

# Stone Soup Academy News



Issue 23 | March 2026 Half Term 4

## World Book Day 2026

Taylor Gilmour

**As we celebrate World Book Day at Stone Soup Academy, we are proud to highlight the excellent progress our students have made in their literacy development.**

Over the past year, we have placed a strong focus on developing disciplinary literacy across the academy. This has included refining our curriculum, supporting staff to embed literacy within their subject areas, and delivering targeted interventions for students who benefit from additional support.

As a result, some of our students have made exceptional gains in their reading. Several of our weakest readers have significantly improved their reading ages, with three Year 11 students progressing

by over 22 months and a Year 10 student achieving an outstanding 28 months of progress.

We are also delighted to celebrate success beyond the classroom. This year, a record number of our students have been recognised in the UK Young Writers competitions. So far, 19 students can proudly call themselves published authors, and we hope to see even more achieve this milestone by the end of the academic year.

These achievements reflect not only our students' hard work and determination, but also the positive impact that a strong focus on literacy can have on confidence, creativity, and success across the academy.



## The progress continues at Stone Soup Academy

Younes Henini

**As we completed Half Term 3, I want to share a clear update on our progress across Stone Soup Academy. Our work remains rooted in a trauma-informed, regulation-first approach, with high expectations, strong relationships and ambitious pathways for every young person.**

Professional learning has continued to grow through EPIC, with 14 staff actively engaged across 11 specialist Learning Communities (including English, Maths, SEND, and Research). Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, strengthening SEND-informed pedagogy, curriculum development and professional dialogue. EPIC Leaders, alongside specialist consultancy support, are also building leadership capacity, improving quality assurance and sharpening our regulation-first practice.

We are also proud to confirm that our first cohort of 20 students is ready to launch the Duke of Edinburgh's Award this half term. Planning, training and risk assessments are complete. Students will take part in volunteering, physical skills and expedition elements, developing resilience, independence and commitment. DoFE aligns closely with our ethos, offering structured challenge, clear progression and recognised accreditation that supports confidence, attendance and preparation for adulthood.

Our new therapeutic room, designed and launched by Zoe, is now fully operational and supporting targeted counselling, emotional regulation and restorative interventions. Early feedback from staff and students has been very positive. Due to its success, a similar therapeutic space is being developed at Milbie House, strengthening provision across both sites.

All students in all year groups completed mock examinations last half term, delivered in line with JCQ expectations. This has strengthened familiarity with exam routines, reduced anxiety and helped

staff identify gaps and intervention priorities. Outcomes are now informing revision planning and personalised support.

We have formally joined the Catena Business Network to strengthen links with local and regional businesses, broadening employer engagement, mentoring and enterprise opportunities. A business engagement event is being planned later this year to welcome business leaders into the academy and explore meaningful partnerships.

We are also embedding PAGES (Personal Assessment and Goal Setting) across leadership, curriculum planning, behaviour support and SEND inclusion. Our implementation has been recognised nationally, and we have been invited to share an impact case study, positioning Stone Soup Academy as a sector-leading example in Alternative Provision.

Our SEND Teaching Assistants continue to make a significant difference every day, supporting regulation, scaffolding learning, implementing personalised strategies and ensuring access arrangements are delivered effectively. Alongside this, we are extending Arbor to strengthen curriculum, assessment tracking and reporting, with the next phase integrating parental communication and behaviour tracking. All staff have completed mid-year performance reviews through BlueSky, strengthening wellbeing, accountability and professional growth.

Inclusion remains central: all students receive SEND support, with SEMH as the primary need. Additional SEND TAs, literacy interventions, and our SEND Tech Hub are strengthening independence and access.

Thank you for your ongoing support, trust and partnership. Stone Soup Academy continues to move forward with strong momentum, strengthening outcomes, wellbeing, safety and aspiration for our young people.

## Personal Development

Katy Smith

### Well, what a busy couple of terms we've had since my last update!

As part of my role, leading in wellbeing, we have had a huge push on our mental health support for both students and staff recently and I am pleased to report, we now have a dedicated mental health therapist in school twice a week. This is as a direct result of a new collaboration with Nottinghamshire's Mental Health Support Team, who are delivering whole group workshops on particular areas of concern e.g. exam stress, emotional resilience and regulation, one to one sessions with specific students and ad hoc drop in sessions for others who may be struggling intermittently. This, coupled with us supporting Zoe Cooke to achieve a counselling qualification, and our continued work with other outside agencies including CGL, means the school is looking stronger than ever in its support of mental health, something that's incredibly important.

We continued with this focus during term 3, when we celebrated Children's Mental Health Awareness week. The theme this year was 'This is My Place', something we thought was incredibly apt for all that we do at Stone Soup. In our continuous drive to strengthen student voice, our Student Leadership and Wellbeing Team (SLWT) took a lead on the activities for the week, planning a form time activity for each day. Mindfulness Monday featured calming colouring activities, Tuesday Tuesday was an uplifting karaoke session, for Wellbeing Wednesday students took part in pampering opportunities, Two Step Thursday was a chance to raise spirits having a boogie in form and finally Fun Friday was a games day, with connect4, monopoly, boggle or bingo! The students had a wonderful time celebrating their own personally devised mental health week.

### Curriculum

The PSHE focus for term 2 was 'Living in the Wider

World', where Year 9 students have explored post 16 options including apprenticeships, goal setting, their own strengths and interests, making a good first impression and managing online reputation. Other year groups have learnt about the dangers around gambling, managing peer pressure, causes of cybercrime and have learnt about the economy and how they as young people can contribute to this. Term 3 focused on 'Relationships', the positives and the negatives of multiple different types of relationship, how to spot warnings of unhealthy patterns, coercion, abuse, the impact of pornography, blackmail and how to manage conflict in and out of the home. Students have engaged well in discussion and been signposted to additional support as and where needed.

