



Dear Parents & Carers,

It is always a pleasure to reach the end of the Autumn term, knowing that students have

settled successfully into their new classes and friendship groups. This term always feels like a long one, but the extra activities and excitement this time of year always create a special and festive atmosphere in school for our young people to enjoy.

Our year 10s and 11s have been taking exams this term, and we are delighted with how mature they have been in their approach to this significant milestone. Hopefully the pleasing exam results will further boost their confidence in their ability to achieve as they progress through the year.

When we return from our Christmas break, the days will start to get longer, which means hopefully we'll have more opportunities to make the most of our outdoor play equipment and Forest Schools as well as getting out and about in the community with more trips and fun learning adventures. It makes such a positive difference for our young people to be able to expend some energy in the great outdoorts!

We understand that Christmas isn't always the easiest time for young people and families, but we hope you all manage to get some time to rest over the holidays, and to make magical memories together.

Wishing you a very happy Christmas, and looking forward to a splendid 2024, Pete Jenkins,
Principal



NEW STARTERS

We welcomed the following new staff to the school:



Charlotte King
Learning Support Assistant



Suzanne Lovell
Forest School & Outdoor Play

OUR DEPUTY PRINCIPALS



How are we already at the end of Autumn term and counting down to Christmas!?

This term has seen students settle into new classes, with new teachers, in new rooms, whilst maintaining relationships with staff and their peers. Change is difficult for everyone, and I am so proud of the way in which our students have overcome the challenge that change presents, embracing their new relationships.

As expected, the change in weather has limited some outdoor activities – we even had to follow guidance and shut the school for a day because of a storm! However, we have still made the most of our outdoor environment, especially thanks to Suzanne, our new Forest School teacher.

Dragonfly Class have continued to develop resilience and their ability to work with others, often in pairs to maximise the opportunities to explore similarities and manage positive interactions. I have really enjoyed spending time in Buttercup Class exploring electronics, building circuits and testing theories with practical materials. Jungle Class continue to make the most of their learning environment, using their Harbour to enable them to engage across the curriculum and work alongside each other respectfully. For their project-based learning, Honeycomb Class have been learning about Europe and some students have even given me some suggestions for a family holiday in Summer 2024! Autumn Class continue to enjoy opportunities for hands on learning, both in the classroom as well as with external venues and providers such as It's a Kind of Magic Animal Centre.

Wishing a Merry Christmas to all students and families, Lewis Harben

Christmas Cards designed by our students well done everyone!

















OUR DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

Hi all! What a busy, productive and enjoyable Autumn term we have had! We anticipate that all ofyou who attended our parent & carer open afternoon/evening had a wonderful time being shown around our setting and spending time in classrooms with the staff teaching your children; looking through their learning and celebrating their achievements so early on in the academic year!

As our talented staff strive to ensure the very best provision for students we're always working towards strengthening home/school connections and we hope our new class planners helped you become acquainted with what students are due to cover in each of the subjects, giving you an exciting oversight of everything delivered. If for any reason you have missed your child's, you can find them on our school website under the heading of: Info for Parents/Carers > Classes and Curriculum. You will now receive a class planner at the start of every new term, so expect one for Spring shortly after our return from the Christmas holidays!

You may already know that at SfIT we have three key school Learning Principles: To be ready, respectful and safe, To have fun, be challenged and inspired & To be the best that we can be! But did you know that we also focus on key Dispositions to help students with this?

In Dragonflies class students always start by focusing on being playful, being active learners and being creative.

Each disposition is symbolised by a woodland animal to help students understand the concept, with a story about the animal's observed disposition – e.g. Badgers move setts (dens), leaving them to be inhabited by other animals needing a home, helping

Being playful and exploring	Being active learners	Being creative and never giving up "I share my ideas and resources"		
"Playing and exploring everything around me"	"I try my best and never give up"			
Squirrel	Woodpecker	Badger		

illustrate the notion of sharing ideas and resources with others.

As students progress through the school they focus on our six dispositions, with a focus on one per half term, until students are confident with each:













Due to changes in our curriculum towards a more enquiry based approach, our foundation subjects (Geography, History, Art & Design, Science and Design Technology) are taught together with a driving question to be investigated per term. This term students focused on being Geographers with questions such as What is our local area like? What is Eurorailing and where would I go? And Should a town be built at the base of a Volcano?! In Spring this focus will shift and our students will become Historians!!

