Victory Park Academy News

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Autumn Term 2022

Update from the Head Teacher



How quickly time has flown since the beginning of the academic year and we find ourselves at the Christmas break! As always, we have managed to pack a huge amount into the Autumn term, much of which is

highlighted in this edition of the newsletter.

We have achieved a great deal this half-term, with teachers and pupils working incredibly hard in each and every lesson. When I do my weekly learning walks, I am always impressed by the energy and professionalism of our staff and the attitude and drive of our pupils.

I am delighted to see such overwhelming support from our parents/careers and external agencies. To everyone that we work with and their continuous support for our young people- thank you.

Another highlight was the Christmas market, watching our students take lead and setting up individual stools with such confidence was a real privilege. Well Done to all involved!

Since taking the role as Interim Headteacher in September, staff have worked incredibly hard as we continue to drive the school forward. I would like to publicly thank each one of them for their unwavering commitment and for the contribution they make to VPA.

On behalf of all the staff at VPA, I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas. Thank you for your continued support.

Mr E Muca (Interim Head Teacher)

Message from the Assistant Head

More so than ever, Staff and Pupil welfare has been at the forefront of the pastoral team's mind this term at VPA. Siobhan Taylor has successfully completed a Senior Wellbeing Course and the first part of her Senior



Mental Health training as well as leading on a team of trained Mental Health First Aiders offering dedicated support to those who need it. This half term we have re-introduced the girls/boys' groups that meet weekly for a double period to build on their social and emotional skills and giving them the opportunity to inform what our Wellbeing focus should be.

We are bidding for a serious funding project which will allow our Enrichment timetable to be more bountiful going forward. An engaging Enrichment timetable not



only offers our pupils complementary educational experiences but also has a positive impact on attendance. At the end of each half term, we have a Wellbeing week

every afternoon for both pupils and staff. This week we have offered festive fudge making, murder mystery, Christmas Jumper Day and a Christmas market open to pupils and their families and carers.

January will see the introduction of new initiatives for Pupils and Staff wellbeing such as, walking groups, cake Wednesday, fundraising events organised by the pupils. More to come on all of this next year. (Please see our links for support around wellbeing and mental health on our school website and never hesitate to contact the Pastoral lead Siobhan Taylor for support).

Mrs S Taylor (Assistant Head Teacher)

Primary

This half term primary pupils have enjoyed working on their cooking skills and have made pizzas, rocky road and curry. They have worked hard on managing their



emotions in a different environment and working as a team to complete their dishes. During art sessions they have worked on canvas

paintings and creating different effects with different materials including using bubble wrap to create blossom trees. In geography both harbour and Donaldson have been learning about different types



of weather. Harbour pupils have written and presented their own weather reports and learnt about different clothing and activities occur in different seasons whilst Donaldson pupils have created their own model of the earth using play dough. They have also discussed

extreme weather such as tsunamis, tornadoes and volcanoes. It has been amazing to see some of our harbour pupils move into Donaldson class for maths and begin to access a higher ability maths with the use of concrete objects.

This half term pupils also laid a poppy wreath at the cenotaph on the 11th November to show respect for our fallen soldiers. They held a two minutes silence



there and spoke about what else we could do to remember them.

Primary staff and students have worked hard on creating a welcoming and inviting corridor for students. They are currently working on a jungle theme for the Donaldson corridor

and a beach theme for the harbour corridor. So far, they have created a tree and next half term's art project will be drawing and painting the animals on the wall.

Pupils are now attending four Read Write Inc sessions a week. Read Write Inc is a phonics scheme designed to support pupils with their reading and spelling. All pupils across the provision have made good progress this half term and it has been a pleasure to see them engaging in their phonics lessons.

Applied Science



This Term our year 10's have been working hard carrying out a variety of experiments for the BTEC. They have been looking at things such as the solubility of solvents with different solutes, the rates of reactions between two chemicals and investigating

air resistance. They have worked really hard this term

and the quality of coursework the pupils have been producing as a result of this has been amazing.