Jordan has had a couple of very busy terms with preparation for adulthood experiences for our young people. These included; making connections with local businesses (DoughNotts) as part of their L2 Business and Enterprise qualification, students attending the National Careers School Leavers Festival, EMTEC Centre Tours in Ruddington and Hospitality connect experiences and work experience at HMRC, early years provisions and John Lewis. Student personal coaches and Heads of Year have accompanied these opportunities to



enable them to continue conversations around the students' futures with both the young people themselves and their parents, which has been a really positive development.

## Personal Development and Cultural Capital Opportunities

Term 2 and 3 saw a wide array of Personal Development and Cultural Capital opportunities for our students. These included lots of sporting activities e.g. ice skating, bowling, lazer quest, crazy and VR golf and paddle tennis – a new activity for Stone Soup! Students also took part in an engagement trip for the top students in English to Chatsworth House, completed their UKMT maths challenge and selected students also went on attendance and top 20 reward trips to Nandos.

One particular highlight in term 3, was the opportunity to visit the Andy Warhol exhibition at the Lakeside Art Gallery. The exhibition features the original art work, which is currently on loan from the Tate Gallery and our students were given a guided tour round the space, had the chance to draw and photo some of their favourite pieces and take part in an interactive workshop with a resident artist. I'm sure you'll agree, some of their final pieces were outstanding, and incredibly in keeping with Andy Warhol's style.

## Looking Ahead

Younes and I have spent the last few terms meeting with multiple academies in our continued search for collaboration and sharing our good practice far and wide. Our link with Catena has already proven fruitful, particularly for our sports department, who have golf and UK boxing links now.

Our collaboration with ItsInNottingham continues to strengthen and through this, we are linking with RockCorps, a national company who offer a four hour volunteering opportunity in exchange for a ticket to a gig at RockCity. Our students also joined ItsInNottingham for their weekly litter pick around

Nottingham City centre, enabling them to engage and give back at a local level.

Finally, thanks to lots of hard work from Fred, Duke of Edinburgh is also officially up and running and, now we have purchased all the equipment, we will be supporting our students through this qualification.

All in all, we have a busy, enriching and rewarding few terms coming up and I look forward to sharing the next update with you soon!



## Creativity, Progression and Real Musical Independence

Paolo Iannattone

**This half term, students have been developing their creativity and production skills through a real mix of listening, DJ-style remixing, and DAW-based composition. From genre knowledge and interactive quizzes to building and refining full productions, the energy in the room has been fantastic, and we're already seeing students think and work like genuine music creators.**

### **Year 9: Genres, Music Quiz, Traktor and Remixing**

Year 9 have been combining musical knowledge with hands-on creativity by making their own music quiz about all music genres. They're exploring what defines different styles: tempo, rhythm, instrumentation, texture, and production choices, and turning that into fun, student-led quiz content. Alongside this, they've been getting stuck into Traktor, learning how DJs and remixers manipulate tracks using cue points, loops, syncing, transitions, and effects. It's been great to see them gaining confidence as they experiment with remixing and begin to understand how music can be reshaped in real time.

### **Year 10: Remixing and Composing with Logic Pro**

Year 10 have been focusing on the practical production work, remixing and composing using Logic Pro. They're developing strong DAW habits: sequencing MIDI, arranging sections, building drum patterns and musical layers, and using effects to shape a clean, intentional sound. The emphasis has been on completing practical tasks with purpose, making sure ideas become structured tracks, with clear musical decisions and a production style that matches the brief. Their focus and creativity have been super impressive.

### **Year 11: Refining Music Sequencing for RSL Presentation**

Year 11 are in a really exciting phase: refining the Music Sequencing and Production unit and preparing their work to present to RSL. They're polishing arrangements, tightening timing, improving sound choices, and making mix decisions that help their music sound more professional and

submission-ready. The key focus is quality and clarity, making sure their final pieces show confident sequencing, strong structure, and a clear creative identity. It's brilliant to see how seriously they're taking the finishing process and how much their work is levelling up.

Overall, this half term has been full of creativity, progression, and real musical independence. Students are building the skills to remix, compose, and produce with confidence, and we're excited to keep that momentum going into the next half term!



## Student Success in Functional Skills and the UKMT Intermediate Mathematical Challenge

Darrell Drummond

**Students across Year 10 and Year 11 have achieved an exceptional range of successes this term, demonstrating resilience, ambition, and a growing confidence in their mathematical abilities. Their hard work has led to strong outcomes in Functional Skills qualifications and impressive performances in national competitions.**

### Year 11 Functional Skills Success

Year 11 students have shown real determination in preparing for and completing their Functional Skills assessments. Many have now secured their Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications, giving them a strong foundation as they move towards their GCSE exams.

#### Level 1 Passes:

Aaron, Aleasha, Arthur, Billie-Mai, Charlie, Chloe M., Dalton, Elyas, Jack, Jensen, Justin, Kai, Kenzie, Khloe, Khyrell, Kian, Kieleley, Kye, Kyrell, Leo, Lewis, Lillie-Mai, Logan A., Logan P., Lucus, Maisie, Malaki, Mason, Mia, Millie-Mae, Oliver, Romeo, Ryan, Scarlet, Sienna, Skye, Taybah, Tia, Wade.

#### Level 2 Passes:

Aaron, Arthur, Billie-Mai, Charlie, Chloe M., Dalton, Elyas, Jensen, Kai, Kenzie, Khloe, Khyrell, Kian, Kieleley, Kye, Logan A., Logan P., Maisie, Mason, Millie-Mae, Oliver, Romeo, Ryan, Scarlet, Skye, Tia, Wade.

### Year 10 Functional Skills Success

Year 10 students have also made an excellent start, with many already achieving their first qualifications ahead of schedule.

