

# SEND Newsletter

## Spring Term 2 (2023)



### Welcome

Welcome to the **fourth** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) newsletter.

The spring term has come and gone in a flash. Our 11 pupils have continued to find the exam practice opportunities advantageous and reflected on these with their keyworkers. Pupils in years 11 and 10 have been given an example revision timetable and revision strategies to utilise at home in preparation for their actual and mock exams. Pupils in KS3 have been working hard, as seen in learning walks and book looks. All pupils on our SEND register have discussed their progress and targets with their keyworkers and have set new targets for the final term of the academic year.

Through our tutor time programme, students have celebrated awareness days on Autism, Neurodiversity and Epilepsy. They have been given information on the topic and a thinking task has been posed for pupils to ponder over.

As we enter the final term of this academic year, year 7 will start moving around the school a little more, becoming familiar with what the next academic year will look like for them. Year 10 will experience a mock exam period where they will get a feel for what their year 11 GCSE exams will look like, whether that be in the sports hall or in smaller rooms to facilitate their access arrangements. Reward trips have been scheduled for years 7-10, to celebrate this year's learning and efforts. Year 11's will soon be ready to depart, making a start on their journey beyond Ridgewood. Last year, all pupils with SEN went on to further education in some form, so we are hoping that this continues with our current cohort.

### Dates for your diary:

- W/C 08.05.23 – Year 10 Mock exams week.
- W/C 15.05.23 – Year 11 GCSE's commence
- 08.06.23 – Year 7 Parents Evening
- 21.06.23 – Year 11 Prom
- 11.07.23 – Year 9 & 10 Rewards Trip
- 12.07.23 – Year 7 & 8 Rewards Trip
- 14.07.23 – SEN Coffee and Cake Event – 9.30am
- 21.07.23 – Last day of term for students



### Attitude to Learning Superstars

From our reviews of the Spring Progress reports, the following pupils have been working superbly receiving 'determined' in 3+ subjects:

Year 7

**Seamus C, Evie W, Ruth N, Jasmine L and Tianny M.**

Year 8

**Ebony B and Beth K.**

Year 9

**Evie G, Maia C, Lewis S and Elina B.**

Year 10

**Daisy L, Billy E, Georgia H, Joey S and Jack L.**

Year 11

**Elise A, Sam B, Annabel S, Joel C and Harry J.**

It has been a pleasure to visit lessons and look at student work during the spring term. Some of the work produced by our students is outstanding.



### Attendance Superstars



The following pupil's attendance to date stands at 100%. This will be making a huge difference to learning!

Year 7

**Michaela W.**

Year 8

**Ebony B, Holly B, Dan D and Aiden J.**

Year 9

**Scarlett S, Ethan J and Lewis S.**

Year 10

**Christian P.**

Year 11

**Elise A, Joel C and Joe H.**



## Did you know?

### Connected relationships = healthy brains.

During the Spring term, I attended a 'Five to Thrive' training course. Five to Thrive is a model, approach and framework for promoting connected relationships; Dudley Local Authority have started to roll this out across the borough. I would like to share some key findings of this with you, as parents, in the hope it will help and support your relationships with your children.

Five to Thrive is a neurological sequence in order to ensure relationships are connected. Research has found there are five stages to 'connectedness':

#### Stage One – RESPOND

- Recognise there is a need waiting to be met.
- We need to be able to absorb the energy and information from the child to be able to transmit it back to them in a manageable way.
- Individuals need different types of responses depending on their needs.
- How does your child want you to respond? How do they need comforting?
- Be aware of how **you** are in your response. Don't be reactive, just respond – you may not need to do anything, just be there.
- Notice strengths so the child feels they can open up.

#### Stage Two – ENGAGE

- Action could depend on need and be non-verbal. Pick up on their signals... proximity, eye contact, touch, posture, tone, etc.
- Reflect on what has worked previously and build on these strengths.
- Let them know you are there when they are ready – acknowledge that you know they will need time. Give them the control/empowerment to make the choices.

#### Stage Three – RELAX

- We catch people's calm.
- Tap into what you know works – notice what they do.
- Reassure and explain with no judgement.
- Remove them from the situation (if they are still in it).
- Model the calmness they need.
- Make it known it is ok to feel this way.

#### Stage Four – PLAY

- Non-verbal playfulness – encourage the small things.
- Do something you know interests or fascinates them.
- Create a sense of shared enjoyment and memories.
- This stage is a window of opportunity for guidance and support and will make the child feel safe again.

#### Stage Five – TALK

- Establish trust before talk.
- Our words and their tone build and shape the brain.
- Connection before correction / Rapport before reasoning
- Listen with empathy and see the world through their eyes. Listen without problem solving – silence is ok. It is not only about listening, it is about hearing.
- Validate how they are/have felt.
- Help them make sense of why they feel that way.

**Humans are born to connect, mirror and match.** So, children need their parents, and their parents need ...?

... a supportive community around them if they are to manage the challenges of parenthood and be able to appreciate the joyful moments.

We are all vulnerable some of the time - as the African proverb says, it takes a village to raise a child. Things won't always go the way we expect, but what is important is that our reflections on situations help us to shape our future choices.

