



# BATTLE NEWSLETTER

## December 2024 \*

## Caroline's Festive Wishes



### Where shall I start?

This has been an extremely busy two terms with us welcoming new adults and 13 new children. Our school is still growing with us now at nearly 50 children with a capacity to work with 60 families and their children. Of course as our school is still evolving, so is our culture. Please hold the notion that we wholeheartedly embrace our therapeutic community ethos which demonstrates in my availability to talk with you all evenings, weekends and holidays, however please may I ask that you are patient if I am unable to get back to you straight away. Thank you to the many families who accommodate my emails and calls in to the evening, this is much appreciated.

Whilst continuing to grow our school, we have also seen many developments including obtaining our Attachment and Trauma Sensitive School Award at Silver level with comments being made such as: \*

**'Methods for eliciting, hearing and responding to children's voices are broad and extensive'**

**'At ISP School, there is an authentic and passionate desire to truly 'hear' and 'see' children and staff are genuinely curious about what matters to the pupils. This is a particular strength of the school.'**

**'There is a focus on creating calm, attractive and adaptive surroundings which put children's mental health and wellbeing at the centre of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments – truly therapeutic spaces.'**

Read our [Attachment and Trauma report](#).

We have supported a number of charities including Young Minds, Children in Need, Jeans for Genes and Save the Children – thank you all for helping to support charities that are close to our heart.

I would like to thank the amazing adults within our school who day in, day out support our children, standing side by side with them during the most challenging times and equally the most rewarding times. Also a thank you to our families who have embraced our way of working, challenged when needed but also supported us in our decision making, and as importantly, thank you to the children who actively hold the culture of the school – it makes me privileged and humbled to be the Head Teacher of our school.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very safe and happy festive season. We are looking forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Best wishes,

**Caroline Belchem**  
**Head Teacher**



# Attachment and Trauma Sensitive School Award



We are delighted to update you all that we have been successful in achieving the Attachment and Trauma Sensitive School Award at Silver level.

Some aspects of the report that we felt we wanted to share supports how we hold our children at the heart of all we do:

‘Staff are aware of the body as a ‘loudspeaker’ for what is going on inside and are quick to respond and offer coregulation. Staff have many methods and skills for helping children to communicate uncomfortable, even painful emotions, and provide them with a broad range of strategies and resources to elicit their voices. All approaches are individualised and truly personal to meet each child’s needs. At ISP School, there is an authentic and passionate desire to truly ‘hear’ and ‘see’ children and staff are genuinely curious about what matters to the pupils. This is a particular strength of the school’.



‘There is a focus on creating calm, attractive and adaptive surroundings which put children’s mental health and wellbeing at the centre of both the indoor and outdoor learning environments – truly therapeutic spaces’.

‘Staff are skilled in monitoring excitement and anxiety, and they have a comprehensive understanding of survival behaviours. They have excellent de-escalation skills and were able to describe a wide range of grounding strategies’.

‘A frequently mentioned theme was the importance of having a deep knowledge of each child as an individual; staff meet children ‘where they are’ rather than using a one size fits all model. All support is individualised and personal, tailored to the needs of the child’.

‘What really shone through in today’s verification is that an attachment- and trauma-sensitive approach is becoming increasingly interwoven into strategy, policy and practice. It is not a ‘tick box’ of things to do, but a rich tapestry which is organic and dynamic, responding to children’s needs in each developmental area. Staff hold shared values, which are expressed through a common narrative. Themes around trust, relationships, empathy, commitment and compassion emerged in each conversation I held today. These shared values are the ‘golden thread’ running through the whole culture and life of the school’.

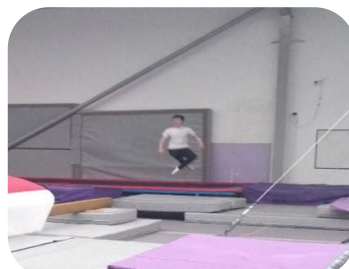


Read our [Attachment and Trauma report](#).

