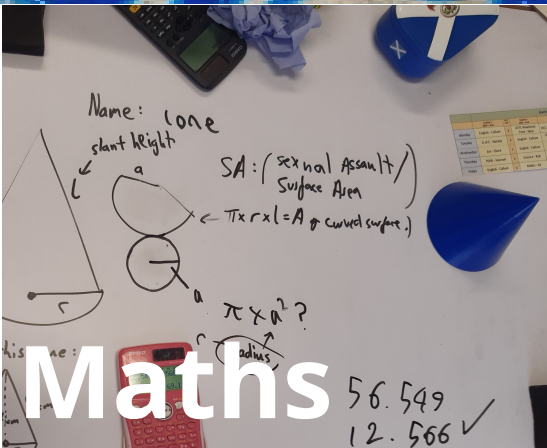


Belong School Devon Autumn recap



The Autumn term in Maths has been about settling our GCSE students into their curriculum. At Belong School Devon we will encourage our students to engage in any way they feel comfortable - even if this means drawing on the tables to work through volume and space problems.

From the Headteacher

Welcome to our first newsletter of the new academic year. After the fantastic results achieved by our students in their summer exams we've been straight back into the busy Autumn term. This year is particularly exciting as our community has grown to welcome students from 11 to 17. Alongside this, we have a range of new subjects in our curriculum offer, including The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, BTEC Sport and Home Cooking Skills, all of which you can find out more about in this issue. I am also pleased to announce that we have been selected by South West Water's Neighbourhood Fund for a grant of £600 to support the school's first aid training programme for students. Belong School Devon aims to teach all students the skills needed to practice first aid, building confidence and self-esteem on the way. Our Learning Coach Champion John Green met with Olivia Crisp from South West Water to receive the cheque on behalf of the school.

There have also been some hands on lessons such as learning division by using physical demonstrations. All students are now on the correct pathway to support their learning in the best way possible. We are looking forward to what they can achieve over the course of this year!



Belong School Devon are now proud to offer The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to students. The values of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award sit very closely with those of Belong School Devon, where staff work to empower students to become successful adults in a modern world. We currently have 19 students enrolled on our DofE programme, with the current focus for many of the students being the skills section. The activities Devon students have chosen reflect the diverse nature of the school community, with areas of interest ranging from cake decorating to knowledge of military history, cooking and photography. Our students are really enjoying the flexibility the DofE programme offers and we are excited to be part of their journey.



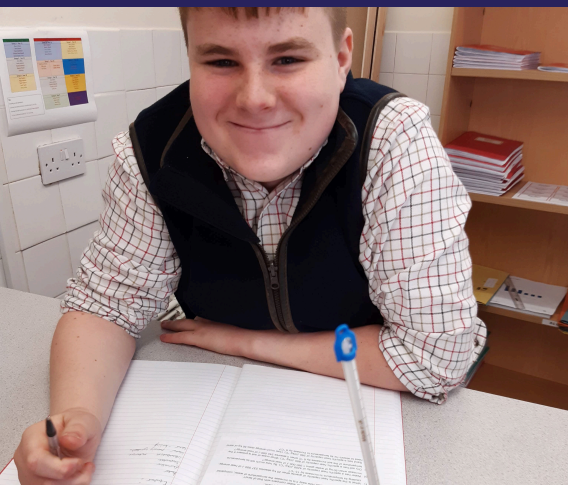


Science

This term has been all about thinking and working scientifically. For example: does adding marshmallows to hot chocolate keep it hotter for longer? Only one way to find out...

Following this we have looked at 'the cell' as the building block of biology and "The Periodic Table" as the catalogue of raw materials for our universe. It has been a lot of fun and a real pleasure to see students grow in confidence in Science lessons.

In GCSE Physics we have focused on completing the practicals that are the backbone of the GCSE syllabus. One such practical investigated which is the best material for making a saucepan: copper, aluminium or steel?



Entry level science is being studied by many of our year 10 and 11 students this academic year. In Biology this term we've been looking at environment, evolution and inheritance. As usual we have been using different strategies that support engaging students in lessons according to their needs.

Year 11 Students began with food chains and webs in Biology this term. Also, pupils have been working on competition between animals and plants for different resources needed in order to survive. It's been a busy term.

ARTWORK '23



Art

Students at Belong School Devon have been exploring their own projects and trying out loads of different techniques and media. There has been landscape painting in oil and acrylics, watercolour studies, intuitive mixed media, Pop Art, and much more! As always, our young people use their own interests and ideas to springboard them into their own art journey and it's so exciting to see the awesome portfolios develop.

Home Cooking Skills



This term has seen a range of dishes being prepared in the kitchen, with the most fun being had preparing for the mental health day bake sale. The students were able to show off their baking skills preparing a range of cakes, cookies and biscuits to raise money for a fantastic cause. The creativity has not stopped there, with the theme of highlighting a chosen ingredient being the key topic. We have had stuffed chicken, a range of Asian and Indian inspired curries and stir fries and good old fashion burgers topping the bill.



