

Principal's Report

Most of you will be aware that Bel is leaving the Centre School after thirteen years, and she will be a huge loss. She wants to change direction and build on the project she has started with her husband Kev, and to study Fine Arts. Bel will be missed by staff and students; she is positive, lively and has a great sense of humour. Bel qualified as a teacher during her time here; she has proved to be an excellent classroom practitioner, ensuring that all students gain qualifications in Science.

I am sure that we will see Bel around in the future, helping at the Farm and doing the odd day's supply! For now, we wish her all the very best for the future.

There has been a very busy term with lots going on, all of which you can see in this newsletter. We have welcomed some of our new starters for visits, and we hope that they feel positive and enthusiastic about joining us here in September.

The fantastic feedback we received on the Centre Celebration evening goes a long way to reassure me that our young people are benefiting and learning here. An ex-student who has held down a job in catering for three years came to see us that evening, and he said to a visitor "This school changed my life!" It may have been a rocky road but it was worth every minute just to hear that!

Thank you to the staff team who work tirelessly for our students and thank you to all parents and carers who support us and their young people on a daily basis.

Enjoy the break, and have a great summer!

Sue Raven



There are lots more photos and info on our Facebook page, Twitter feed and Instagram page. You can get to these from the home page of the Centre School website.

The school website is www.astreacentreschool.org

Brenscombe April 2023



The Spring visit to the wonderful Jurassic Coast actually took place at the end of last term, just before Easter. They missed out on getting into the Easter Newsletter and so here they are! The weather was not helpful, but the week was as great as ever.



Peak District Residential

This was a new trip for the Centre School, organised by Toria and David. The idea was to provide a residential visit for students who'd had no opportunity of doing anything like this in their previous schools. The group hiked in the Peak District, visited gorgeous Dovedale, went to Alton Towers and finished at Tropical Bird World.



Will:

The trip was really good fun. I've not been able to do school trips before. The hike was the best part—really fun! Hard work but worth it—the view was amazing! Alton Towers was good, and we all enjoyed Amare's screaming! Bird World was very good too—the parrots were very friendly, and would eat from your hands and sit on your shoulders! We all got on very well together.



Sam B:

I haven't taken part in a residential since going to Norfolk with my primary school. We got on well as a group on this trip. The Smiler ride at Alton Towers was scary—and I enjoyed the hike although going so high up was scary. I would love to do things like this again!



D-Day Battlefields Trip - Normandy

We are very fortunate at the Centre School that we are able to provide some amazing opportunities for our students—such as the incredible Normandy trip in April! As a change from our long-running 3-day First World War Battlefields trip, Normandy remembers D-Day in 1944 and the Allied Invasion of Europe that led eventually to the defeat of Nazi Germany. The reminders of the fighting here are still clearly visible all along the Normandy coastline, and there is so much to see. The landing beaches where so many on both sides lost their lives are now beautiful holiday destinations again, but the evidence of the past is never far away.

Local guide **Steven Oldrid** joined us for the first morning, and provided lots of fascinating detail about Ranville Cemetery and Pegasus Bridge

"Strange to think," said **Alfie**, "that 79 years ago, this peaceful beach was full of war and killing."

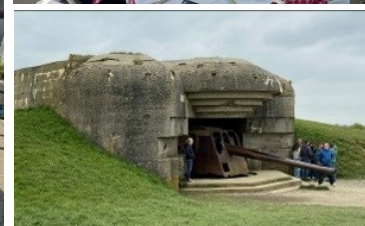
George was "impressed with how close gliders got to Pegasus Bridge."

Leo loved Bayeux, and was very impressed with the Bayeux Tapestry. He enjoyed the trip so much that he'd like to do it all over again!

George thought it was a bit weird trying to do the shopping in French!

Matthew thought it was random but cool that a German Tiger tank had been abandoned in a ditch and was still displayed nearby!

All agreed that it was an amazing experience and they enjoyed travelling and learning with their friends. See the Centre School Facebook page for day-to-day details of our travels back in April.