## 1066 Gymnastics

Our Key Stage 3 children use 1066 Gymnastics for P.E.

All children are enjoying being able to explore the different equipment. Children are encouraging and supportive of each other to not only engage in activities but to attempt new skills enabling each other to see their own progress.





## Space Conference

On October 10th the year 10 and year 11 GCSE Physics groups visited Herstmonceux Science Centre for a Careers Conference run by The National Space Academy.

The careers conferences take place across the UK and this one included workshops, activities, and speakers from relevant industry settings. There was also a chance to speak to a range of businesses and education establishments who provide real-life examples to a variety of career paths.

Guest speakers included Dr Jason Maroothynaden UK Managing Director Space Operations, Professor Sanjeev Gupta, Professor of Earth Sciences at Imperial College London and Chris Brockley of University College London. The day also included the telescope tour and lunch. The group had a chance to listen to talks about space, Mars and future space missions, were able to ask questions, and to also find out about careers in the space industry.

## Year 11 & 12 Mock Exams

Despite the trials and tribulations involved in holding Mock Exams during cold and flu season, we could not be prouder of those children who have taken part this term.

Although they ended up more spread out than the initial one week that had been planned, it was great to be able to offer the children the full experience of taking part in 'formal' examination conditions. The majority of children worked really hard and behaved in a responsible and mature manner. We plan to hold another set of mocks prior to the actual exams for the Year 11's, and then a set of mock exams for those in Year 10 at the end of the year. Well done to everyone who took part, and a massive thank you to all the adults who were involved in supporting the children - whether it be invigilating, covering adults who were invigilating, giving pep talks or, just ensuring that their class walked past the exams area quietly. Thank you all!

## Blackberry Farm

In October children went to Blackberry Farm.

Children enjoyed the animals, and the play area, where they were able to play and interact in a positive way. Children got to explore their sensory needs in the soft play area.



# East Sussex Vision Support

To support our Key Stage Three Language and Communication studies, on Wednesday 20th November, we welcomed East Sussex Vision Support (ESVS), formally The East Sussex Association of Blind and Partially Sighted People into our school.



Both Jez and Steve accompanied by Rosie his guide dog delivered an informal chat to our Key Stage Three classes. In both sessions, the children were shown various pieces of equipment that talk; SIMS Specs; examples of Braille; and signature strips to support both blind and partially people. Children were also gifted magnifiers to take home with them. Everyone behaved respectfully and enjoyed meeting Rosie in particular who adored seeing the children!

If you would like further information or support, visit the [ESVS website](#). If you'd like to donate, visit the [ESVS Just Giving page](#).

## Drama in KS3 – A Spooktacular Production!

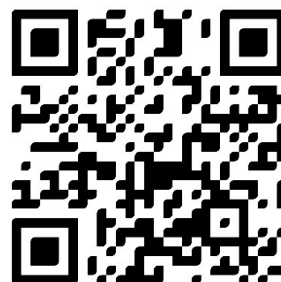
During term 3, KS3 children worked hard and had lots of fun in their drama lessons, culminating in a small production put on for the rest of the school community.

Children took part in a range of drama games designed to get them focused on their movement, concentration, ability to follow direction and most importantly, to get them comfortable performing in each other's company. Working individually and in pairs and groups, children explored the idea of physical theatre and were able to use their imaginations to come up with some fantastic creaking front doors, crackling fires, dripping taps, whizzing washing machines and even flushing toilets!

Some children used their English lessons to write monologues which they developed through learning about how adjectives, similes and alliteration can make our descriptions more interesting to the reader. They then used these monologues in a short production about a variety of characters taking part in a game show to spend the night in a haunted house.

Adults were so very proud of how much bravery and enthusiasm these children showed. Whilst it might not seem much, for our children in terms of developing their confidence this was a massive achievement. Amelia would like to thank the adults who supported and modelled some fantastic performances, and of course the children themselves for doing such an amazing job!

