

NEWSLETTER

Message from Ms Hand



Dear Parents, Carers and Members of our School Community,

As we reach the end of another successful academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our students, staff, parents and carers for their continued support and commitment to Sandymoor Ormiston Academy. It has been a year filled with achievement, kindness, resilience and community spirit and I am incredibly proud of all that our students have accomplished.

Reading through this edition of the newsletter, I have been reminded of the breadth of opportunities our students embrace. From outstanding sporting success, including our continued excellence in football, netball, rowing and tennis, to the creativity and confidence displayed in A Night at the Musicals, our students have once again demonstrated the talent, determination and enthusiasm that make Sandymoor such a special place to learn and grow.

I have also been particularly impressed by the many ways our students have contributed beyond the classroom. Whether through our Eco Schools work, achieving another Green Flag Award with Distinction, collaborating with local partners through the Sandymoor Art Trail consultation or showing compassion and generosity through the Year 8 Kindness Project, our young people continue to make a positive difference both within school and across the wider community. I would also like to extend our best wishes to the students and staff currently taking part in the Team Msitu expedition in Kenya. During their time abroad, they are contributing to important conservation and community projects while developing invaluable life skills, independence and cultural understanding. This truly embodies the spirit of Sandymoor, and we are incredibly proud of the commitment, courage and enthusiasm they have shown. We look forward to welcoming them home and sharing their experiences with the wider school community in September.

The strong reading culture highlighted throughout this newsletter is another source of pride. Thank you to all families who support this important work at home.

As ever, our Year 11 students deserve special recognition. We are immensely proud of the way they have conducted themselves throughout their time at Sandymoor. We wish them every success as they take their next steps and look forward to celebrating their achievements when results are published later this summer.

September Return to School Arrangements:

As we look ahead to the new academic year, I would like to remind families of our arrangements for September.

Wednesday 2nd September

- Year 7 students and Year 11 students only attend school on this day.
- School gates will open at 8:20am.
- Students should be in school ready for a prompt start at 8:30am.
- Year 7 parents are warmly invited to attend the welcome assembly with their children.
- Following the assembly, year 7 parents will have the opportunity to wave their children off to their form groups.
- Complimentary tea, coffee and refreshments will be available for Year 7 parents after the assembly.
- Year 11 students will attend from 8:30am and begin their induction and preparation for their GCSE year before moving into lessons.

Thursday 3rd September

- All year groups return to school.
- School gates open at 8:20am.
- School begins promptly at 8:30am with year group line-up.
- Year 7 will continue their induction programme before moving fully into lessons.
- Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 will attend welcome back sessions and begin timetabled lessons during the day.

Friday Start Time Change from September : A reminder that from September, Fridays only will operate with a later start:

- Gates open at 8:40am
- School starts at 8:50am

For families who need students to arrive at the usual time on Fridays, a supervised Early Start Hub will be available. Students attending the Early Start Hub should enter through Reception.

As we close the school year, I want to congratulate every student on their hard work, perseverance and achievements. I hope all of our families have a wonderful, restful and enjoyable summer break. We cannot wait to welcome everyone back in September, refreshed and ready for another exciting year of learning, growth and success. We look forward to seeing what our students will achieve next.

Have a fantastic summer and thank you for being part of the Sandymoor family.

Ms Hand – Principal



NEWSLETTER

Sporting Success Across the Year



This year has been packed with fantastic sporting achievements. From football, netball, tennis and rowing, our students have shown real skill, determination and teamwork. Our Year 7 Netball team remained unbeaten all year, while Year 8 Rounders demonstrated brilliant resilience in a tough summer tournament. The boys' football teams competed fiercely in the Cheshire School Cups, and our girls' football team, led by Mr Green, continued to grow in strength, proudly retaining our Merseyside Schools Champion status. Our partnership with Sandymoor Community Tennis Academy has also helped build a strong sense of community and a love for sport for life.

Our rowing teams have worked exceptionally hard, finishing the year with outstanding results at the summer regatta — the boys placing third and the girls second in the Runcorn Region. We are incredibly proud of every student who has represented the school. Their dedication has helped us retain our Gold School Games Mark for 2025/26, motivating us to aim for Gold again next year and work towards the prestigious Platinum award.



