

Our ref: MMC/NWI

16 May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

We've had another vibrant and productive week at the academy, filled with inspiring moments of learning and achievement. Our Year 11 students have shown remarkable focus and resilience as they continue their GCSE examinations, and we are incredibly proud of their commitment. This letter highlights the exciting developments across the academy—from exam updates and revision tools to enrichment activities, sports successes, and upcoming events. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to ensure every student thrives.

Teaching and Learning

Year 13 Examinations

The year 13 A Level examinations continued this week with Economics, Geography, Business, English and Psychology as well as BTEC examinations in Sport, IT and Health & Social Care. Individual timetables have been shared with the students and include the dates and times of their exams as well as their assigned room and seat numbers. We thank staff for the support that has gone into ensuring all students are fully prepared to sit their final examinations.

UpLearn

The Sixth Form team recently launched UpLearn with students studying A Levels in Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Economics, and Psychology. The academy has invested in this online platform to support students with reaching their target grades through independent study. Year 13 students should access the site to help them prepare for their upcoming final exams. Year 12 students will be formally set 2 hours of directed independent learning on UpLearn each week.

Year 11 Examinations

Year 11 students have continued to complete written examinations this week, with students completing examinations in English Literature, Biology, Geography, Mathematics, History and Business. We continue to be impressed by the levels of investment displayed by all students and the high numbers of students who are attending the breakfast Achieve sessions, where free tea and toast is provided, from 7:30 am.

Over the weekend, we will be offering weekend Achieve sessions as follows:

- Saturday 17 May: 10 am-12 pm – English Literature
- Sunday 18 May: 10 am-12 pm - Chemistry

As always, we remind parents and carers of the importance of students being on time, in full uniform and fully equipped for every examination.



Year 11 May Half Term Achieve

Over May Half Term Achieve, we will continue to offer a host of sessions to support students to prepare for their remaining examinations, which students are invited to sign up to using this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/gCr0Xpc87h>

Tassomai

Last week, the performance of students in years 10 and 11 reached a new high when it comes to Tassomai, as we were in the top 1% of schools nationally thanks to the relentless investment of students, parents, carers and staff!

For year 11 students, Tassomai is a vital element of their revision during the examination period, as the app supports students to identify strengths and areas of weakness to inform final revision in the coming weeks. Once students have completed the examination for each topic, this content will no longer appear on Tassomai.

Sparx

Sparx continues to be used for revision for years 10 and 11 with 594,381 personalised questions completed. Students can access the entire GCSE curriculum using the "independent practise" button on student's home pages.

Sparx is not logged on Satchel-One as it is a standalone program. Homework is set every Friday and due in on Thursday. This is the same for all year groups. The expectation is that students attempt all questions and watch the videos for support on any questions they cannot complete.

In key stage 3 we have seen 223 students improve their fluency with times tables. This will have great benefits for students accessing higher content in key stage 4.

Careers

Work Experience

We now have over 150 students, within years 10 and 12, who have been successful in securing a work placement. It is great to see how engaged students have been with the launch of this new initiative and we can't wait to see them thrive during their placement week.

If you're child needs any further support with securing a work placement, please contact the academy and we will provide the appropriate support. Please be aware that deadlines are approaching for upload and sign-off on the Unifrog placement tool.

Sports Fixtures

The year 7 Cricket squad will participate in the next round, which will take place on Tuesday 20 May 2025 for the South Yorkshire Schools at Frecheville Cricket Club in Sheffield.

This week, the year 8 Cricket squad welcomed Wickersley School and Sports College in a highly competitive second round fixture of the Joe Root National Hardball Cricket Competition. We wish Wickersley all the best in the next round as they were winners. However, Mr Walker was very impressed by the determination and resilience of the STWA students who played until the last ball. This was a first for the school participating in this competition and we look forward to entering again next year. The next competitive fixture is against Hatfield on Thursday 22 May 2025.



Attendance

We are pleased to share that this Tuesday marked our highest attendance day of the year so far – an encouraging milestone that reflects the continued improvement we have seen each term. Thank you for your ongoing support in making this possible.

However, we would like to draw your attention to a concerning trend: attendance on Fridays remains significantly lower than on other days. On average, we see 12-15 more students absent on Fridays compared to the rest of the week.

We kindly ask parents and carers to be mindful of this pattern. Fridays at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy are just as important as any other day, with vital lessons and learning taking place. Missing these sessions can have a real impact on students' progress and continuity of learning.

Standards

This week, we had the pleasure of launching and discussing the introduction of Yondr pouches at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy. Below, you will find a link to a copy of the letter that was shared with all parents and carers on Thursday and distributed to students following a series of special assemblies held that afternoon.

We want to reassure families that there has been no major change to our existing mobile phone policy. Students have never been permitted to use their phones during the school day and this remains unchanged. The introduction of Yondr pouches simply reinforces this policy by removing the temptation to access phones, which can often lead to unhealthy habits such as phone dependency, increased anxiety and the fear of missing out.

Current leading research highlights the significant impact mobile phone use is having on this generation of young people. Our goal is to create an environment where students arrive each day feeling happy, focused and ready to learn. The investment in Yondr is part of our commitment to supporting students, not only academically, but also socially and emotionally – ensuring they receive the very best experience during their time at the academy.

[Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices \(1\).pdf](#)

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald
Principal

