



AUTUMN TERM 2025



Head Lines

END OF AUTUMN TERM MESSAGE FROM MRS KELLY

As we come to the end of a busy and rewarding Autumn Term, I would like to thank our students, staff, families and wider community for the many ways in which you have lived out our school values: Be Kind, Be Brave, Be Ambitious and Collaborate.

This term has offered countless examples of kindness and respect. Our students represented the school impeccably at the Remembrance Service in Bury St Edmunds, standing alongside veterans and serving personnel with maturity and dignity. Back at school, the whole community came together for our act of remembrance, joined by members of the armed forces and the Royal British Legion. Moments such as these remind us of the importance of compassion, reflection and gratitude.

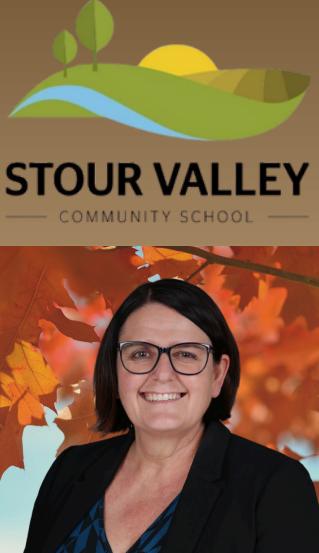
We have also seen many examples of bravery. From our Year 10 students completing their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition in extremely challenging conditions, to students stepping outside their comfort zones through workshops on teenage pressures, alcohol awareness and adult life skills, our young people have shown resilience, courage and determination. Our Year 8 girls who took part in the FA-run officiating course demonstrated real confidence as they explored new pathways in sport and leadership.

Ambition has been evident across the term. Our GCSE History students engaged deeply with their studies during the Amsterdam and Netherlands visit, showing maturity, curiosity and empathy as they explored complex historical themes. Whether through overseas learning, enhancement days, competitive sport or creative artwork displayed in the community, our students continue to strive for personal and academic growth.

None of this would be possible without collaboration. We are hugely grateful to the many organisations, volunteers and families who support our school, from Duke of Edinburgh and local health services to community partners and generous families who helped bring festive joy to our Heart Space.

Working together truly strengthens our school and enriches opportunities for every student.

I am incredibly proud of all that has been achieved this term. Thank you for your continued support, and I wish everyone a restful and joyful break as we look forward to the new term ahead.



M R S R K E L L Y

Central to our vision is the belief in the uniqueness of every student, and that every young person has gifts to discover and share with others. We are committed to building brighter futures for our students, our local community and the wider world. We want our students to be happy and confident, but also be caring and value diversity. Above all we want them to have a thirst for knowledge and a real enthusiasm for life. Our Values: Be Kind, Be Brave, Be Ambitious, Collaborate



<https://stourvalley.org.uk-school/welcome-from-the-headteacher>



Christmas Card Competition Winners!



CREATIVITY AT ITS FINEST

This year's Christmas Card Competition was nothing short of spectacular! With over 190 entries, our students truly showcased their artistic flair and festive spirit. From glittering snowflakes to cosy winter scenes, the creativity on display was incredible. After much deliberation, Keaton emerged as our overall winner with his charming snowy post box design—a perfect nod to the magic of Christmas.

A huge well done to Keaton and to every single student who took part. Your designs brought joy and festive cheer to the whole school. We can't wait to see what you create next year!

Honours Assemblies

CELEBRATING AUTUMN TERM SUCCESS!

Last term, we proudly celebrated the incredible achievements of our students during the Honours Assemblies. Certificates were presented for academic excellence, outstanding attendance, and achievement points—a true reflection of the hard work, commitment, and determination shown throughout Term 1.

A huge well done to all our award winners! Your efforts set a fantastic example for the whole school community. We're excited to see even more success stories in the coming term.



Christmas Concert 2025

STOUR VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL PUT ON A FESTIVE SHOW

This year's Christmas Concert was nothing short of spectacular! From the dazzling performances on stage to the seamless work behind the scenes, our students truly shone. The energy, talent, and professionalism displayed by both the performers and the backstage crew made the evening an unforgettable celebration of creativity and teamwork.

