

Sidmouth College Newsletter

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Welcome to our Autumn edition of the newsletter, it has certainly been an incredibly busy and successful half term. I would like to start by thanking you all for your continued support this half term. Thank you to those families who completed our parent survey, I will be sharing the feedback and next steps from this with you all after half term. As we prepare for the half term break, I would like to thank the staff at the College for all of their hard work over this half term, we are very fortunate at Sidmouth to have such an incredible group of dedicated staff.

Earlier this term we had very high numbers of visitors to our open evening and a very well attended Sixth Form open evening. Thanks need to go to all of our wonderful students who volunteered to be tour guides, it was fantastic to have so many students from years 7 – 13 involved in the event. They were a real credit to the College; we always receive so many fantastic comments from the families that they show round and this year was no exception. Our recruitment and retention continue to be very strong and this year and we were very pleased to welcome back an amazing group of Year 11 students into Year 12.

I have been impressed with every year group so far, however a special mention needs to go to Year 7 who have very quickly settled into life at the College, they are both focused in lessons and working hard. In addition to this they are also taking advantage of the opportunities that are provided to them. We are also seeing our Year 11 and 13 students getting stuck into the 6-1 revision countdown in preparation for their trials. The work ethic in both of these year groups is exemplary and I am sure we will be celebrating their successes in the summer term.

Starting a new academic year, we have new priorities for the continued improvement of the College. We have spent time with students and staff this half term revisiting our values. These are really important to everything that we do at the College and are expressed in [The Sidmouth College Way](#). We have a set of very strong values and these are shared by all, I am proud to observe the engagement of our students in all aspects of College life and see the Sidmouth College Way in practice every day.

The College has been involved in a wide range of local events over the half term and continues to build strong community links. The students are a real credit to the College and all of them who have acted as ambassadors this half term have done so with maturity and enthusiasm.

I am really pleased that we are once again able to provide a wide enrichment offer this year and enable our students access to valuable wider curriculum opportunities which will enhance and support their learning experience while at the College. You will see a snap shot of some of these opportunities in this newsletter.

Have an enjoyable, restful and relaxing much deserved half term break. I look forward to seeing students back on Monday 6th November.

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Ted Wragg Trust Awards

On Thursday 12th October the Ted Wragg Trust held an awards night to mark their 10th Anniversary at Sandy Park in Exeter. Each school nominated a number staff and students for various awards. On the night Mrs Clark was awarded the 'Unsung Hero of the Year' Award. Congratulations to her and to all the nominees listed below.

Student of the Year: James Adesina

Teacher of the Year: Mrs Masters

Co-professional of the Year: Mrs Blackmore

Staff Teamwork Award: The Pastoral Team

Student Teamwork Award: The Music Tech Team

Inspirational Leader: Miss Davies

Unsung Hero: Mrs Clark

Student Community Leadership: Charley T



Principal's Commendations

This term Mrs Parsons has awarded deserving students who have excelled or achieved something above and beyond with a Principal's Commendation.

The first Autumn half term's Principal's Commendations have gone to the following students in Year 7 Nell, James, Chloe and Lucien. They received the award to congratulate them on their excellent speeches, which they



gave at the Sidmouth College Open Day at the start of term in September. Also awarded were Ginny, Grace and Kiesha for performing at the Ted Wragg Trust Awards in the student choir.

They have all done a brilliant job and are fantastic ambassadors for the College. Well done to all the students!

Sidmouth Sustainable Champions Awards

A huge well done to two of our amazing Year 11 students Laura and Grace who attended the Sustainable Sidmouth Champions Awards with Mrs Parsons on Thursday 21st September.

The two girls were nominated for their hard work and dedication to the Sidmouth College garden and allotment area which had not been used for many years.

Along with Miss Flynn, the girls dug up weeds, cleared pathways, cut down bramble and tidied the greenhouse and polytunnel, ready for growing new fruit and vegetables, with the aim to donate items to local food banks.

The girls came runner up in their category and we are very proud of their achievement and recognition against some stiff competition on the night. Well done to Laura and Grace!