#### Level 1 Passes:

Archie, Ashleigh, Ayaan, Ayda, Bella, Cameron, Chanel-Amy, Faith, Holly, Jahnaya, Lashay, Lucas, Macy, Maisy, Oliver, Riley, Taije, Theo, Tyler R.

### UKMT Intermediate Mathematical Challenge Achievements

Students also excelled in the UKMT Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, showcasing their problem-solving skills on a national stage.

Bronze Certificate: Arthur  
Gold Certificates: Riley, Marleigh, Tyler R., Holly (best in school), Jensen

All Gold certificate students received invitations to the Pink Kangaroo, a prestigious follow-on round reserved for the highest performers across the country. This is an outstanding achievement and reflects the curiosity, resilience, and advanced reasoning these students bring to their work.

### Acknowledging Staff Support

We would like to say a big thank you (and much kudos) to Nathan and Priyom, whose excellent teaching, encouragement, and enthusiasm for all things mathematical continue to inspire students across both year groups.

### Looking Forward

With more assessments ahead and GCSE preparation underway, students are well positioned to continue their progress. Their achievements this term show what is possible when effort, encouragement, and ambition come together.



## Showing Up and Succeeding: Building a Strong Culture of Attendance

Helen Lovell

**At Stone Soup Academy, attendance is a key foundation for student success. During half term three, the Academy placed a strong focus on improving attendance and punctuality, particularly reducing late marks and 'U' codes (arrivals after the register closes at 9:45am).**

A big part of this work has been strengthening our partnership with parents and carers. Through daily phone calls, home visits and in-school meetings, the team has worked closely with families to understand and overcome barriers to regular attendance. This open communication allows us to take a proactive approach and provide the right support at the right time.

Within school, students have received one-to-one support and targeted interventions led by the Attendance Manager, alongside the Engagement Team and Personal Coaches. Together, they have created personalised action plans to help students improve their attendance and stay on track.

Attendance is also a key focus during our termly Progress Reviews. These sessions help students clearly see the connection between attendance, academic achievement and future opportunities after Year 11. Students are able to track their progress and understand what they need to do to 'cash out' their SSA bank balance at the end of Year

11, with 90% attendance being one of the important milestones.

This term we also introduced practical solutions to help students get to school. Funded taxi provision has supported students facing travel or distance challenges, while Early Help referrals and assistance with bus pass applications have helped families where additional support is needed.

Importantly, we make sure success is celebrated. Weekly and termly reward trips recognise students with 100% attendance, the most improved attendance in each form, and strong engagement during the mock exam period. End-of-term reward trips for this, first introduced in term two, have received fantastic feedback from both students and parents and motivate students to increase engagement further each new term.

By combining support, clear expectations and celebration of success, Stone Soup Academy is continuing to build a positive culture around attendance. As we move closer to the summer exam period, we are already seeing improvements in punctuality, stronger partnerships with families and increased student engagement across the school.



## Inclusion

SEND TEAM

### National Developments in Inclusion

If you have followed the news recently, you may have noticed that significant changes are taking place within inclusion education. National guidance is placing greater emphasis on ensuring that all pupils can access a broad, ambitious curriculum, with inclusive practice embedded into everyday teaching, leadership and accountability processes.

These developments reinforce the expectation that schools, including alternative provision settings, demonstrate measurable impact, clear progress monitoring and strong oversight of support strategies to ensure every learner is able to engage, achieve and make sustained progress.

At Stone Soup Academy, this aligns closely with our existing approach. Our Inclusion Team works across both sites with the full staff team to support inclusive practice and ensure every learner receives high-quality, targeted support designed to help them overcome the specific challenges they face. Each member brings specialist expertise, and together they are committed to improving outcomes for all.

### Strengthening Inclusive Staffing Capacity

To further enhance our inclusive provision, we have appointed four new Inclusion Teaching Assistants (TAs).

Two Inclusion TAs are deployed within core subjects (English, Maths and Science) to support access to key curriculum content and secure progress in essential qualifications.

Two Inclusion TAs are deployed across non-core and enrichment subjects to ensure consistency of support, promote engagement and maintain high expectations across the wider curriculum

This structure ensures that inclusion is not confined to intervention spaces but is embedded across the full curriculum.

- Deliver targeted in-class support
- Facilitate adaptive teaching strategies

- Promote independence, self-regulation and positive approaches to workload
- Provide structured 1:1 support where required
- Work collaboratively with teaching staff to proactively remove barriers to learning

### Monitoring Inclusion Progress Through PAGS

The academy has significantly strengthened its use of the PAGS progress monitoring system to ensure greater consistency, accountability and measurable impact across our inclusive provision.

This has included:

- Working directly with the PAGS development team to refine how the platform is utilised within our setting
- Delivering additional staff training to ensure high-quality and consistent recording
- Embedding clearer expectations around intervention tracking and outcome measurement
- Using the system to more precisely monitor engagement, academic progress and personalised targets

As a result of our effective implementation, the software provider has recognised Stone Soup Academy AP as an example of strong practice and has documented our processes as a case study to



demonstrate effective use of the platform within an alternative provision context.

## Continuing to Strengthen Digital Infrastructure for Inclusive Learning

Following the outstanding success of our first Technology Hub, we are proud to announce the development of a second Digital Inclusion Hub. This expansion reflects the measurable impact the original space has had on teaching, learning and student confidence.

Led by Michelle Bramhall and the Inclusion Team, the first hub was created with a clear purpose: to strengthen digital infrastructure, enhance classroom practice and equip learners with the tools and confidence needed to thrive in a modern learning environment. Positive feedback from students, staff and families has confirmed its impact.

The second hub will build on this success by extending access to high-quality assistive and supportive technology across additional learning spaces, particularly within core subjects.

## Inclusion Interventions

Inclusion interventions at Stone Soup Academy continue to deliver a dynamic and evolving programme of bespoke support, carefully tailored to the individual needs of our pupils. Our core

aim remains to support the personal, emotional and academic development of every learner, particularly those with additional barriers to learning.

