

HILL VIEW
SCHOOL



Hill View Voice

Autumn Term 1
2025/26

Search

Welcome



Welcome to the latest edition of the Hill View Voice! It's always a pleasure to share this newsletter with you, and this issue is absolutely packed with stories of the amazing learning, creativity, and adventures our learners have enjoyed this half term. As you read through, you'll find updates from every class, from The Knoll's fluffy new arrivals to Herne Hill's culinary world tour. You'll also see reports on our brilliant art projects, inspiring careers events, and an exciting new partnership with the Octagon Theatre.

It is a wonderful snapshot of our school values in action: **'We Stay Safe, We Are Respectful, We Learn More'**.

Working in Partnership: Our Parent Carer Survey

I also want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the 13 families who took the time to respond to our recent Parent Carer Survey. Your feedback is so important to us as we work to make Hill View the very best it can be. We see you as vital partners, and listening to your voice is a key part of how we grow.

We have read every comment, and I wanted to share a summary of what you told us and, more importantly, what we are doing in response.

What You Told Us:

- You overwhelmingly value our caring staff and the strong, positive relationships we build with your children. This is our core strength and the foundation of everything we do.
- You told us that while you value our day-to-day pastoral communication, many of you (almost half) would like to know more about what your child is actually learning in class.
- You shared that you are often unclear about the enrichment clubs and activities we offer.
- You would like more opportunities to connect with the school and celebrate successes together.

Our Commitment to You: Based on this, we are implementing a clear action plan. Here are a few of the key actions you will see:

- **'Curriculum Connect':** We will be launching a new, simple, one-page summary for each class, sent out half-termly, outlining the key learning topics and themes. This will make it much easier for you to see what your child is learning.
- **Parent Partnership Group:** We are establishing a new working group to give parents and carers a formal voice in helping us co-produce solutions and plan community events.
- **Parent Workshops:** We will be running termly workshops (like 'The Bounce Approach at Home') to share our therapeutic strategies and strengthen our shared toolbox.
- **Enrichment at Hill View:** We will be sharing our enrichment offer so that all learners and families are clear on what is available.

Thank you once again for your partnership.

By working together, we can genuinely help every learner "Be the best you" and help our whole community "Build the best us."

I hope you enjoy all the wonderful stories in this newsletter.

Stu Lambert
Headteacher



**Be the best you.
Build the best us.**

The Knoll

Teachers: Beth , Emma & Victoria



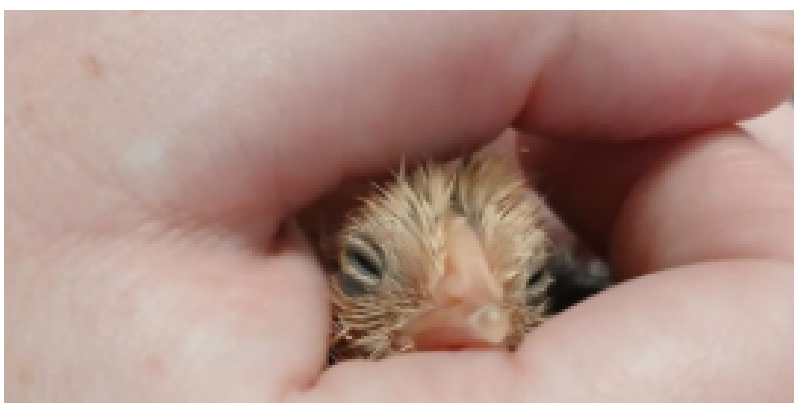
A World of Discovery in The Knoll

It has been a joy to watch our learners in The Knoll explore their world with such curiosity this half term. Every activity has been an opportunity to grow, learn, and practice our values.

A real highlight has been our weekly trips to the Sensory Gym. These off-site visits are a wonderful, nurturing part of our therapeutic week. It helps our learners with their sensory regulation, allowing them to feel safe, settled, and ready to learn.