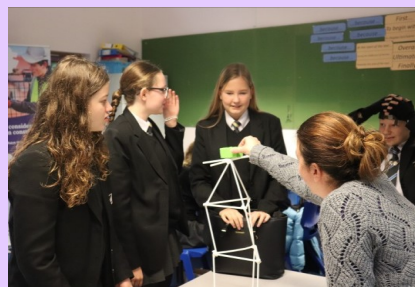
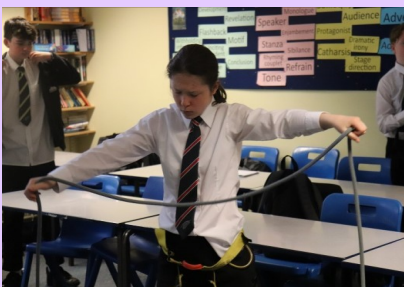




Year 9 Careers Roundabout

On Wednesday 18th October, Year 9 students had the morning off timetable to take part in a Careers Roundabout. Following feedback from previous years we adapted the event and our Business partners worked with 4 groups over the event to carry out interactive sessions about their occupational area. The morning is focused around giving students a vast variety of different workplace experiences, ahead of planning their work experience placements in Year 10 and making their GCSE choices. On the day students had some fantastic opportunities including sessions on healthcare, catering, hair and beauty, countryside conservation, animal care with the help of some giant insects, map reading, army training and electrical and plumbing engineering. There was something for everyone.

We would like to thank Chris from Aquilla Outdoor Adventure, Anne Marie and Sue from Brend Hotels, Jack, Ben and Mikey from AWP, Stuart, Jon, Katherine and Alex from Bicton, Millie from Exeter College, Sarah, Joanne and Paul from Exeter College, Aiden and Joshua from Coreus, Emma from Taylor Wimpey and Cpl Staddentre and SGT Lucas from the Army. Without our amazing employers and volunteers events like this could not happen.



Introduction to Work Experience

On Monday 2nd October Year 10 were off timetable for the day taking part in an introduction to work experience day which included a series of workshops to prepare the students for their upcoming work experience placements in the Summer term. We were lucky enough to have employers from across Devon come in to speak to students and give advice on getting the most out of their work experience.

Thank you to all our visiting business partners for joining us on the day: Helen Maynard and Nadine Howe from Bicton College, Chris from Aquila Outdoor Adventures, Ed from The Royal Navy, Kerri from The Mare & Foal Sanctuary and Emma Hopkins from Taylor Wimpey



Sidmouth College Equestrian

The Sidmouth College NSEA riding squad took part in their first event of the season this half term at Bicton Arena.

We had 6 riders competing on the day; Mia and Abby competed as individuals in the Preliminary Dressage competition, securing 3rd place and qualification to the National Championships in Adlington. We also had a team made up of Izzy, Chloe, Isla and Ella who qualified for the championships taking 1st place!



We now have 10 riders signed up, if any student have their own Horse or Pony and would like to compete with the team, speak to Mrs Churchill in Science for more information.

Cross Country

This term students took part in Inter-House Cross-Country competing for the House Champions title! On day one the weather was dry and sunny for Year 9 and 11 which made for ideal running conditions, however, day 2 was not so good, with showers and grey skies, but students pushed on through. There was some very competitive running, with just a few seconds separating 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions in most year groups. The overall winning House will be announced in assembly after half term.



Netball

The Sidmouth College Under 19 Netball team had their first competitive fixture in October at the Under 19s East Devon tournament.

The quality of netball was high from all teams on the day. The Sidmouth College team had a mixture of wins and losses and finished in 3rd place overall.

Congratulations must go to Willow And Katie who were awarded players of the tournament.





Camps International Fundraising

The College would like to thank the Pain Trust – a local charity based in Exmouth who aim to provide grants to young people embarking on adventures and travels.

The trust have kindly donated a sum of money to a number of the students going to Costa Rica in 2024 as part of the Camps International Expedition.

The students are extremely grateful for this boost to their fundraising and can't wait to fly off to Costa Rica in July of 2024.



Duke of Edinburgh

The Year 10s completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition over the last weekend in September. They were blessed with lovely weather which made for great walking and camping conditions!

Mr Gilbert complimented the students on their resilience after some challenging navigation throughout the walk. Well done everyone involved and thank you to Mr Gilbert, Mr Richards and Mrs Forrer for their support!



