Rivers Education Support Centre

Respect Relationships Resilience Readiness

NEWSLETTER

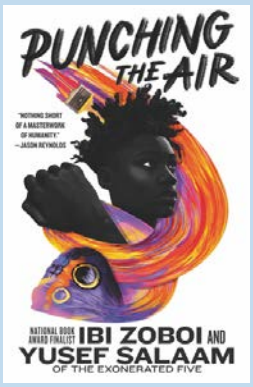
The 'ber' months have arrived, which can only mean one thing... a new school year is underway! We are excited to welcome our students back to Rivers ESC. After a well-earned summer break, it's been lovely to see familiar and new faces, hear all about your summer highlights and kick off another fantastic year together.

Turning the page

As many of our students already know, form time now begins with 10 minutes of reading each day. At Key Stage 3, students have recently started a fast-paced and engaging novel about a homeless 16-year-old boy trying to survive on the streets of London while being hunted by a serial killer who targets homeless teenagers. The gripping dual-narrative storyline is packed with suspense and intrigue while remaining appropriate for our KS3 age group. With short, accessible chapters that fit perfectly into our daily reading sessions, the novel also explores real-life themes that encourage thoughtful discussion and reflection among students.



Meanwhile, the book chosen for our KS4 students is Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi and Dr. Yusef Salaam, one of the real-life exonerated Five, whose story inspired the Netflix series When They See Us. Written in powerful verse, the novel follows Amal Shahid, a talented young artist and poet whose life changes dramatically when he is wrongfully convicted of a crime. It is written in verse like our previous book 'Crossing the Line' so this, alongside the strong themes should be an engaging read for the students.



Show Racism the Red Card

As many of us know, October is **Black History Month**, providing an important opportunity to celebrate, recognise and learn about the achievements, experiences and contributions of Black individuals throughout history and today. Across the curriculum, students have taken part in a range of themed activities to deepen their understanding of diversity, equality and cultural heritage.



On 16th October, staff proudly wore red to support Show Racism the Red Card, helping to raise awareness of racism, promote inclusion, and demonstrate our commitment to creating a respectful and welcoming environment for all.

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What is Black History Month?

Visual learner? Take a look at this video, which explores its origins and importance. You'll discover why recognising these achievements remains so important today.



In Geography, KS3 pupils learned about the arrival of HMS Windrush and the migration of Caribbean people to the UK. Students explored the experiences of the Windrush Generation, who helped rebuild Britain after the Second World War by working in essential services such as the NHS, public transport and education. They also learned about the lasting contributions Caribbean communities have made to British culture, helping to shape the diverse society we know today.

National Poetry Day



We recently celebrated National Poetry Day, with this year's theme being Wonder. During English lessons, students created Blackout Poems, using existing texts to uncover and craft their own unique pieces of poetry. Students selected words and phrases from a page of text to create a new poem, while the remaining words were blacked out. This allowed key words to stand out and take on a completely new meaning, transforming an existing piece of writing into something entirely original.

Here are photos of our joint first place our winners proudly collecting their prizes! Awarded in recognition of their creativity, carefully chosen vocabulary, and striking artistic presentation. Well done girls!

