



CHAIR SCGSG

EXERCISES

Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls
OCTOBER 2025



WORLD MENTAL
HEALTH DAY

Positive and Resilient team
organise wellbeing fair

ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

Pegasus Charity Day

European Day of Languages

World Challenge Expedition 2025



A message from the

Headteacher

Dr. Barbara Minards

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for the 2025-26 academic year! It has been a very long first half term, the 4th September was first day that all students were back in school and so much has been learned, experienced and achieved since then. Congratulations to Year 7 and our new Year 12 students who have successfully completed their first half term at Sutton Girls.

This newsletter showcases a variety of the events and activities that have been happening alongside all the lessons, tutor times and assemblies. The extra-curricular clubs fair on 17th September was very well attended, with students finding out more about the wide variety of clubs on offer before signing up for those that sparked their interest. From familiar favourites including netball, swing band, diversity dialogues, craft and Lego to new additions such as K-pop dance and the society of unsettled science, it is fantastic to see the breadth of opportunities on offer here at Sutton Girls. We are proud of these wider educational experiences which enable our students to develop new skills, build friendships and practise their character strengths.

We recently held our first in-person progress evening for Year 11 and have been very pleased to welcome parents and carers of students in all year groups into school for information evenings at the start of this academic year.

We are looking forward to Year 11 students and their families joining us for our Sixth Form Open Evening



on Thursday 13th November. This event is for students who are currently at Sutton Girls and those who are new to the school. Alongside presentations from myself, Mr Swanston our new Head of Sixth Form and our Senior Student Ambassadors there will be taster activities for each of the 20 different A-level subjects and opportunities to learn more about the many different aspects of our Sixth Form offer here at Sutton Girls.

Our Sixth Form leaders are great role models who have a positive impact on our whole school community. This half term they have led events including the first House Charity Day, a languages fair and wellbeing exhibition. You can read more about these fantastic events in this edition of our newsletter.

This half term has seen high levels of participation in a variety of sporting events both in school

and within the local community. Students have competed in numerous tournaments and fixtures, with notable successes in football, cross-country and netball. Well done to all those who have represented Sutton Girls and got the academic year off to a such a positive start!

After a thorough audition process, the school musical has now been cast! Congratulations to all students who put themselves forward and to the cast and crew of Grease. The rehearsals are underway, and we are looking forward to what is sure to be another amazing production in March.

Please enjoy reading more about what has been happening at Sutton Girls during the Autumn 1 half term. Have a happy and safe half term holiday.

Take care,
Dr Minards

New minibus funded by School Charity makes debut!

by Mr S. Hall
Marketing Assistant

During the summer holidays, we retired our long-serving school minibus after 19 years, having taken students on a variety of outings, such as RAF Cosford, local

football fixtures, and numerous netball games.

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to everyone who has donated to the SCGSG Charity over the years, enabling us to fund our brand-new replacement minibus, featuring graphics

designed in-house.

Just before the end of school on Tuesday 23rd September, our brand new minibus had it's maiden voyage, transporting our KS3 Cross Country team to their first event of the year!

