



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

8<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that you all enjoyed the Bank Holiday weekend and the 4-day week this week! The Summer exam season is now underway for those students in Years 11 and 13. I would like to take this opportunity to wish them all the very best of luck and encourage them to take advantage of all the revision opportunities provided by the college to support them over the coming weeks. Information will be sent to parents/carers of students in Year 11 on the 15<sup>th</sup> May with an update on leaving dates and leavers' celebrations.

Listening to staff and student voice, alongside recommendations from external support, we are changing the way that students in Years 7-10 queue to access food at lunch time from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May in order to streamline our processes. The new approach will allow a more staggered approach and eliminate overcrowding in corridor areas. Please be assured, we are not directing where students sit to eat their food, but simply changing the way in which they enter the canteen rather than forming a line.

- Step 1 – students will start to queue for food at the top entrance to the red hall where they will be directed by a member of staff to an available seat.
- Step 2 – Each table contains 12 seats and when the member of staff is ready, they will direct those 12 students to enter the canteen to get their food. This process will repeat itself until all tables have entered.
- Step 3 – Students will exit the canteen & then sit as usual in available seats to eat lunch with friends.

There will be available tables/seats as usual for those who have packed lunch. These new processes do not apply to Year 11 or students in Sixth Form. They are to enter the canteen in the 'traditional' fashion. Students will need to follow staff instruction to support both the safety and wellbeing of other students, alongside our catering staff and, as is currently the case, they will be responsible for the removal of any rubbish in the canteen. This means placing rubbish in the provided bins and respecting their environment.

Last week our students who access the Supportive Skills Department (SSD) were invited to take part in our very first SEND Sports Fun Day. They were incredibly lucky with the weather and had a fantastic day taking part in a wide range of activities. Today, we have a large group of our Year 9 students enjoying a visit to Imperial War Museum Duxford and we look forward to sharing further information on this with you in next week's newsletter. Next week sees selected Year 8 students visit the Titanic exhibition at the NEC in Birmingham and the training day for those students who have signed up to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

With best wishes for the weekend.

*Dawn White*  
*Principal*

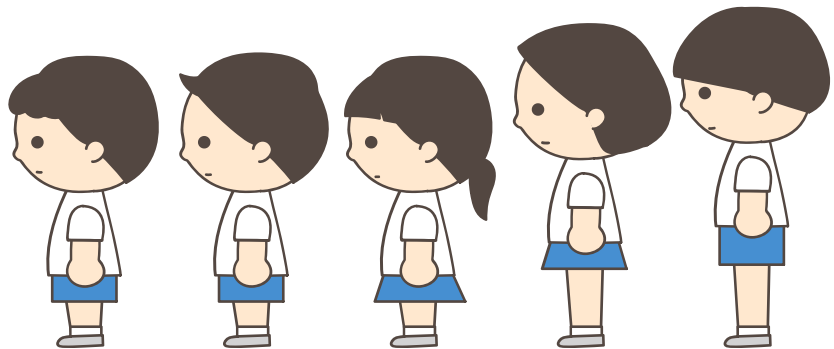


# A Positive Environment for our Students

As the school continues to grow in student numbers, our corridors and shared spaces are becoming increasingly busy at key transition times. In order to create a safer, calmer and more positive learning environment, we are asking our Year 9 students to line up in an orderly manner with their teachers after lunch before entering their Period 5 lessons.

This approach is intended to help reduce congestion, particularly in some of our narrower corridors, while ensuring that all students feel safe, calm and ready to learn. It will be rolled out across all year groups in due course.

We greatly appreciate your support and understanding in helping us maintain a positive environment for all students.



# Year 11 Exam Season

To all of our Year 11 and 13 students,

This week marks the beginning of your GCSE and A level examinations — the culmination of years of hard work, determination, and resilience. We know how much effort you have put in to reach this point, and we could not be prouder of you.

Remember to believe in yourselves, stay focused, and give each exam your very best. Success is not only about results, but about the commitment, courage, and perseverance you have shown throughout your journey.

Take a deep breath, stay positive, and trust in the preparation you have done.

Good luck to every one of you — all the staff at Sir Harry Smith Community College are behind you and wishing you every success.

You've got this!

