



# ***THE PHOENIX***

## **STEWARDS ACADEMY NEWSLETTER**

**WINTER TERM EDITION 3 • 2026**



## **HEADTEACHER MESSAGE**



**Prior to writing my piece for the newsletter I am asked to review what everyone else has written and agree to it being published. I always really enjoy doing this as I am reminded of so many of the wonderful things that students and staff at Stewards are doing every day that make us all proud to be part of our school community.**

**Schools are the sum of the parts of everyone who makes up our community. In this newsletter I was delighted to see Deputy Headteacher Mark Scholtes referring to the work that staff, parents, carers and young people have been doing to improve punctuality. I know this can be challenging for everyone, but I also know that getting more of our students in school on time every day helps the whole school community do better in every way. The work that Deputy Headteacher Helen McGee leads in relation to teaching, learning and curriculum makes a positive difference to the school experience of all our young people every day. Enabling our teachers to continually improve is a real privilege for us all and I am always pleased to read this being summed up in the newsletter.**

**The wider educational opportunities referenced in this newsletter are wonderful to see. Whether it is exciting trips to Paris or Barcelona, or students getting involved in opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge ready for life after Stewards or the maths challenge, it is great to see our young people doing so well. The Brilliant Club graduates and the Jack Petchey award winners exemplify our young people at their very best and we should all be very proud of them.**

**This newsletter marks the half-way point of the school year 2025-2026, and although we have already achieved so much I know that we will achieve even more in the second half of the year. Thank you for being part of the Stewards school community.**

# Stewards Learner

## A Positive Start to the New Year: Thank You for Your Continued Support

As we move further into the school year, we would like to take a moment to thank all of our parents and carers for your continued support. The strong partnership between home and school plays a vital role in ensuring our pupils thrive both academically and personally. Your encouragement, communication, and commitment make a real difference every single day.

We are particularly pleased to share some very positive developments across the school. Thanks to the consistent efforts of staff, pupils, and families, we have seen continued improvement in behaviour throughout the school as was identified in the recent surveys completed by students and parents. Pupils are demonstrating greater responsibility, respect, and readiness to learn, creating calm and purposeful classrooms where everyone can succeed.

One of the most encouraging outcomes of this collective effort has been a significant reduction in the number of suspensions so far this we have seen 300 fewer days lost to suspension than this time last year. This reflects not only clearer expectations and strong pastoral support, but also the willingness of our pupils to make positive choices. We are proud of the maturity and resilience they are showing.

In addition, our recent focus on punctuality has had a substantial impact. By working closely with families and reinforcing the importance of arriving on time, we have seen a significant reduction in the number of pupils arriving late to school. Starting the day promptly ensures that pupils do not miss valuable learning time and sets a positive tone for the rest of the day. Thank you for your commitment to supporting this important priority.

These improvements are a testament to what we can achieve when we work together. We remain committed to maintaining high expectations, providing strong support, and celebrating the many successes of our pupils.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support it really does make a significant difference and has a positive impact upon the behaviour and attitudes of the students. Just to give you the heads-up, next term as well as continuing with our current initiatives, punctuality and lates to school we will be revisiting our mobile phone policy as was mentioned in Mr Drews recent weekly newsletter.

On behalf of the pastoral team have a lovely half-term break and thanks once again.

# TEACHING & LEARNING

In our last Teaching and Learning newsletter, we shared how proud we are of the strong teaching taking place across Stewards Academy. This half term, we wanted to take a moment to remind parents and carers of our main Teaching and Learning priorities for the year and explain how our work on the curriculum and staff development supports students in their lessons every day.

## Teaching and Learning Focus

This year, one of our key priorities is the quality of the curriculum across all subjects and year groups. This means making sure that learning builds over time, is carefully planned and helps every student make strong progress from Year 7 through to Year 11.

Over the course of this academic year, we are:

- Reviewing the subject content across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 in all subjects.
- Continuing to refine the Key Stage 4 options process so it meets students' needs.
- Making sure curriculum improvements are linked to what happens in the classroom.

All this work is about ensuring lessons are purposeful, well structured, and support students to learn confidently and successfully.

