Spring Term 1 Newsletter 2025/26



Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of Spring half-term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been a busy, positive and genuinely exciting half term for our school community.

This half term, we were pleased to welcome visitors as part of our Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) process. It was a really valuable opportunity to showcase the work we do every day to support our learners and to reflect honestly on where we are and where we are heading. The feedback was validating and constructive, and it recognised the strong relationships, trauma-informed practice and inclusive ethos that sit at the heart of our provision. A big thank you to staff and pupils alike for representing the school so brilliantly.

We were also honoured to welcome the High Sheriff of West Sussex, Dr. Tim Fooks this half term. It was a fantastic opportunity to share our vision, celebrate our pupils' achievements and highlight the importance of specialist education within the wider community. Our learners spoke with confidence and pride about their experiences, and it was a real reminder of how far many of them have come.

Our Post-16 Careers Fair was another highlight. Pupils explored pathways, asked thoughtful questions and began to think more deeply about their next steps. Events like this are so important in helping our young people build aspiration, confidence and a sense of possibility and it was wonderful to see them so engaged. The event is also a really good way to support

our families to access provisions and signposting from one place rather than have to individually visit many post-16 providers.

This half term has also been a significant one for pupils sitting mock exams and preparing for external assessments. Students in KS3 and KS4 have sat an incredible 32 exams, not including our GCSE mock fortnight. Exams can be challenging, particularly for learners with additional needs, and I want to recognise the effort, perseverance and courage shown by our pupils. Staff have worked tirelessly to provide the right balance of support, reassurance and high expectations, and that teamwork really shows.

Finally, we are continuing to move forward with plans for expansion, which is an exciting step for the school. Currently 17 Liverpool Gardens is being prepared and we hope that in time this will be open for students to use. This growth reflects both the demand for our provision and our commitment to ensuring that more young people can access the support, education and opportunities they deserve. We'll be sharing more details as plans progress, but it's a really positive direction for the future.

Thank you, as always, to our families, staff and pupils for your continued support and trust. I hope everyone has a well-earned rest over the break, and I'm looking forward to another productive and rewarding half term ahead.

Sarah Paoletti

Headteacher

Staffing

Goodbye to..

Carl D - We are saying a fond goodbye to Carl Downs, who has been a Teaching Assistant in Kalee's class. Carl has been a calm, consistent and caring presence for our pupils, and we are incredibly grateful for the support and commitment he has shown during his time with us. We wish him every success in his next chapter and thank him sincerely for all he has contributed to our school.

Welcome to...

Kayleigh – Kayleigh will be stepping into the role of class teacher, taking over from Kalee. Kayleigh comes with years of experience working in SEN and SEMH provisions and we're confident she will do a fantastic job leading the class and continuing the excellent work already in place.

Alex - Alex starts as a teaching assistant after half term and brings enthusiasm and a real passion for supporting young people, and we're delighted to welcome him into this role. He will be starting alongside Kayleigh in class 8.



1 - Kayleigh



2 - Alex

Potential Expansion

We're currently making improvements to 17 Liverpool Gardens, with an eye firmly on the future. The additional building will not only enhance the space for our current students but also give us the flexibility to expand the provision over time. Once complete, the area has

the potential to accommodate up to 24 students, supporting our continued growth while maintaining the calm, supportive environment our young people need to thrive.

Whole School Events



This half term we have celebrated World Religion Day which gave us the perfect opportunity to explore and appreciate the rich diversity of beliefs and traditions that make up our community. It was fantastic to see our students engaging with curiosity and respect, learning about different faiths, and sharing their own experiences and the Whole School Events board in the hall is testament to the lovely work our children and young people have completed as part of this.

February marks LGBTQ+ month which we celebrate across the school. It has been truly inspiring to see our learners begin to engage in thoughtful discussions, creative projects, and activities that celebrate diversity and inclusivity.

We are all different and teaching our children and young people to celebrate difference and have acceptance for others is crucial in supporting community inclusion and development of social skills. Our whole school events are more than just dates in the calendar they are opportunities for our students to develop empathy, confidence, and pride in who they are, and to learn to value differences in others. I am so proud of the way our school community has embraced this focus with such openness and positivity. These are exactly the qualities that help Educate U feel like a truly inclusive and caring place.

Curriculum Trips

Secondary

As part of our current topic, “Planning a Trip,” each secondary class has been busy organising their own class excursion. From researching destinations to planning itineraries and activities, students have taken ownership of the process and demonstrated excellent teamwork. See below for the destination and date of each class trip.

