

PREPARE | ASPIRE | SUCCEED  
EDITION 3



*December 2022*





*Mr Jones*

Since September, we have set higher expectations for all members of our school community. This came off the back of a successful academic year in 2021/22 that saw us achieve some excellent exam results and retain our Good grading from Ofsted. In light of the pandemic, these are both significant milestones.

The Senior Leadership Team has been restructured and this has enabled us to set a clear direction for further improvements in the coming years. You will hear from a number of the new members of the SLT in this edition as they share with you their plans and their strategy to make this an even better school.

There are no great secrets in this strategy. All students need a great teacher in front of them in order to achieve their potential. Ensuring everyone meets the high standards of behaviour and attendance we set in order to create a positive climate for learning is essential. Allied with that, as leaders and parents we need accurate and robust data on student academic performance so we can support and intervene together if, as they inevitably do, things go wrong.

In a nutshell that is what Mr Fox - Assistant Headteacher Teaching and Learning, Mr Henry - Assistant Headteacher Character and Mr Passaro - Assistant Headteacher - School Improvement have set out to achieve in the coming months and years ahead.

We still have some legacy issues hanging around from the recent global pandemic; namely concerns over attendance and student well being.

Nationally, attendance is down and although we are impacted less than others, we are seeing more students being absent from school. Not only that, we are seeing more students being significantly absent from school with prolonged or persistent absence. Research tells us that this has a significant impact on attainment due to the loss of continuity in learning. Please ensure your child is in school regularly; our expectation is for 95% attendance as a minimum. This equates to around 6 days of absence a year or one a half term. Attendance down at 90% equates to over 20 days absence a year or 4 whole school weeks. This has a serious impact on learning and progress.

TEAM Hub, our Designated Safeguarding Leads and The BASE are still seeing students who are facing significant challenges with well being and mental health, sometimes linked to school attendance. Schools are increasingly being asked to do more and more to support children and families and this places a significant burden on our resources. Where possible, can I ask that parents/carers continue to work with school, health professionals and mental health specialists to gain support. Schools cannot do this alone as we simply do not have the resources or expertise. As always we will do whatever we can to support and signpost families to the right external support.

I recently met with Greg Smith MP to discuss with him the impact of school funding. He was incredibly supportive and has taken my concerns back to the Department for Education. Although the school continues to grow and be oversubscribed, the current financial climate with rising energy costs and unfunded teacher and support staff pay rises is placing a huge burden on schools. I will continue to fight for better funding on behalf of the school so that we can continue to provide the excellent education for all our students.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".



# Student Highlights

## OUT OF SCHOOL

## Henry Edmondson | Year 10



I have been wanting to sail on the TS Royalist since I joined Sea Cadets at 10 years old, but you have to be 13 and with the pandemic it meant I had to wait 5 years. I was very excited to have the opportunity to sail on TS Royalist and what's more it was over my 15th birthday, it was definitely a birthday to remember!

The days started early on Royalist with music playing over the tannoy system and the Coxswain shouting "get up" at 6am!! We got dressed, had breakfast and then 4 'Messmen' were selected, this role involved setting the table, handing out meals and washing up for the 8 staff and the other 20 cadets on board. Once breakfast was cleared away, we took up 'Harbour Stations', 12 cadets lined the foredeck on either side of the ship wearing our formal white caps.

We cast off (set off) under engine or sail depending on the weather conditions, as we headed into The Solent. The Solent is a very busy shipping lane, so this meant we had to tack the ship regularly to avoid collision, which gave us plenty of sail handling experience. We had strong winds for most of the week, which prevented us using all the sails, as there would have been a risk of them tearing. However, on the last day we were able to set every sail and we had the chance to climb the rigging and learn to furl (roll up) and unfurl (roll down) the sails from above. This was rather nerve wracking!! But it was a lot of fun climbing up, even if it was extremely scary.



Once we 'made port' (moored up) in Cowes on the Isle of Wight, or back in Gosport, we set about cleaning the mess deck (living area), including our bunk beds. We would then have an excellent supper made by the ship's cook, play cards or board games, before heading to bed at 10pm. This was our regular routine until the last day when we had to scrub the ship clean from 'Stem to Stern' (from the very front to the very back), including the 'Heads' (the ship's toilets).

My favourite memory of the trip, was when we sailed behind the state-of-the-art HMS Queen Elizabeth II aircraft carrier, which dwarfed TS Royalist; it was a truly imposing sight to behold.



