

The Strattonian – Spring Term Update from Mr Farmer

As we reach the end of the Spring Term, I would like to thank all students, staff, and families for their continued hard work, resilience, and support. It has been a term full of achievement, growth, and memorable moments, and I am incredibly proud of our community. To our Year 11 and Year 13 students, we send our very best wishes as you enter the final stretch of preparations for your forthcoming exams. Your dedication throughout the year has been exceptional, and we have every confidence in your success. Please remember that your teachers and the wider Stratton community are behind you every step of the way.

Wishing everyone a restful, well-deserved break. We look forward to welcoming you back on **Monday 13th April** for a Summer Term full of exciting opportunities ahead.

Here is a roundup of the last half term...

Celebrating Our Sixth Form Learners



Huge congratulations to our wonderful **L3 Business and Sport students** on their fantastic results! We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved at the Matt King Sixth Form. Thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us for our celebration breakfast — your support means so much.

Music creativity and Celebration

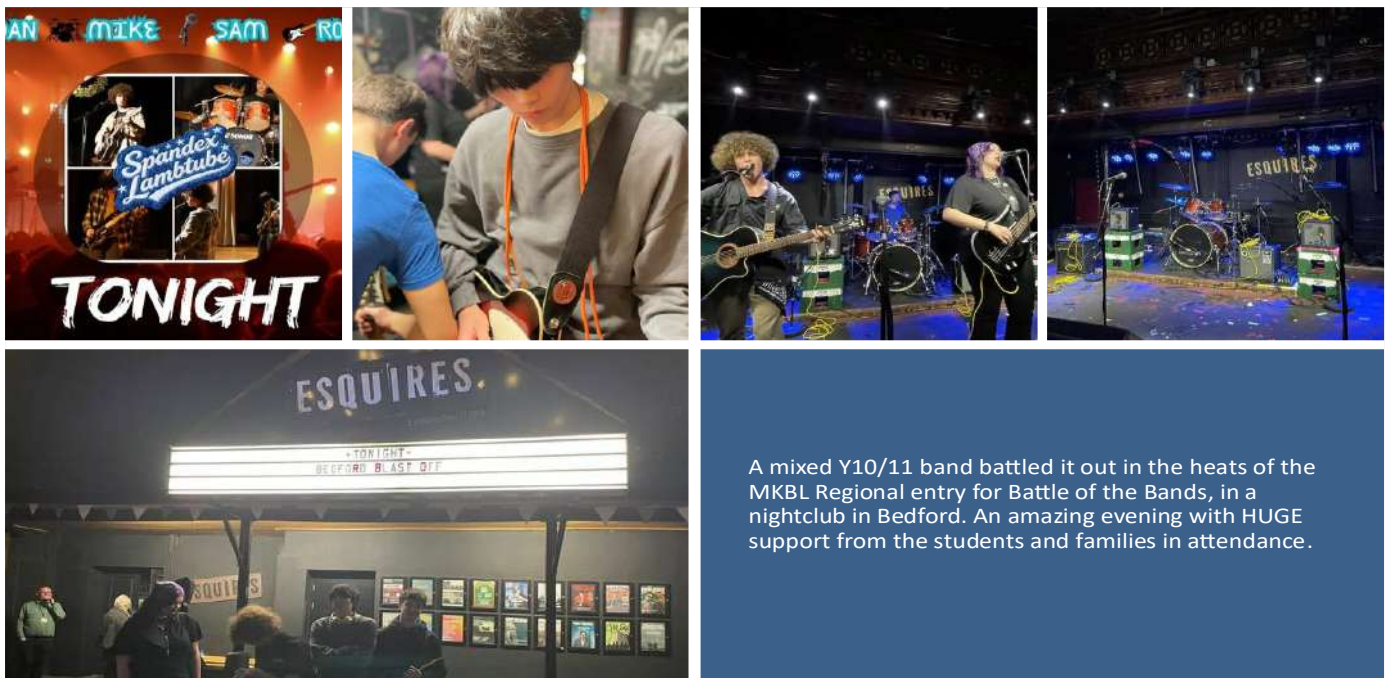


Y7 Orchestra Day



Our Year 7s have enjoyed a fantastic term of musical exploration — from a live, practical demonstration of the components of the orchestra to creating their very own DIY “rubbish orchestra” using recycled materials. This brilliant project not only showcased their creativity but also supported our ongoing work toward achieving our Environmental Pledge.

