



AUTUMN 1 – WEEK 7

That's all for this half of term!

We've had a busy first half term so we hope everyone enjoys a restful couple of weeks off now! We will look forward to seeing all our learners again when they return on **Wednesday 6th November**.

Dates for the diary

Coffee morning - Oak class - 7th November

Tempest Photography visit - 8th November

Visit to Pantomime - Cinderella at Exeter Northcott Theatre - 10th & 13th December (more info to follow!)

Jokes of the week

Benji: 'what is a ghost's favourite food?'
-ghoulash!

Jack L: 'why do ghosts go to the bar?'
-for the 'boos'!

George: 'what kind of car does Yoda drive?'
-a Toyoda

Headteacher's Award



This week the Headteacher's Award goes to **Maisey C**

for a great transition into our school community, even bravely playing the guitar for some of us!

THERAPY FOCUS

We're keeping our focus on fine motor skills this week and learning about a component fine motor skill – BILATERAL INTEGRATION. So what is Bilateral integration?

Bilateral Integration is a fancy way of saying coordination between the left and right sides of the body but when we think about fine motor skills it's how our hands work together! For example, it's developing a consistent dominant hand for writing or using scissors and a helping hand to keep the paper still. It's also two hands being able to do two completely different jobs to achieve a task, such as tying shoelaces or using cutlery.

Here are some fun activities that you can play to develop bilateral integration at home, in the park or put on a Christmas or birthday list!

• Shifting weight between two hands, e.g. wheelbarrow walking, bear walking, supporting a child to swing between monkey bars, using climbing frames

- Jumping jacks
- Riding a bike
- Standing back to back, passing a ball left to right, over and under
- Wearing a catcher's mitt or Velcro mitt when playing catch, then transfer it to the other hand and throw back
- Copying drumming patterns
- Playing Zoom ball
- Stringing beads
- Using scissors for simple activities



Here is a video if you want to know more and want more ideas to try:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ck9qOuLYo3A>

HIGHLIGHTING... CAREERS

At Magdalen Court School we are passionate about all of our learners leaving school with ideas about where they want to go next and how they can contribute to the world around them - whether that's further education, apprenticeships or entering the world of work. Here are some of the things that we've been up to to encourage learners to explore Careers options over the past two weeks.

Find your own TREASURE



Thinking about Careers

Thinking about what you want to be when you're older is like going on a treasure hunt! It's filled with excitement and discovery, but can also feel like a big, scary maze. Think about all the things you love doing and see how you can turn that into a job.

Picking a career is a journey, not just a single destination.
So buckle up, and let's go find your treasure!



Oak class have been talking about jobs they would like to do in the future. Oscar says 'I'd love to be a zoo keeper, I know I will need maths and good note-taking for this job'

Beech class discussed classroom jobs, what they entail and what skills would be needed. Learners completed applications and children were selected for the appropriate class job!

This half-term Holly class have looked at and discussed the following in their Careers lessons: the benefits of Work Experience; possible future career pathways; research on what local colleges and other institutions offer our young people post-16; how to prepare for interviews. They also produced these tote bag designs in PD.



Olive class have been welcoming parents to coffee mornings, making & serving hot drinks. Learning to use the professional coffee machine, practising barista skills and serving customers in a polite & professional manner has given our learners a taste of the workplace!

Pupils have been looking at college prospectuses to enable them to make their final decisions after leaving Magdalen Court School. Pupils from Holly & Lime class took a tour around the many sites of Exeter College, including the Music, Sport and Business faculties. Pupils were amazingly well behaved and asked some really insightful questions.

Don't forget to complete the medical & consents online form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/fxcQzJjf7Q>

or scan the QR code below. If you have any issues filling it out or need a paper copy, contact the school office.



FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Friday 11th October 2024 was a day to remember, when MCS learners participated in the Special Schools Football Festival. Learners from Key Stages 2-5 represented the school in both a junior and senior team. Key Stages 2-3 put in a brave effort to get through the qualifying stages in the morning. This was the first time for some learners that stepped up to the big occasion of playing in an important sporting fixture. Everyone was proud of the performances that were displayed on and off the pitch.

Key Stages 4-5 jumped out of the water like a shark and Alfie Littler was star struck at how these learners played compared to the team last year. They won 2-0, drew 1-1, won 3-0 and won 2-0 again with Tommy and Junior consistently hitting the target. Camron Jon made some outstanding saves that should've given him an England call-up. Callan, despite feeling concerned about playing in defence, was sharp at the back in the end. What is the most impressive out of everything is that the only goal we conceded was from a penalty, which was quite a debatable decision from the referee. Nevertheless, everyone played equally well, and this is an occasion that will surely be a defining moment in the history of Magdalen Court School.

Report by Callan Parsons

Players of the tournament: Camron-Jon, Otto & Elliot

A note from Emma White, PE teacher: I couldn't be prouder of all who participated, not only of their efforts on the pitch but especially of the supportive spirit they showed to the other teams and to each other. Well done everyone!





Our Values Stars of the Week

MAGDALEN
COURT SCHOOL



**Respect
&
Resilience**

**Health
&
Happiness**

**Kindness
&
Independence**

The value this term is **respect** and we've seen some great examples of this quality in school this week.

Larch

Agatha for always communicating her ideas and needs respectfully

Birch

Benji for an amazing improvement in his attitude this week, using respectful language

Chestnut

Mala-ann for being respectful towards all living creatures

Olive

Cameron for showing respect to both friends & adults

Elm

Ethan for making the right choices in difficult circumstances

Juniper

Freddie for showing respect through kindness & compassion

Oak

Lucas B for having a great first term with us

Lime

Josh J for being respectful towards members of the public during his work experience at the RAMM

Maple

Justin for consistently polite and respectful interactions with all peers and staff

Beech

Isaac for being thoughtful and considerate of others

Holly

George for trying to be respectful even in the face of adversity

We have had a brilliant half term in the Food Tech department! I am so pleased with how learners have developed their knowledge and skills within their focus areas. Learners in Larch class made some wonderful American biscuits which are similar to scones. Learners in Birch class made some crunchy cereal, developing skills using the hob to melt oil and honey together before coating the oats and seeds. Juniper and Oak class made their personalised breakfast muffins. It was great to see learners experimenting with flavour and texture combinations, adding vegetables like courgette and carrot, which was really brave. I hope the results proved worth it!

Year 8 learners in Elm and Beech class practiced making drop scones - this was a great opportunity to consolidate their knowledge of preparing a batter and the frying method to achieve perfectly consistent mini pancakes. Learners in Chestnut made one cup pancakes, learners loved preparing these served with fresh fruit and yogurt. Olive class re-capped using the fan assisted grill to prepare sausage sarnies and then evaluated their progress this term. Learners in Maple and Hazel class completed their end of term evaluations followed by a cooked breakfast finale, where they had to manage their time carefully to cook their chosen items. Learners in Holly class made the spiced lentil and butternut squash soup, it was so good and a joy to see learners appreciating the ras el hanout for depth of flavour and authentic Moroccan taste. Learners in Lime class prepared a wonderful Hairy Bikers inspired sausage casserole, packed with loads of spices for additional flavour and butter beans for extra healthy protein, well done guys!



Safeguarding

This week's focus is on school avoidance. On the next page you'll find a guide with helpful information and tips for parents and carers.

If you would like any support with any of our safeguarding topics, please reach out to Jane.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetable routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them, such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



The National College