

 Sir Geoff Hurst Academy Newsletter

Autumn Term 1 • Issue #1 • "Be your best, Be kind, Belong"

 At a Glance

- **Term Dates:** 3rd September – 18th December
- **October Half:** Term 26th October - 30th October (**Inset Day Monday 2nd November**)
- **Main Office & Absence Line:** 01245 821016 | SGHoffice@beckmeadtrust.org
- **School Website & Portal:** <https://www.beckmeadtrust.org/sir-geoff-hurst>

 Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents, Carers, and Students,

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of the Sir Geoff Hurst Academy newsletter! As we reflect on our journey so far—from celebrating the triumphant close of our very first academic year and honouring our Year 11 leavers at Pontlands Park, to diving into an ambitious new school term—I am filled with tremendous pride in our pupils, staff, and families.

At our academy, every single school day counts. When our pupils are in school, they are safe, supported, learning, and thriving. With our collective focus on punctuality and presence, our overall school attendance has seen a remarkable leap, climbing from **57% to 78%**. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our families and the resilience of our young people.



Celebrating Success & Weekly Traditions

To keep this momentum alive, we have embedded rewarding traditions into our weekly routine:

-  **Weekly Attendance Breakfasts:** Every Friday, students achieving 100% attendance gather together for a celebratory breakfast of warm bacon rolls, croissants, fresh fruit, and yoghurts alongside their peers.
-  **Headteacher's Weekly Golden Ticket:** Classes nominate pupils who consistently embody our core values—*Care, Respect, Achieve, Together to Be Your Best, Be Kind, and Belong*. Every Wednesday afternoon, our Golden Ticket recipients join me in the meeting room for tea, cake, and meaningful conversations celebrating their positive impact on our school community.

Looking ahead, we are taking pupil voice even further with the launch of our new **School Council**, ensuring that our students play a leading role in shaping academy life. Thank you for your continued partnership, trust, and shared enthusiasm as we build an inspiring community together.

Warm regards,

Miss Tracey Plane

Headteacher, Sir Geoff Hurst Academy

Milestones & Leavers: Celebrating the Class of 2026

A historic milestone was reached this summer as we bid farewell to our very first set of Year 11 leavers!

To celebrate their dedication, our students and staff gathered for an unforgettable prom at the picturesque Pontlands Park. Dressed to the nines, our leavers enjoyed a three-course dinner in the stunning grounds, reminiscing on their shared memories and celebrating their hard work completing their Functional Skills exams.

"To our Year 11 class: thank you for making history with us at Sir Geoff Hurst Academy. We wish you every success as you embark on your next steps into college, apprenticeships, and future careers!"

Curriculum Innovations: Key Stage 3 & 4 Pathways

September marked an exciting evolution in our academic provision with the launch of dedicated **Curriculum Pathways** starting from Year 7. These pathways are specifically tailored to match each student's talents, passions, and post-16 goals:

-  **Accredited Vocational Qualifications:** ASDAN Short Courses in Photography, Woodwork, and Humanities, alongside practical BTEC courses in Sport and Cooking.
-  **Languages & Academics:** Structured courses in French, Spanish, and hands-on STEM engineering challenges.
-  **Creative & Performing Arts:** Enriched Fine Art, Creative Writing, Vocal performance, and instrumental sessions delivered in partnership with Essex Music Services.
-  **Life Skills & Wellbeing:** Dedicated Health & Beauty modules, alongside weekly swimming sessions at Riverside Ice and Leisure.

Seasonal Enrichment & Halloween Festivities

This term, our autumn enrichment programme has brought extra warmth, excitement, and hands-on joy to our academy! Our pupils have thoroughly enjoyed a range of vibrant seasonal activities tailored to encourage creativity, teamwork, and sensory exploration:

-  **Autumn Pumpkin Picking:** Pupils ventured out into the autumn air to select their own pumpkins, enjoying a fantastic session of outdoor sensory learning, harvesting, and group collaboration.
-  **Halloween Creative Crafts:** From spooky art projects to pumpkin carving, decorating, and autumn-themed sensory tasks, pupils expressed their artistic flair while building warm social connections.
-  **Regulated Seasonal Fun:** These interactive events offer invaluable opportunities for self-regulation, laughter, and shared traditions that truly strengthen our school community.

Outdoor Education & First-Year Celebrations

Hands-on outdoor education continues to anchor our school culture, challenging students to step outside their comfort zones and learn through adventure.

Year 6 Danbury Essex Outdoors Overnight Residential

Our Primary phase set an inspiring benchmark during their trip to Danbury Essex Outdoors. Students tackled the high ropes, conquered the climbing wall, braved the aerial zip wire, and worked as teams through the bushcraft and assault courses.

For our Year 6 pupils, the adventure culminated in their first-ever school overnight residential. From shared mugs of hot chocolate and roasted marshmallows to an evening woods walk, water fights, and spontaneous cabin dance-offs led by the Headteacher, the trip was unforgettable. One student, initially apprehensive about sleeping away from home, was so moved by the encouragement of his peers that he asked to stay—making memories that will last a lifetime. In the words of one enthusiastic Year 5 pupil: *"I can't wait until next year when I get to stay overnight!"*

End-of-Year Phase Trips

We rounded out our first academic year with celebratory phase outings across Essex:

- **Primary Phase:** Aerial runways and adventure climbing at Danbury Outdoors.
- **Key Stage 3:** Traditional seaside trip, building sandcastles, walking the pier, and enjoying fresh coastal air.
- **Key Stage 4:** High-energy bowling, roller-skating, pool, and shuffleboard at Madison Heights.
- **Residential Community:** An action-packed afternoon at St Andrews Lake!

