

happy Easter



March 2024

With the Easter break around the corner, I am pleased to be able to write to you with an update since our Christmas Newsletter and as you will see, we have been very busy in our learning as well as welcoming many new pupils into our Foundry family. Alongside welcoming in the new we have successfully transitioned out some pupils who have returned to a Wokingham mainstream school to continue their education and of course we wish them well with their next steps.

You will see as you go through our newsletter the pupils have been involved in lots of exciting things that have been happening both within and outside of the classroom. These are the types of things that help pupils to understand the wider world and think about their own culture and capabilities not just their life here in Wokingham. We are here alongside yourselves to offer the best possible opportunities for all of our pupils on their journey through secondary school and on to Post 16 education or employment.

Our current Year 11s are now heading towards their final hurdle of GCSEs and lessons are focusing on revision topics. I would like to encourage all of our Year 11 parents reading this to support your child with formalising a revision timetable together, to show that little and often will be the key to sustained success. Through starting this process now, we can remove the additional stress of the 'pressure pot' that builds and builds as we get closer to the exam, leaving them in a poor emotional state at the most crucial time.

All of our pupils have access to GCSE Pod (www.GCSEPod.com) where they can interact with focused video links, quizzes and exam style questions.

We all wish them the best of luck with their exams and know that we will be working our hardest to ensure they are prepared fully.

Thank you for your continued support, remember we are only a phone call/email away if you have any concerns or questions. I hope you all have a lovely Easter.



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PRIMARY



After spending the first term getting the primary pupils settled, building relationships and primarily focussing on our pupils' ability to regulate, this term we have begun to introduce themes and topics within our daily timetable.

In Spring 1, our topic was Dinosaurs. The pupils came in to find an egg in our classroom. It was great to hear the questions which this generated – who laid the egg? Which animals lay eggs and which animals are born alive? Where did it come from? Why is it here? Of course, they were excited to chip away at the egg to discover a Dinosaur! Within this topic, the children learnt about the characteristics of a dinosaur, their skeletons and how we know dinosaurs existed – fossils! Making fossil cookies, a Mod-Roc fossil and a skeleton hunt were up there as some of the most enjoyed activities!



As always, we have continued to support the pupils' ability to regulate and it has been such a joy to see the pupils' begin to apply their new strategies more independently. In particular, the pupils have enjoyed using the sensory floor mats, having a massage using the sensory brushes and 'going for loop' – this is always one which requires trust to be built and the confidence in knowing the pupils will return! Our pupils are now demonstrating progress in their emotional literacy and are beginning to identify the physical feelings along with the emotion being experienced. Within PSHE, the pupils have been exploring the similarities and differences of people, cultures and places around the world and more recently, how to stay healthy, including physical and mental health.



Every week, our pupils have the opportunity to cook something to take home with them. As we all know, cooking incorporates many areas of the curriculum and it has been lovely to see the pupils reading the weight of items on a scale, following instructions as well as measuring with increased accuracy. All of this, alongside ensuring hygiene and personal safety is adhered to!



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SCIENCE

We have been using the improved weather (!) to focus on the outside environment at Foundry. Having prepared some new beds we have planted herbs for use in food lessons as well as some edible flowers for that finishing touch. Our mixed hedge which was planted last year is firmly established and we are looking forward to growing vegetables and ornamental plants in other raised beds. Dan, with the help of pupils, is making a small pond so that we can increase the biodiversity on site. We are also looking forward to producing our own compost courtesy of our wormery. Plenty of opportunities for pupils to become curious about what's going on outside.



For year 11s taking exams this summer there has been a focus on revising practical investigations that are required as part of their scheme of work. In addition to this almost all pupils are still learning new content and doing exam questions to increase their confidence in exam skills. All pupils have the opportunity to practise and take away past exam papers and it is encouraging to see pupils doing this.

Our KS3 pupils have greater freedom to learn through their own choice of activity and chemistry is often a popular choice. Investigating acids and alkalis, comparing indigestion remedies, and investigating neutralisation reactions are all an opportunity to develop confidence with practical skills and think about how science works.



