

Community Bulletin

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21st November 2025



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Our lockdown practice this week went very smoothly, and I want to extend a sincere thank-you to all of our students. Everyone took the drill very seriously, followed directions promptly, and demonstrated excellent behaviour throughout. Practices like these are an important part of keeping our school safe, and students' cooperation makes all the difference.

Thank you to all the parents who joined our recent parent tours. Your involvement is greatly appreciated and we are pleased to see such strong engagement. We have another tour scheduled for next Wednesday, 26th November at 8.30am (advert and google form on page 2) and more tours are scheduled for next term, and later in the year, and if anyone would like to sign up, you can do so by contacting stomalin@willingdonschool.org.uk.



We are also grateful to the parents who were part of the Parent Focus Group on Tuesday who gathered feedback and met with myself and our Assistant Headteacher, Mrs McKie. A summary of the feedback is included on the next page.

Well done to Year 11, with 26 students attending our Saturday session. We hope to welcome even more this coming Saturday. Attendance is optional and not compulsory, as it may not suit all children, but we are here if you feel it would help your child with their GCSE revision.

Thank you to our Year 8 parents who attended the Positive Parents Evening on Wednesday. We welcome any further feedback and encourage you to use the talk2us@willingdonschool.org.uk email.

We also thank everyone who took part in our wreath making fundraiser organised by the Friends on Thursday. It was a wonderful evening and a great way to get into the Christmas spirit. Please also note our Christmas Fayre on Saturday, 6th December, which we hope you can support.

Well done to our students who engaged with the Eastbourne Youth Radio. You were so confident! Well done!

Finally, we still have around 700 children who have not yet paid the annual £5 non-uniform day contribution. This can still be paid online and we kindly ask that it is completed as soon as possible. We have received a few emails in response to the email that went out about the request. Please rest assured if you are in receipt of Free School Meals or have any financial difficulty, there are no expectations for you to pay.

Thank you once again for your continued support and enthusiasm. Together, we make Willingdon School a thriving community for our children.

Best wishes,
Mrs May
Headteacher

Stretch and Challenge Homework for all year groups

This term, we are excited to introduce *Stretch and Challenge*, an optional homework offer designed to deepen and enrich students' understanding of the topics they study in school. These tasks can be completed in addition to core homework, will be available via the Edulink platform as usual. Activities may include research projects, competitions, academic reading, podcasts and book recommendations and will usually be set once per topic and so over a longer period. Students were introduced to the initiative in an assembly at the start of this term, and can earn extra reward points for completing tasks in addition to the main reward, which is developing a richer knowledge of subjects they are passionate about!

<https://willingdonschool.org.uk/learning/literacy/subject-specific-lists>

Parent Focus Group Feedback

Thank you to everyone who shared feedback with us recently. I wanted to provide a brief summary of the key points discussed and the actions we are taking:

- **Year 7 booklets:** Parents noted that the booklets are often given out late. Mrs May apologised for this and acknowledged that it is not good enough, especially for setting the right example for our youngest year group.
- **Consistency of homework platforms:** We talked about homework being set on different platforms. Ms McKie has reminded staff today to ensure homework is set consistently on EduLink.
- **Reporting codes and feedback:** We discussed the need to make reporting codes and subject feedback clearer for parents and students. This is an area we will continue to review.
- **Homework expectations and support for Year 7:** We also talked about the amount of homework and the support in place for Year 7. Miss Naylor will share more detail on the support available for this year group.

We will continue these discussions as we work to improve communication and consistency across the school. Thank you again for your constructive feedback and ongoing support.

Mrs May and Ms McKie



We would like to open our doors again to parents who would like to meet with a senior leader and have a tour of the school in action during the day. The times these will take place are listed below.

Wednesday, 26th November 2025 8.30am-10am

Please click on the link above to book onto one of these tours. We will also see your child's class if you wish or we can avoid it if you would prefer! This is a great way of seeing the school, warts and all! The previous parent tours we did were very successful and we appreciated the parent feedback and observations made.

Click here to book

[Parent Tours during the school day](#)

Christmas Card

Competition
Open to All Year Groups

You have the chance to design the official
Willingdon School Christmas Card!

1st Prize winner £20 Amazon voucher

The card will be used by Mrs May for most of the school Christmas cards.

2nd Prize winner £15 Amazon voucher

The card will also be used by Mrs May for some of the school Christmas cards.

