



Spring 2024



A Message from the Executive Headteacher

## SPRING IS ON THE WAY

*Well, it seems such a short time since I was writing to you at Christmas, but with this early Easter, here we are again celebrating another successful term at TMBS. It is nice to be arriving at school in the daylight and I hope that we all experience some good weather over the holidays.*

*As always, students have been engaging with a number of exciting enrichment opportunities, as well as their everyday lessons in centre. This is especially true of the year 11s, who have just a few short weeks before their GCSE exam period. We know this can be a difficult time for our young people, but please remind them that we are on their side and here to support them through it. We also believe it is never too late to make a difference; whatever has happened before their arrival with us, does not need to be a barrier to their success.*

*I would like to wish you all a lovely Easter period and thank you for your continued support.*

*Greg Portman*



## OUTREACH SHOUTOUTS

- Three students are transitioning to Hook-a-Gate Centre
- One student is transitioning to Ludlow Centre
- One student managed to go out for a family meal
- Two students have completed their Entry level assessments
- One student managed to attend every day for a week for the first time.

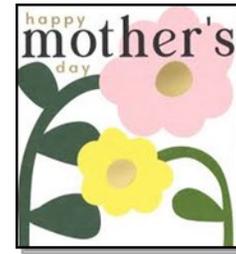
To some these may seem like small gains, but for some of our students these successes are immense and we are really proud of all of them.

## THANK YOU TO ALL THE WOMEN IN OUR LIVES



In recognition of International Women's Day and Mothering Sunday this year, students from Bridgnorth were able to say thank you with some donated gifts. Volunteers at Highley Community Project were kind enough to donate some wonderful flowers and colourful cards to Bridgnorth Centre. Each student bagged two beautiful bunches and a classy card to take home to brighten up this special Sunday for their mums, nans or carers.

It isn't the first time that TMBSS has benefitted from the generosity of local businesses who supply all sorts of provisions to the Project to support the



community. We have used donated food in our Friday Lunch Recipes and the friendly volunteers regularly provide drinks and snacks to students at Highley Severn Centre to help them through their weekly Health, Fitness and Well-Being practical

*'TMBSS benefit from the generosity of local businesses and volunteers'*



### COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AT OSWESTRY



Students across TMBSS had a themed day to celebrate Chinese New Year. Activities took place at all centres but Oswestry students worked together to make their own Chinese dragon. It was great to see them produce something as a team.

### OUTDOOR ED ADVENTURE

Outdoor Education students at Hook-a-Gate are always off on adventures. This is Will in year 11's account of one such trip. Have look at what they have been doing on the next page.

*'We all started in the magic minibus/van thing. About two short years (minutes) later, maybe slightly longer, we made a stop at the Abbey and found out it was 1000 years old; that is definitely older than me.*

*After that, we got back in the magic minibus/van thing and one minute later we got back out. We went around a corner. We crossed a road which definitely wanted to kill us, but we miraculously survived. It was a very close call. (It wasn't).*

*After we crossed the road of doom, we went up a relatively steep pathway, I'm pretty sure I saw a bear. (I didn't). After the perilous journey to the top of the hill, we all arrived at a flat top to look at flooding.*

*After being drenched, Mr. Mac suggested we go see the "Gnome House" so we did. When we arrived, Mr. Mac put on a little show; I thought he was insane.*

*On our way down the hill we passed a quarry that was used to harvest road material and was over 500 million years old.*

*Overall, it was very fun. Like always.'*



*A fantastic time was had at the high ropes!*

## ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT TMBSS

Outdoor education is always a popular subject at TMBSS. It gives students a break from the classroom and an opportunity to learn new skills and venture out into the countryside. Whilst this is super way to improve fitness and get some exercise, it also teaches valuable life skills and students gain qualifications which will be beneficial in the 'real world' and excellent additions to their CVs when applying for college places and jobs.

Students complete a number of AQA awards as part of their experience and also cover basic first aid; gaining a certificate from the British heart Foundation to show they have been trained in CPR.



OUTDOOR  
EDUCATION  
STUDENTS ARE  
CLIMBING THE  
WALLS





## MORE ADVENTURES

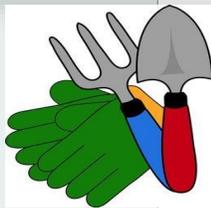
Students from the Oswestry and Sundorne Centres have been enjoying a variety of different outdoor activities to help build positive relationships, develop a sense of team work, and to experience the wonder that participating in these experiences brings.

