

21st November 2025

Dear Parent Carers,

Weekly Update: 21/11/25

I hope this update finds you well. The temperature has certainly dropped this week – where possible, please encourage your child/young person to wear a warm coat to school. Also, if it's wet weather, and your child/young person still enjoys being outside at breaks and lunchtimes, please feel free to send a spare change of clothes into school in case they need it.

Aerosol Sprays

Just a quick reminder that aerosol sprays (including deodorants and body sprays) are not allowed in school. These can trigger asthma and allergies, and we want to keep everyone safe. Please encourage your child to bring roll-on alternatives instead.

Our Academy Councillors

This week's update has a special focus on a group of volunteers who work hard to support the school from behind the scenes – our Academy Councillors!

Firstly, we hear from Jeff Howe – a member of the Academy Council for the last 9 years. Jeff has served as Chair for around 6 years! Secondly, from Keir Mather – a Parent Councillor who has recently joined. Lastly, you will gain insights from a Staff Councillor, Phil Swindley.

Jeff's Story

I became an Academy Councillor after engaging with St Martins through the Young Enterprise Scheme. Initially unfamiliar with SEND, I was inspired by the school's aspirations, the dedication of staff, and how much students valued the support. Over the past nine years, working with staff and students has been humbling and rewarding—helping maintain Ofsted's Outstanding rating and seeing former students return as TAs are highlights. St Martins students consistently exceed expectations, and I always leave with a spring in my step.

Although I'm an experienced business leader, this role has taught me to adapt and apply my skills in education. It's shown me the importance of asking the right questions and approaching challenges with curiosity. These skills, alongside the responsibility of supporting and holding the leadership team to account, are invaluable in any role.

Keir's Story

I joined the Academy Council in February 2025 as a Parent Member, with my eldest

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son currently in Year 9 at St Martins. In both my role as an Assistant Principal and as a councillor, I'm passionate about helping young people reach their potential.

Being part of the Council is rewarding, and I've gained a deeper understanding of how St Martins supports students and creates such a positive environment. The Council is a team of like-minded individuals committed to SEND, inclusion, and preparing young people for adulthood. If you share these values, you'll find a welcoming and dedicated group focused on keeping students and families at the heart of everything we do.

Phil's Story

I joined the Academy Council in March 2023 to contribute to the school's strategic direction and success. My experience working within the school gave me valuable insight into the needs of students, staff, and families, and I wanted to use that perspective to help shape decisions that support teaching and learning. Becoming a councillor has allowed me to play an active role in ensuring St Martins remains a safe, inclusive, and ambitious environment for all.

This role has also broadened my understanding of governance, leadership, and accountability, while giving something meaningful back to the school. I highly recommend it to anyone who cares about our community and wants to influence positive, lasting change.

I hope that you've found these snippets insightful and interesting. Currently, we are working hard to recruit additional members to our Academy Council, including a Parent Councillor. If you are interested in this role, please get in touch with me at the school for an informal discussion about the role.

Parent Carer Coffee Morning at St Andrew's Academy

St Andrew's are hosting a Coffee Morning focussing on Makaton on Wednesday 26th November. St Martins Parent Carers are welcome to join this – please see the poster further in the update for more information.

Derby SEND Voice

A poster is attached about Derby SEND Voice's next drop-in session for Parent Carers on Thursday 27th November. The Family Hubs team will also be present, as well as SENDIASS and the University of Derby's SEND Law Clinic.

With best wishes,



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Headteacher

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St Andrew's Academy

Coffee Morning



Learning Makaton

9:15AM
TO 11AM

26TH NOVEMBER
2025

St Andrews Academy Campus, Fieldsway
Drive DE23 4EF



DERBY SEND VOICE

27TH
NOV
25

PARENT CARER DROP IN

Derbion Centre Community Hub



FamilyHubDerby

Stronger families through support & friendship



UNIVERSITY OF
DERBY

**FREE LAW
CLINIC**



27.11.2025



10am - 1pm

Join Derby SEND Voice
Family Hubs
SENDIASS
University of Derby
SEND Law Clinic

come along for a relaxed chat, meet a few services
and connect with other SEND parent carers.

Please feel free to bring children



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www.derbysendvoice.co.uk

Dates for your Diaries:

Date	Event	Details
Wednesday 26 th November at 5:00pm	Certificate Presentation Evening for last year's Year 11 and Year 13 students.	Invitations have been posted home.
Thursday 11 th December	Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day	Information to follow.
Tuesday 16 th December time TBC	Winter Wonder Show	Information to follow.
Tuesday 16 th December from 2:30pm-3:30pm	Christmas Market	Information to follow.
Wednesday 17 th December	Christmas Dinner for students	Information to follow.

Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

School Starts Back – Monday 3rd November

School Breaks up for Christmas – Friday 19th December

Spring Term 2026

INSET Day – Monday 5th January 2026

School Starts Back – Tuesday 6th January

School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 13th February

School Starts Back – Monday 23rd February

School Breaks up for Easter – Friday 27th March

Summer Term 2026

School Starts Back – Monday 13th April

INSET Day – Friday 1st May

Bank Holiday – Monday 4th May

School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 22nd May

School Starts Back – Monday 1st June

School Breaks up for Summer – Wednesday 22nd July

INSET Day – Thursday 23rd July

St Martins follows Derby City Council's term dates. Dates for next year can be found on their website – please follow the link for these - <https://derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/term-holiday-dates/#>

Social Media Links

Facebook - [St. Martins School Facebook](#)

Instagram - [St. Martins School Instagram](#)

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