



Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College

Newsletter October 2024



Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2024-2025 academic year! As we begin the new College year, we are excited to share the activities and learning opportunities that have been keeping our students engaged and inspired. This term, our focus, as always, has been on developing key areas such as Independent Living Skills, Maths and Thinking Skills, Community and Relationships, The Arts and Enrichment, Work-Related Learning, Communication, and amplifying Student Voice. It has been a fantastic start, and we look forward to building on this momentum as the year continues.

Independent Living Skills

This term in the Explorers group, students had the opportunity to practise their cutting skills with help from our OT Jo McConnell, this helps towards their hand function skills and independence.

Students have been interacting with a variety of switches which enables them to become more independent through utilising these to activate a variety of appliances.



Students from the Seeker Group have been working hard on personal hygiene and hand function. They have had discussions about their own routines and explored many different products.



Community and Relationships

This half term students from the Seekers Group have welcomed Chadsgrove School pupils from P14 as part of our Link Project.



They joined us on a Wednesday afternoon for our Physio Target Session where we have been working on being independently active.



Students and pupils played Boccia, tried different throwing games, stretched their bodies with seated yoga and explored different music tempos using the parachute.

Police Visit

We had a visit from the Police!!

Police Officers came to talk to our Seeker Students about their role in the community, how to remain safe whilst out and about and online safety. A discussion about possible careers and the variety of job roles within the police force also took place.



Students were given the opportunity to try on a uniform, ask questions and have a look at equipment used by the officers. They also got to sit in the police car and listen to the sirens!

Students and staff would like to thank Bromsgrove Police for taking the time to come and visit us.



Community and Relationships

Bradley Thomas MP Visit

We were honoured to welcome our local Member of Parliament Bradley Thomas to our College on Friday 18th October.

This is the first time Bradley has visited Chadsgrove, we were delighted to be able to show him around and introduce him to our wonderful students and fantastic staff team.

During his visit we explained the importance of specialist education provisions and discussed our hopes for the future.

As well as visiting Chadsgrove School, whilst here Bradley also had the opportunity to take part in a friendly game of Boccia with College students.

We're grateful to have Bradley's support and very much look forward to welcoming him back to Chadsgrove soon.



Christmas Songs

Students have been busy in their communication lessons.

They have been discussing their favourite Christmas songs and have chosen a new song to add to the songs that they will perform at the Christmas Market and at Care Homes.

They have been finding and learning new signs and have been working hard practising. Students are excited to be performing to everyone.



Sign of the Half Term

This year, during their sign along sessions, students are going to be working to complete their sign along workbooks.

The theme for this year is **work**. Students will be learning signs relating to jobs and workplaces.

Each term students will choose which sign they would like to be 'sign of the term'.

Because we had a visit from the police this term the students have chosen 'Police Officer' for the sign of the half term.



Sensory Story "Like"

This half term students have been focusing on the sensory story "Like" where students have had the opportunity to get to know each other better and what each other likes and doesn't like.



Students have explored a variety of sensory objects using all of their senses and used various communication devices to specify their preferences.



For World Mental Health Day we chose to do a Sensory story and a song massage as part of students communication lesson.

Liquid Listening

At the beginning of term Tutor Claire Cutler completed a five day Liquid Listening Hydrotherapy Course. Learning the techniques and theories that will support our students both in the pool and in college through music, to promote relaxation, self-expression and independent movement.

"It was very different from anything I have experienced before, hearing the sounds through the water and feeling it in your body enables you to completely shut out the world and focus on self. Working with the students I am already seeing a change in their confidence to relax in the water and initiate independent movement. I'm looking forward to the arrival of our new vibro speakers so I can extend the learning into the classroom."

What is Liquid Listening and what will it do for our students?