We were thrilled with the incredible ticket sales and the fantastic turnout from our school community. Every note, every scene, and every moment reflected the dedication and passion of our Music and Drama departments—congratulations to them for orchestrating such a phenomenal event.

A huge thank you to everyone involved for making this concert a highlight of the festive season. It was a perfect reminder of what happens when talent, hard work, and collaboration come together.



Festive Decorating

BRANCHING OUT: A TREE-MENDOUS ACT OF KINDNESS

We were delighted to express our gratitude to the entire Stour Valley community. This year, our Heart Space glowed with the warmth and magic of a beautiful Christmas tree – a gift made possible thanks to the generosity of Doreward Marble and Granite, Sudbury Car Sales, and Norris & Co. Plumbing and Heating.

Their thoughtful contributions brought festive cheer to every pupil and member of staff, and we were truly thankful. As each of these families had children in our school, it felt only fitting that they joined us in decorating the tree. Their enthusiasm and sense of community made the occasion even more memorable.

A final heartfelt thank you to Mr. Pearson, Mr. Wickham, Mr. Beetles, and Mr. Norris. Their donations, generosity, and support helped us create something that Stour Valley will enjoy not just for one season, but for many years to come.

Thank you all for helping make our school shine a little brighter during the festive season.



Christmas Lunch

FROM GINGERBREAD TO GOOD TIMES: CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2025

Christmas dinner was a great festive lunch. SLT served and Christmas music played throughout. Dessert was a big hit with the Christmas cookies and gingerbread men disappearing first. A huge thank you to our canteen staff for making this special lunch possible. It was a festive event, made even more by Christmas jumpers worn by both students and staff.



Pizza. Potter. Popcorn!

A SPELLBINDING REWARD FOR PERFECT ATTENDANCE!

We celebrated those with 100% attendance at the end of this term. We had over 160 students in the main hall for our Pizza.Potter.Popcorn celebration! Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was shown whilst pizza and popcorn was served. A huge congratulations to those invited!

The next event will be for those who have 100% attendance in term 2 so the competition starts again in January!



Furry Merry Christmas

PAWS FOR THOUGHT: ROO BRINGS JOY TO SVCS

Pastoral Support Officer Mrs Hare had a visitor for students this week....her pet dog Roo wearing his Christmas jumper! Students spent time together in the Library and found it to be a very uplifting experience.

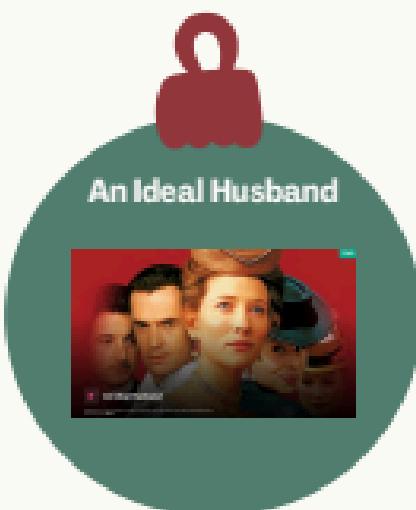
Roo will be supporting the Pastoral Team and will be working closely with our intervention groups in the new year. A huge thank you to Mrs Hare for organising this for us and we can't wait to see Roo back in school!



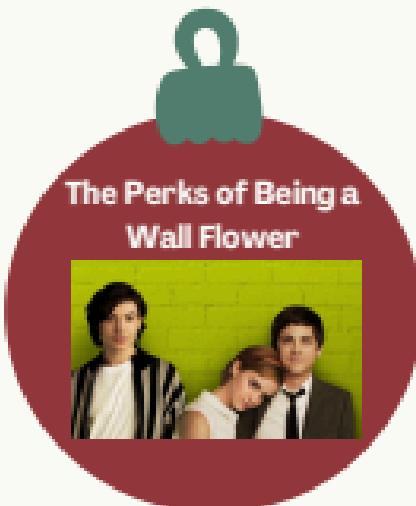
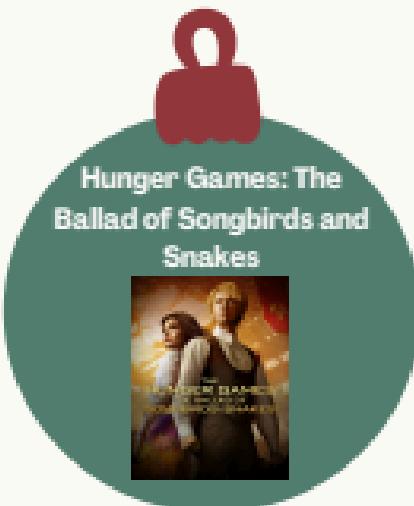
Film Recommendations