D-Day Battlefields Trip - Normandy



Art

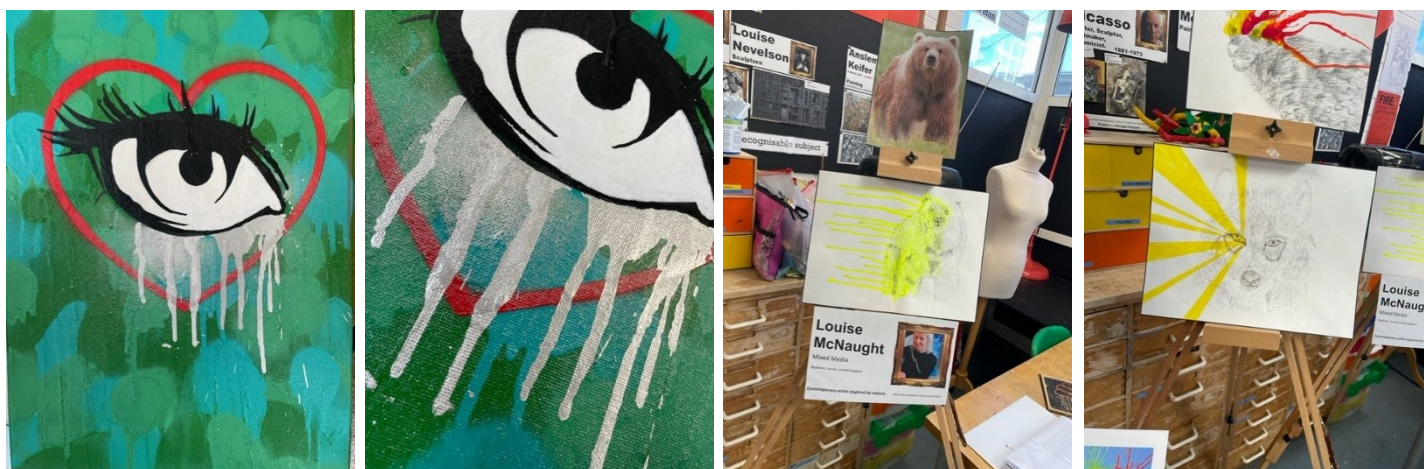
Every so often, Laura (our amazing Art teacher) will ask the staff to look out for plastic bottles, or drink can ring-pulls, or similar random objects. We try to oblige, but we never know what it going to emerge from the Art Room! We are never disappointed!



Laura writes:

This term we have been looking at abstract artists Jean Arp, Yayoi Kusama and Pablo Picasso to inspire our own work. There has been a heavy emphasis on sculpture and talking about the elements of art when looking at artworks and discussing our own.

Students were tasked with making an abstract sculpture in the style of Jean Arp using a pair of tights, wire and a block of wood. They were then introduced to the artist Yayoi, students completed a pastiche of her abstract work and then looked at her flower sculptures. They then turned their Jean Arp inspired sculptures into a Yayoi inspired sculpture with the addition of patterns and flowers.



Art



Sea Fishing

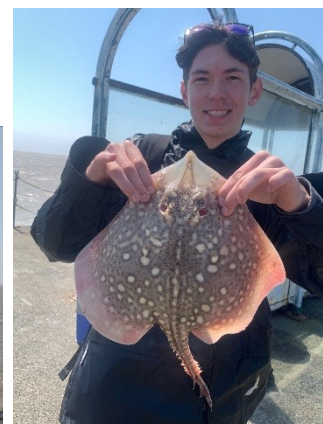
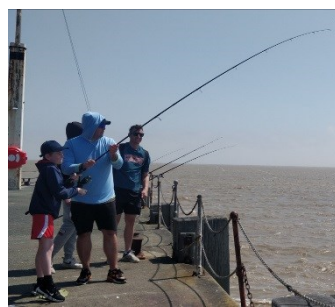
Student TMc: the sea fishing trip was very enjoyable because I got to do loads of fishing with my friends. I caught 2 dog sharks . I also enjoyed the fish and chips. Thank you Stu for arranging it!