The students developed skills they had never learned before, used muscles they didn't know they had, and pushed

themselves in ways they never thought they would.

Activities included: rock scrambling, rock climbing using ropes, caving, canoeing, cycling and bush craft skills; like building shelters and cooking over a camp fire.

The students who got involved in these opportunities came away feeling challenged and exhilarated and wanting more!



## EX STUDENT SUCCESS, AS HE RETURNS AS CENTRE GARDENER

### SCHOOL COUNCIL

Huge congratulations to all the students who represented their centres at the School Council Debate this term. Meeting at The Lantern in Shrewsbury, the topic for discussion was, 'Can there ever be world peace?' And whilst we may not have solved the world's disputes, we did have a mature and thoughtful exchange, with all students contributing maturely and respectfully.

Stevie Chidlow's last day at Oswestry Centre was a rather memorable affair. The year was 2020 and the then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, had just announced that there was to be a national lockdown. Stevie was in Year 11 and was due to be taking his GCSEs in the summer term. He and his fellow students gathered in the garden at the back of Oswestry Centre for a hurriedly organised group photo and then it was off home for what was to become the first of the Covid 19 lockdowns.

In his spare time, Stevie was already working as a part-time gardener and had a work experience placement at Erddig, a National Trust property in Wrexham. After his GCSEs, the plan was for him to accept an apprenticeship with the gardening team at Erddig. This, however, wasn't what actually happened.

In September 2023, Mr. Parkinson, the English teacher at Oswestry Centre, began a part-time course at Reaseheath. One day on campus, he ran into Stevie and the two got chatting about what had happened to Stevie since he'd left the Oswestry Centre—Stevie had completed a Horticulture course at Reaseheath and was working for their ground maintenance team.

Back at work, the following week, Mr. Parkinson was telling Dr. Garside and his colleagues about his meeting with an ex-student. Together they came up with the idea that perhaps Stevie would like to come and look after the garden at the centre as it had become rather overgrown recently. This was suggested to Stevie and following a successful bidding process, Stevie is about to begin working at his old centre, but this time as its gardener.

## BREADY OR NOT, HERE I CRUMB!



Ludlow students were prepared to get their hands a bit mucky, when they made bread as part of their enrichment programme. It took some kneading and a bit of patience for it to rise, but the students were pleased with their efforts and they had positive feedback from their families.



Mr Pople attempted to make some gluten free bread, but there's a rumour that his was not as successful!

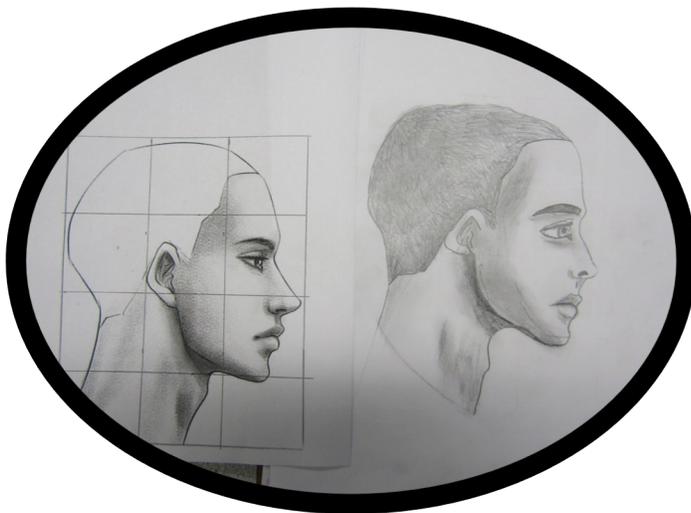
*'We had a great time making bread, which we then took home to share with our families.'*

## 'ART' YOU TALENTED!

TMBSS students never fail to amaze us with their incredible artistic talent.

This term KS3 have been learning about artist Danny O'Connor. As part of the project they have learnt how to draw portraits using grid method. The image below is a year 8 Bridgnorth pupil's work. It was his first attempt and totally independent, just using the image!