Also in Spring, our focus for all classes in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education will be upon Relationships and Sex Education. We fully understand that this is a difficult and overwhelming subject for our students and will send home info in advance so you can be aware of our policy, the content being taught, how we support our students through this challenging topic and how to also support your young person at home. In addition to this, we will arrange a 'Tea and Talk' session onsite that you can join either in person or virtually – details for this will be released shortly.

I hope that this newsletter update has been informative and we welcome you to let us know what you would like to know more about in future editions!

Emily Hanbury

COLLEGE HOUSE - NEWTON ABBOT

DRAGONFLY CLASS





This half term in Dragonfly class we have been focusing on people who help us and how we are building relationships with all the adults that support and teach us at school and off-site. Making trusted relationships is so important to the development of all the students in Dragonfly class and this is also helping us all to identify and reflect on our feelings, and how we can begin to manage them effectively.

Through discussion we have been able to recognise that we have built strong connections with a variety of people including Marc who teaches us during our cookery sessions, Josh who is our PE lead, Suzanne our new Forest School leader alongside our devoted staff team, who are based in our class, and a number of supporting adults who we visit off-site. We have also enjoyed accessing

our daily reading, writing and maths through our play-based provision and have particularly enjoyed expressing ourselves through our African Drumming and Christmas craft activities.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for their ongoing support this term and wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy new year.

AUTUMN CLASS



Autumn Class have had a really successful end to the term, they have coped well with lots of change in their class!



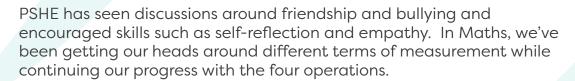
The boys have supported each other in cooking and PE, encouraging and challenging each other. As a new activity they have been climbing with friends from other classes to develop new friendships. Swimming has been an exciting introduction to their timetable which the boys have really enjoyed, enabling them to build relationships with different members of staff.



We have been reading 'The Butterfly Lion' which they have enjoyed and has produced some great conversations and questions. Lego and Meccano remain high on the list of fun activities during social times. During Sound Communities with Marc the boys have created worlds to share and have taught each other new skills working well together.

JUNGLE CLASS





We've welcomed our new Forest School teacher Suzanne with open arms and had some cuddles out in Forest School with our lovely guinea pigs too! We've been swimming, climbing, playing golf and visiting the animals at 'A Kind of Magic' and readily awaiting our school Christmas dinner!







HONEYCOMB CLASS





Honeycomb class have had a wonderful start to the academic year!

We have got stuck into many areas of learning but have particularly enjoyed our Project Based Learning this term. We have been researching different countries in Europe and investigating their transportation systems, languages, climate and their geographical features. We have been using our IT skills

to make PowerPoint Presentations to encourage Lewis to book a holiday in our chosen location!



Within PSHE, we have been focusing on our social skills this term and the qualities of a good friend. We have enjoyed playing lots of games with each other and working on our communication skills.

I am super proud of all of the Honeycomb students this term and look forward to seeing what 2024 brings! Have a lovely Christmas!

BUTTERCUP CLASS

In Buttercup this term, for our Project Based Learning we have been learning about Paris and researching famous landmarks. We have focussed our learning on the Eiffel Tower and thought about how much electricity it uses to light it up. We have learnt that 2750 houses could run for one day using the same amount of electricity that the Eiffel Tower uses every day, because the Eiffel Tower has 20,000 flashing bulbs! We had lots of fun making simple electrical circuits ourselves.

Linking to our Project Based Learning on Paris, we have also learned how to make delicious French Onion soup!

In English, we have been using the text 'Arthur and the golden rope' to create our own layouts, and we are now writing our own quest stories.

Buttercup class have also really enjoyed our African drumming experience and have created some wonderful music.









PLACE HOUSE - ASHBURTON

OAK CLASS





Autumn Term has been very busy and full of new challenges and projects for the children.

The change in PE provision has been a great success. The class all loved their weekly swimming sessions so moving away from them was always going to be tough, but the lessons that Josh Iskander has provided have been so well received by the class that their old sessions are never mentioned.



The access to the gym equipment, as part of the sessions, has been another very popular new resource that arrived this term. Combined with the access to all of the bicycles has made getting quality exercise more accessible than ever before. The benefits of good quality, regular exercise are well known and it has been a pleasure to see this developing so well this term.

We also had a visit from a local fire officer to talk about fire safety - I think we all enjoyed trying on the safety gear!

EVEREST CLASS



In reading this term we have continued to unpick and understand the text 'Holes'. Students have had to use a range of skills including retrieval, inference and understanding vocabulary.

