

# Stone Soup Academy News



## Issue 19 | December 2024 Half Term 2

### Stone Soup Academy aims to open Sixth Form

Harry Stevens  
BBC News, Nottingham

As reported on the BBC. Kerrie Henton is the Executive Principal of Stone Soup Academy in Nottingham, a school for children who fail to thrive in mainstream education.

A school is aiming to open a sixth form to help better support students in education.

Kerrie Henton is the executive principal of Stone Soup Academy in Nottingham, which provides places for pupils between 11 and 16 who have struggled in mainstream education.

But Kerrie said some students did not adapt as easily when they left Stone Soup and moved on to further education or work.

As a result, Kerrie hopes to establish the sixth form.

She said: "Our students are not here because they can't achieve great things, but because they might not have had the best start in life and we want to make sure they have a future.

Mainstream education may not have been right for them, but when they come to us, we're able to meet their needs more effectively and we get fantastic outcomes.

It does nothing but fill you with pride to know you've played a part in the success they're making of their lives."

Stone Soup currently has 110 students who have a range of issues including ADHD and autism, which means they can often find large class sizes challenging. 'Buck the trend'

Kerrie added students in alternative school provision might "fail" to adapt to work or education and they needed more support.

"What post-16 alternative provision we have in Nottingham is not enough," she said.

The sixth form would have space for eight pupils who would study GCSEs alongside a one-day-a-week work experience placement and vocational qualification chosen to best fit their career goals.

Kerrie is now aiming to enlist the help of local companies to provide work placement students providing a bridge to employment for these young people. She added: "We want to buck the trend to ensure [our students] become a success.

"We're looking for companies to work with a student one day a week so they can see how good they are and employ them, then they don't become NEET (Not in education, employment or training)

"We need them to give our young people an opportunity where they can grow."

Students in year 11 interested in joining our new sixth form in September 2025 should speak to Jordan Senior, Head of Careers and Sixth Form.



## Preparation for Adulthood

Jordan Senior

### John Lewis Work Experience

The work experience programme with John Lewis has had a great start. Students participated in a tour of the store to gain an understanding of its operations and customer engagement strategies. Staff gave them a Social Media Task where each student selected 2-3 products they believed would appeal to individuals of their age group and profile. They then created a proposed social media post for John Lewis. One student was offered a temporary Christmas role, reflecting the programme's success in building employability.

### Nottingham Business Club Event

We attended The Nottingham Business Club to promote the launch of our sixth form in the next academic year. We spoke to various business leaders to raise awareness amongst local businesses and stakeholders by distributing leaflets detailing the sixth form's vision, educational offerings, and benefits to the community. The event fostered connections with local businesses for potential future partnerships opportunities.

### Cyber Security Work Experience

In collaboration with Cyber Essentials, students engaged in a hands-on work experience project. They designed and distributed a questionnaire to local businesses to identify their cybersecurity needs. Students offered a free cybersecurity audit from Cyber Essentials as part of their outreach. Our students developed skills in research, professional communication, and understanding cybersecurity fundamentals.

### Think Big Assembly

The Think Big Programme, an initiative by Nottingham Forest Community Trust and Ideagen, aims to inspire and empower students through career-focused activities across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. Think Big representatives held an assembly with our Year 11 cohort, introducing the workshops, activities and apprenticeship roles available through the programme. The objective of this is to engage students with opportunities that

expand their career horizons and develop essential skills along the way.

### HMRC Work Experience

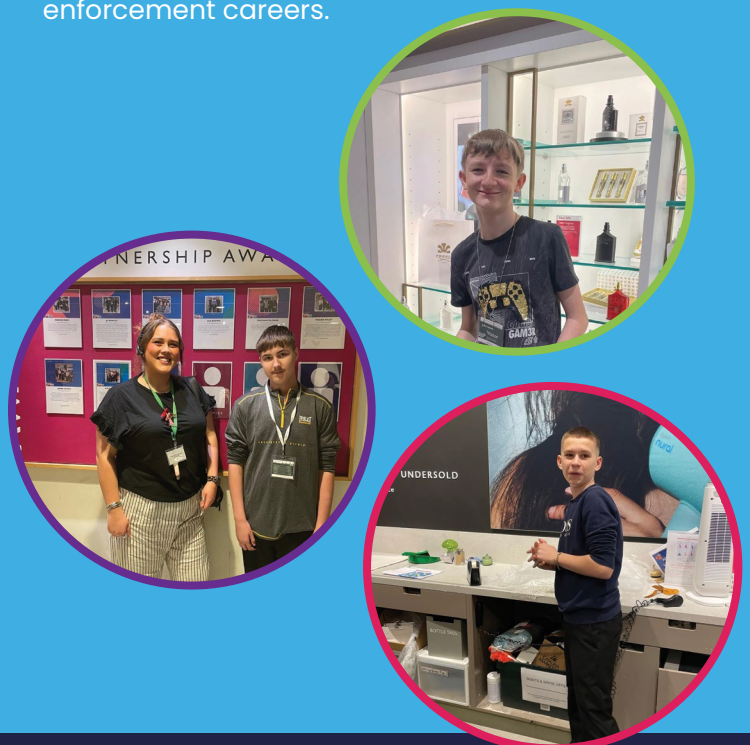
Seven students are set to attend the annual HMRC work experience programme over four days. Students will learn about HMRC operations, policies, and career opportunities. They participated in engaging activities, including mock trials such as the renowned "Jaffa Cake Trial" to explore legal and taxation concepts.

