



Sidmouth College Newsletter



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Autumn Term: Edition 2 Friday 19th December 2025

As we reach the end of a busy and rewarding autumn term, I would like to thank our students, staff, families and wider community for the continued support and warmth that make Sidmouth College such a special place. This term has been full of energy, generosity and achievement, and it has been a privilege to see so many moments that reflect the values and spirit of our school.

There have been many highlights over the past few weeks. From our Christmas Carol Service and Sixth Form Christmas Craft Fair to student involvement in the Sidmouth Christmas Lights switch-on, it has been wonderful to see our students contributing so positively to the life of the local community. Alongside this, our fundraising for charities including CRY, Save the Children and Children in Need demonstrates the compassion and social responsibility that sit at the heart of Sidmouth College.

Students have continued to thrive across a wide range of academic, cultural and sporting opportunities. Successes in sport, the arts, national competitions, enrichment activities and careers events this term showcase the breadth of opportunity available and the commitment of both students and staff. We have also taken time to reflect together through Remembrance events and powerful educational experiences that reinforce the importance of empathy and understanding.

I am incredibly proud of our Year 11 and Year 13 students, who have recently completed their mock examinations with maturity and determination. Their current predictions are hugely encouraging as we look ahead to the summer exam season and reflect the hard work of students and the dedication of staff.

Listening to students and strengthening communication with families remain key priorities for us as we move forward. This term, we have carried out student voice work with approximately 10% of the school, and in January we will be launching our full student survey so that every young person has the opportunity to share their views. From this feedback, we will begin making changes aimed at further improving the daily experience of school for our students, with an initial focus on lunchtimes and transitions.

In addition, on the first day back next half term, parents and carers will receive an email outlining the next steps in our communication approach and sharing our new Communication Commitment. This will set out how and when we will communicate, ensuring clarity, consistency and responsiveness. We are also planning our next Parent Forums, with the first focusing on Year 9 Guided Choices and the curriculum, followed by a forum centred on improving reporting.

As we head into the Christmas break, I would like to thank our staff for their professionalism and care, our students for their hard work, and our families for their continued support. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable holiday and look forward to welcoming everyone back in the New Year.

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Christmas Carol Service

On Thursday 18th December the Sidmouth College Christmas Carol Service took place at St Peter's Church in Sidford. The evening was a huge success, beginning with Mince Pies and hot Mulled wine for guests to enjoy as they arrived followed by a variety of festive entertainment including the student choir, the College band, instrumental solos, a sketch and student and staff readers.

Many thanks to all who attended and supported this event and a huge well done to the all staff, students and the tech team for creating such a fabulous event.

Well done to Mr Morgan who helped make the evening one to remember. Our retiring collection raised £150 in total, with half being donated to the Music Department, and the other half being donated to the Force Cancer Charity. Thank you to all who gave generously.



Christmas Craft Fair

On Saturday 13th December the Sidmouth College Sixth Form held a very successful Christmas Craft Fair at the College.

We were thrilled to have over 20 stall holders selling a huge range of items; there was a raffle with lots of great prizes and lots of games hosted by the Sixth Form.

A huge thank you to everyone that came along. All money raised from the hire of tables will be donated to a charity very close to the hearts of both staff and students here at the College. Sue Hurley retired in July 2025 after 23 incredible years as Head of Sixth Form and Business Studies. Sue was diagnosed with cancer in February 2025 and the charity afforded her incredible support and we are so happy to support this wonderful cause.

Through the event we raised over £240! Thank you to everyone who ran a stall, helped on the day and attended.



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Christmas Lights Switch On

On Saturday 22nd November, members of the Student Council were invited to take part in the official switch-on of the Sidmouth Christmas lights.

With more than 150 students on the council, it was no easy task choosing just three representatives to press the plunger. In the end, Jo, Jack and Holly were selected as the lucky trio. The rest of the council proudly attended the event, cheering them on as Sidmouth lit up for the festive season. Watch the full video of the countdown on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sidmouthcollege.



Interhouse Christmas Foodbank Appeal

In December, Mr Jackson and the Student Interhouse Leaders organised a whole-school Christmas Foodbank Appeal. The Interhouse Leaders worked closely with the local foodbank to compile a list of key items needed by families during the Christmas season. This included ingredients for a traditional Christmas Day lunch, such as stuffing, gravy, Christmas pudding and custard, as well as essential toiletries like shampoo and shower gel.