We utilise a range of targeted tools, including Dyslexia Gold, Touch Typing and Accelerated Reader, to strengthen literacy, improve written communication and build confidence within the classroom.

In addition, practical and enrichment-based interventions, such as the Year 9 gardening project, provide opportunities to develop responsibility, teamwork, resilience and wellbeing alongside academic progress... We are really looking forward to seeing what grows from this green space – both in the garden and in the students who help to nurture it.



## Celebrating Our Stone Soup Values Across the Academy

Becky Ashmore

**This year, our academy has continued to prioritise bringing our Stone Soup values to life. Rather than simply displaying them on walls, the focus has been on ensuring they are actively demonstrated by students and staff across the school community.**

During Half Term 1, weeks 2-6, each week was linked to a specific Stone Soup value. Students who demonstrated these values in their daily behaviour and learning were rewarded with double Dojo points. This approach helped strengthen a shared language around character, encouraged positive behaviour, and reinforced expectations across all year groups.

In Half Term 2, the focus shifted to the value of celebration. Students continued to receive double Dojos for celebrating both their own achievements and the successes of others, helping to build a culture of encouragement and recognition across the academy.

One of the highlights of the term was our Celebration Evening. Designed as a positive alternative to a traditional parents' evening, families were invited into the academy to hear affirmations about their child's strengths, achievements and contributions. The event saw strong attendance, and feedback from parents and carers was overwhelmingly positive. It also strengthened relationships between families and the academy.

Celebration was embedded in a variety of ways, the most consistent students across both core and non-core subjects were rewarded with a special celebratory lunch. At the end of term, we held Christmas form-time parties, every student received a personalised certificate celebrating the unique qualities they bring to the academy, from dedication to their studies and strong attendance to kindness, humour and positivity and we celebrated our top 20 students in terms of behaviour and attendance by taking them out for a meal.

Students also participated in Student Focus, a filmed version of the staff's weekly focus model, where they celebrated both their peers and members of staff.

This initiative helped strengthen mutual respect and a sense of belonging throughout the school.

Our students also played an active role in celebrating important national and school events. Anti-Bullying Week was recognised through Odd Socks Day, promoting individuality and inclusion. Remembrance Day was observed with a minute's silence, a staff-created commemorative video and a collaborative whole-school poppy artwork.

Students also supported important charitable causes. Funds were raised for Children in Need through a pyjama day, and the academy supported Save the Children by taking part in Christmas Jumper Day. These events encouraged empathy, social awareness and a sense of collective responsibility.

In Half Term 3, the focus turned to the value of positivity. Students were again rewarded with double Dojos for demonstrating positive attitudes in both their learning and relationships. Each form group was given a positivity jar, where students

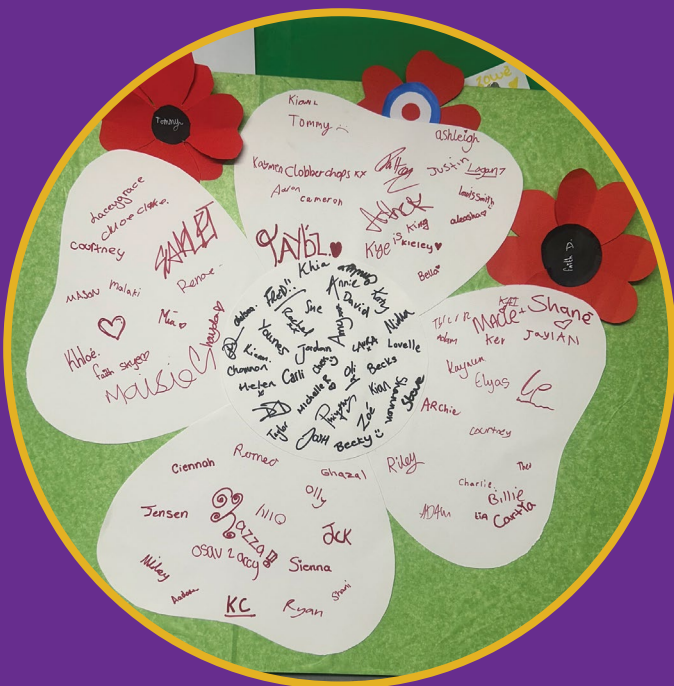


added weekly reflections about positive moments in their lives. These reflections were revisited at the end of the term.

Students also wrote gratitude postcards, encouraging them to positively think about the people and experiences they are thankful for. To celebrate the most positive role models in the school, the ten students with the highest positivity Dojos were invited to a special "Positivi-tea Party."

During Children's Mental Health Week, form-time activities focused on wellbeing and positive mental health. Students took part in creative activities, games, karaoke and shared their weekly "Sunshine Moments", reflecting on positive experiences from their week. These activities helped normalise conversations about mental health and strengthened relationships within form groups.

Overall, the initiatives across these half terms have helped bring our Stone Soup values to life. They have increased positive recognition, strengthened student voice, improved parental engagement and further embedded a culture of celebration, belonging and positivity across our academy community. We look forward to the upcoming terms where we will focus on kindness, respect and collaboration.





## Multi Skills and Hair & Beauty

Josh Cassidy

**Term 4 has been a busy and productive period for our Year 10 and Year 11 students in both Multi Skills and Hair & Beauty. Students have continued to build on the knowledge and practical skills developed earlier in the year while preparing for key assessments and new learning opportunities.**

Within Multi Skills, the current focus has shifted to joinery, introducing students to a new area of practical work. This has allowed learners to develop their understanding of working with wood and using specialist equipment safely and effectively. Students have been learning a range of techniques, including measuring materials accurately, preparing wood for use, and creating joints that are essential in basic joinery projects.

