



THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

'Learning Together For The Future'

Head Teacher
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2nd October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Blues programme and Shakespeare Festival

It was wonderful last week to see so many of our students auditioning for the ever-popular house plays. These opportunities in school are a fantastic way in which our students co-operate and show their commitment with regular after school rehearsals. I am looking forward to seeing the progress they make in their productions and ultimately the evening performances in November.

Last week we celebrated our annual prize day award ceremonies and it again it was such a pleasure to see so many of our students recognised for all their hard work in a wide variety of activities. These awards not only celebrate academic progress but equally effort and participation.

Also last week some of our Year 9 students kindly volunteered to help in serving afternoon tea to some of our local residents at The Community Tea Party. They did an exceptional job and enjoyed communicating with the public about a wide range of topics. Yet another way in which our students were able to serve the local community with pride.

We now have the pleasure in offering Year 9 students another exciting extra-curricular opportunity. This is to participate 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. [Shakespeare Schools Foundation - Home](http://ShakespeareSchoolsFoundation-Home) The foundation which runs the festival says 'We work to promote educational attainment - especially in literacy, literature and the performing arts. We believe Shakespeare is for everyone. Every year children from very different backgrounds come together to perform on the same stage.'

We will be supported to prepare our production with a workshop led by professional actors and directors, which takes place in school. Following the workshop, we will continue to rehearse our production in school during after school rehearsals until the performance in March 2024. We will have an afternoon at the theatre on the day of the performance with a technical run through of the show, before performing in the evening. This is an exciting project open to anyone and exclusive to Year 9, however, we are limited on the number of performers, a restriction set by the festival. However, students can also get involved with backstage or technical aspects of putting on a show. The rehearsals are taking place on Thursday after school and Mrs Gemma Shuttleworth will be delighted to see as many students taking part as possible. Please talk to your child about this amazing opportunity and encourage them to attend.

Year 9 Students have also been privileged to have a guest speaker from Action for Children in a recent assembly. Exclusive to Year 9 students they shared details with them of "The Blues programme". As part of our pastoral programme to support students with their mental health and wellbeing, students have completed a confidential questionnaire. The results from this questionnaire are being collated and analysed by Action for Children. Those students who they feel will benefit from The Blues programme will then be offered a place on a 6-session programme, each session lasting 1 hour. The sessions will include between 8-10 students and not involve any teaching staff. These sessions will allow students to learn a variety of skills and tools to manage life's challenges, techniques to think more positively, have more fun and be a safe space to share thoughts and feelings. This is just one way we want to offer support to students to have more tenacity.

Again, please remind your child to look carefully at the list of extra-curricular clubs that has been offered to all our students. It is not about being the best at these clubs but more importantly it allows your child to interact and forge relationships with other students in a fun manner. This again is of great importance for ensuring a positive and healthy mind.

Myself and Mrs Laughlin (Year 9 Progress Leader), are enjoying spending time with the students and very much looking forward to our upcoming outward bound team building day to Lea Green. In the meantime if you have any concerns or questions that you would like to discuss with either of us then please either contact us by either calling school or emailing 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', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs E Stott
Head of Year 9