



## Teaching and Learning Newsletter for Year 9

### Welcome

Happy New Year and a very warm welcome back to St Edward's and to this edition of the Teaching and Learning newsletter which has a special focus on well being. As usual, you will find across the following pages information about what your son or daughter is studying this half term, as well as the main assessment tasks. Ms Berry, our PSHE coordinator, has written a short introductory piece which has some helpful suggestions as to how we can help to improve the well being of our children; I hope you will find this of use. Towards the end of this edition I have included some testimonies from a few of our elite and high performing sixth form students who pursue sport, music and drama outside of school. It was a great privilege speaking to these students and hearing their stories and I would encourage you to share some of what they have said with your own son or daughter. As always, please do contact me if you would like to comment on any of the material, or have any questions or comments about Teaching and Learning. I would love to hear from you.

**Ian Henry**

**Assistant Headteacher**

### A word from your Year Leader

It is amazing that we are already in a position to look back at the first term of the academic year. Year 9 have managed to accomplish so many great things, both in and out of the classroom.

This term is an incredibly important one for the Year 9 students as they will be selecting their GCSE Pathways which will lead to nationally-recognised qualifications. Students will be asked to select subjects that they enjoy and that they are good at, as well as considering which subjects will be most beneficial to them in an ever-changing world.

The aim of the Year 9 team is to help students make the best and most informed decision about their future, and this will be done with a variety of events, workshops and professionals in school over the next few weeks. We would also encourage parents and carers to be as involved in this process as well by checking planners, looking through completed homework, speaking to your child about what they would like to do in the future and discussing all of the many possibilities and opportunities that they have available to them.

Everybody at St Edward's works incredibly hard to ensure that every student feels safe and happy whilst at school; and it is this environment that is allowing students to work harder and to make good progress during their time with us. With the focus being well being, which is an important part of being healthy, happy and getting the most out of life, it seems a good idea to share some top tips for student well being...

**Physical health** - when you take care of yourself physically, it is good for your well being. For example, being active, having a break from technology, getting outside and getting enough sleep can help your mood and improve physical fitness.

**Mental and emotional health** - good mental and emotional health is important for well being. Those with good mental and emotional health can develop resilience to cope better with difficult situations. If you develop resilience, you can 'bounce back' when things go wrong, which will help get through life's ups and downs and boost your well being.

**Positive emotions** - if you can focus on the good things, take a positive approach to life's challenges and know what you have to feel good about or what's going well, it can help focus on positive emotions.

**Different activities** - trying new things and getting involved in different activities, keeps your options open. This can also help you find other things that you are good at.

**Relationships and social connections** - relationships and social connections are vital for well being. You need close and supportive family and friends.

**Meaning in life** - meaning in life can come from doing good things for others. You could look for everyday ways to help family or friends – for example, giving someone your seat on the bus, or helping someone pick up papers they've dropped in the street. This type of 'giving' lights up the reward centre in the brain, which makes you feel good. People with meaning have less stress and get more out of what they do.

**Goals and achievement** – if you have goals that fit with your values, are fun and attainable, and let you use your strengths, it can give a sense of purpose and achievement.

Thanks for your continued support.

Mr L Kemish ([lkemish@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk](mailto:lkemish@st-edwards.poole.sch.uk))

## PSHE—mental health and well being

We know that over 50% of mental illnesses start before the age of 14; and 1 in 10 children/young people have a mental health disorder. Anything we can do to open up conversations with children about mental health is good. We need our children to see us looking after ourselves, both physically and mentally, so they learn to do it as well. Evidence suggests there are five steps that we can all take to improve our mental well being. These five steps are

### Step 1: Connect.

- Connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships. Healthy relationships are an important part of staying well.

### Step 2: Be active.

- You don't have to go to the gym. Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Find the activity that you enjoy, and make it a part of your life. If you enjoy what you are doing you are more likely to keep doing it. You can do this with a friend or join a group so you encourage each other

### Step 3: Keep learning.

- Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. Learning keeps us mentally active and we can all learn new skills and try new activities. It might be cooking or sewing; or what about getting the garden ready for growing food next Spring?

