



# Stone Soup Academy News

## Half Term 4

# Big plans for the Future of Stone Soup Academy

Kerrie Henton

Stone Soup Academy was set up in 2012 as an 11-18 academy but due to the constraints of our building we have never been able to develop across all year groups. Currently we support up to 85 young people in years 9, 10 and 11. We would like to change this and support a greater number of students to success with our unique mix of high expectations, innovation and care of our young people.

To help us expand we would like to purchase another town centre satellite property in which to base up to 30 key stage 3 young people across years 7- 9. We aim to call it Stone Soup Academy 'Stepping Stones'.

We are proposing a programme based offer for young people across Nottingham, who are currently in mainstream within key stage 3 but who are struggling to thrive. We will invite mainstream schools to place these young people with us for a minimum of one ½ term (6-7 weeks) to a maximum of three 1/2 terms. Within this time we will work intensively with the young people to give them the skills to reintegrate back into their home school-

The curriculum will be designed around three key areas in which we will develop each young person's:-

Skills to talk

Skills to believe in themselves

Skills to learn

We will work with these young people to give them the skills and abilities to enter back into education thus supporting various inclusion priorities including Nottingham City, 'Routes to Inclusion.' Students will be reintegrated back into mainstream and we will also offer CPD for the mainstream school so that they can support the successful reintegration. We will run 6 discreet programmes per year, one per term.

It is envisaged that some learners may return throughout the year, they will not repeat a programme but they will be involved with a new programme. We do not aim to follow the traditional national curriculum in its traditional sense but we will embed Literacy, numeracy, humanities, the Arts, technology and ICT through the delivery of the project based programmes.

Our programme is about building up the confidence and self-belief within the students who we work with so that they can re-enter mainstream classes with a new found belief that they can achieve and succeed.

Within our programmes will also be developing the innovative use of virtual reality and other technologies with the aim to support Neurodiversity.

We will maintain the same high levels of safeguarding and pastoral care as we demonstrate at our current site. As a satellite school the leadership team and Governance will be the same across all sites of the academy. The high levels of pastoral care, systems and processes will be the same as we currently operate.

At this point we do not have a property but the building that we choose will be close to our current site in the city within NG1. The location has been chosen so we can share resources with our main site and also so that our young people can easily reach us. Once we have agreement from the DFE we will proceed with locating a premise. The details of which will be shared on our website [stonesoupacademy.org.uk](https://stonesoupacademy.org.uk).

The premises will be developed to the same high quality that we have at 14 High Pavement, our main site, as we believe that the premises that we place our young people into, reflects the value that we place on their young lives.

The hours that the academy will operate will be 9.30 - 2.30 p.m. giving 25 hours of tuition per week. Students will arrive at the premises on foot or use local transport links and taxis.

Entry onto this programme will be by referral via the home school or via the local authority.

We are currently going through a consultation process which will end on the 16th of April. If you would like further details about our plans or if you have any questions then please contact me via the academy.

# Sixth Form Project

Becky Ashmore

Having worked at Stone Soup for over six years now, I have seen how great we are at ensuring that students have a destination when they leave us. This fantastic achievement and we have taken a lot of pride in their success. However, what I have also been witness to, is some students dropping out of college soon after they begin. Many students do come back to us for help and support and our door is always open for this. We did come to the conclusion that some students may not realise the support is there for them even after they leave or feel awkward turning up or phoning for an appointment to see us.

We now have a working group in place looking at the idea of a Stone Soup Sixth Form. We would aim to provide students who leave with pastoral support and help them to stay in college and offer any help they need in order to do this. By putting this in place we would hope to see an increase in students staying in college and completing their courses, students applying for work, an improvement in students' confidence and self-esteem. Our Stone Soup Sixth Form would provide a way of ensuring that each and every student who leaves us knows pastoral support is still available even after they leave.

We have had three meetings to date and we have made a positive start. We have looked at potential buildings, have asked students and parents their views and thoughts and we have started to look at what a Stone Soup Sixth Form would look like and offer.

Feedback from students and parents has been extremely positive with 93% of students asked in support of the idea of a sixth form. Students would like us to offer things such as exam resits, emotional support, access to computers and Wi-Fi, life skills sessions and printing facilities.

As a staff team we are all really excited about this opportunity to support our young people in the future.

IN THIS ISSUE

Recycling  
Sport  
International Links  
Street Doctors  
Sixth Form  
PSHE

Media  
Music  
Competitions  
Cooking  
Business  
Ks3

Student Council  
Neurodiversity  
Multi Skills  
Literacy  
Careers  
Parent Leadership

A Year to Remember

Oliver Sillito

We are making great progress with the yearbook and currently piecing it all together. This will be our first ever Stone Soup yearbook. Yearbooks will be going out to our cohort who missed out on their Suits Day the first time around. We are looking forward to sharing positive messages, achievements and photos so that that our young people don't forget their Stone Soup family.

Alumni Projects

Working with students who have left Stone Soup is important to us and we have a plan for when we are all allowed to meet and get together. Students will come back in groups of five and they will meet a member of staff for a coffee in Nottingham. We will continue to offer links and find out what our learners would like in regard to support as they carry on through their personal journeys.