Year 11's have been looking into how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and looking into their own habits which may cause their bodies harm and the effects of carrying out these



bad habits. Pupils carried out an experiment to see the effects of alcohol has over our liver. Let's just say



Pupil Voice

they didn't like the results! They then created a series of informative posters aimed at pupils on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle through diet, exercise and healthy eating.



Each term pupils meet to discuss ideas of how we can make their learning experience with us a more enjoyable one. Pupils put forward ideas and

we try to implement as many as we can. This term pupils wanted to see more Christmas decorations up for the festive period, so pupils got together to put Christmas trees up in the classroom and teachers decorated their rooms.

Reward trips are always a hot topic during these meeting and pupils put forward some ideas they would like to see go ahead for our end of term rewards such as Base Jump, Paintballing, Rage room, Astro city and escape rooms were all ideas put forward.

We also discussed how the pupils love the practical side of our curriculum and that they would like to see more of these types of lesson offered such as sports coaching, drama, music, and dance. Pupils also mentioned they find they are able to engage in their learning more when they are comfortable in class. In some classes we have introduced reading corners with beans bags and comfy sofa's pupils highlighted they feel more ready to learn when they are in warm comfortable spaces such as these, so we are aiming to have spaces like this in each classroom.

Personal Wellbeing



Pupils have continued to carry out research into their chosen subjects including Sex and relationships, Drugs and substance abuse. We've recently been working with Open Road which is an

established Drug and Alcohol Recovery support charity in Essex. Open Road pride themselves on giving people a safe place to come and discuss their problems free from judgement and in complete confidence with their trained and professional staff, pupils have been discussing prominent issues that relate to them with our visitors. It's been a great experience for pupils and staff to be able to talk to individuals who have more of an understanding of what they may facing personally. Staff have also enjoyed these sessions and are proud of the pupils engaging in these workshops.

Occupational Studies



This term in Occupational Studies year 10 pupils have been learning how to prepare and paint a room. Pupils showed great engagement and the end result was outstanding.

Year 11 have been continuing to develop their brick laying skills

and have applied themselves well. Working well as a team, pupils have built a structure following specific measurements and a variety of tools.

Princes Trust



In Princes Trust this term Year 10 have been learning about the use of digital technology to enhance their communication, problem solving and employability skills. Pupils also showed

great maturity and insight when looking at the use of social media and how to use in a safe and informed way. Year 11 pupils as they ready themselves for their next steps in life have been learning about managing money and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of saving, borrowing and how to budget. Pupils have shown great engagement and demonstrated real maturity around this subject.

Induction & Reading



Hello I am Eileen Hawkes; I support pupils through their induction. The main purpose of induction is to welcome and

support new pupils through their transition into Victory Park Academy.

Assessments are carried out to assess the pupils baseline learning, and what they understand and able to do. They are then placed in classes in line with their results of their baseline assessments.

All new intake has a Dyslexia Screening.

Does the Screener diagnose dyslexia?

The Dyslexia Screener is not diagnostic; it is a quick initial assessment to see how far a pupil's abilities and skills match those of people who have been found to have dyslexia. Further diagnostic assessments which focus on particular skills such as spelling and the processing of speech



sounds are recommended to determine whether intervention is necessary. As follow up assessments,

we develop different life skills activities in between assessments: playing games this encourages problem



solving, team building. Different reading activities, silent reading / reading aloud reading instructions on how to play a game.

Drawing / colouring helps them to develop their creativity. All these attributes help them to develop.

These skills are usually clubbed into three major categories: Thinking skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making) Personal skills (self-awareness, self-management) Interpersonal skills (communication skills, empathy, cooperation etc.)

Happy Christmas & a prosperous new year

Mrs E Hawkes

KS4 Art



From the beginning of the year Key Stage 4 pupils have been working on GCSE coursework and the course demands that pupils work on a personal project that they are interested in.

The pupils have experimented with various materials such

shading pencils, charcoal, pastel, water colour paint and water colour pencils and have developed their skills. Recently they have progressed to painting with

acrylic paint on large wooden boards. They have put a lot of time, effort into their work and displayed resilience and patience.

With the help of staff, all pupils have worked really hard and created some outstanding work – well done to all!