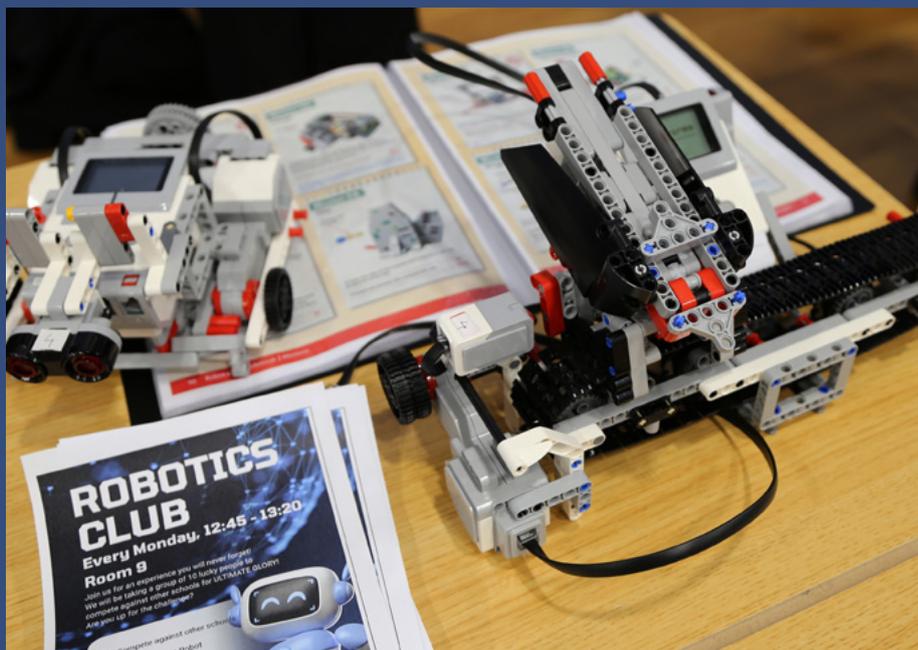


Extracurricular Clubs Fair 2025

by Maryam in Year 8

We have a wide range of clubs here at Sutton Girls. From Crochet, Comic Klub, K-Pop Dance, Diversity Dialogues, Model United Nations, Architecture and so much more, you can find the right one just for you. Clubs are a stress-free and enjoyable way to spend time with friends and take a break from the classroom.

If you have a certain interest or hobby that you like, clubs are a great way to pursue your passion whilst spending time with friends and classmates. If you're like me and have trouble trying to balance homework and revision with self-care and well-being, then you have come to the right place. Whether you're crafty, sporty, or



just willing to try something new, clubs are for everyone to enjoy,

so don't be afraid to come along and showcase your talents!



Settling in to life at “Big School”

by Emily in Year 7

Hello! My name is Emily, and I'm in Year 7. A few weeks ago, I started secondary school, and wow — what a journey it's been already!

Before the first day, I was *really* nervous. I kept thinking, “What if I get lost?” or “What if I don't make any friends?” Everything felt so big and different compared to my primary school. The building looked huge, the timetable was confusing, and there were so many new faces.

But guess what? It wasn't as scary as I thought.

On the first day in September, my form tutor, Mrs Downie, was super kind and explained everything clearly. We got maps of the school (thank goodness!) and even had time on our first day to explore the school more with a treasure hunt. I met a few people in my class who were just as nervous as me, and we started chatting. Now, we sit together at lunch and help each



other find our way around.

One of the best parts of secondary school is all the new subjects. I've started learning French, and I actually enjoy DT lessons now — especially when we do practical lessons in the workshop with Mrs Collis! It feels more grown-up, and I like that we get to move around to different classrooms. It makes the day go faster.

I also joined the drama club at lunchtime, which I never had in

primary school. We're working on a lot of role-play scenarios at the moment, which are so much fun! It's helped me feel more confident and make more friends from my year group.

Of course, it's not perfect. I still get a bit nervous before tests, and sometimes I miss my old teachers and the playground we used to have. But I'm starting to feel like I belong here. Every day, I learn something new — not just in lessons, but about myself too.





Animal-themed charity day organised by Pegasus House

by Zoeya in Year 7

The first Charity Day of the year took place on Friday 17th October, and it was our turn to set the standard! This year, we are raising money for two local animal charities, **Wythall Animal Sanctuary** and **Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust**.

To start the day off, our optional non-uniform theme was “animal

print” and we had some very interesting takes on this, including a very fetching blue, inflatable Dinosaur suit!

In true Sutton Girls tradition, the lunchtime activities included year group stalls with games and quiz sheets, animal-themed bakes, pick-n-mix sweet bags, and a school-wide “match the teacher to the pet” quiz. The showstopper though was the competitive staff

benchball game, with students cheering for their favourite team!

