

Thoughts from the Principal's Office

Dear families,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Parent Post; it is hard to believe that we are already over halfway through the academic year! Although the shortest of our half terms it has been one of the busiest. It was such a privilege last night to attend the Macbeth performance: it was extremely high quality for an amateur production and shows the dedication of the students, the performing arts department and the wider cast of staff that have been involved over the past 8 months in the preparation and performances. In this edition we also have some fantastic sporting and creative achievements to share with you.

As the nights get lighter, the opportunity to get outdoors and be involved in extracurricular activities increases, so if you haven't taken part in any enrichment yet this year there is still plenty of time to get involved. One of our core values is character and we know that our enrichment curriculum provides excellent opportunities to support personal development and leadership skills. This is just as important as our academic studies. We hope you enjoy celebrating the students' success with us. Happy reading!

Expansion

Whenever I meet parents or members of the community in the village, they want to talk to me about the new building that is rapidly appearing by the Year 11 playground. It is very exciting seeing the construction take shape. The Trustees and I have had the opportunity to get our hard hats on and visit the site. We are arranging for the GCSE Engineering students to visit next half term to get some experience of a real construction site. The build is still on schedule even with all the stormy weather.



U12 Girls' Football: Winners of the North Devon League!

Mr Helliwell and I met with our site manager Mr Magson last week to agree the furnishings and layout of the classrooms. As this will be the new English block, we are looking at including corridor decor that celebrates international literature. The solar panels are on the roof, and we have taken the opportunity to increase the number of panels the school has. Currently about 50% of our electricity comes from our solar panel generation and the school and Trustees are now working on the ambition to achieve net zero in the future.

Become a Trustee

We are very privileged to have a strong group of Trustees with a wide range of skills and experience from education and business backgrounds. The Trustees play an active part in the Academy. This half term they have visited the canteen and collected Student Voice on their experiences, they have met with members of staff on a new sustainability and climate change plan, and supported the school performances, as well as attending the governance and accountability meetings. It is a role highly-valued by all staff and students and a key role in supporting the legal compliance of the Academy as a charitable Trust.

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We are currently looking to recruit two new Trustees: a Parent Trustee and a Community Trustee with a background in business and finance. If you are interested in the role and would like to find out more, please contact Alice Hellmund
ahellmund@braunton.academy for more details.

Staffing update

We have been happy to welcome Mrs Hayler as our Finance Manager. She will be joining us after half term and will take a key role on the Senior Leadership team. Mrs Duthuit has joined the Science and Computing Department as one of the two seconds-in-department teaching computing. She is looking forward to introducing a new GCSE course in iMedia later this year. We also welcome Mr Bennett to the Teaching Assistant team; Mr Bennett is a football coach outside of school and supports the Year 10 students at lunchtime playing football on the MUGA.

Should We All Be Eating Insects?

Year 10 students are looking at alternative protein and the nutritional benefits of eating a vegan diet. Students were asked to complete a sensory analysis of chocolate chip cookies made from cricket flour. Students were very keen to tuck in and many were asking for more! The flour is very dark in colour so works well with chocolate, although the texture was a bit gritty. However, students loved them and would buy these crunchy critters if they were readily available and affordable. Maybe the canteen staff might be interested in trying some new recipes.

Students munched on crickets and mealworms and even made some suggestions on how they could be used in a recipes such as salad and pizza toppings. Students said they are 'quite nutty and crunchy'. Cricket flour is currently about £60 a kilo but extremely high in protein, iron, fibre and all 18 amino acids, plus, only 12g gives you your RDA of vitamin B12. Students ate roasted mealworms, crickets and chocolate chip cookies made from cricket flour.

More photos on the next page...



We are sad to share the news that we are saying goodbye to two of our support members of staff that have worked in the SEND team. Mrs Turner and Mrs Ong are leaving at the end of the week and we wish them all the best for the future.

Due to these changes, we currently have two vacancies: one for an Intervention Teaching Assistant and one for a Cover Supervisor. Due to the expansion and our increased intake again in September, we are also adverting for a new Teacher of English and a new Teacher of Science. We are also looking to expand our team of invigilators that supports the students in the practice and formal external exams throughout the year. All adverts and application forms can be found on the school website.

Mrs F Bowler
Principal



Competition Winner!

Congratulations to Lucy in Year 7 who has won a Dryrobe courtesy of Plastic Free North Devon after her litter picking efforts with the Academy. Lucy's name was drawn at random from all of the volunteers who took part in PFND's 'Cleanse and Clean' campaign. Well done Lucy - your win was well-deserved!



