



Sedgehill in Review

December 2025

A look back at some of the fantastic goings on at Sedgehill Academy

THIS ISSUE

Looking forward

Our Y11s and Y13s
prepare for the future

It's Christmas!

It's beginning to look a lot
like Christmas at Sedgehill

Going pro

Our brass instrumentalists
work with the experts



One eye on the future

The next step for our Y11s

We were delighted to welcome an impressive number of Year 11 students and their families to our recent Sixth Form Open Evening. The turnout was a real testament to the ambition, curiosity, and commitment of our students as they begin to consider their next steps beyond GCSEs. Throughout the evening, visitors had the opportunity to explore our Sixth Form provision, speak directly with subject teachers, and hear from current Sixth Form students about their experiences.

Departments showcased the breadth and depth of A-level and vocational courses on offer, highlighting the high expectations, academic challenge, and strong support that define Sixth Form life at Sedgehill.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 students for approaching this important decision with such maturity and enthusiasm, and we look forward to supporting them as they take their next steps into Sixth Form and beyond.



Talent spotlight

By Mr Stuchfield

Over the past few weeks, I have begun a programme of one-to-one careers meetings with all KS4 and KS5 students, and it has already been an incredibly insightful and rewarding experience. Although I have not yet met with every student, the conversations so far have revealed a huge range of ambition, talent, and thoughtful reflection about the future. Students are articulating clear goals, exploring new possibilities, and, in many cases, surprising themselves with what they are capable of achieving.

These 1:1s allow us to look closely at individual strengths, interests, and pathways – whether that be university, apprenticeships, employment, or alternative routes. They also help identify where additional guidance, challenge, or encouragement may be needed to ensure every student feels confident about their next steps.

I would like to thank families for their continued support as these meetings take place. The encouragement students receive at home plays a vital role in shaping their aspirations and confidence. I look forward to continuing these conversations over the coming weeks and working closely with students and families to help every young person realise their potential.

Striking a chord

Sedgehill Academy's Sixth Form students recently took part in an engaging and informative workshop delivered by WaterBear College of Music, providing valuable insight into careers within the music industry. The session explored a wide range of pathways beyond performance, including music production, songwriting, sound engineering, artist management, and creative entrepreneurship.

Students learned about the realities of working in the music industry, the skills and qualifications required, and how academic study can link directly to creative careers. The workshop encouraged students to think broadly about future opportunities, highlighting how passion, discipline, and professionalism are essential for success in the creative sector.

The session was inspiring, practical, and eye-opening, helping students make informed decisions about their next steps and demonstrating how music can lead to sustainable and rewarding careers.



Break a leg!

We are incredibly proud that all KS3 students at Sedgehill Academy have the opportunity to perform in front of their peers. At a time when live performance opportunities are becoming increasingly rare, we remain committed to ensuring every student builds confidence, creativity, and communication skills through performance. Standing on stage, sharing ideas, and supporting one another helps students develop resilience and self-belief. These shared experiences not only celebrate talent but also strengthen our school community, reminding us of the unique power of drama to give every student a voice.



Around the Academy

Learning, exploring, and having fun whilst doing it



Word.

The best that has been written - from Shakespeare to Sedgehill

This year, Sedgehill Academy has proudly celebrated a Year of the Book, placing reading at the heart of school life and reinforcing its importance for learning, wellbeing, and imagination. Across the school, a range of initiatives have encouraged students to develop positive reading habits and a love of books.

In Years 7 and 8, students have taken part in Drop Everything and Read, spending ten minutes reading at the start of lessons each day. This calm and consistent routine has helped students build focus, improve literacy skills, and develop confidence as readers, while also giving them valuable time to enjoy reading for pleasure.

