



# NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DARTMOOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND SIXTH FORM • SUMMER TERM 2026 • ISSUE 15



## Summer Term Newsletter

Bringing you all the latest news from  
South Dartmoor Community College

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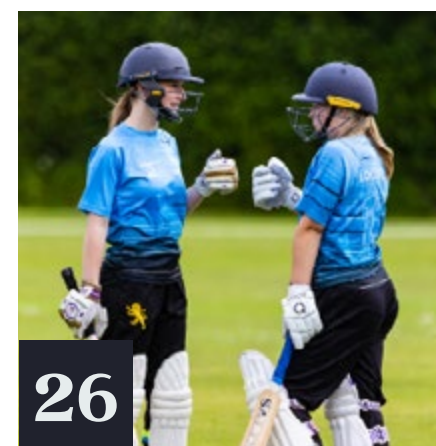
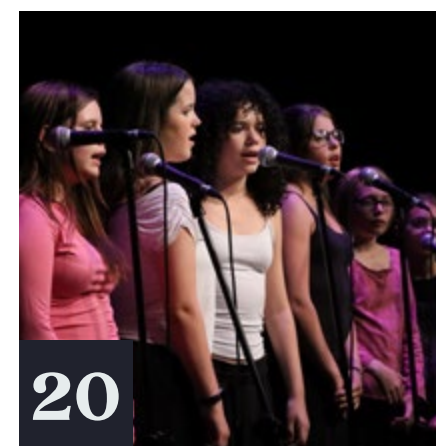
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## Welcome

When I first stepped into a classroom as a newly qualified teacher, the digital world looked very different; there were no emails waiting to be checked, no instant messages, no cloud storage.



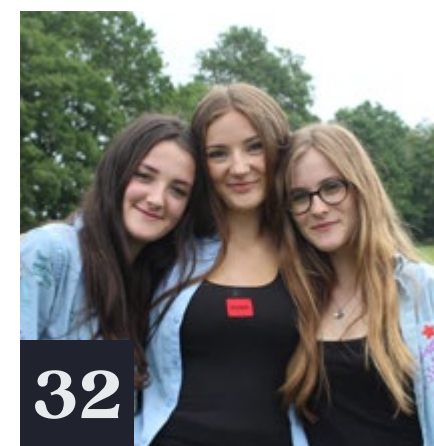
Friends from university would send their emails to a single school address and once a day our IT technician would "go online," print them and place them in my pigeon hole. At the end of the day, I'd collect them like opened letters. My replies went back on a floppy disk — handed over with a smile and sent off into the digital unknown.

This year marks my 30th year in education and the contrast could not be greater. Technology, IT and now AI have transformed how we teach, how we communicate and how our students experience the world. These tools open extraordinary possibilities: personalised learning, instant collaboration and access to knowledge that once required a library and a great deal of patience. They help us work smarter, think bigger and prepare our pupils for a future that is already arriving.

Yet, as this newsletter shows so clearly, the heart of education remains unchanged. The social connections forged in classrooms, the practical experiences that build confidence, the opportunities to create, try, explore and belong — these are the moments that shape young people. Technology enhances our work, but it does not replace the joy, curiosity and humanity that fill our school every day.

As we celebrate the achievements shared in this issue, I am reminded that progress is most powerful when it supports people. Thirty years on, I am grateful for both: the tools that help us move forward and the community that gives our work meaning.

Jen Veal  
Executive Head Teacher



## Author Visit

We were delighted to welcome Carnegie Medal-nominated YA author Nicola Garrard.

Nicola grew up in Ashburton and has family connections to SDCC, so she was especially excited to speak and work with our students.

She delivered a series of inspiring assemblies to Years 7, 10 and 12 about her latest book, *On the Edge*, set in South Devon. She spoke about how she uses her writing to raise awareness of local issues, including the impact of tourism and rural poverty on young people.

She also led a group of KS3 students in a creative writing workshop, giving them an insight into her writing process and an opportunity to express themselves while embracing the importance of taking creative risks.

We are very grateful for her visit and are already seeing how her inspiration has encouraged some of our young writers.



## AI Escape Room

A group of Year 7 and 8 students proudly represented South Dartmoor at the Dell Technologies Ed360 event at Ivybridge Community College.

They took on an exciting AI Escape Room challenge, stepping into a fast-paced world of critical thinking and problem-solving. Working together, they had just 10 minutes to solve a series of AI-themed challenges. Showing fantastic teamwork, resilience and communication, they successfully escaped in an impressive 8 minutes and 52 seconds!



## Reading Success

We have had another great year of reading at South Dartmoor!

Together, our students have read nearly 45 million words, finished almost 3,000 books and put in over 5,000 hours of careful reading.

We are proud of every single SDCC reader!

your favourite  
core words and  
is all about big  
adventures,  
es trying to  
at trip

**44,698,370**  
words read  
by our students



**5,542**

hours of careful reading  
completed by our students



**2,755**

books completed  
by our students

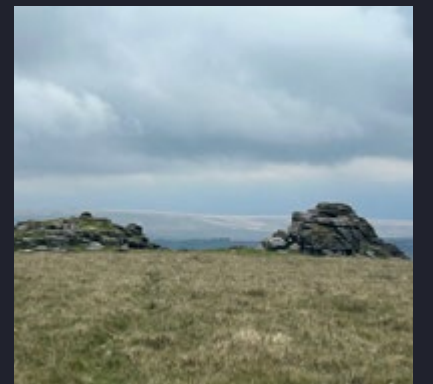
## Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes

South Dartmoor Community College is proud to be recognised as a Dartmoor National Park Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes Champion School.

This recognition builds on the fantastic opportunities our students already experience through our REACH programme, and will help us further enrich the curriculum through outdoor learning and deeper connections with our local environment.

The Dartmoor Dynamic Landscapes programme aims to open up nature to more people, encourage communities to celebrate the moor's rich heritage and inspire young people to play an active role in caring for the landscapes on their doorstep. Our students will have even greater opportunities to explore, understand and appreciate the unique character of Dartmoor.

We are excited to continue developing our students' sense of place, curiosity and environmental responsibility—while helping them enjoy the incredible natural spaces that surround us.

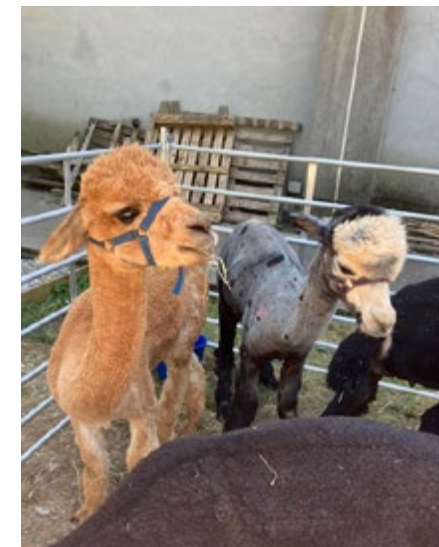


## Special Visitors

We were delighted to welcome some very special visitors to the college - a wonderful group of alpacas!

