

Bulletin for Ansford Families

Issue 6: 9th December 2022

Message from the Headteacher

Dear Families

Life always becomes a bit hectic before Christmas and life at Ansford is no different! This week has seen the performances of our first drama production at Ansford for many years. It is one that we have been preparing for since the start of last academic year and is certainly one to get us all in the mood for Christmas: ELF! You may remember that we had been getting ready to perform last year but had to postpone the event mid-rehearsals due to the escalating number of COVID cases and the increased restrictions that we faced at that time. Mr Newbury and the cast did not give up hope and have been working hard since then to bring this fabulous production to life. We are so proud of all the young people who have been involved whether it's on stage or behind the scenes and we are really grateful to all the staff involved who have made it happen - in particular Mr Newbury who has worked tirelessly to put on the show. We are hoping to share some photographs of the show on the website in the New Year.

We have further Christmas related events next week including the Christmas Dinner on Thursday 15th, which is also 'Christmas Jumper Day' where we hope to raise some funds for Save the Children. Mrs Reddick has also organised the annual Christmas Card Competition and received lots of high quality entries. Well done to Daisy in Year 11 who has created the winning design that captures both the magic of Christmas and the magic of Ansford! You can see the winning design later in this Bulletin.

Year 11 have really impressed us all this week with their mature approach to their Trial exams. In spite of the nerves, students have managed really well and are learning a lot from the process. The 'mock' exams are a really important opportunity for students to experience the feel of a full set of exams and they help to prepare students well for the real event in June next year. We hope that our Year 11 students will have an opportunity to rest and recover over the Christmas holiday.

This week has also seen the launch of a great STEM event that Mr Hill is leading for some of our students in Year 8. We welcomed graduate engineering apprentices from Leonardo Helicopters in school to kick off the Flying Start Challenge. This is run in conjunction with Airbus, Leonardo, Safran and the Royal Navy with the aim of teaching students about the Physics and practicalities of flight and is in preparation for them designing and building a glider.

We were really pleased to welcome Year 10 Families into school last night for their first face to face parents' evening for a long time. There were lots of positive conversations to support students to achieve their best. Thank you to all families who completed the survey giving your views about how we shape parents' evenings in the future. Mr Musson shares the results and outcomes a bit later in this Bulletin.

In staffing news, I would like to say farewell to Mrs Lowe who leaves Ansford today. You may know Mrs Lowe either as her time as a key part of our reception team or more recently in role as Headteacher's PA and Office Manager. In both roles, Mrs Lowe has provided exceptional support to staff, students and families. She will be missed by us all and I am sure that you will join me in wishing her well in her new ventures. Mrs Bevan has joined us and will take on the role; she brings with her a background of experience working in schools

Report a student absence by phone: 01963 350 895 or by email attendanceofficer@ansford.net

Contact the Academy by phone: 01963 350 895 or by email mailbox@ansford.net

Whilst this time of year can be really exciting for many, it can also be a difficult time for others - perhaps because of recent bereavement and loss, ongoing illness of yourself or close relatives, a breakdown in relationships, financial hardship or other unspoken reasons that make it tough. If that's the case, please take care of yourself and reach out to family, friends or other organisations who can support you - there are lots of details of these external means of support later in this Bulletin.

This will be our last edition before the break for Christmas, with our next edition due out on Friday 6th January 2023. I wish you all a peaceful and restful Christmas period.

Rachel Purnell
Headteacher

Who to Contact

The relationship between school and home is a key one as a successful partnership between us will support your child's learning, progress and happiness at school. Our aim is to work with you and your child to ensure that happens, which is why it's important to talk with us if you have any questions, concerns or wish to share information with us.

