

Our ref: MMC/NWI

26 September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been a fantastic start to the term at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy, with students and staff working together to uphold the high standards that define our school community. There is a real sense of determination across the academy, with young people showing commitment not only to their own learning but also to supporting one another in their journey. Whether through academic initiatives, enrichment opportunities, or sporting achievements, our students are demonstrating the pride, ambition, and resilience that we value so highly. I am grateful for the ongoing support of parents and carers, as it is this partnership between home and school that ensures every child can thrive and every success is a shared one.

Teaching and Learning

Sixth Form

This week marked the launch of the Zero Gravity programme, beginning with an introductory assembly. The Zero Gravity initiative is a UK-based social mobility programme aimed at supporting high-achieving students from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds in accessing top universities and competitive career pathways. Our guest speaker commended the enthusiasm and respectful demeanour of our students, noting that they represented the academy exceptionally well.

KS4 Achieve

Students in years 10 and 11 have continued their impressive start to the year with high levels of investment evident from tutor time to the end of Period 4. We also have a number of students in year 11 accessing additional tutoring before or after school in English and Mathematics.

Our programme of live trials has also commenced, with students completing a live trial in English Language, English Literature and Mathematics to support them with refining their examination technique in preparation for the year 11 November trial examinations.

Next week, we will confirm the timetable for our October Half Term Achieve sessions.

Tassomai

Last week saw students in years 10-11 quizzing on Tassomai, our GCSE revision app for English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and Computer Science. Students have performed incredibly well so far, with our performance in the top 2% of schools nationally, with over 179 hours of quizzing completed in year 11 and 135 hours of quizzing completed in year 10.

A reminder that all students are expected to use the app to achieve their weekly goal, which takes on average 15 minutes per subject. Further information about Tassomai and its potential impact can be found here: [How does Tassomai work? — Tassomai](#)



NGRT Reading Tests

Developing students into confident, well-read readers, is a key aspect of our broad and balanced curriculum here at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy. To monitor and support our year 7 to 10 students, we are continuing to invest in the NGRT reading assessment test, which will generate a report about each student's reading ability. Key data from the report will be shared with all staff, so teachers can ensure they are planning and delivering lesson content which is challenging yet appropriate for our students. We will test students biannually so we can track their progress and offer specific intervention where needed. Reading tests will continue to take place until Friday 3 October 2025. As an academy, we will support your child to develop their confidence, enjoyment and reading skills through their English and reading lessons and the wider curriculum, as every teacher at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy is a teacher of reading.

Personal Development

Enrichment Clubs

Enrichment clubs are in full swing, please keep an eye on social media over the weekend for next week's timetable. All clubs are 50 minutes long aside from sporting fixtures. The staff responsible for the sporting fixtures will communicate the finish time.

PE Clubs

Please make your way to the PE department after standing assembly. Fixtures against other schools normally start in week 4 so please encourage your child to come along, train and improve in sport, have fun, make new friends and have the opportunity to represent the school team!

Fixtures

Our year 7, 8 and 9 girls Football squad visited Hungerhill School on Wednesday and came away with a 2-0 win. We would like to congratulate the girls who all played brilliantly and deserved to take home the win – well done!

Additionally, the year 7 girls played for the first time together and although they didn't come home with a win, their efforts were outstanding and they had fun and learnt a lot about how to play as a team. Some of our students have never played football before but had the courage to come out of their comfort zone and represent the school in their first fixture– they should be so proud of themselves!

Our year 8 boys also had their first fixture in the National Cup against Ridgewood. As it was a cup game, after a 0-0 draw, we went on to a nail-biting penalty shoot-out where STWA came away victorious! Well done boys and their new manager Mr Cairns - a brilliant start to the season.

Next week see's the first fixture for our new Y7 football squad as they travel to Minsthorpe Community College in the first round of the English Schools Football Competition on Thursday. All those who have attended training are eligible for selection and Mr. Walker will be sending the squad out on Monday evening. Due to the high number of pupils, a rotation system will be used to ensure all those who are available to play will be given an opportunity to represent Sir Thomas Wharton Academy.