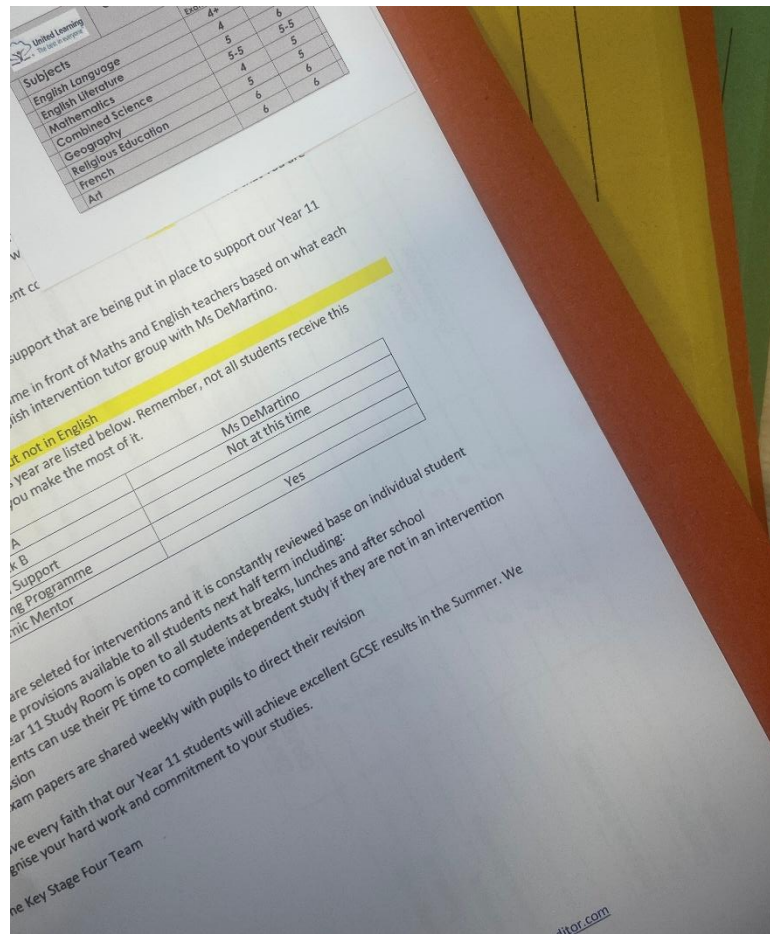
Reading has also been promoted beyond the classroom. During parents' evenings, school books have been used to spark conversations about learning, progress, and the importance of reading at home. These moments have highlighted how reading supports success across all subjects, not just English.

Throughout the year, staff have actively encouraged reading through displays, recommendations, and conversations, helping students discover new authors and genres. The Year of the Book has reinforced a clear message: reading matters, and at Sedgehill Academy, it is a shared priority for students, staff, and families alike.



Across the Academy

Getting the job done with kindness



A colourful end to the year

Year 11 results, parents' evening, and next steps

Sedgehill Academy recently held a highly successful Sixth Form Open Evening, welcoming Year 11 students and their families to explore the opportunities available within our Sixth Form. The evening provided a valuable chance to meet staff, speak to current Sixth Form students, and learn more about our wide range of subjects, enrichment opportunities, and post-18 pathways. The strong turnout reflected the growing ambition and engagement of our Year 11 cohort.

Following the Open Evening, the school hosted Year 11 Parents' Evening, allowing families to discuss progress, next steps, and aspirations in more detail. Staff shared colour-coded predictions to clearly highlight strengths, areas for improvement, and the specific gains students could make with focused effort. This clarity helped students and families understand exactly what was needed to move forward with confidence.

Building on this momentum, Gains Week took place, focusing on how small, targeted changes can lead to significant improvements. Year 11 students were encouraged to see how better attendance, improved organisation, and securing just one or two extra marks could be enough to cross key grade boundaries. These small fixes made a big difference, helping students recognise that progress is both achievable and within their control.



Now, with Open Evening, Parents' Evening, and Gains Week completed, we are actively encouraging all Year 11 students to apply to Sedgehill Academy Sixth Form. Our message is clear: staying with us provides continuity, high expectations, and tailored support at a crucial stage of their education.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Ms Thurston,

Ms Hird, and Ms DeRosa, whose dedication, organisation, and leadership have been central to the success of these events. Their hard work continues to ensure that every student feels supported, informed, and confident about their next steps.

To recognise the incredible effort behind the week, staff and students enjoyed a well-earned treat, with a waffle and hot chocolate van on site. It was a warm, well-deserved reward that perfectly reflected the positive energy and hard work across the school.