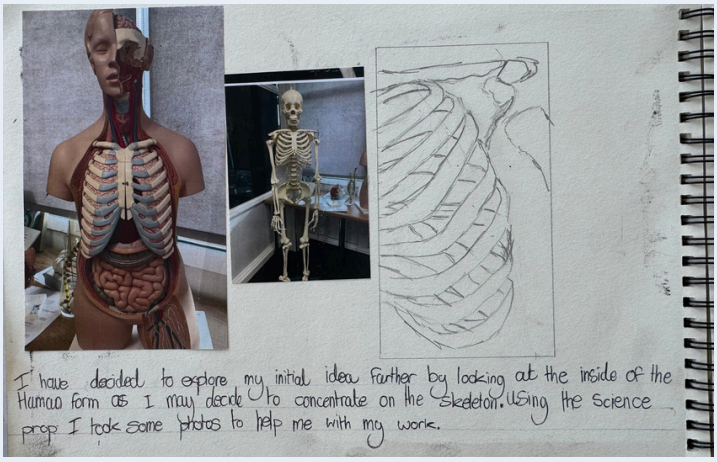
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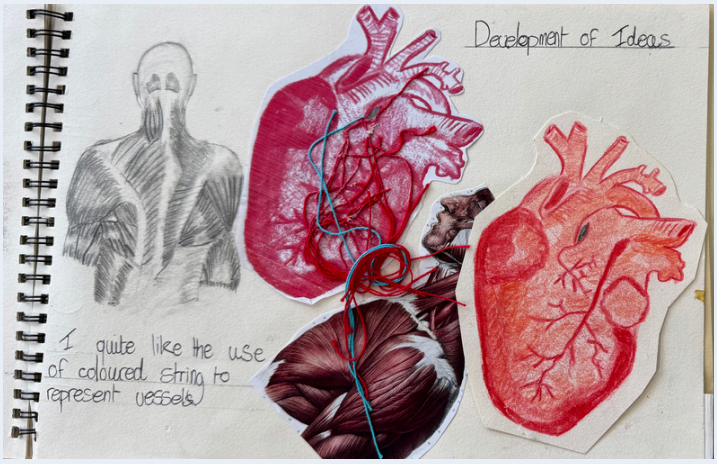
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A Showcase of Art

Last term, we were unable to share our Year 11 students' Art work while they were undergoing moderation. Now that the process is complete, we are delighted to showcase their incredible work and celebrate the talent, creativity, and dedication behind them.

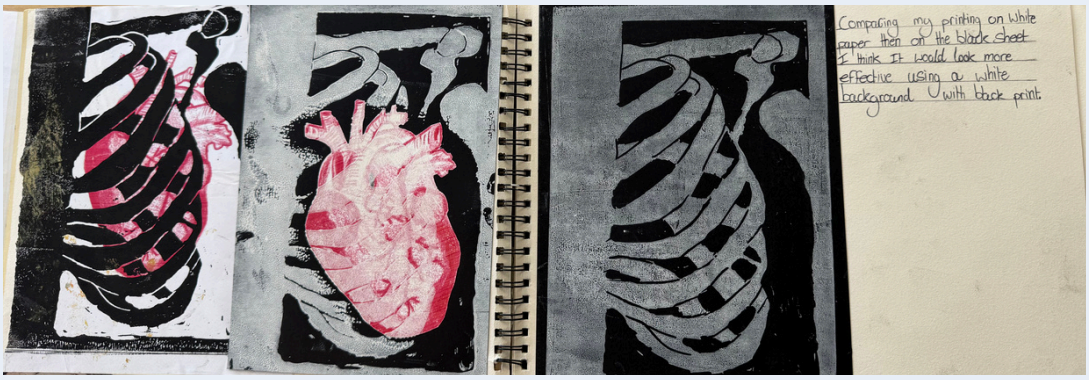
A special thank you to Mrs Leo for her support and guidance throughout the course. Below are a few snapshots of student Teddy's Component 1 work, exploring ideas for his mock exam theme, 'Inside Out'. We think the work speaks for itself!