In writing the students have been developing their knowledge in how to plan, structure and create a descriptive text, focusing on forming characters.



Students have worked extremely hard in Maths this term in their work surrounding fractions. This has included challenging themselves to tackle mixed numbers and improper fractions.

This term, we have been lucky enough to have a visit from Devon and Cornwall Fire Service. We learned about the type of skills needed to be successful in the job and even got to try on some of the equipment! We looked 'on fire'!

THE SHACK CLASS





We have had a really busy term in The Shack class, where we have welcomed a new student by taking part in lots of fun team building activities!



We have all really enjoyed Forest School this term, and have been learning how to make delicious burgers. We've also been preparing for exams as well as working on our individual outdoor learning projects.

VESUVIUS CLASS



What a fantastic term we've had in Vesuvius class!

Your young people continue to impress us and create higher aspirations for themselves and us. They have just completed a week of Functional Skills exams, in English and Maths. Everyone managed their anxiety and successfully sat the exams they were entered for. We're so proud of the way they adapted to changes in their routines and how they coped with the stresses of sitting exams. In doing so, they are setting themselves up well for the future.

Now that our first set of exams are out the way, we're getting stuck into our GSCE English course. This creates opportunities for more in-depth discussions and challenges our thinking. We will continue with some practice for Functional Skills qualifications, but we can already see the difference in engagement as our students are more challenged by the GCSE content.

In Prep for Adulthood, we have been considering the skills that contribute to successful independence in young adulthood. Students are learning to prioritise and create action plans with SMART targets to create aspirations and achieve goals. Forest school and catering both offer opportunities to improve and develop some of these skills. Students have focused on using their skills to help and provide for others, through the preparation and cooking of nutritious meals.

In Arts Award, students have been working hard on their own projects. They are working towards an interesting range of individual projects that reflect their personalities and interests. We have included some progress photos. There has also been access to various offsite enrichment activities. These valuable experiences help our students to learn to self-regulate whilst having fun and gaining a better sense of community in our local area.

Physical Education continues to be a highlight of the week, as students enjoy different physical activities. We work as best we can around the weather to provide a range of activities. Students have been working hard to improve their teamwork, fitness levels and hand-eye coordination. Indoor hockey, dodgeball and use of the school multigym have been favourites this term. Trying out new sports has required some determination but has resulted in boosting our confidence and self-esteem. We've just started our BTEC Sport and our students have chosen a sport they would like to focus their research on.

All in all, a marvellous half term! We still have our class trip to look forward to in the last week of term, where we will enjoy some ten-pin bowling and a meal together. We wish you all a lovely festive period and look forward to seeing your young people when they return in January.





BRAMBLE CLASS



As we approach the New Year, it's a pleasure to share the highlights of Year 11's journey this half term. Our students have showcased remarkable resilience and commitment, particularly in their completed exams, where they dealt admirably with anxiety and applied themselves well.

We are delighted to announce that the students' efforts this term have paid off, and we couldn't be prouder of their approach to the exams, with all students showing resilience and self-awareness around how best they can individually manage exam pressure and stress. Our Year 11 students will now be advancing to the next level of Functional Skills or focusing on GCSE content, and the results of the recent exams will be released as soon as they are available.

In order to broaden our students' experiences with a range of career routes, we had the privilege of a visit from the fire service this term. This insightful experience not only enhanced their understanding of the vital work carried out by our local heroes, but also provided a glimpse into the diverse range of careers available. As we approach the festive season and the end of the year, our focus will shift towards post-16 applications. The students will be encouraged to reflect on their aspirations, consider various career paths, and lay the groundwork for their academic and professional journeys in the New Year. It's an exciting time for our students as they chart their courses for the future.

Bramble Class have also been further engaged in the local community through their business lessons. It has been inspiring to see them take their learning beyond the classroom, venturing out to interview local business people. This hands-on approach has provided invaluable insights into the dynamics of local businesses, fostering a deeper appreciation for the role they play in our community. The students are thoroughly enjoying this real-world application of their studies, and we look forward to seeing how these experiences will shape their perspectives on business and community engagement in the coming months.

As we celebrate their achievements and anticipate the developments in the coming months, we're proud of the growth and enthusiasm our Year 11 students have displayed. We are extremely excited to support the students in the New Year as we create more concrete plans for their post-16 placements.



FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

The BTEC Home Cooking students have been cooking up a storm in the kitchen and asking staff to taste test.