We had such a fun day, and a big thank you to all the students that participated in the quizzes and games, bought and ate cake, and helped to make such a fantastic atmosphere in the sports hall. You helped Pegasus raise an amazing **£1700!**



World Challenge 2025

In July 2025, a small group of students set off for a three week once-in-a-lifetime World Challenge expedition to Borneo! Learning Mentor and trip member, **Mrs Kemp**, tells us about highs and lows of this incredible experience...

This amazing experience saw the team trekking through rainforests, learning traditional bushcraft and survival skills, white water rafting, meeting the orangutans in their natural habitat, and living and working as part of the community in remote Borneo.

During the 18-month build up to the trip, team members had worked hard towards fund raising and fitness in addition to weekly meetings in school to complete training modules such as Global Citizenship, Travelling Responsibly, Personal Growth, Wellbeing, Sustainable Goals and Animal Welfare. A Training Day and Build Up Day hosted by World Challenge also helped in preparation of kit, team building exercises, student roles and health and safety. At the planning stage, the trip seemed a long way off, but July soon arrived, and a very excited team set off on their 30 hour journey to experience the

best few weeks of their lives! (as quoted by students)

Once in Borneo the team were launched straight into activities such as exchanging money, buying SIM cards etc, before planning and budgeting and generally getting orientated with their new surroundings. Although overseen by adult leaders, the trips are designed to be "student led" meaning the team is responsible for its own budget, meal planning, organising and booking free time activities, and each student gets to practice their leadership skills by being Team Leader for the day.

One of the most rewarding phases of the trip was being able to stay on a Farmstay, where the students were hosted by the local community in return for supporting them with their eco-tourism project. This involved working together to learn new skills and encourage sustainable

livelihood opportunities, therefore contributing to their future independence. The students had a great time immersing themselves into the local way of life, and it was a great opportunity to learn some of the language.

In addition to the Community Initiative conservation project which involved making and clearing footpaths, building benches, handrails, and bee boxes, the team also got immersed into Malay culture with visits to local temples, mosques, museums and night markets. They tried traditional Malay cuisine and also partook in a cooking class using home grown ingredients, tried their hand at the skill of basket weaving, learnt traditional dance and drumming routines and enjoyed a visit to the local kindergarten where they got to practice using the Malay language they'd learnt so





far, giving lessons in English and having great fun teaching the children some traditional English games and nursery rhymes.

The main "Challenge" part of the expedition came with the trekking and wild camping, which was hard and arduous due to the terrain, high temperatures and humidity, as well as having to carry all kit, supplies and cooking utensils for four days, but the views encountered were spectacular and sleeping in hammocks was a novel and fun experience – great

if you didn't mind creepy crawlies! The students enjoyed planning their own meals, cooking on open fires and generally bonding over campfire stories.

At the end of the trip the team were rewarded with some much-earned R and R and enjoyed a couple of days exploring the town of Kota Kinabalu and surrounding area; local food markets and restaurants, snorkelling amongst the coral reefs just off the coastline and relaxing on the beach to enjoy the stunning sunsets this amazing

country has to offer.

Each and every member of the team returned home with a sense of accomplishment; whether that be overcoming personal challenges, learning new life and leadership skills, or making new friends. The precious memories (and thousands of photos!) will last a lifetime.

[More photographs from this amazing trip are on our website!](#)

Tara earns place in UK's most prestigious youth orchestra!

by Tara in Year 10

The National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain is one of the most prestigious and sought-after youth orchestras in the country.

Entry is incredibly competitive — musicians must be performing at a minimum of Grade 8 Distinction level and show musical ability that goes well beyond technical proficiency. I had seen the NYO perform on television and experienced their energy and excellence live. Slowly, the dream of joining them began to take root...