Get those gains!

Small changes for big wins

Gains Week at Sedgehill Academy has highlighted how small changes can lead to big results, particularly for our Year 11 students. A renewed focus on attendance, punctuality, and targeted revision has helped many students make crucial progress. For some, it has been just one or two extra marks that have pushed them over a grade boundary; for others, improved focus and consistent attendance have made all the difference. Teachers worked closely with students to identify quick wins and simple



fixes, proving that success doesn't always come from major changes, but from doing the small things well. Gains Week has been a powerful reminder that every lesson counts and every mark matters.

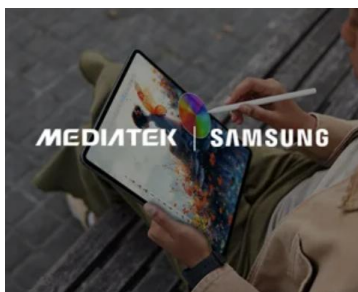


Poetry in motion

Up close with professional writer and performer

Sedgehill Academy was delighted to welcome award-winning poet Arji Manuelpillai for an inspiring visit that celebrated the power of language, identity, and storytelling. During the session, Arji shared his work with students, exploring how poetry can be used to express personal experiences, culture, and social issues.

Students were encouraged to think creatively about their own voices and experiences, gaining insight into how poets draw on the world around them for inspiration. Arji also spoke openly about his journey as a writer, offering valuable advice on finding confidence, refining ideas, and embracing creativity. The visit was both engaging and thought-provoking, sparking lively discussion and enthusiasm for poetry across the school. Experiences like this play an important role in nurturing creativity and helping students see writing as a powerful tool for self-expression and connection.



Making connections

An inspiring electronic engineer recently visited to speak with our KS4 and KS5 students about careers in STEM. The talk explored microelectronics, real-world applications of physics and computing, and the wide range of exciting pathways available in engineering, motivating students to think about the next steps.

Greeting the morning

By Ms Cooper, Assistant Principal

Each morning at Sedgehill Academy, I have conversations with students who have missed a day of school. These are never about blame. Instead, they are about connection, care, and helping students feel welcomed back into learning. What those conversations consistently remind me is just how important attendance really is.

When students are in school every day, they don't just access lessons – they build routines, friendships, confidence, and momentum. Learning is cumulative, and even one missed day can mean missing a key explanation, a discussion, or a moment of encouragement that helps everything else make sense. Being present allows students to feel part of something bigger than themselves: a community that supports, challenges, and believes in them.

We know that life can be complicated, and there are times when absence is unavoidable. What matters most is the message we give our young people – that their presence is valued and that they are missed when they are not here. Every day back is a fresh start.

Strong attendance is not about perfection; it is about consistency, belonging, and opportunity. When students show up, we can support them fully – and that is when they truly thrive.



Festive fun

Raising spirits and raising money

That's the spirit!

Music, cheer, food... and all without getting ready for the day

Sedgehill Academy brought festive cheer to the final week of term with a lively Christmas Concert held during lunchtime. The event featured performances from students across all year groups, showcasing the incredible talent within the school.

The concert included a mix of choirs, instrumental ensembles, and solo performances, with standout contributions from the Year 7 choir and the school orchestra. Students performed a blend of traditional carols and contemporary holiday tunes, spreading festive spirit to all who attended. The lunchtime event allowed students to showcase their hard work and talent in front of their peers, offering a fun and uplifting break from the school day. It was a perfect way to end the term, leaving everyone with a sense of joy and excitement for the holidays, and raising £170 for charity in the process!



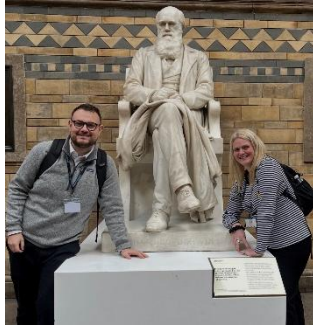
Sedgehill Academy students also had a cosy and fun-filled day dressing in their pyjamas to raise money for the Year 11 Prom. Laughter and school spirit filled the corridors as students swapped their uniforms for slippers, onesies, and nightwear, all while supporting this important milestone event. The initiative not only brought smiles to everyone's faces but also encouraged generosity, helping ensure the prom will be a memorable celebration for our Year 11 leavers. A huge thank you to all students and staff who took part – your contributions will make a real difference!

