

#IceniAcademy



February 2021



@IceniAcademy

PROUDLY  
SHARING  
OUR NEWS

'Individually Strong,  
Unstoppable Together'

## PRINCIPAL'S POST

This half of term, our students have shown us that a little thing like not being able to come into the academy wouldn't stop them from completing the most amazing work. As you read through this newsletter, it is easy to forget that these students have accomplished everything within it from their bedrooms, the kitchen table, or whatever space they can find. Whilst I continue to commend the staff at Icen for their continued efforts to ensure that all students can access the same level of teaching and learning remotely, it is the students who continue to make the provision an overwhelming success.

On Friday 29th January, we held our first 'Screen-Free Friday', in recognition of the amount of time that students had been spending in front of their devices. The English department set work that was paper-based, and we have had some wonderful work handed in, from poetry and prose to letters written to relatives and friends. We look forward to organising another day like this soon, so keep an eye out for details after the half-term break. We also ran a Mental Health and Wellbeing Day in an attempt to educate students on coping and self-care mechanisms that can help during what can be a stressful time.

Looking forward, I am hoping that we receive some encouraging news about reopening on the 8th March. As soon as we know, we will be communicating arrangements to you. We will also be consulting on a change to the uniform after half-term, so do please make sure that you respond to this, ensuring all views are heard.

In the meantime, enjoy the half-term break with your families,

Lesley Hogg,  
Principal.

## Mental Health wellbeing day

Our recent Mental Health and Wellbeing day has led to a number of really positive comments from both students, parents and staff which is brilliant to hear. We would be very grateful for any further thoughts that people might have, including suggestions for follow up sessions.

We know, as many of us are parents as well, how challenging it is to manage our children's emotions at home, particularly when there are necessary boundaries to where they can roam. The link below will take interested families to a site which provides free workshops for parents who wish to learn new strategies to support the emotional well being of their children.

<https://www.nsfh.nhs.uk/Pages/parentprog.aspx>

Mrs Franklin, our Safeguarding manager, has also produced some self-help videos which you might like to use and work through with your children, there are more to follow.

Grounding and breathing techniques: [https://youtu.be/qfJ\\_nbgD19I](https://youtu.be/qfJ_nbgD19I)

FFF & positive planning: <https://youtu.be/amgGklVryZM>

Challenging negative thoughts: <https://youtu.be/t1lMomtdwFg>

Managing big emotions: <https://youtu.be/kJUp5pTK3Zs>

Self esteem and confidence: <https://youtu.be/q1daKHnwxCs>

This term has also seen us run a non-uniform day with the children bringing in a fantastic amount of food for a local foodbank. This support has been continued by the children who are attending school at the moment. They have a non-uniform day on a Tuesday and bring in food for one of the food banks.

Please let us know if there is any further advice or support that you feel you, or your children would benefit from.

Please keep well and safe.  
Mr Carmichael

# NEWS FROM OUR YEAR GROUPS

## Year 7



Year 7 have taken to online learning incredibly well - some might even say like duck to water. Their resilience this half-term has been demonstrated through their high attendance and huge amounts of positive points. Their teachers have been impressed by the work that they've submitted and, I too, have enjoyed seeing images of artwork, hearing of chocolate bar creations, learning about tourism in Australia and China and being impressed by their knowledge of the periodic table. PL time has been very different this half-term and the students have had to create bonds with their new PL tutors. There have been controversial discussions over which chocolate bar should be removed from a Celebrations box, enlightening conversations about the relative importance of different colours and tallies of birds which have been spotted, recited. Quiz time on a Friday has developed competition within the group, with Mr Marengi's form going for 10/10 each week and surprising staff with their innate knowledge of worldly facts and events. Screen Free Friday enabled students to make the most of being at home. Students were keen to demonstrate their baking skills, show their artistic side and get active outdoors. In addition to this, students and staff alike enjoyed Mental Health Wellbeing day. Many excellent wellbeing mood boards and 'where to go for help' posters have been created and I'm looking forward to sharing these fabulous resources with students. As we come to the end of the half-term, we have been greeted by the snow which has encouraged pastimes of sledding, snowman building and snowball fights. What a truly crazy half-term it's been! - Miss Colson

Year 8 have demonstrated just how amazing they are this half term. This was particularly noticeable on our Mental Health Awareness day, last week. They were all incredibly helpful, directing each other and repeatedly sharing links to those who were unsure at lightning speed. This showed great teamwork, resourcefulness, and initiative. A great deal of impressive work was generated, with Tannia (poster shown here) and Summer deserving a special mention.