The current fixture list for year 7 for the rest of the half-term is as follows:

- Thursday 2 October 2025 – Minsthorpe Community College – AWAY – English Schools Cup
- Thursday 9 October 2025 – Hall Cross – HOME – Doncaster Schools Cup
- Thursday 16 October 2025 – Ridgewood – HOME – South Yorkshire Schools Cup



Events

Year 6 Prospective Student Packs

We believe that forging strong relationships at the start of year 6 will help families decide that we are the school community they wish to be a part of. With this in mind, members of our senior leadership team have been out and about in all weathers this week visiting local primary schools to deliver shiny blue envelopes containing letters from the Principal and our Head Students, prospectuses, enrichment brochures, a golden ticket for a tour of the academy at any time and most excitingly, their invitation to our Open Evening Extravaganza. Every member of our senior leadership team has been involved in hand delivering these packs and they have all been blown away by the enthusiasm and excitement shown by the year 6 pupils receiving their packs.

If you have children in years 5 or 6 and are considering schools for their secondary education, come along to our year 5 and 6 Open Evening on Wednesday 1 October 2025 to see the exceptional learning experiences on offer at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy. This evening will be a fantastic opportunity for prospective parents to see the academy and to meet the dedicated team of staff before making the important decision of which secondary school is right for their child.

Year 7 Investment in Learning Evening

On Tuesday 21st October 2025 we will welcome all parents/carers of the current Year 7 cohort to STWA for an evening of information by the leadership team, meet form tutors and explore the enrichment opportunities for young people to attend. The information for this evening will be sent out on Class Charts soon.

Kenya 2027 Parent Presentation

We are hugely excited to announce that we will be partnering with Camps International again to offer students the opportunity to go on a life-changing, 4-week expedition to Kenya during the summer of 2027. Students will work on a variety of meaningful and sustainable projects as well as undertaking the personal adventure challenge of a PADI Open Water Scuba Diving Course.

This opportunity is available to all students currently in years 9 to 12. To find out more, we would like to invite parents and carers to our Parents Presentation event on Wednesday 15 October at 6:00 pm. This will be held in the assembly hall at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy.

To gain an insight into the expedition, you can view photos from previous expedition teams on the Camps International Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/campsint/>

Year 11 Securing Success Evening

On Thursday 16 October, we are pleased to welcome all parents and carers of year 11 students to our annual Year 11 Securing Success Evening, which includes:

- A presentation from leaders about year 11 and what to expect, including key dates and events.
- A classroom-based session with form tutors and subject leaders about effective revision strategies.
- Every student receiving a bespoke set of revision materials worth over £100, which are in addition to those already received in year 10.
- Refreshments and an opportunity to speak to leaders from Sixth Form and SEND, as well as With Me in Mind.

The event will last approximately one hour, starting with a presentation at either 4:15 pm or 5:15 pm.

Please use this link to sign up: <https://forms.office.com/e/LQgrGGCZvM>



Transition

At the end of the last academic year, Miss Preston, our Y6 Transition Lead, announced a competition for our new year 7 cohort to enter. They needed to complete an activity booklet filled with tasks from every department in school to be in with the chance of winning either an iPad, Amazon Kindle or a £50 voucher. Miss Preston was blown away with the number of entries received and announced the three lucky winners: Favour A, Rebeka M and Ellie B.

Attendance

We're excited to announce the launch of our brand-new attendance rewards programme this week!

At the end of this half term, all students who have an attendance above 97% will be entered into a prize draw. The lucky winner will get to choose one of the following fantastic prizes:

- **50-inch Television**
- **Apple AirPods**
- **£100 JD Sports Voucher**

While these rewards are a great incentive, the real prize for excellent attendance is the academic progress students make and the positive impact it has on their future outcomes. We also want to recognise the determination of students who attend every day—even when they're not feeling 100%—and continue to give their best and be in school.

In addition, we're offering students the chance to earn a **non-school uniform day** on the final day of this half term. If our whole-school attendance is **above 93% at this point**, *all* students will be allowed to attend in their own clothes. We'll be writing to parents to confirm whether this target has been met. Our attendance is currently sitting above 94% so we are on target so far!

Parents and Community Advisory Board (PCAB)

To enable us to reflect on the areas of strength and the opportunities for development within our school, our Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB) meets once per term with members of staff and the Senior Leadership team.

The PCAB has a dual purpose:

- It allows parents/carers and members of the community to provide feedback to Leaders on current systems, successes, and areas for development.
- It is an opportunity for the Academy to provide updates to our members on the progress we are making and share early thinking about upcoming developments.

Our first meeting will be on Tuesday 7 October from 5:00 until 6:30 pm.

If you would like to join our PCAB, please email admin@stwacademy.com.

Further meetings during this academic year will be held on Tuesday 27 January and Tuesday 12 May 2026.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald
Principal