Year 12 Biology Fieldwork

On Thursday 21st September Mrs Bayliss took her A-Level Biologists in Year 12 and 13 on a fieldwork trip to Mutter's Moor. Kate Ponting, the Countryside Learning Officer from Clinton Devon Estates, gave a detailed description of the importance of heathland and how management methods are used to maintain this valuable habitat.

The students then collected data, using ecological sampling methods, to investigate the distribution of key species.





Drama Club

KS3 Drama Club is run by Miss Collins on Wednesdays during Break 2. Over 40 students attend every week and work together on improvisations and Drama skills whilst having lots of fun! From terrible talent shows to crash landing on a desert island, you never know what might happen next!

A Drama club member said "I like Drama because it gives everyone a chance to express themselves and to create a short performance in a group. We get to work with other year groups and it has really helped my confidence. It is really fun and Mss Collins helps develop our performances and ideas."

If you are in Years 7, 8 or 9, fancy meeting some new friends and having an extra dose of Drama, go along to the Drama club on Wednesdays in the Hall!



Rugby

Well done to the Year 7 Boys who were selected to represent Sidmouth College this term to play Rugby. Brilliant engagement and participation at Rugby club made selection difficult. The boys played a touch tournament beating Axe Valley in the first fixture and a tight game with Honiton in the second fixture resulted in a draw. The same team will be back at The King's School to play a full contact tournament. A great start to Year 7 Rugby for the boys.



Youth Theatre Auditions

There was a buzz around the college last week as over 90 students came along to the Drama Studio to audition for the next Sidmouth Youth Theatre production which will be performed at The Manor Pavilion Theatre in late January/early February 2024. Before the start of proceedings all you could hear were groups in areas outside the room and outside the building practicing their audition songs and, as they came to sign in, you could feel the nervous excitement.

Stage 1 of the audition process involved working in groups to create a short comic performance based on one title on the board including, Murder in the Launderette, The Great Escape or Death in the Allotment. These performances were shared and enjoyed by all those taking part. The next stage involved singing 30 seconds of a show song unaccompanied in a group, or the very brave stepped up to sing a solo. Each performance was met with claps and cheers as everyone was supportive, even joining in by creating beats in the gaps or adding backing vocals.

Miss Davies will now be challenged to find a show that will suit their talents but also will struggle to make the difficult decisions when casting where some may discover that this time they have not been successful. It was fabulous to see so many keen and enthusiastic students willing to 'have a go' and step up and perform in front of others. For some, it will channel their confidence and for others, their confidence will grow through the process. For those who are successful in winning a place in the cast it will be a lot of intensive hard work to ensure that the performance is as professional as possible. Watch out for rehearsal shots on line and announcements when tickets will be available.





Fundraising for WHAT

On Wednesday 4th October Di Fuller from the Wellbeing and Health Action Team (WHAT) accepted a £500 cheque from Sidmouth College from funds raised by the student body last year on our Sponsored Walk.

This is to support the fantastic work by WHAT who raise funding for local mental health initiative's such as Headlight, who support Sidmouth's young people in the college and community. This initiative is ground breaking in how local communities support and manage their young people's mental health.

Mr White said "This is a fantastic community funded approach to dealing with young peoples mental health.

The College and wider community of Sidmouth are so fortunate to have such an amazing provision offered through the WHAT team's tireless work and dedication to support young people in our community. A massive thank you as always."



Ten Tors

Year 10 had their first Ten Tors residential weekend on Dartmoor in October. They began with training on the Friday evening, learning navigational skills including map and compass reading. They were then able to put those skills into practice on Saturday completing a successful walk on a beautiful sunny day, which made a change for Autumn training.

Well done to all the students and good luck with the rest of your training.



Sixth Form Open Evening

On Thursday 5th October we welcomed over 200 Year 11 students and their families for our Sixth Form Open Evening. The evening began with a welcome talk from Mrs Parsons, Mrs Hurley and the Student Leadership Team. This was followed by a tour of the Sixth Form facilities, inclusion the brand new Costa Coffee in Café 6.

Visitors were then able to get course details and speak to teachers about the subjects on offer, as well as chatting to current A-Level students about their subjects and experiences in the Sixth Form. The evening was a huge success, thank you to all who visited and to our students who supported the event.