Alumni Awards

Jordan Senior

Stone Soup Awards were a great success this term. We had four alumni students, who were not in education, work and training or on zero hour contracts. We came up with an award to help them get back into work providing them with a monetary sum of up to £500 to spend on things they felt would improve their chances of getting back into employment.

The former students used the fund to:

Nathen Smith – start a course to complete training as a teaching assistant.

Lashea Francis –Using the funds to access a football scholarship at a University in America.

Jordan Francis – Would like to buy work clothes.

Mercedes Scholes – work clothes and a bus pass.

# Stone Soup Learners Living the Dream

Jordan Senior

Over the period from November to February half term we have had a lot going on.

One of the projects that was delivered was DREAM. This is a training course for students that includes:

**Health and Prevention:** This session aims to cover common signs of illness, importance of sleep, dental health and personal hygiene, importance of vaccinations, healthy eating and exercise.

**Positive Relationships:** This session focuses on friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults. Emphasis on respect, trust, openness and honesty will be made. Through an understanding of a healthy relationship, pupils can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy.

**Online Safety:** This session covers appropriate online behaviour, information and data sharing, how sites use information provided and recognizing risks and harmful content.

**Recognizing and Reporting Abuse:** This session aims to create an awareness of abuse

including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. It will cover boundaries and privacy, reporting concerns and seeking advice.

**Physical Health:** The session will focus on the changing body and puberty including menstruation. This will prepare both male and female students for the changes that their peers will experience.

**Mental Wellbeing:** This session is aimed at generating an awareness of the types of mental ill health and how it affects daily living. Also, the session will focus on bullying including cyberbullying, emotions, human experience and importance of rest, interests and hobbies.

**Sexual Health:** This session is based on sexual health and providing an understanding of safe sex, informed and healthy choices, law about sex and gender identity in an age appropriate way.

**Drug and Alcohol:** This session relates to legal and illegal harmful substances, consequences of addiction, risks to health, benefits of sustaining, alcohol use and law relating to use of drugs and alcohol.







# Slovenian Exchange

Richard Garbutt

During lockdown the English department has continued to develop the links between Stone Soup Academy and our Slovenian counterparts at the Louis Adamic school in Ljubljana. Remail, Kyle and Chantaya have all contributed to a video introduction to Stone Soup that we will be sending to the Louis Adamic School. Our first Zoom meeting with the Slovenian students took place in December and since then both schools have been in Lockdown. We have plans to host another Zoom conference in the coming weeks where the students can get to know each other a little better which in turn may lead to an exchange in 2022.

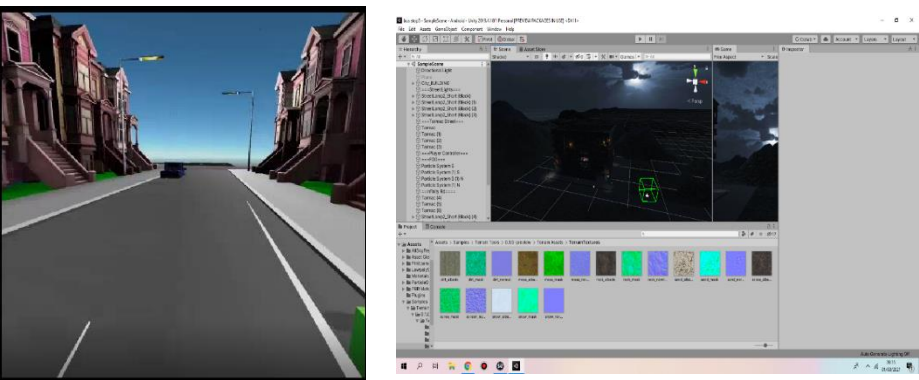


# Media on the Move

Matt Murphy

## VR Spaces

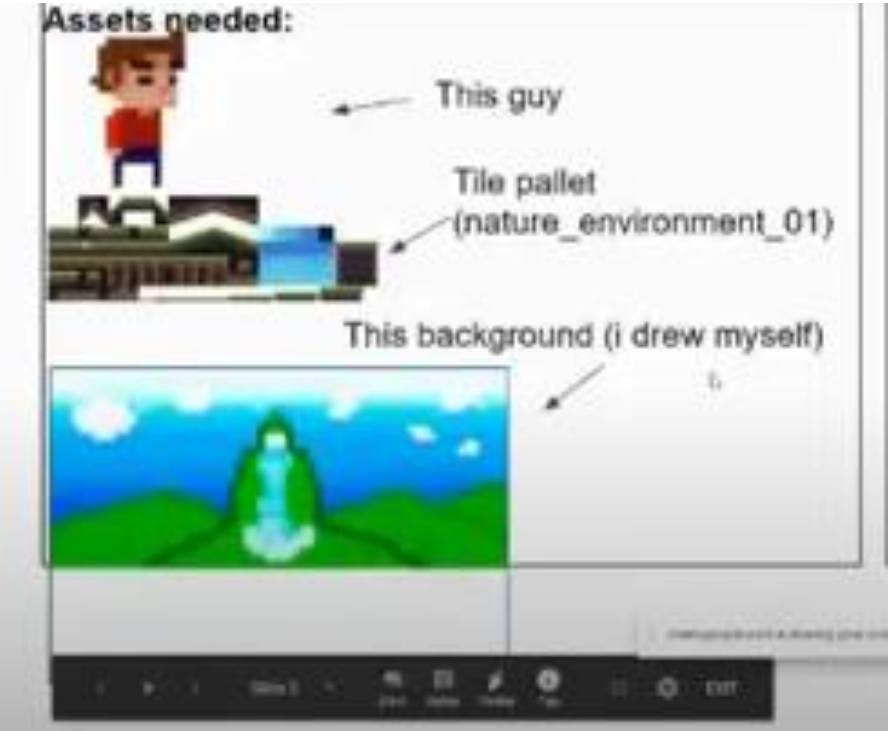
Students are beginning to create their own VR spaces using the Unity game engine. Some are enormously engaged in this challenging work and this initial student experimentation has led to...