If you would like to see the performance, please visit our [YouTube channel](#) or scan the QR code.



# Forest School Developments



Our forest school has received a new addition to the area, a Kadai fire bowl.

Children have worked hard to make sure the space is ready and installed the fire bowl base. This addition will enable further exploration of cooking outside and give the children the opportunity to spend quality time around the fire as a community.

Marshmallows have already been cooked and eaten and now there are talks of burgers and skewers. We would like to thank the Kadai Company for their amazing generosity and discount given to our community. The Kadai is the perfect barbecue where everyone can enjoy delicious, cooked food, followed by a warming fire.

Children have become more intrigued about adding their own craft and imagination to the forest school area and have started to resource pallets, tools and materials to build a storage shed.



## Forest School Adventures



As the developments of the forest school area continues, so does the curiosity of our children.

As we came back from summer and fell into autumn, children have explored the changes in the environment of bare trees, funky fungi and fallen leaves.

The stream has begun to rise and flowing faster, children have enjoyed splashing and clearing blockages to support the streams flow. Our newest inhabitants have had the children smiling and asking lots of questions.

The Palmate Newt has made a home within our log piles and children have explored their habitat, investigated their eggs and handled the newts with care. Now the Newts are beginning to hibernate the children are respectfully giving them space, and hoping they will reappear in spring.



# Summer Festival

This summer, we hosted one of our biggest and most exciting events yet – our first-ever school festival, designed to reflect our ethos and bring the entire school community together. The day was packed with fun, laughter, and an incredible atmosphere that left everyone with smiles on their faces and memories to cherish.

The highlight for many was undoubtedly seeing Caroline, our headteacher, in the stocks, with wet sponges being enthusiastically thrown at her! Meanwhile, our very own band took to the stage, showcasing incredible talent and confidence that shone through every performance. Families were treated to a mouthwatering BBQ, candy floss, burgers, and hot dogs, ensuring plenty of full tummies throughout the afternoon.

The event offered something for everyone: a coconut shy, football aims, face painting, and, of course, the hilarious “Splat the Head Teacher.” Children and adults alike enjoyed the vibrant atmosphere, and it was heartwarming to see the school community come together to make the event such a resounding success.

Feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive:

“So proud to see our child live on stage in front of so many people.”

“ISP has given my child opportunities that we never thought would be possible.”

“What an afternoon! We enjoyed meeting other parents and knowing that we are not alone.”

Children were just as enthusiastic:

“I loved throwing sponges at Caroline!”

“The BBQ was just the best ever!”

“The band was brilliant. I liked dancing.”

This fun-packed afternoon truly encapsulated the spirit of our school community, and we can't wait to build on its success for future events!



## Hello Yellow

ISP School, Battle support Young Minds.

This is a charity close to our hearts where we embrace this national campaign to show young people that they are not alone with their mental health.

Many of our school community wore yellow as an act of solidarity whilst raising money for Young Minds on Thursday 10 October as part of the Hello Yellow campaign. This year we raised £88.75.



## Jeans for Genes Day 2024

This year ISP School, Battle continued with our support of taking part in Jeans for Genes Day, we are really proud of the charities we support across the year.

Jeans for Genes are able to fund groups that provide services, support and hope to 1 in 10 families in the UK affected by genetic conditions.

We kept it simple – adults and children were allowed to wear jeans as long as they donated £1. £29 may seem like a little but actually as we know every little helps.



## Children in Need

On 15 November, ISP School held its third charity event of the academic year, raising £48.45 in support of BBC Children in Need. The charity's mission is to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive by providing access to vital support and resources.

The funds raised will help provide essentials like food and clothing to children in need, counseling for those facing anxiety or grief, mentoring for teenagers in underserved communities, and care for children living with serious illnesses or disabilities.

ISP School is proud to contribute to this important cause, knowing the money raised will help transform the lives of disadvantaged children and young people across the UK.