Here are some book related films to watch over Christmas

BBC iplayer



Netflix



Tutor Group Attendance Winners

WINNING WITH DEDICATION: CHOCOLATE, SELFIES & SUCCESS

Earlier this term, we proudly recognised the fantastic commitment of our students with Attendance Awards. Many different groups achieved success, showing that dedication really does pay off!

From chocolate treats to creative selfies, the celebrations were full of fun and energy. A special mention goes to all the winning tutor groups and houses who set an outstanding example for the whole school.

Well done to every student for your effort and consistency – keep aiming high as the competition continues next term!



Visit from Local MP

Earlier this term, Stour Valley had the pleasure of welcoming local MP Nick Timothy for a special visit. During his time at the school, Mr Timothy met with Mrs Kelly, toured our facilities, and saw first-hand how Stour Valley has flourished as a thriving part of the local community.

The visit celebrated the school's journey since becoming the first Free School to open in 2011 and highlighted the strong reputation we have built for providing a warm, inclusive, and ambitious learning environment.

Mr Timothy praised the school community, commenting on the positive atmosphere and the impressive progress made over the past decade.

Reflecting on the visit, Mrs Kelly said: "We were delighted to welcome Mr Timothy and showcase the achievements of our staff and students. Stour Valley is proud to be at the heart of the community, and this visit was a great opportunity to reflect on how far we have come."



Remembrance at SVCS

A group of 12 students represented the school at the Remembrance Service on Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds earlier this term. Nathaniel Van Der Hulks, Kimberley Cooper, and Elliot Fountain proudly placed the wreath at the memorial and were later presented with a certificate in recognition of their efforts.

The event brought together many schools, alongside the Mayor, veterans, and serving members of the armed forces. Our students conducted themselves exceptionally and were a credit to Stour Valley.

We also extend our thanks to the students who entered the artwork competition, which this year focused on the Royal Navy. Their impressive pieces were displayed in St Mary's Church throughout the week.



The whole school marked Remembrance with a two-minute silence, joined by armed forces personnel from Wattisham and Nigel Wolstenholme from the Royal British Legion.

After the silence, students laid a wreath at our memorial tree in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

A big thank you to our students for their respect and to our visitors for taking time out of an active exercise to be with us.

Photo: LCpl Clarke, SSgt Corpe, Sgt Hutchinson, Airtpr Hobbs, Airtpr Basford, and Nigel Wolstenholme.

History visit to the Netherlands



As part of the History GCSE curriculum, which includes the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, a group of Year 10 and Year 11 students, accompanied by Miss Howard, Mr Stephens, Miss Tompkins and Miss Terry, travelled via the Channel Tunnel to Amsterdam on Thursday 23rd October.

Students visited the Portuguese Synagogue and learned about the thousands of Jews who fled Spain and Portugal during the seventeenth century, establishing new and prosperous lives in Amsterdam during its 'Golden Age'.



A walking tour of the Old Jewish Quarter enabled students to identify 'stumbling stones' set into the pavements—memorial markers commemorating individuals taken from their homes during the Holocaust and murdered.

The Dutch Resistance Museum offered a highly interactive insight into life in the Netherlands before, during and after Nazi occupation. Students also took part in a workshop and enjoyed a guided tour of Anne Frank's House. The visit concluded with a trip to Camp Vught, an SS concentration camp and National Memorial, where excellent tour guides provided further historical context and deepened students' understanding of the Holocaust and its impact.

