



Sedgehill in Review

March 2026

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

THIS ISSUE

World Book Day

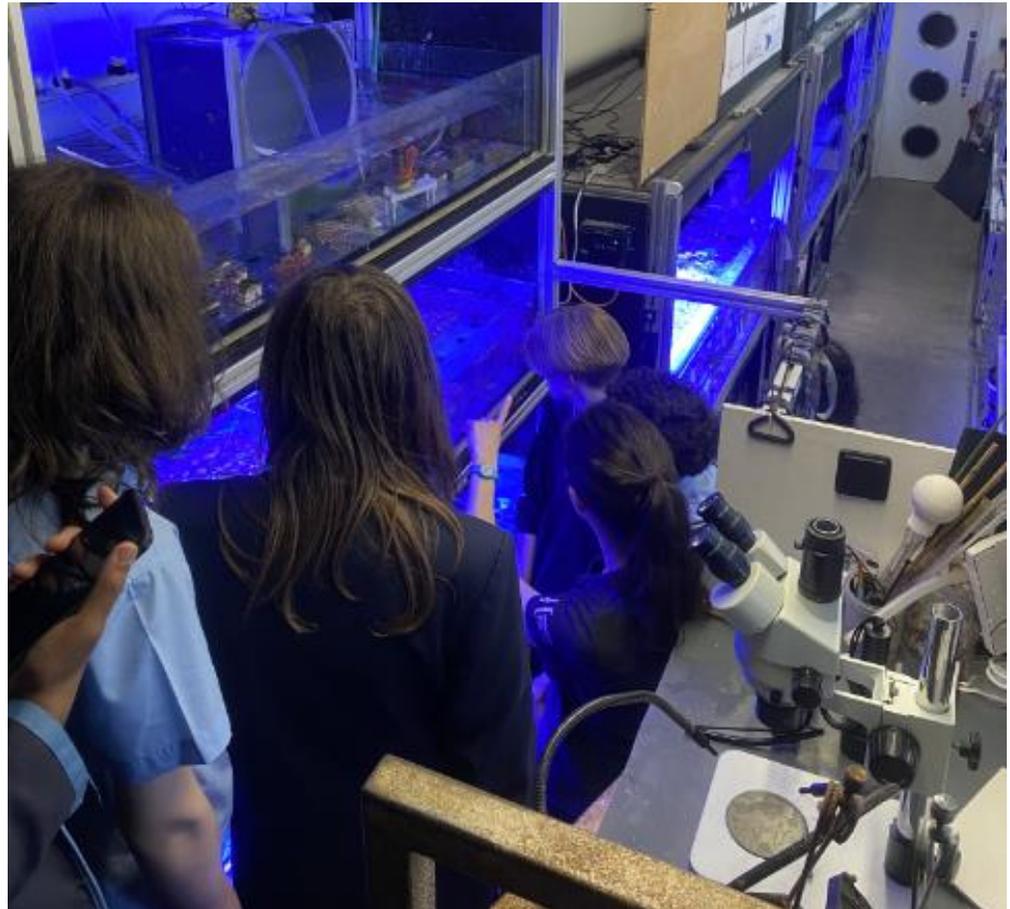
Another year, more fantastic costumes

Y11s

The Y11s approach the final few weeks of school

XFade

20th anniversary of Sedgehill's music label



A fin-tastic experience

Making waves at the Horniman

Students had an unforgettable day on our recent visit to the Horniman Museum and Aquarium, diving deep into the world of marine science and conservation. The trip offered a unique opportunity to learn directly from a field-leading coral research team, who shared fascinating insights into their groundbreaking coral breeding programmes. During an engaging talk, students discovered how scientists are working to protect and restore fragile coral reef ecosystems. From understanding the threats posed by climate change to exploring innovative breeding techniques, the session brought classroom learning vividly to life. One of the highlights of the day was an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's labs and research areas. Students were thrilled to see real scientific work in action, gaining a rare glimpse into the processes that underpin marine conservation efforts. The experience sparked curiosity and inspired many budding scientists in the group. A huge thank you goes to Ms Adams, Ms Borrett, and Ms Judd for organising and supporting such a memorable experience. Their hard work ensured the day ran smoothly and was packed with learning opportunities. As Ms Borrett perfectly summed up, "It was officially the most fin-tastic schooling experience we've ever had." It's safe to say the trip made quite a splash with everyone involved!



