

Dear Parents & Carers,

Even though this is often the most challenging term of the year for outdoor activities, we've still managed to get out and about with our students, expanding on our 'adventures' theme - as you'll see from the many photos in this newsletter!

We're continually enriching the activities and experiences that our students can take part in - as well as the off-site curriculum taking place at Coombe Pafford and Equifinity, we've developed extra on-site learning opportunities. We have Saints Southwest coming into school to offer regular PE and fitness sessions, and Sound Communities giving students the chance to explore a variety of digital skills such as music, animation and



film making. Using these sessions to help students discover and explore different areas that interest them and then helping them develop their competence forms a key part of the 'inspiring' aspect of our 'Care, Nurture and Inspire' mission.

We've had several new teachers this term; they have been given a warm welcome and fitted right in! It's been great to see that as our students have settled into their classes, they are now starting to build positive relationships with staff and with each other.

Wishing you all a restful half term break - Spring is on the way!

Pete Jenkins, Executive Principal

NEW STARTERS

We welcomed the following new staff to the school:



Josh Iskander



Jan Bosence



Tash Westlake



Becka Green
Learning Support Assistant



Ben Digby Learning Support Assistant



Lesley Newnham
Learning Support Assistant
(Interventions)



Jess Emery Learning Support Assistant

A MESSAGE FROM LEWIS HARBEN



It seems like just yesterday that we were celebrating the end of the Autumn Term and students and staff alike were enjoying Christmas festivities in their classes. We really hope that you all enjoyed the video that George made with contributions from so many of our students.

As mentioned in my previous newsletter contribution, all classes continue to make the most of the Adventure Playground equipment. As we approach Spring we are really excited to utilise the newly built planters to grow our own fruit and vegetables – we hope to use these in recipes when working with Marc in the kitchen.

Looking ahead to the Spring Term, we are all excited for the warmer weather which will provide further opportunities for learning outside of the classroom.

We hope you all have a fantastic half-term break and look forward to welcoming students back into school on Monday 20th February.



Lewis Harben & the College House Team.

FOREST SCHOOL

What a great start to the new year in Forest School!

We have put up a slack line, on which everyone has practised their core balance.

We've also cooked and eaten a lot of delicious food; Cajun chicken rice, wrap pizza swirls, Chicken chow mein and also a fair few s'mores.

Everyone has had a go at using various tools; hammering pallets, whittling sticks for marshmallow cooking, making 'fishing rods' and helping saw up logs for our fire store.

It has been very busy and the rain that we had at the beginning of the year made it extremely muddy which was fun, especially with the slingshot and the huge muddy digging pool where we splashed and sploshed with our wellies on...



SMOO CLASS

Smoo class have had a wonderful start to 2023! We have continued with our Read Write Inc. and have been working very hard as mathematicians on multiplication and division!

As geographers, we have been learning all about the equator and hot and cold countries and identifying them on maps.

We have continued to build friendships in the classroom and have been focusing on our emotions in PSHE.

We have had some fabulous muddy days in Forest School AND have been working hard as chefs to prepare some culinary delights in the kitchen!



BEAST QUEST CLASS

This half-term we have been hearing about lots of adventurers in Alastair Humphrey's 'Great Explorers'.

We have learned about the concept of a 'micro-adventure' and been out on some of adventures of our own to inform our literacy work.

We have been smashing our times-tables in Maths and for English, we're continuing to listen to The Nowhere Emporium, our core text last half-term, to find out what happens!



SEUSS CLASS

This term in English, we have been using the text 'Oliver and the seawigs.' We've written about different characters and explored why they behave the way that they do. The children have also thought carefully about offering the characters advice during some tricky situations! We made our own seawigs and designed a poster advertising the competition. They have written some really detailed diary entries which I am incredibly proud of.

For our topic, we have been exploring volcanoes and earthquakes and the four layers of the earth. We know what tectonic plates are and how earthquakes and volcanoes happen!

In science we've investigated how shadows are formed and how they change shape. We have had lots of fun making different shapes and exploring shadow puppets. We now know what transparent, translucent and opaque means.

As a wellbeing activity for Child Mental Health Week, we've also enjoyed making surprise woven friendship bracelets, picking colours we thought our friends would like best!