Sometimes, especially when you are new to the school, it can be hard to know who to contact. Our reception staff will be able to direct you to the right member of staff but as a general guide, the key routes for contact are as follows:

- For most pastoral matters, your child's tutor will be the first point of contact;
- If the matter remains unresolved, or for more complex pastoral matters, please ask for your child's Head of Year;
- For matters relating to lessons and learning in a single lesson, please contact your child's teacher in the first instance;
- If the matter remains unresolved or is more complex, please ask for the Head of Faculty in that subject area;
- For other matters, please describe your situation to our reception staff and they will direct you to the appropriate member of staff.

Please remember that many of our staff are also teachers which means that they will not be able to make immediate responses due to their teaching commitments. We aim to respond to all queries within 2 working days; for more complex queries this initial contact may be a holding response whilst we look into your concerns. If your concern is more urgent, please explain that when you make contact.

Academy Calendar: Key Upcoming Events

Week	Date in December	Event	Location Timing	Staff Contact
2	Monday 12th - Friday 16th	Year 11 Trial Exams	Please find here the information from Mrs Dyal	Mr Musson Mrs Dyal
Week	Date in January	Event	Location Timing	Staff Contact
1	Tuesday 3rd January	INSET Day	School closed for students	
1	Wednesday 4th January	Term starts	Return for all students	
1	Thursday 5th January	Year 7, 8 and 9 Flu Vaccinations	Consent needed: please see the email from Miss Fulton for more details	Miss Fulton
2	Thursday 12th January	Year 9 Parents' Evening	4.15pm - 7pm, face to face and virtual appointments will be available. Further information will be sent to parents next week.	Mr Musson

Regular Notices

From The Safeguarding Team

The safeguarding assembly for this half term was about inappropriate messaging and sexting. The feedback from charities, such as the NSPCC, is that this is growing amongst young people so is a topic that the school wanted to highlight and inform them about. Some additional information about online safety can be found [here](#)

We have been asked to signpost families to online resources to help provide them with information about drugs and alcohol, particularly what to look out for with young people about whom parents have concerns and how to seek support. The following websites are set up to provide help and advice regarding any worries that you may have:

<https://www.talktofrank.com/>

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/advice-info/family-friends/parents-carers-drugs-alcohol-info>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/drugs-and-alcohol/>

Whilst Christmas is a time of celebration for many it can be very difficult for some. Below are numbers that provide help and support for children and parents.

If you have an urgent safeguarding concern about a student at Ansford or another young person, please contact one of the agencies below:-

Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224

Police on 101

NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

For any other concerns, please contact the mailbox@ansford.net

Report a student absence by phone: 01963 350 895 or by email attendanceofficer@ansford.net

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Online safety

https://www.ansford.org.uk/news_and_events/nudies_and_selfies_what_a_parent_and_carer_needs_to_know

If you are seeking help and support as a parent of a young person around Emotional Health and Wellbeing, please see the links below to organisations that offer a range of support services:

PARENTS / CARERS

Family Lives offers supportive, non-judgmental help and advice to mums, dads, grandparents, stepparents and non-resident parents. Tel: 0808 800 2222 (weekdays 9:00am- 9:00pm; weekends 10:00am-3:00pm).

Mindline Somerset, the locally-based emotional support and mental health helpline, is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This service provides a safe place to talk if you, or someone you know, is in distress; it also offers basic information about mental health and local support services. Tel: 01823 276 892 or 0800 138 1692

Mindline Somerset also now has a **web chat service**, which operates 7 days per week from 8:00 to 11:00pm. This is an alternative to the phone line for anyone with privacy concerns (e.g. other family members may overhear a phone call), hearing difficulties, or who just finds this an easier way to communicate. [Click here](#) to access the service (an icon should indicate whether the service is currently available, and invite you to 'click through' to access, during opening hours).

Mindline Trans+, is the locally-based but UK-wide helpline for anyone who is trans, non-binary, genderfluid, gender-questioning etc, or for friends and family members. This service is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:00pm to midnight. **Tel: 0300 330 5468**

The Samaritans will talk with anyone at any time; you don't have to be desperate or suicidal to call or email. **Tel: 116 123** (free to call), or **email jo@samaritans.org** (Samaritans will aim to respond within 24 hours).

