

*'We build incredible futures by empowering young people to develop their **independence, self-esteem and confidence** through a relentless focus on learning and caring.'*

# Newsletter: June 2023

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## Message from the Principal:

With the end of term only a week away for our students, it really is the right time to congratulate all of our students for completing their first year at Bankside College. All of our students have made amazing progress; from settling into new surroundings to enjoying learning through our formal and enrichment curriculum. It has also been wonderful to see so many of our students enjoying the weekly swimming sessions that have been organised this term. I know how important our trips and visits programme is for all students' personal and social progress. Our students, and indeed staff, are looking forward to the 'All Things Wild' trip planned for the end of this term.

I would also like to welcome our new students and their families to Bankside College. Students' transitions have been planned very carefully with the needs of each student at the forefront of our minds. I must say that existing students have been incredibly welcoming and supportive and we all look forward to starting to the new academic year together in September.

On a personal note, I would like to thank students, families and staff for making Bankside a welcoming, friendly and supporting community. I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer break with your friends and family.



**Project Bee Hive:** Students will be participating in our Project Beehive themed curriculum next term. All students will be able to progress through their accredited courses and collaborate on this project and develop their practical, design, marketing and communication skills at the same time.

**Dates & Times:** Term ends for all students on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July and college students will be welcomed back on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September. Term dates for the next two academic years can be found on our website: [Important Information - Bankside College](#)

## OFG Autism Strategy

Bankside Staff have all been trained in OFG Autism Strategy – Ask, Accept, Develop. Please see the attached leaflet about how this strategy impacts upon our practice at Bankside College. Our Clinical team will now be supporting staff with Practice Impact Reviews, while the College works towards Accreditation over the next six months. This will include such aspects as Staff ongoing training, Student Communication Profiles, Use of Visual Supports, Student Sensory profiles and Promoting Independence. Please ask if you would like to know more.

## New Staff

We are delighted to announce that we have appointed Sian Ackerley as our SENCo at Bankside College and School. While Sian will officially start in September, she is already visiting our college so that she gets to know our students and staff. Welcome to the Bankside Community Sian!

## Four Day Working Week

Bankside College is currently participating in Outcomes First Group's four day working week pilot. This is a company wide strategy that promotes colleague's well-being and positive mental health. Through flexible timetabling, and careful planning, we are pleased that we can continue to provide a student centred, caring and professional service to all of our students and their families. Please do not hesitate to contact reception if you have any queries about this initiative.



## Bankside School

Renovation work on the new Bankside School building continues to move ahead at great speed. Bankside School will be a purpose built 11-18 school for pupils with a diagnosis of autism and a range of learning needs. Both phases 1 and 2 of the building will be completed and ready for opening in September 2023.

Facilities at Bankside School will include 11 purpose built classrooms, 4 sensory rooms, an immersion room, sensory gardens/trails and a multi-use activities and games area. We are currently receiving consultations for Bankside School and look forward to welcoming new pupils to our Bankside community in the near future.

Please contact reception at Bankside College if you would like further information.

[info@banksidecollege.co.uk](mailto:info@banksidecollege.co.uk)

## Ask

Student Voice is our top priority. We treat each student as a unique individual with their own likes, dislikes, wants and needs. This is facilitated within a Total Communication Environment, including the use of augmentative and alternative communication. Central to this is our focus on relationship-building, connection and creating an environment of psychological and physical safety. Students are supported to collate their own Profile document to inform us in how we can best support them.

## Accept

Our ethos and approach has a common language, consistency and understanding, based upon neuroscience. We have an empathic understanding based upon relating to the individual perspectives of each student, supported by PACE (Trauma Informed Practice). We respect each student's personal experience to inform what may frighten, preoccupy or distress them. Relationships, connection and belonging are central to our ethos. We create structured and predictable environments, and use communication systems and activities which meet the needs of each student and enable them to thrive and experience positive emotions. Support plans are formulated with the students, their families and our clinical team.

## Develop

We teach our students new skills, abilities and strategies related to the Outcomes within their Education, Health and Care Plans. These are driven to improve their quality of life and well-being through a focus on enablement and empowerment to increase independence and flourish. We do this through positive, evidence-based approaches and positive expectations. We use sensitive but persistent intervention, based upon individual assessment, that uses and supports each student's capacity for emotional regulation and engagement. We accredit achievement using ASDAN qualifications and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. We work in partnership with the student, their family, and all involved professionals.