My next adventure at sea will be on the TS Jack Petchey during Easter 2023. Sea Cadets can give you many different opportunities, I have taken basic and intermediate Marine Engineering, basic First Aid and intermediate Seamanship training courses this year; I look forward to completing my navigation and powerboating qualifications next year."

Aylesbury Sea Cadets meet on Mondays and Wednesdays; for more information visit: <https://www.sea-cadets.org/aylesbury>



*Mr Passaro*

**ASSISTANT HEAD | SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

Having been a member of The Cottesloe School community in various roles over the past five years, I have been lucky enough to share with our pupils many highs and help to support them through some completely unprecedented lows. It is a clear and distinct honour for me to be taking on the role of Assistant Headteacher - School Improvement from the start of this academic year. We are all acutely aware of the vital role that the school plays in serving our community and this inherently means we all have a vested interest in continuously striving to improve every element of what we do.

The single most important component of any school is the cohort of pupils attending. In my role as Assistant Headteacher - School Improvement, I oversee several key areas that help to monitor and determine what it is exactly that these young people will get out of their time studying at The Cottesloe School.

One of the first areas that we have reviewed is the target setting process for pupils. A robust, logical and fair target setting process is essential for all schools for two key reasons: firstly, it enables the school to be able to identify pupils who may not be achieving to their potential and to make timely interventions to try and change their outcomes. Secondly, it enables the Senior Leadership Team - and the rest of the staff - to have an approximate sense of the efficacy of the school. This has many secondary implications, including: curriculum planning; staff professional development; recruitment and retention of staff; retention of pupils from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5; transition of pupils from Key Stage 2 to Year 7. We have moved swiftly this year to change our target setting process in order to make it more effective for all concerned. The new target setting process uses each individual pupil's scores from their Key Stage 2 SATs tests and estimates Key Stage 4 outcomes for individual subjects based on historical outcomes of pupils with a similar starting point. We have designed our own nuanced,

bespoke target setting process which is based on the well-established and widely-used Fischer Family Trust (FFT) grade estimation method. We have worked quickly to generate estimated grades for select year groups and will be looking to replicate this for all year groups in due course.



A second key priority in my new role is to improve the relationship between all key stakeholders and data. My stated ambition is to place data at the heart of all informed decision making in the school; to ensure that we are using data - of pupil attainment; attendance; attitude to learning and all other relevant modes - as part of a formative process. It is my belief that reliable data should form the starting point of thoughtful decision making and be routinely revisited rather than be used to retrospectively judge events. During this first term of the year, I have reviewed the data analysis systems and calendar that had previously been utilised. This involved extensive information gathering and exploring several possible platforms. We have already managed to begin the process of instilling our new data analysis process and have held initial exams analysis meetings with all curriculum leaders to dissect the key strengths and weaknesses suggested in the summer exam outcomes from 2022.

As we approach the new term and the new year, I will be looking to continue to develop the recording, reporting and use of data within The Cottesloe School. This will include: continuing to work with other designated staff to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are appropriately supported throughout their time with us; further improving the robustness of the data that is collected and reporting back to relevant stakeholders at regular intervals. It has been a busy and fulfilling first term as a member of the Senior Leadership Team and I look forward to making further progress throughout the rest of the academic year and beyond.

## *Mentor Programme*

“

Mr Passaro has been really helpful and whenever I had a problem he would always pop out of no where and give me advice and support

Mentee Student

”

Everyone needs some additional help and support some time. The SLT mentoring program is a bespoke coaching scheme that is designed to help pupils get the very best out of themselves and their time at The Cottesloe School. The additional monitoring, coaching and target setting processes involved enable individuals who have historically struggled to focus on themselves and their learning to make sustained changes for the better.



*Mr Henry*

**ASSISTANT HEAD | CHARACTER**

It is a real privilege to be the Assistant Head of Character at The Cottesloe School and be part of such a passionate and dedicated team. I have always been a firm believer in the importance of creating and embedding a culture where behaviour for learning is at the core of all that we do. When such culture becomes the norm, pupils will succeed, reaching their full potential, in both academic and non academic fields.

Previous to my current employment at The Cottesloe School, I spent 16 years working in a school in Milton Keynes. My roles included; Head of PE, Leadership Coach and had various roles within the Senior Leadership Team, all of which provided me the opportunity to support pupils, parents and staff in providing the best possible care and education. These roles have provided me with the skill set to support students at The Cottesloe School.