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our school community, with students and families donating over 1,050 items. On Friday 5th December, Mr Jackson delivered the collected donations to the Sid Valley Foodbank, who were delighted with the incredible support shown.

Thank you to every family who contributed. Your generosity will make a significant difference to local families this Christmas.



Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday 12th December it was the Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day. Students and staff were invited to wear a Christmas jumper for a donation to the charity.

We saw some fantastic festive knits and it got everyone feeling jolly in the penultimate week of term.

In total we raised £600 for Save the Children, a fantastic effort. Well done to all who wore a Christmas jumper and thank you to families who donated.



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Year 7 Disco

Year 7 students were off timetable for a session on Wednesday 17th December to enjoy a special end-of-year treat.

They had a Christmas disco in the Hall, where they danced, sang, and celebrated the end of their first term at Sidmouth College. We saw some impressive dance moves on display, and not just from the students! Heads of House joined in the festivities for some disco classics like YMCA!



GCSE Celebration Evening

On Thursday 4th December, we welcomed back past and present students who completed their GCSE exams last year. The event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the many and varied successes our students achieved in their studies. It was lovely to see how they continue to thrive and excel in their chosen areas.

Individual students received subject prizes recognising achievement and progress across the curriculum. House prizes were awarded by Heads of House, along with community awards for outstanding contributions.

We were delighted to welcome Jim Metcalf and Richard Allen on behalf of the Lions Club, whose continued support and sponsorship of our annual Lions Club Achievement and Endeavour Award is greatly appreciated.

We were also pleased to welcome Louise Cole and Coco Hodgkinson from the Sidmouth School of Art to present the Outstanding Achievement in the Arts Award; Angela Davies, who presented the Award for Drama; Marion Hayman, who presented the Jonathon Hayman Award for Contribution to Student Leadership; and Duncan Woods from Browns Bakery, who presented the Food Technology Prize. Our sincere thanks go to all representatives who attended and supported the event.

It was a pleasure to celebrate such a fabulous year group, with their families joining us for the occasion. Congratulations to all of our award winners, we wish you every success in the future.





Year 7 Girls Rugby Afternoon

A huge thank you to Nikki from Sidmouth Rugby Club for giving up her time to come in and work with our students this half term. The girls had two fantastic afternoons learning the basics of tackling and developing their touch rugby skills, with loads of energy, teamwork, and smiles all round.

Don't forget! Girls Rugby Club runs every Wednesday after school, and everyone is welcome. Come along, learn new skills, and get involved!



Cross Country

The East Devon Cross Country competition saw a fantastic display of determination and resilience from our athletes across all age groups. Racing against strong opposition from East Devon schools, every runner represented the school with pride and commitment.

The Year 7 Girls produced one of the standout performances of the day, securing an impressive 3rd place with an excellent team score of 191. Their consistency and focus made for a brilliant collective result. The Year 7 Boys also battled hard on a competitive course, finishing 5th. In the older age groups, the Junior Boys finished strongly in 5th, while the Intermediate Boys delivered a superb effort to place 4th.

There was also remarkable individual success, with Bronwyn, Bryn, Will, Lizzie, Mary-Bess, Isla, Nathaniel, Gracie and Nola all finishing in the top 16 of their races. Their outstanding achievements mean they have qualified to represent the East Devon team in the upcoming East Devon v Exeter Cross Country Match next week, a terrific honour and testament to their hard work.

A huge well done to all runners who took part. The whole team should feel incredibly proud of their performances and the way they represented the school. Bring on next week's fixture!



Equestrian

Over the summer, Year 9 Student Isla achieved remarkable success in equestrian competitions, earning 3rd and 4th places in Dressage at the Pony Club National Championships, an impressive showing out of more than 280 riders. Her outstanding performance earned her a place on the UK Pony Club Team for an international competition featuring riders from around the world, including the USA, Australia, Ireland and New Zealand. As the youngest team member, Isla's talent stood out once again, helping the UK team secure 1st place overall, while she individually placed 2nd among all competitors.

Well done Isla on your amazing accomplishments!





U15s Football

This half term the U15s girls took part in a competitive 7-a-side tournament, finishing with a record of two wins, two losses and one draw. The girls showed great effort and skill throughout, competing well in every match.