Student TL: the sea fishing trip was cool. I caught a a dog shark! It was really windy and even up on the pier the waves soaked me ! Thank you to the teachers!

Nat says: I have never been sea fishing before and was surprised at the conditions you have to fish in - very windy! It was so nice to spend the day seeing the kids do something they love and to see their patience

and support of each other !

It's also a bit scary when you see what is swimming around in the ocean!



The Centre School Farm



Doris says:

"Check out the #FarmFriday posts on the School's social media platforms!"

The Centre School Farm is a really important part of school life now, and many students and staff attend on a regular basis. Different students access the facilities in different ways - some go to work, and they work hard doing a range of jobs. They learn new skills, and use new tools. Other students may not be as keen to get on with the jobs, but they benefit from being outdoors and getting some fresh air. Some students just like to visit the animals and collect the eggs. Whatever their interaction with the farm, students and staff all benefit from the change of pace and the interaction with nature. The stress of the morning's lessons fades away when you are harvesting the veg, or sitting in the field with the sheep feeding out of your hands. Other schools are beginning to use our farm too, as was always intended; Dunks' amazing vision for the Centre School farm is really becoming reality.



The Centre School Farm—Farm to Fork!



The Farm is now supplying the kitchen!!

Although we couldn't feed the whole school yet, salad vegetables from the Farm has been used by students studying cooking to add to their Chicken Caesar Salads!



Making Terrariums



Students had a great time making their own ecosystem!

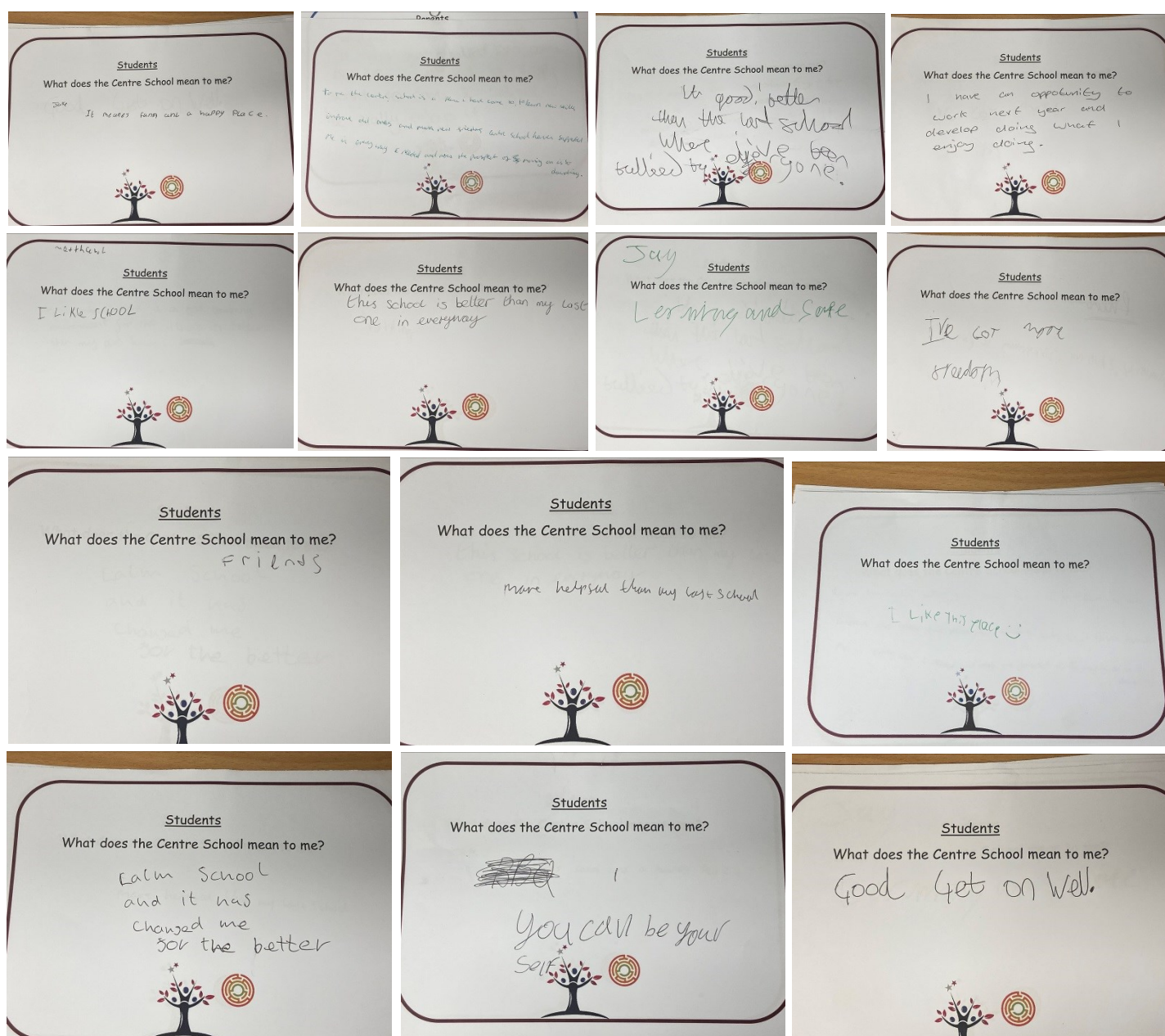
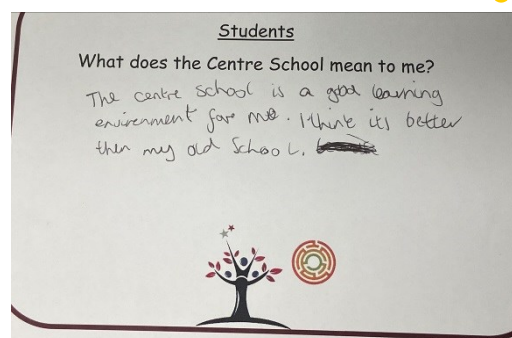
They found some woodlice to keep the Terrarium in tip-top condition and they then built up the layers of different materials to allow the plants and creepy crawlies to thrive!



Centre Celebration 2023— What the School means to us

The Centre Celebration is our annual Open Evening, when we celebrate all the good work being done in school. It was very well-attended this year, and it was great to meet so many parents and hear what they think about us! The classrooms are open, all the students' work is set out, and there are activities for all to get involved in. Plus the BBQ of course!!

One of the most simple but powerful things that we do on the Open Evening is the What the Centre School Means to Me sheets. It's in two versions—one for students, and one for parents. The parents usually write more, but sometimes it's the short, honest statements from students that have the most impact.



Centre Celebration 2023— What the School means to us

Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

Very good so far, helpful and good communication.

Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

The School helps my child with all the needs
Very good

Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

Knowing Liam is in a safe place.
Seeing how much Liam has developed.
Seeing him happy.

Alizzia D



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

Harry has really grown in his time at the Centre School. He is much more confident and I am very happy with the support he has had here. Very excited for his next step as an apprentice at the Centre School.

Julie (mum)



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

Center school has been doing for my son in the short space of time he has been here.

Thank you!



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

The Centre School has given Archie's openness that no other school was able to. I am very grateful, Archie being back in school has restored a balance within our family. We are very grateful. Thank you.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

THE SCHOOL MEANS SO MUCH TO MATT AND SINCE STARTING IN YEAR 7 HE HAS REALLY GROWN AND "FOUND HIMSELF" THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT

NADINE + ALI



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

The School is fantastic, my son has settled in extremely well.

Keep up the amazing work.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

My son is safe, happy and learning!