### National School Leavers Festival

Our Year 11 cohort attended the National School Leavers Festival. The purpose was to introduce students to a range of industries and career pathways. Students interacted with employers, gained insights into career options and learned about entry routes into specific roles.

### Police HQ Visit

The annual visit to the Police Headquarters provided an engaging and informative experience. Students interacted with officers from various departments, learning about their career journeys. Explored the control room, police vehicles, and witnessed a live demonstration by police dogs. Students gained a practical understanding of policing and law enforcement careers.



## SEND at SSA

### Send Team

The SEND team have enjoyed a highly successful half term and are accelerating with progress and achievements into term two. The Stone Soup enhanced graduated response offered by our team has been propelled by innovative practice including PAGS, Literacy gold and Touch Typing.

The SEND team continues to ensure that SEND is woven into every fibre of Stone Soup Academy and that these fibres are strengthened by outstanding SEND provision.

To help gauge which students are in need of additional literacy support during this first term the SEND team have used the Renaissance Learning Star Reader assessment tool to identify each student's initial reading age this academic year. At Stone Soup Academy we aim for our students to achieve "functional reading" which is a reading age above 12 years.

Over the past year we have seen many developments in the interventions provided at Stone Soup Academy. The following are some examples of our innovative SEND interventions.

Sensory Circuits- have been really successful at the beginning of the school day especially for students with ADHD. A guide was sent to parents and staff at SS to recognise why we provide the sensory circuits. Student questionnaires in July show how successful it has been for them. Our sensory circuits in action are amazing for regulation, physical and mental health.

Students are also helping to create a sustainable, beautiful space for learning and relaxation in our courtyard. Our courtyard gardening has provided us with a place of beauty, learning opportunities and sustainability. Our students are using practical skills by weeding, planting flowers and vegetables. They are also learning about environmental awareness and plant life and sustainability. Students have enjoyed using the outdoor space for their send intervention taking in the tranquil and relaxed atmosphere has helped them regulate and appreciate the new garden. Seemingly simple

activities like placing herbs into a bag can be a great way to regulate. Needless to say at Stone Soup we go a little further...

Finally we have integrated play therapy into our SEND interventions to enhance student support. Activities such as slime creating and modelling with clay provide students with opportunities to regulate their emotions, improve concentration, and build confidence in expressing their thoughts. Play therapy has also proven effective in helping students develop social skills and friendships further supporting their personal growth.



## Personal Development

Katy Smith

So far students have actively participated in multiple personal development and cultural capital opportunities including; work experience with John Lewis, an offer of four college courses across year 10 and 11 (Hair and Beauty, MultiSkills, Manufacturing and Construction), a visit to an exhibition and the Nottingham Contemporary, a visit to ArtFest at the Lace Market, DREAMS workshops, PCSO enrichment visits, a visit to the police headquarters and a whole school team building trip to Alton Towers. We are pleased to say that uptake with the students to these events has been really successful, with the majority of students having at least one PD or CC opportunity against their name.

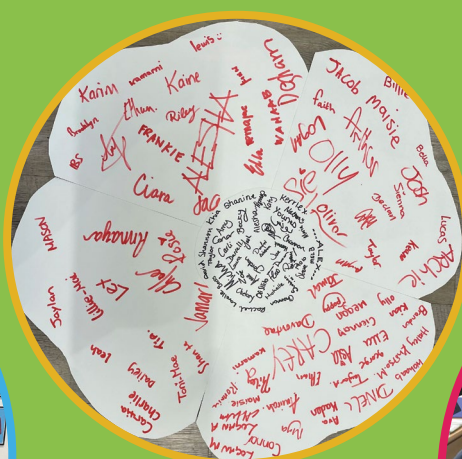
The whole school celebrated Black History month with activities and lessons planned around our theme of 'What Does Your Culture or Heritage Mean to You?'. Staff and students were treated to an African and Caribbean meal, prepared across both sites by Shanine and the other canteen staff. We have also commemorated Remembrance Day this year with a week worth of assemblies, creation of our Stone Soup Poppy, and staff took part in a reading of 'In Flanders Fields' by John McCrae. This was concluded with a playing of the last post at 11 o'clock.

Year 9 students have also been treated to a range of enrichment activities, based around a range of the PD principals. Activities have included; a historic walk, Ready Steady Cook life skills, sports, fitness, social skills board games and, over the Christmas period, ice skating.

Student wellbeing has been the focus for term 2 and, again the student survey was also incredibly positive. We have also appointed a new student Leadership and Wellbeing team, involving 10 of our young people across all year groups. They were treated to a pizza whilst they shared their ideas of anything they believe could help improve the school and also discussed the personal development principles and how they unify our PD offer across the school.

We are looking forward to hopefully seeing some of their ideas implemented across the school in the near future.

Year 9 students have been involved in a community outreach project this term, working with the local PCSO and Framework. They have been designing Christmas Cards, budgeting for and purchasing toiletries and will be baking some gingerbread cookies, all to put together into a gift bag for



homeless people of Nottingham. We will be presenting our gift bags to Framework, and helping them decorate and set up the Christmas lunch towards the end of this term.

In the coming weeks we will continue to solidify student voice, ensuring they can confidently verbalise all that we do for their personal development. Our Celebration evening will feature the 'Stone Soup Studio' for the first time ever, where students will have the opportunity to sell their art and photography work, keeping 50% of the profits, with the other 50% being donated to charity. We also look forward to another successful Movember, in awareness of men's mental health and Christmas Jumper Day.