The visit brought plenty of smiles, with students and staff enjoying the chance to meet these friendly animals. We were incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, curiosity and exemplary behaviour shown by our students throughout the afternoon. The alpacas were on their very best behaviour too, and certainly won the hearts of everyone they met!

A huge thank you to Mrs. Hammond for organising such a special afternoon.



## Greenpower Race

**Students returned to the iconic Castle Combe race circuit for a fantastic day of Greenpower racing – and what a day it was!**

With cool temperatures and perfect driving conditions, it couldn't have been better for our two teams and their cars.

The Year 11 team delivered a hugely improved performance on last year, reflecting their hard work, commitment and determination. Meanwhile, the Year 8 team gained valuable experience, approaching every challenge with great teamwork and enthusiasm. The future is looking very bright!

Both cars ran reliably throughout the day, a brilliant achievement from everyone involved. It was also wonderful to see such strong support from parents on the sidelines – thank you to all who came along to cheer the teams on.



## Transition Day

**Year 6 students got a taste of secondary school on Transition Day, with lots of activities including a fizz-tastic Science lesson on acids and alkalis!**

From creating rainbow reactions to exploring the pH scale, universal indicators and lab safety, it was a colourful and exciting introduction to chemistry—with just the right amount of pop!



## Open Evening

**Thank you to everyone who attended the SDCC Open Evening.**

It was a fabulous community event and a tremendous success; our students were wonderful ambassadors and there was an amazing buzz around college from start to finish. We were pleased to show our guests what we do and who we are.

Open Mornings are on Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 September and everyone is welcome.



## Scholarship Programmes

**The Scholars' Programme for Year 7 students, High Performing Academy, and Year 8 students, the Masterclass Sessions, continued this term.**

Creative Arts students transformed photographs taken on Dartmoor into paintings inspired by local artists, exploring shape, form and layered acrylic techniques. Their work was displayed at Ashburton Arts Centre as part of the Dartmoor Tors Festival. Students also experimented with layered abstract landscapes inspired by the moors, producing vibrant and expressive artwork that captured the spirit, movement and atmosphere of Dartmoor in their own unique styles.

In Geography, students explored the concept of rewilding and debated the potential reintroduction of the lynx to the UK, considering a range of stakeholder perspectives and developing their critical thinking skills.

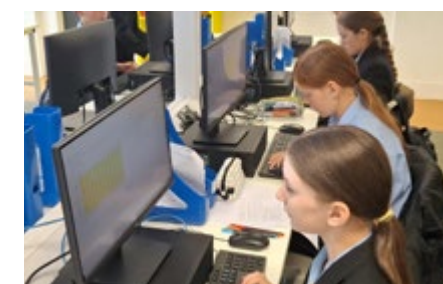
Literacy students demonstrated excellent creativity and focus while producing graphic novel adaptations of Click-Clack the Rattlebag, carefully considering how illustrations can enhance a narrative.

In Computer Science, students developed their programming and analytical skills through a cross-curricular project using Python to investigate rainfall patterns across different counties, analysing data and presenting their findings.

Sport students enjoyed a session with Exeter Chiefs Performance Analyst and SDCC alumnus Joe Forey, learning about performance analysis and how data can be used to support improvements in sporting performance.

Performing Arts students worked with MED Theatre to explore storytelling techniques before composing music, creating theatre and developing dance pieces inspired by Dartmoor myths and legends.

Meanwhile, STEM students helped improve the health of the school pond before investigating the diverse range of organisms living within the ecosystem, using identification guides and microscopes to study both larger species and microscopic life.



## Aspirations Week: Dream Big, Aim High

This term saw our very first Aspirations Week, a celebration dedicated to encouraging our young people to dream big, challenge expectations and explore the many opportunities available to them in the future.



Throughout the week, our college community came together to share stories, experiences and ambitions that inspired both students and staff.

During Morning Welcome each day, Heads of Year and tutors shared personal accounts of their own educational, career and life journeys, including the challenges they had overcome, the unexpected turns their paths had taken and the experiences that had shaped them. These honest and heartfelt stories had a significant impact on students, reminding them that success is rarely a straight line and that resilience, courage and determination can open doors to opportunities they may never have imagined.

Careers education was woven into learning through an engaging *Guess Who?* challenge. Students were encouraged to identify members of staff based on clues about some of the unusual jobs they had held before joining South Dartmoor.



From unexpected career changes to surprising first jobs, students discovered that every member of staff has their own unique story and that there are many different routes to success.

Students in Years 7–9 completed

**“Success is rarely a straight line. Resilience, courage and determination can open doors to opportunities you may never have imagined.”**

and wore their own Dream Job lanyards, proudly displaying their future ambitions. The corridors were filled with aspiring marine biologists, police officers, engineers, teachers, footballers, vets, entrepreneurs and many other future professionals. The lanyards sparked meaningful conversations between students and staff and helped create a

sense of optimism across the college, reinforcing the message that dreams can become reality through hard work, determination and self-belief.

One of the highlights of the week was a visit from renowned author, adventurer and television presenter Simon Reeve. Students and staff were captivated by his stories of travel and adventure, as well as his reflections on overcoming adversity, embracing opportunities and stepping beyond his comfort zone.

His inspiring message was simple but powerful: your background does not determine your future. It was an inspiring reminder that curiosity, resilience and ambition can take you further than you ever imagined.

The college library was transformed into a hub of inspiration with a careers-themed book display, encouraging students to explore a wide range of professions and pathways. Meanwhile, staff embraced the spirit of Aspirations Week by

dressing as careers they had dreamed of pursuing when they were younger. Miss Mieczkowska earned special recognition for remaining in a full nun's costume throughout one of the hottest days of the year. Battling temperatures of 35°C, she deservedly secured the award for Best Costume.

Aspirations Bingo challenged students to have meaningful conversations with staff about career journeys, ambitions and life experiences. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with a great many conversations taking place across the week about hopes, dreams, challenges and achievements.

**“Your background does not determine your future.”**

Students who completed their cards received 20 positive points, but the greatest reward was the confidence, understanding and inspiration gained through these interactions.

Aspirations Week showcased our belief that every young person deserves to dream big and to know that those dreams are achievable. Through sharing stories, celebrating ambition and creating opportunities for meaningful conversations, the week strengthened the sense of belonging that makes the college such a supportive and caring community, while reinforcing the message that there is no limit to what our students can achieve. The future belongs to those who dare to imagine it, and our students showed that they are ready to do exactly that.



## Trail Trotter Tales

The Trail Trotters have enjoyed a fantastic series of runs on Dartmoor during their REACH sessions this term, exploring some of the moor's most beautiful locations and discovering plenty along the way.