As a new member of staff at Cottesloe, I was keen to meet as many staff and pupils as possible, hearing their views of the school. This included speaking to staff and pupils, visiting and observing lessons, looking at pupils' work, progress and engagement.

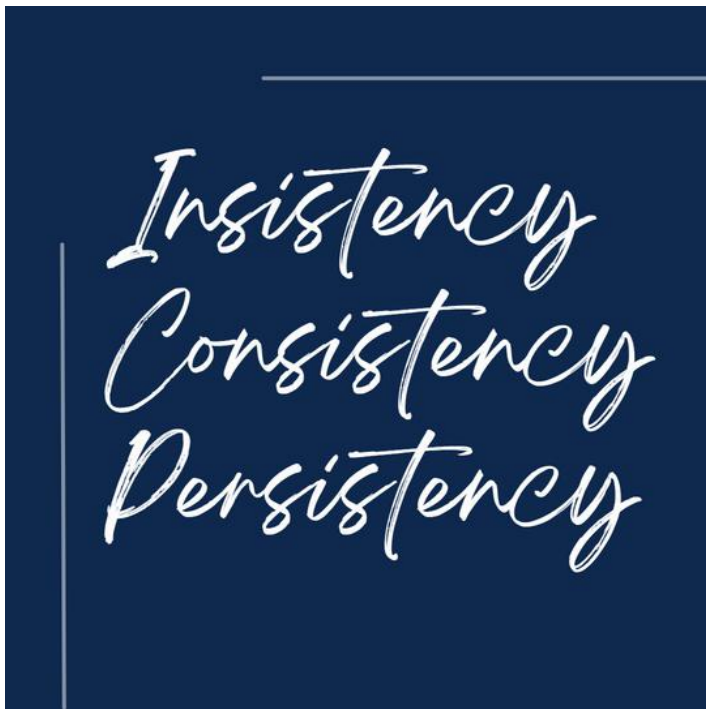
The main trends from this included:

- Pupils voiced they learnt better with the absence of low level disruption.
- Staff and pupils wanted clarification of the behaviour system and expectations.
- Pupils felt that the behaviour and achievement policies were not always applied consistently.
- Pupils wanted to be involved in the redevelopment of the rewards system at The Cottesloe school.

It was from these learning conversations with staff and pupils that the core message of consistency, persistency and

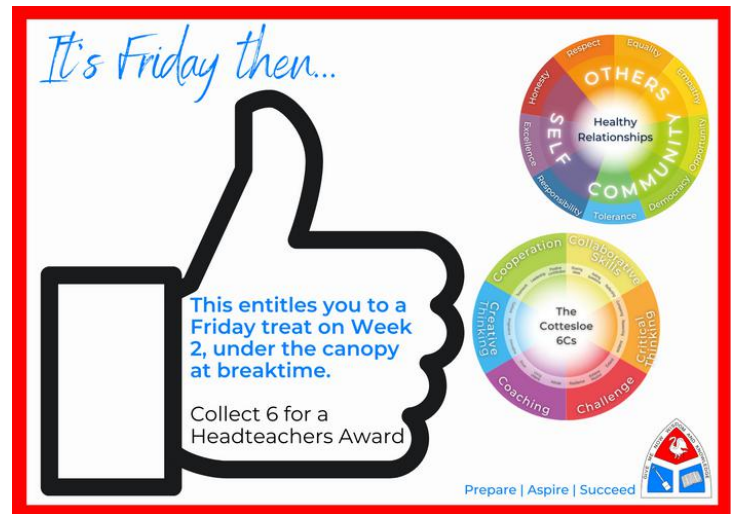


insistency was created. These key terms have been shared and adopted by pupils and staff and will continue to be applied to both the teaching and pastoral elements of the school. The application of these terms will continue to support all parties, enabling pupils to flourish at Cottesloe, whilst holding them accountable for their own learning, progress and behaviour.



We have so much to celebrate at The Cottesloe School. Pupils on a daily basis excel in numerous aspects of school life and it is important to recognise these successes. It is this element of school life that I am especially looking forward to developing, working with students, engaging and empowering them in the redevelopment of an impactful rewards system. A system aimed at celebrating all aspects of a students life and academic journey. This redevelopment has already begun

with 'winners breakfasts' being launched early next year and 'Thumbs up Friday' celebrations becoming commonplace.



