



24th February 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Unlocking New Talents: The Value of Extra-Curricular Activities

As we move further into the school year, we are looking for ways to help our students grow both inside and outside the classroom. **We highly encourage every student to join a minimum of two extra-curricular activities.**

Whether it is sports, music, coding, or drama, these clubs offer much more than just a hobby. Engaging in after-school activities provides students with several key advantages:

- **Social Growth:** It is the best way for students to make new friends and build confidence in a relaxed setting.
- **Skill Development:** Beyond technical skills, students learn vital "soft skills" like teamwork, time management, and problem-solving.
- **Academic Boost:** Research consistently shows that students involved in activities often see an improvement in their focus and academic performance.
- **Well-being:** Physical and creative outlets are excellent for reducing stress and promoting a positive mindset.

At the end of this letter, you will find two key pieces of research conducted by the Social Mobility Commission (University of Bath) highlighting the advantages of participating in extra-curricular activities.

SOCS system to register for clubs:

You can find the full list of our current club offerings on SOCS as well as in Stanborough Times or on the school website. **We would love for you to sit down with your child this week to discuss which activity might spark their interest, if they aren't currently attending any clubs or if they would like to attend another club.**

If you still haven't activated your SOCS account, advice on how to do this can be found at

<https://help.socscms.com/Page.asp?CatID=54&ID=349>

Once you have activated your account, you will be able to do the following:

- On the **"Calendar"** function, you will be able to see not only the school timetable, but also any extra-curricular activities a child is signed up for on a daily basis.
- On the **"Activities"** function, you can see what extra-curricular activities are on offer at various times of the week.
- For many of these activities, parents (and staff) can "add" the student to the activity (this means you are signing the student up to take part). Please be aware that some activities are invite only.
- **"My Activities"** will show any activities a student is signed up for.

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Lemsford Lane, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 6YR

Tel: 01707 321755 • admin@stanborough.herts.sch.uk • www.stanborough.herts.sch.uk • Company No: 07900439

The SOCS system also allows us to do the following:

1. The “PE module” will be used by staff to inform students and parents of PE fixtures against other schools and will include details of these fixtures.
2. The “Music module” will be used instead of printed timetables for instrumental music lessons taken by students in school. Using this system, lessons will be scheduled a term at a time which will help with planning and avoid clashes.

If you have any further queries or questions about extra-curricular activities at Stanborough School or about SOCS, please contact me on smodi@stanborough.herts.sch.uk

Yours faithfully,



Mr S Modi
Assistant Headteacher

Extract from the Social Mobility Commission paper published by University of Bath

<p>Extra-curricular activities are important to young people and result in a range of positive outcomes</p> 	<p>Findings from previous research suggest extra-curricular activities are important in developing soft (especially social) skills as well as being associated with a range of other positive outcomes (e.g. achievement, attendance at school). We found from our analysis that extra-curricular activities - specifically music classes and playing a wide range of sports – are important in predicting intentions to remain in education after compulsory schooling. Regardless of these instrumental outcomes, extra-curricular activities were hugely valuable to young people themselves in ways that are not quantifiable. Extra-curricular activities boost young people’s confidence to interact socially with others; extend their social networks; and provide them with new skills and abilities. Above all, they offer an important space to have fun and relax away from the pressures of school work. These more qualitative benefits must not be discounted, especially in the context of contemporary challenges around young people’s mental health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>Employers in the UK labour market increasingly demand soft skills – and these types of skills (which may be developed via extra-curricular activities) could be an important factor in driving intergenerational social mobility.</p> 	<p>There is strong evidence that demand exists for soft skills from employers in the UK labour market. The most common soft skill lacking in the UK labour market is the ability to manage ones’ own time and task prioritisation (51% of all ‘skill-shortage vacancies’ were attributed to this in 2017). In terms of the ‘skills gaps’ raised by employers, soft skills, such as team working, oral communication and customer handling, are reported just as frequently as gaps in ‘job specific and technical skills’. There is evidence of an association between soft skills (which may be developed from extra-curricular activities) and intergenerational social mobility as shown by previous research and new analysis presented here. Our research found a correlation between higher levels of some soft skills (readiness to learn, problem-solving, and planning skills) and upward social mobility defined as an individual having higher educational attainment than their parents. In this context, further work is needed to understand more fully the degree of alignment between the nature of ‘soft skills’ gained through extra-curricular activities and demanded by employers – for example, whether the ‘team work’ skills gained through sports reflect the proficiencies in ‘team work’ required in the UK labour market (as well as different segments within it).</p>

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