This year, instead of purchasing Christmas Cards to send to our referrers, parents and trustees, we made an ecard instead. The funds that would have gone towards cards were instead donated to the 'No Cold Child' initiative. This initiative was introduced by Parentkind, in partnership with FatFace, to help donate winter coats to families in need. With a suggested 150,000 UK children growing up in homes where parents can't afford to buy them a warm winter coat, this was something that seemed very close to our heart and something we wanted to support.



## Wonderful Progress in Business

Amy Dennett

The first term in Business has been an exciting one with students in Year 11 making good progress with their coursework and preparing for their exam. I am pleased to report we have 15 students taking Business in Year 11 and have all made a good contribution to their coursework. We are working with their personal coaches and Head of Year to ensure that they have a successful year in Business. Students have also been learning about topics that have big links to real life situations, building on their cultural capital of real businesses by looking at the gross and net profit of some businesses.

Many of the Year 10s are excelling in Business this term with 20 students taking the subject at this point and already a good number of these are completing the Merit work in Business. They have a deep

understanding of how and why a business operates and are showing a natural ability to have deeper thinking around a topic. We have been focusing on Profit and Non profit businesses so far this term and students have been doing independent research into 2 businesses of their choice. Their work around charities has opened their eyes to the impact that these types of businesses have on people.

In Year 9 we are currently working on a financial literacy project which allows the students to learn about practical life skills like payslips, tax, budgeting, debt, credit and financial safety. With this students will learn key words around finance and also develop a higher understanding of the world after education.

## Student Success, Progress and Creating Unimagined Futures

Molly Champion

We have participated in several opportunities such as John Lewis, HMRC work experience, the NEC careers fair, Alton Towers rewards trip and 20 out of 37 students in year 11 are currently attending Mechanics and Hair and Beauty college courses, they are going above and beyond at any opportunity. Year 11 have engaged extremely well with workshops led by 'Dreams' and Nottingham Forest.

We have also seen Year 11 successfully take on their mock exams and demonstrate great resilience with promising results. College interviews are now underway alongside the promising news of our pastoral focused sixth form with an abundance of exciting work experience collaborations across Nottingham.

Alongside our attendance team, referring schools and other external agencies we continue to closely

monitor, support and improve YR11 attendance. Currently as a cohort we are on 70.14% attendance figure. There are seven YR11 students with 100% attendance and thirteen with over 80%. Termly reward incentives are in place and the last half term saw PC Fred and his form getting a Five Guys for lunch!

The current year 11 cohort have been nothing short of amazing. The year 11 team will always go above and beyond to support our key students and ensure we are putting them first in everything we do with a personalised approach, so they are engaged and ultimately learning from any mistakes they should make during this academic year. Year 11 has 22 students who are working consistently on a behaviour score of 7 and above with a further ten students who are extremely close to attaining this.



## Building a Strong Foundation in Logic Pro

Paolo Iannattone

As we progress through the term, students across all year groups are building on their musical skills and knowledge, with each group taking on activities that deepen their understanding and refine their abilities in music practice and production.

Year 9 students are continuing to explore the capabilities of Logic Pro, focusing on mastering its basic tools and functions. This term, they are gaining a solid understanding of music software, which will be essential as they transition into Year 10 and begin their BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice. The practical sessions are designed to develop their confidence in navigating Apple Logic Pro, preparing them for more complex tasks in the future.

Year 10 students are refining their use of Apple Logic Pro, with an emphasis for the high achievers on using music keyboards to input MIDI data directly into the software. This approach enhances their ability to compose, arrange, and edit music efficiently. By mastering these advanced tools, students are not only honing their technical skills but also preparing themselves to approach music production with greater creativity and control.

Year 11 students have shifted their focus from exam preparation to composition. They are students now creating original pieces for Unit 2 of their BTEC First in Music Industry course. This task requires them to apply their knowledge of music structure, and production, ensuring their compositions meet professional standards. Through this process, students are developing their creativity and showcasing their ability to produce, promote and evaluate the music that reflects their individual style.

This half term has been an exciting journey for all students, with each year group tackling key aspects of music education tailored to their development stage. From laying foundations to advancing technical skills and creating original compositions, students are making excellent progress toward their musical goals.



## Practice Makes Progress

Duncan Bennett

Sport students continue to make excellent progress and we are looking forward to engaging with external fixtures and events as the year progresses.

Year 9 have been enjoying weekly gym sessions at both Milbie House and High Pavement whilst taking advantage of the sporting enrichment opportunities each week. We have offered a variety of activities in the sports hall and this half term we have offered Ice skating at the Winter Wonderland in the Market Square. This has been a popular choice for students and we are looking forward to more sessions as the term continues.

Year 10/11 continue to study their BTEC courses and we are preparing for assessments in January for both cohorts. In year 10 they have looked at sport equipment and clothing in modern sport and year 11 have studied practical performance in sport linking it to fitness and exercise.

We are also in the process of registering students with the Forest Futures programme where students will have the opportunity to coach, referee and complete CV workshops to invest in their future.





## The Thomas Fuller Maths Challenge

Darrell Drummond

As part of Black History Month, the Maths Department held the first Thomas Fuller Maths Challenge for students and staff to take part in and test their mathematical skills and answer three questions that were originally asked in 1780! Thomas was an enslaved African who lived in America in the 1700's. When he was 70 years old he was visited by two respectable men, William Hartshorne and Samuel Coates who had heard about his ability to work out maths questions in his head. They asked Thomas or the 'Virginia Calculator' as he was known, a series of three questions.