A Night at the Musicals

What an incredible term it has been for Music and Performing Arts. Our talented students have been working hard since Spring to bring our show 'A Night at the Musicals' to life, a story where a group of teens break into a closing theatre and relive the ghosts of theatre past. The performance was packed with brilliant dance, expressive drama, and some truly outstanding singing. The energy on stage was electric, and it was wonderful to see students' confidence shine as they shared the message that theatre is an inclusive space where everyone can belong and thrive. A special shout-out goes to our very own tech crew member, Henry Fletcher, who expertly manned the lights. We are incredibly proud of everything our students achieved.

Many of our students also perform with theatre groups outside of school. If you're interested in seeing more of their fantastic work, follow Cheshire/Runcorn Theatre School and Centenary Theatre Company.



Silver Jubilee Bridge Charity Run Success

What an incredible achievement from our amazing school team, who proudly completed the Silver Jubilee Bridge 10K and Half Marathon in support of Alder Hey Children's Hospital. Their determination, dedication, and team spirit shone throughout the day, and we couldn't be prouder of every member of staff who took part.

This special run was completed in honour of our wonderful pupils, Ollie and Jackson, and in support of the incredible doctors, nurses, and staff at Alder Hey who care for so many children and families each year. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who donated, cheered from the sidelines, or supported the team along the way, every contribution truly helps make a difference. An outstanding effort from an outstanding team. Well done, everyone!



NEWSLETTER

Staff Book Club – Building a Reading Culture Together

This term, we have launched our Sandymoor Staff Book Club, Bookaholics Anonymous, as part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a vibrant reading culture across our school. Each half term, colleagues come together to exchange ideas and celebrate the joy of reading. We know that when children see the adults around them reading for pleasure, it sends a powerful message about the value of books and lifelong learning.

We'd love to invite families to join us by exploring some of the books our staff have recommended (if you would like to join the Bookaholics Anonymous, please contact Mrs Griffiths at griffithsk@sandymooroa.co.uk).

Whether you're looking for your next holiday read or a book to enjoy together at home, we hope our recommendations inspire you to pick up a new title this summer. Happy reading!

– 'The Last Witch of Scotland' – chosen as our first book club read

– 'We Are All Guilty Here'

– 'Chinese Cinderella'

– 'Kite Runner'

– 'The Eights'

– 'The Cloisters'

– 'Prophet Song'

– 'The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart'



Sparx Student Reviews and Recommendations



Beowulf

★★★★☆

"This was a lovely read, I feel like it could have been a little longer in terms of story, but it was worth reading. would recommend it to a friend."

Michael James, 7p/Enl



A Cake for the Gestapo

★★★★★

"I really liked it as it had a deep meaning of friendship through tough times"

Olivia Slinger, 8p/Enl



The Runestone of Avalon

★★★★★

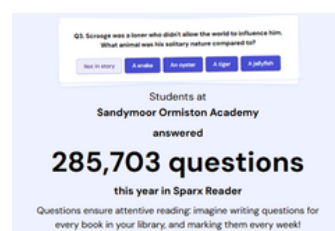
"I loved this book. It was a lovely length to read and was interesting while still being believable that this could happen. Really recommend this book to most people."

Alyssa Watkinson, 10op/Enl

Sparx Reader

This year, students have made excellent progress with Sparx Reader, showing real commitment to developing their reading skills and confidence. Through regular reading and comprehension activities, pupils have expanded their vocabulary, improved their understanding of texts, and built positive reading habits. It has been fantastic to see so many students engaging consistently with the programme, with many achieving impressive streaks and completing their weekly goals. We are incredibly proud of their efforts and look forward to seeing their reading journey continue next year.

This year we have:



NEWSLETTER

Eco schools Green flag Award

Sandymoor Ormiston Academy is delighted to once again receive the Green Flag Award for 2026, achieving the prestigious Distinction level. A highlight of this year's Eco journey has been our growing partnership with Hazlehurst, which has enabled more KS3 and KS4 students to take part in meaningful environmental projects. This collaboration has strengthened community spirit, boosted student confidence, and created a shared sense of responsibility for improving local spaces.

Students have also shown impressive leadership across the academy, from carrying out eco-checks to supporting our transition to more energy-efficient technology.