The What? (Taken from liquidlistening.org)

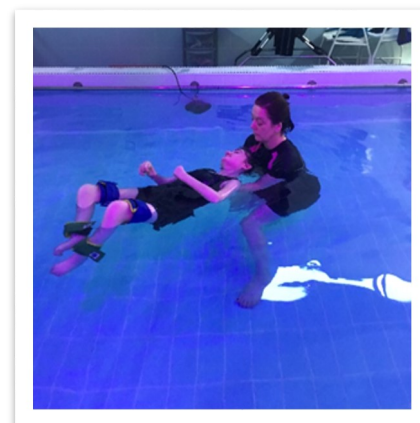
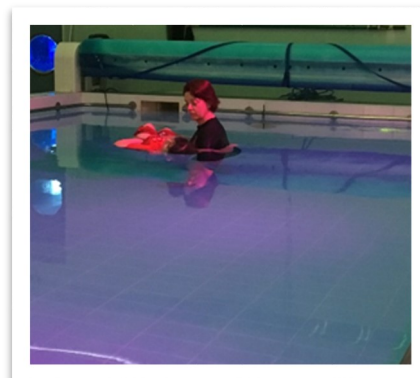
Underwater speakers are placed inside a hydro-pool and specially created underwater music/sound is heard when the head is placed in the water. The vibrations travel through the water and stimulate the inner ear directly, resulting in a perception of sound that is incredibly detailed, immediate and personal. The vibrations can also be felt in the body, and when experienced alongside guided movement through aquatic body therapy, participants experience a deeper state of relaxation. The practice can also help to improve communication, emotional development and motor and sensory skills.

The Why? (Taken from liquidlistening.org)

- Liquid Listening Musical Hydrotherapy
- Relaxes body and mind
- Inspires movement, stretching, vocalisation, stillness
- Reduces agitation
- Enhances wellbeing

For more details on Liquid Listening and its benefits, visit their web page

<https://www.liquidlistening.org/>



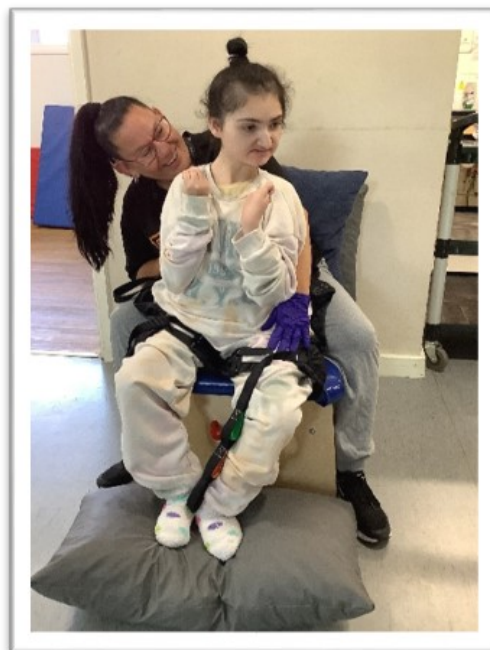
Students have been working hard with our Physiotherapy Team Rachel and Kirsty. They have been completing their assessments for the start of our new academic year. All walkers and standers have been checked and altered with the students so they are compatible for use throughout the new academic year.

Explorers

This term students have been welcomed back into their Hydrotherapy sessions using Chads Grove School's Hydrotherapy Pool.

Students have been working hard with their physio exercises in the pool and then enjoying some relaxation using the new Liquid Listening system. Liquid Listening is a programme of mesmerizing lights and an underwater sound system.

Liquid listening is a new programme that has been introduced to both College and School. We are very lucky to have had some wonderful trainers in to show us how it works and different ways we can use it with our students. We had Laurence, one of Liquid Listening's trainers come to visit us in College to show us how we can use the music element without being in the water.



Seekers

Exercise sessions have restarted with Kirsty.

Health

Students have enjoyed sessions outdoors when the weather has allowed us to. This is great for student's health and well-being.



World Mental Health Day 10th October 2024

To go with the theme of World Mental Health Day we looked at students wellbeing assessments. We then had an afternoon of 'Tea and Chat' focusing on the wellbeing of students and their health.



Student Voice

Our first term back is always busy with Student Voice activities as we prepare to welcome new members to the Ambassadors Board. Year one students have been learning about the role of an Ambassador and all students then had the chance to nominate themselves for a role. Campaign posters were created and voting took place two weeks later.

We are delighted to share that our new Ambassadors Board is as follows:

- **Ambassadors for Communication – Kyle & Holly**
- **Ambassador for Well-being – Ellie, assisted by Yoga Champion Gashow**
- **Ambassador for The Arts – Muneeb**
- **Ambassador of Health & Safety – Thyo**
- **Peer Mentors – Holly & Ali**
- **Chair of Ambassadors - Arouge. This was determined through a vote at our first meeting.**

A new role for this year is **Community and Charities Ambassador**, to which we welcome **Thyo and Gashow** to the position.