Students and staff at Sedgehill Academy donned their Christmas jumpers to celebrate the festive season and raise funds for disaster relief. The school was awash with colour, creativity, and holiday spirit as everyone embraced the fun, festive theme.

Sedgehill Academy students and staff came together to enjoy a festive Christmas dinner, adding warmth and celebration to the final week of term. The dining hall was filled with the sights and smells of traditional seasonal fare, from roast turkey and vegetables to delicious desserts, creating a cheerful and communal atmosphere. Students appreciated the chance to relax, socialise, and enjoy a well-deserved treat after a busy term. The Christmas dinner provided a perfect opportunity to reflect on the year's achievements, share laughter with friends and teachers, and get into the festive spirit before the holiday break.

The event not only brightened up the corridors but also gave the school community an opportunity to support those in need, with all donations going to aid relief efforts for people affected by natural disasters. A big thank you to everyone who participated – your generosity and festive cheer are making a real difference this holiday season!

Geography with bite



Ms Luck and Mr Adams recently took a group of enthusiastic Geography students on an exciting trip to the Natural History Museum, where learning truly came to life. Students explored fascinating exhibits on natural hazards, climate, and the physical processes that shape our planet, with the iconic dinosaur gallery proving a particular highlight. The trip allowed students to deepen their classroom knowledge through real-world examples, inspiring curiosity and thoughtful discussion. Ms Luck and Mr Adams praised the students for their excellent engagement and behaviour throughout the day. The visit was both educational and memorable, leaving students with a renewed enthusiasm for Geography – and a few “dino-mite” memories to take back to the classroom.



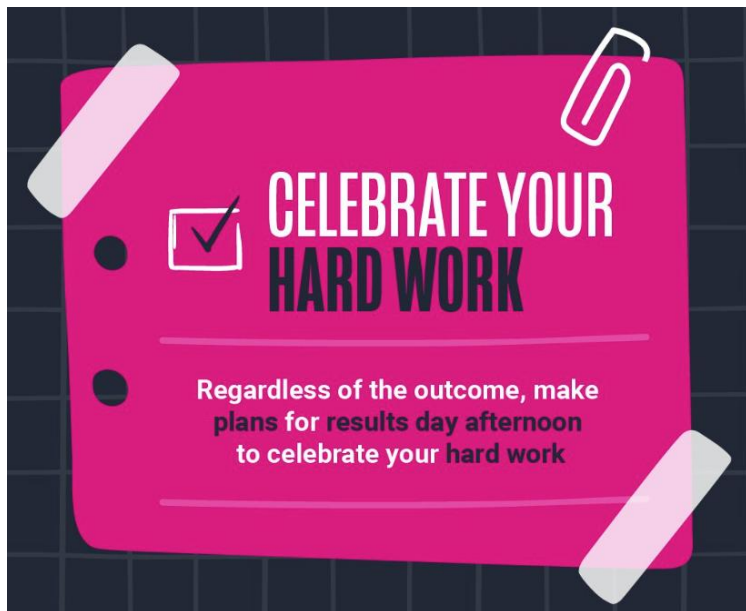
More than lessons



Enrichment has been a real highlight this year, with 40 clubs offered to students across KS3. Engagement has been very strong in Year 7, with 83% participating consistently, followed by 67% of Year 8 and 56% of Year 9 students.

These activities have helped develop new skills, build confidence, and strengthen friendships beyond the classroom. Next term,

we are aiming high and pushing for 100% participation across all KS3 year groups, ensuring every student benefits from the wide range of enrichment opportunities available. Ms Hird has done a fantastic job of boosting attendance to clubs alongside her role as Head of Year 11.



A note from the Principal

By Ms Cassidy, Principal

At Sedgehill Academy, community spirit is one of our greatest strengths. Every day, I am reminded that a school is not just a place of learning, but a community built on kindness, generosity, and shared purpose. When students, staff, and families come together, the impact reaches far beyond the classroom.