I have always been a believer in reflecting on the intended impact of any new initiative or strategy (completing a pre and post mortem). The use of collaborative planning with Mr Fox (Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning) has been crucial in ensuring new initiatives have impact, supporting both pupils and staff. These initiatives have been based on educational research from various authors, including Tom Sheerington (author of Teaching Walkthrus) a leading advisor on Behaviour, Teaching and Learning.

Examples of such initiatives, those associated with both the pastoral and teaching and learning elements, include 'meeting and greeting' and 'Do Nows'.

These initiatives have significantly improved the start of lessons, with staff meeting pupils at the door, welcoming them into a positive learning environment, with a 'Do Now' task ready for pupils to complete independently.

This supports a calm and impactful start to a lesson, enabling pupils to engage with a low risk recall task, aimed at 'plugging' any knowledge gaps that have emerged.

Embedding a culture where behaviour for Learning has a positive impact on learning, progress and achievement continues to be a journey. A journey that I am passionate and committed to at the Cottesloe School. A journey that involves improved communication with parents / carers, enabling impactful intervention and support to be commonplace.



## Establishing a climate for learning

- Come to school fully equipped for timetabled lessons and planned activities
- Engage with 6Cs in classroom activities
- Engage with staff marking and feedback to close any gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Respect the learning environment.
- Engage positively at all times.
- Follow instructions and respond to requests appropriately.
- Be punctual to all lessons. Lateness without an acceptable reason impacts learning.

Name	A1	A2

Name	B1	B2	B3

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## Establishing a climate for learning

### Student expectation

- Mobile phones are not seen, heard or used including Sixth Form
- Students in full uniform and worn correctly, at all times. Note provided by parent for missing items. Non-uniform items such as hoodies not to be worn in school.
- No facial or cartilage piercings
- Bring fully charged Chromebook to school everyday
- All external garments (coats, gloves, etc) removed in class
- Active listening and class participation. Be prepared to answer at all times
- Come to school fully equipped for timetabled lessons and planned activities
- Engagement with 6Cs in classroom activities
- Engagement with staff marking and feedback to close any gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding
- Respect the learning environment by engaging positively at all times. Follow instructions and respond to requests
- Be punctual to all lessons. Lateness without an acceptable reason impacts learning
- Language and actions towards all members of the community should be positive and respectful

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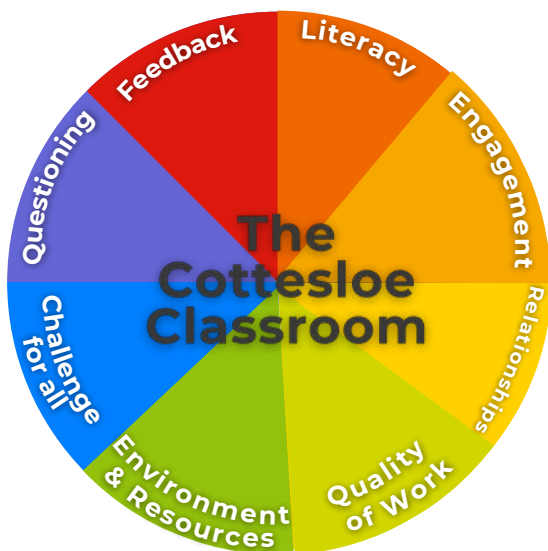


*Mr Fox*

**ASSISTANT HEAD | TEACHING AND LEARNING**

It is an absolute pleasure to join The Cottesloe School senior leadership team this year, especially in order to drive something that I am so passionate about: teaching and learning. Having spent nine years in senior leadership in two other schools, I joined The Cottesloe School in September 2021 as a classroom teacher in English and I enjoyed it immensely. It also provided me with a renewed perspective of all of the trials and tribulations of being a classroom practitioner on a full-time basis - something I am sure not to lose sight of as I introduce new strategies and drive improvement within teaching and learning across the school.