Final furlong

By Ms Thurston

It is the Final Push for Year 11. The Home Stretch Begins. Year 11 students have now successfully completed their mock examinations, marking an important milestone as they move into the final weeks of preparation before their GCSEs.

This is a crucial time for reflection, focus, and determination, as students build on what they have learned and continue to strengthen their knowledge and exam skills.

Mocks have provided valuable experience of real exam conditions, helping students to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. With this insight, the coming weeks offer the perfect opportunity to refine revision strategies, practise past papers, and seek support where needed. We encourage all Year 11 students to stay motivated, maintain a healthy balance, and make the most of the time ahead. Consistent effort now will make a real difference in the outcomes this summer.

The Year 11 team—Ms Hird, Ms Derosa, and Ms Thurston—would like to wish every student the very best as they continue their revision journey. We are incredibly proud of the hard work and resilience shown so far and have every confidence in your ability to succeed. Keep going—you are nearly there!

A slice of the action

Year 11 students recently enjoyed a fantastic pizza party to celebrate an impressive achievement—100% exam attendance during their mock exams. This reward was a well-earned recognition of their commitment, resilience, and positive attitude throughout an important period in their school journey. The event provided a chance for students to relax, recharge, and enjoy time together after weeks of focused revision and exam preparation. There was a brilliant atmosphere, with plenty of laughter and a real sense of accomplishment shared across the year group. A huge thank you goes to Ms Hird and Ms Thurston for organising such a memorable reward and for their continued dedication to supporting Year 11 every step of the way. Their encouragement has helped students stay motivated and focused during this busy time. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all parents and carers for the invaluable support they provide. Your guidance and encouragement make a lasting difference in helping students succeed. Finally, a big shoutout to Farmhouse Pizza Bromley for providing the delicious pizzas that made the celebration extra special.



Back of the net

Year 7 students enjoyed an exciting afternoon of football as they faced Trinity in two 7-a-side matches. Both teams showed great enthusiasm, teamwork, and determination throughout the games, representing the school with pride. Across the two matches, Sedgehill delivered an impressive performance, finishing with a combined score of 16-5. A special congratulations goes to Cyrus and Joshua, who were named Players of the Match for their outstanding efforts on the pitch.



Around the Academy

Learning, exploring, and having fun whilst doing it



Celebrating excellence

Sedgehill Shines at the Jack Petchey Awards

Sedgehill students were proudly recognised at this year's Jack Petchey Awards, in what was a truly memorable and uplifting evening. The event celebrated young people who consistently go above and beyond, whether through leadership, kindness, resilience, or commitment to their school community. It was a wonderful occasion, filled with pride and positivity, as students were acknowledged for their outstanding contributions. From acts of quiet determination to inspiring others through their actions, each award winner represented the very best of Sedgehill.

The evening provided an opportunity to reflect on the impact our students have, not only within the school but also in the wider community. Their achievements are a testament to their character and dedication, and it was fantastic to see them celebrated in such a special way. A heartfelt thank you goes to the staff who attended to support our students: Ms Mather, Mr Schweigert, Mr Gentile, Ms Dobrzycki, and Mr Jones. Your presence made a real difference and meant a great deal to the young people being recognised. Events like these highlight the strong relationships between staff and students, which are at the heart of our school community.

As one colleague shared, it was "a lovely evening recognising some of our students who truly go above and beyond," perfectly capturing the spirit of the event.



Across the Academy

Flexing our artistic muscles



The Ides of March

Et tu, Brute

Excitement is building at Sedgehill as rehearsals for this year's production of Julius Caesar officially get underway. The first rehearsal marked an important milestone, bringing together a talented cast of students eager to begin the journey from script to stage. From the outset, there was a real sense of energy and ambition in the room. Students began exploring their roles, experimenting with delivery, and developing their understanding of Shakespeare's powerful themes of ambition, loyalty, and betrayal. It was fantastic to see such enthusiasm and commitment from everyone involved.

A huge thank you goes to Mr Gray for his incredible work in organising the production, thoughtfully adapting the script, and introducing exciting multimedia elements. This innovative approach will make the performance Sedgehill's first mixed-media Shakespeare production, blending traditional theatre with modern techniques to create something truly unique. His creativity and dedication are already inspiring the cast and setting the stage for a memorable performance.

Congratulations to all the students who successfully secured roles in the production. This is a fantastic achievement, and we look forward to seeing each cast member bring their character to life over the coming weeks.

XFade

A night to remember... for the next 20 years!