... VR spaces which are relevant to the English set text of “DNA” by Dennis Kelly. Once 2 virtual spaces are created, we will pilot the use of these spaces as a teaching and learning tool.

## Games Unit Delivering

Students have started developing original game ideas for the Digital Games Unit of BTEC Creative Digital Media Production course. Students are using the Unity game engine to develop a variety of 2D and 3D games. Students are expected to develop a playable demo of their game as part of the evidence for this unit.





# Music to My Ears

Josh Glover

Despite lockdown halting lessons onsite, our students have continued to publish their music on our SoundCloud webpage to great success: amassing over 1700 plays worldwide. We’ve been able to do this because of our remote studio and SoundTrap, that all of our students can access from their mobile devices and computers.

The music students have responded incredibly well to using SoundTrap to create tracks. With one-to-one support through live lessons students who have recently joined SSA but have never been taught onsite have made massive progress because of our virtual studio.

One such student is Dylan who has made incredible progress because of our virtual studio, and live lessons. The quality of work he has produced, and his enthusiasm has put himself in a really strong position when it comes to returning back to school physically.

All the music technology students should rightly be proud of the hard work they’ve put in spite of continuing hurdles. And it’s been truly inspiring to see our music students working hard to use their skills to produce music that’s enjoyed by so many.



## Eco-School Project

Josh Glover

Recycling across the academy has become 'the way we do things' now, and both staff and students are using our recycling bins responsibly to make sure that the waste we produce is going where it should be. This has been fantastic for our eco-footprint as the majority of waste SSA produces is now recycled.

We are currently looking at multiple ways to broaden our presence and impact as an eco-school through the proposed Nottingham Green Quarter (potentially located at Broad marsh), switching to canned rather than bottled water, and creating a green space in the courtyard at High Pavement for our students to grow food to use in their Food Technology lessons.

All of these are highly promising and speak volumes about SSA's direction to educate our learners about their impact in the world.



# Cooking Up a Storm in Food Lessons

Leona Dunleavy

Lockdown menu, the relaunch! We moved into another period of remote learning at the start of the spring term and moved to online learning. In a bid to continue to foster the love of cooking and practical lessons, we re-introduced the lockdown menu, posting daily a range of recipes on Google Classroom, from fajitas to cookies. The aim is to offer recipe suggestions and inspiration for our students to try at home. Students were encouraged to send me photos of their cooking to earn dojo points for their contribution.

Students in year 11 have been working hard to complete gaps in coursework and have been researching and comparing recipes for dishes they are planning to make for their assessment tasks.

Students in school have completed some excellent theory work to support these tasks and with being in school we have been able to make some of their chosen dishes. I have encouraged students to lead in practical sessions for their chosen dishes, with staff and students cooking along with them. Students have enjoyed showcasing their chosen dishes in this way and have really risen to the challenge of being in control and leading in their lessons.



# HIIT the Gym

Connor Bartle

Throughout the last two half terms, the gym has boosted its use. We have been running morning gym sessions for both staff and pupils. This is where they can use all of the equipment including boxing pads, rowing machine, free weights and much more. There are also after school sessions running twice a week on a Tuesday and Wednesday. These have been a fan favourite and are regularly fully booked. The gym area has also been extended since last half term, which has provided us with the needed extra space so more people can be in there and more exercise can be completed.

Please see myself or Stevie to book a gym session before or after school.





# PSHE in Action

Osiris Santana-Morin

In February, we had the opportunity to partake in a Week Of Action with the Nottinghamshire Police. This covered Cyber Safety, Hate Crime, Knife Crime and Money Muling. Due to Lockdown restrictions, we were able to utilise Microsoft Teams to engage students in the Academy, as well as students from home. Although some of our students were initially reluctant to partake in discussions with police, they quickly became comfortable and engaged wonderfully with those leading the sessions. Particularly impressive was Remai, who on the first day was very close to leaving the Cyber Safety session at the mention of police, however he decided to stay and did listen intently as his peers offered opinions during the discussion. The following day, Remai was happy to join and was interested to learn about Hate Crime, offering his own views, opinions and was incredibly reflective when those views were challenged by other students. Yet it was the Knife Crime session where he truly shined, excited to join the session before it had started and being a forefront voice throughout. The PCs involved were very impressed with our students, their level of engagement and their knowledge on the subjects.