Runners up (x4) £5 Amazon vouchers

CLOSING DATE: 4TH DECEMBER 2025 (THURSDAY)

Hand in your artwork at **your tutor bases** or

email to our competition email address: competition@willingdonschool.org.uk





**Free
Event**

Crash into
Christmas

Wednesday 17th of December
6.00PM to 8.00PM

**Rock Bands
Musical Theatre
Choirs
String Ensemble
Instrumental and Vocal
Solos, Duets and Trios**

A celebration of the wonderful musicians and performers we have at Willington. From soloists to large ensembles; The String Ensemble to a High School Musical Teaser. We have Christmas magic and festive bands, The event will take place in the school's main hall. Everyone welcome.



Willington
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

CHALLENGE 100% ATTENDANCE

24th November - 18th December

Who Can Enter?

All students who achieve 100% attendance during the challenge period.

Prizes (Per Year Group):

1st Prize: £15 Amazon Voucher
2nd Prize: £10 Amazon Voucher
3rd Prize: £5 Amazon Voucher

How It Works:

All eligible students' names will be entered into a prize draw.
Three winners per year group will be selected.

Stay In School • Stay Consistent • Win Big!

Good luck to everyone taking part!

Parent/Carer Survey

Thank you to everyone who has taken part in our previous surveys. Your feedback is incredibly valuable to us.

We truly value your input in our parental surveys and the insight it provides into our school community.

Please take a moment, just five minutes, to complete this week's survey by following the link below.

<https://participate.schoolsurveys.com/oQwF9iCRQsyUiqX9>

The Maths team answers some of your questions around Sparx Maths homework expectations.

Why We Encourage Students to Aim for 100% in Sparx Maths

At Willingdon, we encourage students to complete 100% of their Sparx Maths homework each week. This isn't about perfection for its own sake, there are important educational reasons behind it.

Sparx is designed so that every question builds on a previous skill. When students complete all their homework, they get the full sequence of practice needed to truly understand the topic. Missing questions breaks that learning chain and can leave gaps that make future work more difficult.

Achieving 100% also helps teachers see exactly what students can do independently. This allows us to identify where support is needed early, rather than discovering issues later in class or during assessments.

Perhaps most importantly, finishing all the work builds confidence and good learning habits. Students experience the satisfaction of completing a challenge, develop resilience when questions are tricky, and learn to manage their time effectively.

By aiming for 100%, students strengthen their maths foundations, build independence, and set themselves up for long-term success.

Why Helping Too Much With Sparx Maths Can Make Homework Harder

We know parents want to support their children, but completing Sparx Maths questions *for* them can actually make future homework more difficult. Sparx adapts to each student's answers, so when a child gets help, the system assumes they've mastered a skill and moves them on to harder content before they're ready. This hides important learning gaps and prevents them from getting the practice they need.

Over time, children who don't complete the questions independently often find maths more confusing, become more anxious about tests, and rely increasingly on adult help. Encouraging your child to tackle questions on their own and letting their teacher see where they genuinely struggle, helps them build confidence, fluency, and long-term maths success.

Please contact your Maths teacher if you feel that your homework has become too challenging for you to be able to complete independently. We can adjust the level of difficulty for you.

<u>DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - TERM 2</u>	
Tuesday 25th Nov - Year 8 London Science Museum trip	INSET DAYS 2025-26 Monday, 5th January 2026 Thursday, 25th June 2026
Thursday 4th Dec - Year 9 Parents' Evening	
Saturday 6th Dec - Friends Xmas Fayre - 11am-1pm	
Wednesday 17th Dec - Crash into Christmas Concert 6pm-8pm	
End of Term 2 - Friday 19th Dec - Early School Closure The school buses cannot be rescheduled to run early and therefore students will need to make their own transport arrangements. Year 7 - 12.10pm Year 9 - 12.05pm Year 8 - 12.15pm Year 10 & 11 - 12.25pm	
Start of Term 3 for students - Tuesday 6th January 2026	

Positive feedback from recent parent tours

Thank you so much for taking the time to show us around the school.

We left feeling incredibly positive. Willingdon is a large school with all the challenges that come with that, yet what stood out most was the caring optimism running through the staff and environment. There are so many opportunities for students to thrive, not only academically, but as confident, capable young adults ready for their future.

