

Dear Parents and Carers,

Reflecting on the situation this time last year, there was much talk of us having to adjust to '*the new normal*' as a nation. And then things eased, it felt like they were getting better for a while and now, it seems, that we're close to the same place which we were in last year as we approach our Christmas break.

So on behalf of the team at Compass, I would like to say a huge **thank you** for your support and understanding over this term. It has been difficult at times, especially, these last few weeks as our Key Stage 4 teaching team has been decimated by illness. It is never an easy decision to have to ask children to work from home, however maintaining a safe environment has been at the forefront of my decision making, every time this has become necessary. I hope that from the new year we'll be in a much healthier place.

The return to school after the summer break went well. One of the highlights of the term included a good set of examination grades from last year's Year 11 students, the vast majority of whom have moved onto their choice of Post-16 destinations. This, as you know, was through a process called TAG's, or Teacher Assessed Grades. TAGs were calculated based on a robust process of providing evidence to the exam boards of work students produced and our assessment of their grades. I'm pleased to say that none of our grades were altered by the boards which left our students with the qualifications which they deserved, and us, secure in the knowledge that our processes of assessment and grading here are 'sound'.

This is relevant for the parents and carers of this year's Year 11 students as your children prepare to sit their Mock Exams in January. At this stage it is still the government's stated intention to run 'normal' public examinations in the summer. However, these past few weeks, a new and very infectious variant of COVID has been identified, Omicron, and as infection rates in the South West and particularly in Dorset, have been running at double the national infection rate lately, we cannot rule out at this point, that public exams will not be affected again.

Please ensure your child prepares well for their 'mocks' as a good result here will be used as a source of evidence, if public exams are altered in the end. We can only award grades on the evidence your child is able to produce, if it can't be evidenced it can't be awarded.

It has been a pleasure to meet and to welcome many more new students (and their families) into Compass and the rest of this newsletter shows other highlights of the term so far.

At this point, on behalf of staff and Governors at Compass, I warmly wish you all a lovely festive season and happy new year. Stay safe, stay well and look after one another.

Alison Glazier, Headteacher

Keeping Children and Young People Safe

Keeping children and young people safe: It's the responsibility of us all

No one could have escaped the news of the tragic death of 6 year old Arthur Labjinio Hughes as it hit the headlines last week. Our Corporate Director, Theresa Leavy wrote a very powerful and thought provoking blog on this which can be found here -

[Arthur Labinjo-Hughes - A reflection by Theresa Leavy ...](#)

We take this opportunity to remind you that if you are worried about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person who lives in Dorset contact our CHAD service on 01305 228866.

Can we also draw your attention to DEAL, a new service for Dorset, contact detail are below.

Dorset Education Advice Line (DEAL)

Do you want to discuss your child's emerging special educational needs? Are you worried that they might not be making the progress they should be?

Dorset Education Advice Line is a phone line for parents, carers and professionals who support children who may have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This advice line is part of our Local Offer to children, young people and families and will work alongside existing services such as SENDIASS and the Education Psychology helpline.

Call this number or [complete our Dorset Education Advice Line online form](#) to book a conversation with one of our SEND Family Workers if you have any concerns or questions about how to support your child:

Freephone 0800 14 040 41 - Lines are open:

- Monday to Friday
- 10am to 4pm
- term time only

A SEND Family Worker will email you with your 15 minute appointment where you can talk through your concerns and issues.

We're launching the service as a pilot so we can understand how we can improve our SEND Local Offer to you and improve this telephone support service.

Dorset Education Advice Line (DEAL)

Tel:Freephone 0800 14 040 41

Year 11 Employability Lessons

Students in Year 11 have been participating in 'Employability' lessons for the last few weeks where they have been preparing an Eco-friendly product to present at their very own Dragons Den!

The class needed to create a presentation and a prototype of their product to show the judges.

Between them, they came up with -

- A virtual reality mask with lasers that came with a portable WIFI box;
- The best internet broadband that was powered by both the sun and the moon;
- A glass / cork bottle that could be customised and styled to your preferences.

The presentations were amazing and well thought out with the students answering questions from the judges.

It was VERY close in points, 0.5 between them with the winner receiving an Amazon voucher!

Heather



Year 11 Exams - January 2022

Year 11 students will be undertaking Functional Skills and GCSE Mock exams during the two weeks from **10th - 21st January**.

More details will follow in January.



Max Events

We are into our second year of this provision where Years 10 and 11 students choose to study bush craft for a day a week as part of the broad and balanced curriculum we offer. This term, we have mainly been concentrating our efforts on building a camp and outdoor kitchen for us to use during the day.

Students have learnt how to build kitchen worktops, cook over a fire, make fire walls to keep the wind out of camp, build seating areas and develop the camp itself. We have also been lucky enough to do some reward activities such as axe throwing and archery which the students have really enjoyed.

Mark



Bikeability



Four students in Key Stage 3 were successful in completing their Bikeability Level 1 and 2 training this term.

It was the first time we have attempted this very important training and we are delighted with the progress the students made on the day.

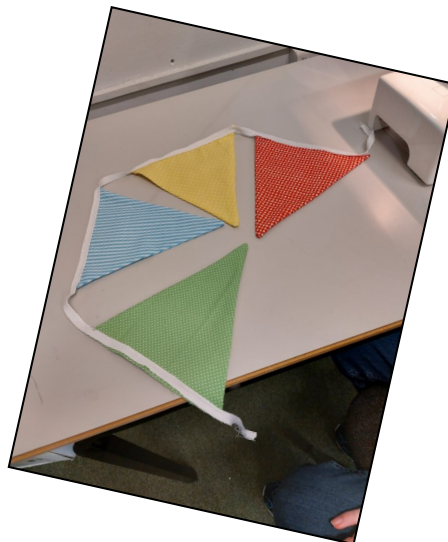
Level 3 will take place in the Spring Term, once the weather improves.

Craig

Textiles Enrichment

For their Friday enrichment activities a few students have been trying their hand at textiles, making simple items that they can take home to share with the family. By using the Compass sewing machines and over-locker they have learnt skills that will help them in their adult life...who hasn't had to repair a ripped seam?

Sue



Important Dates for the Spring Term

As you have already been advised, schools have been given an additional day off in recognition of the extra Bank Holiday next year for the Queen's Jubilee. Compass have chosen to take this day on **Thursday 17 February 2022**.

This means students will finish for the half term holiday on Wednesday 16 February and return to school on Monday 28 February 2022.

Spring Term dates are as follows:

Tuesday 4 January 2022	Spring Term Begins
Monday 10 January 2022	Year 11 Functional Skills and Mock Exams begin (two weeks)
Thursday 3 February 2022	Key Stage 3 Parents Evening
Wednesday 16 February 2022	Students finish for half term holiday
Monday 28 February 2022	Students return from half term holiday
Thursday 3 March 2022	Key Stage 4 Parents Evening
Thursday 7 April 2022	Students finish for Easter holiday
Monday 25 April 2022	Students return from Easter holiday

Sailing

This year has seen us develop our sailing programme at The Andrew Simpson Sailing Academy for the fifth year. Students have had the opportunity to learn new skills and gain experience at sailing boats in some of the best waters in Northern Europe. We have students working towards becoming level 2 and 3 sailors already and we look forward to being back on the water in April....when its a little less chilly.

Mark



A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and Happy New Year!