The first question was 'how many seconds are there in a year and a half?' Thomas took two minutes and answered correctly.

The second question was 'how many seconds has a man lived for when he is 70 years, 17 days and 12 hours old?' Thomas took a minute and a half to answer the question and Mr Coates challenged him saying his answer was not high enough. Thomas replied by saying that Mr Coates had forgotten about the leap years!

The third question was our favourite!

'Suppose a farmer has six sows, and each sow has six female pigs, the first year, and they all increase in

the same proportion, to the end of eight years, how many sows will the farmer then have?'

There were a great number of eager participants in the challenge and our worthy winners this year were Angel K. for the students who refused to give up on the final question and eventually answered it correctly! Priyom was our staff winner this year and appreciated his prize! Well done to them both and well done to everybody who took part!



## Y11 And Functional Skills Maths Are Flying High Again!!

Darrell Drummond

Our Y11 Students are flying through their Functional Skills Maths exams again this year. So far the list of successes at Level 1 are very impressive. Here is the roll call .....

Angel K., Asia-Renee, Ava, Brandon, Brooklyn, Carey, Cerys, Cian, Ciara, Cienna, Ella, Ethan, George, Harley, Ibrahiem, Jace, Jake, Jamil, Kaden, Karim, Khotso, Korie, Liam B., Maisie, Megan, Mya, Riley W., Romarae, Ronnie B., Shamas, Shaye, Taylor A., Taylor C., Thor and Wahaab.

Wow that's some list and lets everybody know just

how hard all of our Y11 students have been working. Congratulations to you all!

As an added bonus there are also seven students who have already been successful at Level 2 in Maths. These are Ava, Asia-Renee, Brandon, Jace, Jake, Kaden and Riley W. An extra set of congratulations for all of you and your hard work!!

Remember, it is only December now and there are another six months left for all of you to achieve so much more. We all look forward to seeing you achieve all that you can!

## All About Energy

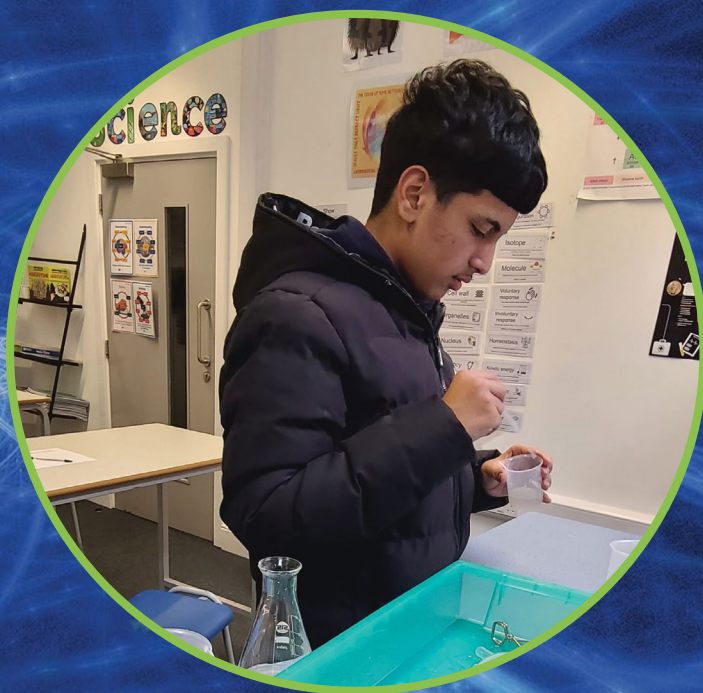
Hannah Smallwood

The students at Stone Soup have been working hard in science. For the first time we carried out science mock exams for our year 11 students. These were very successful and provided valuable practice ahead of their GCSE exams in May.

The year 11s have required practicals to carry out in their lesson and recently this involved making copper sulphate crystals!

Our year 10 science classes have filled up as more students have started and they have made a great start to their time at Stone Soup. They have just finished a physics topic learning all about energy.

The year 9s have been separating mixtures in lessons and have enjoyed learning about the properties of different elements using Top Trump cards!



## English Literature at Stone Soup Academy

Taylor Gilmour

Year 9 students have been focusing on Gothic literature and War poetry. This half term we have started the topic of 'Gothic Horror' which focuses on creative reading and writing skills. The students have been studying extracts from 'The Woman in Black' and expanding their descriptive vocabulary. We have also been exploring the use of soundscapes to inspire students writing notably alongside our studies of war poetry. Students have read a variety of poems from a number of famous war poets and are working towards writing their own piece.

Year 10 have started their 'Diverse Literature' module which aims to expose our students to a wider variety of literature genres whilst combining literature and language skills. We have started exploring the genre of speculative fiction and dystopian writing which gives students the opportunity to think critically about the way our world works and what our future world may look like. As students work their way through the module, they will be given the

opportunity to read works by authors that represent voices and experiences different from their own.

For Year 11, this year started with a focus on preparing all students for their GCSE English Language Paper 1. Whilst exam skills are the main learning priority, students are still given the opportunity to read a variety of fiction texts and discuss wider issues and ideas linked to how the world works outside of the classroom. A select number of students have also progressed on to the full GCSE English Literature course. These students have started studying Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and will continue this text until the end of the year.



## Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason at Stone Soup Academy

Paolo Iannattone

On the afternoon of the 3rd of December 2024, we had the privilege of welcoming Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason for a workshop led by Lucy Drever. It was an inspiring moment of engagement and discovery in the world of classical music. Students had the opportunity to explore the musicians' deep connection with their instruments and even try playing themselves. This event beautifully demonstrated the importance of exposing younger generations to the transformative power of art and beauty in all its forms.

Lucy Drever, the workshop lead said the following:

"All the young people were magic- and I thought Karim and Ethan were just incredible- their questions and playing was a total highlight".



## Attendance and Parent Engagement

Siobhan Stevenitt

Stone Soup has been committed to identifying students with attendance concerns early in the term, ensuring we can act swiftly to support them. This early intervention is tailored to meet each student's individual needs and circumstances.

- Engagement with Families- We have initiated early conversations with families to better understand the underlying reasons for absence. This proactive approach has allowed us to offer personalised support, sign posting to external services such as Be You ( Children's mental health service), Notts help yourself ( who offer a range of services such as child grief etc). and resources, ensuring families have access to the assistance they need to improve attendance.
- Personalised Support Plans: For each student showing signs of attendance challenges, we have developed individualised plans.
- Academic support for students falling behind due to missed lessons.
- Mental health and well-being services for students struggling emotionally or psychologically.
- Transport assistance for students who face logistical barriers to attending school.
- Involvement of External Agencies- For students experiencing severe absence, we have worked closely with external support services such as social services, mental health providers, referrers and education welfare officers. These agencies have been instrumental in addressing the broader challenges these students may be facing.

As a school we have developed strong relationships with referrers, families and external agencies to ensure that families can access the appropriate support services. By collaborating closely we are able to signpost families to the relevant resources.

- Agencies Involved - We work with local authorities, mental health professionals, women's

aid and youth services, among others, to ensure our students have access to a comprehensive support network. This partnership allows us to offer direct access to services for students and families.

- Attendance data is regularly monitored to identify patterns and spot emerging issues. Students with persistent absence are flagged for further review, and additional support, interventions and attendance improvement plans are implemented as needed.
- We utilise attendance data to ensure that no student is overlooked. Students who show improvement are celebrated, while those still struggling are provided with targeted interventions. This ensures that we are constantly adapting our approach to meet the ongoing needs of our students.
- We Celebrate good attendance and improved attendance in a variety of ways such as:
  - Half termly rewards for the form with the top attendance in the academy last half term was Five Guys this term is a visit to Nottingham winter Wonderland.
  - Weekly Lunch passes for the top attender and most improved attender
  - Good Attendance data also goes towards bigger trips such as our year abroad residential, Stone Soup Christmas present ( a trip to London with spending money)
  - Dojo money and points.



## Multi skills

Fred Slaney

What a year so far with the multi skills course at Basford College. The two courses running on Thursday for the year 10 and Friday for the year 11 are both doing well. Both groups have worked hard and completed the first of their assessments, this being Health and safety at work. The year 10's, who are doing Joinery, had a fantastic comment from one of the senior lecturers from the college saying they are really working hard on their assessment which will be at the end of the term. The year 11's have

also done incredibly well in their tiling assessment and having the head of the courses (Ian) taking their assessment and all students completing it in 1 hour and 25 minutes, with passes all round. Ian congratulated them on all of their hard work and commitment to the course, this being their second assessment which gives them a total of 7 points out of 15. Having led the courses for the academy for the second year running, I feel so proud of their commitment and work ethic.



## Supporting Growth and Celebrating Success

Michelle Rogers

Since taking on the role of Year 9 Lead, we have been working closely with parents/carers, teachers, and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to support individual students in areas such as attendance, behavior, and academic achievement. By maintaining an up-to-date tracker, we have been able to address issues promptly, sharing insights with Year 9 personal coaches to implement timely interventions and keeping parents informed of progress. Since September, we have achieved several proud milestones, highlighting the impressive development of our youngest cohort.

Regular collaboration with the Head of Engagement, Principal, Faculty Leads, and Attendance Manager through organised meetings has provided a thorough understanding of each student's needs. Key information is shared with staff through weekly updates, ensuring a unified approach to student support.

Key highlights include:

- 4 students achieving 100% attendance
- 2 students achieving between 90% and 99% attendance
- 5 students achieving between 80% and 89% attendance
- 8 students achieving between 48.7% and 80% attendance
- 12 out of 19 students improved their attendance compared to their attendance upon entry.

Improving student behavior and reducing suspensions has been a major focus. Our Year 9 students currently hold an average behavior score of 6.8. While this is slightly below the Stone Soup Academy standard, there are noteworthy successes:

- 7 students have achieved an average score of 7 or above
- 13 students have maintained an average score of 6 or above

We have offered many incentives for students keeping their behaviour score on target such as a reward trip to the Nottingham Christmas market and Personal Coaches now sending postcards home. All but 2 students also achieved a Class Dojo score of above 90%. 10 students achieved a Dojo Score of above 95%.

Recognising and celebrating students who consistently perform well has been integral to fostering a positive environment.



## Celebrating Student Achievement in Food and Cookery: A Year of Success and Creativity

Dominique Maragh

The Food and Cookery department has been buzzing with excitement and creativity this term, as students have been showcasing their culinary skills through a wide range of practical tasks. It's clear that the kitchen is not just a place for cooking—it's a space for students to grow, experiment, and build confidence as they master important skills that will serve them well both now and in the future.