We also had a wonderful evening in Bedford, competing in this Years’s Battle of the Bands. I was so incredibly proud of the talent on display but also the minibus full of supporters who also enjoyed the evening!



A mixed Y10/11 band battled it out in the heats of the MKBL Regional entry for Battle of the Bands, in a nightclub in Bedford. An amazing evening with HUGE support from the students and families in attendance.

Careers Fair — Inspiring Futures

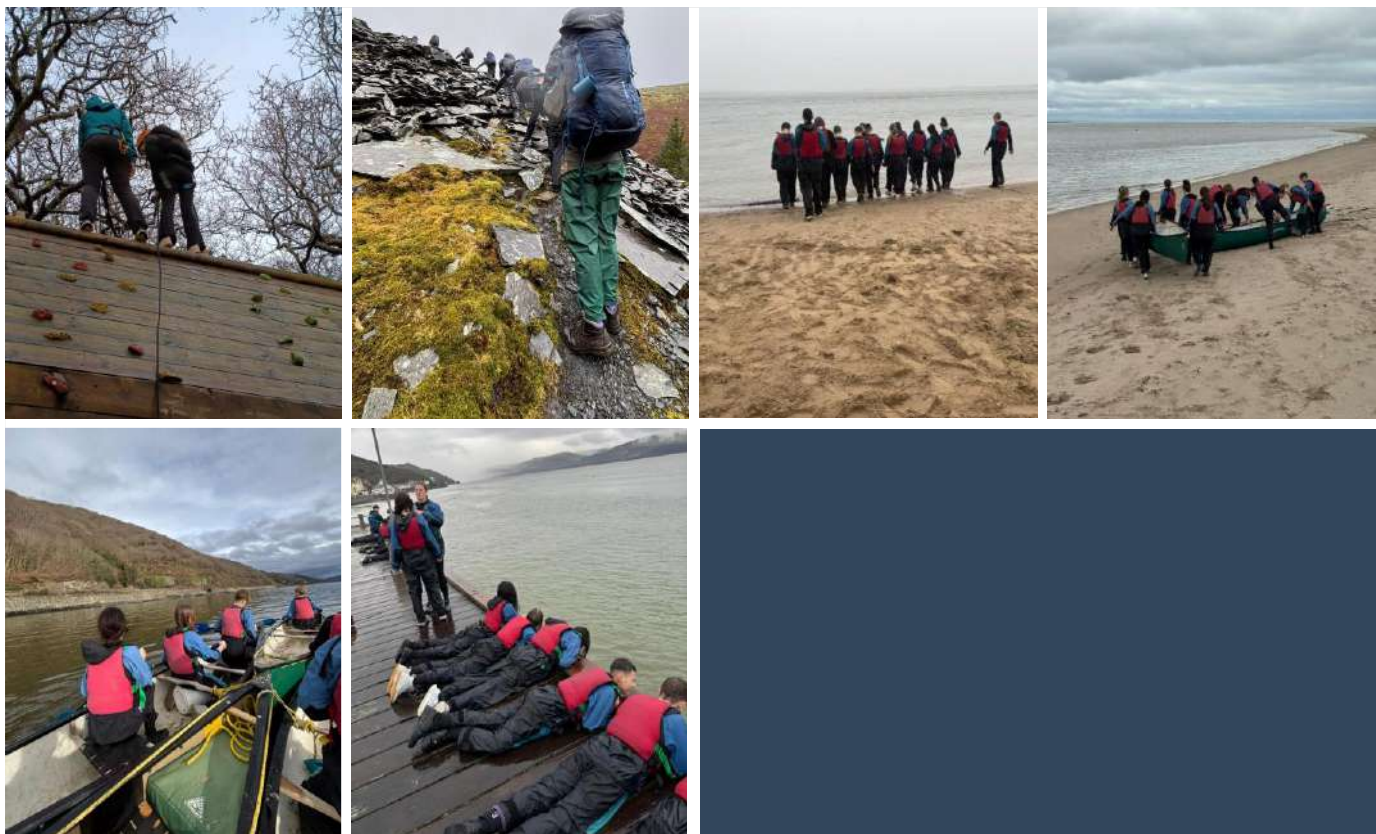


This term we were delighted to host our **Stratton School Careers Fair**, featuring **over 30 organisations**, including employers, apprenticeship providers, training pathways, and further and higher education institutions. It was a fantastic opportunity for students across all year groups to explore the wide range of routes available to them beyond school. Events like this play a vital role in our careers programme and directly support the **Gatsby Benchmarks**, particularly,