Since the age of eight, I have been part of the Services for Education (SFE) Ensembles, where I've gained invaluable experience, and had the chance to grow as one of the leading members! The confidence



I have developed through those years, along with the support and encouragement of my tutors, gave me the belief that I was ready to audition for the NYO!

Reaching the final round was an incredible milestone, but it also meant a summer of focused practice and preparation. The final audition day took place in London and included a mix of social and ensemble work, and

solo auditions, all alongside some incredibly talented musicians from around the UK.

It was an intense experience, lasting around 9 hours, with assessments happening, not just through the solo audition but throughout the group activities as well!

During my solo audition, I was asked to perform four orchestral excerpts, followed by an interview with the panel. While I gave it my all, I left thinking I might have to apply again next year — so when the email arrived offering me a place in the NYO 2026, I was absolutely thrilled!

The opportunity to perform in iconic venues such as Snape Maltings and the Royal Albert Hall is truly a dream come true - I can't wait to start this musical adventure!

Staff come together for the Macmillan Coffee Morning

by Mr S. Hall
Marketing Assistant

It is fairly common knowledge that at Sutton Girls, we regularly support a range of charities, and love a cake sale. The annual Macmillan Coffee Morning is the perfect excuse!

I am thrilled to say that we raised an amazing **£317** for the charity.

A big thank you to everyone who donated and ate plenty of cake, and also our fabulous bakers (Mrs McIntosh, Mrs Rudd, Mrs Parker, Mrs Lambert and Miss Slack) for supplying the most delicious treats.





Students celebrate European Day of Languages with fair

by Pei-Yao in Year 13
Respect Prefect

On Friday the 26th of September it was the European Day of Languages. The theme this year was "languages open hearts and minds" which highlights the power of languages that connect us. The European day of languages is extremely important since it helps to promote linguistic diversity and the interconnectedness between cultures. To commemorate this special day, we celebrated many languages spoken across our school community in an event organised by our Respect prefect team alongside the MFL team in the main hall. We would like to thank everyone who participated in the activities and those who immersed themselves into new cultures and tried speaking different languages!

We were truly fortunate to have lots of languages including French, Ibo, Hausa, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Sinhala. Alongside the mixed playlist in the background, there was lots of delicious food and fun activities for everyone to try!

Starting off with the European languages we had French organised by Daisy and Lyra who prepared some croissants and pêche as well as some french idioms. Nicole and Elsa brought

some delicious homemade tortilla and some Spanish tongue twisters for those who love a challenge. Daria, in charge of Romanian, brought Salami biscuits! The wide range of languages was incredibly inviting and exciting to be a part of.

Apart from European languages, we also involved some other languages to increase our diversity and inclusion. Inshira, Nanya and Karla managed to create a great representation for languages Ibo and Hausa with a leaflet of information with key phrases, a small quiz and some amazing food plantain chips and puff puff. Moving across to Asia, we had Mandarin and Cantonese arranged by me and Cherish. We were super impressed at everyone's

chopsticks skills and those who managed to match Chinese characters to the right image! Madhusa introduced Sinhala with the songs Dinuli Damsandi, and Kalu Nende whilst Jiya, Jia and Rhea introduced Hindi through Kala Chashma and Badtameez Dil. Alongside some delicious Barfi, we hope you enjoyed trying to guess Bollywood actors!

It was a great turnout and the whole school celebrated this special day amazingly! Thank you to all the Respect Team and above all everyone who tried their best to be a part of our first event of the year. We cannot wait to organise more events and to come together as a whole school community to celebrate everyone!



Senior Students organise wellbeing exhibition for World Mental Health Day

by Mr S. Hall
Marketing Assistant

Friday 10th October was World Mental Health Day, and in the week leading up to it, our Positivity & Resilience team were very busy! Year 13 Senior Students Libby and Simi delivered assemblies every morning to every year group, including their own, and launched the whole school project to help all students develop an effective

self-care plan.

During these assemblies, Libby and Simi talked about the importance of the little things, like taking time to go for a walk, listening to a good playlist, and short, frequent exercises which you can do at your desk.