There were goals for Chloe and Isobel, rewarding some positive attacking play and teamwork. Across the tournament, the squad demonstrated strong commitment, improving with each game and supporting one another on and off the pitch.

It was a promising showing from a talented group of girls, and we look forward to seeing them continue their development when the football season resumes after Christmas. Well done to Player of the Match Eva L!



Indoor Cricket

In December the U13s Indoor Cricket team put in a strong performance, winning 2 out of 3 group games this half term, narrowly missing out on the semi-finals by just three runs.

Standout bowling performances from Sam and Isaac, who both bowled with great control and energy, putting consistent pressure on the opposition. The team showed excellent commitment in the field, with sharp catching and quick movement throughout. With the bat, a solid partnership between Harry and Alfie helped build momentum and showed real composure under pressure.

Overall, it was a very positive display from a talented U13 group, with plenty to be proud of and lots of promise for the future.



Careers - Mock Interviews

From Monday 10th to Wednesday 12th November all students in Year 11 had the opportunity to take part in a Mock Interview as part of their careers enrichment programme.

Across the three days we welcomed local employers and members of the community Ashley Leeds, Edward Blackmore, Nick Keast, Gemma Vincent, Anne Bolt, Emily Pitts, Steve Bolt, Amy Lavers, Lindsey Dell, Sasha Hargrave, Denese Molyneux, Al Cameron, Jayesh Elson and Alex McLachlan.

The employers feedback was that the students were really positive and did exceptionally well.

Students said that they all felt much more confident after their interviews, which will help them to prepare for post-16 studies and work beyond education.





Remembrance

On Tuesday 11th November, the Student Council took part in an Act of Remembrance led by Head of Music Mr Morgan. Accompanying him was Josiah who played 'The Last Post' and 'Reveille'. The whole school also took part in a two minute silence at 11am.



Student Success

During the last week of October students Grace and Lucy packed up their camping kit and headed to Watcombe for a selection weekend for the World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027.

The World Scout Jamboree is one of the most significant events in the global Scouting movement, bringing together thousands of young people from around the world to celebrate unity, adventure, and cultural exchange. Held approximately every four years, the Jamboree is a gathering unlike any other, offering Scouts the opportunity to experience a world of diversity while participating in activities that foster personal growth, leadership, and global citizenship.

The 26th World Scout Jamboree will take place in Gdańsk, Poland, from July 30 to August 8, 2027, and will include participants aged 14 to 17 from all 176 member organisations of the world organisation of the scout movement.

Lucy and Grace were in separate camps for the weekend and were assessed on teamwork and leadership skills as well as their ability to support others and to build relationships with people they had never met before. They also had to pitch their tent in the pitch dark and take part in all of the activities over the weekend after walking 13 miles on Friday!

We heard this term that they have both been selected to represent Devon Scouts as part of the UK contingent. Their Unit will be made up of 36 young people from all over Devon.

They will be getting to know their unit over the next few months to build a cohesive, tight knit team and will then be participating in some national training events to get to know the UK team.

A huge congratulations to both girls, what an amazing achievement.



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Children in Need

On Friday 14th November, the whole school took part in a non-uniform day to raise money for Children in Need. Our Student Heads of House visited tutor groups throughout the morning to collect donations.

The Sixth Form also ran their own fundraiser, organising a Mario Kart competition for students and staff, with prizes for the top three fastest times. In total, we raised over £600 for Children in Need, a fantastic achievement. Thank you to everyone who donated!



Ten Tors

Our students enjoyed a rewarding day on Dartmoor in November as part of their Ten Tors 2026 training. Recent heavy rainfall meant they faced unusually high river levels and challenging ground conditions, putting their navigation and teamwork skills to the test. They rose to the occasion brilliantly.

A huge well done to all the students for their determination and resilience, and an equally big thank you to the dedicated staff and volunteers whose support and expertise make opportunities like this possible.