Benchmark 2 — Learning from Career and Labour Market Information: Students received up-to-date guidance from professionals representing local and national industries. **Benchmark 5 — Encounters with Employers and Employees:** Young people had meaningful conversations with experts from fields including engineering, healthcare, digital technology, public services, business, and creative industries. **Benchmark 7 — Encounters with Further and Higher Education:** Colleges, sixth forms, and universities were on hand to provide personalised advice on future study options.

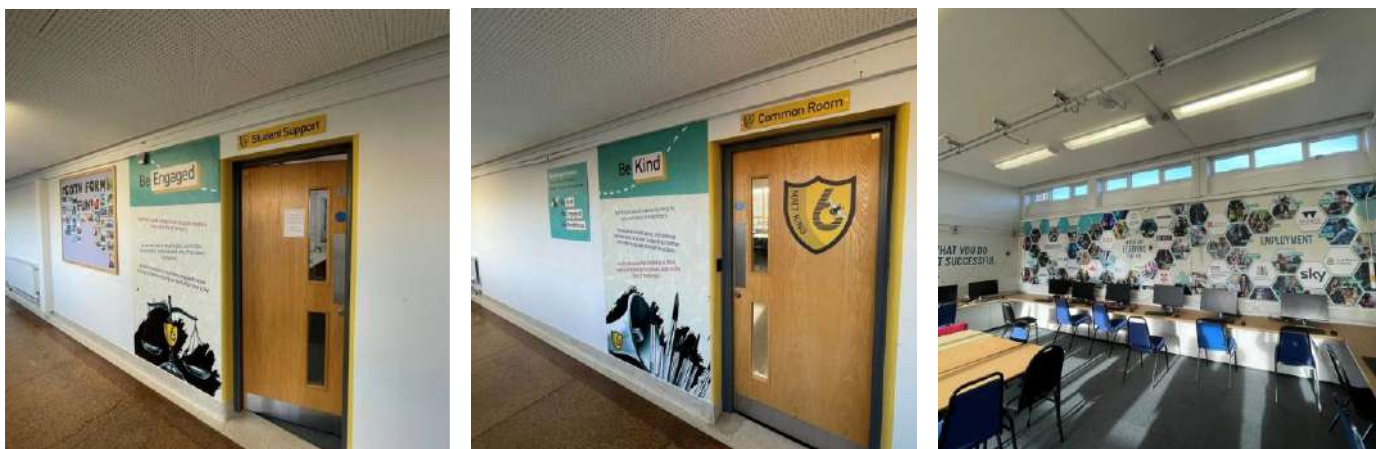
We are committed to ensuring every student has the knowledge, confidence, and support to make informed decisions about their future. Our Careers Fair is a powerful part of that commitment, helping students to broaden horizons, raise aspirations, and imagine what their future could look like.