English & Drama Enrichment

On 14th November, Year 9 and Year 10 English and Drama students attended a Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production of King Lear at Ormiston Sudbury Academy.

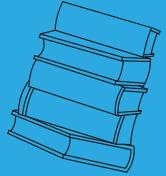
This was a fantastic cultural opportunity and will greatly enrich their study of Shakespeare in the classroom.

We have become a RSC Associate school, which means we work in partnership with a Research School (we are working with Ormiston) to strengthen our use of high-quality, evidence-informed practice. This gives staff access to current research, high-quality CPD, implementation support, and professional networks, helping them make confident, effective decisions in the classroom. As a result, students benefit from consistently strong teaching, more effective interventions, and approaches proven to improve learning, behaviour and long-term outcomes.



Year 7 Library Visits

All Year 7 students have visited Clare Library and Harris & Harris Books this term. These visits help ensure students are aware of the resources available to them locally. We are pleased that many students have now signed up for a Suffolk Libraries card.



Personal Development & Enrichment

Year 10 and 11 Enhancement Day

On 16th October we held an Enhancement Day for Years 10 and 11.

Year 11 developed their Adult Life Skills through sessions on:

Interview techniques

Car maintenance

Driving theory and safety

Post-16 applications

The world of work

Cervical screening

Managing exam stress

Year 10 increased their understanding of:

Risks associated with different drugs

Sexual health

Post-16 options

Finance, including budgeting



We are extremely grateful to our staff and the external providers who contributed to the day, including OM Health & Wellbeing, the Department for Work and Pensions, Reach Haverhill, Suffolk Alcohol and Drug Service - Turning Point, Suffolk GP Federation, Eastern Education Group, and all the individuals who volunteered their time as interviewers.

Celebrating Excellence

We have been delighted with the number of students who's performance this Autumn resulted in rewards.

The number of students who received Honours in assemblies:

Year 7: 84

Year 8: 83

Year 9: 89

Year 10: 117

Year 11: 97

The number of students who attended Hot Chocolate Friday with Mrs Kelly:

Year 7: 1

Year 8: 2

Year 9: 4

Year 10: 1

Year 11: 7



A huge well done to you all!



Sports this Autumn

FROM PENALTY DRAMA TO CROSS-COUNTRY GLORY: A TERM OF SPORTING TRIUMPHS

It was an action-packed term for sports, and our students performed brilliantly!

Several of our girls attended a Football Officiating course at AFC Sudbury and even had the chance to practise on the pitch.

Year 8 boys battled through a thrilling third-round match against Ipswich High School. After a 1-1 draw, they held their nerve in a tense penalty shootout to win 4-2 – a fantastic achievement!

The Year 8 girls were unstoppable, winning every game against Samuel Ward, OSA A, OSA B, and Stowmarket. Led by captain Leah Norris, the team showed incredible skill, determination, and teamwork.

We saw fantastic performances from our Cross Country runners this term. Well done to everyone who took part, and a special mention to Lily, who finished 3rd in the Year 7 race, and Amelia, who secured 2nd place in the Year 8 race.

A huge thank you and well done to all students who represented Stour Valley at fixtures this term, both home and away!



New Cameras for Year 10 Photography



Earlier this term, our Year 10 GCSE Photography students enjoyed an exciting practical session as they learned to use their new cameras. The session gave students the chance to explore key photography techniques, experiment with settings, and gain confidence behind the lens.

This hands-on experience marked an important step in their coursework, allowing them to develop the technical skills needed to capture striking images and express their creativity.

We look forward to seeing the incredible work they produce as the year progresses!

Baking Brilliance

SWEET SUCCESS: YEAR 8 & 9 BAKE UP A STORM!

In early October, our talented Year 8 and Year 9 students showcased their culinary creativity with some truly mouth-watering bakes. From perfectly golden pies to light, fluffy meringues, the kitchen was filled with the sights and smells of success!

The baking session wasn't just about delicious treats—it was a fantastic opportunity for students to develop practical skills, work collaboratively, and take pride in their creations.

