



SYDENHAM SCHOOL

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Friday 19th December 2025

Dear Families,

RE: Year 8 End of Half Term Letter

I hope this letter finds you well. As we come to the end of term, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the achievements of our Year 8 students. It has been a busy and productive term, filled with learning, growth and opportunities. We are proud of the resilience and enthusiasm shown by our Year 8s as they continue to build on the foundations laid in Year 7 and prepare for the challenges ahead.

This end of term letter includes details about the following:

1. **Congratulations and Successes**
2. **Attendance**
3. **Merits update**
4. **Year group specific information and key dates**
5. **Other opportunities**
6. **Parent Pay and Catering**
7. **Uniform**
8. **Praise and Rewards**
9. **Safeguarding**
10. **Term Dates**

1. Congratulations and Successes

We have been delighted to see students in Year 8 demonstrating Ambition, Determination and Respect this half term in line with our Sydenham Characteristics. Many students have received merit stickers and postcards to recognise their successes.



A huge congratulations go to the following students who have achieved end of term certificates in recognition of their commitment and hard work:

Head of Year award for Ambition goes to: **Florence F (8N)**

Deputy Head of Year award for Determination goes to: **Nina C (8M)**

Pastoral Manger award for Respect goes to: **Rue W (8A)**



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Senior Leadership Aim High award goes to: **Swizz Q (8N)**

Congratulations and thank you to **Oveya P (8H)** for creating and delivering an outstanding assembly on raising awareness of Diabetes. Oveya demonstrated exceptional confidence and clarity while speaking to an audience of 240 Year 8 students, leaving a lasting impression on both staff and peers.

Congratulations to **Mary LB (8Y)** for winning the Anti- Bullying week competition with her beautiful and poignant poem, 'The Power for Good'.

Ana-Luzia P (8M), Nina G (8M), Katie D (8D) and Pearl F (8E) need a special mention for their continued commitment to SYD on Track. They have been working hard on fundraising events such as the Y7 movie night and the winter concert sale.

Our top Year 8 readers are **Melika V A (8M) and Maya C (8Y)**, who has also written the most book reviews. Well done to them both!

In Maths Year 8 have shown dedication by consistently working hard and going above the school average in completing SPARX homework on time. This commitment reflects their determination to succeed and make excellent progress.

In English the Year 8s have been exploring the horror and dystopian genres while developing creative writing. Ms Gougeon is particularly impressed with the enthusiasm and preparation of 8Y2 and 8X4 describing them as: 'Always well prepared, always engaged and enthusiastic'. Ms Gougeon would also like to celebrate: **Lola R (8A) and Avie-Mae W (8Y)** for their exceptional effort.

In October, The Art Faculty ran a Black History Month competition. The standard of the Art was excellent. Congratulations to the joint winners: **Alma H (8D) and Pearl T (8Y)** and the runner up: **Ava-Lily A (8H)**. And very well done to **Sadie W-L (8A) and Heve H (8H)** for achieving special commendations.

We have been able to reward 65 students with hot chocolate and cookies in seven of our sessions this term, and the following students were rewarded with the SLT Postcards and Pastries:

Sarah F (8N), Mary LB (8Y), Florence F (8N), Maya S (8Y), Elspeth W (8N), Chen L (8E).

Mr Husain would like to thank the Year 8 Council members for their commitment and leadership this term. They have represented their peers with maturity and enthusiasm:

8S	Peony H	Dorothy C
8Y	Aisha F	Rosie P
8D	Soadhi A	Kaiyah P M
8E	Kylah N	Mabel Mc G
8N	Fiona O-O	Elsbeth W
8H	Avie Mai W	Mollie Mc D



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8A Lyla S B Nadia P
8M Nina G Ana-Luzia P

2. Attendance



Good attendance to school is essential for our students to gain the most out of their school experience and achieve their potential. Research undertaken by the Department of Education shows that attendance of 96% or more directly correlates to better outcomes.

Next half term, please do work with your child to help them attend school every day, because every day counts.

3. Merits Update

Congratulations to the following tutor groups who have earned the highest number of merits to date this academic year:

1st Place: 8N 3080 merits
2nd Place: 8D 3002 merits
3rd Place: 8M 2854 merits

- **Individual merits:**

Congratulations to the following students who have earned the highest number of merits this term:

Paris K (8S), Alma CD (8S) and Florence F (8N).

A special mention to the following who received the most Ambition, Determination and Respect postcards:

Malika F (8M), Nina C (8M), Mozghan A (8D) and Mary LB (8Y).