## What This Looks Like in Practice

We have already made some positive changes. The Key Stage 4 options process has been reviewed and is now more flexible for students, and we are currently reviewing curriculum time as part of our planning for September 2026.

Subject leaders are also reviewing Key Stage 4 courses to ensure students are studying the most appropriate qualifications. This has already led to improvements such as a change of exam board in English from September 2025 and a revised Hair and Beauty course with a stronger focus on practical skills and real-world learning.

## Supporting High Quality Teaching

Alongside this curriculum work, staff continue to take part in high quality professional development. This includes National Professional Qualifications for teachers and specialist training for our co-educators. This ensures staff feel confident and well supported to deliver curriculum changes in the classroom, leading to engaging lessons and strong progress for students.

## Looking Ahead in 2026

As we reflect on the successes of this term, we are also looking ahead to how we continue to build on the strong foundations already in place with a continued focus on high expectations, purposeful lessons, and supporting all students to achieve their best.

Thank you once again for your continued support. If you have any questions or would like to find out more about teaching and learning at Stewards Academy, please do not hesitate to contact the Teaching and Learning Team.

Mrs. McGee - [HMCGEE@stewardsacademy.org](mailto:HMCGEE@stewardsacademy.org)

Ms. James - [KJAMES@stewardsacademy.org](mailto:KJAMES@stewardsacademy.org)

Mrs. Miah - [RMIAH@stewardsacademy.org](mailto:RMIAH@stewardsacademy.org)



# HOUSE



# ATTENDANCE

[www.stewardsacademy.org](http://www.stewardsacademy.org)



- 7JLS - 93.5%
- 7KCS - 94.2%
- 8ACN - 93.4%
- 8TLG - 89.4%
- 9RNN - 88.3%
- 9SHT - 93.8%
- 10CNN - 88.6%
- 10ETS - 91.9%
- 11CHK - 89.9%
- 11THN - 84.2%



- 7LTO - 89.7%
- 7PDA - 94.2%
- 8BPR - 90.2%
- 9UMK - 87.6%
- 9VSH - 89.9%
- 10AMN - 84.7%
- 10KJO - 91.8%
- 11KDG - 87.0%
- 11KSU - 85.9%

- 7KHV - 94.0%
- 7SFS - 93.2%
- 8NAD - 86.8%
- 8ROY - 92.9%
- 9KBL - 92.6%
- 9BDI - 90.1%
- 10JMN - 80.2%
- 10TMY - 92.9%
- 11ACS - 90.1%
- 11EWY - 92.2%

- 7PHN - 94.7%
- 7SMI - 90.6%
- 8MRW - 91.1%
- 8EGN - 90.8%
- 9RMH - 92.3%
- 10DCR - 88.8%
- 10ITH - 94.3%
- 11EOE - 92.0%
- 11SSE - 90.2%



# Brilliant Club Graduation

The Brilliant club, run by The Scholars Program, is an inspiring initiative designed to support pupils in accessing the most competitive universities. The programme connects students with PhD tutors who deliver university-style tutorials, helping them to develop the academic skills, subject knowledge, and confidence needed for higher education. Through this experience, students gain insight into what studying at a top university is really like, while also learning how to think critically, construct arguments, and write independently at an advanced level.

As part of the programme, each student completed a challenging 2,000 word final assignment focused on child rights. This extended essay required them to engage with complex ideas, analyse different perspectives, and present a well structured academic argument supported by evidence. Writing at this level is a significant achievement, particularly as it mirrors the kind of work expected at university. The commitment, resilience, and intellectual curiosity shown throughout the process were truly impressive.

The programme concluded with a special graduation event held at Robinson College, University of Cambridge. This celebratory occasion recognised the students' hard work and dedication, giving them the opportunity to experience a Cambridge college environment first-hand. All 14 students performed extremely well and successfully completed the programme. They should be incredibly proud of their achievements, as completing such demanding academic work demonstrates not only their ability, but also their determination and potential for future success.