One session took the group back to Haytor, where they finally uncovered the hidden quarry pool they had narrowly missed on a previous run. Quiet and tucked away in the landscape, the pool revealed a small but lively scene, where a tiny fish and a couple of newts were spotted.

A later session took the group to Blackslade Down where, after a good warm-up and stretch, they set out across the stream near Blackslade Ford. Impressively, everyone managed to keep their feet dry!

The group also visited Bonehill, tackling challenging conditions, braving extremely strong winds and taking shelter among the rocks while stopping to write in one of Dartmoor's famous letterboxes.

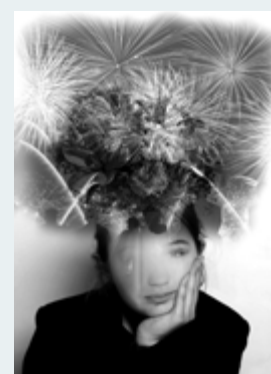
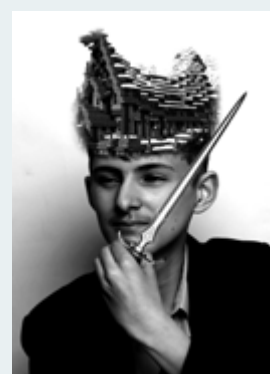
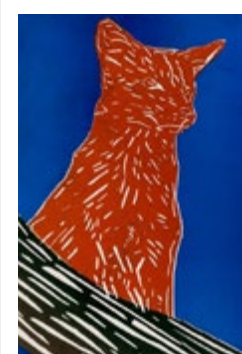
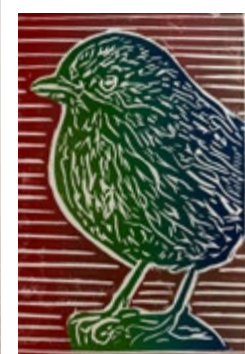
We look forward to welcoming familiar faces back after the summer break, along with a few new ones, for more trails, discoveries and muddy miles ahead!



## Creative Horizons

Our REACH programme has also provided exciting opportunities for students to expand their creative horizons beyond the classroom.

They have explored the traditional craft of printmaking alongside the magic of analogue photography, where darkroom techniques have transformed light, shadow and patience into striking photographic images.



## Sam scores for England

We are incredibly proud to celebrate South Dartmoor alumnus Sam Taylor, who recently scored his first international goal for England Hockey.

During his time at South Dartmoor, Sam studied GCSE PE before completing Health, Fitness and Sports Science (HFSS) in our Sixth Form. A local lad from Bovey Tracey, he began his hockey journey with Ashmoor Hockey Club and has since progressed to play professionally for Holcombe Hockey Club while representing England on the international stage.

Alongside his playing career, Sam coaches and hopes to pursue a teaching career in the future, combining his passion for sport with inspiring young people. It is rewarding to see him using skills first developed through his HFSS studies at South Dartmoor.

From a young age, Sam dreamed of representing England and Great Britain, and it has been fantastic to watch those ambitions become reality. His dedication and perseverance are an inspiration to our current students and a reminder of what can be achieved through hard work, resilience and ambition.

With the Hockey World Cup on the horizon, we have no doubt this is only the beginning. We are immensely proud, and we wish Sam every success for the season ahead.



## Sweet Success for Aliyah

Former student Aliyah Brown has achieved an incredible second place in the National Student Pastry Chef of the Year competition.

Competing through multiple challenging stages, she demonstrated outstanding skill, creativity and resilience under pressure.

Congratulations, Aliyah – a fantastic achievement!



## World Cup Pride for Ollie

Former South Dartmoor student Ollie Watkins was selected for England's FIFA World Cup squad.

As the Three Lions progressed deep into the tournament and secured an impressive third-place finish, seeing Ollie represent his country on football's biggest stage was a source of great pride for our college community and an inspiration to our students.

We look forward to following the next chapter of his career.



# Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions

From the rugged landscapes of Dartmoor to the South West Coast Path, this year's Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions were a journey of challenge, teamwork and achievement.



In preparation for their qualifying expeditions, the Bronze and Silver participants headed out onto Dartmoor for a challenging training expedition that pushed their limits and tested their resolve.

Blessed with warm spring weather, the young adventurers put their map reading, compass work and campcraft skills into practice while carrying full packs across demanding terrain. Nature provided both the backdrop and the entertainment for the trek,

with sightings of lizards and snakes basking in the warmth of the granite tors.

Along the way, students

***“Nature provided both the backdrop and the entertainment.”***

demonstrated impressive teamwork, encouraging one another through challenges,

solving navigation problems and growing in confidence as they applied their learning in real-world situations. The transition from theory to practice is where real growth happens, and seeing them handle the elements and distance with such high spirits was a testament to their preparation.

The Silver group continued their training into a second day, further developing their teamwork, initiative and spirit of adventure.

The successful completion of the training expedition marked a



major milestone. As the Bronze and Silver participants returned to college with tired legs and sun-kissed faces, they did so with the confidence needed for their upcoming qualifying expeditions.

At the end of June, four groups of Year 9 Bronze participants and one group of Year 10 Silver participants set off from college ready to put their training into action. Our Bronze students completed a two-day, one-night expedition, while the Silver group undertook the additional challenge of a second night and day.

Their journey took them through a variety of locations, including Dornafeld Caravan and Motorhome Park, who generously hosted the group, and the Torbay

Scout Campsite at Watcombe, which marked the finish line for our Bronze participants.

Meanwhile, our Silver group spent a second night under the stars before completing their journey

***“It was inspiring to see such personal growth and collaboration.”***

along the beautiful South West Coast Path at Coombe Cellars.

Beyond the physical challenge, students gained invaluable experience in navigation, campcraft, teamwork and communication, while demonstrating resilience,

determination and a willingness to step outside their comfort zones. It was inspiring to see such personal growth and collaboration, all achieved without the distraction of mobile phones or screens.

A particular highlight was the outstanding conduct shown by all participants. Students received numerous compliments from fellow campers and members of the public for their exemplary behaviour and manners.

A huge thank you to Cat and Ian for generously giving their time to assess and support our students throughout their journeys, and congratulations to our incredible participants on a tremendous achievement. We are incredibly proud of you!



# Ten Tors 2026: Another Year, Another Adventure

As another fantastic Ten Tors season came to an end, we could not have been prouder of what students, volunteers and fundraisers achieved throughout the year.



From October through to May, our students dedicated themselves to training for both the Ten Tors Challenge and the college's own Tors and Moors event.

Through sunshine, wind, rain and plenty of mud, they embraced every opportunity to learn and grow. They camped, navigated, tackled the action-packed Adventure Day and developed the resilience, teamwork and determination needed to take on the challenges of Dartmoor.