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MATHS

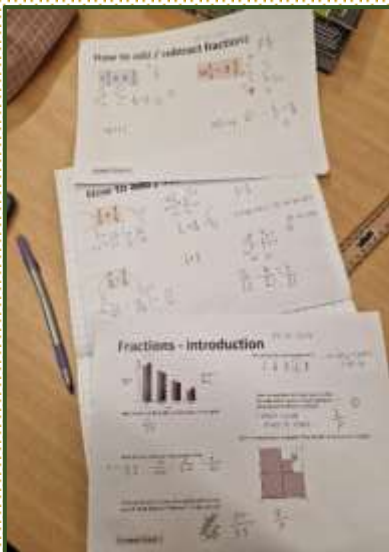
In the Maths department we have had a very busy term. Several of our Year 11s received their November GCSE results and now have a proper GCSE to put on college and apprenticeship applications. All year 11s were offered the chance to sit mock exams at the end of January and these have been used to write bespoke schemes of work for each student to prepare them for the May/June set of exams.

We have welcomed several new students who have settled into the Foundry way of life and are making good progress.

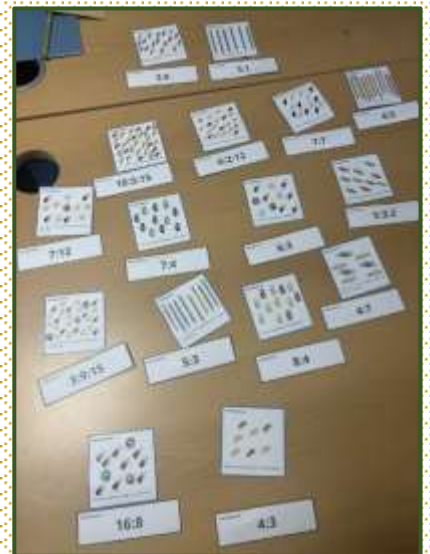
Year 10 pupils have been learning about manipulating improper fractions, factors and multiples and some trigonometry.

Our KS3 pupils have recently started working through Space Maths based activities and looking at key Number concepts.

All pupils have a log in for GCSE pod and we would like to see all pupils using it to revise over Easter or revisit topics they feel they need extra support with.



Come and have a go at completing some past-paper questions on our 'Working Window'!



Ratio activity completed by KS3 pupils



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ENGLISH

For our Year 11 pupils, 2024 started with their mock exams and they have used this experience, and the teacher feedback following the exam, to help with their final push towards the summer exams. They have been working hard as they finalise pieces of controlled assessments; practice exam skills and techniques and, for our Literature pupils, revise their knowledge of texts.

With many of our KS4 pupils just about to sit their Functional Skills exams, both our Year 10 and Year 11 pupils have been working on past papers to practice their reading and writing skills needed for their GCSE exams. Working towards the skills required for Functional Skills is a good stepping stone for the skills that they will need to demonstrate in order to experience success at GCSE.

Lower down the school in KS3, pupils are working on a variety of different tasks and topics: some have been reading the novel *Stone Cold* by Robert Swindells; others have been working on inference skills whilst looking at extracts from novels such as *The Woman in Black* by Susan Hill and others have been using this term to improve basic spelling, punctuation and grammar skills.

We also celebrated World Book Day on the 7th March. This was a chance for pupils and staff to dress up as characters from their favourite books. As you can see, amongst others we had the Mad Hatter and the Cheshire Cat from *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll and Professor McGonagall from the *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling.



The English department would like to end this term's edition of the newsletter by wishing all those about to sit their exams the best of luck and every success for the future.



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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Pupils have continued their PE provision at the gym where they have continued to progress their skills and attitudes to exercise and sport. The year eleven pupils are working hard to understand the 'why' behind the movements and exercise they are performing. Two pupils in particular have been working hard together to push each other and lead each other through various workouts and exercises.

The key stage three pupils have been attending Lavender Park Golf club where they have taken part in snooker and pool. One of the pupils, Marcel, has really engaged well and it is great to see how much he has improved over such a short period of time.



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OCCUPATIONAL STUDIES

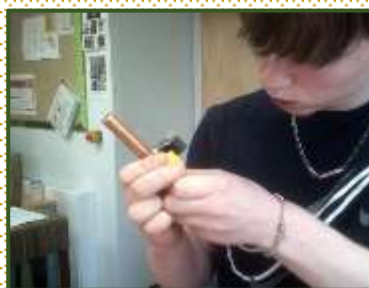
With Easter approaching fast, I am pleased to say that most pupils taking the course have engaged well in Occupational Studies and are making good progress with their chosen units. Most pupils are working towards either a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification and the majority are making excellent progress with many of the Year 11 pupils now focussing on completion of their final unit.



Last year, for the first-time, pupils successfully completed Level 1 AQA Unit Awards in addition to their Occupational Studies units. These are small independent units of study and some cover aspects of study that are integral parts of the main OS units. Currently, five Year 11 pupils are working towards their Health and Safety in Construction (Part 1); a level 1 unit covering some of the health and safety basics in the construction industry.