This first term has been a busy one from a teaching and learning perspective. Following my appointment in July, we began to look at what we wanted teaching and learning to look like at The Cottesloe School with a focus on the behaviours and habits that underpin excellence in the classroom. Through rigorous discussion, we created the 8 key features of The Cottesloe classroom - 8 areas within teaching and learning that will allow us to focus on sharing our considerable strengths within these areas and also work to improve on those where needed. This has led to the development of our teaching and learning brand that now sits alongside the 6 C's and our healthy relationships charter as something that is instantly recognisable as belonging to The Cottesloe School:



## DEVELOPING

*Teaching Habits*

**TO PREPARE, ASPIRE & SUCCEED**

**THE 8 KEY FEATURES OF THE  
COTTESLOE CLASSROOM**

Within each of these 8 areas, we have worked as a staff body to underpin what our minimum expectations are and also what we consider excellence to look like. The school leadership team have been busy looking at learning across the school with regards to these key features and have built an excellent picture of teaching and learning across all 7 year groups and every subject. This gives us a fantastic platform to drive improvement from and also tailor our staff training to focus on particular key features at any time.

Our staff training has also been revamped through the introduction of 'Teaching Walkthrus' - a package that incorporates the best evidence-informed teaching strategies into easy-to-digest sequences. Our CPD session in November saw our staff begin to explore the 'CORE 10' strategies - the 10 Walkthru strategies identified by the first 100 subscriber schools as having the biggest impact on teaching and learning. Our teaching staff identified areas within their own classroom practice to focus on and have devised ways of incorporating their chosen Walkthru into their lessons.

Teaching and learning is our core business at The Cottesloe School and we are committed to providing the best possible education for our students.

There is so much excellent practice that happens on a day-to-day basis across the school and I am thoroughly looking forward to celebrating this, as well as working with the staff body to continue to improve so that our school goes from strength to strength.

## Staff Testimonials



As a Science team we noticed we were routinely using the Walkthrus processes in our usual teaching but the integrity of the technique was impacted as we were missing key steps or it had mutated. In order to streamline and maximise the impact of our actions we have applied the Walkthrus strategies identified in CPD sessions to our Individual Development Plans, which in turn supports the priorities identified in the Department and School Development Plans.

Mrs Hooley | Head of Science



# WALKTHRUS



I found the CPD training in November invaluable as, with other Middle Leaders, I was able to hone my skills as an observer, being provided - as I was - with practical examples to guide my pedagogical knowledge. Discussing these scenarios with my peers was also beneficial as it provided a cross-curricular perspective.

I feel that the snapshot observations that I have made in the department have also worked well due to the efficacy of the electronic form that has been created for the purpose. It is always such a privilege to be able to watch a practitioner at work - especially when they are teaching the subject that you love. Now, however, I feel that I am able to deepen my professional dialogue with members of my team by referring to the Walkthrus specifically. This is both when I have noticed that a Walkthru has developed a colleague's practice but also, when suggesting that a Walkthru is adopted to develop teaching and learning further.

Mrs Webber | Head of English



*Mrs Brimmell*

WELLBEING OFFICER



THE COTTESLOE SCHOOL  
WELLBEING  
*Ambassadors*  
2022/2023

That is our magic number - reflecting the number of conversations that our Wellbeing Ambassadors at Cottesloe School had over the last year. That represents 222 times a student has sought support and received it during breaktime drop-ins at Team Hub.

Simply put - it is those conversations that are at the heart of our scheme. Our specially trained Ambassadors being readily available in the same place every day to support our school community. That is why the scheme is so vital to The Cottesloe School. Initially started as the Mind UK Peer Mentor scheme we are now fully able to deliver the whole package in-house.

So the cycle of recruiting the Ambassadors started again in September. We now welcome to the team Sonny, Ben, Lottie, Scarlett, Erin, Hollie, Harvey and Eloise. They join our fourteen existing Year 13 Ambassadors.

All Ambassadors have been trained on all aspects of Safeguarding, confidentiality, listening and empathy skills. How to initiate conversations and Protective Behaviours training has also been given.

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors are Sixth Form students at The Cottesloe School, and are all friendly and approachable.

Each student has an area they feel they could help with, having had first hand experience.



**If you would like to talk to one of our Wellbeing Ambassadors, please speak to someone in TEAM Hub, or ask your Form Tutor or Head of Year for a referral.**

**‘I love making a positive impact on someone’s day’ Ben Year 12**

**‘I love that I am able to help the Cottesloe community!’  
Eloise Year 12**

Taking the Wellbeing message school wide, this month 45 students attended the Bucks Mental Health Summit. Students represented the voice of the Anti Bullying Ambassadors, the Wellbeing Ambassadors and the LBGQT+ community. In addition nominated students from Year 8 and Year 10 attended.