Although Lockdown has come with its own challenges, it has also presented opportunities to try different approaches in a small group setting. We have trialled assembly-style PSHE discussions during Form Time in the Game’s Room with both students and staff attending. This has helped open up topics and allowed all present to engage with opinions that they would not be exposed to during normal Form Time. For example, we discussed such subjects as gender stereotypes and how they affect people differently. For some of our male students, it was quite eye opening to hear the uncomfortable experiences of their female peers and how we can work collectively to reduce harmful behaviours.

We have also utilised a 3 month trial membership of a platform called Lyfta. Lyfta is a website that offers an interactive and immersive learning experience by taking students around the world and introducing them to people with different perspectives and cultures, via videos and interviews conducted by the creators. Lyfta models their platform on the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and is focused on teaching global citizenship to young people. The first two sessions were student-led and proved to be a real success, learning about a man who emigrated from Palestine to Finland, his struggles as a widower and single father, but also the blessings that he recognises he’s had along the way, including the health of his daughter. Although we are still considering whether to incorporate Lyfta into our PSHE program, we are looking to integrate the UNSDGs into our school-wide curriculum.

As students return, we are excited to have all our pupils back in attendance and already have visits and workshops planned around health and medical safety during the month of March. Jordan has organised multiple DREEAM Sessions throughout the year with the latest session covering mental health, and I am working with Street Doctors to provide our students with first aid training to empower them in their local community, especially those affected by knife crime.





# Stone Soup Academy During the Lockdown

Younes Henini

During the lockdown we had to adapt to learning in a different way. To accommodate the needs of all students, both onsite and remote we delivered live lessons and onsite lessons. Half of the staff had to come to school on alternate days to teach the onsite students while others delivered live lessons for students who were at home.

We are very proud how staff, students and parents worked together to make live lessons very successful. Staff delivered over 465 live lessons during the lockdown 3.

Even during lockdown we held our celebration evening for all year groups in December and celebration week in March. Both celebrations were conducted remotely. Both events were extremely successful with a very high attendance.

To understand parent views during lockdown we conducted a parents' survey. 86% of the parents took part in the survey. We are very pleased that our parents think that we are doing a great job.

Any requests for support from parents were accommodated within 48 hours of the survey.



# Functional Skills at Stone Soup

Rebecca Hale

The year 11 students have been working really hard to pass all of their functional skills exams. The majority of students have now passed their level one English reading and writing papers as well as Maths.

Functional skills exams continued throughout lockdown and remote learning, so a big well done and thank you to everyone who came in to take their exams! I have seen students show real resilience in continuing their hard work in order to gain these qualifications so they should all be very proud of themselves.

As we near Easter, year 11 students will be working towards their speaking and listening aspect of their functional skills English level 1 and practising their discussion and presentation skills. Some students will be working towards gaining their level 2 qualifications in Maths and English.

Year 10 students will also be getting the opportunity to take their functional skills papers in the coming weeks.

All students have done brilliantly to maintain exam focus in functional skills despite the disruption caused by lockdown. Well done and keep it up!





# Natural Forms

Annie Gadbsy

For the past few months, the year 11 art students have been focussing on the theme of “Natural forms” for their exam. Sketchbooks and portfolios have been full of everything from acrylic paint pouring, abstract art, graphical images, portraiture and graffiti; just to name a few. Students have been studying a wide range of artists and have begun discovering new styles and exploring their artistic abilities through practice, trying new techniques both physically and digitally.

There have also been some beautiful images taken in the photography department for the project themed “Connections.” Students have been exploring what the title means to them and have created bodies of work focussed on topics such as BLM, people, places, fashion and security.

In the coming months there should be many exciting new projects coming out of the art department including pupil final pieces, clay work and also a wire sculpture workshop.





# Face Paint Fun in Art

Jason Bedford

I have enjoyed my start at Stone Soup Academy delivering live lessons in maths and functional skills. It has been great doing a variety of one to one work with various students and helping everyone gain evidence for their qualifications. I love helping the art department and have had great fun with all the glitter beards, catwalks, dancing and face painting.



# Lockdown Engagement

Oliver Sillito

Lockdown, COVID & not being able to engage? Not a chance!

We have been putting on a number of activities that help engage our students. We did a masked singer challenge that the staff took part in, the weekly challenge staff focus videos, live quizzes and something very special this time; The Stone Soup Academy hugs and handshakes. We picked different parents and students who we felt needed that well done or SSA family pick me up! We sent a selection of items like chocolate, sweets and tea bags with a message from the school. We had parents post it on their Facebook pages and received messages from them with such appreciation. It really was incredible!

We did numerous home visits where a number of staff got involved to go and see students in their gardens using the opportunity to get them engaging in the work they were being set by their teachers. It was amazing to see and we had to put a rota together with so many staff wanting to be involved.

A selection of Masked singer Entries. Any guesses who?





