

Dear Parents and Carers,

The team here at Compass have great pleasure in sharing with you some of the fantastic learning experiences and events that have happened over this term; it has been a very positive term and much has been accomplished by students and staff alike.

Our new staff have settled in very well and are focussing on building positive working relationships with the children who returned to us in September, and those who have joined us since then. We are almost at our capacity as we approach the Christmas break, which keeps us very busy.

Besides the many successes, there have been one or two challenges, which we believe with your continued and much valued support, we can overcome.

Firstly, we are finding evidence of children being involved in large **social media groups** who are sharing some quite shocking videos of inappropriate and often criminal behaviour. Some of this sharing could in itself be considered as a criminal act depending on the content. When concerns are shared with us, we often find our students personally know only a few of the names in the group chat and know some of the other names are in fact older youths, even adults and there are many people they do not know at all. I'm sure you share our obvious concerns about this, which makes the good thing which the internet is, into a place and space where lasting harm can be done to young lives, unknowingly. We have included an E-Safety update in this newsletter with some useful advice; we're always happy to listen to and learn from you, and provide solutions for any concerns we have. Please do continue to have conversations with us around the matter.

Next, you may be aware from national news that school attendance is beginning to drop across the country. We believe we just might be beginning to see a similar trend starting here which we're keen to turn around quickly. Good school attendance is important on so many levels including, supporting our children's physical and mental health, pro-social skills development as well as leading to good educational and future economic outcomes.

At this time of year especially, there are many bugs to contend with too. Please can we remind you to discuss with us in the first instance if your child is struggling to attend regularly, as we'd much rather try to put in early support than having to end up in any legal process situation over attendance. We're happy to work with you to improve students attendance. Very shortly your child's Progress Report for this term will be sent to you which will include their attendance to this point.

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As a reminder the national expectation of good school attendance is over 96%, with those who are under 90% considered persistently absent and those below 50% as severely absent. Currently, here, 80% of our students improve their attendance from their starting points and we have a few students with 100% attendance. Thank you for your support with this.

Finally, I wrote to you all recently requesting your support around helping our children to understand their responsibilities to everyone around the protected characteristics as defined in the 2010 Equalities Act, especially in connection with racist, trans / homophobic and disablist slurs. Thank you for what you have done so far to help in this respect, it is appreciated and I do expect that there is more to do ahead. I'm sure together we can crack this!

Just to make you aware that our Year 11 students have their Mock Exams starting after the Christmas break. These are important practice for the formality of public examinations. We are expecting to have to adjust the start times of the school day for students in other year groups in order to accommodate the access and invigilation arrangements they require. We apologise in advance for any disruption this may cause.

In the run up to Christmas we are very aware that this school holiday, in particular, can cause additional strain to families. If you happen to find yourself in need of additional support please follow the link below:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/cost-of-living-help>

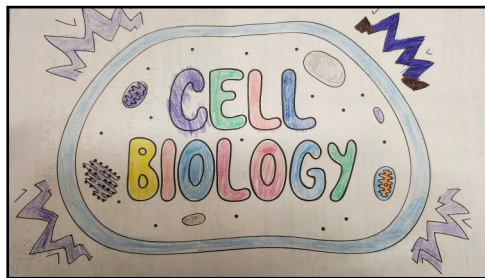
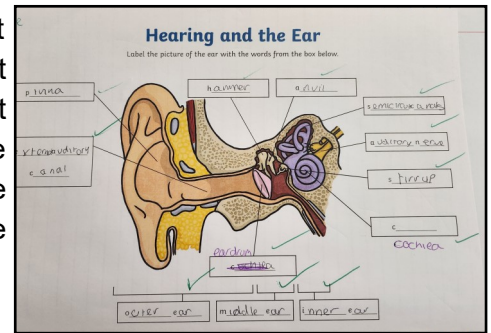
All that remains is for me to send, on behalf of everyone at Compass Learning Centre, very best wishes for the Festive Season and the New Year.