Mrs McGee



# Barcelona Residential: Sun, Sights and So Much Fruit

Our Barcelona adventure began bright and very early, as we set off from Stewards at 3am. Despite the sleepy start, spirits were high and we managed to arrive in Barcelona by late morning. After settling into the hostel and dropping off bags, we wasted no time getting stuck into our first day of sightseeing. Highlights included a visit to the (very impressive) football stadium and some well-earned time at the beach, where students enjoyed their first taste of Spanish sunshine.

Day two was a busy one! Fuelled by a hearty breakfast, we were out of the hostel by 8am and ready for a full day of exploring. We started at Park Güell, where students were amazed by Antoni Gaudí's colourful creations — and even got to feed parakeets straight from our hands. From there, we headed to the Bunkers for a breathtaking panoramic view of Barcelona before enjoying a full tour of the iconic Sagrada Família. The evening took us to La Boqueria market, where students enthusiastically devoured mountains of fresh fruit. Who knew fruit would be such a hit?

The following day brought a slightly later start before heading to the Montjuïc area. We took the cable cars up to the castle, soaking in views of Port Vell, before visiting the Olympic Stadium, Poble Espanyol and the Art Museum. Our final day included (you guessed it) another visit to La Boqueria for more fruit, followed by an incredible cathedral, the Picasso Museum and a stroll to the Arc de Triomf — where students ended the trip chasing giant bubbles in the street before heading back to the airport.

A jam-packed, unforgettable trip full of culture, laughter, stunning views... and an unexpected love of fruit!

Miss Thomas



*gracias*



# Jack Petchey Awards



## December 2025 - Chinonye Okeke

Chinonye is a hardworking and conscientious student. She is fully engaged in her studies and often performs above and beyond. Her quiet determination to do well is evident in all she does. Her written work has shown clear improvement over the past few months culminating in her excellent set of mock results in November. Chinonye's peers value her honesty, trustworthiness and friendship and really appreciate all that she does. An excellent achievement, well done.



## January 2026 - Cian Sensoy

Cian is a respectful and resilient student who is committed to his studies. He is passionate about performing arts and has gone from strength to strength in his performances over the last four years. He is keen to develop his skills and seeks feedback regularly from staff and peers. Cian is a dedicated Year 7 Peer Mentor and supports students weekly. He contributes superbly to pupil voice meetings and is a true advocate of others. Well done, Cian.



## February 2026 - Gracia Manzambi

Gracia was elected as Head Girl in May 2025 and she is the picture of what a top student should look like. Gracia supports at a number of school events and is an excellent public speaker; speaking with passion and conviction about education and opportunity. She is a great spokesperson and advocate for her peers and she goes out of her way to help and support younger students. Congratulations on this achievement.

# Young Mathematicians Shine at Stewards' First Primary School Challenge

On Wednesday 7th January 2026, a group of PCLC's most enthusiastic young mathematicians took part in a special Primary Maths Challenge Day, designed for high-ability pupils from across the trust schools. Hosted at Stewards Academy, the event brought together children from four schools to stretch their problem-solving skills, collaborate in teams, and most importantly have fun with maths!

Throughout the day, pupils tackled a series of challenging activities including logic puzzles, investigative tasks and real-world maths problems that encouraged creative thinking and teamwork. The atmosphere was buzzing with excitement and determination as pupils discovered new strategies and learned to think outside the box. The school representatives from Pear Tree Mead, Potter Street, Purford Green and The Downs impressed everyone with their perseverance and enthusiasm. They demonstrated excellent collaboration, clear communication and a real love of learning.

Mrs Gannon who ran the event the said, "It was wonderful to see the children so engaged and excited about tackling tough problems. They showed fantastic teamwork and resilience and they should be very proud of themselves."

The event came to an exciting close as Pear Tree Mead narrowly claimed victory by just four points, with their pupils erupting in cheers and excitement at their well-deserved win.

Later in the year, the schools will come together once again for a second challenge day, where they will compete with enthusiasm and determination for the prestigious maths trophy.

Mrs Gannon and Mrs Woolley



# Disneyland Paris Trip With The Technology Department

As part of the yearly residential Technology trip, we once again took the students to Disneyland Paris. The students showed great enthusiasm and maturity along the trip and got to experience a ferry for the first time, managing money, staying without parents and of course exploring the theme park independently.