It has been encouraging to see how quickly the students have adapted to these new expectations. Many have shown confidence when using measuring tools and equipment, and they have demonstrated a strong willingness to learn new methods. The tasks set for them require careful attention to detail and accuracy, and the cohort has responded positively to the challenge.

In addition, Multi Skills students are currently in their assessment period, where they are being evaluated on the practical techniques and knowledge they have developed throughout the course. This gives them the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to measure accurately, work with different materials, and apply the joinery skills they have been practising in a structured task.

Meanwhile, in Hair & Beauty, students have continued to develop the work that began last term. As part of their assessment period, learners are finalising the remaining pieces of their coursework while ensuring that all required evidence is clearly presented in their workbooks. This stage is particularly important as students work towards meeting the guidelines required to achieve their Level 1 qualification.

A key focus during this time has been organisation and presentation. Students are making sure that their books are fully completed, neatly presented,

and contain all the necessary components to support their final assessments. Staff have been pleased with the effort shown by students as they take responsibility for completing and refining their coursework.

Overall, Term 4 has shown positive progress across both subject areas. Students are continuing to develop practical skills, improve their understanding of industry-related techniques, and prepare themselves for the successful completion of their courses.

We look forward to seeing their continued progress in the coming term.



## Preparation for Adulthood

Jordan Senior

### **Work Experience Success at HMRC**

**During a recent work experience placement at HMRC, a group of students took part in a “Dragon’s Den” style presentation, pitching their ideas to a panel of judges.**

The panel listened as four of our students delivered a well organised and thoughtful presentation. Their pitch stood out for its clear structure, creative ideas, and engaging delivery. The slides were informative, and the use of images helped to support and enhance the content. One of the highlights was the suggestion of introducing a budget session, which was praised as a practical and effective idea. The group also impressed the panel with a creative alternative court case example based on a KFC scenario, demonstrating originality and strong research skills. The presentation flowed smoothly between speakers, showing excellent teamwork and a fair distribution of speaking roles. The students also responded confidently to follow up and on-the-spot questions, showing a clear understanding of their ideas.

Overall, the experience was a great success, highlighting the students’ creativity, teamwork, and potential. With increased confidence, their future presentations are sure to be even more impactful.

### **Think Big Assembly**

**Students recently attended an exciting “Think Big” assembly, which highlighted the growing technology scene in Nottingham and its strong links to the world of sport.**

The assembly began with a short five-minute film exploring the connection between Nottingham Forest, Ideagen, and the role technology plays in modern careers and apprenticeships. The film helped students understand how tech is increasingly shaping industries such as football, from data analysis to business operations. Following the film, students were introduced to the Think Big programme and what it offers. The presentation explained the wide range of opportunities available, including apprenticeships, workshops, and hands-on experiences.

A key focus was on the variety of activities students can get involved in, from expert-led masterclasses to matchday experiences, all designed to give real insight into careers in technology and sport. The programme is powered by Ideagen, a Nottingham based company that offers a range of tech apprenticeships throughout the year at its local office. This provides students with valuable pathways into the industry without necessarily following a traditional university route.

Overall, the assembly encouraged students to think about their future careers and showed how local opportunities in Nottingham’s growing tech sector can open doors into exciting industries like sport and business.

### **Visit to Experian Nottingham Builds Financial Skills**

**A few students recently visited the Experian office in Nottingham, where they took part in an interactive session designed to build their understanding of finance and banking.**

During the visit, students worked through information slides and practical class activities, many of which involved using calculators to solve real life financial problems. These hands on tasks helped bring key concepts to life and made the learning experience more engaging. One session focused on banking, where students learned about different types of accounts, including current and savings accounts. They explored how these accounts work, the differences between them, and how to manage money effectively using a bank.

Another session focused on salaries and payslips. Students were introduced to how payslips are structured, including understanding wages, deductions, and other key details. This gave them a clearer idea of what to expect when they begin earning their own income in the future.

Overall, the visit provided valuable insight into real world financial skills, helping students feel more prepared for managing money and understanding the workplace.

## EMTEC Centre Tours (Ruddington)

Students recently visited the EMTEC Centre in Ruddington, a specialist training facility offering apprenticeships in automotive, vehicle accident repair, and electrical industries.

During the visit, students explored industry standard workshops and saw first hand the equipment and environments used in professional settings. This helped bring classroom learning to life and provided real insight into technical careers. Students learned about a wide range of career paths, including roles in the motor industry, electric vehicle (EV) technology, and engineering. With the rapid growth of EV technology, the visit highlighted how these industries are evolving and creating new opportunities for the future.

They also had the opportunity to meet experienced tutors who have worked in the industry, gaining practical advice and asking questions about career pathways. The visit introduced different progression routes, including apprenticeships and full-time study options, helping students better understand their choices after school.

Overall, the EMTEC Centre tour was an exciting and informative experience, giving students valuable insight into the careers and technical industries.



## Proactive Productivity in Photography

Emily McCan

**It's been a really full and productive term in Photography, with students across all year groups pushing themselves creatively and becoming much more confident in their own ideas.**

Year 9 have been exploring street art around Nottingham, using the local area as inspiration for their photos. A highlight has been capturing the work of local artist Kid30. Students have taken some really strong images and started to think more about composition and framing. It's been great to see them getting out, noticing more, and engaging with artwork around them.

Year 10 has had a busy term too. Alongside developing their coursework, both Art & Photography students had the opportunity to visit the Andy Warhol exhibition and take part in a workshop at Lakeside Arts. This was a brilliant experience for them, not just seeing the work up close, but actually engaging with ideas around popular culture, colour and identity. They were able to create their own artwork inspired by Warhol in the workshop, guided by local artists. Back in school, students have been building on their photographic techniques, showing more confidence in both shooting and editing, and starting to refine their outcomes more carefully.