Experiences such as the Chester Zoo conservation visit have helped bring environmental learning to life, deepening pupils' understanding of biodiversity and global ecological issues. Our commitment to reducing litter and improving recycling continues to shine, with students taking real ownership of creating a cleaner, greener school environment.

Environmental awareness is now firmly embedded across the curriculum, and our regular updates through Facebook and newsletters ensure families stay connected to our Eco achievements. Together, these efforts reflect a whole-school dedication to sustainability and active citizenship – something our students can feel incredibly proud of.



Hazlehurst Garden project



Our amazing Ecowarriors have been working with residents at Hazlehurst to help bring their garden to life. Together, they've transformed the space into a warm and welcoming environment, showing real social action and genuine care for the community and the planet. Projects like this capture the true spirit of an Eco-School, and everyone involved should feel incredibly proud of the impact they've made.



We recently celebrated our incredible Year 11s with their Leavers' Assembly and shirt-signing, a day full of laughter, memories, and a few emotional moments as we marked everything they've achieved and the fantastic young people they've become.

They also looked absolutely amazing at Prom, dressing to impress and enjoying an evening of dancing, fun, and unforgettable memories.

We are so proud of every single one of them. Once part of our school family, always part of our school family.



Year 11 Farewell & Prom

NEWSLETTER

Sandymoor Art Trail

Earlier this year, a group of our students were invited by Halton Borough Council to take part in a consultation for the proposed Sandymoor Art Trail.

The consultation ran over four weeks, from late February to mid-March, and included a series of interactive sessions: an introduction to the project, two guided "Walk About" sessions to explore the local area, and an idea generation workshop where students shared their creative thoughts and suggestions.

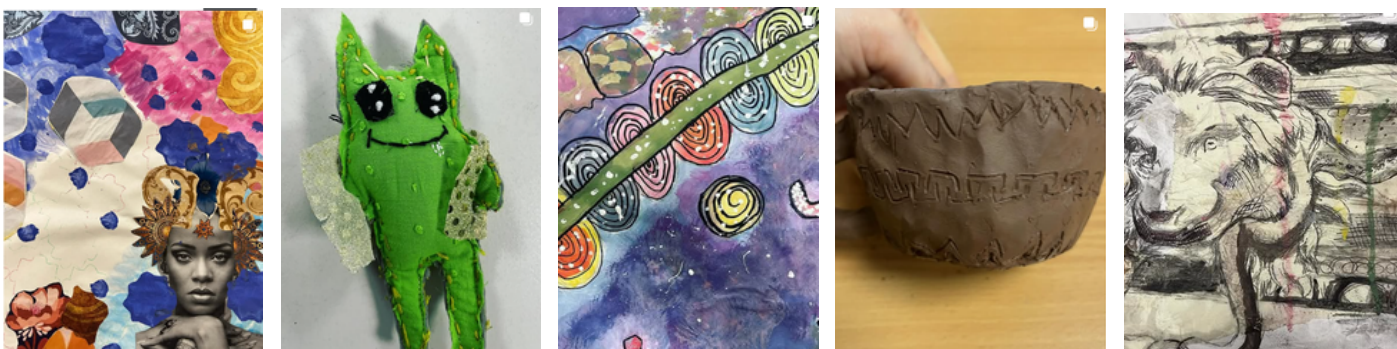
All of the students involved are local residents, aged between 12 and 15, making their local knowledge and experiences invaluable to the project.

Following discussions with Sandymoor Parish Council, the consultation centred on the theme of "Sandymoor's Identity." Students were encouraged to reflect on the features, landmarks, place names and spaces that make their community unique, helping to shape ideas for the future art trail.

We are incredibly proud of our students for representing both the school and the local community so positively, and for contributing their creativity and ideas to this exciting initiative.



Art and design technology showcase



Y8 Kindness Project



This half-term, a grant from Drop Dead Generous—a social action project created to spread kindness around the world, was secured to support our year 8 Kindness Project aimed at giving something back to the local community.

Mrs Lyne and ten dedicated Year 8 students volunteered their time after school to handwrite 150 thank-you cards, each paired with a packet of wild-flower seeds to create thoughtful kindness packages for neighbours.

As Aesop reminds us, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."



NEWSLETTER

Behaviour and Culture Update

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support across this academic year. It has, and continues to be a privilege to work and support this community.