Primary Art



From the beginning of the year Key Stage 2 pupils have been creating work using the basic theories of art such as colour, texture, value and pattern.

All the pupils enjoy working on a large scale with paint and always try

hard and put lots of thought and care into their work.

For a final piece they used acrylic paint to depict a cherry blossom tree. First, they created a blended background, used black to create a silhouette tree shape and then dabbed paint on to the board with bubble wrap to depict leaves. As you can see the results look stunning – well done to all and keep up the hard work.

KS3 Maths

From the start of the year pupils have been working really hard and have covered a range of topics including powers, prime numbers, multiplying fractions, simplifying fractions, working with negative numbers and finding the missing values to make an equation correct.

Try and balance this equation. If 12 x 3 = ? What would 20 + ? be?

Food Technology

In Autumn 1 and 2 the students have been creative with a variety of different savoury and sweet dishes! These include such things as; Lasagne al Forno (Mary Berry style), Chocolate Brownies, Lemon Drizzle cake, Toad-in-the-Hole, Homemade Pizza, Apple and Blackberry Crumble, Tiffin, Cottage Pie (from scratch.



The practical lessons are enjoyed by all students who participate and they get to add their own creative ideas to the recipe that they are following!



The food technology learning space comes to life when the students are engaged in their practical learning. Furthermore, there are a number of teachers that benefit from the end results of these practical lessons because the students will often share their completed dish

with them! This inspires our students, feeds their confidence and gives them a sense of pride!

As the food technology instructor, I am extremely proud of each and every one of our Victory Park pupils!

Assembly



Assembly is held every Monday at 12.15pm. The assembly is divided into two sections. The first one is topic baseda rota has been prepared with the staff

responsible added along with their date. The topics are based on calendar dates for National Awareness days; Religious festivals or current affairs. The relevant staff then deliver this and pupils have the chance to discuss its content, as well as learn something new or share their knowledge with others.



The second part is a powerful and purposeful way of reminding pupils of the Academy's expectations. Each pupil earns Sleuth points throughout the week and these points are collected

up and analysed. Those pupils who have received enough points for Bronze- will pick something they like out of the box. The same is for silver and gold, with the quality of what they pick being greater

depending on the metal colour. Some newer pupils find this public recognition a little embarrassing, however, the vast majority view it as part of the academy's



culture and the uncomfortable feelings begin to dissipate. Moving forward, pupils have decided they would like to be involved in the buying of the prizes which will be discussed in the following Pupil Voice.

Exam News



Well Done to the year 11 pupils who passed their Functional Skills English and Maths Level 1 examinations in November. The

certificates are locked away for safe keeping!

Note in your diary, the dates for this year's GCSE exams.

All exams will be held in the morning in 2023, starting at 9:00am. GCSE English is on Monday 5 June and Monday 12 June and GCSE Maths will be on Friday 19th May, Wednesday 7th June and Wednesday 14th June! Due to the additional coronation Bank holiday on 8th May, Key Stage 2 SATS will start a day later on Tuesday 9th May until Friday 12th May this year.

English KS4

Pupils in year 10 have completed a unit on 'A Christmas Carol', the novella by Charles Dickens. Their



work involved researching and learning about Victorian London and how poverty was crippling society. It covered the themes of redemption; poverty

and social responsibility; Christmas Spirit/ giving to charity and family. Pupil learnt about the different

characters and followed Scrooge's change in character which led him from being lonely and grumpy to happy and generous. Pupils learnt how to select quotations and analyse them.

Pupils in year 11 have worked hard on studying for their Functional Skills Level 1 in English

Language paper, which 60% passed both reading and writing. The others and newer pupils will have the

opportunity to sit the paper in the early part of 2023, or take the higher paper.

In addition, pupils have revised more sophisticated punctuation and sentence structures, as well as planning the structure of their creative writing to include dialogue. Pupils based their work on a clip from WW11.