This foundation of safety has allowed us to dive into some brilliant hands-on learning. In Maths, we've been investigators, exploring the concepts of floating and sinking. In our topic work, we've been learning all about rock pools and the amazing creatures that live in them.

Perhaps the most exciting news was the arrival of a tiny, fluffy chick! Our learners have shown such wonderful care and gentleness. Learning how to look after a living creature is a powerful and practical way to show our value of 'We Are Respectful'. We are so proud of the kindness they have shown.



Ham Class

Teachers: Beth , Emma & Victoria



**Creativity,
Community, and
Care in Ham
Class**

Ham Class has had a fantastic half term, embracing opportunities to learn both inside and outside the classroom, showing just how capable they are of being "the best us."

We've been taking our learning into the community with brilliant afternoons at the local park. It has been wonderful to see the learners' confidence soar as they master the bikes and scooters. They are truly "amazing" on the bikes! This is a perfect example of building resilience while remembering our value of 'We Stay Safe'.

Our learners have also been developing their green fingers! They have worked together to grow their own vegetables, learning about responsibility and where our food comes from. The best part? The vegetables were used to feed the school chickens, showing a lovely full circle of care.

This theme of respecting our environment continued as we learned about rock pools and studied the powerful book 'Somebody Swallowed Stanley', which sparked important conversations about looking after our planet. And back in the classroom, creativity was flowing as learners designed and built their own robots. What a fantastic way to practice teamwork and problem-solving!

Herne Class

Teacher: Sally



World Flavours in Herne Hill

Another busy and exciting term – around the world in 33 days! In English, we've been reading Meerkat Mail and absolutely loving it. Meerkats everywhere! The children have created their own story maps to retell Sunny's adventures and are now busy writing postcards back to Stu. The imagination and creativity on display have been fantastic!

To bring the story to life, we've also had a few "wild" culinary adventures... We've cooked and eaten Worm Bolognaise, enjoyed chocolate worms on toast, and tucked into jelly insects and bugs. Don't worry—no real insects or worms were harmed in the making (or eating) of these dishes!

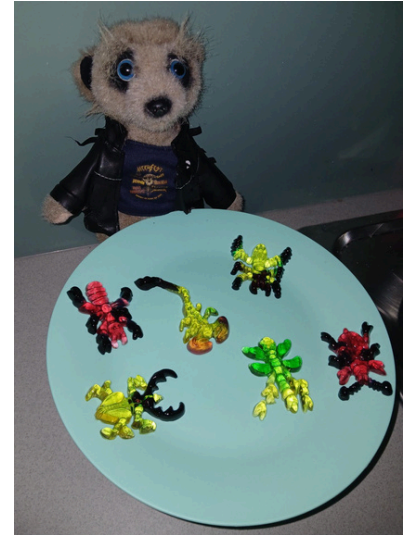
In Maths, everyone is making brilliant progress and showing real enthusiasm for problem-solving and new challenges. It's been wonderful to see such confidence growing in every lesson. We've already been on two school trips this term—full of fun, laughter, and learning. The children have been riding bikes, climbing trees, and back at school, they've discovered the fun of skateboards (helmets and elbow pads firmly in place, of course!).

In Food Technology, we've been travelling the world one dish at a time! So far, we've made paella from Spain, tacos from Mexico, Spaghetti Bolognese from Italy, curry from India, and mezza from Egypt. Some flavours were a little adventurous—but everyone's been brave enough to taste them all! Backed up by maps and globes as we explore the world through geography.

A term full of curiosity, creativity, and courage. We can't wait to see what comes next – hopefully no more bugs!

With thanks for your ongoing support.

