

# iCollege



## Message from Jacquie

Autumn seems to have crept up on us this year, and we are once again at half term.



There are lots of things to celebrate, have fun, and enjoy in the coming few weeks: Diwali starts on 24<sup>th</sup> October, the clocks are 'falling back' by one hour at 2am on Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, so we get an extra hour in bed, Halloween is 31<sup>st</sup> October and Bonfire Night on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November.

As the days start to cool down, and winter is on the horizon, please remember to dress warmly for school. Our heating bills, like everybody else's will have increased by 60%, so in the interests of economy and climate change, we are planning to reduce the ambient temperature across all sites by 1 or 2 degrees. This will hardly be noticeable to learners or staff, but will make a significant difference to our budget and play a small part in protecting the environment.

We will also continue to do our best to offer learners some form of hot food and / or hot drink during the school day when circumstances allow.

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October is an INSET day for staff, so the school terms starts again on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November for all learners.

I hope you all have a lovely half term break.

## IMPORTANT Term Dates

### October 24

Diwali

### November 1

Back to school

### November 5

Bonfire Night

### November 13

Remembrance Day

### December 20

Break up for Christmas

## End of an era at Integration

During the Summer, builders were hard at work on site in Calcot. The old, prefabricated building that has stood there for about 18 years is no more. In its place will be a brand new, purpose-built Integration.

The old terrapins held some wonderful memories. Sharon, TA for 6 Years recalls



how learners fondly nicknamed the building, formally known as 'Badger's Hill', the "Shed School". She remembers trips to the beach, where a learner was stung by a jellyfish; being asked to get display boards perfectly straight; and pretending to be a penguin in one of Karen's famous drama lessons!

But, whilst it is sad to see the building go, we know that the new place will create many more memories. Fram, Lead Teacher, is looking forward to having a building that is fit for purpose and to once more being an iCollege presence in the east of West Berkshire!

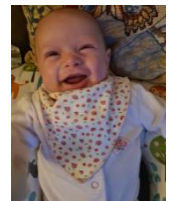


## Congratulations!

To Joel and Amy on the birth of Benjamin Ezra Gregory (24/08/2022), and to Rachel and Jimmy on the safe arrival of Corrie Pocock (11.08.2022). What a productive use of the summer holidays!



Ben

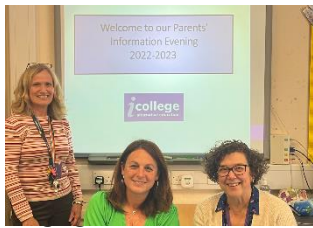


Corrie

## Unit News

### Independence

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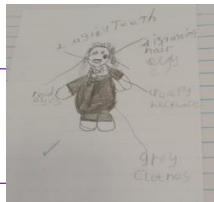
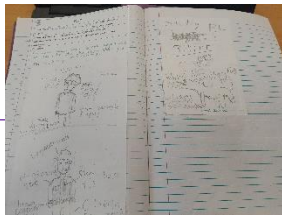
presentation followed by a Q&A session.

For the first time, Independence held a BBQ to welcome new learners and their parents and carers. It was a perfect combination of socialising and sharing important information about the year ahead. After enjoying hotdogs and beef burgers, attendees were invited to engage with a curriculum, unit and careers

### Pod

[staff.pod@iccollege.org.uk](mailto:staff.pod@iccollege.org.uk)

This term we have been looking at self-portraits in Art. We have had so much fun creating Picasso-style and pop art style portraits. In English we have been writing our very own fairy tales. We have used the book "Prince Cinders" as inspiration and have created our own version. The rubbish fairy godmother has turned our princes into sharks, ants and birds to name a few of our ideas.



### Pod+

[staff.pod@iccollege.org.uk](mailto:staff.pod@iccollege.org.uk)

In Pod+, we have been working hard on our geography topic of Raging Rivers where we have been learning about the features of rivers, the water cycle, erosion and deposition and the force of rivers. We have produced some fantastic art work, learning new techniques with clay, sculpting metal sheets and looking at trainer designs. Learners have created canvas art pieces which will take pride of place around the school (see above).

Finally, learners have taken great delight in showing staff how dodgeball, basketball and archery should be done, showing amazing skills!



### Inspiration

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Inspiration has had a hectic start to term, enjoying our new topic of 'Kings and Queens'. Elm class managed some great artwork on 'The Princess and the Pea' and some impressive independent writing on thinking bubbles. One learner in Oak class imagined the Queen looking up at the foil moon from her castle, thinking, "If only I had a rocket..."