Genrefication of the Library

We have undertaken the huge task of changing from the old system of organising fiction by author surname to genre-specific sections instead. Some of the former sections remain (quick reads, manga and graphic novels) but are now also accompanied by others such as fantasy, historical fiction, humour and romance. This is a format most of us are used to when perusing shelves in book shops and supermarkets, so hopefully it will remove barriers for our students in finding and accessing books that they will enjoy. We also completed a 'book weed' at the same time, removing books from the shelves that were no longer current or in good useable condition. This is preparing us for the 140 new titles arriving with our termly book exchange. Happy reading! Miss Rockey, Librarian



Snowsports Trip Pila, Italy 2023

We had an amazing week over the Christmas holidays. Snow was plentiful, the slopes were quiet so no queuing at lifts, and the sun was out all week! This year we had 46 students, half snowboarding and half skiing. Ability ranged from advanced to beginner across seven groups. What is great at Pila is the ability to regularly see all the different groups progressing throughout the day due to 'The Bowl' area being the ski area where the beginners and advanced cross over.

All students had five hours of lessons a day, with time spent sat in the sun on the mountain afterwards to enjoy a drink and share the fun events of the day. Evenings were spent at a pizza restaurant, visiting the beautiful town of Pila (which boasts the largest Roman ruins outside of Rome), karaoke, and bowling at the local games arcade. A big thank you to all the students and staff for making the week a fun and memorable time.

We have booked Pila again for next year departing 28th December 2024. All the information and details are on ParentMail. As we are restricted to 46 students, please book a place by completing the form and paying the deposit as soon as possible. Mrs Craig



British Council Partnership News

I am delighted to say that we have been awarded a partnership opportunity through our work with the British Council. We have been partnered with 'The Government Secondary School, Gwagwalada' in Abuja, Nigeria! This is a fantastic opportunity to discuss a theme that covers climate change and its impacts within our localities. It will involve an initial period of work between each school and staff representatives, before involving student work and various activities. It will also allow us to enrich the curriculum across the school with opportunities where they arise. Watch this space as we update you on how the link progresses.

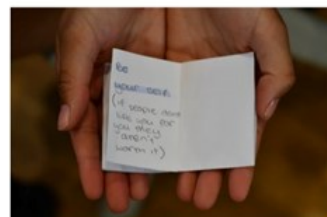
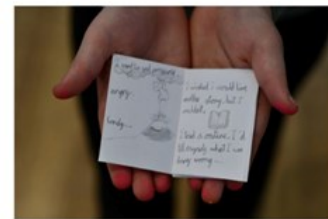
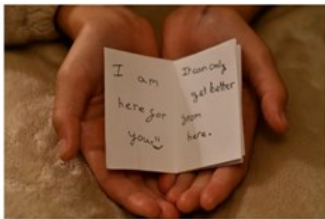


Speak Up – National Theatre 2023 – Braunton Academy

Since the beginning of the academic year, students involved in the National Theatre's 'Speak Up' programme have been meeting every Monday to discuss and explore issues important to them as young people and experience workshops delivered by local artists and creatives. Students have created group artwork which reflects and addresses issues in school and in the wider community, and have created artwork expressing their views. This artwork has been displayed throughout the school to carry the messages of these young people forward in a creative and constructive manner.

As a group, they are growing in confidence every week and able to constructively articulate and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feeling about issues important to them, as well as take action as to how best express their ideas.

We have now entered a development phase where the group are experiencing a wide range of creative activities and workshops which will culminate in them deciding to share their work on a national scale via the National Theatre, Sellador Venues, and other North Devon schools in the programme. This process of 'co-creation' is an incredibly valuable experience for those involved, and we look forward to sharing with you the final work of the programme.



**In a world where you
can be anything,
be kind.**

National Theatre

Welcome to Mrs Duthuit

I am the new Computing teacher, coming to Braunton after teaching at Park School for a very long time. I am French but moved to the UK when I was 20. I have been living on the North Devon coast for over 18 years - I love living by the sea, which has been a constant my whole life. Apart from my family, there are a few things that are very important to me:

Skiing - This is the holiday I look forward to the most. It may also be the only sport at which I am pretty decent!

Crochet - I enjoy making very intricate pieces that take tens and tens of hours. It gives me a great sense of achievement and is something to do while watching TV. The photo shows me wearing one of my completed projects.

Sophrology - it is a very common practice in France that helps with well-being and performance, like mindfulness but easier. It was great for my marathon training a few years back and it helps me keep calm under pressure.

I really hope to inspire girls to study STEM subjects, especially Computer Science. There are so many opportunities for women to join in the coding revolution and you can really use your creativity when you are coding. It is great fun!



New GCSE Course for September: Creative iMedia

We are pleased to offer students the KS4 OCR Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia. This course will give students the opportunity to learn and apply their skills to work in the media industry.

Have you ever wondered why brands use certain logos or colours, how websites are designed, or how to edit videos so that the audience is kept engaged? These are some of the questions that we will answer over the two-year course.

The theory around digital media is fascinating: when you discover the media codes, it is like stepping into the other side of a mirror, offering a new perspective from which you will see marketing materials and other digital products very differently.