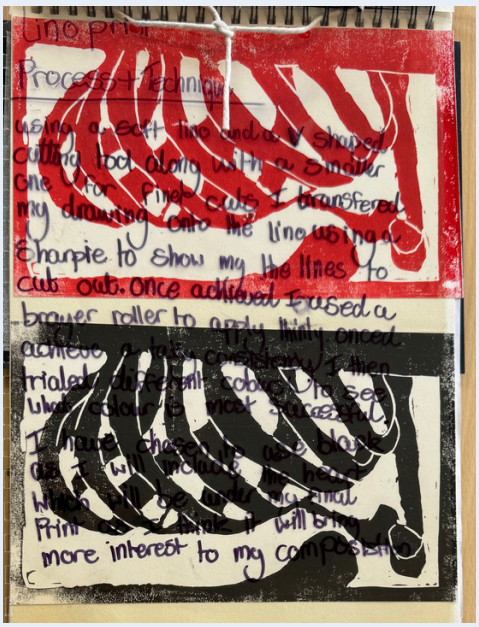


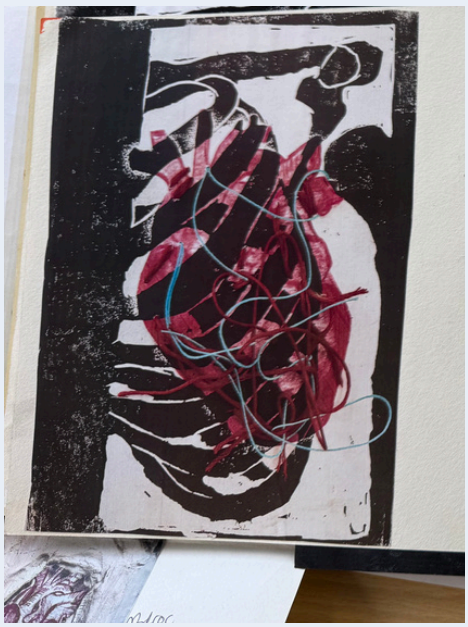


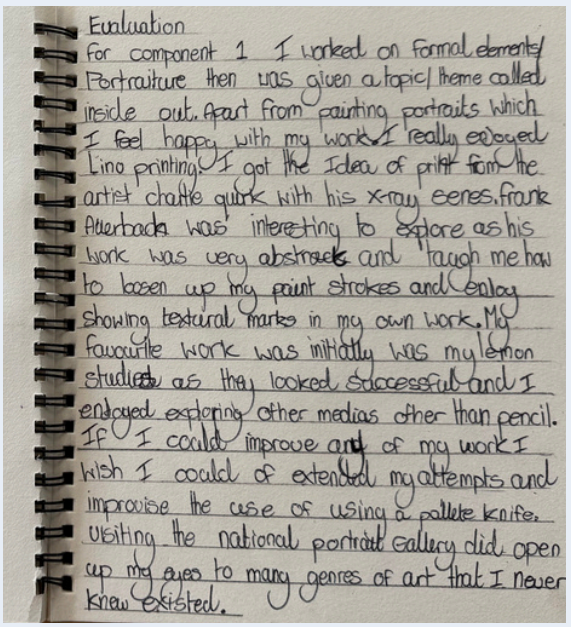
As this collection of work demonstrates, Teddy investigated a variety of materials, techniques and processes to develop his Inside Out theme. Focusing on the hidden structures of the human body, including the heart and skeleton. He refined his ideas over time, using a range of mixed-media approaches to communicate his understanding of the theme effectively.