# Sport and Business Combine Forces

Duncan Bennett

Students continue to make excellent progress with their courses completing work online via Google Drive, Google Classroom and in live lessons. We have completed a mock exam for Unit 1: Fitness for Sport and Exercise and plan to complete another mandatory unit by the end of this term, Unit 2: Practical Performance in Sport. We continue to be able to offer practical sport opportunities through the use of Hyson Green Youth Centre, the Forest Sports Zone and our internal Gym. Students have been enthusiastic and ready to get back to action since their return to the Academy.

BTEC Business has made a great start and is proving popular amongst students. The familiar BTEC format that students have used in the past has made the delivery of the course run smoothly and students have enjoyed the different challenges of studying business as a subject. We are currently studying Unit 1: An introduction to Business exploring business ownership, marketing research and the 4p's of the marketing mix.

## Gym Club/Expansion

With the gym space being expanded we are looking into acquiring new equipment and making use of the new space. We are currently looking at sourcing a new treadmill, bike and boxing bag for the students to use. Gym clubs have now returned and students are taking full advantage of using the gym space.



# Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Rebecca Hale

Neurodiversity is the idea that everyone's brain is unique and is wired in different ways. It is the idea that people respect these brain differences in the same way we do with things like gender and race.

'Neurodiversity' might sound fancy and confusing but it is simply a new long word that refers to things like Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism and Dyspraxia!

Monday 15th- 21st March 2021 saw the first ever Neurodiversity Celebration week. Stone Soup joined 1,160 schools, 20 universities, and over 700,000 students worldwide in taking a pledge to celebrate Neurodiversity week.

Students discussed what Neurodiversity means to them, learnt facts about different neurodiverse conditions and even discovered some of the famous people who are neurodiverse! Did you know that Jenifer Anniston is Dyslexic, Will.I.AM and Emma Watson have ADHD and Billie Eilish has Tourette's syndrome? Neurodiversity is everywhere!

Thank you to everyone for learning about Neurodiversity and how we can embrace our 'brain differences'. No matter how your brain works, you are amazing!





# Home Visits

Becky Ashmore

I think I can speak for all the staff when I say that we missed our students dreadfully throughout the lockdown period. We have such fantastic relationships and not seeing them every day definitely took its toll. For this reason some of the staff decided we would do some home visits and go and see some of the students who had been working from home. We involved the KS3 and KS4 students in these home visits and during our daily calls asked which of them would like a visit from staff.

We did four days of home visits and to say they were extremely enjoyable would be an understatement. Despite each student we visited trying to act cool, it was clear to see how happy they were when we turned up and they couldn't hide their smiles in the same way we couldn't hide ours. We got to catch up on how they had been, encouraged them to complete their work and had some lovely chats with parents. Despite the lockdown we found a way to maintain some face to face contact with students, it was thoroughly enjoyed by all and we couldn't wait to have them all back in the building. Stevie shared his experience by saying

“I have enjoyed being part of home visits during lockdown which is something that I believe makes a massive difference to students' mentality and well-being. Myself and another staff member went to see around seven students and all of them were absolutely buzzing to see us and it's something I am really happy to be a part of.”



# Multi Skills

Stevie Greaves

Since the start of November, I have been involved in a number of projects, one of them being Multi skills. Despite going into lockdown, Multiskills carried on online which was just as successful.

Before Christmas the year 10's were able to successfully finish a planter which took them the whole term to complete. It was an absolutely fantastic experience watching the students make something that fills them with pride and joy. All students are up to date with the theory side of Multiskills so practical will now be our first priority.





# Suits Day

Oliver Sillito

Suits Day was sadly cancelled again for our cohort last year. This is now the third time it has been cancelled for them. We have never given up on offering this key event for our students and we have rebooked it again.

The response from our students has been incredible. The appreciation they have given back is amazing which is why this place is so incredible. We don't forget and we don't give up. We want our students to know that we will always be ready to give them the best send-off day they can have! Now it will be a send-off plus a celebration of what they have done since being away from us. Everybody eagerly awaits a date for their new Suits Day!

# KS3 Meet the Street Doctors

Imani Lockhart-Davis

Stone Soup students have been lucky enough to have taken part in a workshop run by the Street Doctors. The Street Doctors aim is to 'Empower young people affected by violence to keep themselves and others safe.'

Through a zoom call the students were able to interact with healthcare volunteers who engaged the students with an interactive presentation about the basics of how to best support somebody if they have been stabbed by using emergency first aid.

Year 9 considered how to practically apply pressure to a wound, who to contact in an emergency situation, how to protect yourself and interesting and relevant facts about the body. Did you know that there are 8-10 pints of blood in the human body?

Volunteers like the street doctors help people gain the knowledge to potentially save a life in the future. The year 9's were full of questions and greatly enjoyed the session. We look forward to another workshop with the street doctors where we can delve deeper in to how to help, support and potentially save those around us.

Three things The Street Doctors want you to remember.

1. If you see someone who has been stabbed, call an ambulance! You can do this anonymously and you do not have to be at the scene to call an ambulance.
2. Stay safe. Check your surroundings are safe and make sure you are safe before approaching the person who has been stabbed.
3. Apply pressure on or around the wound until an ambulance arrives.