Friday 13th March - Hever Castle - Kayleigh's Class

Monday 23rd March - Brighton Marina/Bowling - Ellies Class

Wednesday 25th March - I360/Upside Down House - Caroline's Class

Wednesday 25th March - Jump In - Hannah's Class

Wednesday 25th March - LazerZone - Martha's Class

Primary

To complement the Primary classes "Life Cycle" topic, pupils will be visiting Drusillas Zoo Park, where they will have the opportunity to observe a variety of animals and explore habitats, growth, and development.

Laura's and Elle's class will be going Thursday 26th March.

Attendance



Every Day Counts This Spring

As we move into the second half of the Spring term, we'd like to thank families for their continued support with attendance. Being in school every day really does make a difference not just academically, but socially and emotionally too.

Spring term is when learning really builds momentum, and regular attendance helps children:

- Keep up with new learning
- Build confidence and independence
- Maintain friendships and routines

Did you know?

- 95% attendance = almost 2 weeks of learning missed over a year

- 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed

We understand that winter illnesses happen. Please remember that if your child is well enough to attend, being in school is always the best place for them.

At Educate U, we know that some families face challenges that can make regular attendance difficult. If you're worried about your child's attendance or are experiencing barriers to getting them into school, please talk to us. You can contact:

- Your child's class teacher
- The school office

REASONS FOR ABSENCE - ILLNESS

Please remember when phoning or emailing in for a child who is absent from school, we require a reason for the absence, otherwise it may be recorded as unauthorised.

Always try and send your child to school even if they are a little 'under the weather' - for example with a runny nose, cough, headache or tummy ache. We will always contact you if your child becomes too unwell to stay in school. We encourage you to send your child to school after giving them paracetamol, if needed.

Who can help?

Pharmacists in England can now conduct consultations and prescribe antibiotics for certain conditions, making healthcare more accessible and convenient.

If your child has any of the following:

• Sore throat

• Earache

• Sinusitis

• Infected insect bite

All you have to do is walk straight into the chemist there is no need for a GP appointment. If you are unsure please look on the NHS website or ring the school for more support.

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS

Safeguarding



We want to introduce Jared Evans in his new role as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead this term. Jared joined us in September and has been dedicated to building strong, trusting relationships with our students. He has been working closely with Emma and Mark to deepen his understanding of our safeguarding processes.

We are also pleased to have Kayleigh Maskell from Early Help attending our IEP day on Monday the 2nd March. Kayleigh will be available to speak with parents and provide guidance and support, including signposting to relevant services.

Additionally, we welcomed PC Marcus Evans to the school on Tuesday, 10th February, who spoke with students about staying safe online and responsible digital behaviour.

Student Council



As we approach the end of another busy half term, we would like to celebrate the fantastic work of our Student Council, who have shown great initiative, teamwork, and care for the wider school community.

To mark Children's Mental Health Week, themed "This is Our Place", the Student Council planned and hosted a special lunchtime event for students. They organised and delivered a jacket potato lunch, with delicious fillings. From helping list the ingredients for the shopping list, putting posters up around school, and delivering a themed art activity to classes, students played an active role in every stage of preparation. The event concluded with a screening of Paddington 2, chosen to reflect the theme of kindness, belonging, and community.

The lunchtime event was a lovely way to come together as a school community and a perfect way to finish the week, reminding us of the importance of connection, wellbeing, and shared experiences. This is one thing the student council have always been proud to promote.

They have also worked hard to support communication across the school. The Student Council helped share important information with students about our newest member of the Safeguarding team, Jared, ensuring everyone knows who they can turn to for support. In addition, council members have actively contributed their ideas, opinions, and feedback during meetings, with many student views being shared directly with the Headteacher. These have included everything from students wanting more trips to a butterfly space for the garden.

Kind regards,

The Student Council team

Exams



Exams Update for Spring Half Term

During this half term, our students have continued to demonstrate commitment and determination, with a total of 38 exams booked. These assessments have included a combination of Functional Skills exams and GCSE mock examinations, providing valuable preparation and experience for our students.

All students have shown great strength and resilience throughout this demanding period. In particular, our GCSE students deserve special recognition, as these exams are longer in duration and require sustained focus and stamina. They have risen to the challenge exceptionally well and have used the mock examinations as an opportunity to showcase their knowledge and prepare confidently for the GCSE exams beginning in May.

We are also continuing to await confirmation from the exam board verifier regarding outcomes for our students' Entry Level Functional Skills assessments. Once verification has taken place, we look forward to sharing and celebrating these results.

Well done to all students for their continued hard work and perseverance.