As ever, the most popular units have a focus on the construction industry such as Plumbing Skills, Hand Carpentry Skills, and Brickwork Operations. Others however, are working on units focusing on furniture design and manufacture, development of IT skills, consolidation of cooking skills and taking part in a sport of their choosing.

As a department we continue to focus on those vocational and practical workplace skills that are not catered for in mainstream schools. Many past and several of the current Year 11 pupils have had their next-step ambitions and choices influenced by interests they have developed whilst working towards the Occupational Studies qualifications at Foundry College.



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HUMANITIES

This term our GCSE candidates have been working hard to complete the course and make a serious start on revision. Some of us have been looking at Weimar and Nazi Germany. This has been full of interest but has many challenges. We have had to get to grips with the fine detail. Four Chancellors (Prime Ministers) in a very short space of time; a global depression, hyper-inflation and wide-ranging political divisions between right and left and within the parties. Sounds familiar, but that was not today, it's Germany in the 20s and 30s. Our pupils have had time to consider that History helps us to understand the problems of today and avoid the mistakes of yesterday. A lighter side was our recent visit to the London Dungeons this was not only very funny and enjoyable, it also helped to put some of our work on Crime and Punishment into perspective. We'll never forget Mrs Lovett's pie shop nor the blood-stained streets of Whitechapel.



In Geography we have continued to examine how food is produced and delivered around the world and how energy likewise gets to our homes. We have just one Religious Studies pupil who is learning about both Christianity and Islam. We have considered Human Rights and are now looking at what these religions believe about the nature of good and evil, the sanctity of human life, abortion and euthanasia. It's all very up to date and relevant to modern life.



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ARTS

This term, our students have been expressing themselves through craft workshops and Chinese food themed photoshoots.



The KS3 Blast Sessions

We have now started the KS3 project, the Blast Sessions which is loosely based on the theme of Space this term, this has been met with mixed results. The theme also links to the NCFE version, and they quite often overlap. Where some students were not keen on certain tasks, other non KS3 students have stepped up, not being able to resist the art calling to them! As always, the students have had the flexibility to run with their own ideas.

Inspire Week Furniture Upcycle

For Inspire Week this year we continued to upcycle a drawer unit in the classroom. The aim of this was to write inspirational messages on the drawers for any future students attending the college. Whilst some found this challenging, the drawers now have new handles, match the space mural on the top (from last year) and have peace and love symbols down the side.



Jean Michel Basquiat Workshop

On the 12th of February some of our students were able to meet with local artist Lisa-Marie Gibbs in Studio 4 at South Hill Park. Upon arrival, we discovered that the table was laden with a lot of mixed media for the students to experiment with. There was a real sense of camaraderie in the group work, and they all produced some interesting pieces that were inspired by their own experiences, and the late artist Basquiat.



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ARTS

Coming Up... Community Project & Guest Speaker



Closely linked to Community Week, we had the pleasure of welcoming Gaynor from **Barkham Hookers** on the 21st of February. She has now shown some of our learners how to crochet. We hope that these new skills will lend themselves to the students completing a fidget lap blanket, to be donated by the college in April (during work experience) to a local care home.

Her visit has had such a positive impact on our young people that we have now invited Gaynor back again in April.

Seewoo Visit & Mono-Printing Workshop

- On the 27th of February, some of the food and photography students visited Seewoo Supermarket in Reading to learn about what different cultures eat, and to take photographs of the produce for their portfolios, which could inspire them in their future endeavours, for example a Japanese inspired photoshoot.
- We have plans to revisit South Hill Park for a second workshop on the 30th of April which will be run by one of their tutors, to teach our students about Mono-Printing.

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ARTS

Foundry College Easter Exhibition 2024

Very exciting news! Between the 12th - 20th of March we held our second exhibition at South Hill Park. Once again it was made available to all, and this time we had 15 pieces which were beautifully displayed.

Some of the students visited on the 19th of March, and had their photographs taken with their work, they should feel very proud of their achievements, pieces which were also publicised on Instagram and Facebook.

With continued successes comes future collaborations, and we hope to have more exhibitions both this year and next. Initial discussions have already taken place for a large sculpture project (to be held in the grounds of South Hill Park) being planned for next year. Thank you to Ben and Aurora at South Hill Park for all of your hard work.



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FOOD AND COOKERY

We are thrilled to share the latest updates from our food department. Year 11 students have been diligently working on their coursework for units 2, 3, and 4 as they continue showcasing their culinary talents and dedication to mastering essential cooking skills.

