

ON TRACK TOTNES

Spring Newsletter 2024

HEADTEACHER'S UPDATE

This term has been another very busy one at On Track Totnes. As the cold, dark winter days have evolved into the seemingly relentless rain of Devon springtime, we have been brightened with many highlights:

- Our school football team was involved in another tournament, and this time won the whole thing!
- A visit to the Space Port in Cornwall led to students and staff creating their own rocket launch
- We have teamed up with partner providers to offer students enhanced opportunities around animal care, music and computing
- A school photo competition, on the theme of Sunsets, received many fantastic entries
- Students have had short stories published in another Young Writers anthology
- Exciting visits to the theatre and ballet
- Many students took exams and achieved qualifications

We now look towards the summer term, with the exam season offering more opportunities for learning to be transformed into qualifications; preparing those students who are moving on for transition to their destinations; many more exciting activities planned for all.

On a personal note, I would like to share the news that I will be stepping down as Headteacher at the end of this academic year. A renewed leadership team will be in place for September. I look

forward to continuing to support the school on its journey in a different role.

I hope you all have an enjoyable Easter break, and look forward to more fun and achievement next term. Hopefully there might even be a bit of sunshine.

Joel



ON TRACK TOTNES



Cooking

Student uptake has been increasing and it's been heart-warming to see greater numbers of students not only try foods they have never experienced before, but also proactively involve themselves in the cooking and preparation - giving vital life skills and growing self-esteem with every dish. Long may it continue and thank you to everyone managing packages and student expectations. Over the coming weeks, we'll be working with students to prepare a forward menu and suggestions are always welcome (bear in mind it has to be cooked, eaten and cleaned away in 30 minutes!)

Construction

What a busy term we have had in construction. Students have been making things ranging from laptop tables to resin tables. They have made gaming tables, Spiders that they hoped would fly.

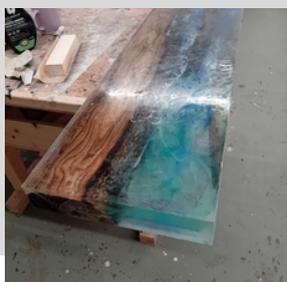
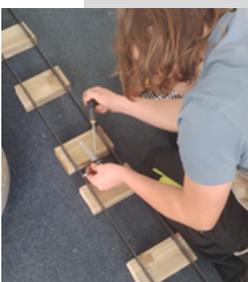
A couple of our students have a keen interest in Science, in particular Rockets. So a trip to visit the SpacePort based at Newquay Airport was organised - this turned out to be quite a journey, but the student thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It was a great opportunity to speak to someone who is an expert in her field and was able to talk to them about the industry. This led to discussions about possible employment in the Space Industry in Cornwall and Devon, which inspired them. We are planning a re-visit to the SpacePort in the Summer term and hopefully there won't be any traffic hol-ups this time around



New Starter

We have a new member of staff as part of the On Track Education team.

Karen Bond is the new Attendance officer, don't let her title scare you, she is only here to help.



NEWSLETTER



Devon FA - Football Tournament

Over the Spring term students have been working hard on their football skills from dribbling to scoring, from defending to attacking.

On 1st March students attended the Devon FA Football tournament and did an amazing job so much so that they **WON!**

CONGRATULATIONS to all the students and everyone involved an **AMAZING** result.



WORLD
**BOOK
DAY**

English World Book Day Competition

It was World Book Day on 7th March and to celebrate we had 2 projects for the students to participate in.

The first was a book character quiz which all the students at Seale Hayne enjoyed. Most of the students at the Totnes site also participated and it even went as far afield as Yarnor! All the students (and some of the staff!) enjoyed the challenge and the opportunity to do a fun based English activity involving their favourite characters.

The second challenge was a story writing competition. There were some fabulous, imaginative stories written, which can be viewed on notice boards at Totnes and Roborough after the Easter break.

A special thanks to all who participated, and to the staff who encouraged and helped the students.

PHONES AND VAPING

As you are aware, we have recently introduced a new mobile phone policy in response to government guidance. Students should not use their phones at all during the school day.

We appreciate this new policy represents a significant challenge for many of our students and we will be patient in how we implement it. We have continued to remind students of the need to hand their phones in or keep them out of sight. We will step up our efforts to incentivise them to comply with this next term, and we appreciate your support in trying to shift the culture of the school in this area.

Similarly, we have recently seen an increase in students vaping in school, especially inside buildings.

It is illegal for young people to vape on a school site, and we will continue to challenge this next term. Please could you discourage young people from bringing vapes in and using them in school.



Princess Theatre Trip 'Blood Brothers'

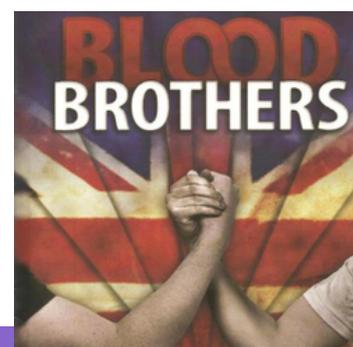
On Thursday 21st March, selected students on the Trinity Arts award attended the Princess theatre in Torquay, to watch the West End touring production of Willy Russel's classic musical "Blood Brothers". Students were treated to top quality entertainment and learned all about the different professional roles required to stage such a performance. The classic tale of class, honour, love and betrayal captured students' imaginations as they were captivated by the performance of seasoned acting professionals from stage and screen, and they represented the school wonderfully.

Special mention must go to the staff members that went the extra mile to ensure all invited students attended, as it was agreed by all that it was a culturally nourishing experience that our students deserve to be part of. Throughout, all students were engaged and respectful, as well as carried away with the spectacle of world-class theatre production.

The effort was well worth it, and should anyone come across any other performances worthy of our attendance, please let Stuart know.

Many thanks,

Stuart



Key Dates

Tuesday 16th April: First day of Summer term

Monday 6th May: Bank holiday

9th May – 19th June: GCSE exams.
Each student will have an individual timetable.

Functional Skills exams will take place during this period, but later into the summer as well, to maximise the opportunities to achieve qualifications.

When the exam season starts we will put in place study leave programmes for year 11 students, meaning they will not necessarily need to attend school every day. These will be worked out on an individual basis, depending on the focus and support needed.

27th -31st May: Half-term break

30th June: Final day for school leavers.

Friday 19th July: Final day of school for students

Monday 22nd July: Summer parent review day

Attendance Ladder