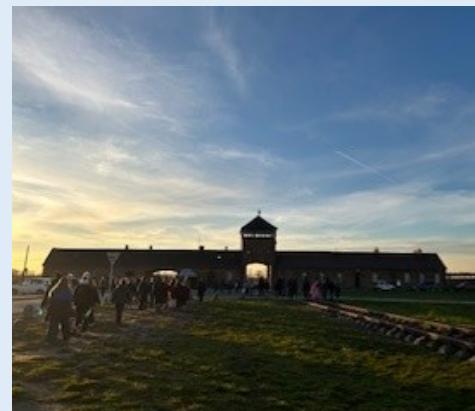
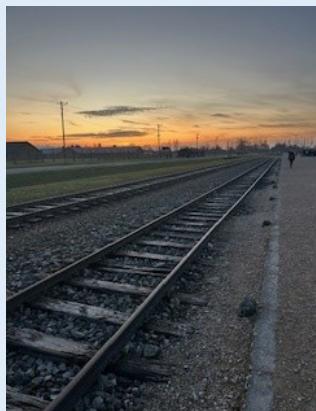


Auschwitz Memorial Day (report by Mrs Whitbread)

On Wednesday 12th November Sidmouth College joined schools from around the South West to take part in the opportunity provided by the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Two sixth formers, Blue and Emily, along with Mrs Whitbread, travelled to Auschwitz to take part in the 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project. After an early start at 4am they flew from Exeter airport to Krakow. During the day there was a visit to the Jewish Cemetery in Oświęcim, which was completely destroyed by the Nazis and carefully rebuilt. A short service was held by accompanying Rabbis to say the names of those buried there and commemorate their lives. Next, the museum on the site of the Auschwitz 1 death camp was a harrowing but enlightening experience, fully explaining the systematic capture, incarceration and murder of over 6 million Jews and around 5 million others.

The day ended with a visit to Auschwitz 2 Birkenau, at the end of the infamous train tracks, standing in the darkness with candles, a Rabbi sang a prayer of peace, filling that evil place with a powerful rebellion and a hope that this fascism will never happen again.





Media Visit

On Wednesday 3rd December, Jo Loosemore from BBC Radio visited Sidmouth College to work with Year 10 and Year 12 Media students, who have been learning about the radio industry.



Students had the opportunity to ask Jo questions about her career and gain insight into what it's like to work in radio. They also listened to Jo's expert tips on creating engaging audio content. Throughout the day, Jo led interactive workshops on being a radio presenter and a guest speaker.

Students have now been offered an exciting opportunity to create their own content to be aired on BBC Radio — stay tuned to hear more!

Christmas Decorations

This year we were lucky to have a Christmas tree donated to the College to add some festive cheer to the campus.

Thank you to the Coman family who donated the 12 foot Christmas tree from the grounds at SAND in Sidbury which stands beautifully in the College Hall for students to enjoy.

Thank you also to Sidmouth Tesco who donated decorations to the College this year which have added some colour to the College Canteen.



Royal Institute of British Architects Trip

On Friday 21st November Mrs Young accompanied a group of students to take part in the prestigious Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Exeter Cityscape Competition. Cityscape is a national design challenge aimed at students in Years 9–12 who have a passion for architecture, art, design, or engineering.

Throughout the day, students worked collaboratively in teams, supported by a mentor from the architectural profession. Their task was to develop a creative and practical proposal to enhance a public space in Exeter city centre, an authentic experience mirroring the real-world process of responding to an architectural brief.

Taking part in Cityscape offers students a wealth of benefits. It provides valuable experience that can strengthen CVs and university applications, while also giving students a realistic insight into what it is like to work with an architectural brief, helping them determine whether a career in architecture or design is right for them. In addition, the event offers the exciting opportunity to win prizes on the day and to learn directly from experienced design professionals.

The day proved to be an inspiring and enriching opportunity, giving students a taste of the innovative thinking and teamwork at the heart of modern architecture.





Maths Challenge

Well done to all our students who took part in the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT) Senior Maths Challenge last half term. This national competition, encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and creative problem-solving among students across the country.



A huge well done to everyone who participated and challenged themselves. Special congratulations go to those who achieved Bronze and Silver awards, a fantastic recognition of their hard work and mathematical talent!

Taking part in the UKMT Challenge is a great opportunity to stretch beyond the classroom and develop problem-solving skills that are valuable in many areas of study and life. We are very proud of all who represented our school and look forward to seeing even more students take part next year!

Year 9 Bake Off

On Friday 5th December Mrs Reeve hosted a Year 9 Christmas bake off. Students were challenged to bake and decorate a chocolate yule log and the results were amazing! All entrants received a certificate, a chocolate treat and house points. Well done to all involved!