Year 8 Outward Bound Residential — Aberdovey Adventure



A selection of our Year 8 students took part in an unforgettable **Outward Bound Trust residential in Aberdovey**, a powerful experience that sits at the heart of our Pupil Premium Charter and our commitment to providing enriching opportunities for every young person. The residential was delivered as a cross-trust Meridian Trust initiative, bringing together students from all of our secondary schools and our special schools to learn, grow, and challenge themselves side by side. This inclusive, collaborative model is something we are extremely proud of. Throughout the week, students stepped far outside their comfort zones as they tackled high-adventure activities, team challenges, and resilience-building tasks in the spectacular Welsh landscape. We are grateful to the Outward Bound Trust and Meridian Trust for helping us deliver such a transformative opportunity for our young people.

Matt King Sixth Form — Phase 2 Revamp Complete



We are excited to share that Phase 2 of the Matt King Sixth Form revamp is now complete, further enhancing the look, feel, and functionality of our post-16 learning environment. This phase introduced striking new wall wraps and motivational artwork, designed to inspire ambition, confidence, and pride in our Sixth Form community.

These vibrant visual updates create a more modern, aspirational atmosphere throughout the building, from study areas to social spaces, helping students feel both supported and motivated as they prepare for their next

steps beyond Stratton. The refreshed environment reflects our high expectations and our commitment to providing a truly exceptional place for our learners to think, work, collaborate, and succeed. This investment in the Matt King Sixth Form is part of our wider commitment to continuous improvement across the school, ensuring our students learn in spaces that are uplifting, purposeful, and designed to help them thrive.

The Brilliant Club Graduation



The Brilliant Club attended their graduation event **University of Cambridge Magdalene College** as part of The East of England Scholars Programme

Students enjoyed a guided tour of Magdalene College, gaining a real insight into life at Cambridge, followed by a Q&A session with current student ambassadors who shared honest advice and experiences about university study.



The celebrations concluded with a formal graduation ceremony, a proud moment for every student involved.

SEND and BUFC Partnership

A new partnership between Stratton and BUFC football club in association with BEDS FA was launched this term. This initiative has been created specifically to support students with SEMH and Communication & Interaction needs, offering them a safe, structured and confidence-building way to experience football right here in school.

What this new programme offers:

- A weekly football experience delivered by grassroots-level coaches
- Fully provided football kit, boots and boot bags at no cost to families
- All equipment kept and cared for in school to remove any barriers to participation
- A focus on belonging, teamwork, communication and emotional wellbeing
- Future exploration of friendly fixtures as the group develops

We are also incredibly proud that several of our Sixth Form students will have the chance to support coaches as part of their Level 1 coaching qualification, a brilliant leadership and enrichment opportunity.

This partnership has been fully funded through external support, meaning there is no cost to the school or families, which is truly wonderful and ensures every invited student can take part.

Our players got their first run out in their new kit and were put through their paces by our brilliant football coach - Rob Bates. Darren Wells - Community Football Technical Secretary, Natalie Bramley- SENDCO at Stratton School and BUFC Chairman Guillem Balague got to observe an excellent and engaging first football session. The students were outstanding

SEND Football Partnership with BUFC

- Our school has launched a fully funded SEND football partnership with BUFC and BEDS FA.
- This will be providing students with SEMH and Communication & Interaction needs a weekly, structured football programme supported by grassroots coaches, free kit and equipment, and a strong focus on belonging, teamwork and wellbeing.
- The initiative also offers leadership opportunities for Sixth Form students working toward coaching qualifications, with club and FA representatives visiting next week as the programme continues to grow.



World Book Day — Celebrating the Power of Reading

This month we joined schools across the country in celebrating World Book Day, a fantastic annual opportunity to shine a light on the joy, value, and importance of reading. Students and staff took part in activities designed to spark curiosity, share favourite stories, and promote reading for pleasure, one of the most powerful tools we have to support learning across every subject.

