



Leehurst pupils can choose their subject

language and a humanity at GCSE, they are often left with a choice of only two or three subjects which are not always guaranteed with inflexible blocking of subjects.

That is why at Leehurst Swan, we have taken a fresh approach; maximising choice and creating GCSE pathways, alongside the compulsory core subjects of English language, English literature and mathematics.

Research has shown that motivation and well-being in young people are related to whether or not they have opportunities to be autonomous and have a say in the direction their lives are taking when making important academic choices.

At Leehurst, we are determined that young

people should choose subjects in which they are emotionally invested and, most importantly, that inspire them! Students can select seven, from 17 optional GCSE subjects that are not limited by option blocks and allow them to choose any combination from four sciences; four creatives; three languages; three humanities alongside additional choices of business studies, design & technology and PE.

We believe that our bespoke, 'find your voice' approach to GCSE empowers pupils to take ownership of their education and control of their future, increasing their chances of success and enabling them to

dreams.

Double click to zoom

Choosing GCSE options should be an exciting stage in a teenager's life: a time when they get to, perhaps for the first time, make decisions about their future.

With many schools insisting that their pupils take two or three sciences, a

St Margaret's host a mini Eisteddfod



Talented pupils at St Margaret's School in Calne were able to enjoy their moment in the spotlight despite Wiltshire's biggest music and drama festival becoming a casualty of Covid-19.

Devises Eisteddfod normally attracts hundreds of children from schools across the county. Hilary Gibbin, head of performing arts decided they would stage their own mini version of the event and record the performances for parents to enjoy on the school's website.

• www.stmargaretsprep.org.uk

New head joins Bristol Steiner School

In January, Bristol Steiner School welcomed Nicola Forder to her post as head teacher of the Redland-based school. She is currently completing a master's degree in leadership and management in education and is a trained practitioner in 'attachment aware' approaches that inform children's development.

• www.bristolsteinerschool.org



The Pinewood way...

You can take a child out of Pinewood but you cannot take Pinewood out of a child. That has been the general consensus as children have risen to the challenge of the latest lockdown. The positivity, creativity and sense of adventure that encapsulates the Pinewood spirit has been clear to see as the children approached their home learning.

The Pinewood virtual learning programme was developed at speed in spring last year and provided a thorough and comprehensive programme of learning for the children, ensuring that they felt both supported through the lockdown and confident that they were not falling behind on their studies.

The school has further enhanced the programme to include an even greater proportion of live lessons and the inclusion of many extra-curricular activities.

Be it writing articles or creating video features for the pupil-led newsletter, exploring the countryside near their home on cross-country runs or improving their art skills, the children have been having a go at it.

Headmaster, Neal Bailey is focused on ensuring that the children do not feel tied to a screen. "The teachers have worked hard to create a programme that whilst still delivering on academic requirements, also takes children away from their screens throughout the day".

• www.pinewoodschool.co.uk



There is more to debate at Downside

The Downside Abingdon Society is the oldest debating society of any school in the country. It provides a forum for pupils to discuss topical and pertinent issues at an intellectual level, and is ideal preparation for any aspiring university candidate.

The society is currently available for fourth to sixth form pupils, however, this year, younger pupils have the chance to join the Junior Abingdon Society.

The benefits of debating, not only in terms of pure academics, but also in young people's engagement with the wider world are numerous: debating can help to improve critical thinking skills, boost self-confidence, develop complex cognitive abilities and increase information retention.



Supporting our pupils to have a voice and truly listening to what they say is a key part of life at Downside.

We believe that all our pupils should have a platform from which to express themselves and to stand up for what they believe in. Debating is just one way of how this can happen.

Abingdon and Junior Abingdon are two of more than 100 co-curricular options at Downside which complement the academic curriculum.

The co-curricular activities are varied: from academic societies and outreach to outdoor learning, performing arts and sport, meaning that there is something for everyone to get involved with.

• www.downside.co.uk