Citizens Advice give free information on benefits, work, debt and money, consumer issues, family concerns, housing, involvement with the law or criminal justice system, immigration, and health. There's a lot of free advice on their website, plus details of how to find your local Citizens Advice Bureau. **Tel: 03444 111 444**

SAFEGUARDING

Children's Social Care (Somerset) have a phone number and an email address that any member of the public can use in order to report a child or young person at risk. (In respect of safeguarding concerns arising in the course of your work at Ansford Academy, follow the school's safeguarding guidance without delay). **Tel: 0300 123 2224, or email childrens@somerset.gov.uk**

CHILDREN / TEENAGERS

Childline helps anyone under 19 in the U.K. with anything that they're going through. Support includes a confidential listening service which is available at any time of the day or night. **Tel: 0800 1111.**

The Mix offers free information and support for under 25s in the UK, incl. advice about sex, relationships, drugs, mental health, money & jobs. **Tel: 0808 808 4994** (11:00am-11:00pm daily).

Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online support for young people (11-18 year olds) in Somerset – NHS-funded. Support includes moderated message boards for talking with other young people, plus online access to trained youth counsellors. (weekdays, 12noon-10:00pm; Saturday & Sunday, 6:00-10:00pm). [This 1 min 30 sec video](#) explains what Kooth's all about, in an approachable, youth-friendly way.

2BU Somerset is for young people in Somerset who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or questioning their sexuality. It offers a youth support group for 13 to 18 year olds, plus online support for young people, parents, teachers etc. **Tel: 07799 136552** (messages checked every weekday).

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Happy Healthy Holidays

Please find here the link to happy, healthy holidays <https://www.sasp.co.uk/happy-healthy-holidays>

From Mrs Comyns, Business Manager

Safest Location for pick up by families at the end of the school day

Families are asked to park and wait for students at the end of the day in the car park at Caryford Hall. This is the hall opposite the school site and not the sports centre. Students meeting parents will therefore exit via the gate near the car park and this keeps them away from the traffic on the front drive and also within the staff car park. Parents are asked not to use the staff car park to wait or to block Maggs Lane.

From Ms Hirst, Deputy Headteacher: Welfare and Inclusion

Uniform Expectations

As we near the end of term, we would like to thank you for your support and are seeking your assistance in ensuring your child/ren are in full uniform when we return in January. Wearing uniform brings a real sense of belonging and common identity to our children and is really important for our school community. We try to create a supportive environment and want our children to feel part of that and proud of being part of it. Wearing the uniform helps children and teenagers get ready to learn. Getting into school clothes signals that the day has started and helps sharpen the brain for learning.

We will seek to resolve uniform issues with you on the day, beginning on Wednesday 4th January. It is not our wish to prevent students from attending lessons and intend to do this, with your help, as quickly as possible. The response to students being in full uniform has been excellent so we envisage very few students having a delayed start to their day; we have spare sets of uniform in school which we will make available to students.

If you foresee any problems please get in contact with your child's Head of Year during the course of next week so that these can be resolved as quickly as possible

- Ms Walsh, Head of Year 7 and Year 8 tracie.walsh@ansford.net
- Mr Newbury, Head of Year 9 josh.newbury@ansford.net
- Mrs Mallord, Head of Year 10 jane.mallord@ansford.net
- Mr Hill, Head of Year 11 elliott.hill@ansford.net

From Assembly Themes

12th - 16th December	Achievement Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Subject / Tutor Group winners● Top 5 girls / boys● Tutor group winners● Individual accolades / achievements	Heads of Years
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[Hanukkah](#) (18 to 26 December)

From Mr Cue, Assistant Headteacher: Teaching and Learning

End of Half Term Nominations

Since the start of this academic year, the end of half term nominations have been entered into ClassCharts. Class teachers nominate up to 5 students from each class who have displayed consistently hard work in that subject.

