



THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

'Learning Together For The Future'

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Senior Section – February Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have come to the end of another very busy and productive half term for the Senior Section. In January we held a **parents information evening to provide advice on GCSE options** and we were pleased to see a fabulous turnout. We trialled a revised approach to the evening, including subject stalls staffed by our Year 12 students and proved to be a great success. It was a perfect opportunity to meet and discuss your child's future GCSE choices. I am happy to say that the process of interviewing all students has been completed and they have made sensible and informed choices. **Year 9 Parents' Evening**, focused on discussion of progress with subject specific staff was also well attended. I appreciate your support with these evenings and hope that you found them to be beneficial.

Beginning after our half-term holiday we will offer you a regular opportunity to come into school to discuss any concerns or questions you have regarding your child. I will be operating a **Senior Section Parents' Surgery** on a Thursday afternoon from 3.45 to 5.15. If you would like to come in and speak with me then please send an email to estott@ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk to arrange an appointment. Likewise, if this time and day is unsuitable and you would like to arrange to meet then please don't hesitate to message me and I can make myself available whenever suits you better.

Senior Section students have, as usual been able to take part in a rich diet of **extra-curricular and enrichment activities** this term. All students were able to take part in a **visit to Beth Shalom**, which is the national Holocaust centre. Children were able to view the exhibits and learn about the topics they cover in Religious Studies and History this year. Most memorably our students were able to meet a survivor of the Holocaust and hear about their experience first-hand. Our students were very respectful and asked thoughtful questions.

We work very hard to ensure our students have the opportunity to think about equality, diversity and inclusion and that their personal, social and health education includes stimulating and age-appropriate learning experiences. This term we heard an excellent **talk from our local Derbyshire Prevent team** who spoke to students about the work being done to prevent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism both locally and in the country at large. Students also attended a performance from an education drama company in our school theatre and saw the play **"Chelsea's Story"** which supported the work we are doing in the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum. This is part of the students PDC programme this half term on the topic of child sexual exploitation. It was a powerful performance and an opportunity for students to think deeply about how to keep themselves safe.

Several Senior Section students auditioned for our ever-popular **Stars in Your Eyes competition** and two students were fortunate enough to make it through to the very competitive and professional final. After some stunning performances it was with great delight that Macey Clarke was awarded 2nd prize with her performance of Cher and Josh Gaskin demonstrated a very accomplished performance of Jake Bugg.

In sport our Year 9 boys team continue to make great progress in the **Football County Cup** and it is very challenging for the PE department to have the difficult decision of choosing from at least 20 boys that are regularly training and vying for a place in the team. I wish you well boys in your **upcoming semi-final**.

Meanwhile a group of students have been regularly preparing with Mrs Beddow for the **Mock Trial Competition** that will take place in March. This is part of the **Young Citizens Programme** to allow students to work with specially written cases so they can gain a taste of what it would be like to practice law and take part in a trial in a real county court. This is a great opportunity for those interested in studying law as well as any student who wishes to develop confidence, public speaking skills and an understanding of the law. Good luck to all involved and well done for committing your time.

Our Head of Drama and Theatre Studies, Mrs Shuttleworth, is working with students who are taking part in **The Coram Schools Shakespeare Festival**. This is a cultural education project that supports young people to perform abridged Shakespeare plays on professional theatre stages with other schools from across the region. After numerous rehearsals they are taking part in a workshop where they will continue to rehearse for the performance in March. Good luck to all concerned in this exciting project.

This year, Mrs Heanue and her team in the Technology Faculty have adapted their curriculum to offer all Year 9 students the opportunity to submit entries to a **national competition organised by the Victoria & Albert Museum**. Students worked in teams to design a product based on the topics of Sense, Restore and Play. Students worked collaboratively and it was a pleasure to judge the selected "pitches" with Rebecca Hartshorne, from SISK construction who kindly supported us with the competition. Having submitted several entries we were immensely pleased to inform one of the groups that they have made it to the final of the national competition in London at the V&A in March. They will pitch their product to four judges, furniture restorer and presenter Jay Blades, designer Camille Walala, garment technologist Victoria Jenkins and V&A Director of Learning Helen Charman. Congratulations all and I hope you enjoy every minute of the day.

As we finish for the half-term break, I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your support in ensuring that time is taken to **re-stock stationery and check that your child's uniform matches our requirements**. I must remind parents and carers that we need students in the Senior Section to be role models for our younger students. In particular, I need your support with regard to sticking to the rules on piercings. For some students this is causing difficulties in terms of access the PE curriculum which is such an important part of their week allowing them to improve not only their physical fitness but also their mental health and wellbeing. Please see the uniform policy if you are unsure of regulations.

[schooldresspolicy2023-v2.pdf \(ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk\)](https://ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk/schooldresspolicy2023-v2.pdf)

Finally, we have recently offered an opportunity for Year 9 students to attend a **residential adventure activity trip to PGL Caythorpe Court in Lincolnshire** from Friday 28th June to Sunday 30th June 2024. We will leave school on Friday lunchtime and return on Sunday evening. The cost per person is £200, which can be paid in instalments prior to the trip.

The cost includes:

- Return coach travel from school
- A full daily programme of adventure activities
- Fun evening entertainment
- All meals and accommodation (students will take their own bedding)
- Full comprehensive travel insurance

There are spaces available and so if your child would like to attend, please ask them to return the trip letter to us on their return to school stating why they should be considered for a place on the trip.

I hope that all the students have a well-deserved break over half term and look forward to seeing them again soon. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Mrs Laughlin and we will be more than happy to discuss these with you. Please either call school or email us directly on estott@ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk or rlaughlin@ecclesbourne.derbyshire.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'E Stott', written over a faint horizontal line.

Mrs E Stott
Head of Year 9