



Week Commencing Monday 16th September 2024

Headteacher's Update

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been another busy week here at school and I hope that your child is beginning to feel more settled back at school after their summer. Our year 7s continue to impress us and as happens every year we have had a couple of students who have not arrived, meaning that there is some space in year 7. If you know of a family who applied and didn't get in, please do let them know that they can contact us about an admission.

I want to thank you for your patience with our new information system, Bromcom. Implementing new software always presents challenges and I know some of you have had difficulty logging in or registering. Please bear with us in this initial stage and can I direct you to the website where there are help guides to support you?

Thank you, Mr Farrer

WEEK B	CALENDAR - TERM 1
Monday 16 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Y10 Duke of Edinburgh Launch during tutorial
Tuesday 17 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Y10 Duke of Edinburgh Launch during tutorial
Wednesday 18 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clubs Fair - Breaktime
Thursday 19 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Y10 Duke of Edinburgh Launch during tutorial
Friday 20 th September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Y10 Duke of Edinburgh launch during tutorial

From: Mr Hainsworth – Assistant Headteacher

KS4 Information Evening

Thank you to those parents who attended the KS4 Information Evening last night. As stated in the "save the date" in Term 6 and the notice in last week's parent/carer bulletin, the meeting held on Teams shared information about study habits & study skills, revision and other resources that might support you as parents of KS4 students. The slides from the event have been sent with this bulletin.

Other information regarding English, Maths, online safety etc., will be made available in due course.

From: English Department

St Laurence Reads 2024-25

Electric Life by Rachel Delahaye

Every year as part of the Tutorial programme, all tutor groups take part in St Laurence Reads. One Tutorial lesson per week is spent reading and discussing a book that students vote to read from a shortlist.

For academic year 2024-25, students voted to read Electric Life by Bath-based author Rachel Delahaye.

This dystopian novel is based in Estrella, a 'perfect', futuristic London. Estrella is immaculate, sanitised and 'hyper-connected'; everything is channelled through the digital medium. In Estrella there is no disease, no pain and no natural world.

Every citizen of Estrella has a chip implanted in their left armpit; this is described as their "birthright", like "an old-time vaccination". The chip - called a Sensii - can be paired with simulation virtual reality games, and it works with the body's hormones so people can feel what it is like, for example, to fly or dive. The Sensii also maps the bodies of the citizens of Estrella, sending updates and alerts to Estrella's medical organisation. The walls of the skyscrapers, where the citizens of Estrella live, "are packed with sensors to monitor [them] and keep [them] safe".

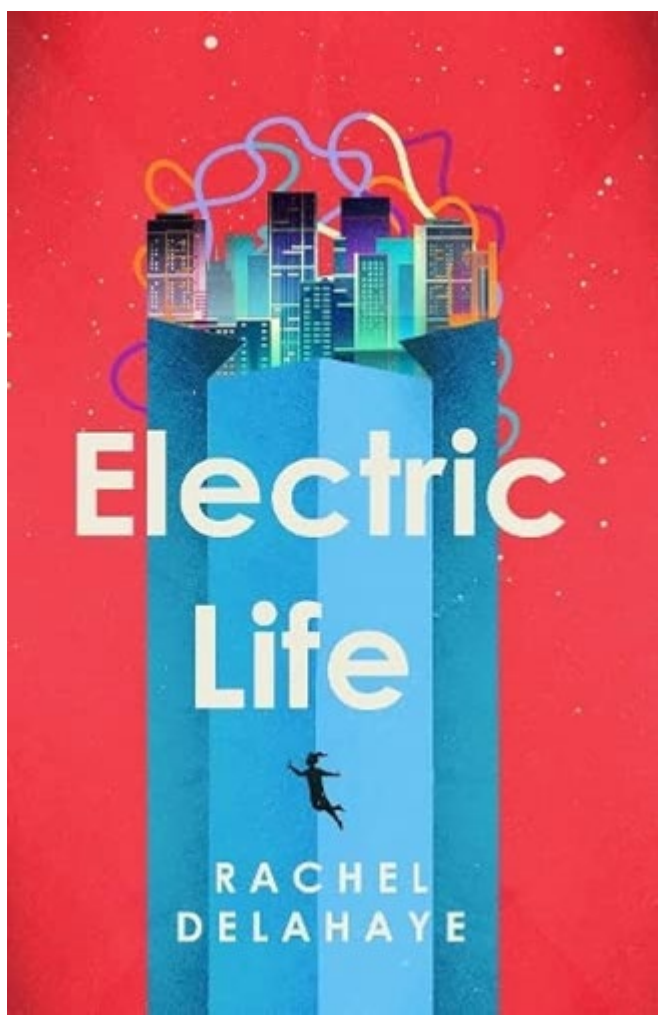
Main character Alara is dropped down from Estrella to London Under to complete a mission for Estrella's elite.

London Under is a world below Estrella where noise, pain and dirt are everyday experiences.