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Students receive an additional 5 positive points for each nomination, which they can spend in the reward shop on ClassCharts. You can view these nominations via your ClassCharts log in.

From Mrs Bevan, PA to the Headteacher

Data Collection

As you are aware the Academy is committed to ensuring that the data we hold is up to date and accurate. We are currently looking at the best way of obtaining this information from parents. Over the next few weeks you will receive a number of requests for data information and consents for students. These will either be in paper form or via a digital form. Please ensure that these forms are completed and returned to the Academy as soon as possible.

Mobile Phones

A reminder that all students should have their mobile phones switched off and in their bags between 8.30am-3.30pm, so if you need to contact your child during this time please ring or email school reception.

Increase in Scarlet Fever and Group A Streptococcal infections

I'm sure that many of you will have seen recent news articles on the increase in Strep A infections this winter. Please [click here](#) to read the latest government guidance on identifying the symptoms and where to seek help or further information.

From SEND Department

Homework Support Club

Struggling to get homework completed? Need help with a particular piece of homework? We will be offering a Homework Support Club in the Intervention Room from 8.50 - 9.20. Ansford's amazing teaching assistants will be on hand to support you with your homework and there might even be a cup of tea and a biscuit available! No need to book, just come along to the Intervention Room.

SEND News

Please see the link below for the latest edition of SEND News, with updates for children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), their families and professionals in Somerset.

<https://beta.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/the-local-offer/>

From Mrs Watson, Careers Officer

Christmas Careers Challenge between 10th Dec 2022 – 10th Jan 2023

Find out more about all the Careers in the NHS by [signing up to the NHS Careers Christmas Challenge!](#) KS3 and KS4 pupils of all abilities can find out about diverse careers through modules and by asking questions of NHS ambassadors/mentors. Bite-sized and accessible to all pupils who are interested in careers within the NHS.

To complete the Christmas Challenge pupils complete the following:

1. Sign up to <https://hee.connectr.co.uk/hee/>
2. Complete 2 tasks

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3. Send a message to a mentor/ambassador

From Mr Musson, Deputy Headteacher: Curriculum and Standards

Parents' Evening Survey Feedback

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey on Parents' Evening. It has been a really valuable exercise, collecting both parent and staff views on how we should organise parents' evenings in the future. The general consensus (approximately 80% of parents and carers who responded, across all year groups) is that face to face meetings are really important so there are opportunities for parents and staff to meet as they are more personable. However, some families did request that we provide opportunities for virtual appointments.

Survey: Key Points

1. There was a consensus that as students progress through their educational journey it becomes more important to hold face to face meetings.
2. Virtual meetings are really valuable for some families to help resolve difficulties e.g. child care arrangements, distance to travel, anxiety of attending a busy evening etc.
3. Families and staff raised the importance of ensuring timings with face to face meetings are adhered to so queues can be avoided - one of the advantages of virtual meetings. It was mentioned, quite rightly, that it can be frustrating when a virtual meeting gets 'cut off' when the allocated time ends.
4. The importance of having focused discussions about the individual and not a summary of what has been taught.

Outcomes

1. To have a blended approach for each parents' evening to provide parents with the opportunity to select an option of either virtual or face to face
2. To ensure, as far as possible, that face to face meetings are kept to the time allocated so waiting times are minimised
3. To ensure content of discussions are focused on the individual, rather than focused on course content or more general points, so that clear improvement actions are discussed to ensure progress in learning

More information will follow as each scheduled parents' evening takes place. We will continue to review the way that we run parents' evenings so that we can make them as accessible as possible for our families.