Throughout the season, our participants truly embodied the college values of Truth, Respect, Equality and Excellence. They supported one another, rose to every challenge and demonstrated outstanding commitment, proving that success was about far more than

simply reaching the finish line. The culmination of months of hard work brought unforgettable moments. The Tors and Moors event was a tremendous success, showcasing the dedication of all our teams.

***“It was a year full of learning, laughter, challenge and unforgettable memories.”***

Then, in early May, we watched our fantastic 55-mile team cross the finish line at the Army's Ten Tors Challenge. There were smiles, celebrations and more than a few tears of joy as months of commitment and perseverance paid off in spectacular fashion.

None of this would have been possible without the amazing volunteers, supporters and families. Every training walk, checkpoint, camp and event relied on them generously giving their time and energy and we cannot thank them enough.

It was a year full of learning, laughter, challenge and unforgettable memories. For the leaders, one of the greatest rewards was watching these young people grow in confidence, resilience and character, both on the moor and back in college.

They were a credit to themselves, their families and the wider college community

Thank you for making this such a special year, and we hope the spirit of adventure developed throughout the experience will continue.



## Tors Trek Challenge 2026

The fundraising team took on the wilds of Dartmoor, raising funds to support our students' participation in Ten Tors and Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) adventures.

Battling the heat, navigating through mist, wild camping and cooking meals on stoves, they experienced the challenges first-hand and truly embraced the spirit of adventure—proving that adventure has no age limit!

A huge thank you to the checkpoint teams for their support, and an enormous thank you to every walker who took part and raised money. Your efforts will help provide life-changing opportunities for our students.



# Summer Exhibition

The Art Department was proud to celebrate the fantastic work of our Year 11 and Year 13 students this term at the Summer Exhibition.

The Sixth Form Space was transformed into a gallery showcasing Fine Art, Graphic Design and Photography—a joyful celebration of months of exploration, perseverance and creative courage.

A huge thank you to the Year 10 Hospitality and Catering students, who worked tirelessly to prepare and serve refreshments throughout the evening, to the Jazz Band for providing live music and to everyone who came along to show their support.



## Creative Journeys in Art

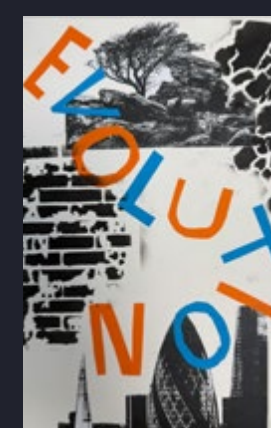
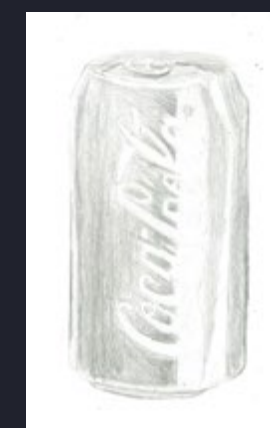
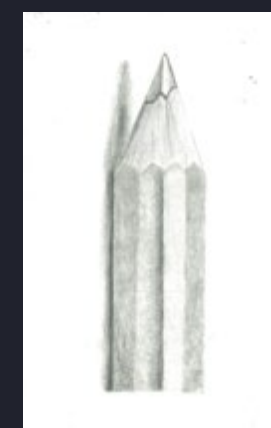
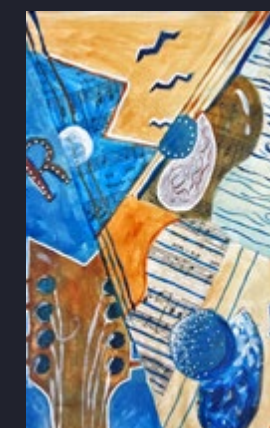
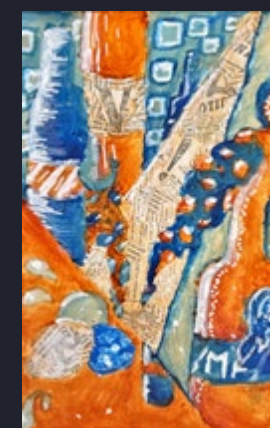
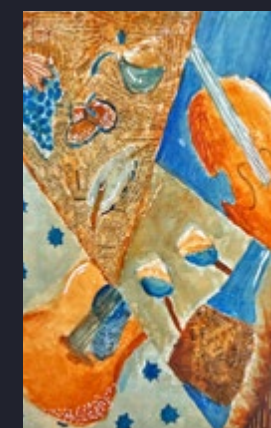
The Art Department has flourished with creativity this year, as students have embraced the freedom to imagine, question and create.

At Key Stage 3, sketchbooks have become windows into extraordinary worlds, filled with surreal creatures and dreamlike landscapes that celebrate the power of imagination. Our Year 9 artists have begun to find their own creative voices, exploring how art can challenge perceptions, spark conversations and remind us why the arts remain such a vital part of our world.

*“Sketchbooks have become windows into extraordinary worlds that celebrate the power of imagination.”*

Year 10 GCSE and Year 12 A level students have embarked on their artistic journeys with enthusiasm, curiosity and dedication.

We are immensely proud of every student who has picked up a pencil, paintbrush, carving tool, camera or printing press, reminding us that art is not simply something we make, but something we experience, share and use to understand the world around us.



## Summer Dance Gala

**Our Summer Dance Gala brought together performers from across the college community for an evening of energy, creativity and celebration.**

A sell-out audience enjoyed a diverse programme showcasing the breadth and diversity of dance at South Dartmoor. We were delighted to welcome two groups from our Primary Dance Project, reflecting the strong partnerships we continue to build with our local primary schools. The evening also featured performances from the Boys' Dance Project as well as dancers from across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, demonstrating the talent, commitment and passion for dance that exists throughout the college.

From contemporary pieces to high-energy group performances, the gala was lively, engaging and full of moments that celebrated both individual achievement and collective endeavor. The standard of performance was exceptional and reflected the dedication of students and staff throughout the year.

Despite the summer heat, students demonstrated exceptional commitment, professionalism and teamwork both on stage and behind the scenes.

The gala celebrated creativity, collaboration and belonging while showcasing the talent, dedication and positive spirit that define dance at South Dartmoor.



# DANCE

South Dartmoor Community College

## Dance World Cup

**Congratulations to our students who represented England at the Dance World Cup 2026 in Dublin.**

The students, who train at Totnes School of Dance, earned their places through a rigorous qualification process.

Their dedication and hard work paid off with an outstanding medal haul of seven golds, five silvers and three bronzes.

We are incredibly proud of their achievements and all they have accomplished!



## Classical Recital Evening

**A warm and appreciative audience enjoyed inspiring performances at our Classical Recital Evening, with pieces on piano, violin and voice delivered by our dedicated and talented performers.**

The recital celebrated the richness of classical music, with students from Year 7 through to Year 13 playing across the range of classical period styles. Each performance reflected not only musical skill but also commitment, discipline and a genuine passion, creating a memorable showcase of emerging talent.

