

Hub News



Blue Coat

Church of England School
& Music College

Edition 3:
Spring 1 2022

Inspire Education Trust
Together we achieve, individually we grow

MR PHIPPS SAYS...

It was another exceptionally busy half term in the Hub at Blue Coat. As we continue to adapt to ever-changing adjustments relating to the coronavirus, we are proud of our students who continue to impress us with their maturity and resilience. As you will read in this half term's newsletter, our SEND provision in school continues to develop, providing opportunities for students to reach their potential academically and socially: to live life in all its fullness. I am blessed to oversee a dedicated and skilled team of staff members who go above and beyond to help our students and their families. If you ever need any support or advice, please do get in touch.



FAB FRIDAY PHONECALLS!



Each week Hub staff nominate students for Fab Friday phone calls.

Mrs Earle always has so many students nominated by Hub staff for lots of different reasons. So far this term we've congratulated Bassam, Zachary, Harvin, Sufyan, Alisha, Summer, Harley, Sam, Ethan, Leo, and Rosie. All of these students have been nominated due to their demonstration of our CHRIST Values in the Hub.

WELL DONE TO THESE STUDENTS AND EVERYONE WHO TRIES HARD!

MEET THE STAFF

Here are a few more of the staff who work in the Hub.

Mrs Earle is the Assistant SENDCo and Access Arrangements Co-ordinator. She is a highly qualified exams assessor, which means that she works with students to find out whether they need adjustments to their 'normal way of working', such as a reader or scribe in exams.



Mrs Davis is the Accelerated Reader lead and she is based in the library. Mrs Davis makes sure that all Year 7s and 8s are making progress through Accelerated Reader, having the right choices of books and completing their reading assessments. She also works with students with little English to develop their phonics understanding. She is passionate about reading and rugby!

Mr Brooks is one of our most experienced members of staff. A former English teacher, Mr Brooks works with students who struggle with literacy or dyslexia. He focuses on helping in their English and also overcoming difficulties and barriers to learning. Mr Brooks is always hearing from adults he has tutored in the past—they always speak highly of him, and so do we!



Miss Ciomag is one of our newest members of staff. She is the lead LSA supporting students with English as an Additional Language and has a wealth of experience teaching children and adults English. She has settled really well into school life and students are already benefiting from her knowledge, experience and calm manner.

THE HUB: MAKEOVER UPDATE

If you have been keeping up with Hub News, you will be aware that we have received a generous investment from Inspire Education Trust, our MAT, to update the facilities and resources in the Hub.

The work is still ongoing as more furniture and resources are still coming in, but students and staff are seeing the benefits of the investment already. We love our new space!

SENSORY ZONE

One of the most exciting parts of the Hub is the Sensory Zone.

One corner of the intervention room S5 is now decked out with equipment and decoration to help students who feel overwhelmed.

A Sensory Space is an area which is designed to support students to regulate their own emotions and senses when they are feeling emotional. A sensory space contains objects and resources intended to assist with calming students down and allowing them to relax and refocus if upset or overwhelmed.

Our sensory space contains...

- ◆ Black walls to block out the light and help the space feel cosy
- ◆ A large mat for sitting on or where physio can take place
- ◆ A pimpled sitting ball for active sitting
- ◆ Palm branches to provide a sense of shelter
- ◆ A multi coloured LED corner light rod
- ◆ A floor sofa which can be rolled out for medical purposes
- ◆ A lego wall for building on
- ◆ A wall mounted bubble tank
- ◆ A ceiling coloured liquid projector
- ◆ Gel floor squares
- ◆ And more!

Our sensory space gets plenty of use from students who need that time out, or where social and creative interventions can take place.



WHERE HAVE WE INVESTED?

The money used to invest in the Hub has gone on equipment and resources which are intended to last and provide quality experiences for our students.

The investment has included:

- * New chairs and tables through the Department
- * Emergency equipment for evacuation
- * New ceiling and lighting throughout
- * Fresh paint all through the area
- * New organisation and filing systems
- * New SEND equipment, such as fidget aids, literacy intervention programmes and bespoke curriculum support materials such as text books
- * Signs, displays and window decorations
- * So much more which impacts positively on the ways students learn and interact.

CURRICULUM ZONE

The Main Hub area is now the Curriculum Zone.

In this area, a new set of tables have created a purposeful 'pod' work space which surrounds the supervising member of staff who works with the students in this Zone.

A set of computers line one wall so that students who are working have access to ICT and can complete their classwork when they are not in lesson.