Year 11 have been focused and committed as they move closer to their final exam. There have been some steps up in maturity and independence, with students working hard to develop their exam projects ahead of the timed period after Easter. They've been refining ideas, experimenting with techniques and, importantly, becoming more confident in explaining their intentions. It's been good to see them taking their work more seriously and pushing for those higher marks.

Overall, what stands out this term is how much more independent students are becoming across the board. They're more willing to take risks, try things out, and reflect on what's working (and what isn't) which is exactly what we want to see. I am really proud of the effort this term and looking forward to seeing what the Year 11s can achieve in their exam next month.



## Stone Soup Students Achieve National Publication Success

Lovelle Pennant

There has been some brilliant news across the academy this term, with a number of Stone Soup students achieving publication in national Young Writers anthologies.

Jack Asher, Laceygrace and Kaymen have been published in I Have a Dream – Teen Ink, a collection celebrating young people’s perspectives on the world around them. Copies have already arrived in school, with students soon to receive their own.

Alongside this, an impressive group of students have also been selected for publication in Stranger Sagas – When Silence Falls, a creative writing anthology exploring tension, imagination, and storytelling.

Those students are:

Aaron Dodsworth

Aleasha Turton

Chanel-Amy Bell

Holly Goddard

Jensen Burbage

Kai Taylor

Macie-Jo Pringle

Mason Bardell

Olly Lewis

Pedro Rocha

Renae Coleman

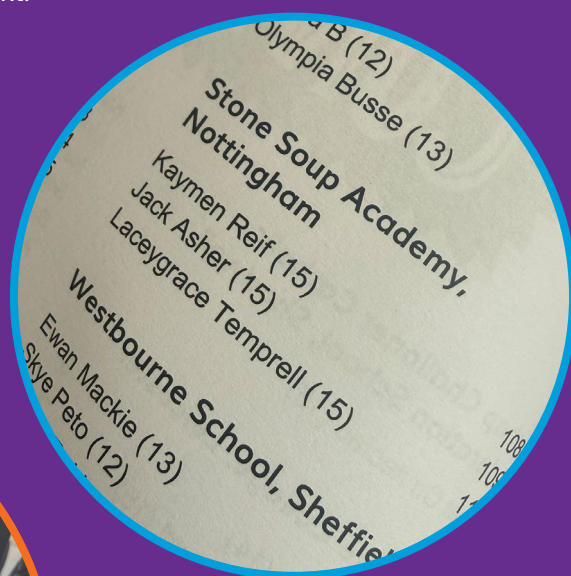
Theo Cristie

To have this many students published at once is something to really recognise. It speaks to the depth of talent across the academy and the way students are increasingly finding confidence in their own voices.

More than anything, this is a reminder that our young people have stories worth telling and that

those stories deserve to be heard beyond the classroom.

This success really highlights just how capable our students are. When they focus, push themselves and take pride in their work, the results speak for themselves. We are incredibly proud of each of them and excited to see what they go on to achieve next.



## A year of Growth and Achievement for Year 11

Alesha Rogers

**This year, we have continued to see Year 11 at Stone Soup Academy go from strength to strength, showing real maturity and commitment as they approach the final stages of their education. Throughout this term's mock examinations, students have demonstrated impressive resilience, determination, and a growing confidence in their abilities. Their approach to these assessments reflects just how far they have come, both academically and personally. We have seen an increase in student punctuality and attendance to mocks too.**

A significant milestone has also been reached, with almost all Year 11 students successfully completing their Functional Skills examinations in both English and Maths. This is a fantastic achievement and a testament to their hard work and perseverance.

As a cohort, students are continuing to thrive across our vocational pathways, particularly within Multiskills and Hair and Beauty. It has been wonderful to see almost all students on track to pass their modules with such success, many achieving particularly strong outcomes. These courses not only provide valuable qualifications but also help students develop practical skills and confidence for their future careers.

Looking ahead, we are incredibly proud that a number of the year group have already secured college offers following successful interviews. With the ongoing support and guidance of their personal coaches, students have shown great ambition and readiness to take their next steps beyond Stone Soup Academy.

### Attendance

Attendance remains a key focus, and we continue to work closely with our dedicated attendance team,

referring schools, and external agencies to ensure students are well supported. Through consistent monitoring and tailored interventions, we are seeing positive improvements, with many students showing increased engagement and commitment to their education.

### Behaviour

Year 11 have made remarkable progress in their behaviour this year, and this is evident in the calm, focused, and purposeful environment seen across the provision. Students are increasingly demonstrating a desire to succeed, showing greater self-discipline and a willingness to engage positively with both their learning and the wider school community.

During HT4, an impressive 32 out of 40 students consistently achieved a behaviour score of 7 or above, with the remaining students achieving a score of 6. This is a strong reflection of the collective effort being made across the cohort.

Perhaps most encouraging of all is the strength of the relationships that have developed between students, their personal coaches, and the wider staff team. These connections are at the heart of the progress being made. While students may not always say it outright, it is clear that they are working alongside staff, building trust, and embracing the support around them as they move through their final academic year.

As we move closer to the end of the year, Year 11 continue to show that they are ready for the challenges ahead, and we look forward to celebrating their successes in the months to come

## Busy Busy Busy in Art

Annie Gadsby

It's been a busy term in the Art Department, with all year groups showing great creativity.

Year 11 students are preparing for their exams after the Easter break, refining their skills and final ideas. Year 10 are creating personal self-portraits that reflect their personalities and interests through

creative use of colour and imagery. Meanwhile, Year 9 students have been exploring pop art, producing exciting multi-media projects inspired by the style.

Overall, students are producing imaginative and impressive work across the department.

## Year 9 Reflection, Enrichment and Appreciation!

Molly Campion

**As we reach the halfway point of an already wonderful academic year, there are a few things I would like to highlight and reflect on.**

First would be the addition of Lochlan as personal coach during HT3. Lochlan has demonstrated resilience and his willingness to be hands-on. Although only here a short time, he has built a strong relationship with the cohort and is now PC to two students.