The educational part of the trip saw the students take part in the seminar about the brand-new Frozen attractions and set building that went into it. They have been tasked to create a fashion design for the characters, a menu for the new frozen themed restaurant or a rollercoaster for the park related to the theme which they will complete in school.

They were a pleasure to have and so many pupils expressed their gratitude for this wonderful opportunity. A lot of fun, food and shopping took place by both staff and students! We are looking forward to next year's residential trip for the future year 10s which will be a new country and new experience so keep your eyes peeled at the end of this year!

Thank you to the parents for their support and allowing the pupils to experience this.

Miss Stylianou



# History Students Watch 'Hitler on Trial'

On 30th January, the Stewards History Department took a group of Year 11 historians to attend the highly acclaimed School History Scene's 'Hitler on Trial' at the Abbey Theatre, St Albans.

The half-day session was designed to help students improve upon their examination performance in an imaginative and creative way. It began with an exam-skills workshop aimed at boosting students' grades in which examiners went over actual GCSE candidate answers with pupils. Students listened as the presentation explained the criteria for stronger answers and offered tips for the upcoming exam.

The second part of the session involved a stage production. Students were treated to a courtroom drama which asked students to imagine that Adolf Hitler was captured by British Special Forces in 1942 and put on trial in a British court for charges drawn up by the International Military Tribunal including 'crimes against peace'.

Whilst the Prosecuting Counsel attempted to prove that Hitler's main aim from the beginning was to prepare Germany for a war of aggression and conquest, the Counsel for the Defence tried to justify Hitler's actions by calling witnesses who expressed that rearmament was only one of Hitler's aims.

The play was well produced and clever in the way that it put Hitler on Trial for 'crimes against peace'. It meant that unlike other charges that could have been presented, such as 'crimes against humanity', Hitler would not have obviously been found guilty. Furthermore, the witnesses used were well selected as they showed a wide range of people from different classes, professions and backgrounds.

Students were engaged throughout the trial as the audience were playing the role of the jury and therefore needed to pay attention to developments so that they could come to a fair judgement. There was an excellent ending that made some people jump as Hitler was shot and killed by an angry assailant.

Student behaviour was exemplary throughout the trip. Well done, Y11 historians!

# UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge

On Wednesday 28th January, over 70 Year 9 and Year 10 pupils took part in the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge.

The challenge involved completing 25 difficult maths questions on many different topics intended to showcase their problem-solving skills. Pupils were competing against students at a high level in Year 9, 10 and 11 across the country.

This is an annual challenge which Stewards has participated in for many years, and once again the pupils have done us incredibly proud. This challenge is extremely difficult as students must apply excellent mathematical thinking in order to find the solutions.

Our pupils showed great resilience throughout the challenge which is reflected in the fantastic results. Special mentions to:

## Year 9

### Bronze award

Peter Stygar

### Silver award

Tyler Gifford, Albert Mirtran and Lucas Song

### Gold award

Denis Dunajevs (Best in School)



## Year 10

### Bronze award

Oliver Fearn, Eloise Gregory, Georgie Hale,  
Oskaras Krencius, Stacey Pouna and Emily Webber

### Silver award

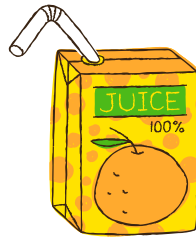
Samuel Nottingham (Best in Year)



A special mention goes to Denis Dunajevs who achieved the 'Best in School' award by scoring 62 points. This high score means Denis has been entered into a more complex challenge called the Grey Kangaroo. This is a first for Stewards and we are all extremely proud of Denis to represent the school in this upcoming challenge.

Next up will be the junior challenge for Years 7 & 8 in the summer term, and of course the Grey Kangaroo. We will keep you updated on how they get on and hopefully more award news to follow.