Lexia



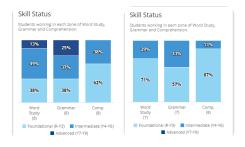
All pupils are expected to complete Lexia apart from the current year 11's. Literacy deserves and demands focus,

Welcome to Lexia Core5 Reading

and Lexia has delivered it. It is a computer programme which has developed a breadth and depth of expertise in literacy. Lexia solutions can be used together or individually to meet all structured literacy needs for any student. When it's taught the right way, literacy is fully within reach of the vast majority of learners. Lexia's approach is focused on sound methodology, engaging experiences, and continued acknowledgement of the value of each individual learner. By doing so, this programme is making literacy truly accessible for every pupil, to every need. Each pupil is assessed by the programme and put on their own individual literacy journey based on their needs.

We have:

- Timetabled Lexia usage into pupils' school week- Each pupil is timetabled 3x 20-minute sessions per week.
- Appointed a Lexia coordinator to facilitate best practice throughout our school
- Kept a close eye on pupil progress to identify and address risk areas
- Utilised scripted Lexia Lessons, and printable and digital Skill Builders to provide one-to-one or small-group scaffolded support, and independent practice.



Key Stage 4 have made 25% Advanced progress in the Autumn term in the grammar section of the programme and 13% in the Word Study.

Almost half of Key Stage 3 have made progress at the intermediate level of Grammar; 29% in Word Study and 13% in Comprehension.

We Are Loving to Read!



We have implemented a Reading intervention timetable whereby pupils read with a

teacher, learning assistant or Senco. This includes pupils from all year groups and is at the same time each week. This is to promote the love of reading and so far, the pupils selected love this time! We have reading time for both small groups and on-to-one pupils.

Reading is our main focus and all pupils have had a reading target to work towards across the curriculum. The targets are monitored by teachers; evidenced when they have been met and recorded on Go4schools. Learning walks and Work Scrutiny also monitor how reading is implemented into every subject. Reading is the key to accessing the full

curriculum offer and we have included 'reading time' twice a week in tutor, as



well as enrolling our pupils on Read, Write Inc for phonics or Fresh Start programs.

Hair & Beauty



In Hair & Beauty this term, we have been working on the unit "Working as a Team." Pupils planned a 'Salon Day' for the Christmas market. The whole process was led by the pupils and designed to replicate the skills and experience that pupils would need to apply in a real

working environment. Planning the day involved researching and ordering products, pupils analysing their skills, abilities and qualities, then booking in appointments for staff, pupils and parents on the day to showcase their skills. We have also been learning about the structure and



functions of the skin. These topics are taught using engaging practical activities so that pupils can learn kinaesthetically where possible. For example, the 'build the skin' activity.

Pupils have also have had the opportunity to take part in a 'lunch time

hairdressing club' which has proved popular.

Leap & STAG



Two days per week, pupils have taken part in 'Outdoor Education' where they attend an offsite provision and participate in activities such as rifle shooting, bush craft, ziplining, canoeing and much more. These lessons are designed to teach pupils how to take risks safely, work effectively as a team, communicate and collaborate and develop

problem solving skills.

Pupils have attended combat sessions once a week to learn about keeping the body and mind healthy, respect and resilience.

Educational trips take place once every half term. We have visited the farm and the animal sanctuary this term. Pupils have found these visits particularly therapeutic.

Pupils are also given the opportunity to voice their opinions and take an active role in planning their curriculum. Every Friday we hold a 'Celebration Assembly'

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where we look back on our achievements from the week and we discuss future activities to come.

Pupils have SEN targets that are often linked to their personal development, for example, to be able to play a game with another pupil. Pupils are supported to meet these targets during lessons as well as during Tutor time and break times.

Personal Development

This term the students have been participating in a wide range of sports for PE including Football, Cricket and Badminton of which everyone has excelled!



The students even had a football match against our trust academies based in KENT called Inspire

Academy. It was a closely fought game of which Inspire came out victorious but not before an amazing comeback from Victory Park! Well done boys you did us proud!

The STAG and LEAP group have done really well at Thriftwood this term, the students have taken part in the Leap of faith, Pedal karts, Rifle shooting and the cresta run. Those students that have gone have managed to learn more about teamwork and resilience as well as some



conquering their fears! Very proud of all of you!