At Stratton, we know that strong reading habits are directly linked to improved progress, vocabulary development, confidence, and overall academic success. That's why developing a reading culture is a core priority for us, and why we continue to champion reading both in and beyond the classroom.

To help families support reading at home, we've created a set of carefully curated recommended reading lists, tailored to different age groups and interests. You can explore them on our website here:

 <https://stratton.school/school-reading-list>

We encourage all students to discover new authors, try different genres, and find books that genuinely excite and inspire them. A love of reading stays with you for life — and World Book Day is a wonderful reminder of just how transformative that can be.



Year 8 Trip to Astra Zeneca Discovery Centre



- Year 8 students had an incredible day at the **AstraZeneca** Astra Zeneca Discovery Centre in Cambridge.
- They had a tour of the working labs, going through the stages of medicine development and then completed a hands on activity where they got to purify their own medicine.

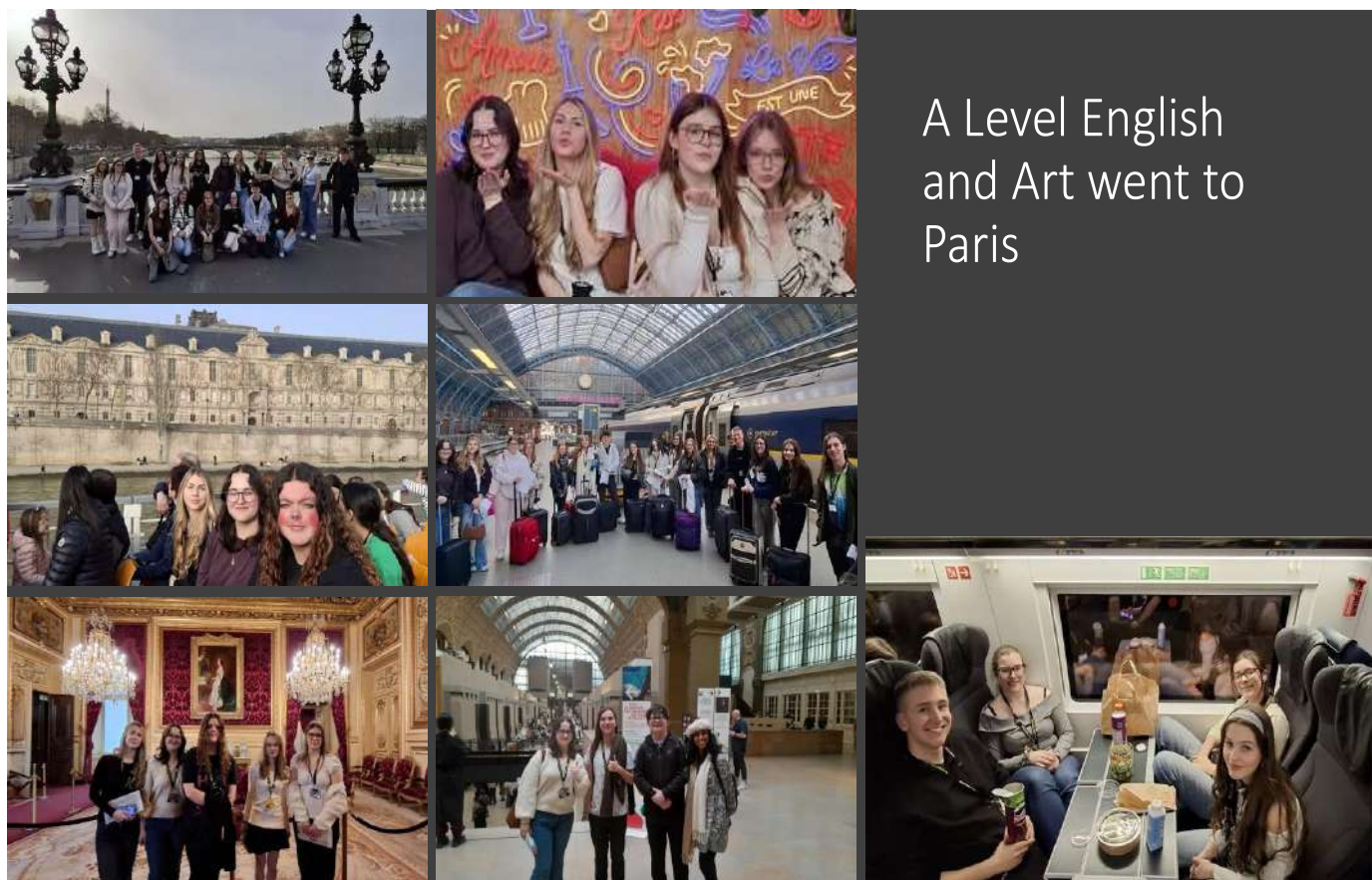
A Level Trip to Paris — Literature, Art & Culture Come Alive