The teachers we met were genuinely lovely. Each one spoke with pride, not just about their subjects, but about their students. It was truly heartwarming, and I'm sure the children feel that support, even the more reserved or reluctant ones.

It's clear that strong relationships have been built between staff and students. The expectations around behaviour and respect are high, and it was impressive to see how well students responded to that. The balance of warmth, boundaries, and professionalism is something the school should be proud of, you have got it exactly right.

We were also encouraged to hear that the school remains committed to what is best for its students, rather than simply following trends or external pressures. The fact that Ofsted and the DfE later adopted practices already established at Willingdon speaks volumes about the strength of your leadership and vision

Even when teachers spoke with us, students remained focused and on task, which was remarkable. Every classroom we visited was calm, purposeful, and filled with engaged learners, an achievement not to be understated.

You have every reason to be proud of your staff, your students, and the culture you have created.

Thank you again — it was a pleasure to visit.

5

REASONS TO SHOW UP & START THE WEEK RIGHT

Start strong, smash the week ahead!



1. SET THE VIBE FOR SUCCESS. NAIL MONDAY, AND THE REST OF THE WEEK FOLLOWS!

2. GET YOUR MOMENTUM GOING. KICK-START YOUR LEARNING AND STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME.

3. CATCH UP WITH YOUR COACH. CHAT ABOUT THE WEEKEND, SET GOALS, AND RESET YOUR FOCUS.

4. BE PART OF THE CREW. SEE YOUR MATES, SHARE STORIES, AND STAY IN THE LOOP.

5. DON'T MISS OUT! TRIPS, CLUBS, AND COOL ANNOUNCEMENTS USUALLY DROP ON MONDAYS!

Monday Matters

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REASONS TO BE IN SCHOOL ON A FRIDAY

Finish strong, go into the weekend winning!



1. FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED. SHOW AMBITION, RESILIENCE, AND PRIDE IN YOUR WEEK'S WORK.

2. STAY CONNECTED WITH FRIENDS. WRAP UP THE WEEK TOGETHER AND MAKE WEEKEND PLANS!

3. LOCK IN YOUR LEARNING. FRIDAY LESSONS TIE EVERYTHING TOGETHER (AND MAKE REVISION WAY EASIER).

4. GET AHEAD OF THE GAME. SORT YOUR STUFF FOR NEXT WEEK SO MONDAY FEELS EASY.

5. EARN YOUR WEEKEND CHILL, NO STRESS, NO CATCH-UPS, JUST GOOD VIBES.

THE FRIDAY FEELING



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

It's been another largely positive week for our Year 11 students, who continue to work hard as they build towards their mock exams at the start of December. It has been fantastic to see their engagement across a wide range of subjects, whether that's in Food Technology with the NEA now underway, GCSE PE and their PEPs, or their Travel and Tourism coursework, just to name a few.

The maturity they are showing towards the tasks set by exam boards and teachers is really encouraging, and it's clear they are focused on achieving the best possible outcomes in their controlled assessments and coursework.

A reminder that we have our second Grade Up intervention session this Saturday from 10am to 12pm in school. Many students have already signed up, and after the positive atmosphere and high levels of engagement last week, we're very much looking forward to another productive session.

Please see the Year 11 mock timetable on the following page for your information.

Students are also moving into the second round of choosing their Leavers' hoodies, with lots of student voice helping to shape the final design as we move through the year.

Finally, we would like to thank you for your ongoing support. Any continued encouragement at home as students prepare for their upcoming mock exams is greatly appreciated.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend when it arrives.

The Year 11 Team

GRADE UP - INTERVENTION TIMETABLE					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Coaching Time	Assembly	English (selected students) Maths (selected students) Science (selected students)	English (selected students)	English (selected students) Maths (selected students) Science (selected students)	Maths (selected students)
Lunch Time	Art	Travel & Tourism English – Poetry Workshop	Travel & Tourism Sociology	Art	Art Travel & Tourism
After School 3-4pm	DT (invite only)	Spanish Business	Maths History IT Science	French Drama Music GCSE PE Art Psychology	Geography (selected students)