The results were:

Best Overall Yule Log - Dulcie B

Most Creative Design - Maisie M

Best Christmas Spirit - Edie P

Special mention to Holly S for Best Tasting



Food Technology

In November Mrs Reeve's Year 8 Food and Nutrition class were baking their own versions of a chicken pasta bake. In preparation, they learned how to make fresh pasta from scratch to use in their recipes.

They did an amazing job and have all learnt a new culinary skill!



Sociology and Media Masterclass

On Friday 14th November, Mrs Todd's Sociology and Media students took part in a BBC Verify: Filter the Fakes masterclass led by BBC Verify senior journalist Paul Brown.

The session aimed to equip students with the skills to spot fake news in both traditional media and online spaces, while also strengthening their overall news literacy and critical-thinking abilities.

It was a fantastic and eye-opening experience that encouraged students to think deeply about misinformation and the importance of verifying what they see and share.

**BBC ACADEMY LIVE
Presents
BBC VERIFY ON TOUR**

Hosted by
Emma Miller
Radio Presenter
BBC North East

Hello Sunderland!

Streamed live from the University of Sunderland

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TIME **SESSION DETAILS**

09:45 - 10:25 **MASTERCLASS WITH BBC VERIFY: 'Filter the fakes'**
In a time when trusted news and navigating an overwhelming amount of information online can be a challenge, BBC Verify is here to help. This masterclass will enhance your news literacy and critical thinking skills. The aim is to encourage you to start thinking about what you read, watch and hear in the media, and to consider the source of the news and whether to believe it or not. Led by BBC Verify's senior journalist, Paul Brown.

13:00 - 14:30 **Q&A CAREER INSIGHTS: How to Break into the Media**
Join us for an inspiring discussion with media and digital influencers, hear from and put your questions to an inspiring panel of media professionals, as they share their career insights and advice. The panel includes Harry Roy, freelance sports radio journalist and presenter of BBC Total Sport Squash Gold show; Callum Rose, freelance journalist and radio producer and presenter of BBC Breakfast, BBC Breakfast News, BBC Breakfast and Head of Speech at Spoke.

13:50 - 14:30 **MASTERCLASS: Being the screen of Sunderland TV (17/18)**
Made in Sunderland, 17/18 was an offshoot at the University of Sunderland, the three-part Netflix documentary series chronicles Sunderland AFC's journey to the 2017 FA Cup Final. In this masterclass, the team will be talking about their win against Wycombe Wanderers. Director, Ben Read and Series Producer, David Gould will be talking about storytelling, the importance of research and the importance of trust when making a documentary.

14:30 - 14:45 **REFLECTIONS & KEY TAKEAWAYS**



Careers

Following the Employer Conference in Exeter this term, we were delighted to welcome John Yarham, CEO of the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), and Suzy Wright, South West Area Manager, to Sidmouth College on Thursday 20th November. During their visit, they met with students to hear first-hand about their experiences of careers education and work experience at the College.

Sidmouth College is currently piloting the Equalex programme in partnership with the CEC, aimed at further enhancing future opportunities and outcomes for our students.



Rotary Young Chef Competition

In December a group of Year 10 students took part in the first heat of the Rotary Club Young Chef Competition. Entrants had to plan and prepare a two-course meal to be judged by members of the Rotary Club and two local chefs.

There was an impressive variety of skills on display, with dishes ranging from venison and baked salmon to stir-fried prawns and cheesy chicken pasta. All competitors worked exceptionally hard and clearly enjoyed the experience. Presentation was meticulous, and students maintained clean, well-organised workstations while supporting one another throughout the competition.

Congratulations to 1st place Jess, 2nd place Christeen and 3rd place Isabel. Jess made venison loin with a red wine sauce, dauphinoise potatoes and greens beans and individual millionaires shortbread dessert. Jess will now go on to cook in the next round. The overall winner of this national competition will receive a prize of a two-day trip to Europe, which includes cookery classes to learn culinary skills.



Admissions Policy for 2027/2028 Consultation

Along with all other schools and academies in Devon, we are consulting on our admission policy for 2027-28. The Local Authority is also consulting on its arrangements – the admissions schemes through which you can apply.

You are invited to look at the proposed new policies which are based on policies for this year and next year and to have your say on them.

Our proposed policy is on our admission page and you can see all policies at <http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy>

Further information is here: www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements.