Our A Level English and Art students recently travelled to Paris for an inspiring cross-curricular visit designed to deepen their understanding of both literature and art history. This enriching experience brought their studies to life in one of the world's most culturally significant cities.

For our A Level English students, the trip provided valuable context for the *Paris Anthology*, enabling them to explore the settings, themes, and cultural references that shape many of the texts. Wandering through districts such as Montmartre, the Latin Quarter, and along the Seine allowed students to experience first-hand the sense of place that underpins the anthology's diverse voices.

Meanwhile, our A Level Art students benefited enormously from the chance to study iconic works of French art history up close. Visits to major galleries including the Louvre, offered unparalleled opportunities to examine masterpieces by artists such as Monet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, and Delacroix. Seeing these works in person helped students develop a deeper understanding of technique, context, and artistic influence, strengthening the critical and analytical skills required for their coursework.

This shared experience not only enhanced subject knowledge but also fostered independence, cultural curiosity, and confidence — qualities that are invaluable both academically and personally. It was a truly memorable trip, and our students represented Stratton brilliantly throughout.

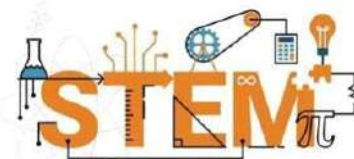


AQA Filming

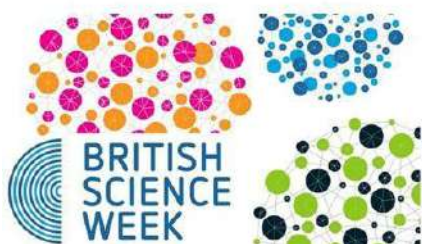
Sticking with the English Department for a moment, we were delighted to welcome AQA to Stratton as they spent time filming with our team. Stratton is proud to have been selected as a pilot school for the new GCSE texts, and it is a privilege to be working in collaboration with AQA on this exciting project.

STRATTON STEM WEEK

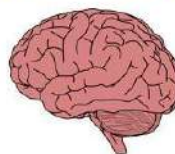
9th - 13th March 2026



Year 8 STEM
FAIR
12th March



Lots of exciting activities including- Dissections, Escape Rooms, CSI Investigations, Technology Challenges



Big Bang Show
11th March - LUNCHTIME

This term we celebrated our **whole-school STEM Week**, an exciting programme of activities designed to spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and showcase the incredible opportunities that Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths can offer. From hands-on experiments and engineering challenges to guest speakers and problem-solving workshops, students across all year groups engaged with STEM in dynamic, inspiring ways.

STEM Week is an important part of our curriculum enrichment at Stratton because it:

- **Builds essential skills** such as critical thinking, creativity, teamwork and resilience — all vital for success in modern careers.
- **Raises awareness of future pathways**, helping students understand the vast range of STEM-related roles in the UK and global workforce.
- **Promotes equality of access**, ensuring every student has the opportunity to explore STEM subjects in a fun, supportive environment.
- **Connects learning to the real world**, showing how science and technology shape everything from healthcare and climate solutions to engineering, design and digital innovation.