# Breakfast Club



**8:15pm - 8:45am Everyday!**

**FREE bagels, juice and cereal as well as the option to purchase food ready for break-time to avoid queuing during your break.**

**Everyone welcome, it is a great atmosphere - we hope to see you there!**



**ACL**

**FREE!**

Point of view  
**English** [ing  
language spok

# KS4 Support for GCSE English Exams Online Live Course

This course is run by a GCSE English Tutor. It aims to equip parents with the knowledge to support their child through the GCSE papers.

The course will explore both the Language and Literature paper and identify Literacy techniques needed for the exams.

**Date:** 18/03/26 to 25/03/26

**Time:** 09:30 - 11:30

Scan the QR code, or  
Visit our website [acessex.com](https://acessex.com)  
and type 'KS4 ENGLISH' in the 'Find a  
course...' box



**acessex.com**

**0345 603 7635**



Essex County Council

# Essex Fire Museum

## Open Day

2026



17th and 22nd Of February

10:30AM To 4:00PM

Fire Station, Hogg Lane, Grays  
RM17 5QS



**Book Now**   
**Free Entry**



Museum@essex-fire.gov.uk



**Grangewaters**

# February Half Term at Grangewaters



Discover your next adventure

	MONDAY 16 FEBRUARY	TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY	WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY	THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY	FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY
9.30AM TO 11AM	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Archery Climb Longboat Sailing	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Wiggly Bugs Bushcraft Climb
11.15AM TO 12.45PM	Archery Climb Canoe Raft	Archery High Ropes Canoe Raft	Archery Climb Wiggly Bugs	Archery Climb Longboat Sailing	Archery Bushcraft High Ropes
1.30PM TO 3PM	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Archery Climb Bushcraft	Archery Abseil Bushcraft	Archery Canoe Raft Climb

All priced at £12  
per person, per activity



To book go online at  
**grangewaters.co.uk**

essex  
/outdoors



# AMAZING ADVENTURES ON YOUR DOORSTEP

Exhilarating school holiday  
activity days for kids age 8+

Water sports, high ropes, zip wire, archery,  
bushcraft and more at four centres.

**DANBURY • HARLOW • MERSEA**

HALF PRICE  
FOR FEBRUARY  
**£20**  
PER DAY

## Where can I store my bike at school?

We have a large bike shed by the back entrance to the school where we lock bikes and scooters behind gates until the end of the day. Please use this and do not keep your bikes anywhere else. If you arrive late, bring them to the front of the school and they can be put in the workshop if necessary.



## Lost and Found

Reminder to please put your children's names in their uniforms and bags so that we can reunite them if lost. Please put full names and not just initials. Thank you.



## Recording an Absence via Arbor

To record an absence, click on the **Quick Actions** button and then click **Attendance**. From here, click the green **Log Absence** button in the top-right of the page. Here you can input the start and end time for the absence. By default, the absence start and end times reflect the student's full day, but these can be adjusted as needed. Once you have filled in this data, click **Log Absence**. This will then be visible to school staff. School staff can then accept or reject the absence. Approved absences appear in the **Attendance** tab of the Parent Portal or Arbor App.

**LEARNING  
EVERYDAY**



## Suggested Resources

info@[stridefoundation.com](mailto:stridefoundation.com)

[www.stridefoundation.com](http://www.stridefoundation.com)

### Action on Addiction

Working with people affected by drug and alcohol problems, this charity works in the areas of research, prevention and treatment as well as providing education and family support services.

[www.actiononaddiction.org.uk](http://www.actiononaddiction.org.uk)

### Al Anon

Providing support to teenagers, families and anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking, regardless of whether that person is still drinking or not.

[www.al-anonuk.org.uk](http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk)

### Alcoholics Anonymous

Groups that take place throughout the country, enabling people struggling with alcohol dependency and misuse to maintain sobriety through peer support.

[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

### Drugfam

A charity offering professional support to families, friends and carers of young people who have developed problems with drugs.

[www.drugfam.co.uk](http://www.drugfam.co.uk)

### Narcotics Anonymous

Membership is open to anyone with a drug problem seeking help, regardless of what drug or combination of drugs have been used, and irrespective of age, sex, religion, race, creed or class. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using drugs.