Grace Norman

Exams Officer

Futures at Educate U



January saw our exciting Careers Fair, where students had the opportunity to meet a wide range of providers and hear about future pathways. We were delighted to welcome representatives from Plumpton College, Educate U Futures, and the Chichester Colleges Group, with Brinsbury, Worthing, and Northbrook Colleges all represented. Students listened to informative presentations and learned about the variety of courses and opportunities these colleges can offer.

We are now busy planning for National Careers Week (2–7 March). Our main Careers Focus Day will take place on Thursday 5 March, with careers-themed learning embedded across the curriculum. As part of this, we are pleased to welcome a visiting ceramicist specialist, who will work with students to explore creative career pathways.

We are also looking forward to our Year 9 Futures Event on Tuesday 24 February, 3.15–4.15pm. This event invites Year 9 students and their families into school to learn more about the curriculum pathways available as students move into Year 10, and to ask questions about the next steps in their education. We look forward to sharing more careers opportunities with our students and families over the coming weeks.

Martha Reeves

Futures Lead

News from the SENCO

As part of my role, I regularly monitor classrooms to ensure they meet the sensory needs of our students. These observations focus on the following key areas:

Classroom Environment and Organisation

This includes reviewing tidiness, the availability of calm spaces, and the appropriate use of sensory tools.

Visual Supports and Communication Tools

This involves checking the use of visual timetables, Now–Next–Then boards (where appropriate), social stories, and visual reminders to support communication and understanding.

Individualised Support and EHCP Awareness

Teachers and support staff are expected to have a clear understanding of each student's individual needs, EHCP targets, and intended outcomes, and to actively monitor and review student progress against these.

Learner Voice and Regulation

Students should feel confident in expressing their needs and using regulation strategies. Where required, staff respond promptly to signs of dysregulation and demonstrate sufficient knowledge of their students to help prevent escalation.

Following each classroom visit, a discussion takes place with the teacher and class team to identify areas for development and any support required to implement improvements. Outcomes from these discussions are shared with Sarah Paoletti.

We have also established a working party focused on supporting parents of children with ADHD or autism, particularly exploring the impact of nutrition on these diagnoses. After half term, we will be in contact to arrange a date to invite all parents and carers to attend a short presentation. This session will explore how food can affect regulation and outline small, practical changes that can be made at home to support children more effectively.

Georgina Spoor

SENCO

News from: Therapy House



January in the therapy room is often less about beginning something new, and more about finding one another again. After the break, reconnection happens uniquely for each of our young people. We as therapists notice and respond to the students' needs In that moment, some children return to their boxes, adding new objects that speak where words feel too much; others linger over drawings we have made during the holidays, smiling as together we see if what I imagined them doing was correct, testing whether they were held in mind even in absence. Together we wonder about dreams and hopes for 2026, no dream is to big too be explored and all hopes are welcome and heard. There could be mentioning of what might be missed from last year and what might feel left behind, as always, together we find ways to say hello or goodbye in the language that feels most comfortable to our students.



Yoga & Reflexology

Here at Educate U we understand that when a child feels safe, seen and regulated, healing can begin, this is all part of a trauma-informed approach. Two of our lovely interventions we offer are Yoga and Reflexology, with Vicki our Reflexologist and Children's Yoga Teacher. Both are offered here at Therapy House and as part of the Forest School day. Results speak for themselves, when a child can get onto the Reflexology chair feeling not their best and then leave feeling happy, calm and grounded, we know its had a positive impact and the same goes for yoga. However, how many of you actually know "why" these interventions work?

Both are powerful bottom-up approaches, which calm the nervous system and help the children come back into their bodies.

Yoga is far more than just getting into various yoga poses, it is a practice of mindfulness, focusing on intentional movement and breath. When the children do this at Forest School, it becomes a bit more special, because we are surrounded by nature, so as well as the movement side of things, we practice mindfulness exercises, which are all nature based, we may sit holding a stone, or sit quietly softening our gaze, at the same time as hearing the different layers of sound within the woods. Nearly all the children that go to the woods, get excited at the prospect of spotting a deer, or maybe a Dormouse and the potential of this, can help them initially settle themselves. From a physical perspective, within a very short period of time, those children that regularly have yoga sessions, develop great core strength

and their co-ordination improves, this then boosts their confidence, which then spurs them on the next time.

Reflexology works on specific pressure points which amongst other things, enables the body to shift from a fight or flight state and brings us back to a place of balance and calmness, lowers cortisol levels and can improve sleep and focus. I am often met from both children and adults alike with “I don’t like my feet being touched” and that is absolutely fine, but I can absolutely say that all the children that decided to give it a chance with a 5 minute taster session, after seeing their peers do it, don’t look back. They either use it as an opportunity to just chill out, with some having a little snooze, whilst others chat their way through, but either way, they enjoy their sessions and leave more relaxed afterwards.