The enthusiasm and engagement shown throughout the week were exceptional, and it was wonderful to see students embracing challenge, asking great questions, and discovering new areas of interest. Experiences like this not only enrich learning but also help to raise aspirations — inspiring our young people to see themselves as the scientists, engineers, coders and problem-solvers of the future.

A huge well done to our superb Year 7s who rounded off STEM Week with an exceptional achievement: **1st and 2nd place** in the annual *Meridian Trust Escape Room Competition*! Students from six Trust schools tackled a series of challenging science puzzles to unlock the Treasure Box and Team Stratton shone throughout **Congratulations!**

The cat is out of the bag...

Musical theatre plays a powerful role in school life, offering students the chance to develop confidence, teamwork, creativity and resilience, skills that extend far beyond the stage. This year's production of *The Addams Family* showcased all of these qualities in abundance, and we could not be prouder of the exceptional performances delivered by our talented cast and crew. Their hard work, dedication and professionalism shone through in every rehearsal and every show.

To celebrate their achievements, and to build excitement for what comes next, the cast embarked on a special mystery trip this term, travelling to an undisclosed theatre to watch... an undisclosed musical! This secret "BIG REVEAL" tradition marks the launch of preparations for the Stratton Musical 2027. True to form, Mrs Lawson and Mr Guiver brought their signature flair for drama and anticipation to the event, reminding us once again why musical theatre is such a vibrant and cherished part of our school community.

And we are pleased to announce that the Stratton Musical 2027 is....

... Into the Woods



Lessons From Auschwitz – A Profound Experience



It was a real honour for the History Department to lead a one-day visit to Poland in partnership with the **Holocaust Education Trust** as part of the *Lessons From Auschwitz* programme. Our Year 12 students — **Henri, Fin, Jess, Kalin, and Sophie** were outstanding ambassadors throughout.

Before travelling to Auschwitz-Birkenau, students attended a seminar with a Holocaust survivor, and they are now developing their 'Next Steps' project to contribute to our school's Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations in 2027.

Mr Macwhinnie



We're thrilled to share that **Stratton School has achieved the Parent Friendly School Standard** — a recognition of our commitment to strong, meaningful partnerships with parents and carers.

This thorough review has helped us celebrate what we're doing well and identify how we can strengthen our approach even further. Our goal is now to work towards the **Silver** and ultimately **Gold** standards as we continue to enhance communication, inclusion, and support for all families. We believe wholeheartedly that when schools and families work in genuine partnership, extraordinary things happen for our young people. Thank you to all our parents and carers for your ongoing trust, support and involvement in our school community.

You can follow our progress on our new webpage: <https://stratton.school/parent-friendly-school->

If you'd like to get even more involved, a fantastic way to do so is by joining FOSS (Friends of Stratton School PTA) [Friends of Stratton School](#). Your participation and energy make a real difference!

Psychology Immersion Day — Meridian Trust HUB Event




We were delighted to host a **Psychology Immersion Day** for Years 7 and 8, welcoming students from Sharnbrook Academy to join our own learners. Students explored the differences between the brain and the mind through a series of hands-on, engaging activities, including:

- Attachment and “egg babies”
- Perception, memory, chunking, mnemonics, and rehearsal
- Primacy and recency effects
- Method of Loci
- Narrative chaining
- Eyewitness testimony and memory accuracy

One of the standout moments? The jelly brains — fun, memorable, and a brilliant way to explore how different brain regions work, including the visual cortex through optical illusions. A day full of curiosity, discovery, and plenty of “light bulb moments”!

Dates for next term

Back by popular demand, we will be uploading our Summer Term Card to the website shortly. This has a comprehensive breakdown of all the exciting opportunities occurring over the summer months – aiming to have this on the website before we return from the Spring Holidays.



Summer
Term
2026

April						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

May						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

June						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

July						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We are proud of our community and grateful for the partnership we share in supporting our students.

Warm regards,
 Sam Farmer
 Principal, Stratton School