The consultation runs between 10th November to 16th January.

Policies will be determined by the end of February and published in the same places by 15 March 2026 next year. You can comment at schoolsadmissionpolicy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk or by emailing the school.

No changes are being proposed.



Sidmouth College has Devon Youth Councillors

In a hugely exciting development two of our most committed Student Council members have been successfully elected to Devon Youth Parliament.

From January Florence G and Molly P will be attending monthly Parliament meetings at County Hall and will be reporting back within our council meetings to keep us updated. Well done to you both and we know we will be represented brilliantly by you both!



Donation Tree in collaboration with Sidmouth Library and the Rotary Club

The true brilliance of Student Leadership is taking initiative and developing ideas that have real impact. Olivia S is the embodiment of this. What started as an idea to do something to support people who need it, especially at Christmas, has become so much more. The idea of a Donation Tree was suggested and with true collaboration it was situated in Sidmouth Library and became a huge success. This led to further collaboration with the Rotary Club of Sidmouth and on Saturday 13th December volunteers from the Student Council gave up their Saturday afternoon to help wrap presents and pack food boxes for people in need this Christmas.

The students were incredible and the Rotarians could not believe how much we got done in such a short space of time. These collaborations are the start of what we hope will be a long and prosperous tradition which will really capture the true spirit of Christmas.



Key Dates for Spring Term 1

First Day of Half Term 1
Tuesday 6th January

Year 9 Parent Forum
Friday 9th January

Year 9 Guided Choices Evening
Thursday 22nd January

Open Morning
Thursday 5th February

Year 8 Parents' Evening
Thursday 5th February

Last Day of Term
Friday 13th February

Devon Youth Council Conference

On Saturday 22nd November three members of the Student Council attended the Devon Youth Council Conference in Tiverton. We received a special invite to attend in recognition of the incredible work our Student Council does to leave a legacy and to work with outside agencies to create real change. The focus of this meeting, which was attended by a range of Devon Councillors including Denise Bickley, who accompanied our students, was Places to Go & Things to Do.

The young people who contributed, including Sidmouth College, presented a video that we produced to explain issues regarding affordable and efficient public transport and how we are campaigning to achieve this.



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Sidmouth College Enrichment Programme

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
BREAK 1 (11.05am to 11.35am)	Knitting & Crochet Club College Library All year groups	Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan	Maths Drop-In Room M34 Years 7-11 Gardening Club Meet at Library All year groups (Start date TBC)	Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan	Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan
BREAK 2 (12.55pm to 1.25pm)	Photography Club Room 44 (Week 2 only) Years 7, 8 and 9 Careers Drop-in Careers Office (between M49 & M50)	Table Talk- Card Games/UNO College Library All year groups LGBTQ+ Club All years (See Mrs Sullivan for info)	Textiles Club Room 43 Years 9, 10 and 11 Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan	Doodle Club Room 43 KS3 Students Drama Club Drama Studio All year groups Eco Club Room 206 All year groups Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan	Music Open Access Music Room See Mr Morgan
AFTER SCHOOL (3.15pm onwards)		Homework Drop-In College Library All year groups Maths Drop-In Room B37 Years 7-11 College Band Music Room - All Years (Audition Required)	Homework Drop-In College Library All year groups Music Tech Team Music Room All Years (Interview Required)	Homework Drop-In College Library All year groups College Choir Music Room All Years Welcome	

Fundraising Bake Sale

On Monday 8th December, during the staff INSET day, Mrs Hurley organised and hosted a fundraising bake sale in support of FORCE Cancer Charity. The event brought staff together for an enjoyable and meaningful cause, with a wide variety of homemade cakes and bakes generously donated by colleagues.

To make the day even more special, Mrs Hurley invited former Sidmouth College student and recent Great British Bake Off contestant Toby to attend and help judge the competition for the best cake. His involvement added excitement to the event and was a real highlight for staff, who enjoyed showcasing their baking skills and receiving expert feedback.

Thanks to the generosity of staff and the success of the bake sale, an impressive £300 was raised on the day. In addition to this, Mrs Hurley has raised a remarkable £1,500 in total through a range of other fundraising events. This is an outstanding achievement and a testament to her dedication and hard work. Well done and thank you to Mrs Hurley for her fantastic efforts in supporting such an important charity.



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