From all of us in the
Herne Hill team



Lydeard Class

Teacher: Tom



Friendships and Fantastic Beasts in Lydeard Class

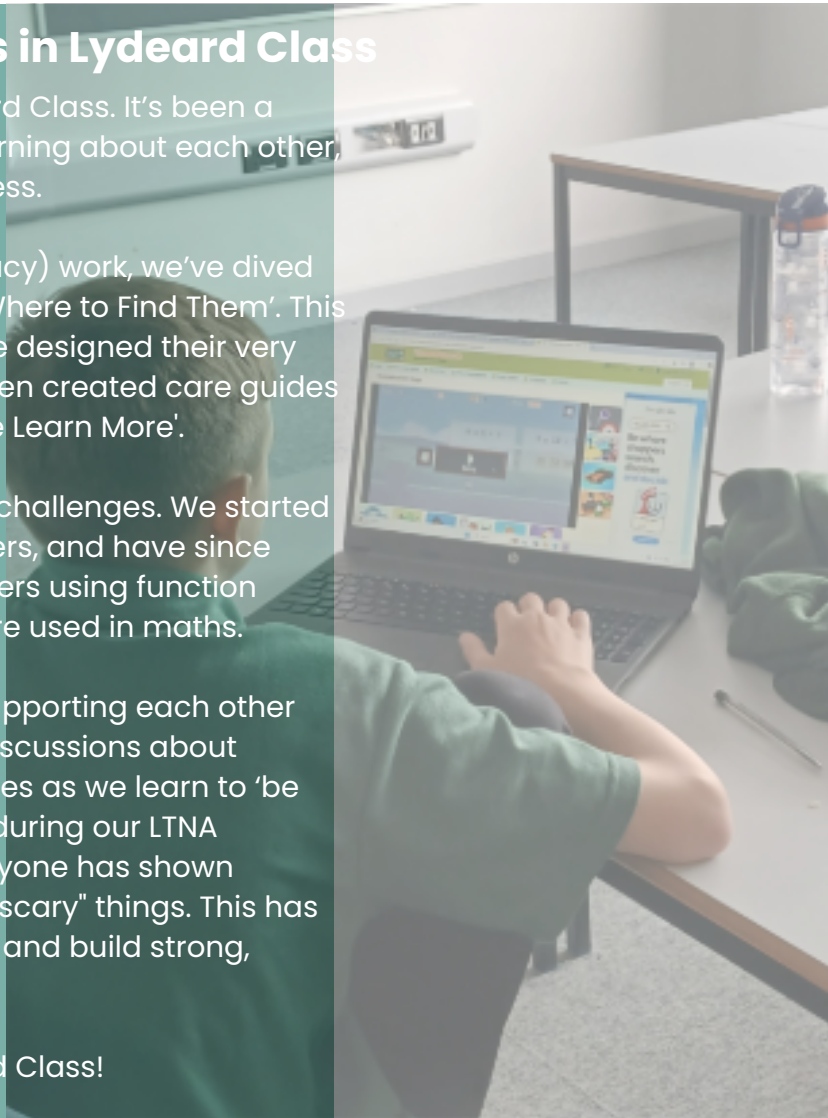
We have had a wonderful first half term in Lydeard Class. It's been a fantastic period of learning about our school, learning about each other, and building brilliant new friendships in the process.

In our CLL (Communication, Language, and Literacy) work, we've dived into the magical world of 'Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them'. This has sparked so much imagination! Learners have designed their very own beasts, written detailed descriptions, and even created care guides for them. It's been a perfect way to show how 'We Learn More'.

In Maths, we've been tackling some brilliant new challenges. We started by exploring sequencing with shapes and numbers, and have since moved on to algebra. It's been great to see learners using function machines and getting to grips with how letters are used in maths.

So much of our work this term has been about supporting each other and staying safe. In PSHE, we've had important discussions about friendships, E-safety, and understanding influences as we learn to 'be me in my world'. This has been put into practice during our LTNA (Learning Through Nurture Activities), where everyone has shown incredible bravery in trying new and sometimes "scary" things. This has been amazing for helping us develop as a group and build strong, respectful relationships.

What a great start to the year. Well done, Lydeard Class!