Oxford Mental Health supported the day's event - with UNLOC staff traveling across the UK to deliver the Summit in our school. UNLOC believes in unlocking the potential of every young person to be a changemaker, it is a leading non-profit organisations co-founded in 2012 by two 16 year olds desperate to support the youth of their community. We are so thankful that we were able to welcome to The Cottesloe School four leading organisations that shared their knowledge and listened to the feedback that our students shared with them. Our students had a voice and they used it. We are so proud of their knowledge and their willingness to participate in the day.

<https://www.unloc.org.uk/>







**“I loved it so much! I loved how we learnt so much and we got to do fantastic activities. The games were fun and we got to learn about new people”. Ruby Year 9**



# Art Studio@Cottesloe

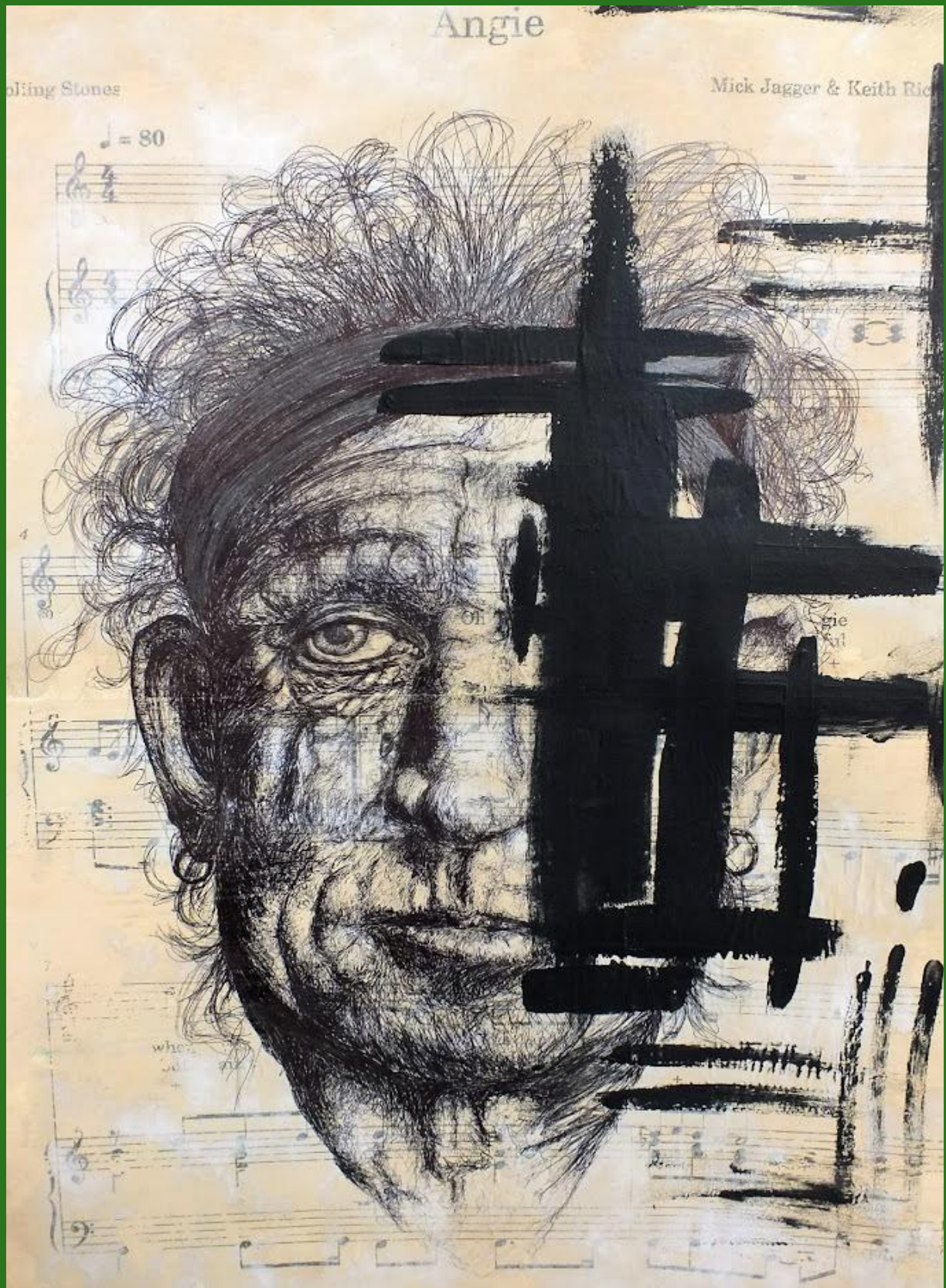




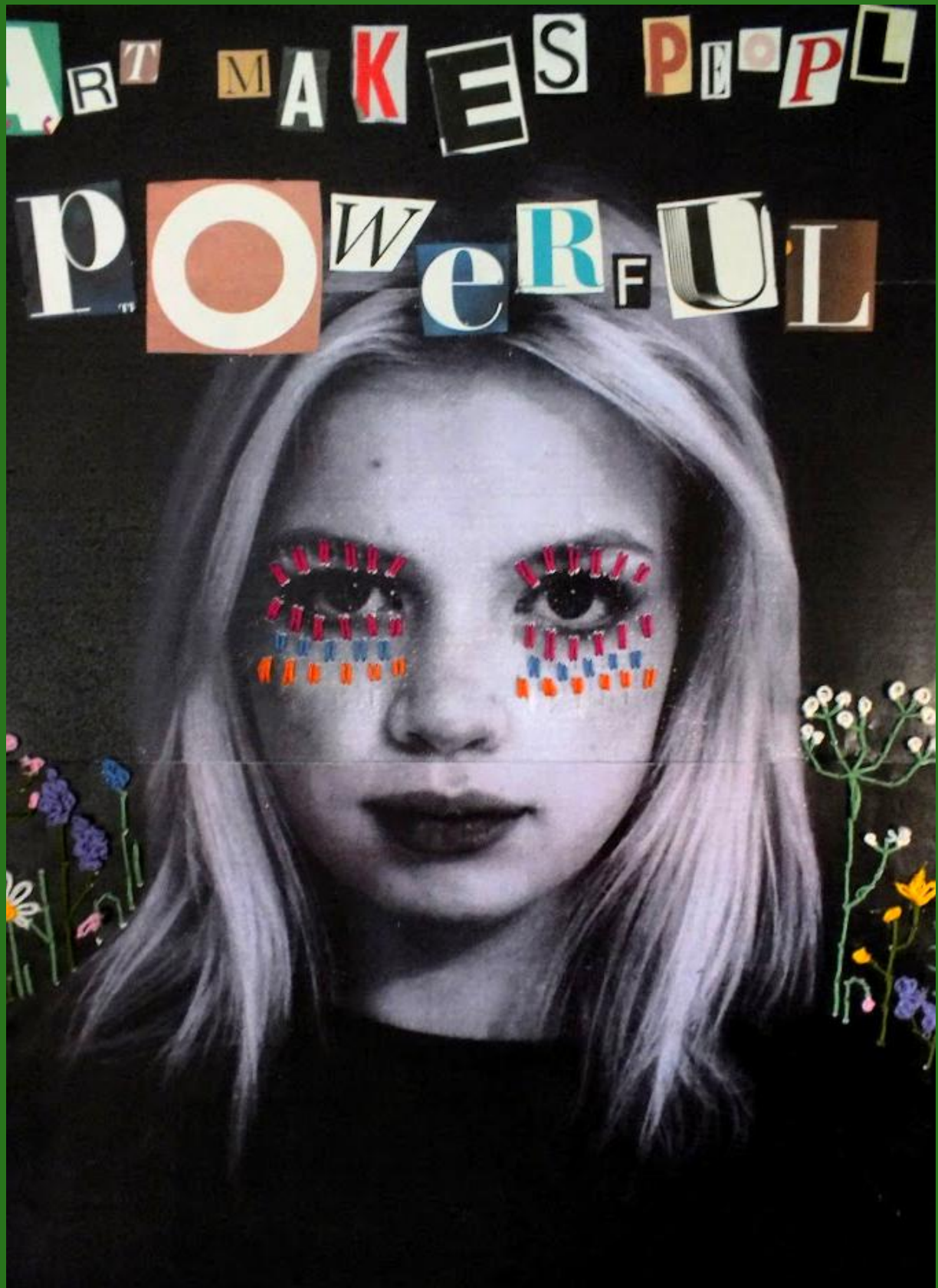
Nataniel  
Year 11



Emily  
Year 11



Millie  
Year 11



Poppy  
Year 11



Frida  
Year 11



Florence  
Year 11





Emilia  
Year 11

We hope you enjoyed the third  
edition of Prepare, Aspire, Succeed  
Newsletter



*Wishing you and your  
families a wonderful  
Christmas!*