Congratulations to everyone involved!

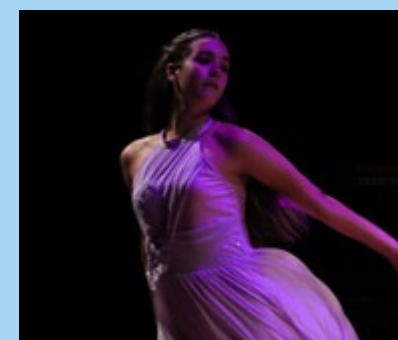


## Creatives in the Making

**Students from across the Creatives faculty came together for a wonderful celebration of creativity, performance and artistic achievement.**

Guests enjoyed an impressive A level Art Exhibition before watching an inspiring evening of performances featuring dance, drama and music. Original pieces and well loved covers showcased the incredible talent within our creative departments.

Well done to everyone who took part, and thank you to our wonderful audience for supporting the event.

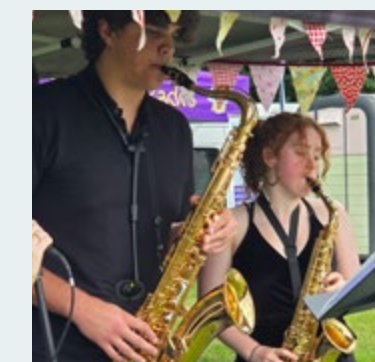


## Big Green Fun Day

**The wonderful college Jazz Band delivered a fantastic 45-minute set to an appreciative crowd at the Bovey Tracey Big Green Fun Day.**

Performing classics such as *Sway*, *All of Me*, *The Girl from Ipanema* and *Fever*, the band showed great togetherness and musicality throughout.

Well done to everyone involved!



## LAMDA Success

**Congratulations to our students on their fantastic LAMDA examination results!**

Students performed rehearsed pieces and confidently answered questions about their texts and performance choices, achieving an excellent set of results.

We are incredibly proud of everyone who took part, as well as those who continue to work hard in lessons.



# Summer Gala Concert

**Thank you to everyone who supported our Summer Gala Concert. What a wonderful way to bring our 2026 Concert Programme to a close!**

We continue to be inspired by the dedication, talent and generosity our musicians bring to the College every day, and this concert was a fantastic celebration of their hard work and commitment. A special thank you to our families and supporters. Your encouragement makes such a difference, and we are incredibly grateful to have you alongside us throughout the year.

To those students moving on to the next stage of their educational journey, we wish you every success for the future and look forward to seeing all that you go on to achieve.



## A Red Sea Diving Adventure

In the early hours of Easter morning, a group of eager students set off for Bristol Airport, beginning an unforgettable week of diving, learning and cultural discovery in Egypt.



From day one, the classroom looked very different for Team Bubbles. After settling in, students got set up, refreshed key skills and readied themselves for their first dives that afternoon.

Beneath the surface of the Red Sea, they took their first breaths underwater, focusing on calmness, control and confidence as they explored depths of around six metres. Guided by the dive team, they practised essential skills including buoyancy control, breathing techniques, mask skills and regulator exercises.

As the week progressed, confidence grew. Days were filled with briefings, dives and skill development, while evenings brought time for reflection, e-learning and theory sessions, linking science and maths to real world diving through concepts such as volume, density and pressure. Between dives, there were moments to rest, recharge and take in the stunning surroundings, and one evening brought a change of pace with a football match played in true international spirit.

Key milestones followed in quick succession. Students completed swim tests, refined open water skills and learned advanced techniques including zodiac diving, compass navigation and deploying surface marker buoys. Working steadily towards Open Water Dives 3 and 4, they edged closer to completing the PADI Open Water course. Their

***“Beneath the surface of the Red Sea, they took their first breaths underwater, focusing on calmness, control and confidence”***

determination paid off, with theory exams passed and skills confidently demonstrated beneath the surface.

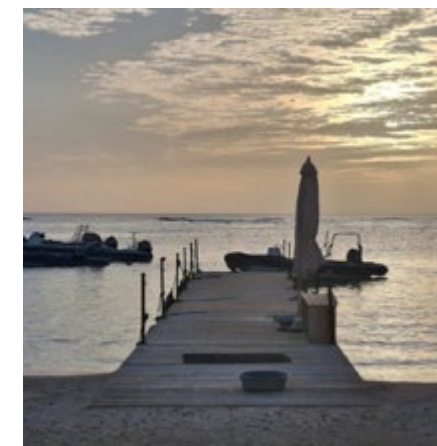
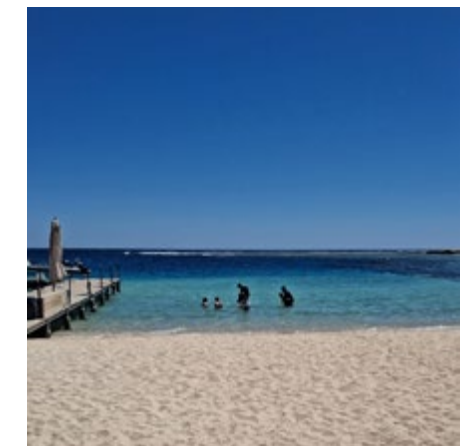
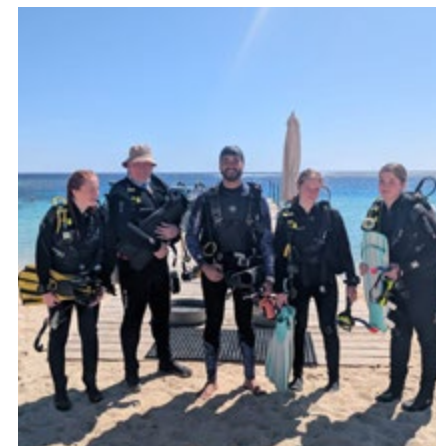
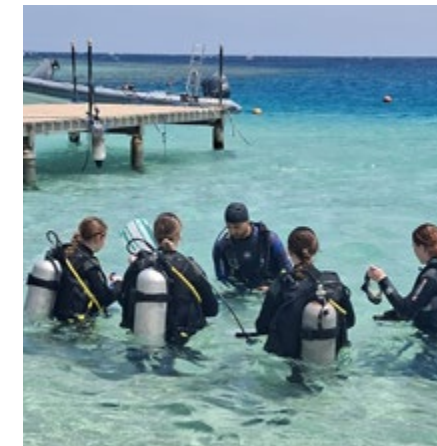
By the final dive days, the newly qualified divers were completing their first buddy pair shore dives, exploring the wonders of the underwater kingdom along the house reefs independently yet safely supervised.