This year, we've seen exceptional progress across all year groups, with students consistently creating dishes that demonstrate not only their technical ability but also their passion for food. From the meticulous preparation of classic recipes to the innovative twists on familiar dishes, each student has embraced the challenges set before them with enthusiasm.

A highlight this term has been the opportunity for two of our students, Thor and Jake, to take part in the FutureChef local final. Their achievement is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and culinary talent, and it serves as a wonderful celebration of their individual journeys in the kitchen. While this competition was a brief but exciting highlight, it is important to recognize that the true success of our Food and Cookery students lies in the work they do day in and day out in class.

Throughout the term, students have been creating an array of delicious and diverse dishes, all while developing a wide range of skills—from perfecting knife techniques to experimenting with new ingredients and cooking methods.

Year 10 students, for example, have been exploring a variety of savory recipes, including rich and comforting lasagna, where they've honed their skills in layering and seasoning to achieve balanced, flavorful dishes. The attention to detail in these dishes has been impressive, and it's evident that the students are taking the time to understand the foundations of good cooking.

In Year 11, students have been tasked with more complex menu planning, where they've been

analyzing the suitability of various recipes for different dietary needs and occasions. Their ability to work through this critical thinking process and then bring their plans to life in the kitchen has been outstanding.

Whether they are preparing dishes for a formal dinner setting or creating a simple yet elegant meal for a casual gathering, the thoughtfulness and precision they've shown in their work is a clear reflection of their growing expertise.

One of the most gratifying aspects of this term has been seeing how students support one another in the kitchen. There's a real sense of community within the class, with students offering advice, sharing ideas, and collaborating on techniques. This collaborative environment not only enhances their cooking skills but also fosters a strong sense of camaraderie.

The dishes being produced in the Food and Cookery department are a testament to the dedication and talent of all our students. From beautifully presented plates of grilled chicken and roasted vegetables to stunningly intricate pastries, the work has been nothing short of impressive. These dishes not only showcase technical skill but also reflect the creativity and individual flair that each student brings to the kitchen.

As we look ahead, we are excited to see how the students continue to grow and refine their cooking skills. The dedication and passion they've shown this term are truly inspiring, and it's clear that they are laying the groundwork for success in the kitchen and beyond.

Congratulations to all our students for their hard work and the amazing dishes they've created this term. Your achievements are something to be truly proud of, and we look forward to seeing your continued progress and success in the kitchen.

## Audience, Audio and Films in Media

Khia Lewis-Todd

In Media this term we have had our hands full. Our year 11's are prepping for their final major project and exams will be here in the New Year. Year 10's and 9's are beginning their portfolio, looking at audience types, audio and films.

Year 11's have been able to pick a topic of their choice and begin to prepare their own media masterpiece. This will be the last cohort of students to study the old BTEC First award Creative Digital Media production whilst the course changes to BTEC Tech Award Creative Media Production.

We were able to go and view a local artists exhibition at Broadway gallery called Trap Art curated by Christian Byfield-from Basford but now situated in Arnold. Some of our students were even able to interview the gallery manager and the artist himself showcasing their great media skills.

Year 11's have begun working closely with film writer and director Derry Shillitto, a creative from Ireland. The students together as a collective will be creating ideas and also starring in an upcoming film called The Correction Unit which will be aired on Netflix in the US with the hopes to get it aired on Netflix UK.

With the festive season and new year around the corner it's safe to say that we will be a very busy bunch of elves.





## Suits Day Friday 27th June 2025

Oli Sillito

As always, I must mention Suits Day. Our 2024 event was truly incredible and once again we are making big steps for our 2025 event! It promises to be our biggest yet, as we continue to celebrate our students and show just how proud we are of the steps they are taking toward their future. If students would like to get involved then speak to me (Oli).



## Stand up to Knife Crime Work

Oli Sillito

We've already started booking speakers and artists for this year's special event, which continues to grow in excitement and scale. Please see the review of us in LeftLion below: <https://leftlion.co.uk/features/2024/07/live-review-stone-soup-academy-presents-stand-up-to-knife-crime-at-metronome/>

We recently had the opportunity to present to Commander Stephen Clayman, Head of the Central Specialist Crime Team at the Metropolitan Police Service, it was truly special to witness the growing traction the event is receiving and to see how many people are now supporting it.

Best thing about stand up knife crime over the years is seeing the engagement grow from our students and other young people attending! It makes it that extra special!

Below are some testimonials from those who have either performed or spoken at the event in recent years. I speak about this event often, as it holds a special place in my heart.

**23.07.25**

WE ARE BACK FOR THE BIGGEST YET

STAND UP

### TESTIMONIALS

"Showed us how we can combat and work together as a community to keep young people away from picking up a knife."

"I feel inspired to do my bit and spread awareness wherever I go too. I look forward to the next event."

"It focused creating an open environment to better strengthen the community and conversations for people who can be most vulnerable"

"I left so inspired, and encouraged that things are going to get better".

"Stone Soup are one of the only schools I know to be taking knife crime and the welfare of the pupils seriously and this shows in the mind set of the children that attend"

## Trips, Trips and more Trips!

Oli Sillito

Our recent trip to Alton Towers was a huge success, marking our largest outing to date! We organised a memorable experience for 53 students and 15 staff members, providing a day filled with fun and team-building activities. The trip not only offered a chance for students to enjoy thrilling rides but also fostered strong connections among both students and staff, enhancing engagement and teamwork. Now I would like to say that I handled all the rides amazingly well and didn't feel like I was going to throw up those £19.50 chips but that would be a lie.