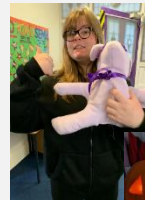
Our work on sensory exercise to help us self-regulate continues, and we have introduced 'Zones of Regulation', designed to help us managed our feelings.



### Intervention

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At Intervention, learners have been getting creative with the sewing machine and in the kitchen.



### Integration

[office.integration@iccollege.org.uk](mailto:office.integration@iccollege.org.uk)

We have finally moved into our new, temporary digs!

Whilst we wait for our brand new building to be built in Calcot, we are based in Thatcham. At the beginning of September, it was all hands on deck to scrub down and set up our new location for returning young people. We had visits from the Integration team to help out, plus much appreciated support from some of our school governors and our head teacher, Jacquie!



## Careers news

A big shout out to young people from Independence for excellent behaviour at the Careers Expo, Newbury College on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

Year 11 learners managed brilliantly with huge crowds and made the most of a great opportunity to meet with local businesses, try out activities and ask questions about their areas of interest.



*Interactive activities with AWE*



*Huge thanks to Waitrose for their continued support with WEX*



*Meeting with Xtrac – a big local employer with great apprenticeships*

The National Citizen's Service team (Dave and Scarlet) have been regular visitors to Independence where they have been delivering skills booster sessions to year 11 learners. The topics have been based around careers and progression as well as employability and skills for independent living.



**BEEP (Berkshire Education Employer Partnership) came to Independence to support year 11 learners with some teambuilding exercises.**



**Gemma talked about transferable skills and how they are useful in the work place.**

**Learners were able to develop their problem solving and resilience through the activities.**

iCollege has recently successfully passed another two units for the Rainbow Flag Award - thank you so much to everyone in the iCollege community for sharing the hard work you have done in your lessons! It has been recognised by others outside of iCollege how we are continuing to develop our inclusivity and diversity within all of our subjects, and trying to provide the best support for everyone accessing iCollege. That now means

we have passed all but 1 unit, and are now well and truly at the finish line!



Gold stars to the young people from Intervention, Integration and Independence for excellent engagement at Social Action plays in October.

We were treated to performances of 'Risking it All' and 'Unacceptable'. Both plays conveyed important messages about keeping young people safe and were portrayed by vibrant actors in bespoke performances for iCollege learners.





## Curriculum

At **FOREST SCHOOL**, we've been making bird feeders!



In **PRACTICAL SKILLS** at Intervention, learners have been creating and upcycling all sorts of items for their homes:



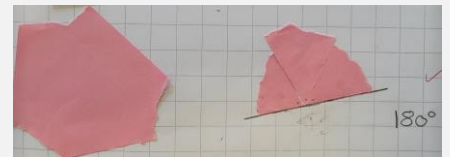
In **COOKING**, we have been learning all about safety in the kitchen, especially knife skills. Learners have practiced on different fruits and vegetables before creating pumpkin tortillas and mummy hotdogs!



The **ART** department has been busy this half term. Here you can see that years 9 and 10 have been creating organic pods from clay. Their varied inspiration includes mushrooms, flowers and sea-life!



At Intervention, we have been doing angles in **MATHS**. Here you can see how we ripped the corners off a triangle and showed they can be put together to make a straight line – and therefore must total 180 degrees.



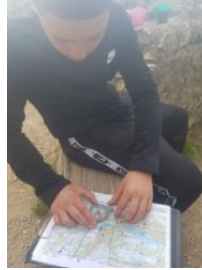
The Pod have been creating portraits:



## Our iCollege Community

### What has been going on at Outdoor Academy?

What a great start to the autumn term. Learners have been active with Outdoor Academy on both land and water taking advantage of some fantastic weather. We are so impressed that the young people are challenging themselves to get involved and participate. The team are looking forward to the winter term with some indoor kayaking, indoor wall climbing and some other amazing activities.



### A Note from the governors

Governors were delighted recently to have news of impressive public examination results from iCollege learners of 2022. The range of qualifications in such a variety of subjects is testimony to the staff's continued attention to meeting the diverse needs and attributes of all iCollege's learners. Congratulations to both staff and learners for all their efforts, especially as these results were achieved against the continued presence of Covid and the constraints that this placed on all aspects of iCollege's work over a protracted period of time.

Another recent significant event for iCollege is the temporary move for staff and learners from Integration to Parsons Down Infants School, which had become vacant. This was a big move for all concerned at the Calcot site. Integration's previous home is being completely transformed with the iCollege new build underway there. Governors were keen to help with this move and some were there to help out at the beginning of the new academic year in September. Governors were also invited to a staff barbecue on the INSET day, which was a very good opportunity for staff and governors to meet informally.