Year 11 December Mock Exams

	8.30am	-	11.25am
28-Nov	Art - 5hr	28-Nov	Art
01-Dec	English Literature Paper 1 1hr 45m	01-Dec	Business Studies 1hr 45m Dance 2hr
02-Dec	History Paper 1 2hr	02-Dec	Maths Paper 1 1hr 30m
03-Dec	Sociology 1 - 1hr 45m Further Maths Non Calculator Paper - 1hr 45m	03-Dec	Spanish Writing Higher 1hr 20m/Foundation 1hr 15m
04-Dec	Biology Paper 1 1hr 45m/1h 15m	04-Dec	French Writing Higher 1hr 20m/Foundation 1hr 15m Latin 1 - 1hr 30m
05-Dec	English Literature Paper 2 2hr 15m	05-Dec	12.15 START Spanish Reading Higher 1hr/Foundation 45min
08-Dec	English Language Paper 1 1 1hr 45m	08-Dec	Geography - Physical paper 1hr 30m
09-Dec	Chemistry Paper 1 1hr 45m/1h 15m	09-Dec	French Reading Higher 1hr/Foundation 45m Latin 2 - 1hr
10-Dec	DT 2hr	10-Dec	Maths Paper 2 1hr 30m
11-Dec	English Language Paper 2 1hr 45m	11-Dec	History Paper 2 1hr
12-Dec	Physics Paper 1 1hr 45m/1h 15m	12-Dec	Psychology 1 - 1hr 30m
15-Dec	Further Maths Calculator Paper 2 - 1hr 45m Child Development - 1hr 30m	15-Dec	Food 1hr 45m
16-Dec	ICT -1hr 30m Psychology 2 -45m Music - 1hr 15m	16-Dec	Spanish listening Higher 1hr/Foundation 45m
17-Dec	Maths 3 1hr 30m	17-Dec	French Listening Higher 1hr/Foundation 45m
18-Dec	PE 1 1hr 30m	18-Dec	Geography Human/Fieldwork 1hr
19-Dec	Drama - 1hr 45m Sociology 2 - 50m		



Head of Year
Mr Gordon

Email - pastoral-10@willingdonschool.org.uk

Year 10

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Well done to all our Year 10 students for another successful and productive week in school.

This week we carried out a series of lesson walkthroughs, and we were delighted to see such strong focus and engagement across all Year 10 classes. At this important stage of their Key Stage 4 journey, students demonstrated our school value of *respect* through their attentive listening, positive attitude to learning, and the way they responded to teacher feedback to support their progress.

Our Year 10 assembly, led by Miss Walters, focused on allergy awareness. Students learned about the wide range of allergies that some members of our school community manage daily, and the importance of being considerate, informed, and supportive in order to help keep everyone safe at Willingdon.

On Monday 17th, the whole school took part in a lockdown practice during Lesson 5. This was an important opportunity to ensure all students are confident and aware of the procedure should it ever need to be implemented.

Due to the wet weather this week, we have made frequent use of our indoor allocated areas at break and lunchtime. Please could you remind your child that during wet weather they must stay only in the designated indoor areas and avoid being in the corridors.

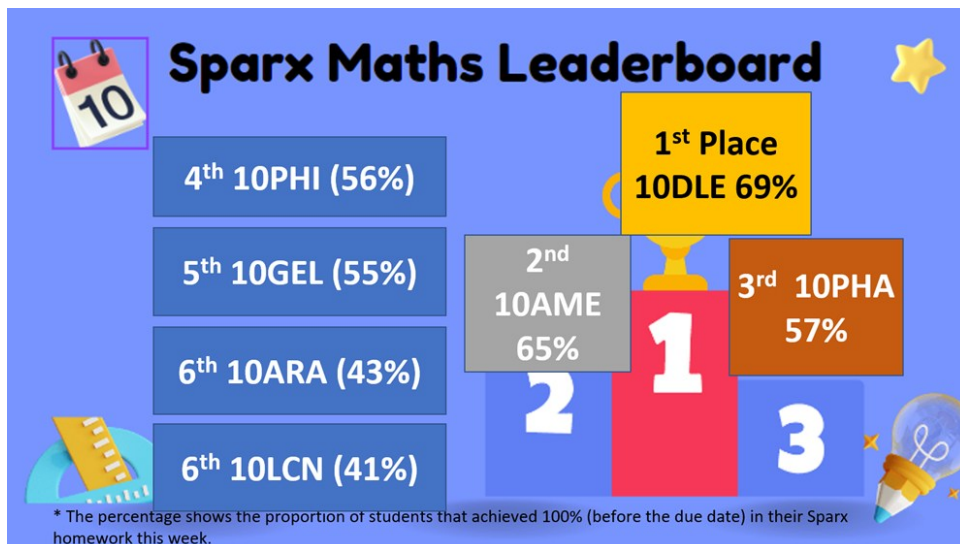
Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to another successful week ahead.

