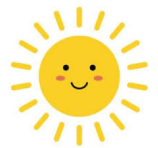


Newsletter

Ancora House School



Welcome to the summer edition!



Hello from us all here at Ancora House School,

We have had a busy time since our last Newsletter in February. Our amazing Year 11 learners have sat their GCSE exams which is a fantastic achievement after the 2 years they have been through due to the Covid pandemic. Many have had offers from their chosen colleges, and others are looking at alternative pathways, including work experience. A group of year 11s will be volunteering at Chester Zoo, and some others taking part in activities organised by the National Citizen Service over the summer. We wish them good luck with their future, and would love to hear how they are getting on over the coming years (admin@ancora.cheshire.sch.uk)

Our younger learners have been taking part in a variety of activities too. Chris Turner, a TA from our sister school at the Countess of Chester, has been coming over to see us on Friday afternoons to run some Duke of Edinburgh sessions. We had a fantastic Art display in our windows for the Jubilee celebrations, as well as creating our "Queen Bee" Bee Garden using seeds given to us by Frodsham Town Council, and plants donated by various organisations. Thank you to Neil who maintains the park for supporting us. We have also had Gareth Cheeseman from ACET in to deliver RSE sessions with small groups.

We had a coffee morning for our parents and a year 11 feedback evening before Spring Break. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Year 7-10 feedback evening, but we will reschedule this as soon as possible.

Finally, thank you for all the support as parents and carers you have given to us as a school. We thoroughly enjoy working with all our young people and to see them flourish as they grow in confidence.

Have a lovely summer break.

Outdoor learning...

Ancora House School is extremely fortunate to be in the wonderful Castle Park. In order to make the most of this space, our four teachers have been completing a Level 2 Award in Curriculum-Based Outdoor Learning Practice which will be completed in September. The idea of this is for teachers to gain ideas to take their curriculum outdoors and make the best of the site. In order to allow us to deliver a more outdoor curriculum, we have purchased an event shelter where learners can have lessons in the park in a variety of weathers. We have recently used it for the Year 11 enrichment sessions, and for a whole school outdoor session.

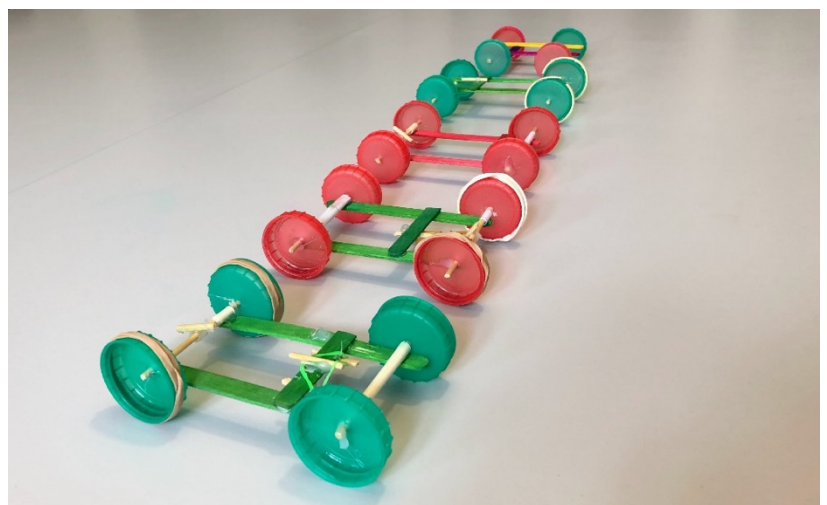


Summer of Art at Castle Park...

Students at Castle Park have been busy creating some wonderful window art for all to enjoy! Inspired by local Chester artist **Nikki Pinder**, who has decorated many of the city's electricity boxes and windows, including the iconic Storyhouse, students set to work! They have been inspired by their surroundings, and their designs echo the natural shapes and forms of Castle Park. The vibrancy and vivacious use of colour reflects both our school and the wider environment...fabulous work everyone!



STEM: Elastic band powered cars
After the exams had been completed, the year 11 learner took part in STEM sessions to further enhance their knowledge and support their teamwork skills. Over a number of sessions, the learners made elastic band powered cars. They could only use ice lolly sticks, a hot glue gun, milk bottle tops for wheels, drinking straws and an elastic band. By the time they had finished they understood more about how and why vehicles move. The best car managed to travel the amazing distance of four metres!
Well done Year 11!