♥ Mental Health, Wellbeing & Residential Life

World Mental Health Day: Spreading Kindness with "Kind Cards"

On 10th October, Sir Geoff Hurst Academy marked World Mental Health Day, focusing on gratitude, active listening, and human connection. Students and staff wrote and exchanged Kind Cards across our corridors, expressing heartfelt thanks to the people who brighten their days—whether addressed to *"the one who always listens,"* a dedicated keyworker, or a friend who shares an encouraging smile.

Our 3 Everyday Wellbeing Pledges:

1. **Look out for one another:** Notice when a peer or colleague needs a helping hand or extra patience.
2. **Keep talking:** Normalise speaking openly about feelings without stigma.
3. **Spread kindness:** Embed small gestures of gratitude into our daily routines.

Riverside Ice & Leisure Memberships for Residential Pupils

Physical wellness and community integration are central to our residential provision. We are thrilled to share that all of our residential pupils have now received full memberships to Riverside Ice and Leisure in Chelmsford! This grant gives our young people regular access to the swimming pools, ice skating rink, and fitness facilities—helping them build confidence, independent life skills, and active routines.

🛡️ Safeguarding Spotlight: E-Safety Training with 'The Two Johns'

On 14th October, we welcomed renowned online safety experts, The Two Johns (ESafetyTraining.org), for an intensive whole-school digital safety day.

- **Student Sessions:** Tailored, age-appropriate workshops equipped pupils with practical awareness on gaming safety, digital privacy, and recognising online pressure.
- **Staff Professional Development:** Up-to-the-minute briefings on emerging social platforms, algorithmic trends, and proactive safeguarding procedures.
- **Parent & Carer Evening:** A well-attended seminar offering families real-world strategies to protect and supervise their young people online in the home.

"The feedback across all year groups was overwhelmingly positive, leaving students and parents alike feeling empowered and informed."

Session Recording: The session was recorded and will be available until 4th November via the Zoom recording link provided on the school portal.



Key Dates & Upcoming Events

Date	Event / Activity	Time	Location / Notes
02.11.26	Non pupil day staff training	All Day	No school for students
03.11.26	SEND Careers advisor visiting school	9am - 1pm	Parents/carers can book 1:1 appointment slots via ClassDojo - Secondary parents only
13.11.26	runPudsey	10am - 11am	Children in Need sponsored run
18.11.26	Careers Fair - London Excel Year 11's	All day	London
04.12.26	School Christmas Market	11.30am - 1pm	SGH
11.12.26	Parents Evening	1.30pm - 5.20pm	More details to follow



Parent / Carer Coffee Mornings

- **Autumn Term:** 03.11.2026 (10am - 12pm)
- **Spring Term:** 27.01.2026 (10am - 12pm)
- **Summer Term:** 19.04.2026 (10am - 12pm)
- **Summer Term:** 29.06.2026 (1pm - 2.30pm)

Free Parent & Carer Support Courses

Essex County Council provides a range of free courses supporting parents at home as linked below, please register for as many as are appropriate and share with any other adults that support our learners:

- **Managing Conflict at Home:** ACL Essex HO4C04OL26 Managing Conflict At Home
- **Managing Anger:** ACL Essex HO3C06OL26 Managing Anger In Young People
- **Positive Parenting for Teens:** ACL Essex HO2C04OL26 Positive Parenting For Teens
- **Understanding Teens' Anxiety:** ACL Essex HO2C06OL26 Understanding Teens Anxiety
- **Understanding Children's Anxiety:** ACL Essex HO1C06OL26 Understanding Children's Anxiety
- **Setting Boundaries:** ACL Essex HO5B01OL26 Setting Boundaries
- **Assertive Parenting:** ACL Essex HO2C10OL26 Assertive Parenting

To register your interest or find out more details, search for the course codes on the ACL Essex website or contact aclfamilylearning@essex.gov.uk.

Wellbeing & Community Corner

Tip of the Month: Focus on Transitions & Routine

The Power of the "5-Minute Grounding Buffer"

The shift from summer to full autumn routines—combined with darker evenings and seasonal changes—can trigger sensory overload and heightened anxiety.

When your child arrives home from school, try offering a 15-to-20-minute **"Zero Expectation Zone"**:

- **Pause the questions:** Avoid asking "How was your day?" or "What did you learn?" immediately at the door.
- **Provide regulation first:** Offer a warm/cold drink, a crunch/chew snack (great for oral sensory input), and low-lighting space.
- **Connect quietly:** Sit nearby without demanding eye contact or conversation.
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Why it works: Children in SEMH environments expend immense energy self-regulating during the school day. Giving them a structured, demand-free buffer allows their nervous system to reset before transitioning into evening expectations.

 Recommended Reading:

- **Primary:** "Ruby's Worry" by Tom Percival
- **Secondary:** "When the Sky Falls" by Phil Earle

 Riddle / Quiz of the Week:

"I can be given, but I can never be bought. I can be broken, but never with hands. If I am kept, I build a bridge between two people. What am I?"

Answer: A promise!