## Year 8

### Self-care

- Drink more water
- Spend 10 minutes in the sun
- Learn to say no
- Cut out toxic people
- Donate to charity
- Go for a walk/run
- Sleep
- Eat full meals/don't skip breakfast
- Help others/do something nice in secret
- Join a support group with others who are going through the same thing as you



The hard work put in across the year group has been rewarded with a massive 4,024 positive points. This is despite potential internet issues and all the distractions of working from home: a massive achievement. 8AB earned a gigantic 909 of this total, followed by 8GW with 701. Bradley earned the highest number in the whole year group, with a total of 89. This was followed by Patrick with 71. Eighteen Y8s earned over 50 points which is astonishing. Engagement has been good across the subject range, with 8.4 in science getting a special mention for being so hardworking and enthusiastic. This week, Finley finishes his 40 mile run to raise money for EACH – East Anglia's Children's Hospices. The fact that Finley has challenged himself in this way and helped such a worthy cause is nothing short of outstanding.— Ms Hodges

## Year 9

In a strange half term Year 9 have managed to complete a huge amount of online learning. There has been lots of pictures of dogs shared and everyone has really worked hard to ensure they have made the most of the lessons on offer. We have had an Online Combined Cadet Force session with Mr Charlesworth and have had a fantastic opportunity offered to them by Miss Colson for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. In difficult times it is great that we have plans for activities in the future that will be physical and challenging as well as academic opportunities.

Talking of academic learning it is a really crucial half term as we are about to take our options. We have the exciting privilege of being Icen Academy's first ever Virtual Parents evening. This has been combined with recorded assemblies for options so by the end of the half term all parents and students will have had feedback from Teachers about their progress and the many amazing subjects available for next year. As always if there are questions after this week regarding options PLTs and I will be happy to help answer them.

Mr Falder

# Year 10

Year 10 have made an excellent start to 2021 and have been working hard in their live lessons. I have heard many positive comments from their teachers about their engagement and contributions in lessons and I have been impressed with how quickly they have adapted to working online. Our year 10 students completing their Duke of Edinburgh awards have also continued to make excellent progress this term too.

Year 10s attendance in our Mental Health and Wellbeing Day was fantastic and it was lovely to see some interesting conversations amongst the year group during the sessions that they attended. The PL tutors have collected some brilliant work produced from this day and have also heard from lots of students who enjoyed the sessions they attended. We very much hope that this day provided an opportunity to learn about how we can prioritise and look after our mental health and wellbeing. Now, more than ever, it is important that our students understand what support is available to them. The day focused around empowering our students with the knowledge and tools that they need to encourage positive mental health and wellbeing.

Looking ahead, in the coming months, students will need to begin thinking about post 16 options; our excellent Careers Advisor, Mrs Downing, will be on hand to help with this, as will the year 10 PL tutors.

Thank you to our year 10 parents and carers who we know have been working hard behind the scenes to ensure that home learning runs as smoothly as possible. We appreciate all your efforts with this. We hope that year 10 enjoy a well-deserved half term break and return raring to go again!

# Year 11

Following the Christmas break year 11 have continued to work hard; their attendance and engagement in live lessons has been seriously impressive. As ever, despite facing a difficult year, our students continue to show resilience and determination to succeed.

Aside from their work in lessons, year 11 have also been working hard to ensure that their post 16 applications are in progress. Lots of the year group have attended virtual interviews and it has been a real joy to hear from them and learn that they have been offered a place on their chosen course! For many of our students, this has given them a clear focus for the coming months as they work towards the goal of reaching the required entry grades. The year 11 PL tutors have also been working incredibly hard with their tutees making regular phone calls to them across the half term; I know that they have also enjoyed discussing students plans for September and beyond. This is an exciting time for year 11 as they make decisions about what the next couple of years will look like for them and we are incredibly proud that they continue to rally against the uncertainty of this year.

