



# Clacton County High School Sigma Sixth Tending Weekly News



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[The CCHS Blog](#)

Autumn Term 2023 | Issue 3 | Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

## ***Stimulating Reading @ CCHS***

This year we are launching a new reading incentive, in partnership with the BookTrust, with the joint aim to get students reading. The Bookbuzz programme is an exciting reading scheme which is specially developed to encourage young people to keep picking up books and develop a love for reading! Reading regularly has a significant impact on wellbeing, imagination and language skills.

Our Year 7 students have gained more independence since moving to secondary school and we now want them to take ownership of their own reading. The programme enables our Year 7 students to choose one of the sixteen Bookbuzz titles to help them discover what gets them turning the page at school and at home. All sixteen books have been carefully selected by a panel of experts to ensure quality, suitability and to encourage reading for pleasure. Over the next couple of weeks all our Year 7 students will have the opportunity to peruse the books and order the free book that they would love to read. Later this term they will receive their free book to take home to keep. Bookbuzz is run by BookTrust, the UK's largest children's reading charity that transforms lives by getting children and families reading. Each year BookTrust reaches millions of children across the UK with books and resources to help stimulate a love of reading.



## ***Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award***

Over the past number of years, numerous Year 9 students have taken part in Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, working towards their Bronze Award. The scheme forms part of our Year 9 Broader Curriculum, which gives our students an opportunity to learn some real life and alternative skills, alongside their academic learning. The Duke of Edinburgh award is made up of a number of sections, the main element being a two-day hike which is the focus for our Broader Curriculum lessons. Throughout the year the students learn how to plan a route, map read, navigate, plan and cook simple meals using camping stoves and put up tents, all in preparation for their assessment hike at the end of Year 9. These skills are tested and enhanced throughout the year during a number of practice hikes, before they are all put to test during their final assessment.



Alongside their hike, each Duke of Edinburgh award requires candidates to also complete voluntary work, undertake regular physical activity and broaden their understanding and expertise in a chosen skill – all of which we require the students to undertake independently. Having completed their hike, the students then embark on the additional elements of the award. We are delighted that eleven students have now completed all the requirements of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and have been presented with their award. Congratulations to Ronnie, Elise, Alfie and Cabhan in Year 11 and Finley, Rocco and Maisie in Year 12, along with former students Lily, Polly and Jessica who were in Year 11 last year.

## ***North Essex Theatre Awards Success***

Well done to two of our talented Year 13 students, who recently won prestigious awards at the annual North Essex Theatre Guild awards evening at the Princes Theatre. Maddie Robinson was nominated in a number of categories, after her involvement with the Princes Youth Theatre productions of Shrek and A Monster Calls; she was delighted to win the 'Best Young Actress of the Year', whilst Max Chase won the 'Best Young Actor' category. Congratulations to both of them!



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## Reinforcement Works Complete

Over the past couple of months, we have had to deal with the disruption caused by the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in a few areas of the school, back in late July. These sections of the school were added to the original school building in the early 1970's when the material was commonly used within the building industry. As the school has grown over the years we have been fortunate to have had further additional buildings added to the school, both in 2004 and more recently the new sports hall and new classrooms so, unlike other schools across the country, a full-closure of the school has not been necessary.



Remedial work on the affected areas began in early August, with the aim to have all areas, highlighted by surveyors as requiring intervention, being fully supported before the end of the month to enable all the year groups to return at the start of the Autumn Term. This was accomplished and the school was ready to fully open before an announcement by the Department of Education, on the last day of August. Their updated requirements stated that it was not sufficient to just reinforce areas of RAAC, identified as showing signs of wear, but any area of RAAC despite their condition. This news was a crushing blow to everyone and especially the Sigma Trust Estates team, who had reacted quickly back in July to help ensure disruption to student's

learning was avoided. Despite the set-back, work was intensified to re-visit areas already completed, to add in the additional support across all areas of the roofing affected. We are indebted to our contractors who have worked tirelessly seven days a week, for the past month to ensure that the disruption to learning has been limited to just three weeks.



After only a week, all but one main area was fully supported and handed back to us by the contractors, enabling us to welcome all but one year group into school each day. During the past two weeks we've still had fourteen classrooms unavailable, leading to the need for our Year 8 and Year 9 students to alternate between online learning at home and lessons in school. Those in school, both staff and students, have had to contend with numerous room-changes daily with teachers, as well as students, having to move around from room to room, with all of their equipment. Thankfully, we are now ready to welcome all our students back into school from Monday and look forward to having them all fully immersed in the routine of school life. We understand that the past few weeks have been very unsettling for everyone and we thank all those affected, both in school and at home for your patience. One small area of work is still to be completed but this will not affect students being on site. As we prepare to fully re-open, we are the envy of many headteachers across Essex whose schools are affected by RAAC, they have been in contact with the school asking how we have managed to resolve the problem and fully re-open so quickly and seeking advice on how they can follow suit. The quick response was down to the Sigma Trust Estates team, to whom we owe our thanks to for their diligence throughout the summer, and the contractors on site. The work that has been completed is just a remedial repair, supporting the areas of roofing that contain Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete. Moving forward the school will be looking at longer term permanent solutions. This work, where possible, will be planned during school holiday periods to limit any further impact on our student's education.

## National Online Safety – Group Chats

As part of their [#WakeUpWednesday](#) series of Internet Safety Guides, National Online Safety have created a special guide for parents, providing some helpful tips on 'Group Chats' – [view the guide here](#).



Chats occur through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed. In the guide, you'll find tips on a number of potential risks such as bullying, inappropriate content and unknown members.