Year 9 Parents' Evening 12th January 2023

Following the outcomes of Parents Evening Review, Year 9 parents' evening will be held as a hybrid model with a combination of virtual and face to face appointments. The appointment slots will be organised as follows:

4.15 - 4.45pm: Virtual Appointments

4.45 - 6.45pm: Face to Face Appointments

6.45 - 7.15pm: Virtual Appointments

Further details on how to make appointments will be sent to Year 9 families next week

From Mrs Switzer, Teacher of Geography (and accompanying Camps International)

Kenya Trip

Please can students who are going to Kenya with Camps International make sure that they are regularly checking their school email in order to keep updated with any further meetings/ fundraising notices.

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From Mrs Reddick, Lead Teacher for Art

Ansford Christmas Card Competition 2022



A

We have had some really lovely entries for the annual Christmas Card Competition. The winning design card has been created by Daisy in Year 11 (Design A). Daisy's design will be made into Christmas cards to purchase from reception and these should hopefully be available next week. The two runners up were Harry in Year 9 (Design B) and Jessica in Year 9 (Design C). Well done to our winners and all those who have taken part.



B



C

From Mr Kershaw, Head of Science

Year 11 Science Revision

Please find [here](#) a copy of the letter that has been sent to Year 11 families.

STEM Festival

Ansford Academy will be taking part in a very exciting STEM festival (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths). This is the first time such an event has taken place in Somerset. The Academy will be hosting a number of exhibitors, including organisations like Thales, Royal Navy, Leonardo Helicopters, along with many other companies who are involved in STEM fields. This is an amazing opportunity to find out about the high tech and groundbreaking organisations in the local area, with the hope of opening the eyes of, and inspiring the young people of Somerset to amazing career openings that exist in our part of the world.

The event is being held on Monday 1st May 2023 at locations in Castle Cary, Bruton and the surrounding area. Here is the website to showcase the event which is free of charge: <https://somerscience.co.uk/>

From Miss Thomas, PE Technician

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PE Kit

If anyone has any spare PE kit, the PE department would be very grateful to receive it as we can use it for the people who may have forgotten their kit or for others who are without for different reasons..

From Mr Sandy, Teacher of Music

Music Lessons

Learning to play a musical instrument is hugely rewarding and is a skill that can last a lifetime. Not only does playing music bring joy to oneself and others, researchers have found that learning to play a musical instrument can improve memory, boost listening skills, sharpen concentration, improve social life, and can even help with depression and anxiety. We have a team of visiting music teachers who offer one-to-one tuition on an instrument here at Ansford. Instrumental lessons currently on offer are: Piano, Drums, Vocals, Guitar and Violin.

There is a cost for lessons and instrumental teachers will be responsible for providing invoices and collecting payment. Please email paul.sandy@ansford.net for a form or students can collect one from Mr Sandy in PA1.

From Mr Newbury, Head of Year 9 and Teacher of Drama

Year 5 Performing Arts Workshops

Last week we hosted Year 5 pupils from local primary schools who joined us for a carousel of Performing Arts workshop. As you can see from the photos, they had a great time learning songs, scenes and dances from our Elf production.



From Modern Foreign Languages Department



MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES CLUBS IN WS1 LUNCH 13.50-14.20
French KS3 Wednesday week 1
Spanish KS3 Wednesday week 2
French KS4 Thursday week 1-2
Thanks to come along and enjoy
cooking, games, films, food tasting
music , crafts.... Bring your lunch.
Merci Adios NK

