

Head Teacher Welcome

I would like to take this opportunity to formally welcome our new students and their families to Ethos College and say welcome back those continuing into year 11.

At Ethos College we provide a caring, stimulating, safe and welcoming environment where learning is enjoyable, and teaching is personalised to the needs and interests of individuals. Pupils are supported to fulfil their academic potential whilst developing the confidence and skills required to succeed in post-16 education, employment or training.

As a school, we highly value parental involvement and recognise that the achievements of our young people are only possible through a partnership approach. Therefore, on a regular basis our staff team make regular contact with parents and carers regarding updates on academic and SEMH progress. We also send a half termly newsletter showcasing pupil work and sharing updates as well as offering events throughout the year where parents and carers are invited into Ethos to share and celebrate success.

I very much look forward to welcoming you to these events over the coming year and regularly sharing updates of the young people's achievements.

Our first event, of this academic year, is a Macmillan coffee morning on Friday 27th October at 10.45am, followed by our half termly celebration event, which will begin at 11.15am. Our celebration events are an opportunity for us to celebrate the many successes that our pupils achieve every day whether that be improvements in attendance, academic attainment or following our nurture principles. It is important that all our students know that their achievements are recognised. Families and professionals are invited to enjoy the celebrations which showcase our school, wonderful students and dedicated staff.

Rebecca Smith, Head Teacher.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and as such all professionals, parents/carers and visitors share an objective to help keep young people safe.

Diane Parkinson, Michelle Brown, Lucy Beeby and Lori Holloran have responsibility for Safeguarding at Ethos College and are designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's).

Please speak to either of the listed names if you have any safeguarding concerns, you can phone them on 01924 469170.



Forest School

Students have shown some excellent skills, this half term, in Forest School. The process of practising building and lighting a fire provides our young people with a sense of achievement and gratification, as the fire grows before them. This develops self-esteem and confidence; when the spark lands on the cotton wool after persevering, the moment is just unforgettable!

Fire lighting develops physical skills, concentration skills and promotes safety awareness. The benefits for emotional well-being and self-regulation are huge.

Well done 🙌 💧

Paula Mortimer | Forest School Lead



World Mental Health Awareness #HelloYellow



Why are we wearing yellow?

On Tuesday 10th October, thousands of people across the country, came together to show young people that how they feel matters. More young people than ever are seeking help with their mental health, but many don't receive the help they need. We can't let young people face these challenges alone. They have to know that how they feel matters and they deserve to feel supported.

#Helloyellow exists to make this happen!

During the day, Group 3 students completed some work around mental health; all writing statements personal to them of things that they deserved and positive affirmations to remind them of how great they are, such as: I deserve to be respected! I am brave! These statements help to promote a positive growth mindset and enable students to reflect on themselves; these 'glimmers' help to remind them of the positive things and people they have around them.

Our Stories Matter

'Even when it's not pretty or perfect. Even when it's more real than you want it to be. Your story is what you have, what you will always have. It is something to own.' Michelle Obama

Humans are natural storytellers. We are made up of stories. We use stories to make sense of our past and better understand who we are as individuals.

At Ethos College we have 'Our Stories Matter,' which creates a space within the curriculum to explore stories from a wide range of different storytellers and based on a variety of different themes and ideas. It also creates a space for students to explore their own story as a way to understand their identity and their place in the world.

In response to one of the stories we have been reading, one of our students has written this viewpoint piece about the role of labels in our society.

The Benefits and Problems with Labels

Many people believe labels to be a way to tell other people who you are, and to some extent that is true. But, in reality, the main reason to have a label should be to help you better understand yourself. They should be a way for you to make sense of the world around you and how and where you fit into it. They can prepare you for challenges that you will face and can help you explain who you are to other people.

In short, labels should be about you. It should be your own choice what labels you decide to give yourself, and you should give them for your own benefit. Unfortunately, too many people do not understand this. They give labels to those who don't want them and tell people who they are. Of course, I understand that many people don't understand the damage that this can do to people, and that is why I would like to explain.