One student shared their appreciation: "This is the best trip. I was never allowed to go on trips at my old school"

I want all students at Stone Soup to have the opportunity to be able to act their age and have a good time outside of the classroom!

With this success, we are now planning more exciting reward and team-building trips for students, reinforcing our commitment to creating positive experiences and building lasting relationships.

## Music Video in a Staff Focus

Oli Sillito

Our staff focus continues to be a highlight of each week! With now over 500 videos being produced over the years thanking students for their achievements in the week we continue to try and make them fresh, exciting and fun to watch so what better than to make a music video filmed and edited by students in focus!

Special thanks to all the students who helped make music video magic! Not another job like it.



## Mechanics

Chelsey Reid

This term we have begun our Mechanics course again for 10 of our Year 10 students. As the course has only been running for 3 weeks, the students have been doing an introduction to mechanics and learning about the health and safety side of working in a garage. As well as the theory side of things, the students have been thoroughly enjoying getting the chance to take part in the racing at the end of the session.



## *Hair and Beauty*

Molly Champion

We have successfully seen ten of our young people begin their Level 1 Hair and Beauty qualification at Nottingham College. All students have been fully engaged and positive throughout. The girls have gone from strength to strength completing theory and practical work in order to succeed and show what they can accomplish.

All of our students have shown nothing but respect towards the tutor Karen and all other staff around the Nottingham College site. They have visibly grown more confident by asking questions and not being afraid to try new things such as

using equipment they haven't seen before and independently creating their own physical and digital platforms to store work each week. I have been told that all students are on target for a pass by the end of the course which is just excellent!

We at Stone Soup Academy can't wait to see them flourish on this course!



## Student Success, Student Progress and Student Challenges

Alesha Rogers

Since becoming the year 10 lead we have been working closely to monitor student progress, student successes and addressing any challenges they present. Since September we have been seeing lots of positive progress with our year 10 students. They have successfully completed their mock exams and have been enrolled for Multi-skills, Hair and beauty and Mechanic college courses. Students are also undertaking work experience at John Lewis on a Monday morning. We currently have two year 10 groups at both HP and MH, year 10 are at capacity and we have seen some successful transitions splitting the groups up and placing students where they are best suited.

We have continued to work very closely with our attendance team so we are able to provide continued support for students who are low attenders. To support attendance, we are ensuring that home visits, attendance meetings, referrer meetings and necessary support is put in place to encourage our students to attend. We work very closely with our attendance team in supporting this. We have 20 students above 80% and 2 students on 100% attendance. To encourage those who regularly attend we implement form competitions and the form with the highest reward is treated to a reward trip.

There has been a big focus on improving student behaviour around the academy. We have had a focus on identifying trends early so we are able to implement timely interventions with students and homes. We have been communicating this with weekly student concern emails and fortnightly Engagement Team meetings.

We currently have 21 students achieving their target of 7 behaviour score or higher. We have a further 9 students who are on a 6 behaviour score and coming very close to achieving their target and are on track to by the end of this term. We have offered many incentives for students keeping their behaviour score on target such as a reward trip to the Nottingham Christmas market and Personal Coaches now sending postcards home. All but 5 students also achieved a Class Dojo score of above 90%. 30 students achieved a Dojo Score of above 95%.



## Stone Soup Academy's Writing Challenge: Inspiring Creativity and Unimagined Futures

Lovelle Pennant

Stone Soup Academy recently ran another exciting writing challenge aimed at sparking creativity and encouraging literacy across the school. The task was to craft three verses of a poem or rap, with the theme centered on imagining bold and uncharted futures. Students from across the academy rose to the challenge, showcasing their linguistic flair and artistic talent.

By focusing on unimagined futures, the challenge encouraged students to think beyond the present, dream big, and put their visions into words. The winning entries stood out for their creativity, originality, and effort. Congratulations to the talented winners: Ryan, Sienna, Ethan, Khotso,

Korie, Brandon, Ronnie G, Arthur, Asia, Logan P, Amaya, Logan A, Lewis & Kaden. These students demonstrated impressive skill and imagination, capturing the essence of the challenge. Their verses not only inspired but also highlighted the importance of literacy as a tool for self-expression and empowerment.

Here at Stone Soup Academy, we are committed to fostering creativity and literacy through initiatives like this writing challenge, as it continues to enrich the school community, inspiring students to dream, write, and shape the future with their words. I am excited to seeing what the next writing challenge will bring.

## 'Fight or Flight' Writing Challenge

Micha Davis

This term, students have the opportunity to enter a writing competition being held by Young Writers. The theme is 'Fight or Flight', those moments in life when we must choose to stand up and take action, or stand back and not interfere. Entries must be no longer than 100 words, making these examples of 'mini sagas': short, sharp stories filled with excitement and drama that get right to the point.

Year 9 have been looking at the theme of 'Fight or Flight' along with their other topics this term. It connects well with the Gothic Literature we have been studying, as horror stories directly put their characters in situations that force them to either summon all of their courage or to run for their lives!

A £50 prize is available for stories that are selected by the judges and most of the entries have a chance to be published in an anthology.