Sedgehill's annual XFade concert once again proved to be one of the most anticipated events of the school year, celebrating the remarkable musical talent, creativity, and confidence of both current students and former pupils. This year's edition was particularly extraordinary, as alumni from the past 20 years returned to perform alongside today's students—many of whom have gone on to become

high-profile professionals in the music industry. The evening perfectly showcased the strong sense of community and continuity that XFade has fostered over two decades.

The concert featured a wide range of performances, from powerful vocal solos to energetic band sets and dynamic group pieces. Seeing former students share the stage with current performers created an inspiring atmosphere, demonstrating the long-lasting impact of the academy's music programme. For current students, it was a unique opportunity to learn from those who have built careers in the industry, gain practical insights, and be motivated to aim even higher in their own musical journeys. One Year 11 performer shared, *"Singing alongside alumni who are now professionals really pushed me to give my best—it's amazing to see what we could achieve in the future."*

The audience, composed of families, friends, staff, and alumni, was treated to an evening full of skill, passion, and sheer enjoyment. Every performance was met with enthusiastic applause, and the collaboration between alumni and students brought a special energy that could be felt throughout the venue. Another student reflected, *"It*

was so inspiring to watch people who started right here at Sedgehill come back and perform at such a high level. It shows what's possible if you follow your passion."

A huge thank you goes to Mr Gilbert, whose 20 years of dedication to XFade have made this event possible. His vision, organisation, and passion for nurturing musical talent have created a platform that inspires generations of students. Mr Gilbert's commitment has not only encouraged young performers but also built a lasting community of alumni who remain connected to Sedgehill and each other.





We also extend our sincere gratitude to Ms Bill, Mr Gentile, and Ms Cooper for their invaluable support behind the scenes. Their hard work ensured the smooth running of the concert, from technical preparations to rehearsal coordination, allowing performers to focus on giving their best on stage.

XFade 2026 was more than just a concert—it was a celebration of legacy, talent, and the enduring

power of music. It highlighted the incredible achievements of Sedgehill students past and present while inspiring the next generation of performers. As one alumnus noted, *"Returning to XFade felt like coming home—I'm proud to still be part of this amazing community."* Congratulations to everyone involved for creating an unforgettable evening that will be remembered for years to come. Students at Sedgehill Academy have been writing, singing, rapping and producing their own music with Musician in Residence, Andy Gilbert, since 2005. Set up and led by Andy, the innovative XFADE programme has benefited more than 1,000 budding young artists and creatives during its run. As part of his role, Andy works weekly with XFADE students training them in how to write, compose and produce music and passing on his own insight from a career in the music industry. Now reaching its 20th birthday, XFADE remains a thriving hub for original songwriting.

We're incredibly proud of what the students have created - and of the impact the project has had on their musical and personal development as their confidence and skills have grown. Former XFADE students have gone on to be Grammy-nominated songwriters, working with artists such as Doja Cat, John Legend and Aespa, while others now perform at the highest level with artists including Stormzy, Ed Sheeran, Dave and Raye.



Sedgehill Academy is incredibly grateful for contributions from supporters and friends of our school, which allow us to continue to offer some amazing experiences and support our students to express themselves through XFADE. To help ensure the future of XFade and continue supporting and nurturing musical talent at Sedgehill, we have launched a JustGiving page.

Our aim is to raise £5,000, which will go directly towards providing resources, equipment, and opportunities for both current and future students to explore their musical passions. Please, if you can, donate [here](#).



Future options

By Mr Stuchfield, Associate Assistant Principal

Our Year 9 students have now chosen their GCSE options, and I am filled with excitement and optimism for the journey ahead. This milestone marks the start of a new chapter in their learning, giving them the opportunity to focus on the subjects that inspire them most and align with their ambitions.

It has been wonderful to see the care, thought, and enthusiasm with which students approached this process. Selecting options is an important moment of reflection, allowing students to consider their strengths, passions, and future goals. At Sedgehill, we have provided guidance and support to help each student make informed choices, ensuring they can thrive in the areas that matter most to them. I am particularly excited about the talent and potential of this Year 9 cohort. They have already demonstrated resilience, curiosity, and determination, and I am confident they will approach their GCSE studies with the same enthusiasm and commitment.

To our students: well done on making your choices and taking ownership of your learning journey. To our staff and families: thank you for your continued support and encouragement as students embark on this next stage. The future is bright for Sedgehill's Year 10 students, and I cannot wait to see the incredible achievements that lie ahead as they begin their GCSE studies.