Careers and Transitions

It has been a busy term for Careers and Transition with workshops for National Careers Week and National Apprenticeships Week. We have had lots of visits to colleges in preparation for our year 11 leavers and for our current year 10's to start thinking about their options. We have had guest speakers in to talk about UK Parliament, NHS careers and NCS. Most inspiring of all, we have had wonderful presentations delivered by some of our past students. They have spoken to our current students about their journeys with Ancora and spoken about how they managed in college and volunteering. Two of them have places to study at University in September!

Every year for the last 4 years, we have been involved with a Summer Volunteering Project open only to Ancora House School at Chester Zoo. This project has been so fantastic for all involved and we have 6 students who will be completing the project this year. This successful project will run again in 2023 so there is the opportunity again next year to get involved!

We are very grateful for the support Chester Zoo and many other Charitable and voluntary services offer to our school. We were able to hold a thankyou event for them and we had guests able to attend from Chester Zoo, Youth Federation, Chester University and Neil our wonderful Gardener at Castle Park. Our guests enjoyed a tour of our school, were able to hear how we have developed as a school from our Headteacher Sian Thomas (From Little Acorns!), were able to see some of our student's wonderful displays and to eat lots of lovely cake! We were sorry that some were unable to make it this time - Storyhouse, UK Parliament, STEM Ambassadors, our local PSCO and many other wonderful individuals. We want to say thank you to you all for your support for our school. Working with others in our community, really does make so much positive difference to our young people's education journey!

We have lots planned for the new academic year and look forward to continuing to make our Careers and Transitions Curriculum even better!



As part of our contribution to the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, we have created a 'Queen Bee' garden, full of wild flowers for our bees.



Jubilee celebrations at Castle Park



Our students worked hard to participate in the Jubilee celebrations, creating portraits, butterfly art and even a large-scale Queen Elizabeth!

Red Nose Day 2022



On 18th March, the learners had a bake sale outside Castle Park House and raised over £68. The learners went out into the park encouraging patrons to come and buy a cake. This was an enormous achievement for some of our learners and really paid off.



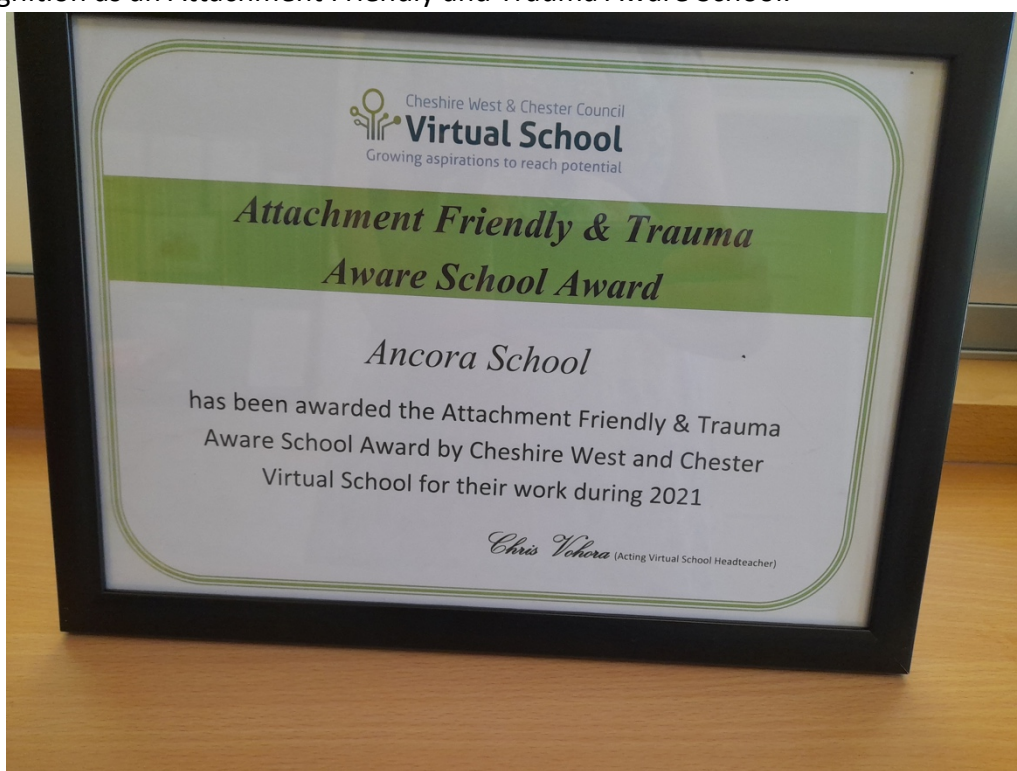
CELEBRATE!