Thank you for your continued support.

Year 10 Team

Meet the Team

Well done to the Year 10 students that were rewarded with hot chocolate and biscuits this week. It was lovely for myself and Ms Wilding to meet the students and discuss how hard they are working at school, work experience placements and their aspirations and future career pathways. Well done to all that were invited, we are very proud of the mature way they are approaching their learning and the focus and dedication they demonstrate every day at school.





International Student Feedback

Well done to all the students from Year 10 that have met with Mrs May, Mr Gordon and Ms Wilding and were rewarded with an Amazon voucher. All the students listed below were highlighted by our current international students for the fantastic support they have given them at school. Our students have demonstrated our school values helping the students enjoy their time at Willingdon.

Harley S-G

Louis H

Ethan F

Manya D

Ashley H

Enzo d S

Austin A

Florrie B

Sophie P

Esme R

Maureen-Elica M

Angel H



Head of Year
Mr Keast / Ms Johnson

Email - pastoral-9@willingdonschool.org.uk

Year 9

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

The year group have had another really busy week!

On Tuesday, another group of students enjoyed a very cold day of activities at Bushy Wood. They made a shelter, completed team building activities, had the opportunity to take part in rock climbing. However, the most enjoyable activity, given the weather was cooking pitta pizzas and s'mores (toasted marshmallows and chocolate sandwiched between two digestive biscuits) over a camp fire.

On Wednesday, the whole year group had an assembly with Jack the Lad as part of the Dare to Dream programme they have been taking part in since the beginning of the academic year. The theme of this assembly was what brings happiness and success. Rather than money and fame, it's family, relationships and job satisfaction. Following this a small group of students worked on an individual basis with the team We, as ever, had amazing feedback about the year group.

We also want to take the chance to congratulate Harry D. On Friday, he attended an annual Ju Jitsu seminar and was graded for his blue belt. In the words of his very proud family ' he absolutely smashed it'. Well done Harry!

This week's winner of the year group attendance challenge was 9CFR with attendance of 94.8%. We are continuing to see a dip in attendance and appreciate the continued support of parents and carers. It is especially important that we build this resilience as we head towards KS4 and GCSEs.

9CFR are also currently in the lead for our Christmas treat with 5 stars currently compared to two for each of the other tutor groups.

The 5 top achievers in the year group last week were Freddie D, Bow-Belle C-M, Issac S, Freya C and Aeryn N who all received treats on Thursday.

Have a lovely weekend.

Year 9 Team



Dear Year 9 Parents and Carers

Loudmouth Education and Training has been commissioned to deliver *Calling Out* to secondary schools across East Sussex. This Theatre in Education production explores topics such as harmful sexual behaviours, sexual harassment, sexual assault,

pornography, consent, and misogyny through an engaging live performance.

The aim of the programme is to help students understand what harmful sexual behaviour is, recognise its many forms, explore where these behaviours, and consider the impact they can have on those affected.

Our Year 9 students will be taking part in this production on **Wednesday, 26th November**.

If you would prefer your child not to participate, please contact our RSHE Lead at gstables@willingdonschool.org.uk



Head of Year

Mr Roche

Email - pastoral-8@willingdonschool.org.uk

Year 8

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

We have had another fantastic week in Year 8 as we move into our fourth week after half term. Students remain engaged, focused, and are consistently meeting our expectations in lessons. They continue to demonstrate our school values, and I have personally witnessed many examples of compassion and ambition in their learning and in the way they support one another around school. Their kindness towards others has been particularly impressive.

Year 8 Progress Evening

I would like to express how delighted I was with the turnout at our Year 8 Progress Evening on Wednesday. Thank you to all parents and carers for your commitment and continued support, particularly around attendance and academic progress. We hope you found the evening informative and useful in understanding how best to support your child throughout the year.

Attendance Update

Our current attendance sits at 94%, and we are keen to see this improve. As you know, students with attendance below 95% are likely to develop gaps in their learning, which can affect their progress particularly as they move towards GCSEs, college, and future careers.