### Step 4: Give to others.

- Even the smallest act can count whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Research has shown that smiling at others can make you feel good too. It may be that you could volunteer at a local church or shop or maybe a neighbour needs a little help? Do you have a skill you can share? Or support a charity that is close to your heart

### Step 5: Take notice.

- Be more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you. This could involve taking time out each day to have a ten minute walk outside. Even if you're just walking from one place to another try to listen to the sounds, look at what's around you. Breathe slowly and enjoy the journey. Try to not always think about the list of things you have to do. Take time out to just be.

You can see that several of these are closely linked. The key is to start slowly and don't give yourself a hard time if you slip. Try to find things you enjoy. If you can share these with your family, you can strengthen relationships so that you can talk about things when times are a little tougher.

Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. We can be great examples for our children by showing that we ask for help too. Help can come in a number of ways. We may have family and friends but there might be times when we want more professional help. There are so many online places it can get confusing. Here are just a few that you can look at. Some are for children and some for families.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness/Pages/Fitnesshome.aspx>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/have-conversation>

<https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Childrensleep/Pages/teensleeptips.aspx>

## PE

The focus of the KS3 core PE curriculum is to allow students to experience a wide range of sports. This allows students to gain knowledge and experience in a wide spread that enhances their learning and progress. The core lessons are designed to cater for all experiences with the focus on each child's individual development in their knowledge and attainment.

On top of the core curriculum there is also a huge extra-curricular programme that is open to all students. So far in KS3 there have been clubs for rugby, netball, badminton, basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, and Dance. Post Christmas the rugby club will become football club.

An assessment process takes place after each rotation of activity. Each individual is assessed in the skills in isolation and then the skills in a complete situation as well as their knowledge and understanding of the rules and tactics.

### **Tips to aid progress in PE**

Begin attending extra- curricular clubs.

Perform sport outside of school.

Learn the rules and tactics from observing high level sport

Fully involve yourself in lessons, it does not matter if we make mistakes, we can learn from them.

## DRAMA

Year 9 will be re-commencing their journey through the history of theatre and exploring the impact of Shakespeare on the stage. Students will be working on Macbeth in a practical perspective and exploring the play in a range of different ways. They will focus on use of performance space, character development, use of language and stage combat. Students will be formally assessed on this unit at end of the spring term, using extracts from the play.

Students may wish to visit [www.shakespearesglobe.com](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com) to prepare for the forthcoming unit.

## Spring Term Curriculum Programme

Subject	Topic Title	Main Task Assessment
Geography	Geography of Sport	Evaluate the best location to host the 2026 Winter Olympics
English	Shakespeare: Macbeth	GCSE style reading question on an extract from the text
Textiles	Fashion and Upcycle	Design and making of final product
Resistant Materials	Bespoke Steam Punk Clock	Design and making of final product
Food and Nutrition	Teen Meals	Putting a meal together in a healthy way
Graphics	Architecture - Beach Hut Project	Interior design and manufacture of a beach hut
Computing	Control using Flowol, then code the flowcharts using Scratch, then following this, coding using Python.	Flow of data, logic and how it is implemented in Scratch and basic Python instructions
History	Voting Rights	'The most significant reason women secured the vote was due to the efforts of the suffragette movement.' How far do you agree?
French & German	Career plans and ambitions	Listening and Writing assessments
RE	What is it like to follow Jesus?	Is discipleship easy?
Science	Electricity and Magnetism Genetics and Evolution	<i>Written tests completed in class for all topics listed using past KS3 science questions.</i>

### 🎵 Music 🎵

Students will be studying one of the following topics depending on which class they are in:

- Dance music, exploring a wide range of traditional, modern and world dance styles. The first half of the project involves learning rehearsing and performing a traditional dance piece. This will then be followed by using music technology to compose and sequence a club dance piece.

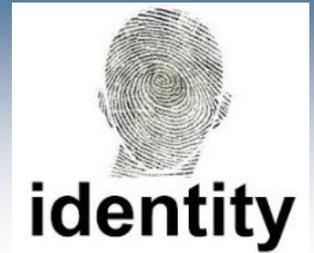
OR

- Pop performing, students will work in ensembles rehearsing and performing a pop song carrying out a variety of roles in the group including keyboard player, guitarist, drummer and singer.



## Art

In art, the year 9 students are continuing with their theme of identity. They are going to look at how a range of artists use their art to express and communicate issues and ideas. Students are going to consider issues and ideas important to themselves and experiment with communicating their ideas through their own practical work.