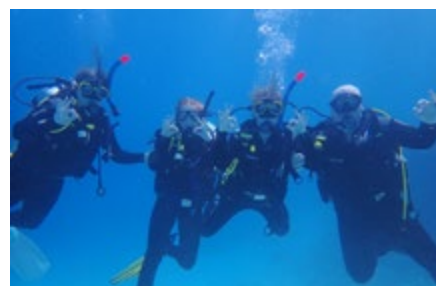
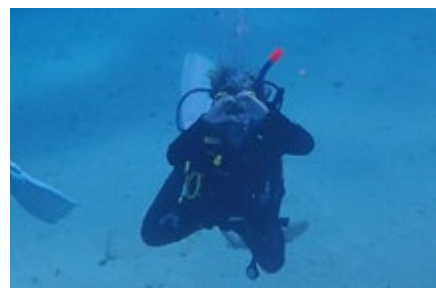
Surfacing from these dives, smiles and celebrations made clear just how far they had come in a short time.

The final full day brought a shift in focus to conservation. Students worked together on a large scale beach clean, showing care, responsibility and respect for the environment that they had been so fortunate to experience throughout the week. It was a powerful reminder that protecting these marine spaces is just as important as exploring them.

As the group prepared to head home, there was pride in what had been achieved and gratitude for the wonderfully kind and generous Egyptian hosts who made the experience so special — from the dive team and instructors at the Red Sea Diving Safari to the Marsa Alam’s Nakari Dive Village housekeeping teams with their creative towel art and chefs who provided a superb selection of freshly prepared meals.

Team Bubbles returned home with new qualifications, lasting memories and experiences that will stay with them for a lifetime.





## Equestrian Success at Cockington Horse Show

**Year 7 student Ruby and her horse, Billie, enjoyed a successful day of competition at the Cockington Horse Show in Bovey Tracey.**

Ruby competed in a number of classes throughout the day and performed brilliantly, achieving strong placings in all of them, including the jumping. It was a fantastic experience, and she thoroughly enjoyed competing alongside other riders.

We are proud to celebrate her success and look forward to hearing about her future competitions.



## Making a Splash

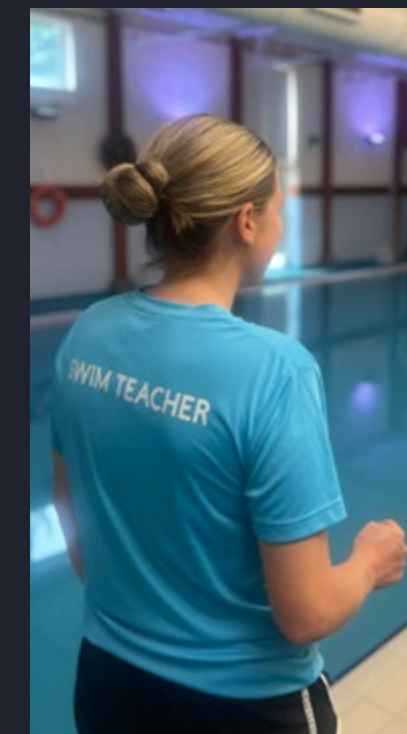
**This term, we were delighted to launch our Swim Starter Programme.**

Made possible through external funding, the programme provided additional swimming lessons for students who would benefit most, and aimed to build confidence in the water while developing essential swimming and water safety skills. Living in Devon, these are valuable life skills that help keep young people safe.

Throughout the programme, students showed determination and enthusiasm, making excellent progress week by week. Many arrived lacking confidence in the water but quickly developed their skills and challenged themselves to achieve more than they thought possible.

Miss Lovell and Mrs. Avery-Wright thoroughly enjoyed leading the sessions and watching students grow in confidence.

We are very grateful for the funding that made this programme possible and look forward to providing more opportunities that help students develop these important life-saving skills.



## Cricketing Achievements

**South Dartmoor cricketers have enjoyed an excellent season, with teams achieving success at county level and representing the college with pride.**

The U13 Girls enjoyed a strong season, finishing third at the Chance to Compete District Round at Abbotswells Cricket Club and qualifying for the county finals. The team showed determination, teamwork and real progress in every match, with some students making their first appearances for the college. They later secured a top-five finish in Devon at the Chance to Compete County Finals, ending their campaign with an impressive victory over Devonport High School for Girls.

Meanwhile, the U13 Mixed team were crowned Chance to Compete County Champions after progressing through group stages and defeating Devonport High School for Boys in the final to secure the county title. Their success reflected the determination, skill and teamwork they displayed throughout the competition.

The U15 Mixed team also enjoyed an impressive run, reaching the county finals after an unbeaten campaign. The team demonstrated excellent resilience and teamwork throughout the competition, particularly in their final match against Torquay Boys' Grammar School, where they were set a challenging target of 100 runs from just 40 balls.

The U15 Girls reached the Devon semi-final of the Barclays Knight-Stokes Cup, a Marylebone Cricket Club competition celebrating state-educated cricketing talent. Following an impressive quarter-final victory over Newton Abbot College, the team progressed to the county semi-final, where they narrowly lost to a strong Year 10 Queen Elizabeth's School side. Made up of students from Years 8, 9 and 10, our team delivered an outstanding performance and should be incredibly proud of everything they achieved.

We are incredibly proud of all our cricketers for their commitment, teamwork and achievements this season, and we look forward to following their continued success in the future.



## Marylebone Cricket Club

**South Dartmoor took on the prestigious Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) at Bovey Tracey Cricket Club in their annual fixture, proudly continuing a tradition as one of the few state schools invited to play them.**

After being put into the field, South Dartmoor impressed with a superb bowling display, dismissing MCC for just 171 – their lowest total in this fixture. Olive excelled with an outstanding four wicket haul to earn Player of the Match, while captain, Albie, produced a superb full-length dive to take a stunning one-handed catch.

Chasing 172 for a historic first victory, South Dartmoor fought hard but fell 23 runs short, with Owen leading a resilient late innings.

A fantastic occasion for everyone involved. Thank you to Bovey Tracey Cricket Club for their excellent hospitality and to everyone who helped make the day so memorable.



## BMX Racing Success Across the Levels

**South Dartmoor students continue to enjoy success in BMX racing at regional, national and European levels, with several riders producing outstanding performances this season.**

Coby in Year 10 is currently competing at regional, national and European level, with hopes of qualifying for the World Championships in Australia later this year. Racing in the Elite Men's category regionally, Coby, at the age of 15, is competing against adults and has already secured multiple podium finishes. Nationally, he sits second in the standings behind fellow South Dartmoor student Ned, while his ninth-place finish at the European Championships saw him place among the continent's best riders. Coby also holds the world No. 2 ranking, and hopes to go one better at this year's World Championships.

Ned has also enjoyed an exceptional season across regional, national and European competitions. Also racing in the Elite Men's category, he leads the national standings and recently travelled to Sarrians, France, for the UEC BMX European Championships. Battling through a field of 104 riders in the Under-15 boys' category in near 40-degree heat, Ned progressed through the motos and knockout rounds to reach the final, where he secured an outstanding fifth place in Europe. As a result, he can now race with the prestigious E5 plate.