Attachment friendly and Trauma Aware Award

The Virtual School in Cheshire West and Chester works alongside each child's setting to ensure the best possible educational outcomes. The Virtual School team seeks to support and challenge through a multi professional approach to enable the education gap between Children in Care and their peers to be closed.

In 2019, Ancora House School began the year long process of obtaining the award. An audit was carried out to look at what we did well and areas for improvement and an action plan created. The Virtual School then approved some funding so that we could fulfil our plan. However, Covid hit and the award had to be put on hold. This was an opportunity for Ancora House School, community site, as we were able to move to bigger premises in Castle Park and change our action plan to include our wonderful sensory room, The Sanctuary. As well as The Sanctuary and The Oasis rooms, we completed training on Verbal De-Escalation Techniques, purchased Heart Math and a 2nd TA will be training as an ELSA.

Finally, on 14th July 2022, we were able to present to The Virtual School what we have achieved and have been awarded recognition as an Attachment Friendly and Trauma Aware School.



Zones of Regulation

An Ancora House School, it is important the learners understand how they are feeling and that they can communicate in verbal and non-verbal ways about this to staff. The Zones of regulation is a social-emotional learning curriculum that was created to teach young people how to master self-regulation and emotional well-being. This provided the young people with the tools to identify how they are feeling and how they can manage the feeling/s and access the support they may need to regulate their emotions. The Zones of regulation consists of four Zones: The Blue Zone – Going slow (you would experience low energy levels and may feel sad, tired or down), the Green Zone – Good to Go (you feel neutral emotions such as happy, content and ready to learn), the Yellow Zone- Be Aware / Take Caution (your energy and motional levels will be heightened and you could feel frustrated, stressed, excited or silly) and lastly the Red Zone – Stop and Notice (you feel more intense emotions and feel on very high alert; you could feel angry, panicked or elated). Once the young person is able to identify their emotion/s they can use their 'Tool Kit' to help manage the feeling/s. Our young people can access the Zones of Regulation as many times as they require throughout the day. Additionally, it can be a tool to use at home as well as in school so the young people are able to communicate how they are feeling.

Zones of Regulation

How do you feel today? **What Zone are you in?**

Blue Zone Going Slow	Green Zone Good to GO!
HELPLESS, UNSURE, HURT, HOPELESS, OVERTHEWELMED, HESITANT, DISAPPOINTED, EMPTY, SLEEPY	WARM, CONTENT, CONFIDENT, ACCEPTED, HOPEFUL, HAPPY, LOVED, PLAYFUL, GOOD, STRONG
Yellow Zone Be Aware/ Take Caution	Red Zone Stop and Notice
ESTATIC, WORRIED, CONFUSED, SHOCKED, SILLY, ANNOYED, STRESSED, FRUSTRATED, SCARED, BRITATED, EXCITED	EXPLOSIVE, RAGE, DEPRESSED, ANGRY, HEARTBROKEN, BRITATED

Summer holidays

On Friday 22nd July Ancora House School, community site breaks up at 1.30pm for the summer holidays. We return on Monday 5th September. The summer holidays is a lovely break to relax, but we are aware that these six weeks can be a difficult time for some families. Cheshire West and Chester Council have a web page with a variety of information to support families over the summer break. [The Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\) Programme | Live Well Cheshire West \(cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk\)](#)

The National Autistic Society has also created some resources to support those who find change difficult [A guide for all audiences \(autism.org.uk\)](#)

They also have a guide to support families going on holiday [Going on holiday \(autism.org.uk\)](#)