This half term Art students in all secondary centres have created a sunflower inspired by Vincent Van Gogh during



enrichment. They could select from a range of media: acrylic paint, oil pastel, pencil crayon, textiles and collage to create their sunflower.

The finished flowers were then brought together in a centre display, but will also be copied to create one big display at Sundorne Reception.

By taking part, students also achieved an AQA Unit Award.

Well done!



Online Grooming is when someone befriends and builds an emotional relationship with a child and communicates with them through the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offence. This type of victimisation can take place across any platform; from social media and messaging apps to online gaming and live streaming. Often it involves young people being tricked, forced or pressured into doing something they wouldn't normally do (coercion) and often the groomer's goal is to meet the victim in a controlled setting to sexually or physically abuse them. In some cases children may be abducted or have long-lasting psychological damage.



# What parents need to know about **ONLINE GROOMING**



## CHILDREN ARE MOST VULNERABLE

Unsurprisingly children are often most at risk as they are easy to target and unlikely to question the person who is engaging in conversation with them. Groomers will use psychological tricks and methods to try and isolate them from their families and friends and will often choose to target more vulnerable children who may be easier to manipulate. Predators will stalk apps and websites that are popular with young people and will use a 'scattergun' approach to find victims, contacting hundreds online to increase their chances of success.



## LIVE STREAMING CONCERNS

Predators may use live video to target children in real-time using tricks, dares or built-in gifts to manipulate them. Grooming often takes the form of a game where children receive 'likes' or even money for performing sexual acts. Social media channels, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, all have live streaming capabilities, but there are many apps which children can use to live stream, including Omegle, Liveme, BIGO Live, YouNow and many more.



## ANYONE CAN BE A PREDATOR

The internet has made the ability to interact with strangers online easy. Many sites and apps are reliant on individual users entering their own information when signing up. However individuals can remain anonymous if they choose to enter inaccurate information and many online predator cases are due to groomers using impersonation techniques. However, often the greater threat comes from adults who 'hide in plain sight', choosing to befriend young children without hiding their real identity.



## CAN BE DIFFICULT TO DETECT

Unfortunately, most children find the 'grooming' process (before any meeting) an enjoyable one as the predator will compliment, encourage, and flatter them to gain their trust, friendship and curiosity - 'a wolf in sheep's clothing' scenario. This often means children fail to disclose or report what is happening. If the groomer is also previously known to the child, their family and their friends, then this can make detection even harder.



## FROM OPEN TO CLOSED MESSAGING

Online predators may contact their victims using any number of ways including social media, forums, chat rooms, gaming communities or live streaming apps. Sometimes there is little need to develop a 'friendship / rapport stage', as the victim has already shared personal information online and is communicating openly with others. Children may also be prepared to add other online users they don't know so well to gain 'online credibility' through increasing their friends list. Predators will often seize this opportunity to slowly build a relationship and then move their conversation with the child to a more secure and private area, such as through direct messaging.

## EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Online predators will use emotive language and aim to form close, trusted bonds with their victims through showering them with compliments and making them feel good about themselves. Often victims will refer to them as their 'boyfriends' or 'girlfriends' and it can be difficult to convince some young people that they have been groomed, often leading to lasting psychological effects.



## Safety Tips for Parents & Carers



### IT'S GOOD TO TALK

It's unlikely that you can stop your child using the internet, nor can you constantly monitor their online activities, but you can talk to your child on a regular basis about what they do online. By talking openly with them about online relationships, they can quickly ascertain the kind of behaviour which is appropriate or inappropriate. Ask them whether they have any online friends or if they play online games with people they haven't met. This could then open up conversations about the subject of grooming.



### CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

In order to give your child a safer online experience, it is important to check privacy settings or parental controls on the networks, devices, apps, and websites they use. Disable location sharing if you can. If you use location-sharing apps to check where your child is, remember that these could always be used by strangers to follow your child without their knowledge. Ensure that you check options so that location information is never shared with anyone except those they have permission to share with.



### MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA & LIVE-STREAMING USE

It's important to be aware of what your child is sharing on social media and with whom. Create your own profile and become 'friends' with them or follow them so that you can monitor their activity. Similarly, always check on them if they are live streaming and implement privacy controls. Choose a generic screen name and profile picture that hides their identity. You may also feel more comfortable being present each time they live stream.