Year 7 student Trixie got her national season off to a fantastic start over the Easter holidays, competing in Manchester, the home of British Cycling, where she brought home two silver medals from the opening rounds. She has continued that form throughout the season and currently sits first in the national standings, having won four of the first six rounds and finished second in the other two. Trixie also travelled to Sarrians for the European Championships, where she reached the final and finished eighth in Europe, earning the E8 plate for future races.

Fellow Year 7 rider Izzy is competing at both regional and national level this season. Regionally, she currently sits second despite racing in an age group above her own, competing against riders one to two years older. Nationally, she continues to make excellent progress against competitors in her age category.

Jack in Year 7 is also enjoying a strong season. He currently tops the South West regional standings and sits 11th nationally as he heads into the remaining rounds of competition.

With national titles, European finals and world-level ambitions, the future looks incredibly bright for these talented riders. We are incredibly proud of them and wish them every success as they continue their impressive seasons.



## Sport and Dance Awards

**The inaugural Sport and Dance Awards Evening, held as part of Sports Week, was a fantastic celebration of student achievement, dedication and success.**

As the first event of its kind, the evening aimed to further raise the profile of sport, dance and physical activity across the college, while recognising students' outstanding achievements alongside staff, parents and carers.

A highlight of the evening was an inspiring address from SDCC alumnus Emily Ashford, who shared her journey to representing Great Britain in rowing. Speaking about resilience, perseverance and embracing challenges, Emily left students with a powerful message about achieving their goals.

The dance awards were presented following a superb live performance from Hal and Meg, both award nominees. Their performance showcased the talent and creativity that continues to thrive within the college's dance programme.

Congratulations to this year's award winners: Jay, who received the Sporting Spirit Award; Lauren, recipient of the Extra-Curricular Award; Leah, recognised for Performance in Dance; Ella, who received the Most Improved in Dance Award; Erin, awarded Excellence in Dance; Coby, named Sportsman of the Year; and Trixie, who was crowned Sportswoman of the Year.

The evening was a tremendous success and a fitting celebration of the hard work, dedication and achievements of our students. We look forward to building on this success and making the Sport and Dance Awards a key event in the college calendar for years to come.



## KS2 Nurture Festival

**Students enjoyed taking part in our KS2 Nurture Alternative Sports Festival, an exciting and inclusive event packed with new experiences.**

Throughout the afternoon, students had the opportunity to try a wide range of activities, including trampolining, table tennis, pickleball, archery, badminton, basketball and boccia. Each session was led and supported by the fantastic SDCC Year 9 Sports Leaders, who demonstrated enthusiasm, encouragement and leadership throughout the event.

The festival created a positive and inclusive atmosphere, giving students the chance to step outside their comfort zones, build confidence and resilience and discover sports they may never have tried before. Staff were delighted to see so many students fully engaged, enthusiastically taking part and enjoying the experience alongside their peers.

We look forward to building on the success of this event and providing even more opportunities for students to enjoy inclusive and engaging sporting experiences in the future.



## Multi-Sports Festival

**We were delighted to welcome Year 3 students from Blackpool, Ashburton and Buckfastleigh Primary Schools for a fun-filled Multi-Sports Festival.**

Students were mixed into six teams and rotated around a range of challenges, including fireball, pickleball, athletics relays, parachute games, boccia and the ever-popular Football Cone Smash challenge, where everyone had the chance to channel their inner England and Aston Villa striker and former SDCC student, Ollie Watkins!

The enthusiasm, teamwork and positive attitudes on display throughout the morning were wonderful to see. Students embraced each challenge with energy and enthusiasm, supporting one another and joining in with big smiles.

A special thank you goes to our fantastic SDCC Sports Leaders, who led the activities brilliantly. Their organisation, encouragement and leadership helped make the event such an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Well done to all the students who took part, and thank you to the staff and schools for supporting another successful festival.



## Cross Country Event

**We were delighted to welcome students from across our partnership primary schools for our KS2 Cross Country event.**

Across four races, plus a fantastic fun run to finish, an incredible 344 students from 10 schools took part.

Despite a few rain showers, the atmosphere was amazing, with brilliant parent support and students showing fantastic resilience, determination and encouragement for one another throughout the morning. We are incredibly proud of every participant for giving their best effort.

Thank you to all the school staff for organising students and families to access such a wonderful opportunity. Events like this remind us just how powerful school sport can be!



## Dartmoor 3Ball

**Students from Years 3-6 enjoyed two fantastic Dartmoor3Ball tournaments.**

Despite some drizzly conditions, both events were filled with enthusiasm, teamwork, determination and skill as teams competed in our much-loved striking and fielding game. It was wonderful to see so many students enjoying the opportunity to play, compete and celebrate Dartmoor3Ball in such a positive and supportive atmosphere.

A huge thank you to the SDCC Year 9 Sports Leaders, whose excellent officiating, encouragement and support helped make both events such a success, and well done to everyone who took part.



# Year 11 Leaver's Day and Prom

We had the pleasure of celebrating Leaver's Day with our Year 11 students. They have worked tremendously hard this year and we are incredibly proud of them.

The day was filled with laughter and nostalgia as we reminisced over old photos and videos, before the annual SDCC auction! Shirt signing followed, then we came together again in the evening for the Prom at The Moorland Hotel. They were a wonderful year group and we are deeply fond of them. They worked well with us and we are excited to celebrate their results with them in the summer, welcoming the majority back to Sixth Form in September.



## Geography NEA Launch

Students attended the A Level Geography Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) launch day at Plymouth University.

Alongside fellow geographers from across the Trust, they were introduced to a range of human and physical geography ideas and received valuable guidance from university staff and lecturers, giving them a clear insight into the requirements of the NEA.

It proved to be a fantastic learning experience that both inspired and prepared students for their independent investigations.



## Chemistry Competition

Year 12 Chemistry students competed in the Royal Society of Chemistry Schools' Analyst Competition.

The competition took them through three experiments exploring the world of analytical chemistry, putting their practical and mathematical skills to the test. Once students had collected and reviewed their results, they had to decide whether the mysterious illness that had befallen a local pharmacist involved foul play.

It was a great opportunity for students to experience the world of forensic science and apply what they had learnt this year to the 'real world'.



## Basketball

We were proud to host this year's Sixth Form Basketball Tournament.

Welcoming teams from across the country for a fantastic day of competition, teamwork and sportsmanship, our first team reached the final, while the South Dartmoor Alumni team battled their way to the third-place play-off.

Our students were exceptional ambassadors for the college, showing resilience, respect and positivity both on and off the court, and we are proud of all they achieved.



## The Science of Crime

Year 12 Criminologists became forensic investigators for the day.