**Mr Smith.**



# Year 11 Exam Season

Practical GCSE examinations are now all completed - well done to all of those students who have sat these! Written examinations are well under way - please find below a copy of the exam timetable, for your reference.

Mrs Reed.

Summer 2026 Exam Timetable GCSE								
Week	Date	Morning - 9am	Duration	Level	Afternoon - 1:10pm	Duration	Level	
Wk A	13th April	GCSE Drama Prep & Music Composition - All Day						
Wk A	14th April	GCSE Drama Prep - All Day						
Wk A	15th April	GCSE Drama Exam - All Day						
Wk A	16th April	GCSE Music Composition - All Day						
	21st April	Deadline to withdraw / change tier and be refunded						
Wk B	22nd April	GCSE Polish Speaking Exam						
Wk B	23rd April	GCSE Turkish Speaking Exam						
Wk B	24th April	GCSE Art Exam - All Day						
Wk A	27th April	GCSE Art & MFL Speaking Exams - All Day						
Wk A	28th April	GCSE MFL Speaking Exams - All Day						
Wk A	29th April	GCSE MFL Speaking, ALevel French & Spanish Speaking & ALevel Art Exams - All Day						
Wk A	30th April	GCSE MFL Speaking & ALevel Art Exams - All Day						
Wk A	1st May	GCSE MFL Speaking & ALevel Art Exams - All Day						
4th May		May Day Bank Holiday						
Wk B	5th May	3DD Exam - All Day						
Wk B	6th May	3DD Exam - All Day						
Wk B	7th May	Turkish L&R - H	1hr 50	GCSE	Citizenship	1hr 45	GCSE	
					German L&R	1hr 20 / 1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk B	8th May	Sport - R184	1hr 15	Camb Nat	Drama	1hr 30	GCSE	
		Sociology	1hr 45	GCSE				
Wk A	11th May	English Literature	1hr 45	GCSE	Business	1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk A	12th May				Biology	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE	
Wk A	13th May	Geography	1hr 30	GCSE				
Wk A	14th May	Maths	1hr 30	GCSE	Citizenship	1hr 45	GCSE	
					German Writing	1hr 15 / 10	GCSE	
Wk A	15th May	History	1hr 20	GCSE	Sociology	1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk B	18th May	Chemistry	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE				
Wk B	19th May	English Literature	2hrs 15	GCSE	Child Development - R057	1hr 15	Camb Nat	
Wk B	20th May	French L&R	1hr 20 / 1hr 45	GCSE	Enterprise & Marketing - R067	1hr 15	Camb Nat	
Wk B	21st May	English Language	1hr 45	GCSE	Business	1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk B	22nd May	Turkish Writing	1hr 25	GCSE				
		Half Term						
Wk A	1st June	Japanese L&R	1hr50	GCSE				
Wk A	2nd June	Physics	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE	Polish L&R	1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk A	3rd June	Maths	1hr 30	GCSE	Geography	1hr 30	GCSE	
Wk A	4th June	History	1hr 50	GCSE	French Writing	1hr 15 / 1hr 10	GCSE	
Wk A	5th June	English Language	1hr 45	GCSE	Music	1hr 15	GCSE	
Wk B	8th June	Biology	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE				
Wk B	9th June	Japanese Writing	1hr 25	GCSE	History	1hr 30	GCSE	
Wk B	10th June	Maths	1hr 30	GCSE	DT	2hrs	GCSE	
Wk B	11th June	Geography	1hr 30	GCSE	Food	1hr 45	GCSE	
Wk B	12th June	Chemistry	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE	Polish Writing	1hr 15	GCSE	
					Dance	1hr 30	GCSE	
Wk A	15th June	Physics	1hr 45 / 1hr 15	GCSE				

# Education Tute Online Revision

## GCSE Revision Live is back.

Free revision sessions on YouTube the evening before each GCSE exam - with focused teaching, a short Q&A, and live support from a qualified teacher throughout.

We know the night before can be stressful, so this is designed to help students feel calmer, more prepared, and ready to go into each exam with confidence.

Everything is accessed through the poster - students just scan the QR code to find their session. No sign-up, no accounts, just straight in.

Mr Thornton.