Alison Glazier
Headteacher



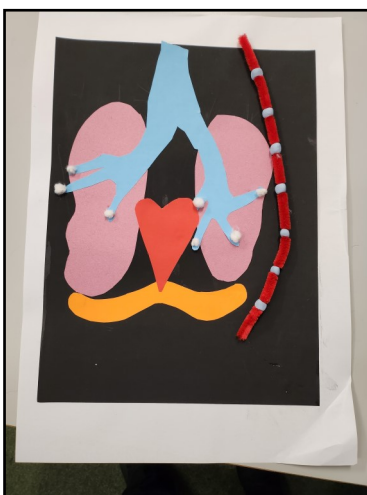
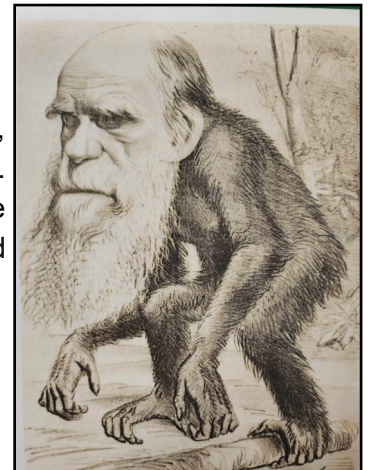
SCIENCE NEWS

Students in Year 8 have been working hard learning about sound, how sound travels and how we can hear different sounds. Classes have discussed how and why a sound cannot be heard when within a vacuum (not the hoover). They have also been looking at the different parts of an ear, describing the different functions and how to protect their hearing from future hearing loss.



Year 9 students started the year by discussing, understanding and practising safety within a science room. Students have been learning about microscopy, cells, specialised cells and enzymes. They are currently preparing for practicals where they will be testing different food types to determine if they contain protein, lipids, reducing sugars or carbohydrates.

Students in Year 10 have been working extremely hard this term, learning about evolution, natural selection and genetic engineering. Students have discussed and written about Charles Darwin and have looked at Charles Darwin's work on the theory of natural selection and how it explains how genetic traits of a species may change over time.



Year 11 students have been working towards completing their subject knowledge in preparation for their GCSE's. Students have shown true commitment to their learning and understanding of biological concepts and are learning retrieval and recall of knowledge strategies each week. Students have been learning about the respiratory system, naming and explaining each organ and its function in relation to the system.

Bex

LIFE SKILLS NEWS

Anti-Bullying Week (13–17 November)

As part of Anti-Bullying Week this year we discussed the history of some of the words that young people use and why they are so offensive. The aim is to empower our young people to call out their peers if they are using these words by explaining why they shouldn't use them. We then spent time talking about how important it is to not be '*Bystanders to Bullying*'.

As a school we created this display with the message '*Stand up to Bullying*'. Here are our students' responses to this theme.



Dorset Police Armed Response Team visited Compass to educate our Year 10 and 11 students about the dangers of carrying knives and other weapons when out, especially the potential consequences of carrying replica guns. Our young people enjoyed the talk and found it informative. Thanks for your time Dorset Police.

Vita Nova



Vita Nova performed their ground-breaking play '*Nest*' for our Year 10 students here in Compass, which captures the last day of an addict's struggle with addiction before asking for help. Sam, the protagonist, sits in their '*nest*' unable to go out and constantly battling with the relentless voices in their head: Fear, Shame, Pride and Quiet Love. Sam eventually picks up the phone and makes the call for help taking their first step towards recovery. Year 10 were an excellent audience for the play and participated very well in the workshops that followed.



CAREERS NEWS

We kicked off our 2023/24 Careers programme with a visit to a construction site with Year 11 students. Thanks to Tilbury Douglas, we went to look around the refurbishment project they are running at South Walks House in Dorchester. Students had the opportunity to ask questions from people in the building trades and see a working construction site to see if a career in construction might be for them.



Jules Cosmic Cactus:

Our Careers Advisor, Jules from Cosmic Cactus has been in to meet with students in Year 11 and some from Year 10 to discuss their future plans and what they would like to do after their GCSEs.



Penny - Dorset Targeted Transition Fund

We are pleased to welcome Penny back to school as part of the Dorset Targeted Transition Fund. She will be in once a fortnight, working with a group of Year 11 students to support them with decisions about their future and to help them with their transition to Post 16 education and training.

In Life Skills this term, Year 11 students have been focused on planning for their futures, thinking about transferable skills they will need in their future jobs and what their options are when they leave Compass.