Mark Haddon, author of 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' said in an interview about certain regrets when writing the book that "Labels tell us very little about the person who has been labelled and a lot about the person doing the labelling. If you want to find out who someone is, just ask them." I love this idea as it helps dissuade people from giving labels to those who do not want them and encourages asking someone who they are in order to learn about them.

It is important to understand that people can tell you who they are, without having to give labels like 'Autistic' or 'Gay'. Many people will happily give you these labels, and this is because that is how they see themselves, and they are allowed to be proud of it. A label should be a big part of you, and something that is important to the person who wears it.

You should also try to realise that not everyone who gives themselves labels wear them loud and proud. Many use labels simply as a way to console themselves, rather than a way to tell others who they are. And the most important thing to understand is that a person should not be obliged to tell you who they are. They don't need to tell you every last detail about themselves, and you can still get an understanding of a person without each minor detail.

I am queer, trans and autistic. I wear these labels proudly and I tell people where it comes up. I am comfortable with these labels and I do not shy away from talking about them. The one thing each of these things have in common is that these labels are part of my person, and they are a part of me. But nobody else has a say in who I am, only I can decide.

The most important thing to remember in this conversation, and many others is basic respect. Nobody should feel an inherent need to share, and it should be priority to make sure people feel comfortable with the questions being asked about them and are happy and willing to share the answers. Your life should be about you, and only you should be able to decide how people perceive you.

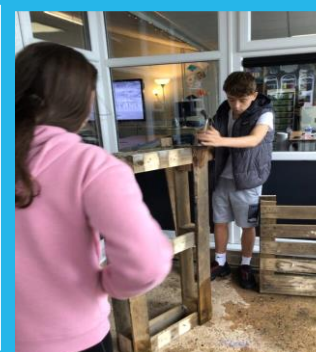
I've said it before, but I will say it again, however freeing they can be, labels should be treated with caution. It is always worth asking a person who they are, but it's important to remember that in the end, it is their life, and they should get to decide who knows what about them.

Cross Curricular Learning

An element of our new PEACE curriculum is cross-curricular learning. In our sessions, this half term, we have been making wooden planters.

Originally, we planned to buy wood; however, one of our students suggested that we could turn it into a recycling project and use the wood from old pallets.

We quickly set to work; sourcing pallets, breaking them up and then measuring the wood up, ready for sawing. Once we had the right sized pieces of wood, we began to build our planters. They have been really successful and as the saying goes, 'Team work makes the dream work.' We look forward to displaying the planters in the school grounds.



School Council

At Ethos College, we have a student council which meets on a half-termly basis to debate a range of topics that contribute towards improving our school community. The student council have already met twice this half term, with a representative from each of our groups attending. Our first two meetings have focussed on reviewing the schools reward system, extra-curricular trips & activities as well as looking at how we can improve our common room which is used at break and lunch times. After half term, we will be asking pupils to elect our student council chairperson who will work closely with the staff team to plan and run the student council meetings. We look forward to continuing to provide updates of the work our student council do in future newsletters.

Careers:

Suzanne Impagliazzo is the Careers Adviser, from C&K Careers, who works with students at Ethos College. C&K Careers offer an independent and impartial advice and guidance service for young people. They work in partnership with schools and other organisations to help young people apply for and access the most appropriate post 16 provision, to suit their individual needs. Suzanne has already started to meet with students to provide advice and guidance around careers and will continue with this throughout the academic year. If you would like to contact Suzanne to discuss options or arrange an appointment, you can do so in the following ways:

- Telephone: 01484 225500 and ask for Suzanne Impagliazzo
- Email: Impagliazzo@ckcareers.org.uk

The Stop Programme

The STOP support programme has been designed to support parents/carers and wider families of young people who need further understanding to attend school and engage positively.

The STOP family programme will be available to all parents and carers from January 2024.

The aims of the programme are to:

Gain an increased understanding of your child and their needs.

Learn strategies that will help you and your child improve both your relationship and home/school experience.

Improve family dynamics and consider long-term solutions to promote positive change.

Build a support network with other parents/carers dealing with similar challenges.

This programme ran successfully, in the last academic year, and the feedback from our families was very positive.

Please get in touch with Diane Parkinson on 01924469170 or on dparkinson@eat.uk.com for more details or to book a place.