**Tute** EDUCATION

## Replace panic with purpose

Free revision on YouTube -  
the night before each GCSE exam

*No sign-up needed*

**Scan to join**

-  Focus on what actually matters
-  Learn how to approach exam questions
-  Get live support from qualified teachers
-  Join each session on YouTube at 18:00

**@TuteEducation** 🔍

*Streamed on YouTube*

# Student Journalists: Happy Birthday Sir David Attenborough!

Our college journalists meet every Wednesday lunchtime in the library to write articles on school life, wider world news stories and topics of their choice. The Journalism Club is something the library is keen to grow over the coming term and into September.

This week, Year 7 students, **Emily & Olivia** have contributed an article celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Sir David Attenborough:

*On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, Sir David Attenborough celebrates his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. He is one of our most important naturalists and documentary makers and has been working in television since 1954! When researching this article, we learned that David feels the secret to his long life is small healthy meals, regular walks and skipping up the stairs!*

*David is not strictly vegetarian, but doesn't eat a lot of red meat because he worries about the environment. This is no surprise as David has campaigned for climate change and has made several documentaries about ways to take care of our planet.*

*David obviously loves animals and he has been part of many amazing discoveries. Let's take a look:*

- *He was the first to get camera footage of the Dumbo Octopus*
- *He discovered a prehistoric plesiosaur, which was named the Attenborosaurus - the fossil was 47 million years old!*
- *In 2015 he broke the world record for deepest dive on the Great Barrier Reef - over 1000ft in a submersible*
- *Over 50 plants have been named after him!*
- *Many species now carry Attenborough in their name, including butterflies, frogs and even an echidna!*

*Happy birthday Sir David Attenborough! We are proud to have one of our houses at SHSCC named after such an inspirational figure.*



# Supportive Skills SEND Sports Fun Day

Students who access the Supportive Skills Department (SSD) were invited to take part in our very first SEND Sports Fun Day, a fantastic opportunity that brought together teamwork, resilience and, most importantly, fun.

Throughout the day, students engaged in a wide range of activities, including team-building challenges, competitive games and inclusive physical activities designed to ensure that every student could participate and succeed. They enjoyed a mix of traditional Sports Day events alongside exciting Commando Joe-style activities, which encouraged collaboration, problem-solving and perseverance.

In addition, students took part in games such as rounders and an engaging escape room-style brain teaser, which provided a brilliant balance of physical activity and cognitive challenge. The day was rounded off with a lively Just Dance session, where students could celebrate their achievements together in a fun and energetic way.

A special thank you must go to Miss Hunter for leading the SSD Sports Fun Day so successfully. Her organisation ensured that all activities were carefully planned and prepared, and that both staff and students were supported throughout the day, with everyone in the right place at the right time.

It was a truly memorable day, full of achievement, smiles and inclusive success and we look forward to making this an annual event.

**Mrs Light-Rudland**



# Global Dance Open Championships

The college is so proud of Aaliyah and Lola from Year 7 who have qualified to represent Team England in the Global Dance Open Championships in Spain and will represent Team England/GB for their duet.

This is an amazing opportunity and the result of lots of hardwork! We know you will join us in wishing the girls every success in the competition.



# Student Sporting Success

Congratulations to Alfie in Year 10 for his commitment to rugby. He has been the Captain of the Under 15s team at Peterborough Rugby Club since Jan 1st 2026. He was selected to play for the county on the Hunts and Peterborough team and played in all 3 matches against different teams from Northamptonshire.

Alfie is also a qualified Contact and Tag Under 13's coach, he has completed Lineout and Scrummaging courses with the RFU and currently is completing his refereeing qualification and refereed his first official match at the weekend for the Under 12's PRUFC team against Leicester Lions.

Well done Alfie; this is a fantastic achievement!



# Useful Information

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators EXAM-DAY READINESS

The lead-up to exams can be an emotionally challenging time. As the date approaches, nerves can become harder to manage. From nutrition to emotional support, this guide offers 10 practical strategies to reduce stress and enhance performance. Whether at home or in school, these tips encourage focus, resilience, and wellbeing – giving every student the best opportunity to approach exam day with clarity and self-belief.