We are pleased that we have welcomed several new governors over the course of the last year; right now we are still seeking to recruit a Support Staff governor. This is a great opportunity to find out more about the workings of iCollege at a strategic level. Jill Hills, the Clerk to the governors, is the person to contact. Jill is a highly experienced clerk and she will be able to answer any queries you might have about this role. Her email address is:

[jhills@icollge.org.uk](mailto:jhills@icollge.org.uk)

'My life's a mess! Everything keeps changing! Look at what's happening in the world: there's a war, and this cost of living thing, and Covid keeps coming back!' I often hear these sort of laments from young people, voicing what we as adults might feel too. What they're grappling with is how chaos can engulf life, chaos both externally and internally: the multitude of things going on in the world over which humans have little control, coupled with the tumultuous experience of growing into a developing body and brain whilst working out who you are and what's expected of you.

Young people are always fascinated by chaos. Think about the course of modern music and art, zombie movies, and the themes of X-box games. There's a dynamism and vibrancy in chaos that's inventive, spontaneous, and, yes, destructive. With good reason we encourage young people to focus on what they can do to structure their lives and prepare for the future, but in doing so we might gloss over the intensely felt awareness that order is fragile, often boring, and potentially stifling. Yes, chaos can be frightening, but it can prompt us to reassess our world and remind us of our capacity for flexibility. In nature there is a continual kaleidoscopic flow, an organic order imbued with chaotic change that works towards adaptation for new circumstances. And of course we're part of nature, so we too have an inherent ability to adapt psychologically and physiologically to change; we're only still existing as a species *because* we can do so. The best context in which we can do this is within relationships: these are what contain chaos and help sustain us when things fall apart. And it is out of our relationships that all sorts of interesting and creative responses might emerge.

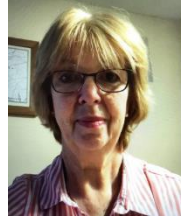
*iCollege Councillor*



### In Conversation with Cheyanne

I'm Cheyanne and I'm a year 11 learner at Intervention. In this edition of the newsletter, I have interviewed Maureen Sims who is the Chairperson of our school governors.

My first question was to ask what her role at iCollege is. She explained that her job is to challenge staff and governors, ask questions and make sure people can talk. She said that there are 12 governors at the moment, with 2 spaces available. I asked her why she became a governor of iCollege, and she said it is a volunteer job and there aren't many governors because it's unpaid and takes up time. She felt that after being in education for so long, she wanted to "give back".



After this, I asked her if, now that she knows iCollege learners, there was anything she would change about how she dealt with mainstream. She said that mainstream schools tend to focus on groups and not individuals and that she can now see how important it is to be more flexible for learners who struggle to engage. She also said she would put more support in for teachers to help learners.

My next question was, "If you could change one thing for learners at iCollege, what would it be?"

She said, "A lot of small things add up to become big things." She mentioned further opportunities for young people to come to iCollege, proper science labs, more equipment and sports facilities as well as a minibus! I think a minibus and extra equipment would be good for iCollege. A minibus would help more people come to school and a proper science lab would be brilliant as we have the same rights as mainstream learners.

When I asked her what she thinks it means to be successful, she said it was about *feeling* that you are doing your best.

I asked her if she thought mainstream school was better than iCollege. She said, "Certainly not!" She thinks we're both important and that we could learn from each other. She said that mainstream schools should learn a thing from iCollege: to stick with learners.

Cheekily, I asked her if she had ever got into trouble when she was at school. She told me a story about her school uniform. It was purple and included a beret. She thought this beret was "ridiculous" and didn't want to wear it, so she stood on it in a puddle and got a detention from her french teacher!

Finally, I asked her what is at the top of her bucket list and she said that she would like to visit New York.

We are currently seeking applicants for the opportunity to join our school's Governing Body

Successful applicant(s) will:

- Join a friendly and dedicated team;
- Be supported to develop useful new skills and knowledge;
- Work with school leaders to assist children and young people to fulfil their aspirations;
- Give something of significant value back to our community.

If you are a parent, carer or grandparent and would be interested in finding out more about this voluntary role, Please contact: Jill Hills Clerk to Governors  
[jhills@icollge.org.uk](mailto:jhills@icollge.org.uk)

**Closing Date: 4th November 2022**

You can find out more about our Governing Body on our website: [icollge.org.uk](http://icollge.org.uk)

If you would like to contribute to the next iTimes, please email:

[sgiaever@icollge.org.uk](mailto:sgiaever@icollge.org.uk)

Thank you to everyone who sent items for this edition.

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01635 48872