September always comes around so quickly, and with that in mind. I'd like to draw your attention to some key specifics regarding students return on 2nd September (year 7 and 11) and 3rd September (years 8-10).

Mobile phone pouches

As you know from previous correspondence, we are implementing our phone free policy with the use of individual mobile phone pouches from September. Upon students return in September, they will each receive an individual mobile phone pouch that they can keep free of charge. Any required replacement through loss will require the purchasing of a replacement pouch, which can be done at reception if ever required.

Phones will be magnetically locked in individual pouches for the duration of the school day. Following the end of the school day, students will be able to unlock their pouches via the unlocking stations which will be opened from 3.00pm.

Any student who will be leaving early for an appointment for example, will be able to unlock their pouch at reception.

Prior to our return, during the week of the GCSE results, I will send out further specific guidance regarding detailed specifics of our new mobile phone policy and a link to Frequently asked questions regarding our new policy, following this, any further questions can be directed to school via SOA info.

In September, students will receive a detailed walk through regarding our protocols in this area. We will also look to share this with you in the form of a video 'how to' explainer.

Equipment

With the additional need to store your mobile phone pouch safely, we are adding a school bag to our essential equipment list. All students should look to have a school bag from September. The mobile phone pouch will not sit easily in a blazer pocket and so we recommend that students store their mobile phone pouch in their school bag.

In terms of general equipment. We ask that all students have a pencil, pen, rubber and ruler. In addition to this, students should ensure that they have a pencil case, a green pen and a scientific calculator. This is particularly important to support in not only Maths, but in multiple other subjects as well and is an essential piece of equipment for all students from September onwards. All models of calculators work differently and becoming familiar with a calculator early helps build confidence, strengthens problem-solving skills, and improve exam results.

To support this, we recommend the following calculator models, both widely used in schools and approved for GCSE examinations:

Casio fx-83GTCW and Casio fx-991CW

Having one of these calculators also allows our teachers to provide consistent support and guidance across the year group.

Uniform

Our uniform expectations remain unchanged, and from September all warm weather adaptations will be removed. Key uniform existing expectations are listed below:

- No skirts should be altered and they should be worn at a suitable length just above the knee.
- Shirts should be tucked in at all times in the school building
- Skirts should not be worn with folds
- Blazers can be removed in lessons but should be worn on corridors during transitions
- Jewellery should be discrete, this means plain studded earrings, no nose piercings, no bracelets or rings
- No acrylic nails should be worn
- No artificial eye lashes should be worn.
- No nose piercings should be worn
- Shoes should be a leather like material, not be a trainer or have logos e.g. Nike, on clouds etc. To help in this regard. Our key strapline in this area is 'no boots, no trainers, no logos, no stripes, no patterns, no suede'

May I take this opportunity to again wish you an enjoyable summer break and welcome your anticipated support in ensuring all our learners return in September fully equipped, dressed to impress and ready to demonstrate progress and success in each and every lesson.

Have a lovely summer break

Mr McGuckin – Vice Principal for Behaviour and Attitudes



NEWSLETTER

Sparx summer reading challenge

We encourage all of our students and families to keep reading over the summer holidays by taking part in one (or more!) of this year's exciting reading challenges.

Students can complete the optional Sparx Reader summer assignment to maintain their reading streak and continue building their comprehension skills.

Readers can join Halton Libraries' Read 5 Challenge (ages 0–16) for the chance to earn a prize, while children aged 4–11 can also take part in the Read to the Beat Summer Reading Challenge in conjunction with The Reading Agency.

We would also love to see parents, carers and other family members get involved by joining Storyhouse's Adult Reads Two Challenge. Reading together helps to foster a lifelong love of books, and we look forward to hearing about everyone's summer reading adventures in September!

Links:

<https://sparxreader.com/>
<https://library.haltonbc.info/Summer-Reading/>
<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>
<https://www.storyhouse.com/whats-on/adults-read-two/>
<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/book-recommendations/bookfinder/>



Supporting reading at home

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping young people develop as readers. Even a few minutes of reading each day can have a significant impact on academic achievement and confidence.