Open Day 2023

In September Sidmouth College opened its doors to the public once again to attend our Open Day. The event was a huge success with record breaking 650 guests over the three sessions.

On arrival visitors listened to a welcome talk from Mrs Parsons, followed by speeches by our Head Boy Josh, Head Girl Flora and Year 7 students Nell, James, Chloe and Lucien; they all spoke confidently in front of such big crowds.

After the talks, parents and prospective students were given a tour by our student ambassadors from Years 8 and 9, finishing off with refreshments in the Library and Canteen.

In the morning session visitors were able to see lessons in action as they toured the college. In the evening departments hosted a variety of subject activities. In History Mr Trengove pulled out all the stops in his Henry VIII costume, whilst also putting on a game of Kings and Queens 'Play your cards right'.

In Food technology everyone was invited to make their own delicious pizzas. In Photography guests were able to get creative and make their own light graffiti and in Science students set fire to their teachers hands!

Feedback from visitors was all positive with many compliments for our brilliant student guides, Sixth Form helpers and staff who gave demonstrations in all departments. Thank you to everyone who attended and to our student ambassadors. We hope to see many of our visiting pupils join us in the coming years.





Children's Commissioner Visit

On Thursday 28th September a group of students from Sidmouth College were invited to the Cranbrook Education Campus to speak to the Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza. The visit gave students the opportunity to give their views on what can be changed for young people in England. The students gave their feedback below.

"We arrived in the room with lots of other Year 7s and we were feeling nervous, but we were soon welcomed by Rachel and her team and felt much better. We talked about vapes and how to make the situation better by not making them colourful or flavoured. We also talked about shopkeepers being more responsible for what young people buy, for example energy drinks and vapes. After that we discussed feeling safe walking home or taking the bus and the school environment. We want to introduce more safe environments, like youth clubs and have more people who are trained to help children who have additional needs. We both felt worried the day before, but now feel more comfortable that we've had our say we feel really confident that Rachel will get everybody's ideas heard and seen by the government."

Written by Freddy and Abi (Year 7)

"During our visit to the Cranbrook Education Campus, we discussed a variety of important topics, primarily consisting of how political decisions affect the lives of young people and their community. I enjoyed having the opportunity to hear the different points and views of other students in my age group and witnessing the quality and range of their knowledge. I am grateful to have had the privilege of meeting Rachel de Souza and her team and being able to witness first-hand the process they use that greatly impacts children's lives and well-being by giving them a voice. Thank you for this valuable experience."

Written by Orla (Year 10)

"The main things that the Year 10's talked about were: transport to and from school, financial worries, environmental issues, help for mental health issues, online safety, young people's opinions, safety outside of school and what we would say to the prime minister if we had the chance. The things that were most focused on and agreed on were online safety and help for mental health issues. Overall, it felt like the commissioner and her people were really listening and it seems like they want to use our responses and opinions."

Written by Kai Year 10

The students were fantastic ambassadors for the College and gave valuable input into the discussions. Well done to Kai, Freddy, Abi and Orla.

Following on from the meeting, we are encouraging all students to complete 'The Big Ambition' survey from the Children's Commissioner. Please encourage students to complete the survey here: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/the-big-ambition.

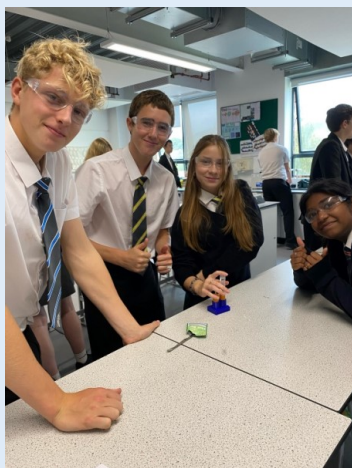
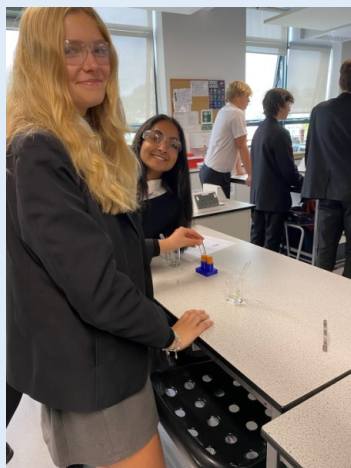




Sidmouth Science Festival

To celebrate Sidmouth Science Festival, Year 11 students specializing in separate sciences were treated to an immersive masterclass with a space centre representative (Dorian) at Sidmouth College. They received the latest insights on space exploration, then applied their knowledge of momentum and combustion to construct model hovercrafts and rockets.