> *Mrs Leo's teaching is supportive, engaging and fun*

> *I had loads of fun in Art and I loved it*

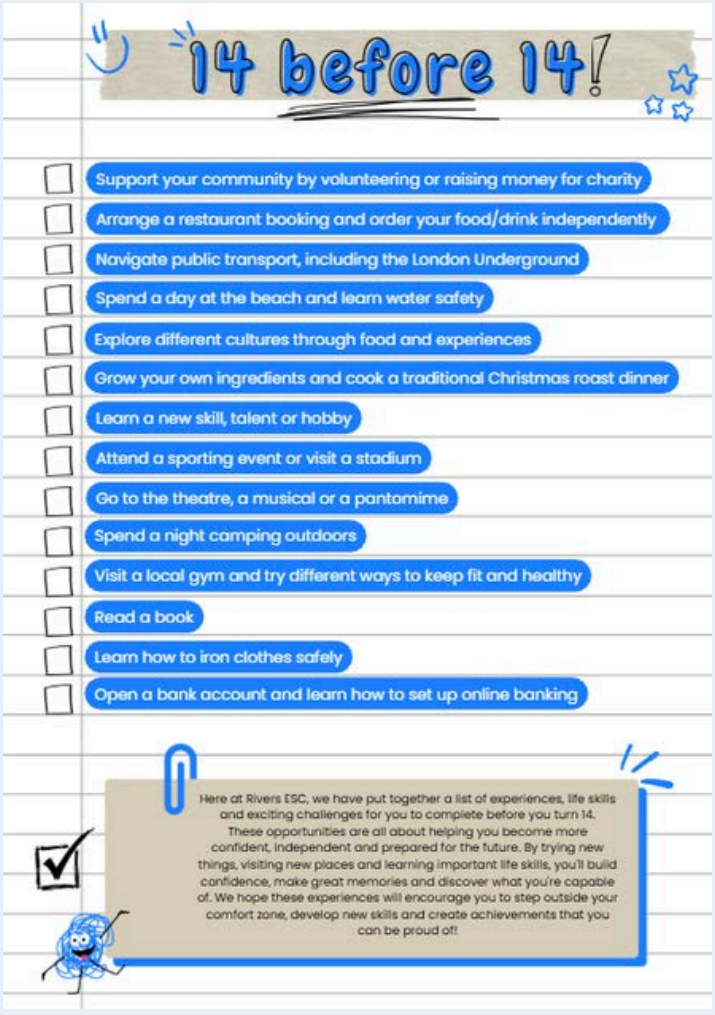
> *I now understand the true meaning of Art*

> *I would definitely recommend Art GCSE*



These amazing art pieces, along with sections from our students' portfolios, are proudly displayed in our meeting room for all of our visitors to admire. Surrounding this are genuine quotes from last year's students, taken from their Art evaluation forms . It's proof that great artwork and positive feedback go hand in hand.

This List Won't Tick Itself



As discussed at the end of the last academic year, we are delighted to introduce our 14 Before 14 and 16 Before 16 posters. You may have already spotted these displayed around the KS3/4 centres. While there are only a few differences between the two, reflecting how close our students are in age, the 16 Before 16 poster places a greater emphasis on careers and aspirations.

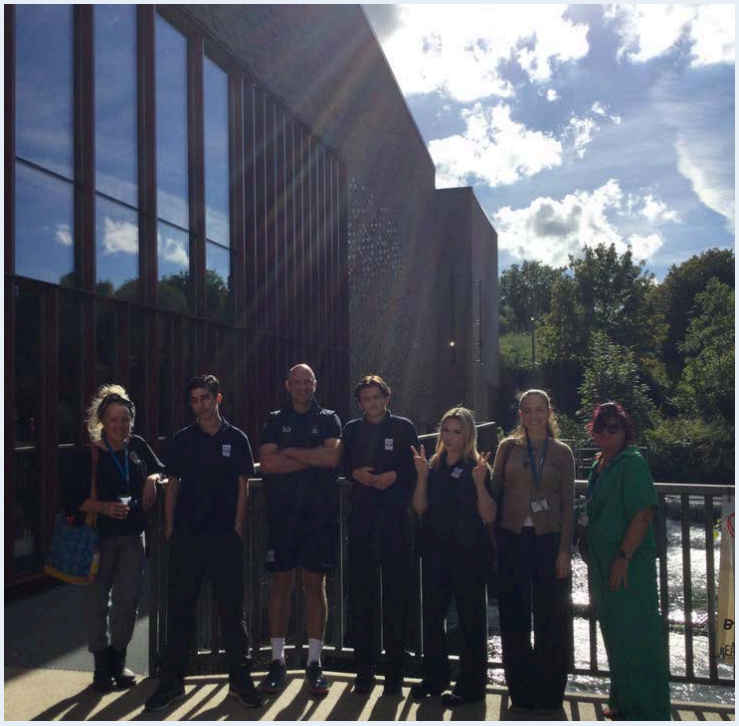
We look forward to seeing students ticking off items from their lists, attending events and embracing opportunities that help grow their confidence, independence and ambition.