### Y13 Student Tilney Gardner: History, Music and RE A Levels

I regularly practise the piano and cello outside of school to perfect pieces. Looking back to my first piano performance I was very nervous which often meant I would shake before I went to perform. However over time, I have learnt to manage these nerves. By perfecting the pieces I play and practising them constantly I can ensure that even if I make a mistake whilst playing, I can carry on. Indeed, being fluent in a performance is very important and the skill of being able to carry on is developed with the more performances that you do. Although practising alongside A levels can be hard, I find that playing the piano can often relieve stress. Performance is something that I now really enjoy and getting experience of it when you are young is the best thing. Although you may be nervous, you have to believe in yourself and go and do it. Only that way will you get better!



### Y13 Student Emily Broomfield: Biology, Chemistry and PE A Levels

#### What performance do you take part in outside of school?

Outside school I compete in Dressage at Lulworth Equestrian Centre.

#### What does it feel like to perform?

It feels like you are part of this powerhouse team that can perform (hopefully) seamless movements that look so elegant whilst also feeling the eyes of the judges, stewards and spectators watching and critiquing your every move.

#### Do you get nervous or feel the pressure when competing?

Every time. I almost always either end up crying or getting frustrated with the pressure in the ring.

#### Can you explain what this feels like?

It is mostly the pressure you put on yourself, as when you perform it is just you and the horse; when you enter the arena it is silent, so it is very easy to get inside your own head and wind yourself up.

#### What techniques have you got to help you overcome the nerves and the pressure?

Taking a deep breath when I feel I am getting too stressed. I often do this six or seven times when warming up and entering the ring. When doing the test, you cannot think about the previous movements. It is very difficult, but you have to ignore every past manoeuvre and solely focus on the one you are currently doing. If you start to think about how well/badly the last thing was, then the next move is going to be bad too...etc. You have to push aside all of your thoughts with the exception of the current situation, otherwise it falls to pieces.



### **How do you manage to combine practise and competition with your school studies?**

Time management. Staying organised and within a good time frame helps me to be able to balance schoolwork and riding. Being proactive and using my initiative to find my way to training, events and social activities makes this much easier to balance time. By forward planning I can help myself by being organised so I get much less stressed.

### **How does your passion for Dressage help you to improve your well being?**

Having something that I absolutely love really helps to break up the school week. Being able to train and find myself sore and stiff but then able to do things I wasn't able to do before, really keeps you motivated and helps me to use that in my school life. Having something fun, as well as school work, means that you are able to keep up the work ethic and achieve.

### **What advice would you give to a younger student?**

Tackle one thing at a time. It is all well and good saying I am going to learn Chemistry but you have to break it down into smaller segments, otherwise it seems never-ending and that you are going nowhere fast. Stop. Breathe. Think about the short term as well as the long term.

## **Y13 Student Aimee Cupper: Creative Writing, Drama and Music A Levels**

I am a member of the Bournemouth and Boscombe Light Opera Company (BBLOC), a musical theatre company.

### **What does it feel like to perform?**

I love every second! I get an insane adrenaline rush every time I perform and I can't get enough of it. Hearing an audience of 1000+ clapping and enjoying your performance is impossible to beat.

### **Do you get nervous or feel the pressure when performing?**

Initially I get nervous before the curtain lifts, especially when I have friends and family watching but then I take a breath and remind myself that I know the show inside out. The only way to overcome the nerves for me is to practice so there is no possibility of getting it wrong.

### **What techniques have you got to help you overcome pressure?**

Taking a deep breath, it's clichéd but true, just taking a second to collect yourself makes all the difference, you'll go into your performance calm and ready.

### **How do you manage to combine your involvement in musical theatre with your studies?**

I have to schedule my time and designate certain study periods and evenings to school work. Sometimes I take school work to rehearsals with me and do it in my break. It's important to establish a balance, find a routine that works for you and stick to it.

### **How does your passion for performance help you to improve your wellbeing?**

I get to spend hours doing what I love and gain new friends and experiences, it is hard but I wouldn't trade it for anything.

### **What advice would you give to KS3 students to help them overcome pressure?**

Practice. If you know what you're doing then it can't possibly go wrong .



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