Students eagerly posed questions about post-16 opportunities, showing keen interest in future pathways in space science. The session proved a resounding success, leaving the students inspired and eager to delve deeper into the world of space science.



Fundraising

Well done to two students and sisters Gracie and Etienne who cycled 60 miles over the summer in one day to raise funds for the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Charity.

The girls did an amazing job and the money they raised will make a huge difference to those suffering from the disease. Well done girls, what an achievement!



Year 11 NEA

On Wednesday 11th October Year 11 Performing Arts (Music) students performed their NEA pieces to an audience of family, friends and College staff. The students were supported by the College Music Department Tech Team who spent the day setting up the Hall with music and sound equipment ready for the evening performances.

Well done to all the students who were involved and the performers for their incredible work.



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Christmas Card Competition

The College is running the Christmas Card Competition again this year, which is open to all students.

The winning design will be used as the official Sidmouth College Christmas card for 2023 and be sent to our various contacts and friends of the College.

The closing date for entries is Friday 24th November 2023 and, once completed, designs need to be given to your Art teacher or to anyone in the Art Department for judging.

Design specifications:

- Design must be A4 or A5 size.
- Must be a Christmas theme
- Any media can be used such as paints, collage, ink, lino print, colouring pencils, felt pens, mixed media, photography, digital design.
- Must be 2D and able to be printed onto card.

We cannot wait to see your designs. The October half term is a great opportunity to get your entry made. Be as creative and festive as possible! The Winner will be chosen and announced in the last week of November, and the card distributed in December.



Student Celebration

Year 9 Student Amelia is a very talented costume designer and maker. This term she attended the Comic Con and Gaming Festival at Westpoint in Exeter in a costume and mask she created herself and it looks amazing!

Amelia's hobby is making and painting animal masks, having to problem solve and get inventive in the process. Her favourite game is 'Five Nights at Freddy's' and this year she created a mask of the character Montgomery Gator (pictured right)

Amazing work Amelia!





The Sidmouth College Reading Canon

We have introduced daily reading into our curriculum for Years 7 – 10. Each year group have been reading a different novel for the term. We are working towards a collection of texts which hold significant value, both in the style of writing and the messages they communicate.

The books that each year group have been reading are listed below:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
<i>Private Peaceful</i> Michael Morpurgo	<i>Refugee Boy</i> Benjamin Zephaniah	<i>Of Mice and Men</i> John Steinbeck	<i>Lord of the Flies</i> William Golding
<i>Skellig</i> David Almond	<i>Goodnight Mr Tom</i> Michelle Magorian	<i>My Sword Hand Is Singing</i> Marcus Sedgwick	<i>The curious Incident of the dog in the night time.</i> Mark Haddon

We have already had some great feedback from our students:

'Your comprehension skills improve.'

'It helps you feel focused for the rest of the day'

'Helps improve memory.'

'It improves mental health really gets people to question the meaning of the book'

'One positive impact is that in whole school reading you get to debate in your class about something that happened in the story, which helps to see the world in a different way and empathise'

'It might make people who maybe don't read as much want to read more in their own time and everyone learns new words.'

Currently, we are consulting with staff, students, parents and carers to find out which books they would like to see included. We will be using this information to develop our canon over the next few months. If you would like to have your say, please follow the link to complete the google form - <https://forms.gle/TpYa1grBtykPqf1y8>

Funding our canon is our next challenge; we want the Sidmouth College Canon to reflect the interests and needs of our community. We have been very lucky to have a significant contribution from the Ted Wragg Trust towards this, but we still need to raise more. If you would like to sponsor a set of books, or contribute to a set please get in touch with the college.

We all know the value of reading so we hope you will take time to read and share books over the half-term break. Enjoy your reading!