## World Kindness Day and Anti-Bullying Week

With World Kindness Day and Anti Bullying Week all falling across the same period in November, it felt only right to take time out of our busy curriculum to pay proper attention to these two things that are so close to our hearts in school and form a big part of our school ethos.

On Thursday 14th November, after all the off-site activities had taken place (Riding, Gym and Fishing), the whole school settled down to a number of sessions in school – recognising and celebrating the many acts of kindness that take place every day at ISP, Battle, along with lessons and activities designed to explore this year's anti bullying theme – respect.





## Science in KS3 Term 1 & 2

LME have been enjoying their biology topic, the group have been focusing on plants in Biology in Term 2 and the children were able to describe the function of the stomata and were able to view this under the microscope by getting an imprint of a leaf.

CWA class created their own onion cells, to put on a slide to view under a microscope. The children had a portion of an onion, they were able to pull back a layer of onion epidermis and placed this on a slide. The children then added some blue food colouring on top of the onion epidermis and then a slide cover was placed on. The children were able to view this onion cell under a microscope and was able to observe the nucleus and cell membrane.

BHS group have been enjoying their chemistry over terms 1 and 2, they have been very interested in trying out experiments in chemical reactions. When coca cola and mentos mix, the small pores on the mentos speed up the release of carbon dioxide gas from the coca cola as they give a larger surface area for the reaction to occur over. This causes the foam and bubbles to erupt at a speedy rate.

GSH group have enjoyed using the microscopes in their biology topic over the last 2 terms. From looking at premade slides to creating their own slides, the children are now very confident at using microscopes and know how they work. Shrimp eggs premade slide is one of the classes favourites, as it is incredibly detailed.





# Learning Outside the Classroom

## A Gateway to Practical Knowledge



Learning outside the classroom (LOtC) offers students the chance to explore and understand the world beyond traditional school settings. By engaging with real-world experiences, students deepen their knowledge, develop essential life skills, and foster a love for learning. Here's an overview of what LOtC is, its benefits, and how it can transform education.

### What is Learning Outside the Classroom?

LOtC involves educational activities conducted outside regular classrooms. This could include visits to museums, nature parks, or historical sites, as well as participating in community projects or outdoor adventures. It's about making learning hands-on and relatable, connecting lessons to real-life experiences.

For example, studying ecosystems by exploring a forest or learning geometry through architecture tours helps students see how concepts apply in the real world. LOtC emphasizes active participation and makes learning exciting and practical.

### The Future of LOtC

As education evolves, LOtC is becoming more important. Technology like virtual reality can recreate far-off places, making it easier for all students to participate. Partnerships between schools, communities, and organizations will create even more opportunities for real-world learning.

### Conclusion

Learning outside the classroom helps students grow academically, socially, and emotionally. It connects lessons to life, making learning more meaningful and exciting. By stepping outside, students see the world as a classroom, full of endless possibilities and lessons.

### Examples of LOtC Activities

- Outdoor Learning – Activities like hiking or camping teach survival skills and teamwork.
- Museum Visits – Trips to museums and historical sites bring lessons to life.
- Community Service – Volunteering in local initiatives builds empathy and responsibility.
- Career Exposure – Internships and workplace visits introduce students to real-world professions.
- STEM Learning – Visiting labs or science centre's makes complex concepts easier to grasp.
- Boosts Motivation  
Breaking away from the usual classroom routine excites students. The novelty of exploring new places or ideas makes them eager to learn more.
- Emotional and Social Growth  
By interacting with different people and environments, students build empathy and confidence. Activities like volunteering teach kindness and responsibility.
- Encourages Environmental Awareness  
Outdoor learning fosters a connection with nature, helping students understand sustainability and the need to protect the environment.
- Bridges Theory and Practice  
LOtC shows how school subjects are used in real life. For example, a visit to a manufacturing plant can help students understand supply chains in business studies.