Parent Workshops

This term, Belong School Devon's Mental Health and Trauma Informed leads Shannon Norman and John Green have continued to offer evening sessions to parents and carers.

These sessions are built around open discussion and shared experiences, while John and Shannon offer information on strategies and approaches that can be used to help support young people both inside and outside the school environment. These sessions are open to all parents and carers – for more information please contact reception.devon@belonglearning.co.uk. Shannon and John are part of Belong School Devon's Pastoral team. You can find out more on the key role the Pastoral Team plays at Belong School Devon on the Devon School Teams page.



BTEC Sport

It's been a busy start to the year for our students, particularly our Year 10s. The BTEC Sport course has been a new addition to our curriculum offer this academic year. In this first half term, students have been introduced to the world of sport. We have been learning about the rules and regulations of sports and physical activities as well as the importance of planning and delivering a warm-up for a variety of different participants.

In theory lessons, students have analysed sport to find ways to make physical activities and fitness accessible to all, from grassroots to elite. They have been able to put this into practice during our Thursday practical lessons. Our BTEC Sport students are also contributing extremely positively to our core PE lessons on a Friday, supporting their peers with the techniques and rules for a variety of sports.

An excellent start to the year, and the BTEC course!



English

A very important recent development in English teaching is 'decolonizing the curriculum'. In more student-friendly language, we call this "Changing the DWD (Dead White Dude) dominance in English Teaching". We have broadened our curriculum through the school to reflect an inclusive and multi-cultural society, and aim to develop empathy and understanding of the different experiences of others.

An example of this is within the GCSE English Literature course, where after many years of teaching the same poetry anthology, the exam board have introduced a new collection called "Worlds and Lives". Year 10 are enjoying this very much, and the collection lends itself to interpretation via political, social and cultural approaches.

Also on the theme of keeping the curriculum relevant, our teachers Ellie and Callum couldn't find suitably engaging resources for our Functional Skills groups. So they made their own! One of these was called "Wonders of the World". Ellie and Callum asked staff for photos of themselves at various Wonders of the World – some of us could offer one, or two at most. But there was one member of staff who has been everywhere (as seen here)...or has he? Perhaps you can judge for yourself....



Our Learning Coaches play a key role in supporting students from their first steps working with Belong School Devon. Some students may have been away from education for an extensive period and the Learning Coach team provide a smooth transition from meeting initially in the home environment progressing to support within the school 5 days a week. This can be through support in the classroom to Learning Outside the Classroom activities where small groups can gain education away from the school site. Parents can call a KLC at anytime during the school day to find out any information required concerning their child. Daily written pastoral notes form a running progress of the student's activity at Belong School which parents can access at any time on-line. Parents and guardians are also invited on-site at regular intervals to attend educational and health care meetings with members of the Senior Leadership. These meetings will also be attended by the student's Key Learning Coach.

Appropriate behaviour modelling forms part of the Key Learning Coach remit, so students can become familiar with new social situations and ensures that pastoral care and support is also available to meet additional needs within the school day. In the student's final year plans are made for Post 16 opportunities which with communication from Leadership, Colleges and other educational providers the Learning Coach team will organize visits, speak with tutors and assist with the application process to ensure a student's next step into adulthood is a confident one. The Belong School Learning Coach team are the first point of contact for parents and the first level of support for the student.



Dates and Notices

Key Dates

Tuesday 19th December

INSET day - No students

Wednesday 20th December

Last day of Autumn Term

5th-9th February

Exam week

10th-18th February

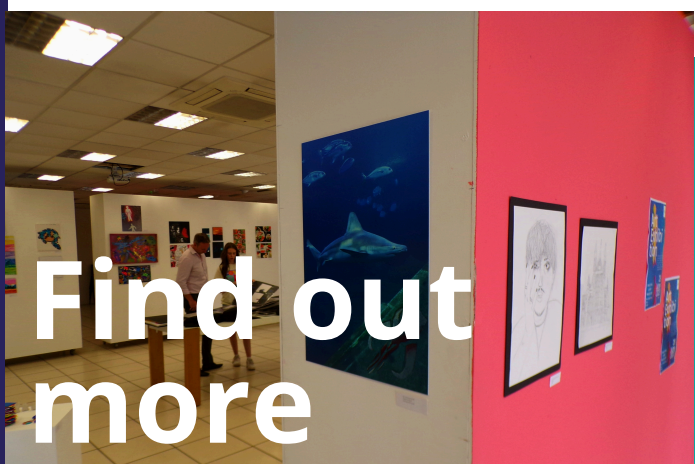
Half-Term holiday

Monday 11th March

INSET day - No students

Thursday 28th March

Final day of Spring Term



Find out more

You can find out more about Belong School Devon, the lessons and activities taking place at our school and the Belong Learning organisation by visiting our website:

www.belonglearning.co.uk/devon

and following our Meta (Facebook) page:

<https://www.facebook.com/belongschooldevon/>