4. Year group specific information and key dates



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- **Year 8 Parents' Evening:** 22nd January 2026. (Please check your emails for the letter explaining how to make your bookings.)
- **Year 8 assessments:** The next assessment cycle begins the week commencing 11th May 2026.
- **Sydenham Charter:** We have officially re-launched the Sydenham Charter so please do make sure that you are supporting your children to complete as many activities and challenges as possible over the winter holiday and help them to set targets for the new term.

5. Other Opportunities

During the holiday there is the Lewisham Borough Winter programme for children and families where you can enjoy Art, Drama, Dance, Clay and Much More! Get Creative and Festive with The Skipz Xmas and New Years Experience 2025: [LEWISHAM BOROUGH | skipzhafprogramme](#)

The Horniman have a range of activities for families over the break. Please see here: [What's On - Horniman Museum and Gardens](#)

Parent Pay and Catering

Please ensure that your child's Parent Pay account is topped up regularly for the school catering system. A few reminders about catering:

- Free porridge is available in the dining hall every morning for all students
- There is a meal deal available each day which is a main meal and a dessert – this costs £2.78
- The Free School Meal allowance is £2.78 per day – this is credited to your child's account when they make their selection at lunchtime. Please note that this does not include an allowance for breacktime snacks.

6. Uniform – Reminders

At Sydenham School we believe that high standards of uniform contribute to an orderly and purposeful school environment. Please note that our Winter Dress Code means that students can wear a navy or black coat but must remove them inside the school building. Blazers are still compulsory (teachers will allow students to take them off during lessons.)

Blazers	These will need to be worn at all times unless permission has been given by the class teacher in the classroom to take it off.
Shirts	White revere collar shirts
School bag	Sydenham School bag only.



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Socks	Black socks or tights only.
Jewellery	One pair of studs (not hoops). No bracelets, necklaces (unless religious) or rings.
Hair	Students' hair should be their own natural colour (no hair dye or different coloured additions)
Nails	No acrylics or coloured nail polish.
Scarves	Plain black, dark blue to grey only. Must not be worn inside the school building
Hoodies	Hoodies are to be worn for PE and Dance lessons only. Confiscated hoodies will be placed in reception until the end of the school, when they can be collected.
Mobile Phones	Switched off and kept in the student's bag while they are on the school site. If the mobile phone is seen on site, it will be confiscated and can be collected after one week.

When students arrive at school, the following will happen:

- Uniform will be checked at the gate
- Students not wearing correct uniform will be directed to a member of staff

Infringement	Action
Trainers / boots / other inappropriate footwear	Student given school-issue plimsoles to change into
White, patterned or Nike socks	Student removes socks and is given school-issue black socks
Jewellery (apart from watch and small studs) can be removed at the gate	Student removes jewellery before entering school. If Jewellery is seen in school it is confiscated until the end of the half term.
No blazer	Student given school-issue blazer for the day
Incorrect school bag	Student given school-issue bag for the day

7. Praise and Rewards

We have been delighted to see so many students this half term who have been rewarded through our school systems of postcards, stickers, Hot Chocolate Fridays and SLT-led Pastries and Postcards. This has been an opportunity to celebrate success and excellence across the school – well done to all students who have been recognised.

8. Safeguarding

If you have a safeguarding concern about your child or any child who attends Sydenham School, please contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for the borough in which



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the child resides. Lewisham MASH can be contacted on 0208 314 6660 or MASHagency@lewisham.gov.uk.

If you are uncertain of the borough the child resides in, please contact the NSPCC: [Report child abuse | NSPCC](#)

If you have an urgent safeguarding concern, please contact the relevant emergency service. If you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do, go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111. If you want to contact the police, ambulance, or fire brigade, dial 999 in an emergency or 101 to report a concern or a crime.

We would also like to remind all families that Kooth will be available for your child to over the Winter break. Kooth is a free online mental health and wellbeing service available to all young people in Lewisham aged 10-25. Kooth offers free support with no waiting lists and is a safe and anonymous space for young people to talk about their wellbeing without the fear of judgement. Please do review these [resources](#) and this link ([Home - Kooth](#)) for more information about Kooth's support.

9. Term Dates

Please see below for the term dates for the next this academic year:

[Term Dates 25-26](#)

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's tutor in the first week back. A reminder that we return to school on **Monday 5th January 2026**.

Yours sincerely,

Ms S. Bailey Head of Year 8

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