The posters encourage students to set goals, try new experiences and make meaningful memories during their time at Rivers. They also provide opportunities for students to reflect on what they have achieved and what they would still like to experience. We are excited to watch their progress unfold throughout the year.

Our Afternoon in Verona

Students recently enjoyed a trip to the BEAM Theatre in Hertford to watch a live performance of Romeo and Juliet, bringing the Shakespeare play they have been studying in English to life. Seeing the characters and scenes come to life on stage helped students better understand the plot, themes, relationships and conflicts within the play. The trip gave students the chance to engage with the play in a new and exciting way and experience Shakespeare as it was meant to be enjoyed.

The performance was part of a special two day production held from 30th September to 1st October, giving students the opportunity to see a professional interpretation of the text they have been exploring in lessons. Students represented the school brilliantly and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, with many commenting on how seeing the play performed helped them understand and appreciate the story even more.





Macmillan Coffee Morning



Across the centres, we held a Macmillan Coffee Morning to raise money for charity. Students across Key Stages 3 and 4 worked hard to bake and prepare a variety of treats, which were sold during break time on 25th September. Thank you to everyone who donated and helped support this fantastic cause. In total a generous £82 was raised!

It was great to see students getting involved and supporting the event. The money raised will help Macmillan continue to provide vital support to those affected by cancer.

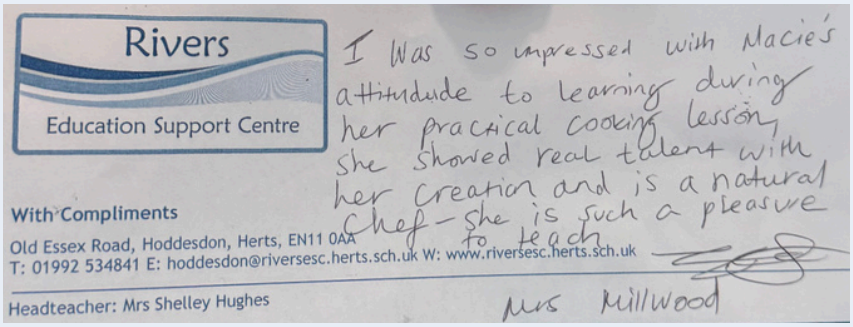
A smash hit in Food Tech!

We are delighted to share that our ***brand-new*** kitchen is now up and running, featuring six fully equipped workstations where students can develop their cooking skills in a modern, professional environment. Each student benefits from their own dedicated workspace, helping to build independence, confidence and practical skills. Although we are only one term into the year, students have already impressed us with their enthusiasm and the fantastic food they have created, making full use of this new facility.








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I Was so impressed with Macie's attitude to learning during her practical cooking lesson, She showed real talent with her creation and is a natural chef - she is such a pleasure to teach

With Compliments

Old Essex Road, Hoddesdon, Herts, EN11 0AA
T: 01992 534841 E: hoddesdon@riversesc.herts.sch.uk W: www.riversesc.herts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Shelley Hughes

Mrs Millwood

The finished results looked great. Students created their own smash burgers from scratch, and they didn't stop there. Instead of using shop bought brioche buns they shaped and baked their own!

A compliment slip was recently sent home to celebrate Macie's fantastic achievements in Food Technology. Pictured to the right, Macie is proudly displaying the impressive burger she made during the lesson.



Also pictured is Henry, proudly showing us his burger alongside Miss Osborn. Topped with tomato, lettuce and ketchup, his burger looked just as impressive and according to Henry, it tasted every bit as good as it looked!

PSHE in Action

Students have been taking part in weekly group workshops, including sessions delivered by Harlow College, Herts Young Homeless, Your Voice Your Choice, and on topics such as sexting awareness, drug awareness and county lines.
These engaging talks encourage thoughtful discussion, with students showing excellent listening skills, sharing their ideas and contributing positively.
The session provided a oppurtunity for both students and staff to ask questions and explore important topics.



