



South Dartmoor Community College

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Empowering everyone to be the best they can be.



22 July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Aspirations Week 2026

I wanted to write to you to share something about the special atmosphere we experienced in school during our recent Aspirations Week for Years 7, 8 and 9.

The focus of the week was simple but powerful: encouraging students to aim high, to be the very best they can be and to begin imagining all the possibilities open to them. What made the week so impactful was the way our staff brought these ideas to life in a very real and personal way.

Each morning, tutors and Heads of Year shared aspects of their own journeys — including the challenges, the changes of direction and the moments that shaped them. Staff were incredibly open, sharing photographs and stories from their past and, in doing so, showed students that success rarely follows a straight path.

Alongside this, we created a list of the most unusual jobs our staff have ever done. This became the basis of "Get to Work" questions in lessons across the week, where students tried to guess which member of staff had held each role. These discussions led to thoughtful conversations about transferable skills, unexpected opportunities and the idea that every experience can shape your future.

Students were also encouraged to think carefully about their own ambitions — both realistic next steps and big dreams for the future. They recorded these on Aspirations Lanyards, which students wore with pride on the final day. These small but visible reminders sparked meaningful conversations about goals, effort and belief in themselves.

There was a fantastic sense of community and enthusiasm throughout the week. Staff embraced the theme fully, even dressing as the careers they might have chosen had they not become teachers, which added a real sense of fun and energy.

Students also completed Aspirations Bingo cards, encouraging them to speak with different members of staff about careers, journeys and ideas for the future. Each completed card earned praise points, but more importantly, these conversations helped students to see new possibilities.

Our library hosted an Aspirations Display throughout the week, which was extremely well attended and became a hub for reflection and discussion.

To round off what has been a genuinely uplifting week, we were incredibly fortunate to welcome BBC presenter Simon Reeve, who spoke to students across Years 7, 8, 9 and 12. He spoke about his own journey and answered student questions with honesty and humour, describing our students as "really impressive".

The feedback from both students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. One colleague reflected:

"I've been teaching since 2001 and I genuinely cannot recall a week where I've felt so moved, energised and uplifted by so many powerful stories and life journeys."

Students have shared similar reflections, noting how much they valued hearing about real experiences and how it helped them to see staff as people from whom to learn.

We wanted to take this opportunity to connect this work back to your child individually. Unfortunately, your child was not in school for the activity where students shared and recorded their aspirations for the future. We know that young people's ambitions develop and change over time, and this may provide a valuable opportunity for a conversation at home about their interests, strengths and future goals.

We know that aspirations will change and develop over time, but taking the time to think about future possibilities is an important first step. We encourage you to continue these conversations at home — asking questions, exploring options and supporting your child to dream big.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Kind regards

Mrs Carol Murray
Aspirations Lead