## Art

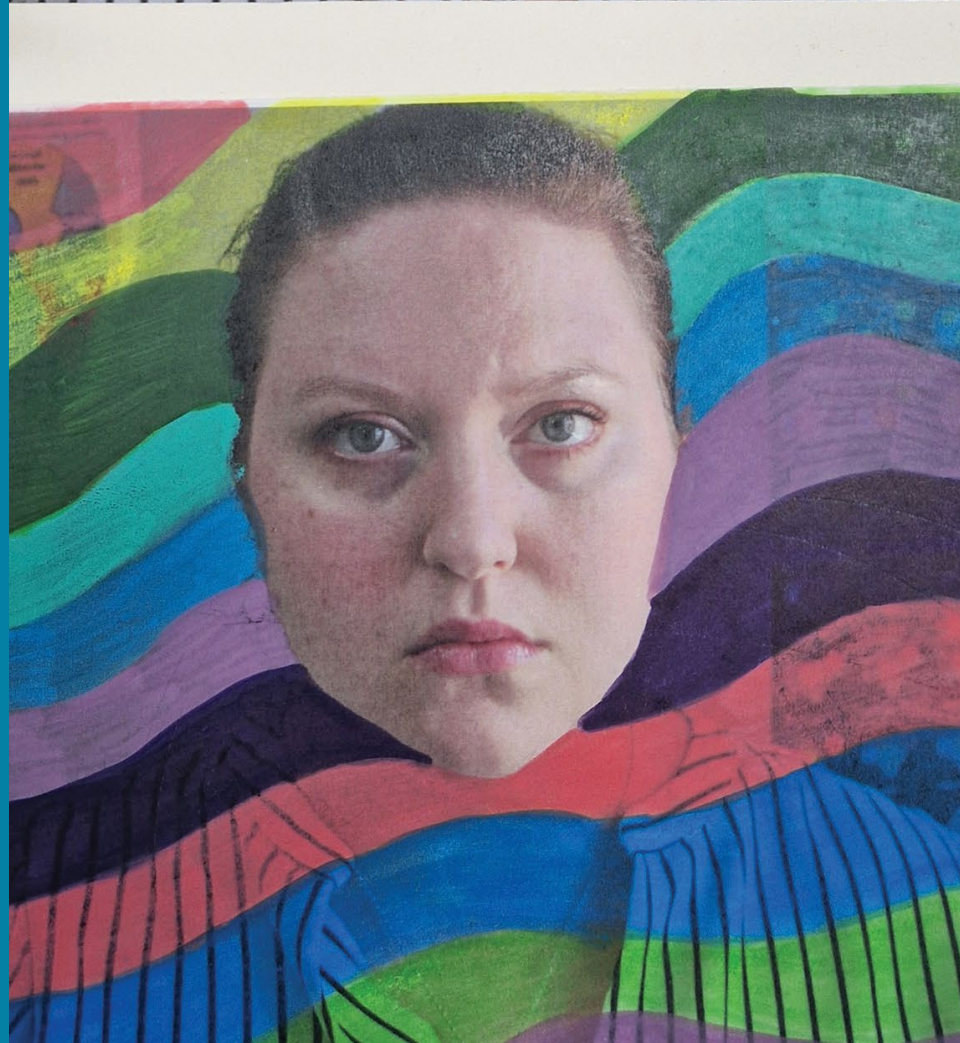
Annie Gadsby

At the end of last term, our year 9's finished exploring colour theory and optical illusions concluding in an optical perspective image of a cityscape colour wheel. Our year 10's had been investigating the term natural forms where they had practiced their still life abilities and the year 11's finished work on the term "tropical" where they fine tuned their drawing and painting skills.

Moving into the new term, year 9 have begun a topic on the theme of "Fantasy." So far, they have explored what the term means and discussed fantasy creatures and media influences such as Harry Potter and Lord of the rings. They have experimented with design, creating their own magical creatures and 3D dragons, showing off their emerging art skills and knowledge of monsters and mythical creatures.

Year 10s began the term exploring Pop Art and the influence it has on current popular culture such as cartoons and use of printmaking techniques. We have since been evolving into the influences of street art and graffiti in both modern and pop culture. So far, our students have come up with and designed their very own tag names ranging from McBlu to Stemz. We have some budding Banksys here at the academy!

Our year 11's are in the final term before the start of their component 2 exam and have begun an independent project on the topic of "Dreams." There has been a wide variety of work and ideas already with projects ranging from future goals, to fantasy worlds and even nightmares. Every media and technique has been explored and displayed throughout their work and the entire academy is excited to see their final pieces before christmas.



## Art



## All Change at Stone Soup Academy

Kerrie Henton, Executive Principal

Younes Henini, Principal

Stone Soup Academy is always looking for new ways to develop and grow and, since we opened in 2012, the student number has tripled along with the staff. We now have two super sites filled with the latest technology and aspirations to expand into Sixth Form. To support these new developments and add capacity, we have changed our leadership structure. From the start of the academic year Kerrie is moving from principal to take on the strategic developmental role of Executive Principal and Younes Henini, who has been at Stone Soup as Vice Principal since 2018, being promoted to interim Principal and will lead on all operational aspects. These are exciting times for all at the academy and we can't wait to see what we can now achieve with this additional capacity.



## Enrichment

Michelle Rogers

Year 9 students have enjoyed a variety of enrichment opportunities through weekly sessions, offering a balance of education and enjoyment. Activities included:

- Offsite sports sessions
- Art and design projects
- Games room competitions (featuring pool, ping pong and FIFA)
- Ready Steady Cook challenges
- History-themed workshops
- Ice Skating at Winter Wonderland