### Why is LOtC Important?

- Better Learning Outcomes  
When students learn through experience, they remember concepts better. For instance, visiting a science centre makes lessons on physics or chemistry more engaging and clear.
- Builds Life Skills  
LOtC teaches teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. Working on group activities during a field trip helps students develop these essential skills.



## Music

The music department have recently purchased a gorgeous full size cello.

The students are having great fun learning to play this large bowed string instrument. We have also just received our new wireless microphones.

They sound amazing and we are excited to use them at this year's Christmas Show! We look forward to seeing you all there.



## Healthy Eating at ISP School, Battle

We have this term increased the fruit bowl with more variety of fruit.

The children and adults are enjoying trying lots of different fruits across the week including melon, pineapple, kiwi, dragon fruit, jack fruit and anise. We put the fruit bowl out each morning for children to either try different fruits or as a snack.

It's been a pleasure to see children at least trying different fruits, more and more children have tried these as the term progresses.



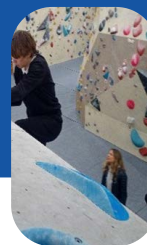
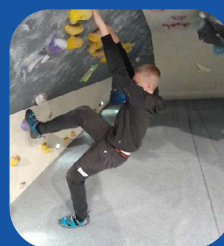
## KS4 Conquers New Heights at Chimera Climbing Wall

In October 2024, KS4 students visited Chimera Climbing Wall and took on an exciting challenge that pushed their limits and boosted their confidence. From scaling towering walls to tackling personal fears, the students showed remarkable resilience, determination, and teamwork throughout the day.

After a quick warm-up and safety briefing, the group got to work, climbing their way to new personal bests. Some took on the toughest routes, while others set and achieved individual goals. Guided by an enthusiastic instructor who provided tips and encouragement, the students also used their own initiative to create challenges for themselves and their peers.

Staff at Chimera praised KS4 for their enthusiasm and energy, noting how well they listened, learned, and embraced the activity. Every student succeeded in climbing to new heights—both literally and figuratively—unlocking newfound confidence and resilience.

The day was an unforgettable success, leaving everyone with a sense of accomplishment and memories to treasure.



# Language and Communication

## Term 1 - Makaton

We began Term 1 by introducing our first topic of our Language and Communication subject, Makaton.

Makaton is a unique communication programme that uses symbols (pictures), signs (gestures) and speech to enable people to communicate. When people use Makaton, the signs are used with speech, in spoken word order, this provides extra clues about what someone is saying. Using signs is supportive for those who have no speech or limited speech and those who cannot sign or prefer not to sign. Often there is a lot of frustration when someone is unable to communicate meaningfully or effectively, this is where Makaton can be highly supportive. Makaton can take away the frustration which enables people to become less isolated and be able to communicate with the world around them.

The children all have embraced learning Makaton with a positive attitude; as well as developing an excellent understanding of why Makaton is so important and how anyone at any point in their lives may need to use it to be able to communicate. Several children took their enthusiasm beyond school, from taking signs home to learn and sharing these with parents and carers. By the end of the term, many children were able to construct their own sentences which they felt able to share with peers and staff.



## Term 2 - Braille

We started off our Braille topic this term by having a visit from East Sussex Vision Support.

This gave the children a wonderful insight into the realities of day-to-day life for individuals who are blind. This visit also provided the children with an opportunity to put on glasses which mimic eye conditions which cause sight loss, such as, glaucoma, macular degeneration and cataracts. The amazing staff from RNIB introduced the children to the Braille alphabet and explained the patterns from the different letters of the alphabet. This supported the children to make links from the letter of the alphabet and how this presents within the Braille cell.

Braille is a system of touch reading and writing for blind people in which raised dots represent the letters of the alphabet. The children have really enjoyed learning Braille this term, from learning the history, practising the alphabet, decoding phrases and solving Braille puzzles. This highlighted to the children how fortunate we are to have our sight and the importance of looking after our eyes, as it is something we can often take for granted. The children were fascinated by the challenge of reading Braille with their eyes closed, as this gave them a perspective of the everyday realities of a blind individual.