Life-saving skills

Giving a helping hand

Year 8 students recently completed an exciting and practical first aid course, equipping them with essential skills that could one day save lives. The course provided hands-on experience in responding to a range of medical situations, from minor cuts and burns to more serious emergencies like choking or cardiac incidents. Students learned how to assess situations safely, perform CPR, and use basic first aid equipment, all while building confidence in their ability to help others. The course also emphasized the importance of staying calm under pressure and communicating effectively in emergency situations—skills that are valuable both in and out of school. Many commented on how empowering it felt to gain knowledge that could make a real difference in someone's life. This initiative highlights Sedgehill's commitment to providing students with life skills alongside academic learning.



Jack Petchey Champions

Many students, who began the day with limited confidence, made excellent progress in their communication and interviewing skills. Nicky highlighted how well they supported each other, embraced challenges, and were willing to step out of their comfort zones. Choosing Oracy Champions was a tough decision, reflecting the strong participation and improvement shown by all.



Preparing for the future

Looking forward and upward

Aiming high

Sedgehill girls' basketball goes from strength to strength



Our Sedgehill girls' team made history yesterday, finishing as runners-up in their very first National Schools' Finals. The team put in a tremendous effort but were ultimately defeated 58-38 by national powerhouse St Peters Collegiate Academy from Wolverhampton. St Peters, who were runners-up last year, brought the experience and motivation needed to claim the title this season.

The Sedgehill team, understandably in awe of the occasion, took some time to settle into the game—a natural reaction in their first major national final. Despite this, the girls showed remarkable determination, highlighting both their skill and potential. St Peters' program has been running longer, giving them more depth in their squad, an

area that Sedgehill will focus on improving in the coming season.

Leading the scoring for Sedgehill was Thea Baruela (12SGR) with 12 points, demonstrating composure and talent on the national stage. A standout of the tournament, however, was Coach Gabbi, who made history as the ONLY female head coach at the finals, and one of only two schools to have female coaching representation. Her leadership, encouragement, and expertise provided inspiration for the girls and marked an immensely proud moment for the program.

For a first season, to have a girls' program nationally recognised is a huge achievement. The team's performances this year have set a strong foundation, and the aim is clear: to go one step further in next season's competition.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the girls throughout the season and in this one-off game—your encouragement has been invaluable.

Congratulations to the team, Coach Gabbi, and all involved for an incredible debut on the national stage!

An important visit



Ms Ballabani recently accompanied a group of Sixth Form students on a profoundly moving visit to Auschwitz. The trip gave students a firsthand understanding of the scale of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust and the enduring impact on survivors and their families. Walking through the camp and seeing the preserved sites of suffering provided a powerful reminder of the importance of remembrance, empathy, and education.

Students reflected on the resilience of those affected and discussed the responsibility we all share to challenge prejudice and injustice in the world today. Ms Ballabani aims to bring these insights back to Sedgehill, helping enrich students' understanding of history and the lessons it teaches about humanity, tolerance, and moral courage.

Empathy & AI

Sedgehill Sixth Form students recently had the unique opportunity to visit one of the world's leading law firms, Allen & Overy Shearman's, to explore the fascinating intersection of empathy and artificial intelligence in the legal sector. The visit offered students an insight into how cutting-edge technology is transforming professional services, while highlighting the enduring importance of human skills such as empathy, ethical decision-making, and effective communication. During the visit, students engaged with senior lawyers and AI specialists, learning how the firm is leveraging AI tools to improve efficiency in research, contract analysis, and case management. At the same time, they explored how empathy and understanding client needs remain central to the practice of law—



reminding students that technology cannot replace the human judgement and interpersonal skills that are vital in complex legal work. Students also participated in interactive discussions and scenario-based exercises, applying their knowledge of empathy in problem-solving and team collaboration. Many commented on how eye-opening it was to see the practical application of AI alongside emotional intelligence, and how relevant these skills will be in their future careers. The visit not only inspired students to consider opportunities in law and technology but also reinforced the importance of balancing technical expertise with empathy, critical thinking, and ethical awareness. It was an invaluable experience that brought classroom learning to life in a real-world professional context. A massive thank you to Ms May for leading!