Amongst many scrummy, healthy, winter dishes the students have been cooking this term was a delicious 'sweet potato and chorizo' soup with homemade garlic croutons. It's a thumbs up from me, and definitely from Josh!

Year 9 have been cooking foods from places with famous volcanoes (their project-based learning this term), including ancient Pompei bread, Icelandic Sweet pancakes and Japanese Sushi!



ART

We enjoyed a lovely group project this term, where staff and students made a Remembrance Day wreath out of vegetable printed poppies.

Each class printed poppies, which were then cut out individually and combined to form the wreath.







PE, SCHOOL SPORTS & ACTIVITY

I'm delighted to share PE news and developments at our school as we wrap up another half term. This marks the second half term since we introduced Physical Education (PE) into our curriculum, and the

response from our students has been absolutely brilliant. The enthusiasm and engagement displayed by our pupils during PE lessons has been amazing to witness.

Since the inception of PE in September, there has been a noticeable positive impact on the students' communication and interaction skills during their lessons. The camaraderie fostered through physical activities has created an environment where students feel encouraged to work together and support each other.



This term, our students have had the opportunity to explore fitness routines and circuits and play in some extremely competitive games of dodgeball (some more competitive than others... you know who you are). Pupils' commitment to these activities has been outstanding, showcasing not only their physical ability but also values of respect, motivation, and hard work. We look forward to continuing this journey with our pupils, promoting not only physical well-being but also the invaluable life skills that come with teamwork and dedication.



Thank you for your ongoing support and Merry Christmas,

Josh Iskander - PE Lead

CAREERS SUPPORT

What are we doing to supportour young people on their next steps after school?

- We have appointed our new Careers Lead, Issy Harben. Contact her at: i.harben@sfit.org.uk
- We have purchased Unifrog, a career experience tracking tool used by many secondary schools, which will be rolled out to students and can be accessed by parents/carers.
- Rolled out a new plan of career 'experiences', ranging from visits from a range of working professionals, to visiting varying places of work, to visits to local educational settings.
- We've recently had a member of the Fire Service visit us at Place House, and we will be hosting a similar visit in the new year for College House. We have a visit planned by a Devon Air Ambulance paramedic.
- Years 9, 10 and 11 will be visiting Marjon University in the New Year to explore higher education opportunities.

Termly Spotlight: Apprenticeships

How do they work?

On an apprenticeship, students are employed to do a real job while studying for a formal qualification, usually for one day a week either at a college or training centre. By the end of the apprenticeship, students will hopefully have gained the skills and knowledge needed to either succeed in their chosen career or progress onto the next apprenticeship level. What they'll learn depends on the role that they're training for. However, apprentices in every role follow an approved study programme, which means they'll gain a nationally recognised qualification at the end of the apprenticeship.

There are four different levels of apprenticeship:

1: Intermediate - equivalent to five good GCSE passes.

2: Advanced - equivalent to two A-level passes.

3: Higher - equivalent to the first stages of higher education, such as a foundation degree.

4: Degree - comparable to a Bachelors or Masters degree.

(Apprenticeship level structures vary across different countries in the UK.)

Types of Apprenticeship:

Most job sectors offer apprenticeship opportunities in the UK, with a wide range of specific roles on offer within each. Some local opportunities are:

Company	Role	Level		
CRS Adventures Ltd	Outdoor Activity Leader	2		
Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship SIO	Equine Groom	1-2		
Humpty Dumpty Childcare	Early Years Practitioner	2		
P. Deare Carpentry & Joinery	Carpenter Apprentice	2		
Drum Inn	Chef Apprentice	1-2		
Dr Button & Dr Channing	Dental Nurse	2 - 3		
Bill Lomas Motor Services	Mechanic	2		

Our next newsletter will have a Careers spotlight focusing on College Courses (including an explanation of the routes into College from SfIT).

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

5 Ways to Wellbeing at Christmas!



Connect - Keep up your Christmas traditions! Even if you are apart from family, make use of online platforms like zoom. Do something fun with your family, bake, do a quiz, make cards, play board games. You could also think about starting a new Christmas tradition (e.g. a family craft on Christmas Eve, reading a book together, watching a film or making Christmas decorations!).



Be Active - The 12 days of Christmas exercises: try one activity to do on each of the 12 days of Christmas. Example: Hold a standing yoga pose for 1 min, do a 2 minute jog on spot, run up & down the stairs 3 times, 4 push ups, 5 sit ups, 6 toe touches, 7 squats..... 12-star jumps.