ASGARD CLASS

Asgard class have had a very productive and enjoyable Half Term - students have engaged with multiple offsite opportunities such as Equifinity, indoor rock climbing, Sound Communities as well as visits to the Donkey Sanctuary.

Whilst in school, Asgard class have been focusing on their Maths, English, Science and PSHE lessons. Pupils have worked hard to grasp new concepts and worked well individually as well as in small groups.



After Half Term, in addition to our studies, we

are looking for opportunities to build interaction skills and teamwork within the class and are looking forward to arranging an educational school trip and team building activities.

Thank you Asgard. It has been a great first Half Term at SfIT. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you all in class (both pupils and staff). I am very proud of how the pupils within Asgard class have adapted to a new face and welcomed me (Josh) to their classroom. I'm looking forward to working with the pupils and wider team next term. Have a restful and relaxing break!

COBRA CLASS

In Cobra this half term we have focused on our reading and mathematical skills to ensure that we continue to develop our love of learning. Reading out loud and listening to others read is crucial to ensure that we build our story telling, word understanding and comprehension skills. In Maths we are continuing to build a solid

understanding of place value and develop our understanding of the four operations addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

We have also been busy perfecting our sensory and fine motor skills as we mix and blend slime ingredients together. First, we made sure that we followed the order of the recipe and then explored what happened if we added too much or not enough ingredients. It needed teamwork and perseverance to get it just right!

In Sound Communities we have been mixing our very own "drum and bass" tracks using professional studio equipment, and we have used the animated filmmaking technique "stop motion" to capture object movement to create a short story. This week Mark shared his Greenscreen so that we could explore another way to role play and rehearse our story telling. Have a look on our Facebook page to see our amazing videos for yourself!

Our off-site alternative provision is continuing to be a huge success as we learn how to develop and manage crucial life

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skills, empathy, and emotions. Spirit, Sparkie and Pona, from Equifinity, are always so pleased to see us each week and the donkeys at the Ivybridge Donkey Sanctuary really enjoy being brushed and cared for too!

A MESSAGE FROM LUCY GRENEN

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas break with your children, although it now seems like a long time ago! This half term we have had a bit of a cold spell with some snowy conditions at times here on the edge of Dartmoor. The children have still been outside playing on the outdoor equipment and enjoying their Forest School sessions, they

have also continued to do their weekly swimming sessions.



Our new teachers have settled in well - Jan with his Year 7 class and Natasha with her Year 9 class. The children have been keen to get to know them better and to engage in their learning each day.

The Year 9 class have been to Combe Pafford to find out more about Painting and Decorating, next term it will be Motor Mechanics which a lot of students are very excited about. This is a really great opportunity for the children to discover new areas of interest and consider what they might like to do in the future.

The Year 7 and 8 children have been enjoying weekly sessions with Sound Communities, making music and learning how to share this with each other. Sound Communities come to visit us at Place House every Friday. Soon the other classes will get the opportunity to work with them in small groups too!

We have Saints Southwest coming to us every week to provide sports activities and challenges for children at lunchtime on a Wednesday – this is very popular and gives the children an opportunity to try something different and play and compete both in teams and individually.

Year 10 and 11 children continue to engage really well in their learning and are starting to consider their next steps and which qualifications they need for College or Apprenticeships. They have visited South Devon College in the last few weeks to get an idea of what education can be like post 16.

All in all it has been another busy term, we look forward to some warmer, sunnier weather when we can spend more time outside and we are hoping to plan some more trips to explore our local area.

Lucy Grenen and the Place House Team

LIONS CLASS

This term Year 7 have welcomed our new teacher Jan! We have really come together as a team, working hard but also having lots of fun.

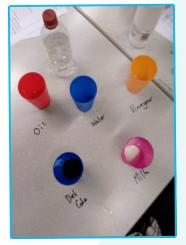
We have been reading Varjak Paw which one student has described it as "a really good book which deserves a lot of credit". Year 7 have done lots of science experiments, seeing which liquids dissolve salt the most and learning how to filter dirty water!