We have had time in class to apply for Post 16 destinations and are encouraging anyone who hasn't done this already to get their applications done before Christmas.

Weymouth College – Peter Vowles kindly gave up his time to come to talk to us about life at Weymouth College. Open days for next term are as follows:

- **Open Evening – Tuesday 6 February – 5.00pm - 7.30pm**
- **Open Day – Saturday 8 June – 10.00am - 12.30pm**

Register online at www.weymouth.ac.uk/register-open-day/ - registration not yet open.

Please also see their website for more information on Apprenticeships and current vacancies: www.weymouth.ac.uk/level-of-study/apprenticeships



Kingston Maurward

Three Year 11 students visited Kingston Maurward spending time finding out about the equine, sports and animal care courses. Their open days are as follows for next term:

- **Sunday 21 January – 10.00am or 11.00am** Register online at: https://ols.kmc.ac.uk/WCFWebSite/KMC_OnlineServices/events.aspx?KMCEventSection=1000020822974

MAX EVENTS



We are very lucky to have access to such a fantastic provision. Our Year 11 group have spent this term making improvements to the camp in preparation for the cold months over winter and creating a garden display that we will start to grow flowers and vegetables in from March.



The Year 10 group have been busy learning all the new bush craft skills and how to use the tools safely. They have made brushes, coat stands, prepared food to cook on an open fire and now wooden snowmen decorations for the festive period.



MARITIME

The maritime course continues to go from strength to strength. The students have participated in powerboating, paddleboarding, sailing, sail making, first aid, kayaking and windsurfing so far this term. The students will finish the year with a range of qualifications from the instructors at Portland Sailing academy. The students involved continue to grow in confidence and leadership skills. We have now been sailing with the Andrew Simpson Trust for seven years and we continue to fundraise in order to keep this relationship going into the future for more students to access.



Mark

ART NEWS

Back in September, a few of our students took part in a graffiti project at The Front Skatepark on Weymouth seafront. Over three days, they designed ideas and learnt how to create their own piece of graffiti art for an outbuilding at the skatepark. The students represented themselves and Compass perfectly and really enjoyed their experience.



The last few weeks, Key Stage 3 students have been working on a Colour project in Art. They have been exploring colour association and Remembrance Day Art. In class, students made a clay poppy which has been given to veterans at the Veterans Club in Wyke as gifts and talk to the veterans about their experiences. **Sian**



CATERING NEWS

We've had three months of fantastic cooking in the kitchen since the start of term in September.

Our newly refurbished kitchen is working well and is an excellent learning environment for our students. Each student has their own work area, cooker and equipment enabling them to become familiar and confident within a realistic 'home style' type kitchen environment.

All students have produced a wide range of different dishes over the last three months, preparing and cooking both sweet and savoury items such as Cornish pasties, Victoria sponge, chocolate brownies, macaroni cheese, Quesadillas and chocolate Swiss roll to name a few.

Our BTEC Level 1 students have been busy too, working through five modules so far covering bread, egg, soups, casseroles and breakfast items (their homemade hash browns were amazing!). Here are a few photos of some of the delicious food our students have produced this term.



Catherine

JUBILEE CHALLENGE

Compass Learning Centre has been offered the opportunity to join Westfield School on their organised training walks for the Jubilee Challenge, and the Jubilee Challenge walk itself, which happens on Dartmoor each year, over a weekend in May. The health benefits gained from completing these walks will be fantastic for all involved. We will make use of the incredible Dorset countryside for the training walks including from Ringstead beach, The White Horse, Osmington Mills, Lulworth, Redcliff, Portland and White Nothe. The Jubilee Challenge itself will take place on Dartmoor with an overnight camp. For further information, please view <https://www.tentors.org.uk/>. This is open to students in Year 10 and 11 and this year we have four students taking part in this incredible event. We hope to complete the challenge every year from now on.



The Jubilee Challenge is set up to allow students with additional need access similar opportunities to Ten Tors that may be unachievable for some. Westfield School have given us an incredible opportunity and students will need to respect that abilities and need will vary from student to student. Some students attended one of the training walks last year with huge success. We have completed two training walks so far this term. The first was Portland Heights to Compass totalling 10.3 miles and the second was Dorchester to Compass totalling 12 miles.