During a practical session with the Science Department, students examined fibres and hair samples, analysed blood spatter patterns, lifted fingerprints and used chromatography to investigate evidence.

They discussed the importance of preventing contamination and learned about the correct methods for collecting and storing forensic samples.

Using the evidence gathered, they applied methodical scientific skills to eliminate suspects and solve a crime scene investigation.

A fantastic hands-on experience that brought their Criminology studies to life!



## WeST Supra-Curricular Summer Conference

Year 12 students attended the WeST Supra-Curricular Summer Conference 2026, hosted by the University of Plymouth.

The conference brought together A Level students from across WeST for a day of inspiring speakers, interactive workshops and engaging discussions. Designed to show how classroom learning connects to higher education, employment and the wider world, the event encouraged students to explore the real-world impact of their subjects.

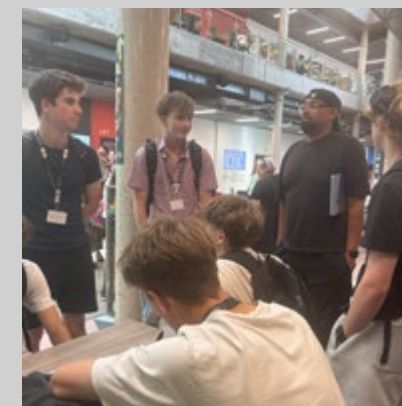
A particular highlight was hearing from South Dartmoor alumnus Tom Kegode, who opened and closed the conference. Now a speaker, coach and founder of workplace culture consultancy SparkShift, Tom shared insights from his career and encouraged students to embrace curiosity, seize opportunities and recognise the value of the skills they are developing today.

For South Dartmoor students, Tom's involvement made the occasion even more special. Earlier this year, he spoke to the Year 12 cohort during their Sixth Form induction programme, making his return a genuine full-circle moment as students reflected on their own journeys and aspirations.

Throughout the day, our students were excellent ambassadors for South Dartmoor, demonstrating maturity, curiosity and respect. Whether engaging with speakers, contributing to discussions or considering future pathways, they embraced every opportunity on offer.

The experience challenged students to think beyond their current studies, explore future careers and consider how their knowledge can be used to address real-world issues. They left feeling inspired, confident and excited about the possibilities ahead.

We would like to thank the WeST team, the University of Plymouth, Tom Kegode and all the speakers and organisers who made the day such a valuable experience.



## 'Summer Ready' Day

Year 12 students took part in our annual 'Summer Ready' Day, designed to develop the knowledge and confidence needed to stay safe in real-life situations.

Students completed CPR and defibrillator training with Devon Air Ambulance, took part in self-defence workshops with Martial Arts 4 Fun and attended road safety sessions with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. Devon and Cornwall Police also explored the dangers of speeding, distraction, drugs and alcohol when driving. Students showed maturity, curiosity and responsibility throughout the day. We thank all our partner organisations for delivering valuable skills and experiences that will support students beyond the classroom.



## TEFL Training

Year 11 and 12 students completed a two-day Level 2 Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) qualification in the Sixth Form Centre.

The course developed skills in communication, lesson planning, language development and supporting learners with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

From September, students will use these skills to support members of our EAL community within college, helping younger learners build confidence and improve their language proficiency.

The qualification also creates opportunities in volunteering, tutoring, travel and education, while developing leadership, cultural awareness and global citizenship.



## Mock Interviews

Year 12 students took part in the launch of our new Sixth Form Mock Interview Programme, designed to prepare them for higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Supported by volunteer interviewers from a range of professions, they experienced realistic interview scenarios and received valuable professional feedback.

Students demonstrated confidence, resilience and professionalism, impressing interviewers with their communication skills and self-awareness. The programme reflects our commitment to preparing students for ambitious futures through authentic experiences beyond the classroom.

We thank all volunteers for their support and look forward to the next round of online mock interviews in the Autumn Term.



## Sixth Form Celebration

Year 12 students came together for the Sixth Form Celebration, reflecting on a year of achievement and community spirit.

The afternoon began with a Sixth Form Quiz, where students demonstrated curiosity, teamwork and intellectual engagement. A traditional cream tea provided an opportunity to strengthen friendships and celebrate shared experiences.

The celebration also included Summer Term Subject Awards and Sixth Form Community Awards, recognising academic commitment, leadership and contributions to college life. It reflected our values of Truth, Respect, Equality and Excellence, providing a fitting conclusion to a successful year before students return for Year 13.



## Year 12 Enrolment Morning

**Our Year 12 Enrolment Morning welcomed the newest members of South Dartmoor Sixth Form.**

Students explored their courses, met staff and learned more about Sixth Form life while beginning to build friendships and connections within the community. They received key enrolment information and discussed academic pathways, enrichment opportunities and personalised support available to help them achieve ambitious futures.

The morning concluded with the annual Naming Ceremony, where students unveiled the newly named section of the JMB following the Year 11 Leavers' Auction.

We look forward to welcoming students back for Induction Day in the Autumn Term. A small number of places remain available for September 2026. For further information, please contact [aslater@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:aslater@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk)



## Year 13 Leavers

**We were delighted to celebrate our Year 13 students and their contribution to the Sixth Form community.**

Over the past two years, they have demonstrated outstanding work ethic, determination and resilience, helping to shape a vibrant and supportive Sixth Form environment. They leave us as excellent role models for future students.

To mark the end of this chapter, students enjoyed a friendly football match, followed by an informal gathering at the Dartmoor Lodge, where students and staff came together to share memories and celebrate their time in Sixth Form.

We look forward to celebrating their success on A Level Results Day and wish them every success in the future.



## Octopus Energy Tech Summit

**Our ICT Systems Manager attended the Octopus Energy Tech Summit in London.**

Bringing together around 4,000 innovators, industry leaders and customers, the event explored how technology and clean energy can help tackle global challenges.

Featured speakers included John Kerry, Boris Johnson, Tim Peake, William Kamkwamba, Hannah Fry and Jimmy Wales, who shared insights on energy, innovation and the role of technology in shaping the future.

The summit concluded with a showcase of new technologies designed to support a cleaner, more sustainable world. Find out more about this inspiring event on our [website](#).



## London Marathon

**Congratulations to Mr. Stokes, who successfully completed the 2026 TCS London Marathon.**

Running in support of Black Trail Runners, an organisation that works to break down barriers to the outdoors through access, skills and representation, he finished in an impressive 3 hours 55 minutes and 45 seconds.

Mr. Stokes was grateful to everyone who supported his fundraising efforts and to the Black Trail Runners community, whom he was proud to represent on the day.



## See you in September!

**The staff at South Dartmoor would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable Summer break.**

The Autumn term starts on Friday 4th September 2026 for students in Year 7, 10 and 12, and on Monday 7th September 2026 for students in Year 8, 9, 11 and 13.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back!



## SOUTH DARTMOOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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