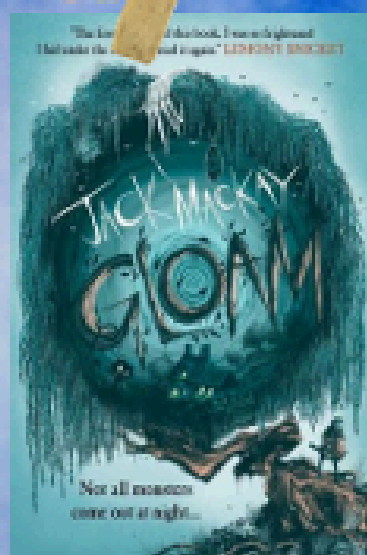
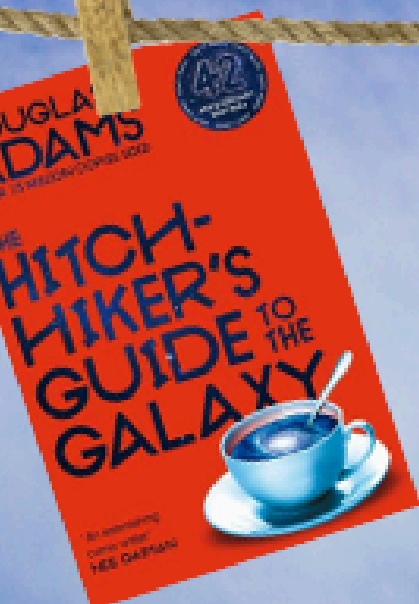




# *The English Department's Top 6 for the 6 weeks*

## KS3 BOOKS

@scvsenglish



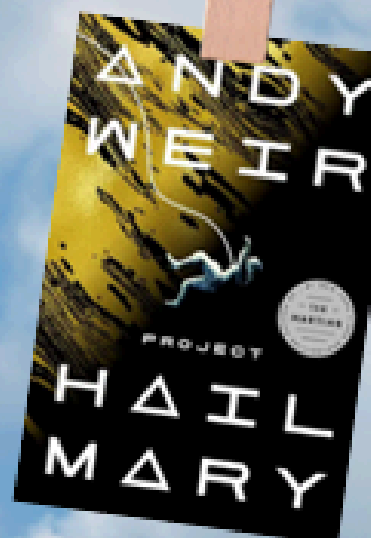
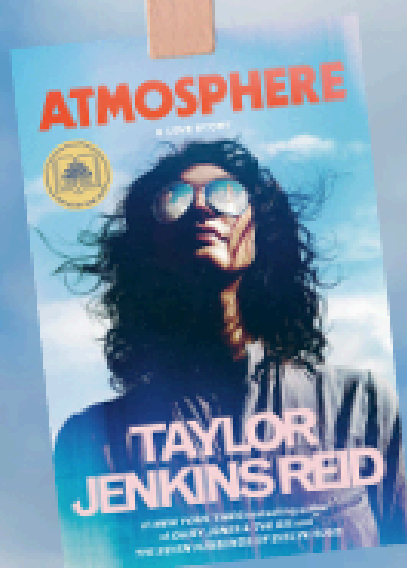
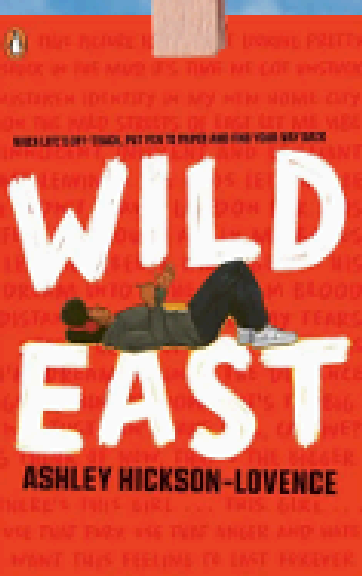
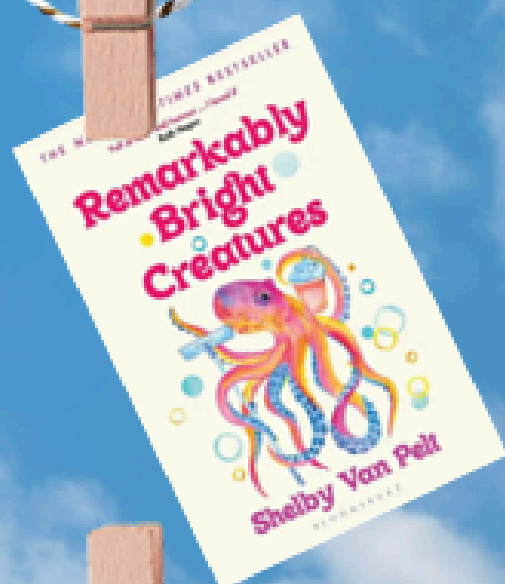


# The English Department's

## Top 6 for the 6 Weeks

KS4

@svcsenglish



# Changes to Mobile Phone Expectations this September

## Supporting Learning, Wellbeing & Positive Social Interaction Throughout the School Day

From September 2026, Stour Valley Community School will be introducing updated expectations regarding mobile phones and smart devices, in line with Department for Education guidance. Students who bring mobile phones or smart devices to school will be required to switch them off and store them securely in their allocated locker for the duration of the school day.

This change aims to support learning, reduce distractions, encourage positive social interaction and promote student wellbeing. Students will continue to be provided with the information they need throughout the day via their student planner, while parents can continue to access key school information through EduLink. Lockers will be available for students to securely store mobile phones and other permitted valuables. Existing locker holders can continue to use their current locker, while new lockers and replacement keys can be purchased via ParentPay.

Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day should continue to do so through the school office.

Appropriate arrangements will be made for students who require access to a mobile device for medical reasons or other agreed exceptional circumstances.

To read the full letter from Mrs Kelly, please visit: [Letter from the Headteacher](#).

