

Our ref: MMC/NWI

3 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been an exciting week at the academy with our Year 5 and 6 Open Evening taking place on Wednesday. This event saw us open up the academy and welcome over 857 members of our community to experience the exceptional learning experiences that take place here on a daily basis. It was fantastic to see the looks on people's faces as they walked around the building taking in the inspirational book-themed areas and figuring out which book each department was representing. Events like this one really give us the opportunity to show-off all what we are about at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy, and I would like to thank all those that came to visit us on the night and look forward to welcoming prospective students next academic year.

Teaching and Learning

Year 11 October Half Term Achieve

Over October half term, we'll be hosting a number of Achieve sessions to support students with preparing for trial examinations in November as well as coursework components before Christmas. Over the last three years, students who attended these sessions found them to be incredibly beneficial and they performed significantly higher than students who did not attend. Please find attached the timetable for the October Achieve sessions.

Students are not expected to attend in uniform, but they will need to bring equipment (e.g. pen, calculator, revision guides) and refreshments.

To support with resourcing the sessions, we ask that students sign up to the sessions they plan to attend using this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/jErcb3PTW0>

Tassomai

Last week saw another phenomenal week of quizzing on Tassomai, our GCSE revision app for English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography and Computer Science. Students were once again in the top 2% of schools nationally, with over 217 hours of quizzing completed in year 11 and 140 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](#)

Sparx

Our students have already shown extra-ordinary engagement with Sparx and have completed 100,000 questions in the first 2 weeks of homework tasks.



The program links content to content covered in lessons such as oracy tasks and aims to support all of our students' long-term progression in Mathematics.

We are proud that Sparx Mathematics is inclusive and can adapt to all students' current level of expertise. This promotes engagement, confidence and ultimately learning.

If any students are having issues with Sparx mathematics, please contact m.harvey@stwacademy.com and we can arrange the necessary support.

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.

Careers

Better Learners Better Workers (BLBW)

On Tuesday we welcomed Mr Lingard and Miss Clark from BLBW into the academy to hold interviews with the programme applicants. They were both extremely impressed with how the students conducted themselves, especially as some were very nervous. They look forward to welcoming those who were successful to the programme on the 20 October 2025.

Polypipe

This week, the whole school has had the pleasure of working with Ms Rider our Career and Enterprise co-ordinator from Polypipe. During this session, students learnt about the vast range of careers available in this industry and learnt about some employees on the Apprenticeship, Degree Level and Graduate Management Scheme programmes.

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. We currently have 26 extra-curricular opportunities for our young people to access.

PE Clubs

Clubs have been busy this week in PE which is great to see! We have Netball, Badminton and football fixtures coming up over the coming weeks so please attend training in preparation if you want to represent the school team.



Sports Fixtures

On Thursday evening the year 7 football team travelled to Minsthorpe Community College in the first round of the English Schools National Cup. Despite the result not going the way we would have liked, Mr Walker gave the Man of the Match to Alex C for his determination in defence and ability to keep applying pressure to the attacking team. In addition, Max M made some great saves in goal to keep STWA in the game. Finally, Alex S managed to get on the scoresheet with a 30-yard free-kick which sailed over the goalkeeper's head and into the roof of the net. With the scheduled fixtures having kick offs beyond the finish time of training, we will continue to train and those in the team will stay for the games.

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

- Thursday 9 October 2025 – Hall Cross – HOME – Doncaster Schools Cup
- Thursday 16 October 2025 – Ridgewood – HOME – South Yorkshire Schools Cup

Y7, 8 and 9 Netballers have their first fixture of the season on Monday at home against Hungerhill School.

Events

Year 5 and 6 Open Evening

On Wednesday we held our Year 5 and 6 Open Evening. The evening was 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 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>

Year 7 Investment in Learning Evening

On Tuesday 21 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/>

Standards

Our sanction system plays a key role in ensuring every lesson remains calm, focused, and free from disruption. We are delighted to see how positively students have embraced the new C1-2-3 approach. Year 11, for example, have halved the number of sanctions compared to last year — a fantastic achievement that reflects their maturity and commitment to learning.

When students occasionally make the wrong choices, we use these moments as opportunities to guide them back on track, helping them grow in resilience and responsibility. We would like to thank parents/carers for their continued support of the detention system. Attendance is excellent, and the positive conduct shown by students during detentions demonstrates their willingness to learn from mistakes and move forward successfully.

We are excited to build on this momentum, working together as a community, to raise standards even further and ensure every student thrives at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy.

Attendance

We currently have over **522 students** entered in our end of half term prize draw for maintaining strong attendance. Prizes include:

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

There are also another **189 students** who could still qualify for the draw if they attend every day for the remainder of this half term.

As a school, we are also on track to finish the half term with an average attendance of over **93%**, which means students will be allowed to wear **non-uniform on the final day of the half term**. At present, we are sitting at **94.2%** with 10 days to go, so things are looking positive.

Morning Punctuality

We have noticed an increasing number of students arriving between **8:20 am and 8:25 am**. Please be reminded that:

- The school gates close at **8:20 am** each day.
- Students arriving after this time will receive a **30-minute late detention** and attend our late form at the front of school during tutor time.
- In the event of a delay with the school bus service, the deadline will be extended, and those students will not be penalised.

We kindly ask that parents/carers support students in leaving home or are dropped off, with enough time to arrive before the gates close.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain excellent attendance and punctuality.

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.

Due to a clash of dates, the first meeting scheduled for **Tuesday 7 October** has been rescheduled for **Tuesday 11 November 5:00 pm-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.

Academy Car Park

Please can you ensure that if your child is dropped off or collected by car, you adhere to the following sections below for the safety of all students at the academy.

- All students should be dropped off and collected in the designated location on the entrance road into school, ensuring you do not block the bus bay. Students should not be picked up in the car park or at the front of school. Only students with medical issues are permitted to do this.
- When exiting school, please use the one-way system and do not exit through the main entrance gates. We have over 1,300 students leaving at once on Wednesdays and it is important that the signage is followed.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald
Principal