From Maths and Computer Department

Extra-curricular activities

Mathematics and Computing

Autumn 2022

Your weekly timetable of extra-curricular activities

	Tutor Time 09.00 – 09.20	Lunchtime 13.45 – 14.30	After School 15.30 – 16.30
Monday	Numeracy Mentors Ms Buckley MA2	KS3 Homework Club Mrs Withers MA5 (Wk 1)	NO CLUBS – STAFF MEETINGS
Tuesday	Numeracy Mentors Ms Buckley MA2	Sudoku Club Mrs Withers MA5 (Wk 2)	Minecraft Club Miss Worthy-Jarvis IT1
Wednesday	Numeracy Mentors Ms Buckley MA2	Maths Logic Challenge Mrs Piper MA4	
Thursday	Numeracy Mentors Ms Buckley MA2	Higher Paper Drop-In Session in MA3 with Ms Harris and Mr Musson	Year 11 GCSE Maths Intervention/Revision and Support Foundation Paper in MA5 with Mrs Withers and Mrs Piper Higher Paper in MA3 with Ms Harris and Mr Musson (please check the calendar)
Friday	Numeracy Mentors Ms Buckley MA2	KS3 Games and Chess Club Mr Wong in MA2 Drop in to The Learning Bridge with Ms Buckley	

From Year 11 Team

Year 11 Intervention/Revision/Support/Catch-up Timetable

Starts Monday 12th September


	Lunchtime (1:45pm - 2:30pm)	After School (3:30pm - 4:30pm)
Monday	Spanish: In WS3 with Miss Kenchington	
Tuesday	Art & Photography: In AR1 with Mrs Reddick	Science: In SC1 with Mr Kershaw, Mr Cocks and Miss Mascall PE/Sports Studies: In IT2 with Mrs Wood, Mr Darby and Mr Hill Citizenship: In WS4 with Mr Willson
Wednesday	Geography: In WS3 with Ms Perkins (2-2:30pm)	English: In EN5 with Mr Noott, Mrs Uffendell, Mrs Hardy-Stewart, Ms Mallord
Thursday	Design & Technology: In DT2 with Mr Oats	Maths: Foundation Tier in MA5 with Mrs Withers & Mrs Piper Higher Tier in MA3 with Miss Harris & Mr Musson RE: In WS4 with Mr Willson

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Friday	History In WS4 with Mrs Kenchington	
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Other Notices

Current Vacancies	
<div style="text-align: right;">  ANSFORD ACADEMY <small>LEARNING TOGETHER TO LEAD OUR LIVES</small> </div> <p>Governor Vacancy</p> <p>Would you like to shape the future of our thriving academy?</p> <p>Vacancies have arisen for a Parent Governor on the governing body.</p> <p>Becoming a school governor is a rewarding and challenging role and will allow you the opportunity to use your skills and attributes to have a positive impact on the education of all the students in our school. Governors work closely together and play a vital role in the strategic direction of the school, working with the Principal and other senior members of staff to ensure that each of our students can reach their potential and be the best they can be. You will be able to develop and learn new skills in a board-level environment, take on different challenges and work as part of an established and successful Governing Board.</p> <p>Governors need not be experts in the field of education. What they do need is an interest in the school and the welfare of its students, together with the time, energy and willingness to get involved. As well as attending Full Board meetings, attendance at committee meetings is also required. The frequency of meetings, and therefore the time commitment, has recently been reduced.</p> <p>We are particularly interested in self-nominations and expressions of interest from individuals with experience and skills in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Leadership <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">Contacting Us</p> <p>If you are interested in becoming a governor and would like further information please contact our Clerk clerk.governors@ansford.net</p>	<div style="font-size: 2em; color: #ccc; opacity: 0.5; position: absolute; top: 50%; left: 50%; transform: translate(-50%, -50%); pointer-events: none;"> Ansford Academy </div> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">Do you have the time and skills to be an examinations invigilator?</p> <p>We are seeking to expand our team of invigilators, who work with us on a casual contract basis to support the Examinations Office in the running of internal and external examinations.</p> <p>For more information and how to apply, see the vacancies page on our website: http://www.ansford.org.uk/vacancies</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; color: #ccc;"> <small> Ansford Academy, Dunscombe Lane, Castle Cary, Somerset, BA7 7JH Tel: 01963 350895 Email: mailbox@ansford.net </small> </p>

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For further information on vacancies please click on the link below.

<https://www.ansford.org.uk/vacancies>