You may find the following resources helpful:

- National Literacy Trust: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/>
- BookTrust Families Hub: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/>
- Words for Life (National Literacy Trust): <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/>
- Oxford Owl Parent Reading Support: <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/>
- Audio books: <https://www.audible.co.uk/>
- YA Book Prize Winners: <https://www.thebookseller.com/awards/the-ya-book-prize>
- Waterstones – Teen Fiction: <https://www.waterstones.com/category/childrens-teenage/teen-and-young-adult>
- Talking About Reading: <https://educationblog.oup.com/secondary/talking-to-children-about-their-reading>
- British Library – Children's Books: <https://www.bl.uk/childrens-books>
- Literacy Trust – Literacy Games <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/>
- We would like to thank you for your continued support in helping your child develop their reading skills.



NEWSLETTER

Results Day – 20th August

Students will be able to collect their results from 9am–11am in the forum. If your child hasn't done so already, they need to notify the Exams Officer:

(omahoneyn@sandymooroa.co.uk) if they are unable to personally collect their results, informing her who their nominated adult will be who will pick them up on their behalf, without this results cannot be given out.

Dates for next term

Progress Evenings - 3.30pm - 6.45pm:

Y7	20th May
Y8	11th February
Y9	25th March
Y10	10th June
Y11	10th December

Options Evening: Time TBC

Y9	15th April
----	------------



NEWSLETTER

Fundraising for School

Friends of Sandymoor are helping school raise funds for a variety of items for our students. If you could like to get involved in our fundraising next term, please contact Lucy by email on:

friendsofsandymooroa@gmail.com

Sweet sales:

We have sweet sales on a termly basis whereby students can buy their favourite sweets to eat or take home.

Pre-loved school uniform:

If you have any pre-loved good quality school uniform you would like to donate, please bring it into school. Alternatively, if you would like to purchase any pre-loved uniform, please contact us.

Wednesday 5th August – 3.30pm – 6pm – pre-loved uniform sale in school – please come along.

Please check our social media platforms for upcoming events to support our school.

Friends of Sandymoor:

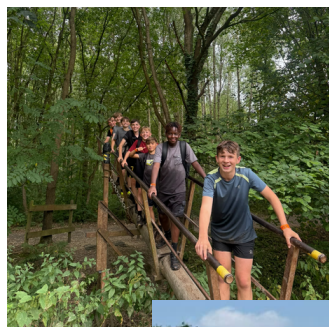
*Thank you for all of your fundraising this year to provide additional support for our students.
Thank you also to parents and carers for buying raffle tickets and supporting us!*

Arbor Update

From 1st September, all payments will be made via Arbor rather than Parentmail.

Further information regarding this will be sent out over the summer – please look out for the email and refrain from making any further payments beforehand.

Any money currently in parentmail will be transferred over to the new system.
Thank you.



NEWSLETTER

Important changes to School Lockers

From September, we will be introducing a new locker system for students.

If your child would like to have a locker, there will be a **one-off payment of £5**, which covers the use of the locker for the entire time they attend the school. This payment also includes one locker key.

Please note that if your child loses their locker key, a replacement fee of £5 will be charged for a new key.

If your child would like a locker from September, please let us know as soon as possible so we can make the necessary arrangements via email to: reception@sandymooroa.co.uk.

Payments can be made from 1st September via Arbor.

Thank you for your support.

Important changes to Cooking and Nutrition Lessons

Throughout years 7, 8 and 9 all students at Sandymoor Ormiston Academy study Cooking and Nutrition and take part in practical lessons.

To ensure all students can take part in these practical lessons, school will supply all of the ingredients that your child needs. However, due to rising costs of food we are now asking for a contribution towards these costs of **£20 for the full academic years**. When school purchase the ingredients, we can buy in bulk which is more cost effective to help save on the expense of ingredients, and prevents you being left with surplus ingredients which you may never use again.

We are also asking parents to provide containers/bags to take the food home.

We would ask for payment to be made between Tuesday 1st and Friday 4th September via Arbor.

We appreciate your support with this initiative.

Any safeguarding concerns when school is closed over summer

If you have any Safeguarding concerns when school is closed, please do the following:

- Contact the Police : 101/999
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Samaritans: 116 123
- Report to CEOP via the School website.
- Contact the Contact and Referral Team at Social Services: 0151 907 8305 (9am-5pm)
- Social Services emergency duty team: 0345 050 0148 (5-9pm)
- Papyrus (Suicide prevention): 0800 068 4141/ 07786209697