Chinese New Year Celebrations:

In celebration of Chinese New Year, our students had the opportunity to explore the rich culinary traditions of this festive occasion. Two year 11 pupils worked hard to prepare and cook a variety of traditional Chinese dishes which our pupils enjoyed tasting alongside receiving their red envelopes and lucky gold coins to celebrate.



The year 11 students were also fortunate to participate in an enriching cookery workshop by the Healthy Chinese Cuisine Ambassadors. This hands-on experience allowed them to learn more about Chinese cuisine and culture, refine their practical skills, experiment with a new recipe and to showcase their creativity and passion for food preparation, further enhancing their proficiency in the kitchen.



Meanwhile, our Key Stage 3 students have been thoroughly enjoying their culinary journey by creating an array of sweet and savoury dishes. From delectable desserts to savoury snacks, our younger chefs have been exploring a diverse range of recipes. Their enthusiasm and eagerness to learn (and consume their creations) inspire us as they develop essential health and safety practices in the kitchen and cooking techniques.



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LIFE

In our LIFE lessons the focus this term has been on a vast array of topics including Relationship and Sex Education, Personal Hygiene, Personal Safety, and Personal Finance. I am pleased to report that our pupils have shown great engagement and progress in these areas.

Relationship and Sex Education

Our pupils have been learning about the importance of healthy relationships, consent, and sexual health. We have had open discussions about different types of relationships, how to communicate effectively with partners, and the importance of respecting boundaries. We have also covered the topic of sexual health, including safe sex practices, sexually transmitted infections, and contraception. Our aim is to equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their relationships and sexual health.



Personal Hygiene

We have been emphasizing the importance of personal hygiene in our PSHE lessons. Pupils have learned about the importance of regular hand washing, dental care, and maintaining a healthy diet. We have also discussed personal grooming and the impact it can have on self-esteem and confidence. By teaching these skills, we hope to promote good habits that will last a lifetime.



Personal Finance

In our personal finance lessons, we have been teaching our pupils about budgeting, saving money, and understanding financial products. We have discussed the importance of making informed decisions about spending and saving money. By teaching these skills, we hope to empower our pupils to make financially responsible decisions in the future.



Personal Safety

Our pupils have been learning about personal safety both online and offline. We have discussed topics such as road safety, cyberbullying, and how to react in emergency situations. We have also covered the importance of setting boundaries and recognizing potentially dangerous situations. Our aim is to help our pupils develop the skills they need to stay safe in all aspects of their lives.



Our pupils have been working hard to complete their AQA Unit Awards in these areas. These awards provide a framework for developing knowledge and skills in a structured and engaging way. We are proud of the progress our pupils have made and look forward to celebrating their achievements with you.



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FOUNDRY VOICE

As part of this term's Community Giving Week, we have had pupils out and volunteering with the local community in a variety of different roles. Pupils supported younger readers by being a book buddy at Keep Hatch Primary School, helped to combat loneliness with elderly residents by being a companion at Suffolk Lodge Care Home; took part in habitat conservation with the Green and Active scheme in Bracknell and supported the ground maintenance team at St Paul's Church. Alongside this, we have continued our charity activities to support Alexander Devine Children's Hospice. We were Egg-cited to take part in the big chick knit campaign. Amazing volunteers across the wider community got the knitting needles out to make as many knitted chicks and friends as possible. As a school, we collected crème eggs and then got busy filling hundreds of knitted friends – each one going on sale for £3 with all donations going to the charity.



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FOUNDRY VOICE

At the start of the month, we visited the hospice in Maidenhead and donated a cheque for over £250 which was the money we raised from our Christmas fund raising activity – project reindeer! The hospice team were very grateful for our donations and the efforts of our pupils.



We also worked closely with another charity – Breck Foundation – earlier in the year and invited a guest speaker in to deliver a workshop to all our pupils for Safer Internet Day. During this workshop, pupils learnt about the tragic circumstances that had led to the Breck Foundation being created 10 years ago and had a safe space to discuss events in Breck's life and how they themselves can be safe, and encourage others to be safe, online. It was a testament to our pupils that at the end of the day, the guest speaker was full of praise for Foundry pupils; the sensible contributions they had made to discussions and their awareness about safe online practices. We were very proud of all our pupils.



If you would like to learn more about either of the charities mentioned, please visit the links below:
Alexander Devine: <https://www.alexanderdevine.org>
Breck Foundation: <https://www.breckfoundation.org>