A huge well done to all involved for bringing such energy and enthusiasm to the kitchen. We can't wait to see what they whisk up next.



Duke Of Edinburgh

RESILIENCE IN ACTION: YEAR 10 CONQUER THE BRONZE CHALLENGE

On the weekend of 20-21 September, 32 of our Year 10 students successfully completed their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award expedition. The group faced an unexpectedly challenging weekend, walking a combined 12 miles while carrying all the kit needed for camping.

As if that wasn't enough, a sudden change in the forecast brought winds of up to 45mph until the early hours, meaning the night was spent in the school hall and gym rather than under canvas! Despite these hurdles, the students showed resilience and teamwork throughout, and were a real credit to the school and community.

Since starting the award in January, the students have embraced the spirit of Youth Without Limits – learning new skills such as playing musical instruments, cooking, and volunteering at local events and charities. Their commitment has been inspiring, and we look forward to welcoming Year 9 students into the next cohort soon.

We are incredibly grateful for the support from the Duke of Edinburgh charity, which provided funding for equipment and offered two years of reduced licensing and participation fees. Without this, we could not have established the award at Stour Valley for current and future students.

In recognition of this support, Mr Sims ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon on Sunday 12 October to raise funds for the charity. Donations are still welcome and will help provide opportunities for young people nationwide:
<https://events.dofe.org/fundraisers/nathansims>



Post-16 Careers Event Inspires Students

OPENING DOORS TO BRIGHT FUTURES

Earlier this term, Stour Valley hosted its Post-16 Careers Event, giving our students the opportunity to explore their next steps and future aspirations. The event brought together a wide range of providers, including local colleges, sixth forms, apprenticeship organisations, and training specialists, all ready to share advice and guidance.

Students engaged in meaningful conversations about courses, career pathways, and opportunities beyond GCSEs. It was fantastic to see so many of our young people asking questions and taking proactive steps toward shaping their futures.

A huge thank you to all the providers who supported the event and gave their time and expertise to help our students make informed decisions.



Futures Updates this Autumn

YOUR GUIDE TO SPRING & AUTUMN FUTURES

FUTURES SPRING 1 WEEKS 1-2

FUTURES AUTUMN 2 WEEKS 3-4

FUTURES AUTUMN 2 WEEKS 5-7

https://stourvalley.org/downloads/FUTURES_Spring_1_Weeks_1-2.pdf

https://stourvalley.org/downloads/FUTURES_Autumn_2_Weeks_3-4.pdf

https://stourvalley.org/downloads/FUTURES_Autumn_2_Weeks_5-7.pdf



Update from Anglian Learning CEO

As CEO of Anglian Learning, the school Trust which supports your child/ren's school, I would like to share some key highlights of the work we have undertaken in the last few months. These activities have benefitted the pupils, workforce and communities of our Trust.

Firstly, I was delighted to attend our Platform 25 exhibition in Cambridge which brings together artwork from each of our secondary schools. As usual, the quality on display was impressive and many congratulations to all pupils whose work was exhibited. My thanks also to the art teachers across our Trust for their support of the exhibition, which was open to members of the public.



MR JONATHAN CULPIN

December 2025

We also launched Anglian Learning's long-term strategy, which has three main areas of focus: Belonging by Design, Great Schools and Connected Communities. Next term, I will share with you more information about this strategy. We have already started to drive forward in each area, including the launch of webinars to support parent, carer and pupil wellbeing as part of Belonging by Design and working in partnership with the Foundation for Young People's Mental Health. More details can be found [here](#).

We have been supporting the development of our school estate, using government funding to invest in EV chargers, refurbishing numerous classrooms, toilets and play facilities and, most ambitiously, working alongside the Department for Education to start the remodelling of Sawston Village College.

In January, we look forward to welcoming four new schools to our Trust, with one being Soham Village College. The school's vision and values align well with Anglian Learning's, making them a perfect fit for our community. We look forward to learning from each other and inviting their pupils to take part in our Trust-wide events in the coming months and years.

I wish all families a restful break and thank you for your continued support as we work together. For more information on our Trust's activities, please visit our website www.anglianlearning.org, or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