Where possible, please schedule appointments in the afternoon so that students can attend most of their lessons.

Upcoming Attendance Incentives

To encourage strong attendance in the run up to Christmas, we will be running several competitions and rewards, including:

- 100% Attendance raffle from next week until the Christmas break.
- 12 Days of Christmas Attendance celebration, with selection boxes and small treats for students consistently in school.

Please note medical appointments will not negatively affect attendance for the purpose of these rewards, as long as they are evidenced.

Competitions & Events

- Christmas Card Competition – We would love to see as many entries as possible.
- The Year 8 Bake Off – We’ve had a brilliant response! Our 16 finalists will compete during the final week of term, with the winning tutor group receiving a special Domino’s Pizza reward.

Celebrating Success

A huge congratulations to our Year 8 Girls’ Netball Team, who achieved an outstanding 13–0 win against Peacehaven this week. Well done to all involved, an excellent performance!

We would also like to celebrate our High Achievers for this week, each earning between 30 and 40 achievement points:

Suki L	Olivia I	Lillie P	Georgia K
Thomas G	Ellen K	Saria K	



Fantastic work—well done!

Congratulations as well to 8EMC, who reached an impressive 95.7% attendance. Your cake rewards will be delivered next week!

Uniform & Weather Reminder

As the weather is turning much colder, please ensure students:

- Arrive on time, as travel delays are expected.
- Wear the correct uniform, including blazers and optional school jumpers.
- Bring a coat, as temperatures continue to drop.

A reminder that hoodies are not permitted in school. Students should not wear hoodies inside the building, as this causes unnecessary issues with uniform expectations.

We are looking forward to another brilliant week ahead. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.

The Year 8 Team



Head of Year
Mrs Muller / Mrs Naylor

Email - pastoral-7@willingdonschool.org.uk

Year 7

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Thank you for all your support you have been giving your child and us with the Year 7 homework changes, we hope that easing the students in with the recall booklets for the first term helped to get them in good habits ready for the introduction of subject homework this term.

To support students, we do have homework clubs available, these are running every Thursday lunchtime in IT2 and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3-4pm in IT2. Please encourage your child to come along if they are struggling and needing some extra help.

We are also seeing a large number of fidget toys being used in lessons by Year 7 students, our guidance is that they can have one fidget only and it must be discrete (small and not noisy). They are to support on task focus and behaviours and must not be a distraction. Fidgets that are large/noisy/distracting should be put back in the students' bag and can be used at break, but are not appropriate during lessons. In addition, items such as Rubix cubes, tech deck skateboards/ scooters and star wars mini figures are classed as toys and are not permitted.

We will be reducing the time Year 7 leave lessons by, to 2 minutes. They know the building now and won't get lost! This starts on Monday.

Finally, please can we remind you of our attendance challenge this term, the '12 days of Xmas', please encourage your child to achieve 100% attendance throughout November, so we can enter them into this competition.

Have a lovely weekend.



Friends of Willingdon

*Join us for our
Festive Christmas Fayre*



Vendor spots available

December 6, 2025

10am - 1pm

Email friends@willingdonschool.org.uk for more info





Friends
OF WILLINGDON

Christmas Fayre

Saturday 6th December 2025

Meet Father Christmas and have a photo in his sleigh

Carol singing and Christmas music

A wide range of festive products for sale including holly wreaths, table centres, Body Shop products, crystals, jewellery, Christmas decorations, stained glass decorations, sweets, chocolates and many more

Fun Christmas activities for all including bouncy castle

Fantastic prizes on offer in our Christmas raffle and tombola. Cakes, mince pies and hot drinks on sale

Careers Page


Job Spotlight

<https://studyworkgrow.com/>

JOB SPOTLIGHT

Carpenter

MAKER



CARVE • CRAFT • BUILD

studyworkgrow

Community Page



**EDUCATION
EAST SUSSEX**
TOGETHER FOR EXCELLENCE
AND INCLUSION

Boys in Mind

The Boys in Mind (BiM) charity is a youth-led organisation that challenges stereotypes around masculinity and mental health.

They work with schools to create films, workshops, and resources co-produced with boys and young men. Their message is simple but powerful:



We want boys and young men to be mentally healthy, to feel safe to talk openly, and to know that being kind and compassionate is part of being strong.



**Visit the Boys in
Mind website**

**CLICK
HERE**