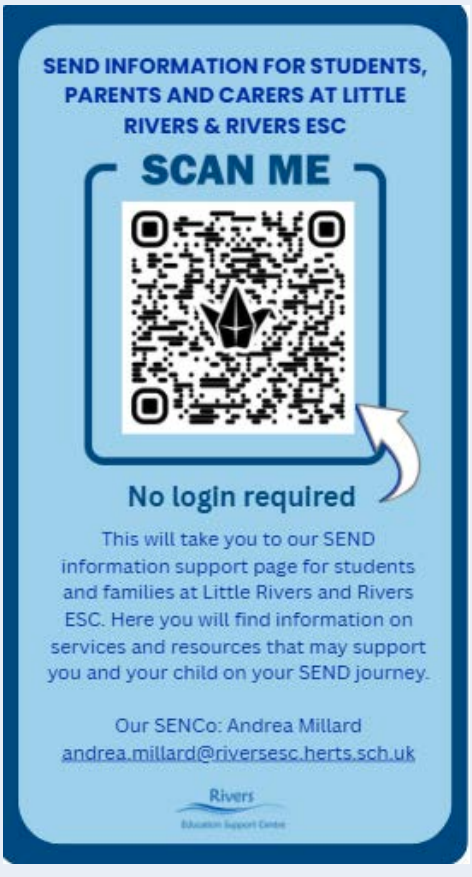
PACE (**P**layfulness, **A**cceptance, **C**uriousity **E**mpathy)

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting children's emotional wellbeing, staff recently took part in a workshop exploring the PACE approach. PACE helps adults build trusting relationships with children and young people by focusing on understanding the feelings and needs behind behaviour rather than simply reacting to the behaviour itself. Through playful interactions, acceptance of emotions, curiosity about a child's and young people's experiences, and empathy for how they are feeling, adults can help children and young people feel safe, understood and supported.

Throughout the session, staff explored the PACE approach and considered how it principles can be woven into daily practice across our Primary and Secondary centres. By focusing on connection, understanding, emotional wellbeing, these strategies help create a supportive environment where students feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

We understand that every young person's journey is different, and having access to the right information can make a real difference!

To the right, you will find a QR code linking directly to our SEND Information and Support page. Designed to support students and families, it offers a range of helpful resources, practical guidance and information to help everyone feel informed, connected and supported.



Introducing Enrichment

Everyone loves Fridays, but now they've become even better with the introduction of Enrichment! Students can choose from a range of activities to help them unwind at the end of the week, while also developing new skills and interests. Enrichment provides valuable opportunities for students to socialise with peers they may not usually spend time with, build new friendships, boost confidence, and even discover a new passion or hobby. Here's a look at what we've been getting up to:

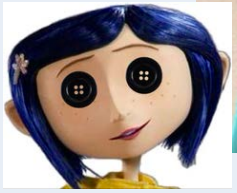




Chess is a firm favourite during break and lunchtime, with students eager to test their skills against our resident chess champion, Mr Smith. It's proven so popular that we've introduced it into Enrichment too! While students are sharpening their strategy skills and planning their next move, Mr Smith is doing his best to protect his title. Plenty have challanged him, but we're starting to wonder if he secretly takes his chessboard home for extra practice! Judging by the smiles on their faces, the competition is as enjoyable as it is intense.

Students have been creating their own Coraline dolls, inspired by their English lessons as they study the novel at KS3. The results have been incredibly impressive, with students bringing the characters to life through intricate details and imaginative designs, with many of the dolls capturing the quirky charm, intricate details and slightly eerie character of the film's iconic animation style.





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Glaxo Smith Kline Trip



KS3 students had an interesting and insightful visit to GSK in Stevenage where they had the opportunity to learn about the jobs available on site from Kitchen porter to Scientists. They did a tour of the expansive site and then took part in simulated science experiments with GSK internship students where they used their maths and physics knowledge to problem solve. The visit formed part of the weekly careers programme now running at our KS3 centre, helping students explore future career pathways.

Keep Busy This Half Term!