Students have folders, books and resources individually prepared for them if they are working in the Zone during lesson time.

Students work in the Hub for many different reasons, such as when they are on modified timetables, or doing extra work for their exams. All students are able to access high quality provision thanks to the organisation of the Curriculum Zone.

SOCIAL ZONE

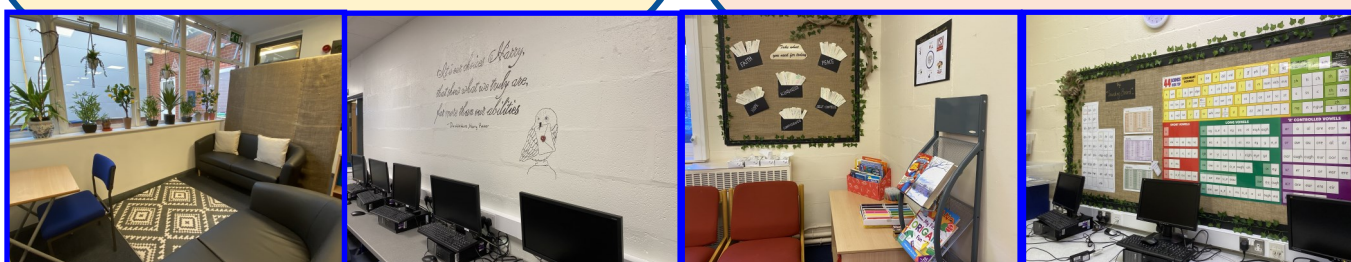
Room S1 is now the 'Social Zone'.

The Social Zone is a multipurpose room, and as the name suggests, is where a lot of the socialising takes place. Students use the space to sit and eat their food, make friends and socialise with others.

It is a safe space for break and lunch. There are books to read and games to play if people want to use them. Interventions and small group work takes place in here as well during the day.

There are lockers in the room for students who need some help organising themselves or remembering their timetable.

The Social Zone contains the 'wellbeing wall' full of inspiring messages and we look forward to more new furniture arriving to finish off this space very soon.



WELLBEING ZONE

The far side of the main Hub is now the Wellbeing Zone.

The Wellbeing Zone is a flexible space consisting of two small sofas, work tables, and natural decoration and foliage. Students who need some space for time out can use this area. As a naturally quieter space away from other students, quieter mentoring conversations can take place or students can work independently, such as when revising for example.

Staff are often seeing completing work in the Wellbeing Zone as the work space means that it is a productive and flexible area. We look forward to the finishing touches over the coming weeks.

The Wellbeing Zone's displays remind us that we are all unique and have things to offer.

OTHER ZONES

Room S6 is where many academic interventions take place.

Set out with a suite of desktop computers, a central table and a class whiteboard, S6 offers a space for many different sorts of interventions. It most regularly is used to support students with their literacy. Dyslexic students access 'WordShark' on the computers, and in the mornings students can be seen practising their touch typing skills.

Individual Office Space

The Hub contains office for staff. The front office, staffed by Mrs Brown and Mrs Head, is the first place people come to. Mr Phipps, Mrs Ram and Mrs Earle have offices in the Hub as well. There is a new 'hotdesk' office which is used by part time staff and by external specialists such as the School Nurse.

INTERVENTION FOCUS: THRIVE

The **Thrive Approach** is a nationally recognised programme which aims to support children and young people's emotional development. It identifies gaps in childhood development, and puts interventions in place to support students to have their emotional and developmental needs met.

Thrive is well established across schools in Coventry and beyond, and Blue Coat is one of a small number of Secondary Schools leading on its implementation.

Our Thrive Licensed Practitioner, Miss McGrath, has a small group of students who she sees a number of times in the week to complete interventions with. As

Thrive develops in school, numbers will increase and we look forward to more students joining the programme.

Click the Thrive logo to find out more.



NEEDS FOCUS: AUTISM

What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong condition affecting people from all backgrounds. It is a neurological condition, meaning that it relates to the way the individual's brain processes information. It is estimated that 1% of the population are autistic.

What does the term 'autism spectrum' mean?

Autism is a spectrum, which means that everyone with autism is different. Some autistic people will need little or no support. Others may need help every day. Autistic people are often brilliant at things other people might not be so good at!

What might autistic people struggle with?

Some of the most common difficulties which autistic people face include:

- Difficulties with communication and interaction with others
- Find it hard to understand how other people think or feel
- Sensory overload, may be overly sensitive to noises, lights, smells etc
- May get anxious about change or things which are unfamiliar
- A need to do the same things over and over as this provides comfort

How do we support autistic students?