National Online Safety also have a multitude of simple e-Safety guides with new ones published each week as part of their [#WakeUpWednesday](#) campaign. We recommend that you [sign up to National Online Safety](#)



[and receive their weekly E-Safety update](#), alternatively visit the [e-Safety pages on our website](#), including a number of National Online Safety guides.

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# Clacton County High School Sigma Sixth Tending Notices and Letters



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**The Weekly Notices is a 'one-stop shop' for home/school written communications and information.**

Please take the time to check through the mailing particularly for your child's individual year group: there could be some very important information for you to be aware of.

## Whole School Notices

### From Head of School – Mr C Taylor Update on RAAC Remedial Works from Monday 25th September

Dear Parents - I am delighted to be able to inform you that we are able to open from Monday for all year groups. Without doubt, it has been a long and difficult three weeks for all those students and families affected and it is great that we are now on the other side of the majority of the remedial work. Just 2 areas to complete; the Library and the classroom above, but this does not impact on the school operationally.

We look forward to seeing the whole of the CCHS community back in school.

### [Letter from Head of School - Behaviour & Safety](#)

### Arbor- Our Parents and Carers Portal - Updated

Since September 1<sup>st</sup> we have been using a new communications portal, please see below some useful links and information to help you gain greater satisfaction from using the new system.

[Help with logging in](#)

[Your Homepage Dashboard](#)



On the App homepage you will be able to see sections for:

- [Notices](#) – This section contains a list of missing information (including consents) on the student's profile. Parents and Carers will receive notifications when consents are pending, please accept or decline consents.  
**Please check and handle any missing consents as soon as possible**
- [Calendar/timetable](#) - You can see which lessons and events your child is taking part in on the current day on the Arbor App. (active) On the browser version you can see the whole week ahead
- [Statistics](#) - This shows information about the student's attendance, behaviour and progress statistics for the current term. (active)
- [Guardian consultations](#) – This section allows guardians to book time for Parents Evening meetings by selecting one of the available slots as per the School's setup (**Will be activated in due course**)
- [Assignments](#) - This section shows any homework or coursework assignments that are due, overdue or marked. (active) *Please note that uploaded homework will only show as submitted once the teacher has accessed it*
- [Accounts](#) - The **Accounts** section contains the following subsections: **Dinners** - Top up student dinner money. **Uniform** - will show a charge if a tie has been issued by Pastoral/Year office. **Events** - covers items such as food tech charges, revision books and other ad-hoc payments (active) *Please take care to pay for the correct item*
- [Activities](#) – Pay for School trips that are open for your student (active)
- [School Shop](#) - (not active, School uniform can be purchased [here](#) )

### Arbor Profile

On your child's arbor profile – (please click on their photo) this will take you to your child's general information and details. Please ensure that all information is provided, accurate and up to date. Thank you

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## Reminder of Timings of the school day

**Registration** is at 8.45am. We are happy that students are on site prior to this time, but no earlier than 8.15am. **School finishes** for the day at 15.10. Students not participating in an after-school activity or meeting with a member of staff are expected to leave the site by 15.30 in school uniform.

**Breakfast Club** in Clouds, opens at 8.15am.  
**Breaktime for Years 8 and 10** is at 11.40am

**Breaktime for Years 7, 9 and 11** is at 10.20am  
**Lunchtime** for all years is 13.15pm

## Autumn Term date reminders

- Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> September – Year 11 Information Evening
- Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> October – Year 7 Parents Evening
- Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> October – Sigma Sixth Open Evening
- October half Term – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 27<sup>th</sup>

## Year 7

### **Tutor Evening for Year 7 Parents and Carers**

Thursday, 12th October will be our Year 7 Tutor Evening, more information will follow

- [Letter from Deputy Headteacher - Mrs Tate re Pupil Premium Grant](#)

## Year 11

### **Year 11 Information Evening – Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> September**

Please see [letter from Deputy Headteacher - Mrs K Loosley](#)

## Safeguarding, SEND and Wellbeing

CCHS is pleased to announce that they have partnered with [tootoot](#) –tootoot is a safe, secure and diverse web-based safeguarding tool, which allows young people of all age ranges to report any concerns or issues that may be worrying them in an anonymous, confidential and discreet manner. [Click here for more information](#)



## Careers

This week we have linked our careers focus to the possibilities of work experience. There is a wealth of virtual work experience available for young people and it is so worthwhile for them to begin as soon as they can to think about their futures beyond CCHS.

Two virtual experiences this week to take a look at are both linked to the TV and film industry.

Aged 16-25? From Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October until Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October BFI Film Academy Short Course at the University of Suffolk.

For further information go to <https://www.uos.ac.uk/study/ba-digital-film-production/bfi-short-course/>

This is the [link](#) for Springpod TV - take a look for a virtual work experience. Students will need to sign up for Springpod to complete the experience (it's free) and they will get a certificate at the end.

Essex Careers have published a very informative and interesting brochure on a guide to local employment and skills and we encourage all students and their parents to take a look. The summer 2023 edition has a sector spotlight on Health & Social Care, Engineering and Finance, but there is much, much more within to help and inform.

To access your copy follow this <https://www.essexopportunities.co.uk/essex-careers-magazine/>

## Community Notices

### [What's on at Colchester Museums/ Castle](#)

#### **Youth Enquiry Service (YES)**

Is your child or teenager receiving counselling? Are you finding life a challenge while waiting for counselling support to begin? Youth Enquiry Service (YES) offer a safe space to share please [click here](#) for more information.

#### **Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service**

The following workshops are available for parent/carers in the local area - [Click here to view](#)

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