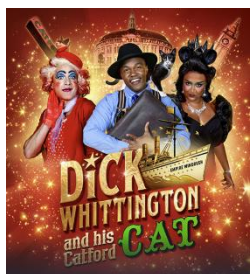
This term, we have seen wonderful examples of this through student-led initiatives that have raised money for both charitable causes and the Year 11 Prom. Events such as Christmas Jumper Day have brought colour and joy to the school while encouraging students to think about others. Whether fundraising for disaster relief or contributing towards an important milestone like the Year 11 Prom, our students have shown creativity, leadership, and a genuine desire to make a difference.

What makes these moments so special is that they are led by students themselves. They demonstrate empathy, responsibility, and a strong sense of belonging—values we work hard to nurture at Sedgehill. These experiences help students understand the importance of giving back and supporting one another, skills that will serve them well beyond their time at school. I am immensely proud of our community and grateful to everyone who continues to contribute to the positive, caring spirit that defines Sedgehill Academy.

Future-proofing

Laying the groundwork

Sedgehill Academy is incredibly proud of our Year 13 students, who have worked tirelessly to complete their UCAS applications this term. Their dedication, focus, and determination have been truly inspiring, and it has been wonderful to see their aspirations taking shape. Already, the hard work is paying off – we have received over 100 offers from universities across a wide range of subjects, from STEM and humanities to creative arts and social sciences. These offers reflect the talent, commitment, and potential of our students, and we are thrilled to celebrate this achievement with them. Completing a UCAS application is no small feat. It requires careful research, thoughtful personal statements, and a clear sense of ambition and purpose. We are proud of the resilience and professionalism our Year 13s have shown throughout this process, and we are confident that the skills and determination they have demonstrated will continue to serve them well in higher education and beyond. For those students who are still finalising their applications, we encourage them to keep going – support from staff is available, and the finish line is within reach. Well done to all our Year 13s on reaching this exciting milestone!



Making a song and dance of it

Our Year 7 students rounded off the year with a trip to see Dick Whittington and his Catford Cat at the Broadway theatre. They have had a fantastic start to secondary school, and their Heads of Year – Ms Craggs and Mr Bonfield – couldn't be prouder!



A few final thoughts

A round-up of events



A bold note

Sedgehill Academy x Trinity Laban

On Friday 5th December, Sedgehill Academy's brass students enjoyed an exciting and inspiring workshop led by musicians from Trinity Laban Conservatoire, under the direction of Adrian Miotti. The visiting students performed alongside and worked with our very own Sedgehill Brass Players, an ensemble launched last year and open to all students interested in brass instruments.

During the workshop, students had the opportunity to play well-known pieces including Sunny and the iconic theme from Rocky, gaining confidence and experience performing as part of a larger ensemble. The session was a fantastic celebration of collaboration, musical development, and the growing success of brass music at Sedgehill Academy. A massive thank you to Mr Gentile and Ms Bill for their continued passion for our talent musicians!



One last ace

Sedgehill Academy's Year 7 tennis teams competed at the Olympic Park in Stratford against five Greenhouse Sports schools. Both teams reached the semi-finals and faced each other in a thrilling final, decided by a tense shootout. The students impressed everyone with their skill, integrity, and exemplary behaviour throughout the day. A massive thank you to Coach Adam for the brilliant work he has done with the teams this year - tennis at the Academy has never been better!

The Writers of Tomorrow

Miss Lennon has been working with the Sedgehill Writers of Tomorrow to enter the Young Writers' National Competition with stories of 100 words or less. This year's challenge was "Stranger Sagas." See one of our favourites from this term, below!

*

The 208

by Yasmina Elaawar-Edwards, Yr 7

I look up from my blurred phone screen and see it through the darkness of the high street: a colossal, scarlet red beast racing towards me.

I break into a sprint, racing through the vast puddles, water splashing into my boots.

My heart pounding, I glance ahead and locate safety, realising its gaining on me. My legs feel as though they'll fall off, but I can't stop; it's getting closer.

The rain slaps me as I approach my destination.

I come to a halt, and it pauses too. I look up to find a number, illuminating the road-208.