# Landbased Project in Muddy Waters



Our Landbased project to build three raised beds got off to a great start.

The preparation and groundworks were started and the 3 beds were dug and the earth turned over in preparation for the raised beds and the good soil to be introduced.

BUT this term the weather has been against us and rain stopped play. We have been able to continue to prepare the ground and are waiting for slightly better weather before we can get out again and continue this project. So here's to brighter days ahead.



## Falaise Gym

As part of the PE curriculum KS4 have been using the equipment at Falaise Gym.

After being inducted KS4 have the opportunity to use the extensive facilities. Going to a gym regularly is a great way to relax, lower blood pressure, boost your mental health, as well as being a social activity.

Equipment includes cardio machines and strength training equipment.



## Awards at ISP School, Battle 2023-2024

This academic year our **KS3 child of the year award** goes to a child who joined us June 2022 so has been with us for two years. In the beginning of their time with us there were incidents a plenty including one restrictive physical intervention. This child has 68 incidents last academic year compared to 33 incidents this academic year – these incidents have been far more low level. This child has chosen some excellent options for Year 10 including Triple Science. He is a budding Mathematician and has supported not only me but also Amelia with Maths (as you know it's certainly not my strong point). I have enjoyed seeing you grow academically, socially and emotionally this year, I have loved seeing you sing in Music assemblies, the Festival, IT club with your headphones on, spending time with you in our office for table top club and so much more.

**This award is so deserved. This award goes to Joshua Riley Saxby.**

This academic year our **KS4 child of the year award** goes to a child who joined us in January 2023 so has been with us for around 18 months. Within this time there has been a significant reduction in incidents – Jan 2023-July 2023 43 incidents, Sept 2023 to July 2024 68 incidents but most importantly since March has only had 7 incidents. This child has become such a great support to his friends, encouraging them into community meetings, into lessons and offering words of advice. It was amazing when he arrived in our office with a friend to chat to me even though his friend had always said he would never set foot in our office! It has been an absolute joy watching your commitment to the band, the incredible amount of hours you spent practising was definitely worth it when I saw your families faces watching you on the stage. You have a clear plan for your summer holidays and know you need to really focus on learning from September to ensure you can head off to college and follow your dreams of engineering.



**I am delighted to inform you all that this Years KS4 child of the year award goes to Kai Sharrod-Stevens.**

This academic year we have an additional award. This award is for **Best Newcomer**. This means it is for someone who has joined the school in the last few months and has just settled in, is well liked and just gets on with things. This child joined us at the end of February, has never had an incident slip and just diligently gets on with learning. This child never gets involved in other childrens dramas which is a massive help to the adults and the children involved. This child has a lovely sense of humour when you get to know them. I so look forward to seeing this child flourish at our school.

**I am so happy to give the best newcomer award to Cerys Collins.**

This takes me to our **Head Teacher child of the year award**. This child joined the school in September 2022. It is fair to say they found accessing school an almost insurmountable challenge. This child's attendance was at 29.99% last academic year and this year nearly 100% (97.09% in fact). Wow, what an absolute pleasure it has been for us all to watch you flourish – you have a strong friendship group, have shown such musical ability particularly having a super singing voice. You are spreading your wings and heading off to college, independently, even taking a bus journey daily to get there. I honestly cannot underestimate how proud I am of your determination to succeed and to get what you needed from us in order to take you to the next stage in your journey.

**I am absolutely delighted to hand my Head Teachers award to Marley Paviour.**

## Exam results August 2024

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This year saw a record number of children sitting GCSE's with grades ranging from a 7 in English Language, 6 in Maths, 5 in English Literature and a plethora of 4's in a number of subjects. For children not quite ready to access GCSE's all left with Entry Level 3 qualifications in Math and English. I am so proud of our Year 11's who worked so hard towards achieving these results.

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