Jan says: "In Year 7 for our English work we have also been learning from the book 'Great Adventurers' by Alastair Humphreys. The class have studied the skills used by the author to make the style of writing interesting and inviting to read. The children have been planning and practising their own non-fiction reports where they will put the skills into their final writes.

We have been enjoying learning about Rivers, as part of our Geography project, and we are planning some exciting field work after half term. The class have found out about the key features of rivers, information about major rivers around the globe as well as seeing where their own local rivers come from and join the sea as part of the water cycle.

Lots of exciting this coming after half - term but I would just like to say how much I have enjoyed these first few weeks with my new class and being part of such a supportive and caring team.

Overall, a really great start to the term and we are excited for what's to come!"





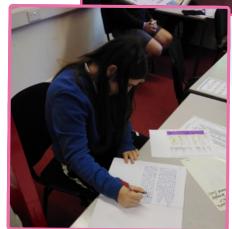
PARRETT / YEAR 10 CLASS

Another term, another batch of achievements from our wonderful Year 10 students.

We are well into our GCSE English course with students working hard in their English lessons comparing and contrasting very challenging texts. The standard of work has been wonderful, and children have made great strides in their writing. This will bode well for the functional skills exams that they will be doing in March.

Year 10 students are very glad to welcome Mr Blake back in the pool and the forest, and have been engaging well with both Forest School and swimming lessons, where they have been making pizzas, soup, s'mores and perfect different strokes and dives.

In PSHE, we have been focussing on careers in preparation for our Year 10 Work Experience Week (21st-24th March). Students have been exploring their post-16 options including apprenticeships and colleges. This has included a visit to South Devon College where students were impeccably behaved and particularly enjoyed the outdoor facilities and the chips in the canteen! After half term, we are hoping to visit Exeter College and Bicton College to learn more about the different courses that are available for them when they leave SfIT.



GRYFFINDOR CLASS

Year 9 have had a fantastic term so far!

From creating excellent art pieces in the style of retro-futurism, to trying their best with their reading and writing skills. We have been focusing on the book

"PAX" during reading, and the children are becoming super familiar with the book and are able to analyse it well.

We have had lots of in depth PSHE lessons, and the children have been mature and eager to learn throughout. We've spent lots of time outside playing games, enjoying the cold snowy days and taking trips to our local park doing lots of friendship building.

The students have also been excellent at their painting and decorating session at Combe Pafford.

Year 9 children have absolutely loved having Tash as their new class teacher, as have the staff. Tash, you are amazing and we are all so lucky to have you! Keep being amazing year 9, and don't stop believing in yourselves, because we won't stop believing in you!









DART CLASS

Year 11 have had another extremely successful half term, with lots of focus on preparations for Post-16.

This term we have visited South Devon College and the students really enjoyed seeing the reality of college life. We look forward to visiting a wider range of Post-16 placements in the upcoming half term. We particularly enjoyed having Gilpin Demolition in for a talk and to showcase their work, and the boys loved trying on the safety equipment and using some of the tools such as the sledgehammer.

Year 11s have been focusing on their upcoming Functional Skills exams (w/c 20th March), and have all made fantastic progress in completing their Level 1s. We can't wait to see the fantastic results they achieve in both their Level 2 Functional Skills exams, and their GCSEs in May/June!







SKY CLASS

This term Year 8 have been developing their scientific skills learning all about Earth and space. We did an experiment to see what the Earth's core would look like!

We have also been working on our friendships. We've enjoyed using our cooking sessions to bake some cookies and brownies to share with each other. Here are some pictures of our experiment and of us working hard on our social skills (yum!).





A MESSAGE FROM MDT

"Hello! My name is Janelle Penfold and I am the new Occupational Therapist (OT) working within the MDT team.

My role involves a range of areas, this includes helping pupils to develop their fine motor co-ordination, hand strength, core stability and handwriting.

I can also help with other areas such as exploring sensory needs, self-care activities such as tying shoelaces and visual perceptual skills (needed for handwriting).



This will be explained more in detail in the OT leaflet I plan on sending out but please don't hesitate to contact the school if you wish to talk to me or have any concerns."

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Optimus Award for Wellbeing & Mental Health:

Our Wellbeing Action Team have been hard at work this half term creating wellbeing corners at both sites.