### 1 FUEL THE BRAIN

Encourage students to eat a balanced breakfast and hydrate before exams. The brain is around 80% water, so even mild dehydration can reduce memory and concentration. Provide water, cereal bars, or fruit on exam day – especially helpful if anxiety affects appetite. A little fuel can go a long way towards better performance.

### 2 PROMOTE POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Support young people to challenge negative thoughts. Help them replace "I'm going to fail" with "I've worked hard; I can do this". Positive affirmations boost confidence and reduce anxiety. Practise these together at home or in school settings.

### 3 PRACTISE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Encourage daily use of calming techniques, such as diaphragmatic breathing, guided muscle relaxation, or mindfulness. These techniques help regulate stress responses. Consider running short morning sessions before exams, or practising together at home to promote calm focus.

### 4 CREATE FAMILIAR COMFORT

Ensure a supportive adult is visible and available before exams. The calm presence of a parent or teacher can offer a sense of safety. Schools can provide 'calm zones'; parents can support with consistent routines and reassuring conversation.

### 5 ENCOURAGE VERBAL EXPRESSION

Invite students to talk about their exam worries. Whether it's a quick check-in with a teacher or chat with a parent, open conversations reduce emotional pressure. Active listening is often more powerful than immediate problem solving.

### 6 ORGANISE EXAM-DAY LOGISTICS

Prepare exam-day essentials in advance. Schools can coordinate staff to greet students and manage pre-exam spaces. Parents can prepare clothes, equipment and transport the night before to prevent stress.

### 7 BUILD A COPING TOOLKIT

Teach students simple 'in-the-moment' coping strategies. These include calm breathing, focusing on what they can control, and using grounding techniques. Practise these together so they become easy to recall under pressure.

### 8 EMBRACE A BALANCED ROUTINE

Reinforce healthy routines: regular sleep, nutritious meals, movement and time to unwind. Families and schools can support students by encouraging outdoor time, screen breaks and restful evenings before exams.

### 9 NORMALISE EXAM NERVES

Let students know that feeling anxious is normal and doesn't mean they're unprepared. Reassure them that a certain level of stress is natural – and can actually improve focus and performance when managed well. A calm, understanding tone – at home and at school – helps build confidence and resilience.

### 10 KEEP SPACES CALM

Reduce pressure in exam-day environments. Whether in the school common room or family kitchen, avoid last-minute cramming. Instead, use soft lighting, gentle music, and quiet time to support a composed mindset.

### Meet Our Expert

Stefan Fusenich is a teacher educator and DfE subject learning coach (advanced practitioner). Stefan has extensive management and teaching experience across various posts in education, and is a qualified lecturer with Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/exam-day-readiness>

# Useful Information

Sir Harry Smith Community College



## Mental Health Resources and Support Services



# kooth

Kooth is a free, safe, and anonymous online mental health and wellbeing platform for young people aged 11 to 25, offering counselling, peer support, and self-help resources.

Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community designed to support children and young people with emotional and mental health challenges. It provides a safe, confidential, and accessible environment where users can engage with qualified counsellors, connect with peers, and access self-help tools at their own pace. The service is available daily up to 10pm, ensuring timely support when needed.

<https://www.kooth.com>

# Key Information

## Term Dates

### SPRING TERM 2026

START OF TERM	Monday 5th January 2026
Professional Day (college closed to students)	Friday 13th February 2026
Half Term	Monday 16th to Friday 20th February 2026
Last Day of Term	Friday 27th March 2026

### SUMMER TERM 2026

START OF TERM	Monday 13th April 2026
May Day Bank Holiday (college closed)	Monday 4th May 2026
Half Term	Monday 25th to Friday 29th May 2026
Last Day of Term	Friday 17th July 2026
Professional Day (college closed to students)	Monday 20th July 2026

## Contacting Us

Please visit our website to find out the best way of contacting the person you would like to get in touch with. Please do remember that if you are contacting a member of our teaching staff, they will have teaching commitments during the day so please bear with them. If you would like to meet with a member of staff then please do arrange an appointment first.

In any cases of an emergency, please call the school on **01733 703991**.

## Social Media

Please be sure to follow us on social media. We have Facebook pages for Sir Harry Smith Community College, Park Lane Primary School, New Road Primary School and the Aspire Learning Trust.