All of their assemblies culminated in a special lunchtime exhibition with a positive affirmation tree, a drop-in from COMPASS Birmingham, a sign up to their

20-day physical health challenge as well as a mini challenge during lunchtime to walk two laps around the school building, getting a card stamped after each lap to earn a cookie, drink and a chat with the whole Positive and Resilient team.

Students were invited to write their own positive affirmations, which were collected and built into a positivity tree!



Year 13 students enter Imperial College London's annual Science in Medicine School Teams Prize

by Mr D. Pockson
Head of Biology

The Biology Department are really proud of Year 13 Biology students Ernest, Sama, Aisha, Zara, Saffiya and Prabjot on being highly commended for their entry into the **Rare Autoimmune Rheumatic Disease Alliance (RAIRDA)** poster competition!

Their entry "Gut Your Back" explored the application of science and research to improve people's lives.



Year 7 Brass introduction from Services for Education



by Ella, Emily, Mahnoor and Tulsu in Year 7

On Tuesday 23rd September, our class had a special Music lesson taught by Mr Taylor, the brass teacher. Mr Taylor taught us how to play the P-Buzz, an instrument that most of our class had never heard of! It is plastic and like a trombone. After learning the correct mouth position to play brass, we had a go

ourselves at some simple scales and rhythm patterns. It got really loud in that classroom!

First of all, Mr Taylor did a short demonstration on what we were going to play. We were going to learn how to play the tune to "We will, we will rock you"! First, we did some breathing exercises – get an imaginary plane, breathe in and whilst you blow out, launch the plane! Then, we learned how to

produce the correct sound, and how to hold the instrument. By the end of the lesson, we were able play 'We Will Rock You' on the P-buzz. It really made me appreciate brass instruments and realise how fun they are!

We are so grateful to Mr Taylor that he could come in and show us all about brass!

Year 10 GCSE Art students have a creative and tranquil day at Birmingham Botanical Gardens



U16s Birmingham Schools' Netball

by Miss E. Hewitt
P.E. Department

On Monday 13th October Year 10 and 11 students represented Sutton Girls in the U16 Birmingham Schools' Netball tournament. This age group has remained one of the strongest levels of netball demonstrated by all Birmingham schools. The Sutton team played incredibly well and at such a high level in a tough field, finishing 4th.

Well done to Martha, Serena, Esmie, and Evaleen in Year 10, and Gabby, Yasmin, Issy, Daisy, Anabel, Evelyn in Year 11!



Sutton Schools 6-a-side Football League

by Mrs R. Hughes
Head of P.E.

Over the last four weeks, students from Sutton Girls have been playing in a Sutton Schools 6 a side football league at Bishop Walsh every Thursday.

We entered a Year 8 team (Abigail, Matilda, Tash, Deniz, April, Darcey, Annabel, Etta, Vicky, Camille) and a Year 9/10 Team (Soha, MojetoLuwa, Yvette, Jenny, Erin, Bethany, Eshar, Addison). After 4 weeks both of our teams finished 2nd in their respective leagues!



Success for students at the Sutton Schools Cross Country event



by Mrs R. Hughes
Head of P.E.

We are always proud of the athletic abilities of our students, and our Cross Country teams always make us proud. So on Thursday 23rd October, we took our students to the Sutton Schools event.

Well done to Shania (who came 1st in the Year 10/11 race), Eliana, Felicity (who came 1st in the Year 7 race), Poppy, Aiza, Sarah, Matilda (who came 1st in the Year 8 race), Darcey, Naomi, Delilah, Aria, Leila (who came 3rd in the Year 9 race), Sophia, Clara, Ira, and Jessica for their effort and participation!



You can look forward to our next newsletter at the end of the Autumn 2 term in December!

In the meantime, keep up to date by following us on:
[facebook.com/suttcold](https://www.facebook.com/suttcold)



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