Secondly is the enrichment opportunities on a Friday for year 9 and how wonderfully they've engaged with both off site and on site activities. Massive shout outs to Leo C and Harley H for always participating in sport and Renae C and Miley B for making some wonderful treats for us staff!

As a year group we really are going from strength to strength and although it has been a bit of a slow burner in terms of getting students on roll, what I've learnt to realise is that this has actually been valuable quality time to build strong and nurturing relationships with the year group which is something that we don't always get the chance to do so early on.

It has been a fantastic start to the year and I am so fortunate. Not only to work with 13 amazing, young people from all walks of life, but also with such a dedicated and all round brilliant team. I can't wait to see what we do next!



## Year 10 Progressing with Focus on Attendance, Behaviour and Learning

Michelle Rogers

**Year 10 students have continued to make strong progress this year in attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement. Thanks to the effective partnership between families and Stone Soup Academy, students are demonstrating growing confidence and engagement in their learning.**

Our student tracker has played a key role in identifying areas for support early, allowing staff to put timely interventions in place. Regular communication with parents and Personal Coaches ensures that students

receive consistent, targeted support to help them succeed.

### **Teamwork and Communication**

A collaborative approach remains central to Year 10's progress. Regular meetings involving the Head of Engagement, Assistant Principal, Faculty Leads, and Attendance Manager enable staff to understand individual student needs and implement effective strategies. Weekly updates ensure all staff remain

informed and aligned, providing a consistent and supportive experience for students.

## Attendance on the Up

Attendance continues to be a strength, with a large number of students maintaining above 90%. Those requiring additional support are receiving tailored interventions from Personal Coaches, the attendance team, and referring schools to promote sustained improvement.

## Positive Behaviour Shines Through

Behaviour across Year 10 remains positive overall. The average behaviour score currently stands at 7.0. While this reflects a slight dip since HT2, the majority of students continue to meet expectations. One student

achieved a behaviour score above nine, twenty-one students achieved a score of seven or higher, and eleven students achieved a score of six or higher.

Positive behaviour continues to be recognised through reward trips, personalised praise, and postcards home from Personal Coaches, reinforcing expectations and encouraging continued progress.

## Looking Ahead

The progress seen this half term demonstrates the impact of strong teamwork, clear communication, and determination. With ongoing support from staff, students, and families, Year 10 is well placed to build on this progress as they prepare for the demands of Year 11 and their GCSE courses.

# Food Wonderful Food

Dominique Maragh

**Our Year 11 students are truly rising to the challenge as they prepare for their final practical exams. The level of dedication, planning, and passion they are demonstrating is outstanding. From carefully selecting dishes to refining techniques, they are putting in an incredible amount of effort to ensure their final outcomes are nothing short of exceptional. There is a real sense of excitement building as we look forward to tasting the delicious creations they have worked so hard to perfect.**

Meanwhile, our Year 10 students are full steam ahead, diving into the fascinating topic of food origins and how recipes can be adapted to meet different dietary requirements. Their enthusiasm has been evident in the kitchen, where they have successfully prepared a range of dishes including fully loaded burgers, rich chocolate brownies, and classic sausage rolls. Their confidence and skills continue to grow with each practical session.

In addition, students have recently completed the Hospitality Connect programme after a year of fantastic

engagement and participation.

Throughout the course, they explored the diverse world of hospitality, developing skills from bed making and understanding finance, to menu planning and event organisation. This journey culminated in a wonderful afternoon tea experience, where students invited parents and staff to enjoy a beautifully presented service. The atmosphere they created reflected true professionalism, showcasing not only their practical skills but also their ability to deliver a high-quality dining experience.

We are incredibly proud of all our students and the commitment they continue to show. With so much talent, creativity, and enthusiasm on display, the future of food and hospitality is certainly in safe hands.



## Electrifying Science

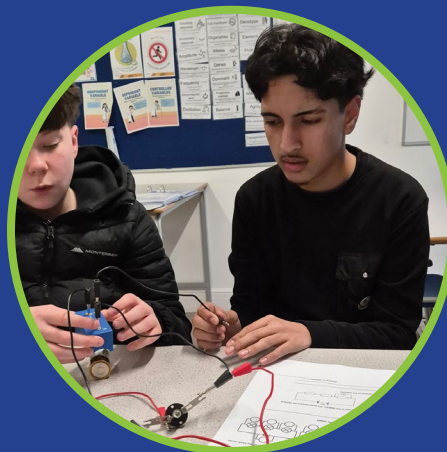
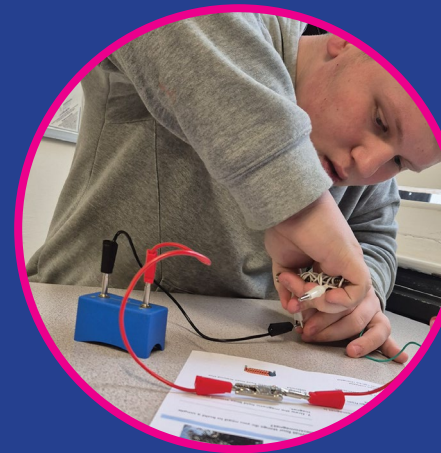
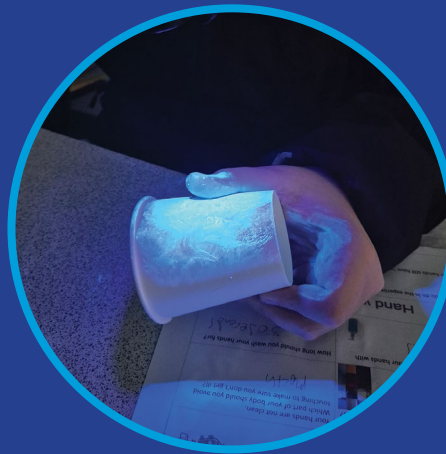
Hannah Smallwood

**This term in Science has been incredibly productive and rewarding across all year groups, with students showing dedication and enthusiasm in their lessons.**

Our Year 11 students have been working hard in preparation for their Biology and Physics GCSE exams. They have approached their revision with maturity and determination, building confidence across key topics. Their efforts have been reflected in the two mock exams they have completed this term, where many achieved fantastic results. These mocks have not only highlighted their strengths but have also provided valuable insight into areas for final improvement, putting them in a strong position for success as they head towards their real exams in May.