Our enrichment timetable has also been popular this year with a massive thank you again to the staff at



Southend Combat Academy! Always ready to give positive reinforcements and a kick in the backside (not

literally) when needed. They are a great credit to the whole of Southend for the people they help. We have had lots of our students go every week and learn lots of new skills in self-defence, discipline and how to live a healthier life.

Another enrichment that has worked very well which is Football at Chase. This has been really popular amongst both boys and girls this year which is amazing to see. Students have learned about teamwork, resilience and managing their emotions which is all based around our SIS targets for the school. Our rewards system revamp has also been a success this term with various prizes on offer for the highest recorded points winners every week. Our pupils have decided on the prizes during the Pupil voice meetings with Kerry, Sarah and Amanda of which we thank them for organising.

Lastly, I would like to remind all parents and students of the Uniform policy, please for next term can your son/daughter be wearing the school top and black joggers, if the students come in not wearing the correct uniform they will asked to going into reflection or borrow a pair of the schools and as a last resort we will ask parents to come and bring them a pair.

Mrs S Brown

Parents' Morning



We would like to thank all parents who joined us for parent's morning.

This gave parents and teachers an opportunity to go through pupils' reports and books. In addition, parents could walk around the academy and view

the classrooms and the Hair and Beauty room, some even had treatments and their hair done by pupils studying the qualification.

Message from Ms G Lyons

Been a busy time with my role changing. I am now the voice at the end of the phone willing to assist in any way with attendance or welfare.

The welfare role is still a focus and you will still see me on your door steps and should you need help with anything please ask.

The parent's morning on Thursday 15th December was well supported a big thank you for attending it means a lot to the students and staff to see you all and give positive feedback in person.

The uniform rule is an important part of our academy ethos it is being implemented on arrival at reception. To help we have spare uniform students can borrow for the day, however the expectation is school tops and black joggers or leggings.

We do sell uniform:

Polo shits £8.50 and £12.50 for a jumper

I found Matalan a good place to buy joggers and if you need support with this please ask.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a safe time over the Christmas break and look ford to a positive new year for us all Gill Lyons

Message from the DSL



As this term draws closer to Christmas, I would like to thank all pupils and staff at VPA for the continuous work and engagement. This term has seen some great community spirit with monthly visits from our CYP policing team, they have

interacted with the pupils and partaken in their lessons, from Food technology with our year 11's to reading with our primary pupils.

Also, this term with thanks to Open Road that have engaged our pupils with a 4-week workshop programme around the dangers of drugs, alcohol and peer pressures. There were also performances from Prince charming.

I hope to continue this level of community engagement in the new year with more visits and support from our amazing local outside support agencies. Have a Merry Christmas.

Mrs C Burch (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Message from the SENCO



This term we have successfully introduced a new KS3 provision, for some of our students, which delivers a curriculum that focuses on personal development and fundamental learning skills. LEAP has supported the reintegration of

many of our pupils into the academy and supports pupils moving onto alternative provisions. The SEN team have started to plan some exciting developments for the academy with our students, which include a sensory room and an outside animal area, which pupils will be responsible for the oversite and management of the animals during the school day.

We have continued to work with other school within the area to support the placement of our Primary and Secondary TAG placements. A number of students have successfully transitioned back to their home school, using the strategies they have learnt at Victory Park.

Miss K Blight (SENCO)

Quality of Education

Work scrutiny takes place every week, every teacher is added to a rota whereby one teacher will bring along their books/folders and present to four other teachers. There is a set of criteria we use to assess the quality of work produced, marked and pupil feedback. We are especially proud of our teachers who have gained 100% in areas such as following the marking



policy; curriculum and providing plenty of opportunities for ambition within lessons.

Learning walks have taken place

so we can collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for the academy development. Within these, other subject teachers are able to hold academic conversations with pupils about their learning experiences. They are intended to be developmental and constructive rather than judgemental, and are a whole-school teaching and learning improvement activity. Learning Walks recorded have shown good teaching practice across the curriculum including providing reading opportunities for pupils in lessons, as well as reinforcing literacy skills, outstanding assessment for learning and pupil engagement.