## What we have been up to this year...



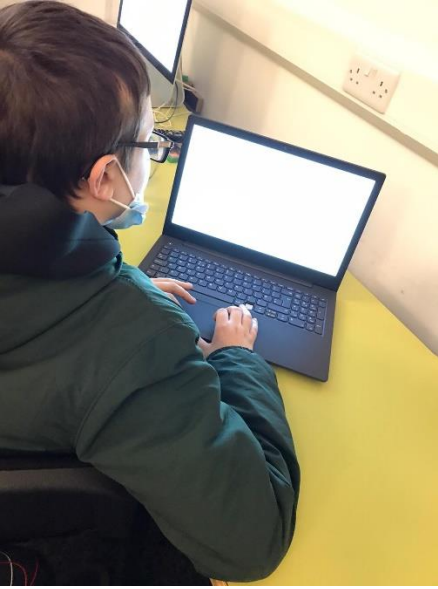
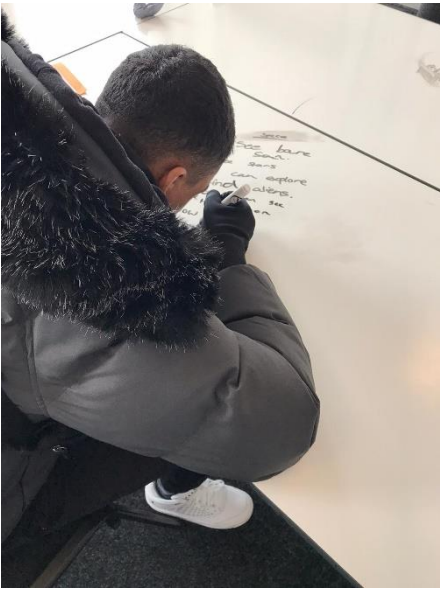


# Living it Large in KS3

Kyle Saddington

Since October half term there has been an increase in numbers at KS3, jumping from 5 to 10 young people. With this increase, we have been able to expand the opportunities that KS3 receive. The half term was a great success due to the amount of Class Dojos that the pupils accumulated and the attendance of the young people was excellent with all students achieving 90% or above. To celebrate the excellent term, we had a presentation at the end of the year and celebrated Christmas together. We also had awards which had a positive impact on the young people.

When we returned after Christmas we only had one day in school before we returned to a national lockdown and we returned to remote learning. Work packs were created for each student and these were personalised to their individual needs. The packs were sent out fortnightly to the pupils so they constantly had work to complete. There were also live sessions daily for the students. This is where we went through work and gave the pupils the opportunity to ask any questions. For the final work packs that we sent out, all KS3 staff completed home visits together and this was a really good opportunity to the young people and make sure they didn't forget what we all looked like!



# Family Competition

Younes Henini

Name:  
Phone:  
Email:

Please complete both and send it back to your child's personal coach for a chance of winning an award.  
Good luck.

## Math Crossword Puzzle

Fill in the blanks of the crossword puzzle to make the mathematical equations true.

12	+		=	36					
		÷		÷					+
	-		=	4					23
x		=		=		÷		=	
		6			x	5	=		
=						=			
56		20	-		=	11			3
		+		x					x
84	÷		=						13
		=		=					=
				63	-		=		

## Stone Soup Academy

F	A	M	I	L	Y	A	C	A	D	E	M	Y	A
V	Y	T	I	V	I	T	I	S	O	P	A	C	S
R	E	L	A	T	I	O	N	S	H	I	P	O	E
G	S	S	K	I	L	L	S	C	E	F	T	N	L
L	D	R	A	W	E	R	A	F	S	U	N	F	F
O	A	R	L	E	A	R	N	C	E	T	Y	I	C
B	S	T	O	N	E	U	N	N	O	U	T	D	O
A	E	C	N	E	I	L	I	S	E	R	I	E	N
L	N	E	G	O	T	I	A	T	E	E	N	N	T
S	E	K	A	T	S	I	M	I	Y	S	U	C	R
P	F	E	E	D	B	A	C	K	A	G	M	E	O
U	C	S	U	P	P	O	R	T	E	P	M	N	L
O	N	R	T	S	U	C	C	E	S	S	O	R	R
S	C	R	E	A	T	I	N	G	F	M	C	T	I

POSITIVITY  
CARE  
NEGOTIATE  
RELATIONSHIP  
SUCCESS  
CONFIDENCE  
COMMUNITY  
REWARD  
ACADEMY  
SELF-CONTROL  
FEEDBACK  
MISTAKES  
SKILLS  
CREATING  
RESILIENCE  
SUPPORT  
FAMILY  
FUTURES  
GLOBAL  
LEARN  
SOUP  
STONE

# Parent Leadership Groups

Becky Ashmore

On the 28th January 2021, Younes and I held an online parent leadership meeting via zoom. We had quite a few parents wanting to take part.

The meeting was fantastic and it was such a joy to hear the feedback from the parents.

