



West Surrey Partnership

January 2026 Newsletter



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The start of the academic year feels like a distant memory! As always, the Christmas term was busy, with plenty of opportunities for students to connect and collaborate.

In September, we launched our major literacy initiative, **Reading Together**. In this pilot year, 90 students from 9 secondary schools are paired with primary pupils across 16 schools. Secondary students trained as reading mentors—learning phonics and reading strategies from primary teachers—before delivering weekly sessions. We aim to expand this in the coming months.

Our School Council met again at Guildford County – this group is shaping activities for older students; we'll share the final programme soon. Meanwhile, junior pupils enjoyed Saturday masterclasses at RGS, exploring a huge range of topics, and spent afternoons learning about classical music at RGS and Charterhouse.

CWIZZ

We had the fantastic CWIZZ Literacy Quiz in November, facilitated brilliantly by CWISL (Children's Writers and Illustrators for Stories and Literacy) and hosted by Guildford High School.

Over 80 children from 10 different schools attended the event, forming teams and working together to get the best scores and to show off their literary knowledge in themed rounds. They were also treated to readings of some new books by some wonderful visiting authors, and even had the chance to win books and other prizes in a raffle!

We are so grateful to Margaret and the team from CWISL who made the afternoon so exciting, and well done to all the teams for their hard work - and huge congratulations to Tillingbourne Junior School on your win!



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Guildford Book Festival

As part of our ongoing partnership with the Guildford Book Festival, we were thrilled to have a number of visiting authors speak about their books in September and October.

The brilliant Maz Evans spoke about how to write a good story, as well as telling us about her new book 'The Last Bard', which introduces young readers to Shakespeare's characters.

For older children, bestselling author Kate Mosse spoke about her book 'Feminist History for Every Day of the Year', in which she vividly brings to life inspiring stories of 366 remarkable women from across the globe, and Mike Berners-Lee spoke about 'A Climate of Truth', a book which asks questions about what exactly is holding us back from solving the climate crisis.

Many thanks to Guildford High School for hosting these inspiring events.

SPM Concert

261 pupils from five schools were given the chance to attend Southern Pro Musica's *Concerts for Children*.

Southern Pro Musica was founded to meet the demand for a professional orchestra that could support choirs across Hampshire and West Sussex. As more talented freelance musicians chose to establish their careers in the south, the orchestra expanded its reach, collaborating with choral societies in other regions and taking on purely orchestral performances.

This event provides children with the unique opportunity to experience live orchestral music and engage with the arts in a meaningful way. Many thanks to Charterhouse for hosting.



Reading Together

We are incredibly excited to be launching our new Reading Together programme. This ambitious project pairs 90 students from 9 secondary schools with primary pupils across 16 schools. Secondary students train as reading mentors, learning phonics and reading methodologies from primary teachers, before delivering weekly mentoring sessions throughout the year.

For primary pupils who struggle with reading, working alongside a secondary mentor can be transformational. They gain not just reading support but also a secondary school mentor. Secondary students build confidence through training and develop genuine leadership skills.

Thank you to all staff and students involved, including the Heads and teachers at Boxgrove who delivered the outstanding training to our secondary school students. We are delighted with the progress that has been made so far and look forward to seeing what our students will achieve throughout the year.



RGS Masterclasses

The purpose of the RGS Masterclasses is to promote passion and deeper interest in subjects and enhance a love of learning for learning's sake; to provide a secondary school experience to generate excitement about the next steps into secondary school; and to boost confidence generally via new and different experiences.

Last term, 175 Year 6 pupils and their families came from 28 different local primary schools every Saturday morning in September. They joined one of seven strands in Classical World (classical civilisation, Latin, Greek & Philosophy), Creativity (Drama, Art, Music & creative writing), Humanities (Geography, History, Economics & Politics), Modern Foreign Languages (Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin, Russian), Mathematics, Science, and Design Technology. To know more contact masterclasses@rgsg.co.uk.

The Tudor Project

Year 4 and 5 classes from Boxgrove, St Thomas of Canterbury and Holy Trinity Pewley Down Primary Schools had the chance to experience a Tudor themed day of lessons based in RGS's original Tudor building and 'Big School' hall. They enjoyed sessions in Tudor History, including a visit to the Chained Library, Tudor Music and dancing, some Drama (new this year), Tudor Games & Gambling, and Tudor portraiture. It's a really fun, interactive day for the children thanks to the energy and passion of the staff involved. The Tudor Project runs every Friday throughout the year. All the costs including transport are met by RGS supported by WSP. To know more contact tudor@rgsg.co.uk.



School Council

On a very wet November evening, the WSP School Council met for the second time—thank you to Guildford County Sixth Form for hosting us. Our three working groups (Academic, Careers & Leadership, and Sustainability) agreed to prioritise Academic and Careers events that showcase future opportunities and potential subject areas for their next steps in education. We'll meet again just before half term.



SPA Conference

We were honoured to be able to speak at the School Partnerships Alliance Conference 2025 in November, hosted by Magdalen College School. We spoke about the formation of the WSP, and gave an overview of two case studies which illustrate what we have learned in the last three years.

We also produced a booklet which highlights two of our cross-sector literacy projects (downloadable [here](#)).

The conference was inspiring, with fascinating talks from teachers, psychiatrists, and many other people involved in the partnerships world. Many thanks to the SPA for organising such a thought-provoking event.