Sunny Class

Teacher: Nathan



Wellbeing, Wisdom, and Wraps in Sunny Class

Sunny Class has had a fantastic start to the new term, with a real focus on wellbeing and building positive relationships.

A key part of our success has been our new start-of-day routines. Every learner completes a 'Morning Check in Form'. This is such a vital, therapeutic part of our day, allowing staff to check in on each learner's wellbeing. It's supported by daily morning discussions about new things they've learned or activities from the night before, helping us ensure everyone feels safe, heard, and ready for learning.

This is followed by a calm 'regulation time', where learners have been getting to know each other and developing positive social skills ('We Are Respectful') by playing board games. 'Race to the Base' and 'Draughts' have been firm favourites!

This settled foundation has led to some brilliant academic work. In CLL, the class has been showing our 'We Learn More' value by studying World War I. They are reading 'Adventures through time WWI' and are developing a broad knowledge of the causes of the war and the fighting on both the Eastern and Western Fronts. We've also been impressed with how well they are engaging with their spelling work twice a week.

In Maths, learners have been developing their skills with money, shape, and angles. We are incredibly proud of those who showed the resilience to attempt a Foundation GCSE non-calculator paper – a fantastic achievement!

In Food Technology, the focus has been on life skills and how 'We Stay Safe'. Everyone has learned about food hygiene and safe knife skills, which has resulted in some amazing dishes, including fruit kebabs, chicken and vegetable kebabs, wraps, and pizzas.

Well done, Sunny Class, for a brilliant, productive, and respectful start to the term!



Coker Class

Teacher: Mark



Creativity, Care, and Comfort Food in Coker Class

Coker Class has had a good start to the term. Our learners have been settling into their new classroom, finding positive routines, and doing the important work of building strong, supportive relationships with each other and with staff.

A vital part of our provision revolves around caring for our school animals. Taking the dogs for walks has been a fantastic way to get exercise and build responsibility.

We've also seen so much gentleness and kindness ('We Are Respectful') during time spent caring for our fluffy animals. These are some of the real highlights of our week.

In CLL, we've been looking at how to tell a good story. Our learners have been tapping into their creative side ('We Learn More') to produce their own versions of well-known stories, often with fantastic and imaginative new twists.

In Food Technology, the theme has been making good, wholesome food on a budget. With the autumn weather setting in, it was the perfect time to make a warming vegetable soup and our own homemade bread.

To round off a great half term, Coker Class thoroughly enjoyed a brilliant trip to Planet Volt. What a great way to celebrate a lot of hard work!



Burrow Class

Teacher: Coral



Focus, Future, and Fun in Burrow Hill

It has been fantastic to see the great focus and engagement from our learners in Burrow Hill as they begin their qualifications. There is a real sense of purpose in the classroom as they embrace this new challenge and show how 'We Learn More'.

This focus on the future was brought to life when the class attended a careers fair. This was a brilliant, inspiring day that got everyone thinking about their future options and the exciting opportunities available to them.

Our learners have also been developing important life skills and showing real responsibility. They are now enjoying cooking each other a breakfast to start the week—a wonderfully respectful and supportive routine to have as a group. This has been part of our wider work in Food Technology, where they have created culinary delights such as delicious apple and mixed berry pies and hearty cottage pies.

Of course, the term has also included plenty of fun and adventure, with highlights being fantastic trips for a round of golf and a session at the inflatable park. These are brilliant opportunities to build relationships, trust, and resilience.

Well done, Burrow Hill!





It has been an exciting term for our Learning Through Nurture Activities (LTNA), with learners from all classes enjoying a range of experiences to encounter nature right on our doorstep.

Our main focus has been the changing of the seasons. Autumn-based art projects and seasonal crafts like pumpkin carving have been very popular, allowing learners to be creative ('We Learn More'). We have also looked at the nuts, berries, and seeds that harvest time produces. We're even trying to plant our own oak and conkers, with the goal of nurturing saplings to plant on our school site, showing respect for our environment.