Learn - Learning a new skill has been shown to improve our wellbeing by boosting our self-confidence and self-esteem. It builds a sense of purpose and can help you connect. You could learn to do some X-mas baking, sewing, make some Christmas cards. Get creative, there is so much you can learn to do and create at Christmas.



Give - Think about those around you who might be struggling with their wellbeing – you could send a Christmas card to a neighbour or phone a friend, or share some Christmas baking with friends or neighbours.



Pay Attention/Notice - Go on a mindful Christmas walk with your family. Pay attention to all of your senses. Is it cold? What can you smell? Can you see any Christmas lights? Which house nearby has the best Christmas lights. Which house has the most?

Reflecting on 2023



This year has been hard and challenging, we may want to just forget all about it and write it off, but it can be useful to reflect. Focussing on the positives can help boost our mood and keep us motivated for the new year.



Reflect

- Think about the good things that have happened in 2023: maybe you got to spend more time with friends or family, you learned a new skill, started a new job, moved to a new house or even got through really difficult times when you thought you couldn't!
- Write down any of the thoughts from 2023 that impacted you, describe how you overcame any challenges and dealt with your feelings.



Look Ahead

• Think about New Year resolutions and what you want to achieve in 2024 – Savings? A new instrument? Sport? What is happening next year that you can look forward to?

Useful X-mas Links:

Tips for single parents at Christmas:

https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/find-information/family-life/christmas/

Link for Christmas games:

https://www.mykidstime.com/parties/festive-christmas-party-games-for-kids/

Supporting children with SEN at Christmas:

https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/additional-needs-disabilities/support-home-school/send-christmas/

Life Chance Trust News





We hope everyone is enjoying the wintery weather!

Life Chance Trust is excited to welcome Ben Feasey as our new Head of Trust and he has started with us this December. Ben brings a lot of knowledge and experience of working in the youth sector as well as the charity sector. He will be working with the team to drive the charity forward even more.

Mentoring Young People:

You will all be pleased to know that we have been working with last year's Yr 11 school levares - and all of them are doing really well. Most of them are starting to need less and less support from us which is fantastic to watch. Of course, we do keep in regular contact to check in.

Outside of SfIT young people, we are starting to support more and more young people and have had referrals from a number of different schools/post 16 provisions. Chloe and the mentors are working with these young people to help build their life chances. We like to take lots of trips to see animals!

We are now experiencing a short waiting list due to the high demand of young people needing our support. This means the charity is starting to be recognised for its brilliant work to support 16–25-year-olds who have experienced trauma and would benefit from a mentor.

Volunteer Mentors:

Due to the high demand, we are experiencing, we are working hard to recruit new volunteer mentors. We have just inducted 2 more and have 2 booked onto our January induction training.

Please spread the word and if you know anyone, get them in touch. We are always welcoming new volunteers.



Life Skills Workshops:

We have recruited a new Youth Facilitator – Cara Baer, who has just started a new cohort at Teignmouth Community School Sixth Form. Cara is a lecturer at the University of Plymouth and works with students who need extra support.

Our group at TCSS has been great and all young people have got stuck in to learn some life skills. So far, they have completed the mindfulness workshop, learning about sleep routines, healthy eating, and exercise. They have learnt about cooking on a budget and worked together in the kitchen to cook different meals. Next, they have life admin where they will be applying for provisional driving licences, learning to book a GP appointment and basic finances. They will continue with their workshops after Christmas – teambuilding, employment and public transport.

We have more workshops to deliver after Christmas, including with the SfIT year 11 students and Newton Abbot College. After last years, year 11s finished their workshops, we went indoor go karting in Exeter in the October Half term.



Other news:

We have signed up for RunPlymouth (April) and Exeter's Great West Run (May) in 2024. We have nearly filled all our places! We still have a couple, so please spread the word. We also visited Dartmoor Zoo for our Trust away day, what a great place to have a meeting!



Chloe Sutcliffe Listening, Advocacy and Mentoring Co-ordinator Life Chance Trust



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Term Dates 2023 / 2024

Autumn HeifTerm

7 Sep - 20 Oct
HolfTerm to Christman

8 Nov - 15 Dec

Winter HolfTerm - 3 Jan - 9 Feb

HalfTerm to Easter • 19 Feb - 28 Mor

Spring Holf Term 15 Apr - 24 May

Surmer Hair Term - 3 Jun - 18 Jul

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