Alara is placed in peril, as we wonder which of the inhabitants of London Under, she can trust. Will she be able to complete her mission and return to her worry-free life in Estrella? Does she really want to?

This novel considers the impact of living in a synthetic digital world and raises questions about where our own society might in this respect be heading.

Some parents and carers might like to buy a copy of Electric Life and 'read along' with the whole of St Laurence!



Year 7 Literacy Lessons – from Heather Browne, Literacy Co-Ordinator

This year, all Year 7 students have a weekly timetabled Literacy lesson. Each week, students will spend 30 minutes exploring our ILC and reading independently and 30 minutes developing vocabulary and grammar using a new digital platform – **Bedrock Learning**.

Built by former English teachers, Bedrock Learning is a digital literacy platform which offers learners a carefully sequenced and adaptive **vocabulary and grammar curriculum**. It exposes learners to new words and grammatical concepts through a rich diet of culturally valuable fiction and non-fiction. Its algorithm ensures that learning is personalised to your child, identifying and targeting gaps in knowledge and extending their fluency in English.

We believe this evidence-based approach can be a transformative addition to our literacy offering in Year 7, ensuring that our young people are equipped with the vocabulary and grammatical understanding they need to access the whole school curriculum and express their ideas in every subject.

Your child will be introduced to Bedrock in their timetabled literacy lessons. They will then be able to access vocabulary and grammar ‘lessons’ during their literacy classes and at home. Later this term, a fortnightly home learning will also be set to complete a Bedrock ‘lesson’. Students will be rewarded and supported to succeed by staff.

You can find out more information about Bedrock Learning at bedrocklearning.org. You can also find additional help for parents at help.bedrocklearning.org.

From: Criminology Department

Please ensure you have asked you son/daughter if they have booked on to the Crime scene to courtroom day on November 14th. This is a day off timetable to support students doing Criminology and other A Level students interested in a career in the criminal justice system. More details please email nicbut@st-laurence.com. We have 30 spaces for this interactive day.

From: Ms Eyles – Head of Dance

Chance to Dance Club

Year 7 & 8 Dance Performance “Chance to Dance” Club starts on Wednesday 11th September, after school in the Dance Studio.

Please note this is not a “drop in and out” dance club but a performance club with limited spaces - please do not sign students up unless they can commit to performing at the Bath Forum or in Chance to Dance in February and March.

There is a maximum of 30 places allocated on a first come, first served basis. Students will not be able to join the class unless they have signed up on Bromcom and been allocated a space, so please sign up to avoid disappointment. Students of all ability are welcome to join.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO MANAGE CONFLICT EFFECTIVELY

Disagreement is a natural part of human interaction. This can seem particularly true when dealing with the sensitive issues that arise for secondary-aged pupils. This guide brings you 10 top tips which can help prevent conflicts arising or mitigate their impacts when they do.

1 INSPIRE RESPONSIBILITY

The best approaches to conflict resolution are restorative. This means that rather than adults imposing their own solutions on children who have had a disagreement, they should work with them. Allowing them to handle it can feel empowering to young people and will hopefully teach them to manage their own disputes as they move towards adult life.

2 ACTIVELY LISTEN

Remember to give every child the opportunity to voice their opinion, regardless of their age, stage of development, special educational needs, or other individual requirements. This can be done using a variety of different communication methods. For example, some children find it easier to express how they're feeling using pictures and drawings, while some prefer to write their ideas down.

3 BE CURIOUS

Demonstrating how to approach conflicts with a mature and empathetic mindset can set a good example to children, which can prove a useful skill for them later in life. Model this by asking inquisitive-yet-respectful questions about the issue at hand. Really try to understand where all parties are coming from, and share information between them when and where appropriate. This should encourage young people to mirror your behaviour, teaching them to be curious about the other sides of a conflict, and thus being more willing to hear them out.

4 PROMOTE DIFFERENCES

Children and young people may come from a range of different backgrounds and cultures or have protected characteristics which may cause them to see things from various angles. Having a school and community culture which celebrates and embraces diversity in all things – including diversity of opinion – means people are more likely to feel heard and understood.

5 BE SUPPORTIVE

Discussions may be sensitive or, in some cases, even trigger negative emotions. Pupils may have mixed feelings about the issue at hand. They could be nervous or anxious before even coming to the table to talk about it. Try and create a space where all parties feel safe, welcome and comfortable. Allow breaks and time-outs if the conversation gets heated, to prevent anyone from saying something they might later regret.

6 MENTALLY PREPARE

Think of how you can approach the conflict in a calm and regulated manner. Consider taking some extra time to prepare beforehand and finding somewhere quiet to relax. Even if you're not directly involved with the conflict, mediating can be a stressful experience in its own right. Make sure you're hydrated, fed and comfortable, and do the same for the young people involved. These may seem like insignificant factors, but it's important to remember that physical discomfort can trigger dysregulation, which can make it much harder to have a calm, productive conversation.