Parents had nothing but praise for Stone Soup with one parent going as far as saying she has times where she almost wishes her other children would find themselves in a position where they would need to attend Stone Soup. She felt the staff at Stone Soup really take time to get to know the students and build up positive relationships whereas her experience has shown that at mainstream students are just ‘numbers’. She went on to say that throughout the lockdown, her step son had often spoken about how much they missed the staff at Stone Soup and she said this would have never happened in mainstream school. It was great to hear how the support Stone Soup offers does not stop after students leave and that this is something that a parent had experienced herself with her son.

Parents were more than happy with the support given throughout lockdown and they loved the fact their child had a personal coach who they could go to for anything and everything, they were also happy with the live lessons and work packs.

When the parents were asked about anything we could do that we maybe haven’t thought about or anything we could improve on, they said they felt like there was nothing to improve as we were doing everything to a very high standard. We could not have asked for better than this!

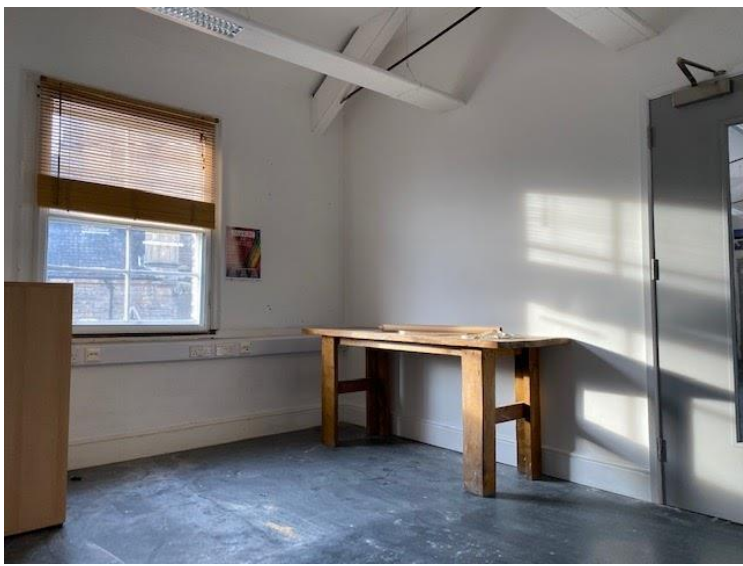
I also received an email from a parent who wanted to attend but couldn’t due to work commitments. She explained that her son now likes school which is something she never thought she would see. She also spoke about the positive effect Stone Soup has had not only on her son, but on their family life and this is always something that is amazing to hear.

# Beauty Room

Megan Harris

A beauty room has been in planning for the past couple of months and is finally becoming a reality! As you can see the room is still a work in progress. But we now invested in all the beauty equipment. We have manicure tables, towels, varnishes, robes and products ordered! We are hoping to get the room up and running very soon, starting out as a reward activity. We are working on the idea of giving beauty cards for good behaviour which can then be cashed in for learning, giving and receiving manicure treatments. We are currently in contact with City and Guilds, who are the providers of a Level 1 Beauty Therapy Course which we will be delivering right here, on site! This is a very exciting time and holds so many possibilities. If anyone has any questions please come and have a chat!

*Keep your eye on these spaces -*









# Pi Day

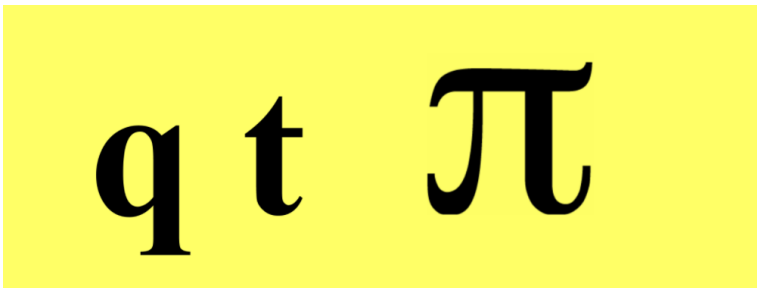
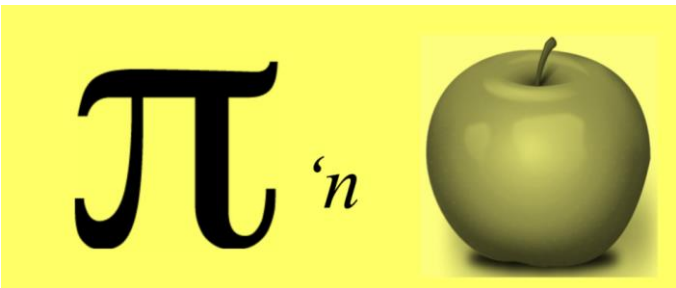
Darrell Drummond

And so it came around again - Pi Day was celebrated this year on the 15th of March because its usual day, the 14th of March or 3/14 as it is written in the US, fell on a Sunday. It is quite ironic really that the first few digits of this amazing number are actually 3.1415 so maybe running over two days was meant to be!