We are looking to develop our Ambassador Team moving forward, so we hope to have an exciting update to share in our next newsletter!

Ambassadors will be working towards a new Learner Agreement for students and continuing to challenge and support our Business Manager and Directors to make our College an even better place to learn and grow.



Explorers

This half term, our students have been engaged in exciting and innovative learning experiences with all sorts of different technology.

The Explorers group have been delving into different music genres using switches and VOCAs (Voice Output Communication Aids). This hands-on approach has allowed them to interact with a wide variety of sounds, fostering their sensory and communication skills in an enjoyable and accessible way.



Seekers



Meanwhile, the Seekers Group have been honing their ICT skills.

They have been experimenting with artificial intelligence to create images and text, sending emails, and designing posters for the upcoming Christmas market.

These activities are not only enhancing their digital literacy but also encouraging creativity and practical application of their skills in real-world scenarios.

Both groups are making excellent progress, embracing technology, and developing skills that will support their future learning and independence.

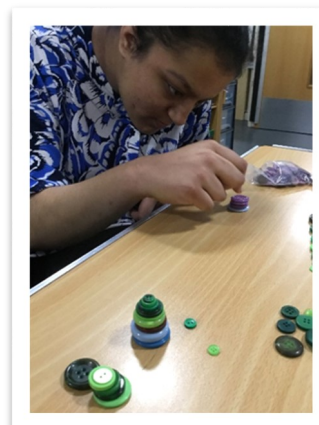
The Arts

The Arts

This half-term Seekers have been learning Sing and Sign to 'This Is Me' and more recently the students and staff have been voting on which Christmas songs to use for our performances at the Christmas Market and residential homes.



We have been doing dance for fitness each week, but we will soon be working on a Christmas themed choreography to perform.



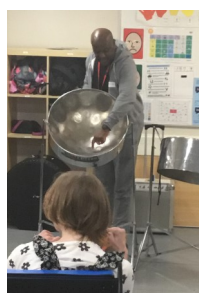
We have also started making Christmas ornaments as gifts for the residents we will meet over the Christmas period.

Enrichment Day – Monday 21st October

Enrichment Day – Monday 21st October

We celebrated Black History Month with some poetry writing inspired by Benjamin Zephaniah and explored healthy eating inspired by Macka B's raps about food – both celebrated black artists from the West Midlands.

In the afternoon, we enjoyed an interactive Steel Drums workshop and performance by Jason from Sound of Steel Steelband.



Charities

Harvest Festival

Harvest is an opportunity for students in College to celebrate and give thanks for the food that has been produced throughout the year, and for all the hard work given by the farmers and suppliers.

All food donated has been safely delivered to Catshill Food Bank by our students.

Catshill Food Bank is a local initiative that helps families that are struggling to provide food for themselves and/or their family. Thank you to our students and families for the generous donations.



We're also incredibly pleased to say that we've also donated £55.00 to Catshill Food Bank from selling the produce we've grown in our Vegetable Garden!



From planting seeds and growing our produce



To selling our wonderful fresh vegetables



To donating our profits to the Catshill Food Bank



Useful Information



Signalong Parent Carer Workshop

An opportunity to learn the basic skills of Signalong

DATE: Friday 29th November

TIME: 1pm—3pm

VENUE: Chadsgrove School

Limited spaces available

Please book a place by emailing Rebecca Sabel:

rs291@chadsgrove.worcs.sch.uk

or phone:

01527 871511



Useful Information

Important College Dates for your Diary

Here are some important dates to pop in your diary for the remainder of the year...

- 28th October to Friday 1st November - College Closed for Half Term
- 4th November - College re-opens following half term
- 12th November - Maths & Thinking Skills Week
- 13th November - Student Ambassadors Meeting
- 15th November - Children in Need Day
- 18th November - UK Parliament Week
- 22nd November - Student enterprise stall at Bromsgrove Christmas Market
- 28th November - Natspec Student Parliament
- 3rd December - Disability Awareness Day
- 12th December - Christmas Jumper Day
- 16th December - Parents & Community Christmas Celebration
- 17th December - College Christmas Lunch
- 18th December - Christmas meal at the Swan Inn
- 20th December - College closes for Christmas Break

Useful Information

Dates have been sent out for Year 1 students' Annual Reviews which are scheduled to take place in November and December.