7 GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT

Make sure you have all the facts, figures and timelines of the situation prior to the discussion. This should be done as objectively as possible with the aim of resolving the ongoing issue. You may want to risk assess any problems that may arise and look for possible solutions during your preparation time.

8 STICK TO THE POINT

Make the reason for, and purpose of, any meetings or communications clear prior to setting them up. Provide an agenda. Act as a neutral chairperson who can keep all parties on track. Make sure everyone has a chance to air their concerns about the issue being discussed and try to avoid talking about unrelated incidents. Close off with some action points, detailing what everyone can do to resolve the conflict.

9 BE SOLUTION FOCUSED

It's often said that the art of diplomacy is about giving others ladders to climb down. This means the main aim of any meeting or correspondence should be finding mutually acceptable and amicable solutions. Parents, carers, teachers and pupils should be aware there may need to be a compromise for the common good – and, most importantly, the good of the children you're supporting.

10 DON'T IGNORE OR AVOID CONFLICT

No one benefits from allowing concerns and grievances to fester, as this can lead to further division and mistrust, and ultimately doesn't help the children involved. Use our tips to open meaningful lines of communication. These should help you find a suitable resolution and minimise the number of conflicts you're faced with mediating overall.



Managing Digital Anxiety

Did you know?

We used to have only a handful of interactions a day due to only being able to connect with people that we met in person and later via the telephone or email.

With the surge in the use of social media, we may now have tens, hundreds or even thousands of interactions with people daily, seeing glimpses into their lives and perhaps comparing them with our own. Research has found both positive and negative effects of social media but the frequency of 'checking' our devices has been shown in various studies to have a detrimental effect on wellbeing*.

So what can we try?

1 Batch check

Every time we check our phone or email, we open ourselves up to micro-stressors. That is, small things that can impact our mood. By scheduling times when we check media/messages, we can avoid letting others impact our day so frequently.

2 Be predictable



Like Pavlov's dog, humans quickly learn what to expect. So if your friends or colleagues learn to expect that you don't check your messages after 7pm or before 9am, they will not expect a response from you and not be disappointed. Parents can actually help reduce anxiety for their children and teens by being clear about the house rules as their friends will also know what to expect. Firm but fair can really help!

3 On your terms



A simple technique can be to turn off the notifications, badges, vibrations and sounds our phones make when someone else wants our attention. Try to keep your personal boundaries clear and look at your phone when you have time, not when someone else demands that time. Phones are clever now so you can pick and choose what you want to hear about, what's urgent and what's not. Remember every time you break your focus, it takes time to re-gain it.

Reference




*Online social interactions are associated with greater connection and more stress
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2451958821000816#bib29>



ABC online safety checklist for teens


As teens gain more independence, there are still areas in which they need support. Use the checklist below to review their online safety.




Activate 	Review privacy settings on social media together. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Use family or parent modes on platforms with social features to supervise use, like TikTok Family Pairing and Snapchat Family Centre . <input type="checkbox"/>
Balance 	Show them how to use screen time tools to check their device and app usage. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Encourage them to be selective about what they do online. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Empower teens to watch and follow a range of content types to avoid falling into echo chambers . <input type="checkbox"/>
Check 	Ask them to show you how they use their apps and discuss safety measures. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Ask them what they share online and how it makes them feel. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Discuss ways to protect their privacy on different platforms. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Together, review how to report users and content on the platforms they use. <input type="checkbox"/>

Scan below or visit internetmatters.org for more advice





 [InternetMatters](#)

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Youth Café Drop-in

A new drop-in café open to 8 to 16 year olds

**Every Thursday from
1.30pm to 4pm**

St Margaret's Hall (side entrance)



- ☀️ safe, warm and social space
- ☀️ enjoy hot chocolate and snacks
- ☀️ space to relax and chat
- ☀️ activities and games

Want to know more?

Email dlloyd@bradfordonavontowncouncil.gov.uk



Bradford on Avon
Town Council

BOA
youth



St Laurence School

has joined the following SOCIAL MEDIA platforms to keep you informed of some of the great work your children are doing at school.

We will post news and photos from school trips, dance and drama performances, STEM events and lots more. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and “like” and “share” our stories.

FOLLOW

LIKE |  & SHARE



facebook.com/StLaurenceSch



instagram.com/stlaurencesch/



twitter.com/stlaurencesch

www.st-laurence.com

**ST LAURENCE SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION (PTA)**



DONATE 1 HOUR & MAKE AN IMPACT

We are aware that everyone works and having teenagers is a busy time. But a few hours of your time (regularly or adhoc) will make a huge difference. Scan the QR code and let us know how you can help.

WE NEED:

- People's time**
- Skills**
- Ideas**
- Cash donations**
- Uniform donations**

admin@st-laurence.com



The focus of the SLSA is to support well-being (mental, physical and financial) across the school community. To do this we need great people and great ideas to make the fundraising possible