We will study colour theory, typography, and logo-making for the first unit in Year 10. There will be lots of creative processing and idea generation, utilising Photoshop, DreamMaker and other software, as well as researching real life examples, etc. There is NO coding in this course. There are two pieces of coursework to produce before sitting the exam in Year 11. The briefs are set by the exam board but give you lots of freedom in terms of interpretation. We will do all the learning ahead of the coursework window so that you have plenty of material to use to support you in your independent work and your revision.

I loved teaching this course in my last job, and I cannot wait to start it next September. It is fun, creative, and challenging. Mrs Duthuit



Trip to Bletchley Park and Oxford University

Forty Year 9 students took part in a trip to Oxford University and Bletchley Park in order to widen their horizons and stimulate their minds

We arrived at Oxford University and we were shown around their Exeter College with its splendid old buildings and history, before taking part in a Critical Thinking workshop. The students looked in detail at the most famous Shakespeare stage direction from 'A Winter's Tale' Act 3 Scene 3 when Antigonus is chased off stage by a bear. The students had to think at a very high level to formulate ideas and discuss this scene's meaning.



Following lunch, we then walked to the Oxford University Maths Institute where we were met by Prof. James Munro, an amazing character who enthralled the students with his wit and obvious love of Mathematics. The students took part in a lecture on the Product Rule for Counting and how a knowledge of systems and patterns enables mathematicians to solve tricky problems. At the end of the afternoon, we visited the Oxford University Natural History Museum where the students were free to wander and look at the huge number of fascinating exhibits in the collection.

Following an overnight stay in a hotel and, for a lot of us, a crepe breakfast, we boarded the coach for the journey to Bletchley Park - the home of the British codebreakers in WW2. During this time students took part in a workshop on codebreaking, ciphers and saw up close and in use an original German Enigma machine. The students had a guided tour of some of the Park focusing on the D-Day landings with a multi-screen cinematic presentation. We saw where Alan Turing worked along with his team, and visited the shop before leaving for home. We will be running this trip again next year for selected Year 9 students; details will be sent out via ParentMail in September. Mr England, Teacher of Mathematics



Eco Club

Thirteen Eco Club members braved the chilly weather to plant 70 more saplings at Yeo Valley Community Woods. This is the second time we have planted trees here and it was lovely to revisit last year's trees and see how they have grown. The plan is to lock 3000 tonnes of carbon into this woodland for the next 100 years. Well done everyone for their enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Mrs Moy



Year 11 Food Preparation and Nutrition Practical Tasks

Food students are currently working really hard on their GCSE coursework task which is to plan, prepare and cook dishes that represent an event or celebration from around the world. Students have selected Chinese New Year, Semana Santa (Holy Week), Christmas, and American Independence Day. So far staff have been amazed and impressed by the effort and commitment made by students to produce practical dishes of an extremely high standard. Students are working towards their final practical task at the end of February, and all the staff wish them the very best of luck when they have to prepare three dishes in three hours. Here are a selection of dishes made so far.



Practical work by Jackson, Romesh, Tallulah, and Oscar.

Year 9 Rugby Success

Following their impressive victory over West Buckland School in the North Devon Cup Final, the Year 9 Rugby team now travel to Blundell's School in February for the semi-final of the Devon Cup. Their ND league season has started well with victories over Park School (50-0) and South Molton (47-5). Other rugby results: Year 7 drew against Park (15-15), Year 7 beat South Molton (55-5), and Year 8 lost against South Molton (10-5).



Netball Success for Year 11

The year 11 netball team had a great last season at Braunton Academy, coming runners-up in the North Devon league. They have been a pleasure to coach over the last five years and I hope they all continue to play netball when they leave school.



Netball Success

Congratulations to the Year 8 netball team who won the Netball League before Christmas. They always work hard in training and matches, and show determination to achieve.



Congratulations to the Year 9 netball team who won the North Devon Netball tournament, and then went on to compete in the County round at Paignton.





Events in February

10TH FEB Braunton Bird Walk - MEET @ HEANTON COURT
10:30 - 12:30 PM

13TH FEB Natural Crafting with LWIB - Clay Coasters
Key Stage 3. Booking Required. 10 - 12 PM

14TH FEB Wellbeing Walks around Braunton Village with
Live Well in Braunton. Free walks 10:30 - 12:30 PM

16TH FEB **WildTech Workshop for Beginners:**
Learn how to identify species with your
smartphone. Booking Required. 1PM - 3PM

24TH FEB Natural Crafting with LWIB -
Make Your Own Plantable Seed Paper.
Key Stage 3. Booking Required. 10 - 12 PM

26TH FEB First Meeting of Wild Pages:
Nature Book Group. 5:30 - 7 PM

28TH FEB Wellbeing Walks around Braunton Village with
Live Well in Braunton. Free walks 10:30 - 12:30 PM

28TH FEB Film Night - Film TBC 7 - 9 PM

**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL FOR
SOME EVENTS:**

Visit our Facebook or Website
pages for details and booking.