[www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

### Nacoa – The National Association for Children of Alcoholics

A nationwide charity which provides information, advice and support for anyone who is affected by their parent's drinking.

[www.nacoa.org.uk](http://www.nacoa.org.uk)

### Phoenix Futures

Phoenix provides both community and residential treatment for people experiencing drug and alcohol problems. They are also a Housing Association providing recovery-friendly housing.

[www.phoenix-futures.org.uk](http://www.phoenix-futures.org.uk)

### UK Smart Recovery

Teaching rational, easy to learn and self-empowering skills to help participants abstain from any addictive behaviour and to develop a lifestyle that supports sustained recovery.

[www.smartrecovery.org.uk](http://www.smartrecovery.org.uk)

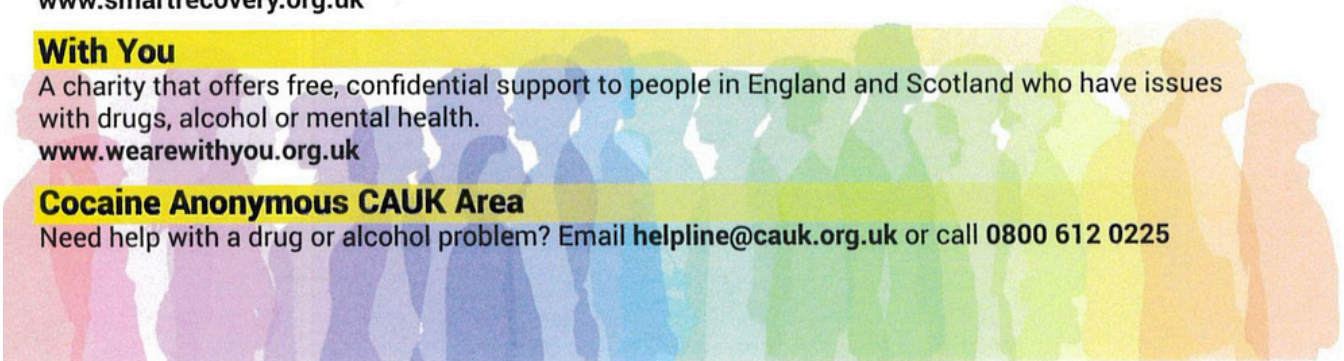
### With You

A charity that offers free, confidential support to people in England and Scotland who have issues with drugs, alcohol or mental health.

[www.wearewithyou.org.uk](http://www.wearewithyou.org.uk)

### Cocaine Anonymous CAUK Area

Need help with a drug or alcohol problem? Email [helpline@cauk.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cauk.org.uk) or call 0800 612 0225



# Safeguarding

This half term we have been focusing on the growing pandemic of vaping affecting young people, educating about the dangers and highly addictive properties of nicotine.

All year groups were delivered an assembly entitled 'The Truth About Vaping: What they don't tell you', and we were lucky enough to have Jo Langley from Stride Foundation come in to speak specifically to our Year 10 and 11 students about addiction and how it can impact the whole family. Jo has lived experience of addiction and recovery, and her presentation was very powerful.

If anyone would like support with addiction within the family, help is available from a variety of sources. Please see the attached leaflet.

In March, we will see the return of the knife arch. We are currently arranging a suitable date with Essex Police which will be communicated to you all in due course. The knife arch, aside from the robust safety benefits, opens an important dialogue between Police, staff and students about working together to protect our community from knife crime.

This work is further embedded by local Police Officers who come into school every half term and are visible at lunchtimes, building relationships with our young people, answering their questions and addressing their concerns.

Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead



Mrs Atkinson  
(Safeguarding V Office)

[safeguarding@stewardsacademy.org](mailto:safeguarding@stewardsacademy.org)

If you have any worries about your safety or wellbeing, speak to a member of the Safeguarding team, or any adult in the School

Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead



Miss Blake  
(Safeguarding V Office)

Safeguarding Officers: AHoH Office



Ms Morley



Mrs Bolt



Mrs Ali



Mrs Coulson



Mrs Coates



Mr Hughes  
(AHT/Maths Office)

For Safeguarding updates and information please visit:

