Spring 1 Newsletter



Headteacher's message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the halfway point of the school year, it brings me immense joy to reflect on the remarkable achievements of our students and staff here at Educate U. The corridors today are filled with the laughter of settled, happy children who are thriving in our nurturing school environment and I am reminded that their enthusiasm for learning and positive attitudes towards school life are a testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire school community with our incredible staff and parent and carer group.

We are thrilled to announce that we have been awarded the prestigious Wellbeing Award for Schools status. This recognition underscores our commitment to promoting the wellbeing of every student (and our staff), ensuring they feel supported, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential. Our focus on mental health and emotional resilience continues to be a cornerstone of our ethos, and we are proud to provide a safe and supportive environment where all students can thrive.

Our subject specialists have been working tirelessly to ensure that our curriculum is broad, relevant and engaging, and tailored to meet the diverse needs and interests of our children and young people. By focusing on detailed curriculum planning and implementation, we want to equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to succeed in an ever-changing world.

Finally, we are dedicated to strengthening our channels of communication with parents and carers to build on a collaborative partnership in support of the children's education. We recognise the importance of transparent and open communication, and we are committed to keeping you informed about school events, academic progress, and opportunities for involvement. Together, we can continue to nurture a positive and inclusive school community where every voice is valued and heard.

As we embark on the second half of the school year we will continue to celebrate achievements, overcome challenges, and inspire excellence in all that we do.

Wishing you a restful February half term break.

Sarah Paoletti

Headteacher

Staffing changes

Saying Good bye

Katy Merryfield-Day bids us farewell as she embarks on a journey to fulfil her passions outside of a classroom environment and we wish her every success with her next endeavours.

Official Wellbeing Award for School Status!

Wellbeing Award for Schools

On 23rd January, we welcomed Mark J the independent assessor from the Wellbeing Award for Schools. Together with Mark Brown (Educate U) the assessor spent the day going through evidence that the school's wellbeing change team have been collating over the last year, as well as meeting school leaders, some of the staff team, students and parents / carers. This was topped off with a short presentation by our senior mental health lead (and Parent/Carer connection) Mark, about the school's mental health provision and our vision for the future. The conclusion of the day was that Educate U was awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools!

Mark J commented "*The evidence presented, together with meetings with stakeholders, demonstrated that Educate U is passionate about emotional wellbeing and mental health (EWMH). Leaders and staff are committed to supporting the wellbeing of pupils, colleagues and parents and this is reflected across the whole provision. A truly impressive school.*"

We would like to thank everyone from across the whole school community that were involved in the process; from those who were part of our change team, met with the assessor, completed one of our evaluations or who gave ideas and support in any way.

Looking towards the future, the work carried out to achieve the award will now lay a foundation that we can be developed on, to grow and further support our children and young people, and each other across the wider school community.

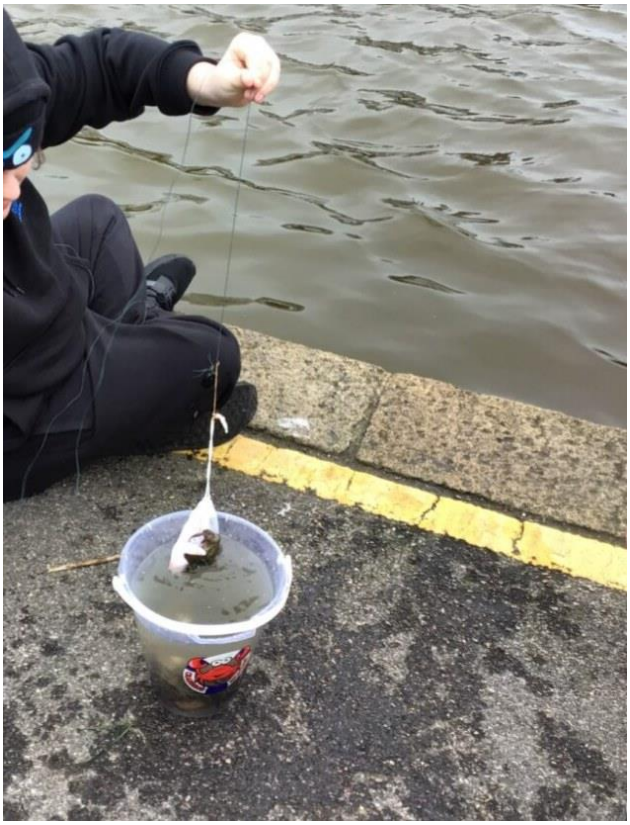
Outdoor Education

Our Outdoor Education sessions this half term have proved extremely popular with our first venture at Littlehampton Harbour. Our primary children's topic focus being 'The World Around Us' saw children explore the vicinity to understand how it has evolved over time. Our secondary children's topic 'World of Work' saw the children visit the Lifeboat station where they had opportunities to listen to RNLI staff talk about what it takes to become a member, ask lots of questions, and inspect the Lifeboats and equipment. This visit was particularly apt as it coincided with the RNLI SOS Day. Afterwards, children got very excited when they went crabbing by the harbourside.











We didn't let the drizzly weather dampen our spirits on our second Outdoor Education visit to Arundel. Our objective was to solve the clues to a Treasure Hunt which led us through streets and walkways across the town. By reading, discussing, and solving clues we found out how Arundel used to be a thriving fishing port and discovered in its heyday hundreds of years ago, there were forty-two ale houses! We even found a traditional sweet shop where the children behaved impeccably as they chose, ordered, and shared various sweets from their given allowance.

Our first Outdoor Education session after half term will be to Southwater Park near Horsham (This is the rescheduled trip from January, postponed due to inclement weather). As it is national engineering week,

children's learning will have a STEM focus. We look forward to reporting back even more news about how we use the outdoor environment to develop our learning and social interaction skills.

Student Council



This half term the student council are still going strong, with more students wanting to join, which we are more than happy to accommodate. We are so proud of the consistent determination the students bring each time we meet.

The discussion in last week's meeting was planning for 'Children's mental health week'. The student council excelled sharing ideas of activities they can do within their classes. They also thought this would be a great opportunity to finish the school half term bringing the school together for a jacket potato lunch. They chose the rainbow this year and allocated different colours to each class. The rainbow represents us as a school all coming together as one. One thing that is brought up a lot in our meetings is how much the children enjoy coming together as one, so this the perfect time for our children and young people to be shown that their voice matters.

Visit from Dv8



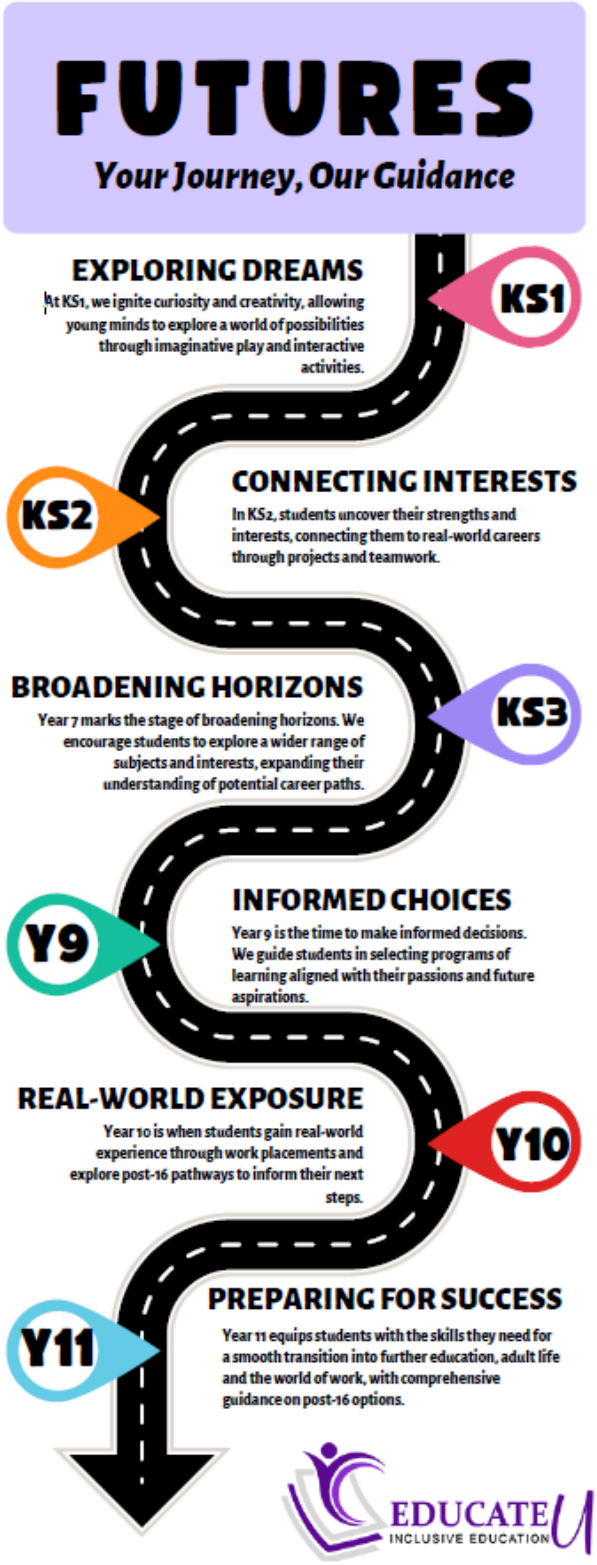
On Thursday the 8th of February we welcomed Nicola from Dv8 through our doors to inform our students about the wonderful provision that Dv8 offer.

Pupils learnt about the variety of opportunities within the music industry, from performance to production, we saw how Dv8 follow student's passions in order to get the best out of them.

We learnt about the range of career options within the media industry. Our young people learnt about presenting and broadcasting information as well as the enormous amount of work that goes on behind the scenes in the industry.

Finally, we dove head-first into the world of game design and development. We found out about the range of skills that would be built during the excellent courses available, from modelling to programming. The level 2 and 3 course breakdown was clear and our young people got a great deal from this experience. We thank Nicola and the team at Dv8 for their help and assistance.

Futures



Futures: Your Journey, Our Guidance

As the school year continues, we continue helping our young people navigate through the ever-evolving landscape of career opportunities, it is crucial for our students to be well-informed and inspired. In our relentless pursuit of this goal, we've embarked on a series of educational and enlightening visits, along with a range of exciting upcoming events.

Broadening Horizons

Our recent visit to Brinsbury College was fantastic. Students had the unique opportunity to delve into the world of Animal Care, Construction, and Conservation. This experience was not just about observing; it was about engaging with professionals, understanding day-to-day responsibilities, and gaining insights into what these careers truly entail.

Connecting Interests

Equally exciting was our engagement with The SAND Project. Here, students were exposed to a range of career paths, each with its own challenges and rewards. The project's diverse scope gives the chance for students to follow their passions and build businesses around them.

Real-World Exposure

Not only have we had Dv8 visit our students older students this week, we are thrilled to announce upcoming visits from representatives of The Army, and the NHS. These sessions are designed to not only inform but also to ignite passion and curiosity among our students. We cannot wait to welcome more wonderful post-16 provisions through our doors.

Informed Choices

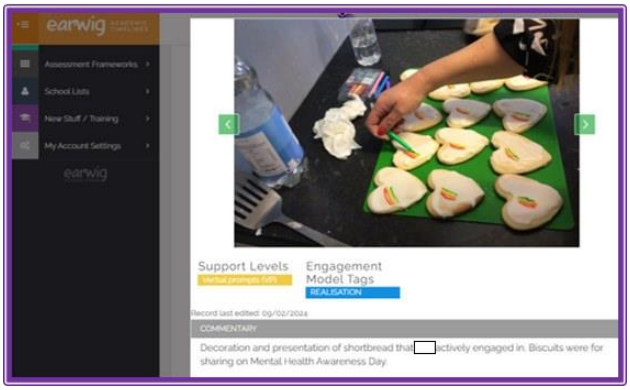
We understand that every student is unique, as such, we continue to tailor our career guidance to suit individual interests and aspirations. We believe that fostering these interests and providing bespoke support and guidance empowers our young people to make the most informed choices possible. There is plenty more for our young people to look forward to over the coming months. If you have links with a company that would like opportunities to access our school as a potential provider please email our futures lead: mike@educauteu.co.uk

Earwig

We are thrilled to announce that EarWig is now live at Educate U! EarWig is our internal system designed to track individual child tasks against their IEP and EHCP targets, offering actual evidence of their progress throughout the day. One of the most exciting features of EarWig is the ability to share selected photos and comments with parents, providing a deeper insight into their child's daily life and achievements. While these photos may not always focus on the actual work itself, they capture important moments such as using specific learning tools or achieving targets related to Social, Emotional, and Mental Health.

Alongside the application, we have set up an Earwig school email to answer any questions, resolve any problems or give more details where requested (earwig@educateu.co.uk). Additionally, all the work will be available for viewing on IEP day, allowing parents to explore it in more depth. So, if you see anything amazing, make sure to ask the teacher, who will have it ready for you on the day.

We are working to enrich communication and engagement between school and home through our EarWig journey, and we eagerly anticipate receiving feedback from stakeholders to further enhance communication.



Children's Mental Health Week



It has been wonderful to hear the activities that have been happening around the school during this week. This year's theme was **'My voice matters'.** We are so proud of the children highlighting the importance of their voices being heard. Wow! Once again, another successful whole school lunch. The student council helped prepare and serve over 40 jacket potatoes! Everyone was full and happy. We thank every student and staff member that joined in wearing a colour of the rainbow, it really did light up the hall. For children who couldn't make the school lunch they shone in other ways; we had tie dyed tee-shirts and hair sprayed all manner of colours. Thank you to all students who have participated and to their parents and carers for supporting.

Therapeutic Parents Group



Come and join us once a week in a supportive and relaxing environment.

As we navigate the complexities of trauma-informed care, we understand that caring for the wellbeing of our parents is essential. We have been thinking of ways that we can support your wellbeing and bring about a real sense of community.

We want to organise groups with shared experiences e.g. Our existing families, new families, care-experienced/SGO families.

What will each group offer? A valuable opportunity for you to cultivate a sense of shared experience and connection, all within a supportive and therapeutic environment.

How? You will experience first-hand what it feels like to listen to understand rather than listen to respond or 'fix'. Through guided principles of PACE (a trauma-informed practice developed by Dan Hughes) we hope you feel supported and part of a community of parents.

How often? 4 weekly sessions of up to 1 hour per week. We kindly ask for you to commit to the 4 sessions.

Day/Time: Thursday 10:30 – 11:30

Venue: Therapy House

Maximum group number? 6 people

Please let us know by Friday 23rd February if this is something you may be interested in so that we can begin to finalise plans. You can email kym@educateu.co.uk and priya@educateu.co.uk to register your interest.

School Improvement

I am delighted to share the incredible feedback we have received from our independent School Improvement Partner, a current serving Ofsted inspector, Shaun Jarvis. His assessment of our school's performance has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the progress of our students and the journeys they have made in their time at school, and the strong leadership at all levels that underpins our success. This validation reinforces our ongoing efforts to deliver outstanding education.

Comments from the report:

"The curriculum was revamped and now sets out more clearly the knowledge and skills pupils will learn in each subject from Reception through to Year 11 with attention to sequencing. English, mathematics, PSHE, Geography, History, RE, PE, Art, STEM, ASDAN and all have dedicated subject leaders that have put in place long, medium and short-term plans. SP described collaboration between subject leaders so that links across the curriculum are carefully made. Phonics follows a validated SSPP (Twinkl) and this is followed with fidelity for the vast majority of pupils. However, leaders have chosen to use other programmes for selected pupils with a clear rationale."

In relation to our mock deep dive in Maths at school:

"Leaders monitor the implementation of the mathematics curriculum. They use learning walks and book scrutiny, along with discussions with pupils, to check how well the planned curriculum has been learned. Leaders have identified key foci on which they place an emphasis, for example adaptive teaching. This monitoring helps them to make suitable adaptations to the curriculum, but also to support staff in delivering the curriculum effectively. The subject leader is clear about the strengths of the subject, for example the strong progress pupils make in mathematics. He has identified priorities around further instilling a love of mathematics for all pupils and working towards all pupils leaving with the mathematical knowledge, skills and qualifications they need to pursue their next steps and be fully prepared for adulthood"

News from Westminster



We are excited to announce that Educate U along with a group of other local headteachers and school leaders were recently invited to Westminster by Sir Peter Bottomley MP for a networking event aimed at networking and collaboration among schools in our community. This unique opportunity allowed headteachers to engage in discussions about pressing local issues and share insights and strategies for addressing them. The event provided a platform for forging valuable connections with other schools, laying the groundwork for future collaborations and the exchange of best practices. We are committed to nurturing these newly formed networks to ensure that our schools continue to thrive and provide the best possible education for our students

For more details see: **Celebrating Our Schools in**... - Sir Peter Bottomley MP | Facebook

Safeguarding updates



Some parents and carers may be aware of some of the changes around school in terms of Safeguarding. In both Primary and Secondary we have a Safeguarding Display. On this is a picture of our Designated Safeguarding Lead; Emma Jenkinson and our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead; Mark Brown to ensure that students, staff and visitors know who to speak to should they have any safeguarding concerns. As well as this both Mark and Emma will be updating it with information in terms of support and signposting for our pupils.

All visitors of the school will come upstairs as usual and be greeted by a member of the office team who will sign them in. They will then receive a red lanyard to wear while on the premises. This is to ensure that both staff and children are aware this person has been signed in as per our policy and to ensure they are always with a member of staff.

On signing in we have now created a Safeguarding leaflet which has information on how we safeguard all pupils, pictures of both our DSL and DDSL as well as what to do should our visitors have any concerns when on site.

Parent and Carer Connection



As a reminder, we have our Parent and Carer Connection Mark Brown, available at the school entrance or via phone every day from 09:30am – 10:10am or bookable outside of these times if your child travels in by taxi. This is to discuss any worries or concerns that you may have which affect your child. Mark is able to signpost, deal with any concerns and address issues directly.

Please contact him at mark@educate.co.uk or on 01903 297906

Policy Updates

Some policies have been reviewed and updated to align with our trauma informed ethos and to continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all our children and young people. Firstly, our **Trauma Informed Anti-bullying policy** has been revised to further enhance our approach to addressing bullying behaviour while also considering the impact of trauma on both children who have been bullied and children who have bullied and how we manage a response to both.

Additionally, our **Trauma Informed Behaviour Policy** has undergone updates to better support students who may be dealing with various forms of trauma. These changes emphasise a compassionate and understanding approach to behaviour management while prioritising the wellbeing of every student.

Parent/Carer voice matters. These policies have taken the comments that parents have made in the previous parent surveys and reflect parent suggestions too.

Finally, the **Curriculum Policy** has been reviewed and updated to reflect the our approach to both the formal and semi-formal curriculums that we offer. These revisions aim to provide an enriching learning experience for all students, catering to their diverse needs and ensuring equitable access to quality education.

Please see our website for full policy details Policy - Educate U

Changes to the way we discuss provision.

In response to parent and carer feedback and to enhance transparency regarding your child's progress, we are refining our approach to IEP days. Moving forward, your child's work will be prominently displayed in a nearby area, providing you with the opportunity to review it before or after your scheduled meeting. A member of your child's team will be on hand to assist with any inquiries you may have. Additionally, we will open the hall for your convenience, offering refreshments and the chance to engage with all members of our senior leadership team, including our SENDCO, Georgina Spoor, and our lead therapist, Kym Clay. We appreciate your ongoing support of Educate U.

Additionally, your child's teacher will reach out to you via phone every 4-6 weeks to have a discussion regarding the support and provisions in place for your child at school, as well as any adjustments that may be necessary to further aid their progress.

Signposting



1 - [Free Online Session for Parents or Carers Concerned About Youth Self-Harm Tickets, Wed 21 Feb 2024 at 19:30 | Eventbrite]

2023-24 Calendar