Mark

YEAR 11 MOCK EXAMS

Year 11 Mock Exams are taking place for two weeks beginning on **Monday 8 January 2024**.

An overview timetable will be published and students will be made aware of which exams they are taking.

There will be some changes to the start times for other students in Years 9 and 10, which you will be notified of separately.

If you have any questions regarding the mock exams please contact us.



KEY STAGE 3 NEWS

Key Stage 3 students have enjoyed some excellent outdoor adventures this term, where they have shown excellent resilience and enthusiasm in getting out and about in the best Dorset countryside.

We have carried out orienteering activities near Hardy's Cottage, climbed to the top of St Catherine's Chapel before descending to the sea, studied the sea defences at West Bay on the windiest of days and even climbed to the top of the Cerne Abbas Giant. We get a little wet and a little muddy but we are always smiling.



Students have shown incredible maturity and sensitivity during some very challenging debates and lesson content. We have learned about the origins of slavery, colonialism, and some more modern issues such as the BLM movement and segregation. They have shown real empathy and understanding to such content and they should be proud of their progressive attitudes.

Craig & Lucy

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE SPRING TERM 2024

As previously advised, our scheduled Spring Term INSET day has been changed to Thursday 28 March.

Spring Term dates are as follows:

Tuesday 2 January 2024	Spring Term begins
Monday 8 January 2024	Year 11 Mock Exams (2 weeks)
Thursday 1 February 2024	Parents Evening
Friday 9 February 2024	Students finish for half term holiday
Monday 19 February 2024	Students return from half term holiday
Wednesday 27 March 2024	Students finish for Easter holiday
Thursday 28 March 2024	INSET Day No: 3
Monday 15 April 2024	Students return from Easter holiday

ONLINE SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING UPDATE



The ever increasing use of the internet continues to pose safeguarding concerns for our students, mainly as victims but in some cases as the perpetrators. There are many websites which can provide parents with additional knowledge and guidance and information on who to contact if your own child is experiencing or has been the victim of cyberbullying, sexting, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) etc. The Compass website provides links to these websites. www.compass.dorset.sch.uk

Please find time to talk to your child about their use of the internet and how to keep safe. Do you know which sites they visit, the on-line games they play, the chat-lines they visit, the social media platforms they use, the pictures they post on-line and who to? Do you know if they have ever received inappropriate images or messages from a friend or someone they previously didn't know? What have you and they done to prevent this from happening again? Have you or they reported it to CEOP and/or the police if necessary.

CEOP.police.uk



Young people communicate using electronic media in their every day lives and find it hard to be without it and not in constant contact with friends. Whilst it is a good means of communication it can also mean that young people are unknowingly putting themselves at risk when they are out and about in their social groups. Some of the social platforms they use to communicate with each other provide tracking details which means that anyone can follow where they are and who they are with.

Following on from this, in a recent incident, which we are sure you are all aware of, live video footage was streamed on a social media platform showing a group assault on an individual. A totally inappropriate use of electronic media but a useful piece of evidence for the police to use.



Whilst every young person needs to learn how to deal and manage risk and how to protect themselves and others from harm, we as parents have a responsibility to help and guide them to make the right decisions. When your child goes out without you, do you know where they are going. Who they are with and what they are doing? We all have a responsibility to try and make our local communities a safe and enjoyable place to live.

If you have any concerns or need further assistance with regarding Online Safety or Safeguarding, please contact us.

FRIEND OF COMPASS

Friends of Compass is made up and supported by the staff and friends of Compass Learning Centre. Friends of Compass exists to raise money for the benefit of all the children at Compass.

Through our fundraising we have been able to provide equipment and resources for use by students within the school; provided funding to help with the development of the sensory garden and Summer School activities; and helped our Year 11 students to celebrate their time with Compass.

Our fundraising activities have been impacted over the past few year, but we are now back up and running.... our latest fundraiser is detailed below.



In the meantime if you, or someone you know, would like to support Friends of Compass then please do contact myself, Paula Doyle, Chairperson.

Tel: 01305 - 206530

email: office@compass.dorset.sch.uk.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us over the years.

Paula



Cryptic Quiz Sheets **£1**

Prize £25

Closing Date 31st January

Available from the school office.