The extended dry spell provided a wonderful opportunity to develop and refine our fire safety, building, and maintenance skills. Learners have safely used tools to split wood, tried different methods to start fires, and experimented with campfire cooking. The highlight so far? Baking a cake inside a foil-wrapped orange – delicious! This is a fantastic way to build resilience and learn how 'We Stay Safe'.



We also have some very exciting news: Hill View has been accepted as a provider for the Duke of Edinburgh Award! We are currently enrolling our oldest students onto their Bronze award pathway. They will commit to activities developing their hobbies, physical fitness, and volunteering to support others—a perfect example of "Build the best us." Expedition training is also underway, where learners will develop skills in map reading, camp cooking, and putting up tents.

What a brilliant opportunity for our learners. Watch this space for more progress reports!

**Nature, Nurture, and New
Adventures in LTNA**

Outdoor Education

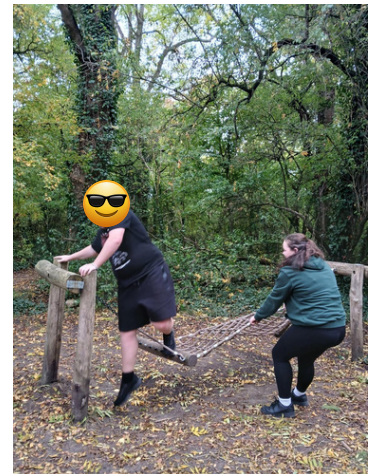
Teacher: Hannah



Teamwork and Adventures in Outdoor Education

Our secondary learners have recently been exploring the theme of teamwork through a dynamic and engaging series of activities. The focus has been on building strong, supportive relationships between staff and students, fostering collaboration and mutual support ('We Are Respectful'). As part of this, learners participated in several sessions at the golf range, enjoyed a full day at Planet Volt, and took part in a refreshing nature walk. These experiences have not only strengthened their bonds but also highlighted the importance of working together as part of "Build the best us."

Our primary learners have also embraced the theme of teamwork through a variety of enriching experiences. They have been learning how to ride bikes, practising their new skills in local parks while building positive relationships with staff and peers. To further support their learning, we visited several parks, creating wonderful opportunities for connection and collaboration. For their adventure days, Ham Class explored the aquarium and visited Weymouth beach, perfectly aligning with their curriculum focus on rock pools and sea life ('We Learn More'). Meanwhile, our other primary learners enjoyed an exciting day at Planet Volt and took part in a peaceful nature walk, reinforcing our values in both adventurous and reflective settings.



KS4 Science

Teacher: Philippa



It's been fantastic to see some of our upper secondary learners diving into their Entry Level Science qualification as part of our KS4 provision.

This half term, the focus has been on Biology. Learners have been showing their 'We Learn More' value by recapping and learning the parts of the cell. The real excitement came from the hands-on work, as they've had the opportunity to use microscopes and showed great skill and focus in making their own onion cell slides.

From there, they moved on to specialised cells, learning how muscle cells, sperm cells, and nerve cells have the same basic components but look very different (and, importantly, why this is the case).

After the half-term break, they will start to explore genetics and inheritance before moving on to their first Chemistry topic. Our learners have thoroughly enjoyed the practical, hands-on aspect of Science. We can already hear the excitement building for what's next... especially the Bunsen burners (where 'We Stay Safe' will be our number one priority!).

KS4 Science in Action: From Cells to Bunsen Burners!

Creative Arts

Teacher: Sophie



It has been wonderful to see so much imagination and creativity across the school this half term. Art and design are such powerful ways for our learners to express themselves, build resilience, and discover new talents.

Primary Learners

This half term, our primary learners have been diving into the formal elements of art, with a special focus on line and shape. They've been showing their 'We Learn More' value by developing their skills, drawing a variety of lines, and learning to distinguish between geometric and organic shapes. Building on this foundation, some classes have explored printmaking, created bold paper collages inspired by Henri Matisse, and are now crafting wire mobiles influenced by the abstract style of Wassily Kandinsky. It's been a joyful journey of creativity, discovery, and artistic expression!