Wishing you all a lovely half term from **Therapy House.**

News from: Forest School

Our students have been embracing the great outdoors as part of their current topics.

Primary: In line with their "Life Cycle" topic, our younger learners have been exploring the woodland, observing nature up close, and investigating the environment around them. They discovered bones in the woods and discussed which animals they might belong to, went bug hunting (finding an impressive six spiders in one session!), and enjoyed their first trip to Mondona Pond, where they spotted ducks resting peacefully in the water.

Secondary: As part of their "Planning a Journey" topic, older students took to the woodland to identify potential risks while walking through nature. They practiced using a new wood-cutting tool an activity they thoroughly enjoyed and discussed the various hazards that could arise in a woodland setting, combining hands-on learning with safety awareness.

Just as a reminder can parents provide waterproof trousers and jackets for Forest School sessions in order to prevent the children's clothes from becoming wet and dirty. This is so they can benefit from the full experience of forest school. If this is an issue please feel free to contact Hope or the Office team so we support in any way that we can.

It’s been wonderful to see all our pupils engaging with the environment and developing curiosity and critical thinking along the way.

Hope Bridle

Forest School Lead

Intervention Staff Spotlight: OT



My name is Toni, and I am the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) at Educate U.

I have been working with students for approximately one year, and it has been a pleasure to see their progress and growth during this time. Many of the students I support have successfully achieved their individual targets and are now working toward new goals.

My role focuses on helping students develop independence in essential daily living and school-based skills. This may include areas such as handwriting, balance, and self-care tasks like zipping up their coats. These skills are fundamental to supporting students' confidence and independence, both in school and beyond. It is truly a privilege to work with our students and to witness the pride they feel as they develop new skills and achieve success.

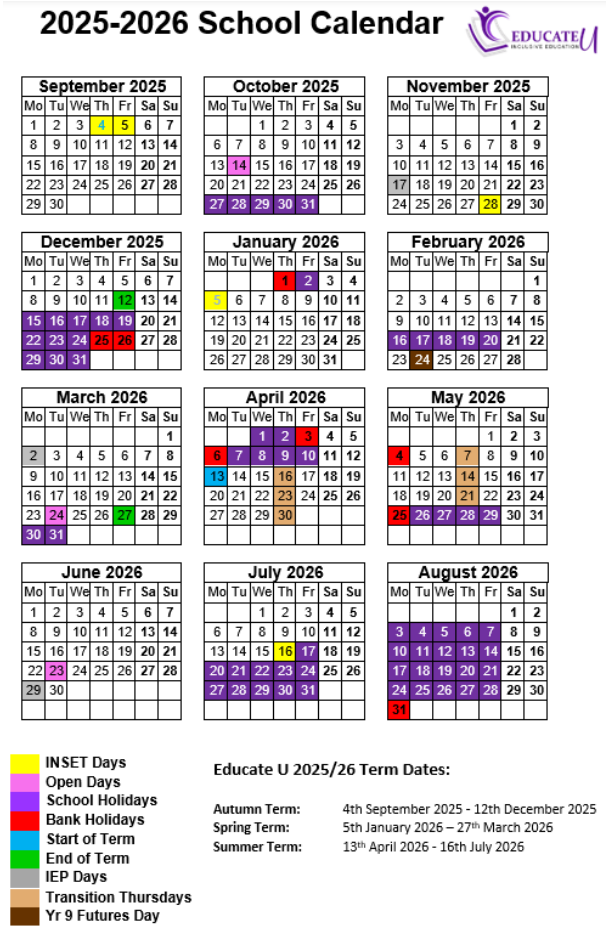
Important: Parent and Carer Voice Survey

Important: Parent and Carer Voice Survey. We greatly value your thoughts and we're always looking for ways to improve our school community and our processes. We would be very grateful if you could take a few moments to complete the Microsoft Form linked below:

Educate U Parent and Carer Views

Your feedback plays a vital role in helping us reflect on what's working well and where we can make things even better. Whether it's a quick comment or a more detailed suggestion, your voice really matters to us. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

2025-26 School Calendar



Date for the diary:

16th-20th February - Half Term

24th February - Year 9 Futures Day

2nd March - IEP Day

4th -6th March - Primary Trip to Lodge Hill

16th-20th March - Bikeability Week

24th March - Open Day (12:00pm finish for students)

March 27th - End of term (12:00pm finish for students)