Year 11 produced some brilliant work during our Mental Health and Wellbeing day last Thursday, some of this you can see on the newsletter. I particularly enjoyed students sharing their vision boards and discussing their aims and goals for the future. It is clear that we have a year group who have big dreams and ambitions! Showing admirable determination and drive this month is Year 11 student, Jack who has set himself the challenge of running 50 miles in February. Jack is raising money for Cancer Research, a charity which has special importance to his family. We wish Jack luck in his challenge!

To all our year 11 students, their parents and carers, thank you for your continued efforts and support. Please enjoy a restful and deserved half term break!

Miss Cross



## News from our Faculties

We have shifted our focus in Physical Education to Physical Activity in the current circumstances. This is to help pupils meet the NHS recommendation of at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. We also hope this can offer some flexibility for pupil's screen time during the day. After half term we will be launching several competitions based on physical activity, but above all, we hope pupils are feeling the benefits we have discussed so far. These include, but are not limited to, better mental health, improved sleep and helping to maintain a healthy weight. Mildenhall College Sixth Form are offering an exciting football course whilst studying your choice of A levels or BTECs. Mr Taylor has emailed this to all Year 11 pupils.

PE



We have been able to purchase a number of new Table Tennis tables and bats. We hope this will enable a Covid safe extra curricular club to start at lunch times when we all return to school. We have also had an outside gym installed which can be used by pupils and the community. Following pupil discussion, we have added jogging bottoms to the PE kit. Pupils now have a large variety of kit they can choose for lessons. A reminder we stipulate only kit showing the Icen logo can be worn in lessons. Skins/base layers are the only exception to this.

## MFL



Our students in MFL have been busy learning about important events celebrated in France and China. A very important event in the Chinese calendar is New Year, which is celebrated on 12th February this year, the year of the ox. In our live lessons we have been learning about the traditions of Chinese New Year; the food people eat, activities people do and how to say "Happy New Year" in Mandarin. *Mr Liao and Mrs Song*

In year 8 & 9 French, students have been learning about how 'la Chandeleur' is celebrated in France and how to talk about the various pancake toppings. Y8 were particularly impressed to learn that France has 2 Pancake Days, one on the 2nd of February (La Chandeleur) and one on Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras - Carnival).

As part of our live lessons we looked at the ingredients needed for pancakes, their quantity and the different steps of the recipe. The students were particularly keen to write what their favourite "crêpe" was and why by encouraging each other to type their sentences into the chat area. There was so much variety and some even made pancakes at home later that day! Food being part of the leisure topic in GCSE, Y10 carried on discovering the savoury version of "crêpes" (originating from Brittany) along with understanding a French menu and deciphering a logic puzzle as to which savoury and sweet crêpe each person would choose according to their tastes to practise their reading skills.

Miss Trichet and Miss Agoudjil



## Science

We have been looking at electrical appliances in Y9 this term.

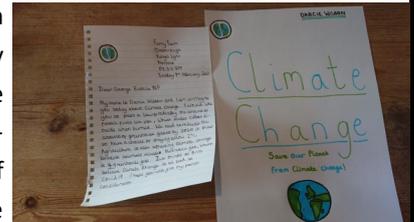
As part of the metal reactions topic 8.1 have been coming up with ways of remembering the reactivity series -

Poop Soup Catches Many Animals 'Cause Zebras Indecisively Lick Hooves, Calling Santa Gloomy Panda.  
Please Stop Calling Me A Careless Zebra, Instead Learn How Copper Saved Gold-Purple Hippo.  
Please Secure. Contains Mental Anomalies. Capture Zebra In Large Holding Chamber Specially Guarded. Protect!  
Plastic Sacks Come. Meanwhile, A Crazy Zebra Investigates Lorries Heating Chocolate Squares. Great pandas.  
Please Send Chocolate Money And Chocolate Zebras Inside Loud Heavy Chocolate Snakes Glowing Pink  
People Say Children Make Colour-blind Zebras Ill, Laughing Haughtily, Constantly Sniffing Giraffes.  
Pink Smelly Chubby Men Ate Chocolate Zebras In LA. Heroes Called. Spiderman Greeted Peppa.  
Please Send Cameron Moys, As Cameron's Zebra Is Leaving His Cage Solo, Gladly Paranoid.  
Powerful Sharks Cause Many Anteaters Carelessness. Zooming Into Laughing Hippos Cautiously, Secretly, Gently, Personally.  
Peacocks Stand Cautiously Making Apple Curry, Zooming In Long, Hefty Corridors, Singing Greatly. Perfect.  
Pinecones Sleep Calmly. Meanwhile Ants Cry Zaps In Long Hidden Cabbages. Safe Genius' Ponder.  
Perfect Sandwiches Change Many Animals And Crazy Zoos In LA, Horses Cower Sadly, Gorillas Prey.