Students' Passports detail their individual needs, strengths and areas they struggle with. Teaching staff use these to get to know their students. We provide a safe space at break and lunch in the Hub. Each student has a key adult who offers support and checks in. Students may take part in specific interventions designed to lower anxiety, or help with communication, interaction and emotional understanding.

For more information on autism, this website contains some good information: [National Autistic Society \(autism.org.uk\)](https://www.autism.org.uk)



THEATRE VISIT AND TOUR

This term, Blue Coat Theatre hosted a behind the scenes tour for a select group of students.

Mrs Belgrove (Theatre Manager) and Mr Baker-Wyatt (Theatre Technician) worked with Hub staff to organise the tour. Students had a talk about how a show is put together, then got to visit the backstage area, including the orchestra pit, the costume department and the dock area where scenery is prepared. Ms Sanderson commented 'all the pupils were keen to try the costumes on as we talked about role play and character. The jewellery room was a real highlight—an Aladdin's cave! It really was a delight seeing the pupils have an informed joyful time. It led several pupils to audition for the school play and get a part.' Elizabeth said, 'The tour was really fun and just so interesting.' Sarah also commented, 'It gave me confidence to audition for Our Day Out and it was fun seeing behind the scenes'.

As a result of the tour, many more students are now wanting to get involved with Theatre productions and develop their skills in the arts.

WHY OUR STAFF LOVE THE HUB

I love working in the Hub, creating a safe, calm and welcoming area for pupils to come for support in their school life. Every day is different and sometimes challenging, but the knowledge that the pupils are happy and re-assured is heart warming at the end of every day.

Putting the needs of the pupils first, and showing them "SOMEONE CARES" is sometimes all it takes for them to engage back into their day of learning. I love what I get to do every day! (Ms Sanderson)

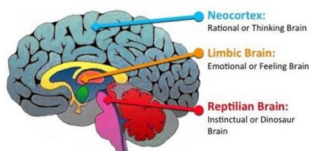
STAFF TRAINING

Trauma informed approaches

On the first day of Spring Term, all staff undertook training on the development of the teenage brain (neuroscience) and how to use trauma informed approaches. Staff learned about how the impact of early childhood adversity affects behaviour in the teenage brain, and how the teenage brain functions very differently to those of adults. The overall message of the training was to 'be kind' - a valuable message for everyone.

If you are interested in finding out more about neuro science and the teenage brain, UNICEF have a helpful introductory video plus a great deal of research on their website:

[The Adolescent Brain \(unicef-irc.org\)](https://www.unicef.org/brain)



Being a key adult is so important for our students, for them to know they have someone to come to when they need to. I enjoy spending time with the students playing games- hangman, Jenga, connect 4 and many more, creating art work, and chatting about their day. We have so many students with different interests and it's so nice to be able to let them share their interests with others. I enjoy working with and supporting students with their individual needs, and seeing them progress is fantastic! (Ms Toman)

I love working in the Hub because everybody is working hard to make a positive difference to students' lives. It is a place often filled with laughter, a place where students are able to discover their strengths and go out better prepared for things. It's also a place where staff really care about what they do, work as a team, pull together, support each other - a place which will never give up on the students it works with! (Mrs Powell)

Working in the Hub is a unique experience. Hub staff have the pleasure of working one to one and seeing the children in their care make progress as individuals. The Hub is a place that any students can access if they need a bit of space, help with a subject, or specialist work. Need some support? The Hub—Sorted! (Mr Brooks)

I love working in the Hub because it gives me chance to work with SEND and EAL students. The Hub is a safe and effective environment for students to increase their learning potential and to have healthy interactions. It also teaches them skills in life such as creative thinking, problem solving and coping with emotions. The dedication of the Hub staff make it a lovely working environment which I am honoured to be part of. (Ms Ciomag)

Our students have been making handprints to go on the wall to show how unique each of us are and how we all belong no matter our background or challenges.



MRS SHELLEY SAYS... During a recent fire drill, a Year 10 student supported with a very sick child, helped to organise other students and got help and assistance. This student overcame many challenges of their own to put the needs of others first in that situation, demonstrating our School Values and keeping others safe. This small but significant example of resilience in the face of adversity demonstrates the care and support provided by the Hub in enabling students to live life in all its fullness. I am proud of our school and its students and every day is full of examples like this, where students across the school community follow the example of Jesus and support one another. All the staff work tirelessly to enable our students to reach their very best and this is really evident through the encouragement this newsletter brings.