In the frame

Talented artists given their due

Sedgehill students and staff came together to celebrate World Book Day in style, immersing themselves in the joy and creativity of reading. The school was transformed into a colourful showcase of literary inspiration, with students dressing up as characters from a wide range of books. From the fantastical Land of Oz to the quirky worlds of Roald Dahl, and the exciting universes of comic book heroes, imagination was truly brought to life. Students embraced the spirit of the day, demonstrating their love for reading and storytelling. Favourite characters included Dorothy, the Scarecrow, and the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*, as well as beloved Roald Dahl creations such as *Matilda*, *Willy Wonka*, and the *BFG*. Comic book fans also got their moment to shine, celebrating superheroes and iconic characters that have captured imaginations for generations. A huge thank you goes to Ms Lennon and Ms Cooper for organising such a fun and engaging event. Their creativity and dedication ensured the day ran smoothly and gave students the opportunity to celebrate books, reading, and their favourite stories in a lively and memorable way. World Book Day at Sedgehill was a fantastic reminder of the power of stories to entertain, inspire, and connect us. Congratulations to everyone who took part—you truly made the day magical!

A note from the Principal

By Ms Cassidy

As we move further into the academic year, it is inspiring to reflect on the progress and achievements across all year groups at Sedgehill. Our Year 11 students have recently received their results, marking the culmination of years of hard work and dedication. Seeing them celebrate their achievements and begin to look forward to the next stage of their education is a truly rewarding moment for the whole school community. Meanwhile, Year 9 students have finalised their GCSE options, taking an important step in shaping their learning and pursuing the subjects that inspire them most. Making these choices is a significant milestone and one that sets the foundation for their academic journey in the coming years. For our younger students, Year 7 are entering the final term of their first full year of secondary school. Their progress, resilience, and growing confidence have been wonderful to witness, and it is exciting to see how much they are already thriving in their new environment. At the Sixth Form, Year 13 students are receiving their final university offers—a moment filled with anticipation and promise for the next chapter of their lives. Year 12, meanwhile, are beginning the university application process, considering options and preparing for interviews and personal statements. Across all these milestones, one thing is clear: the future is full of opportunity. Whether it is progressing to the next stage of education, exploring new subjects, or taking the first steps towards a career, Sedgehill students are poised to embrace it with confidence, curiosity, and determination.



A few final thoughts

A round-up of events



Angle of approach

By Mr Ferdinand, Lead Practitioner

One of the most inspiring things I see every day at Sedgehill is the mindset of our students in mathematics. Rarely—if ever—do I hear phrases like “I don’t like maths” or “I can’t do it.” Instead, our students approach every problem, concept, and challenge with curiosity, enthusiasm, and determination. This positive attitude makes all the difference, not just in mathematics lessons, but in their learning across the curriculum.

From tackling complex algebra to exploring geometry, students embrace the opportunity to learn and grow. They are willing to make mistakes, ask questions, and support one another, understanding that challenges are stepping stones to understanding. This resilience and eagerness to engage fosters a classroom culture where effort and curiosity are celebrated, and where every student feels empowered to succeed.

It is this mindset that makes Sedgehill students so impressive. Their determination to approach difficulties with a “can-do” attitude ensures that progress is continuous and confidence grows with every lesson. As a mathematics department, we are incredibly proud to work with young people who view challenges not as obstacles, but as opportunities to learn and achieve.

The enthusiasm and resilience I see every day remind me why teaching is such a rewarding profession. Sedgehill students set an inspiring example for learning with curiosity, courage, and confidence.

Outside the classroom

Sedgehill students recently participated in an engaging PSHE and Careers Drop-Down Day, designed to provide them with practical skills, inspiration, and guidance as they consider future pathways. The day offered a variety of sessions, combining career insights, wellbeing support, and personal development workshops. Students benefited from workshops led by top organisations, including KPMG, M&G, and the Construction Youth Trust, gaining valuable insight into different industries, career routes, and the skills needed to succeed in the workplace. These sessions encouraged students to explore potential future opportunities and think critically about their own strengths, ambitions, and next steps. Alongside careers-focused workshops, students participated in wellbeing and empathy sessions, helping them develop emotional intelligence, resilience, and an understanding of others’ perspectives. These sessions provided practical strategies for managing stress, communicating effectively, and supporting their peers, emphasising the importance of personal growth alongside academic achievement. A huge thank you goes to Ms Steele for organising such a dynamic and enriching day. Her dedication ensured that every student had the chance to engage fully with each session, make meaningful connections, and take away skills that will support both their personal and professional development.

The PSHE and Careers Drop-Down Day was a resounding success, equipping students with knowledge, confidence, and inspiration as they look ahead to future study and career opportunities. It highlighted the exciting possibilities available to Sedgehill students and reinforced the importance of developing both skills and character.