# Humanities

In Humanities we have been extremely busy since returning to largely virtual learning since January. For History in Year Seven, we have investigated how William the Conqueror was able to maintain control after the Norman Invasion through the Feudal System and a diary on the Medieval Peasant's Year. We are about to lay siege to castles right now, which is just as well, given that in year eight we have been studying the Civil War, including the Siege of York, which led to the decisive Battle of Marston Moor in 1644. Our year Nine classes have focused on the causes of World War Two, with some superb biographies of Hitler from our students. In Year Ten, we are exploring the role of conditions, injuries and medicine on the Western Front in preparation for our GCSE Paper One and pondering the poignancy of Owen's words of *Dulce et Decorum est* in so doing. Year Eleven are on the verge of completing their GCSE course in its entirety and I have been particularly impressed with their mature and thoughtful reflections in considering a range of interpretations regarding US involvement in Vietnam.

Geographical studies have included a comparative study of study of Australia and China for year seven and in year eight a consideration of the contemporary conundrum of weather and climate. The excellent project on climate change attached by student Darcie Wilson illustrates just how seriously our next generation regards this issue of the millennium. This perfectly fits with the position of the year nine curriculum, who are looking into just how the Geography of the United Kingdom slots into this and other global issues. Our GCSE students in Year Ten have returned to the more global issues of Tropical Storms and Earthquakes in preparation for their Physical Geography examination, whilst Year Eleven are tackling examination practice in preparation for however the Government decides it wants to assess the GCSE qualifications this year.



The RE curriculum has continued to explore diversity in all its forms, with a year seven study of Hinduism and the Puja Ceremony in particular. Year eight are exploring personal beliefs and identities, whilst year nine are examining war and how this can fit into people's religious beliefs, such as the concept of the 'Just War.' Our Citizenship course in Years Ten and Eleven continues with an examination of rights and responsibilities and an study of Britain's global institutions, such as Parliament. The attached pictures of 'Snow MP's' are not merely an excuse to throw snowballs but an entry point into what constitutes a good MP and how people can engage with their local community through this conduit.

Miss Laws' commendations:

- Alfie (8RP) - For outstanding contributions in his history lessons. He has been answering nearly every question asked with efficiency and accuracy. He has certainly been throwing himself into his online History lessons and should be very proud of his knowledge retention and progress.
- Jack (11MATH) - For being an incredibly conscientious student and sending me well produced work at the end of every single lesson.
- Matilda (10AW) - For being an amazing contributor for every single history lesson and showing an amazing level of knowledge retention and hard work.



As a Humanities Team, we have been extremely impressed with the engagement of the students in our 'live' lessons. This is something that would have been impossible without not only the support of the students themselves but also their families. Thank you very much for this and your continuing encouragement for what we are trying to achieve.

Mr Bedford

## English

As part of 'Screen Free Friday', the English department set a range of screen-free activities for students to complete. We have been really impressed with the standard of work students submitted. This poem was written by one student about their the experience of moving schools a number of times when they were younger. We particularly liked their use of repetition to show the strength of how they felt.

As well as Screen Free Friday, students in all year groups have been working really hard in their live English lessons. In Year 7, students have been thinking hard about Shakespeare, studying both 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and E. Nesbit's retelling of Shakespeare's stories in her book 'Beautiful Stories from Shakespeare'. This has allowed Year 7 to find out more about stories they might not already know, such as the stories of 'Pericles' and 'The Taming of the Shrew.'