Each classroom has made a space for a reading corner. These have bean bags, blankets and a range of books for pupils to pick up to read. Reading corners have become very popular with our pupils, not only to sit and read but also to have class discussions or debates.

Many classrooms have weighted blankets; fidget toys and we have introduced a 'Time Out' card for pupils as a way of supporting the needs of our pupils and their learning. These have all been successful to date.

Christmas Market

Each tutor planned a stall for the Christmas Market. This took place after the Parents morning and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!



Stall 1 had a Tombola game packed with a huge variety of chocolate and sweets. This proved to be a winner with all the pupils who were quite happy to wander off and return shortly for another go, especially at the end!

Stall 2 was 'Make a Cute

Reindeer'. It's amazing what can be created with a bar of soap, a brown flannel and ribbon! The eyes and nose were hot glued onto the front to create a face. It was wonderful seeing the pupils and their parents getting involved and being really pleased with what they made.

Some pupils decorated their snowmen they had made with eyes, nose, a hat made out of black cardboard, brown pipe cleaners for arms and some ribbon for a scarf.



The designing did not stop there! Stall 3 had biscuit

decorating. Again, the most impressive colourful designs were being created, although some were eaten before completion!



Stall 4 was a complete frenzy with an Icon quiz and pupils racing each other to complete it first and win themselves a bag of assorted sweets. Number 18 proved a sticking point for pupils; staff and parents. There is always one!

However, the stall had lots of bags of sweets to hand out- there was plenty for everyone.

Finally, stall 5 was 'Guess How Many Presents are in the Stockings'. Both stockings had the same amount, one for males and the other for females. Both had 14 presents. Pupils and parents were



allowed to 'feel' the stockings and then add their name and number.

And here are the winners who guessed the exact number 14! Well Done!



Flu Vaccination Clinics

Flu vaccination clinics are running throughout December & the Christmas holidays for secondary school children **(Years 7-9)** in:

- Basildon
- Brentwood
- Chelmsford
- Colchester
- Dunmow
- Epping
- Great Wakering
- Harwich
- Maldon
- Southend
- Thurrock

If your child is eligible, don't delay.

Book an appointment today on 0300 790 0597.

Information Regarding Strep-A/Scarlett Fever

You will have heard that there is an increase in scarlet fever in school age children in England. We need to remember that infections remain extremely rare. We understand that this is a worrying time for parents, but please only keep children away from school if they are experiencing symptoms. Our children have missed far too much school in the last 2 years so it is important that we continue to build up that lost time.

Although scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, it should be treated with antibiotics to minimise the risk of complications and reduce the spread to others.

The symptoms of scarlet fever include a sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. This is followed by a fine red rash which typically first appears on the chest and stomach, rapidly spreading to other parts of the body. On more darkly-pigmented skin, the scarlet rash may be harder to spot, but it should feel like 'sandpaper'. The face can be flushed red but pale around the mouth.

If you think you, or your child, have scarlet fever:

- See your GP or contact NHS 111 as soon as possible
- Make sure that you/your child takes the full course of any antibiotics prescribed by the doctor.
- Stay at home, away from school for at least 48 hours after starting the antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection
- When calling in to the school absence line, please state specifically if the condition has been confirmed by a doctor.

If your child has an underlying condition which affects their immune system, you should contact your GP or hospital doctor to discuss whether any additional measures are needed.

These are links to further information:

- UKHSA update on scarlet fever and invasive Group A strep <u>UKHSA update on scarlet fever</u> and invasive group A strep - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- A fact sheet that covers what scarlet fever is and other frequently asked questions: <u>Factsheet (publishing.service.gov.uk)</u>
- Scarlet fever guidance on symptoms, diagnosis or treatment: <u>Scarlet fever:</u> <u>symptoms, diagnosis and treatment - GOV.UK</u> (www.gov.uk)

Key Dates

Last Day of Autumn Term Tuesday 20th December 2022

Christmas Break Wednesday 21st December - Friday 30th December 2022

Bank Holiday Monday 2nd January 2023

Teachers Training Day Tuesday 3rd January 2023

First Day of Spring Term Wednesday 4th January 2023