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

The Centre School gives me the confidence that however much my child doesn't like the school environment he does love this school which helps encouraging him to go.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

Relief finally where he should be. meets his needs. School easy to communicate with.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

It has really helped Leo come out of his shell and be happy want to come to school. he really enjoys it.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

has opened my sons options to view the world after a bad primary school experience.



Parents

What does the Centre School mean to me?

The Centre School has helped Adrian very much he has grown since his old school.



PSHE lessons — water safety



Crox writes:

This term in PSHE students have been learning about the dangers of cold water. One of the main reasons why people drown is cold water shock and students had the opportunity to experience what happens to the human body when it is in cold water. Students put their arm in water which was around 14 degrees (same as the sea around the UK). They kept their arm in the water for a minute. Using the thermal camera, we could show students how their body temperature had cooled. As you can see from the photo of Aaron his arm is blue from the cold of the water. This activity certainly raised how important it is to learn how to manage cold water shock by laying on your back and floating.

Fishing Match

Fishing continues to be a significant activity for the students of the Centre School. Lots of good skills can be learned (such as patience!) and the benefits of being outdoors are well-known. The regular fishing match took place recently, and the weather was not kind. The photos of bedraggled students illustrates this!

Billy won, as you might be able to tell from the photos — and Alfie W came in second.



Theatre Trip

A small group travelled to London recently to experience live theatre at a performance of ***The Book of Mormon***. They also got to play with Lego and meet Darth Vader!



Football Tournament



We sent four teams to the Cambridgeshire SEN Schools' Football Tournament in June, and we did rather well! The two Key Stage 4 teams (Year 10 up) achieved First and Second place in their age group, and the two Key Three teams (Year 7-9) won Second and Third places. This gave us the overall Winners Trophy, but perhaps more importantly **we won the Fair Play award!**



Team Building Day

The Centre School holds regular off-timetable days when we run activities to raise the profile of British Values, good mental health and most recently, Team Building! These days are always fun and educational—and the students learned a lot about working together!



Aqua Park—best place on a very hot day!



Kilo's "Shred it up" tour



Kilo writes: Following on from the recent interest shown by students in scooting and skateboarding, Brad, Sam and I decided to team up and do a mini-tour of local skate parks in this region. After the promise of a free

McDonalds, Joe Hinson agreed to join us! Joe is a former Centre School student, and now 3-times UK National Champion skateboarder. The day was a great success, and all involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves—including staff!

Staff member Bradley has also been working with organisation called **Let's Skate** to teach students the basics of skateboarding. This is run by the "amazing" Jason, who is very supportive with our students. Brad enjoys seeing the students pushing themselves outside their comfort zone, and says that it's great to see them developing their skills. very popular, and many new skills are being learned! It's also good exercise, as the photo taken after a scooting session shows!



Annabel's Safeguarding Bit - Cambs Local Offer

At The Centre School, we believe that working in partnership with families, outside agencies and other professionals is key to creating an environment where our students can thrive. A great place to find out about what is going on in the local area for young people and young adults with SEND is Cambridgeshire's Local Offer Page (link below). Here, you can find information on:

- services that are available to everyone, such as schools and GPs
- targeted support and services for children and young people who may need some additional, short-term support
- specialist services for children and young people who have complex needs and need longer term specialised support

If you do access any support through this service, we would love to know about it so we can keep up to date with what our students and their families are experiencing. We're all about building relationships here at The Centre School and the more we have to chat about with the students and their families, the easier this becomes.

<https://send.cambridgeshire.gov.uk>



Dates for next term

There are two Training Days at the beginning of the Autumn Term, and our staff will be coming out for Home Visits on **Wednesday 6th September**.

Times of meetings, and the staff coming to see you, will be on the letter sent with this newsletter.

Training Days: **Monday 4th / Tuesday 5th September 2023 (closed to students)**

Parent Visits: **Wednesday 6th September 2023 (closed to students)**

Term Starts: **Thursday 7th September 2023**

Half-term: **Monday 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2023**

Training Day: **Friday 24th November 2023 (Closed to students)**

End of term: **Wednesday 20th December 2023**