Year 10 students have also had a busy and engaging term, exploring a range of fascinating topics. In Physics, they have been developing their understanding of electricity, while in Biology they have been learning about the heart and the circulatory system, including the vital role of blood. Students have particularly enjoyed the hands-on practical work linked to these topics, which has helped to bring the science to life and deepen their understanding through real-world application.

Meanwhile, Year 9 students have been building strong foundations in both Biology and Physics. They began the term by studying microorganisms, gaining insight into how diseases spread and the importance of prevention. Alongside this, they have explored electricity, learning about conductors and insulators and how they are used in everyday contexts. Their curiosity and engagement in lessons have been excellent, with many students asking thoughtful questions and showing a growing confidence in their scientific knowledge.



## Business Students Show Enterprise Spirit and Strong Progress

Amy Dennett

**Students studying Business at school have had an exciting and productive term, with both Year 10 and Year 11 demonstrating commitment, creativity, and determination in their coursework and examinations.**

Year 11 students have recently begun their much-anticipated social enterprise activity. Working collaboratively, students are developing business ideas and preparing products using the resources provided, with the final outcomes to be judged by Ingenuity. This project allows students to apply the enterprise and marketing skills they have developed throughout the course in a real-world context, encouraging teamwork, innovation, and problem-solving.

Alongside this, Year 11 students have completed their Business examination, which went extremely well. Students approached the exam with focus and maturity, showing excellent effort and determination. As they approach the final stages of their school journey, there is now a strong push towards completing coursework to the highest

possible standard as they near the end of their final year.

Year 10 Business students have also made an impressive start to their coursework journey. They are currently beginning Task 3 of their first unit and have already shown excellent engagement and progress. As part of their learning, students recently visited Doughnotts, where they experienced first-hand how a successful business operates. During the visit, students explored customer service practices and learned about the production of the company's handmade doughnuts, gaining valuable insight into quality control, branding, and customer experience.

It has been a busy and rewarding period for Business students across both year groups, highlighting their enthusiasm, resilience, and growing understanding of enterprise. Staff are incredibly proud of the effort students continue to show as they develop key skills that will support them in their future education and careers.

## Read, Write, Succeed: A Celebration of Functional Skills Successes and Literacy at Stone Soup Academy

Taylor Gilmour

**This half term, Year 11 students have been working hard to complete their Functional Skills examinations. They have sat their Reading and Writing assessments and are currently preparing to deliver their Speaking and Listening presentations.**

We are pleased to share some of the early successes below and look forward to adding more names to these lists in the coming weeks.

### **Level 1 Reading & Writing Passes:**

Aaron, Arthur, Billie, Charlie, Dalton, Jack, Kai T,

Khyrell R, Kye J, Logan A, Logan P, Oliver L, Scarlet, Sienna, Skye, Wade

### **Level 2 Reading & Writing Passes:**

Arthur, Kye J, Oliver L, Sienna

### **Speaking and Listening Assessment Completed:**

Jensen, Jack, Kieley, Chloe M, Taybah

## From Padel to Pool, Sport is Thriving

Duncan Bennett

**This term has been a hugely successful one for sport across the school, with students showing excellent commitment, effort and enthusiasm in all areas.**

Our Year 11 students have been working incredibly hard as they prepare for their Fitness for Sport and Exercise exams. Their dedication to both the theoretical and practical elements has been outstanding, and they should be very proud of the progress they've made.

Meanwhile, both Year 10 and Year 11 students have made great strides in their coursework, demonstrating strong understanding, improved performance, and a positive attitude towards learning.

In practical lessons, students have had the opportunity to take part in a wide range of sports

including football, basketball, dodgeball, table tennis, pool, padel, bowling, rowing and golf. It has been fantastic to see so many students getting involved, trying new activities, and developing their skills.

Overall, students have been amazing this term. Their energy and participation have made lessons enjoyable and engaging, and it's clear that school sport is thriving.

We're now looking forward to another exciting term ahead, with even more opportunities to get involved and continue building on this success!



## A Busy and Creative Term

Khia Lewis-Todd

**It has been an exciting and productive term in the Media department, with students across all year groups developing their creative and analytical skills.**

Our Year 9 students have been exploring the world of film, focusing on how movies are created and how to write effective film reviews. To bring their learning to life, we are excited to be taking them on a cinema trip later this month. This will give students the opportunity to experience film in a real-world setting and apply their reviewing skills in a practical and engaging way.

Meanwhile, Year 10A have been working incredibly hard on Component 2, which centres around the theme of thrill seeking. As part of this unit, students are creating their own audio adverts to promote a fictional thrill-seeking business. They have been developing imaginative ideas, writing persuasive scripts, and learning how to engage an audience through sound.

Our Year 11 students have now begun their exam period, focusing on Component 3, which explores mental health and talking therapy. Students are tasked with creating their own advert from scratch, including generating original ideas, scripting, and sourcing sound effects. It has been fantastic to see their independence and creativity shine through during this important stage of their course.

Overall, it has been a very busy but incredibly enjoyable term in Media. We are proud of the hard work and enthusiasm shown by all students and are looking forward to even more exciting projects next term.