Our students can access this calm space to engage in mindful colouring, use sensory toys, get information about wellbeing or just chill on the comfy cushions.

We have also had another round of the student council which all of the classes engaged super well in. The Wellbeing Action Team are working on another "You Said, We did" which will be shared with students shortly.

As you are aware, we have sought parent/carer feedback through our recent survey and this shows that we are making good progress in developing our wellbeing support across the whole school community.

As always, we appreciate your feedback so if you have anything else you would like to share, please email us at: info@sfit.org.uk





Megan Harben

Life Chance Trust news



I'm so excited to have joined Chris Keeling-Rowe, working for the Life Chance Trust as Listening, Advocacy and Mentoring Co-ordinator to support 16-25 year olds. This means I can continue working with School



for Inspiring Talents students after they leave, as well as supporting other young people in our communities. We have been working hard to get our Youth Advisors' Board and pilot 'Mentoring plus' scheme up and running, and I also met with our Year 11s to tell them what's on offer through the Trust.

Chloe Sutcliffe - c.sutcliffe@lifechance.org.uk

Life Chance Trust wins prestigious national grant

We're proud to have received a HUGE vote of confidence in our young people – a big grant from a partnership of 5 of the leading UK funders for charities, including the Community Lottery Fund. We are one of just 8 charities awarded funding out of nearly 60 applications, and have been given £23,000 a year for two years to pay for the 'Listening and Advocacy' part of Chloe's role, involving young people every step of the



way! We'll also be able to share our knowledge and experience with, and learn from other charities nationally. You can find out more about the Listening Fund here.

Do you know a 16-25 yr old in difficulty as a result of challenges through childhood, who might need our help?

If so, ask them if they're interested in having a Life Chance mentor, and if they say yes, please tell us about them <u>here</u>. We are now working with young people to help build their confidence, life skills and motivation, training or jobs, manage their money better, plan transport, and so much more!

Do you know a young person who'd enjoy getting involved with our charity as a volunteer 'Advisor'?

We've had positive meetings with local colleges and youth organisations and our first Youth Advisory Board meeting. There's lots of scope to shape what we do and how and we are looking forward to more meetings together to shape our charity.

Community Events - Exeter and Plymouth

We're getting ready for our first community events. Want to get involved as a runner or a volunteer? Then let Chloe know! Click here for info: <u>Community Events.</u>

Sunday 14th May - RunPlymouth: 5k, 10k and half-marathon, plus helpers and supporters needed.

Sunday 21st May – Exeter's Great West Run: Community Mile, 10k and half-marathon, plus water and cheer point helpers needed!

Ways to support the trust:

- Help us build our profile on Facebook and Instagram like/follow/share!
- Easyfundraising Sign up here, and every time you shop online with over 7,000 brands, we'll get a small donation!
- Teignbridge Lottery Play Teignbridge Lottery with us! Buy £1 tickets and you could be a winner PLUS 50% of sales come to the Trust. Choose Life Chance Trust as your good cause to support us in raising money. You can win up to £25,000 as well as other prizes such as a whole year of HelloFresh. It only takes minutes to sign up https://www.teignbridgelotteryforcommunities.co.uk/support/find-a-good-cause

SAFER INTERNET DAY

February 14th is.... Safer Internet Day. Look out on our Social Media for more hints and tips for staying safe online and helping your young people navigate the internet.



School for Inspiring Talents

Term Dates 2022 / 2023

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Autumn Half Term

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Half Term to Easter

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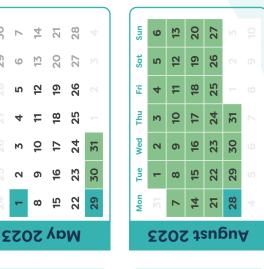
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June 2023

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School for Inspiring Talents

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July 2024

June 2024

Bank Holiday

Holiday

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Autumn Half Term

Term Dates 2023 / 2024

Half Term to Christmas • 7 Sep - 20 Oct

November 2023

6 Nov - 15 Dec Winter Half Term

. 3 Jan - 9 Feb

Half Term to Easter . 19 Feb - 28 Mar

 15 Apr - 24 May Spring Half Term

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 February 2024

Summer Half Term . 3 Jun - 19 Jul

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