All our tutor groups were given the opportunity to take part in the great Pi Day Dingbat Challenge where they had to work out as many dingbat puzzles as they could. They came in mild, medium, hot and extreme and great fun was had by all! The winning tutor group was Artemis and they will be shortly receiving a nice chocolate surprise. Or maybe I will try to make a blackberry and apple pi for them. Or maybe a giant mince pi. Or maybe a...you get the pi-cture.

As a reminder, two brilliant quotes by a certain Mr. Einstein – “everybody is a genius.” “If you judged a fish by its ability to climb a tree then it would live its life believing that it was a fool.”

Have a go at these...



# Year 9 Notts TV Edit

Oliver Sillito

We teamed up with Notts TV & St Mary's Church with our year 9 cohort and produced a project about Christmas and what it means for everyone. Students spoke in a 3 minute segment about the joys of Christmas but also remembering the hardships others are going through. We wanted the community to know that Stone Soup was, and always is, thinking of them through difficult times.





# Counselling Service at the Academy

Michelle Rogers

We are pleased that the lockdown did not stop our counselling service. The majority of our students were learning remotely, we had to be inventive, so we offered video and telephone appointments to any students that required some support. Also our student counsellor has now been added to google classroom and regularly updates the "support hub" page which reaches our cohort with practical advice. Students also have the opportunity to email her directly through a link to her email. This is in addition to our in-house support.

**Plans moving forward:** Instead of all referrals for counselling going through me, referrals can now also be made by parents and students through personal coaches. Students can also make self-referrals themselves privately by placing a request in a locked box. We have worked on making the counselling room comfortable by adding some soft furnishings. We also have added plenty of creative resources for the students to explore their emotions.

If you feel that your child could be in need of some emotional support, you can contact me on, [mrogers@stonesoupacademy.org.uk](mailto:mrogers@stonesoupacademy.org.uk) or 07519127311.

# Literacy Lives on During Lockdown Learning

Kerry Day

This term we have adapted once again to remote learning but have also continued with teaching students physically in school. We have continued to use the Literacy classroom on google and this has had great success with students regularly taking part in activities around the subjects of homophones, synonyms and antonyms, apostrophes, ambitious words, connectives and spelling mistakes.

We have also been working as a whole staff to embed Literacy into our practise by having a weekly task that we all complete. We have been feeding back how well this has been working for us all. The weekly tasks have involved using newspapers in our lessons, making students more willing and able to use Dictionaries and Thesaurus; as listed in our Literacy Policy, helping students choose more ambitious words in descriptions, helping students with common spelling mistakes and getting students to become more familiar with key words for each subject. Literacy has been mentioned weekly both in staff briefings and staff emails as a reminder of its importance in all subjects.

In the upcoming year we will be running projects in the Library that will help students become more familiar with the Library and learn new and exciting things.



# Innovation at the Heart of our Work

Jordan Senior

At Stone Soup Academy, what we do changes outcomes, it changes lives and it changes futures. As a result of our work, 100% of our students move onto education, work and training post 16.

We're an Alternative Provision Free School Academy that works with local schools and local authorities to ensure that students who fail to thrive in a mainstream school environment have a genuine educational alternative. Based in Nottingham, we opened in September 2012 and achieved our first outstanding in May 2014, and again in 2019.

We see innovation in all aspects of the academy's delivery, from the use of technology in classrooms to the design of physical spaces. Many of our approaches are rooted in an understanding of the psychology of the young people we work with.

We have embedded a culture of continuous questioning, evaluation and improvement. We are always looking at ways to innovate. Building a research and development culture to seek out new models and methods of engagement and learning is at the heart of what we do for our young people.

## **Teaching leadership to our young people**

Good leadership in schools helps to foster both a positive and motivating culture for staff and a high-quality experience for learners. Leading with impact helps to anticipate other people's views and feelings which is very important when working with vulnerable students. It is also important to know when to adopt different approaches depending on the situation.

We teach leadership in a variety of ways, some obvious and some more subtle. We have developed a student leadership group and students conduct meetings every half term to go over school improvements and suggest ideas that they would like to put forward.

We have wellbeing groups set and jointly led by staff and students, where they gather information across the academy and have meetings to implement what's been discussed. Both of these leadership groups help raise students' aspirations and give the young people confidence in the process, confidence in speaking to people, maintaining eye contact and in holding and attending meetings.

## **The challenges of engaging local businesses**

Developing external relationships with business and the community has been an integral part of our development. The extended periods of work experience we run gives students an in-depth experience of work that makes them feel more a part of the business.

The key challenges that we've had to overcome as an alternative provision has been around perception. Alternative provision can sometimes feel to parents that they have failed, it wasn't what they wanted for their child, but we change that by showing the positive impact it has on lives.

Perceptions of AP can vary. We challenge negative perceptions not only through words but by the actions of our students. By raising the confidence of our young people they are able to step into a big established business and feel like they belong and in doing so they change opinions. We started with one company who we linked with and as a result of the work we have done, we now work with over 10 established large companies.

## **Work experience can turn into job offers**

We have had a number of students where their work experience programme has turned into a job with the business they worked for.

This is not something that should be overlooked as it means that our learners have overcome adversity and built up the resilience to step into unfamiliar surroundings and thrive, building confidence along the way and gaining employment, creating their own unimagined futures.