In Year 8, we have been studying the brilliant 19th century sci-fi story 'The Time Machine' by H. G. Wells, and we are looking forward to continuing this work after half term as we start to write our own sci-fi stories. Year 8 have also been studying 'The Fire Eaters' by David Almond, set on the eve of the Cuban Missile Crisis. They have really impressed us with their hard work learning more about this important part of history.

Year 9s have been looking at how war has been presented across a whole range of literature, including poetry, prose and non-fiction. After half-term we will be looking at more contemporary examples of literature about war, including some poetry about the conflict in Afghanistan.

Our work with Year 10 has focused on GCSE English Literature, with classes working on the brilliant 'An Inspector Calls' and 'A Christmas Carol'. These are important and fascinating texts, and we have been particularly impressed with the way students have been closely examining the different characters and themes in a sophisticated way. Well done, Year 10!

Finally, Year 11 have continued to hugely impress us with their diligence and work ethic. We have been continuing to look at a range of Literature texts as well as honing our knowledge and skills for English Language. We just know that they will be ready for however they will be assessed this year, and we will be there to support them, too. We couldn't be prouder.

So—in summary—it has been a busy term in the English department where we have been thinking hard and producing some excellent work. We are already looking forward to seeing every back—virtually, at first—after the half term break so we can continue this excellent work.

## Change

Old home , missing it  
Old friends, missing them  
Old memory's, live inside me  
Change in life, is what divides me

Living in two life's, One real one fake  
Living in two homes, one made with love one made with hate

Adaptation, my only good trait  
Hoping success will be my fate.  
Change is why, I can't relate

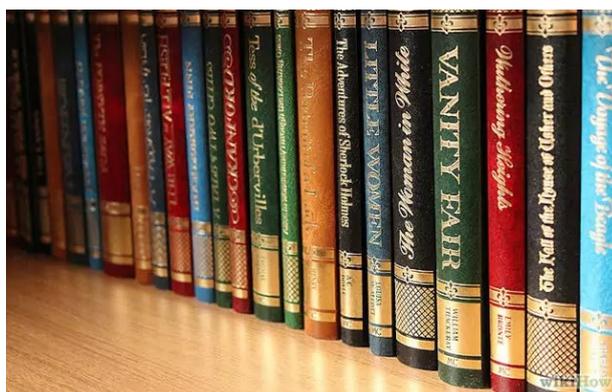
Realisation settling in,  
Wondering where to begin,  
Who to sit with ,  
Who to talk to ,  
Change is hard,  
Just gotta work through,  
Walking around , mouth shut with glue.  
Change in life , Shows lies from truth.

## Staffing

There are two staffing updates for the English department. Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you on behalf of the whole team to Mr Brodie, who has stepped down as Director of Faculty but who we are very, very lucky to still have as part of our team. Mr Brodie lead the department for almost nine years and we are very grateful for everything that he has done.

Secondly, I would like to welcome Ms Clark who has joined the department as a Teacher of English. Lots of you will have seen and heard her in your English lessons and in the academy, too, and we are really pleased that she is now part of our team.

Miss Staniforth



## Maths

We are making excellent progress with our Maths here at Icen! Outstanding progress being shown on Hegarty Maths with 99,752 questions answered and 1939 hours of learning!! There has been excellent engagement in lessons and some lovely conversations exploring strategies to solve problems as well as sharing photos of work completed. The Maths team are very proud of our students progress and all their hard work – Well done!

Mrs Edwards



## Design Technology

During the lockdown and in the time where we were confined to bubbles, we have been refurbishing the workshops. The benches look like new, tools are sharp organised and ready to go. Displays have been updated and the workshops look better than they have in years. We have also been looking closely at what we teach and we will be offering a refreshed curriculum across both key stages. The only thing missing is students and we all look forward to teaching practical work again.

Mr Bate



**ART**

### CREATIVE RISK TAKING

Key stage 3 Art Lessons are continually evolving in this time of remote learning; however, the students' eagerness to develop their creative skills and knowledge has been second to none!

Taking pride in their practical outcomes and sharing these eagerly with both myself and Ms Baldwin is very rewarding, and we are eagerly looking forward to seeing much more when we return to the academy.

Keep up the good work... Be creative and enjoy the therapeutic efforts of ART!

Mrs Crook