Secondary Learners

Our secondary learners have been immersed in a vibrant mix of creative projects. Younger learners have been crafting bold and colourful 3D paper sculptures inspired by the dynamic work of Charles McGee, exploring form and pattern. Meanwhile, older learners have been pursuing self-directed projects based on their interests—a fantastic example of "Be the best you." This has ranged from designing and sculpting Warhammer figures and custom dice for D&D club, to investigating the expressive world of graffiti art. Excitingly, a collaborative mural wall is in the works, which will showcase their ideas and be painted by the students themselves—a perfect way to "Build the best us." The energy and imagination across all year groups have been wonderful to see.

New Skills: Crochet Club It's also exciting to share that Crochet Club launched this term for both primary and secondary learners, welcoming complete beginners. I am so impressed with what learners have already produced, including lovely hairbands and blankets. Learning a new skill like this takes real patience, persistence, and dedication—all key parts of resilience. We are so proud of their focus and can't wait to see what else they will make!



Phonics & English

Teacher: Cath & Coral



A Focus on Reading and Writing



We are thrilled to share several exciting updates about how we are supporting all our learners to "Be the best you" in their reading and writing.

A Huge Thank You to Martock Charity Shop We were absolutely delighted to receive a generous donation of £2,000 from the Martock Charity Shop. This incredible gift will be used to extend and resource our school library area, creating an even more engaging and supportive space for our learners to develop a love of reading. Some learners from Herne Hill Class had the pleasure of popping into the shop to deliver our thank you cards and share our appreciation, showing our 'We Are Respectful' value in the community.

Our Approach to English This year, we are using the 'Talk for Writing' approach across the school. This has a strong focus on vocabulary and deepening the understanding of meaning. Before starting a new book, each learner will be immersed in a cross-curricular introduction to get them enthused and excited about reading. The high-quality text will then be shared as a class and become the main focus of both our reading and writing activities.

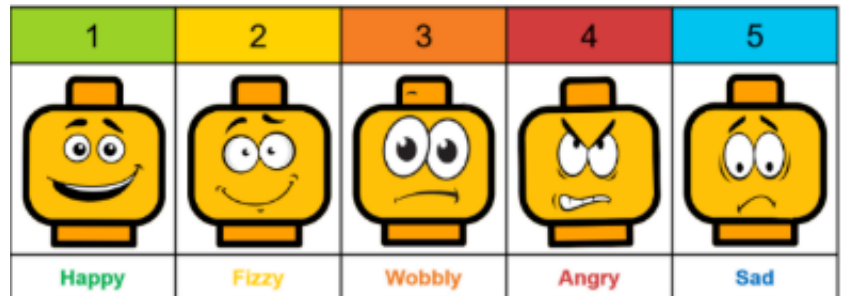
Phonics and Reading Support For our learners of all ages who are developing their reading skills, we are using the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' phonic scheme. To support this at home, all learners and their families can have access to E-Library resources on the Oxford Owl website, which provides a wealth of levelled reading books. Please do ask your class team for a log-on if this is something you would like to access.

KS4 Functional Skills As part of our KS4 provision, learners are working on their Functional Skills English qualification using the NCFE framework. This teaches the key, practical English skills needed for life after Hill View, such as letter writing, creating articles, and completing job applications, supporting our learners to 'Learn More' for their future.

BOUNCE Approach



At Hill View we continue to use the BOUNCE Approach to help our learners communicate and regulate their emotions. This term we are focusing on how our bodies feel when we are calm, relaxed, engaged and ready to learn! Displays in our classrooms and corridors help remind learners about activities that will soothe their nervous systems. Here are a few examples.