### STICK TO 'TRUE FRIENDS'

Make it clear to your child that they should not accept friend requests from people they don't know and to verify friend requests with people who they do know. Encourage them to only interact and engage with 'true friends' i.e. those friends who don't ask personal questions such as close family and friends. Remind them to never agree to chat privately with a stranger or someone they don't really know and to never divulge personal information, such as mobile phone numbers, addresses, passwords or the name of their school.



### DISCUSS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Talk to your child about what a healthy relationship looks like and how to detect someone who might not be who they claim to be. Explain that groomers will pay your child compliments and engage in conversations about personal information, such as hobbies and relationships. They may admire how well they play an online game or how they look in a photo. Groomers will also try and isolate a child from people close to them, such as parents and friends, in order to make their relationship feel special and unique.

### BE SUPPORTIVE

Show your child that you will support them and make sure they understand they can come to you with any concerns they may have. They need to know they can talk to you if someone does something they are uncomfortable with, whether that is inappropriate comments, images, requests or sexual comments.



## Meet our expert

Jonathan Taylor is an online safety expert and former Covert Internet Investigator for the Metropolitan Police. He is a specialist in online grooming and exploitation and has worked extensively with both UK and international schools in delivering training and guidance around the latest online dangers, social media apps and platforms.



## LOOK OUT FOR WARNING SIGNS

- Child safety experts have identified key grooming patterns and advise parents to look out for:
- Secretive online behaviour.
  - Late night internet or smartphone usage.
  - Meeting new friends in unusual places.
  - Becoming clingy, develop sleeping or eating problems or even bedwetting.
  - Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities.
  - Having new items, such as clothes or phones, unexplainably.
  - Seem withdrawn, anxious, depressed or aggressive.
  - Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.





## Safeguarding at TMBSS

At TMBSS we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognise that safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people is everyone's responsibility

The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead for TMBSS is James Pearson and he can be contacted by telephone on 01743 368189 or via e-mail [pearson.j@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk](mailto:pearson.j@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk). All other provisions have designated safeguarding leads and as parents/carers you will be given a leaflet on who they are and how to contact them on the initial home visit.

The main safeguarding focus remains to be Child Exploitation. The West Mercia Police Team is offering sessions to parents/carers about identifying and acting upon risks of exploitation. The links will have been sent out but if you have not received it, please ask your centre administrator.

[http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/shropshire/fid/home\\_page](http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/shropshire/fid/home_page)

The link above will take you to Shropshire Council's Family Information Directory. From this page, you will be able to access a wide range of support offers.

Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service offer drop in sessions for anyone requiring support. The link to the page is below and they update the dates and times monthly

<https://www.shropsdas.org.uk/news/drop-service>

Just a reminder that Jodie Prophet is our Family Support Worker and is available to provide support. She can be contacted at, [prophet.j@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk](mailto:prophet.j@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk) or you can contact your centre manager.

If you require information on additional financial support, please contact [Spelman.e@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk](mailto:Spelman.e@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk). We are able to signpost you for support services

### Useful Contact Numbers

Compass/FPOC – Children's Services first point of contact 0345 678 9021

We Are **With** You – Young people's substance misuse team 01743 294700

NSPCC – 0808 800 5000

Bee U – 0 – 25 Mental Health Support - 0300 124 0093 Childline – 0800 1111



# NSPCC



One year 8 Oswestry student inspired her peers recently by creating an oil pastel piece of a figure watching a sunset. Year 10 were so impressed by her work, they wanted to create sunset images too.

They interpreted her picture and developed the theme of sunset, taking an interest in using a new medium and learning blending techniques.

Student voice put to very good use.

Well done Artist of the week!

## ARTISTS INSPIRED...



## Numbers to call in an emergency?

*If brought into centre, mobile phones must be handed in at reception.*

Bridgnorth Centre: 01746 764733

Hook A Gate Centre: 01743 367369

Ludlow Centre: 01584 876129

Oswestry Centre: 01691 653134

Sundorne Centre: 01743 368190



## IMPORTANT DATES

**End of term:**

Friday 22nd March 2024



**PD Day:** Tuesday 7th May 2024

**Start of term:** Monday 8th April 2024

**End of term:** Friday 24th May 2024

**Half-term:**

*Monday 27th May—Friday 31st May 2024*

**Start of term:**

Monday 3rd June 2024