

Our ref: MMC/NWI

23 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

As we reach the end of this first half term, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been a truly exceptional start to the academic year. It has been a joy to see our students approach every opportunity with such energy, ambition, and pride in their academy. Their hard work has already led to some remarkable achievements including academic performance - and their enthusiasm for learning, enrichment, and personal growth continues to inspire us all. From the success of our now renowned Wednesday electives to the dedication shown in classrooms and extra-curricular activities, our young people embody the values and aspirations that make this community so special. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our parents, carers, and staff for their unwavering support and encouragement; it is through our shared commitment that Sir Thomas Wharton Academy continues to flourish.

Teaching and Learning

Sixth Form

Textbook Launch Afternoon

Next half term, all year 12 students will receive a complete pack of revision guides for their A Level exams. This event will be hosted in the week commencing 17 November.

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.

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>

Year 10

Achieve Week

We are holding our first year 10 Achieve week of the year on the week commencing Monday 3 November.

There will be three Achieve weeks throughout the year to support delivery of the courses with year 10 and support in the performance in PSA's/practical subjects by giving extended periods of time within those areas.



Tassomai

Last week saw another excellent week of quizzing on Tassomai, with students performing in the top 1% of schools nationally thanks to over 214 hours of quizzing completed in year 11 and 132 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 240,000 questions in the first half term of homework tasks.

One of the benefits of using the sparx program is how it improves students' fluency with timetables. 180 of our students have improved their fluency so far this year.

No tasks will be set during the half term period, tasks will resume Friday 7 November.

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

Careers

Better Learners Better Workers

This week, our year 9 students attended their launch event at the exclusive Cutlers Hall in Sheffield. After going through a two-stage interview process, only 10 were able to be given this amazing opportunity to open their eyes to the various manufacturing industries. The packed day allowed them to develop new skills in communication and teamwork whilst understand more about the role of Master Cutler. The evening ended with all being accepted onto the Better Learners Better Workers programme as ambassadors this year.

Work Experience

Next half term will be the launch of the year 10 work ready programme. Please keep an eye open for further communication on this.

Personal Development

Enrichment Electives

Block two of the Electives will begin on Wednesday 19 November. We have sent parents and carers a copy of the Elective brochure via ClassCharts and we're excited to launch some new elective additions including Swimstars Lifesaving, Printmaking and Caged Steel. Please note, year 7 students can now access the off-site provision provided parents give consent. Students will select their four choices in tutor on the first week back, so please discuss the fantastic and varied Elective offer with your child.

Enrichment Clubs

After school Clubs taking place during half term two will be shared in tutor time during the first Monday back, they are available on the website and on our social media platforms. We have over 25 after school enrichment clubs running; it would be great to see as many students there as possible. All clubs run until 3:40 pm. If a club has a later finish time it will be communicated by the enrichment lead.



Sports Fixtures

Year 7 Netball

Year 7 played their second ever netball match on Monday 20 October against a very tall year 7/8 Ash Hill Academy team. Although the score didn't go our way, the team learned a lot and started to understand some of the tactics of netball. During the second half of the game, the team played some really lovely Netball and didn't concede any goals, which was brilliant! Again, it is great to have so many students who turn up to training, week in, week out and want to represent the academy!

Woman of the match goes to Megan who had two shots and scored both!

Year 9 Football

On Monday, our year 9 boys played against the Laurel Academy. At full time, the score was 2-2, however, with 10 minutes extra time, the scoreline changed dramatically to 4-2 for STWA to take the win.

Man of the match goes to Leo for his brilliant decision making and fantastic skill selection throughout the game.

Events

Restart a Heart Day

On Thursday 16 October, we took part in the annual Restart a Heart Day. We welcomed five NHS volunteers into school and trained 187 year 9 students in the life saving skill of CPR. All students really rose to the challenge and at the end of each session, 100% of students had clearly demonstrated that they knew what CPR was; they could carry out chest compressions on our CPR mannequins and they understood how an AED worked. Mrs Webster was incredibly proud of everyone who took part.

Better Learners Better Workers Launch

The Better Learners Better Workers programme launched on Monday 20 October at Cutler's Hall, Sheffield. As part of this, students involved in this programme were taken to Cutler's Hall and participated in a tour of the impressive hall, teamwork activities, and meeting and working with employers from the construction and engineering industries. The students met with the Master Cutler, Mr Philip Rodrigo and were officially welcomed as Ambassadors. At the end of an incredible day, all ten students stood on the stage to present in front of roughly 200 peers and parents, a massive achievement for them!

Sixth Form Open Evening

On Wednesday 12 November, we will welcome prospective Sixth Form students and their families to our Open Evening from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The evening will commence with a presentation from our Sixth Form team at 5:15 pm, followed by the opportunity to tour the academy, meet subject teachers, and learn more about the courses on offer. Join us to find out more about our exceptional experiences. Please confirm your attendance at the event via this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/cY7Be67hq0>.

House Updates

As we head into the final week of this half term, we have seen Chatsworth storm into the top position on the house leaderboard with 3,379 points. They are being followed by Brodsworth with 2,142 points, Cusworth with 1,492 points and Chatsworth with 1,353 points. In half term two, there will be an array of opportunities to earn house points where students can participate in: weekly wins, box tasks, online quizzes, the extended house project and awareness day challenges.

Towards the end of half term 2, we will be hosting our term one house reward of a Christmas cinema screening for all students who are in the winning house that have contributed towards their house.



Attendance

We are excited to announce our first winner of the STWA Attendance Prize, awarded today! Over **600 students** achieved **over 97% attendance** this half term and were entered into the prize draw. A huge well done to all the students who qualified - their commitment and consistency are truly commendable and helped us achieve record attendance this half term!

It has also been a pleasure welcoming students into the academy today in their non-uniform. This reward was given to all students as we surpassed our attendance target - a great way to end the half term on a high note!

Thank you to everyone for your continued effort and enthusiasm. Let's keep it up next half term to achieve another record attendance!

ABM Catering

As you will already be aware, our catering service is provided by an outside provider, ABM. Due to rising costs across all sectors, the company have had to increase the cost of a school meal deal and other items. The increases across the menu have been kept to an average of 4.5%.

From Monday 10 November, Sir Thomas Wharton Academy will see the price of school meals increase from £2.55 to £2.60 per meal deal; we will also see prices increase for individually sold items too.

Please be aware that this increase in price does not impact our students that receive free school meals.

We are aware this is not ideal news given the current economic circumstances however, working with our catering provider, ABM, we believe that the cost of our meal deals represents good value and is a sustaining healthy hot meal, prepared and cooked freshly each day on site for our students should they choose it.

If you have any questions regarding the price increase or the meal options, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are happy to address any queries you may have and help wherever needed.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M McDonald
Principal