BOUNCE & Poly Vagal Theory

Did you know that the BOUNCE Approach is based on a theory called Poly Vagal Theory? Scientists have found that our nervous systems are constantly scanning the environment for cues of safety or danger. This is called neuroception. If you are interested in hearing more about BOUNCE, Poly Vagal Theory and how it can help manage big feelings, Sarah Stent will be running two online BOUNCE at HOME information sessions on the following dates:



13th November 2025 at 11 - 12 [Join the meeting now](#)

18th November 2025 at 3:00 - 4:00 [Join the meeting now](#)

Click the above TEAMS link to join the meeting. The content for each session will be the same. If you would rather attend an in-person event please contact the school office to register your interest.

Black History Month



Building Our Best Us: A Joyful Celebration of Black History Month

This Tuesday, our school community came together for a fantastic celebration of Black History Month. It was a wonderful opportunity to explore and appreciate the rich diversity of food, music, dance, and stories from around the world, truly helping us all to 'build the best us.'

A highlight for many was the vibrant food tasting. Our learners showed great curiosity—a key part of 'We Learn More'—by trying new flavours, from dragon fruit and avocados to wonderfully ripe mangos. A huge thank you must go to Silas, who did an amazing job preparing all the food and helping our learners feel safe and supported in trying something new.

The school was filled with the sounds of music from celebrated artists like Bob Marley, Yemi Alade, and Angelique Kidjo. It was fantastic to see so many learners and staff engaging positively, showing their respect for different cultural expressions. We even had a go at the 'Skelewu' dance, which was a lot of fun and a great way to build our community spirit! Our 'Hill View Skelewu' might need a little more practice, but I'm sure many of us would happily volunteer Coral for dance captain (...sorry Coral!).

A powerful part of the afternoon was sharing the story of Baroness Floella Benjamin and her inspiring journey as part of the Windrush generation. Our learners' thoughtful and respectful response to her story has directly inspired a new weekly 'Storytelling and Culture' session, creating a wonderful and lasting legacy from the day's celebration.

We also want to say a special thank you to Ruth for stepping up to cook delicious plantain, which was another new and positive experience for many. The day was a brilliant example of our community values in action, and we are so proud of how our learners embraced the celebration with such respect and openness.

Kira





An Inspiring Visit from The Octagon Theatre

We were thrilled to welcome Anthony Kosky to our Expressive Arts Room on Tuesday 14th October. Anthony, who works with The Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue and is also a professional Actor, Director, and Musician, came to talk to our learners about his work.

Anthony met with several learners from across the school, generously spending time watching their performances and listening to their compositions. He also taught some learners a few techniques on the drums, played alongside them on the piano, and offered fantastic advice on digital content creation.

Embracing our child-centred, relational approach, he also engaged in the obligatory football discussions and now apparently owes two of our learners a football match on his next visit!

We are so grateful for the time and energy The Octagon Theatre and Anthony have invested in our school, and we look forward to our next ventures together.

Thank you, Anthony, for investing in our learners. And a huge thank you to all the learners who met with Anthony. You battled nerves, showed the resilience to try something new, and performed with courage. You showed our visitor how truly wonderful you are, and you made us all very proud.

KS4 Learners Explore Future Careers

Our Key Stage 4 learners have been brilliantly focused on their futures this term, showing fantastic engagement as they 'Learn More' about the world of work.

Somerset Careers Fair In October, some of our Year 10 students attended the Somerset Careers Fair at Westlands Entertainment Venue. This was a brilliant opportunity to see our local post-16 providers, such as Yeovil College, as well as companies offering Supported Internships and Apprenticeships.

Our learners really made the most of the event, enjoying hands-on activities like strength testing with the Yeovil College Sports department, reaction time testing with the Army, and even having photos of their eyes taken by Specsavers! They spent time asking thoughtful questions to exhibitors to understand how businesses work. They also had a great chat with current apprentices on the Thales stand and caught up with Nikki from ASK Apprenticeships, who visited us in the summer term.

