

ELLESMERE EXCLUSIVE



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Inside Out 2: The movie Trailer.

Well, it’s official! Disney are releasing their second installment of the Inside Out movie franchise.

The sequel of the iconic movie is set to release in June 2024 and will introduce new characters such as Anxiety. The film will be centred around Riley as she battles her way through her gruelling years as a teenager as she discovers new emotions which will be talked about later. The film’s predicesor Inside Out (2015) follows Riley who’s emotions are controlled by a group of emotions (Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust) as they try to control Riley’s mind and thoughts during her childhood. When a plan fails, Joy and Sadness must try to find their way back to their HQ.

Amy Poehler is set to return as the voice of Joy, the fun team leader of the group, alongside new actors like Maya Hawke ,who played Robin in the hit Netflix TV series Stranger Things, who is set to voice the role of Anxiety - one of the group’s newest members.

The motion picture will be directed by the amazing Kesley Mann who will be joined by the incredible Pete Docter, the film’s executive producer, who is responsible for writing brilliant movies like: Up, Inside Out, WALL-E and Soul, all created by Disney Pixar.



|Coming up...

WRITER’S NAME: SAM HENN

The film’s teaser trailer shows construction workers breaking down the HQ in order to add a new panel in, which the gang soon find out is orange. Standing behind them is the team’s newest installment, Anxiety (voiced by Maya Hawke). Little do the crew know, Anxiety is only the start of a whole group of new emotions including: Ennui (a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction), Embarrassment and Envy. These new emotions will tie into the theme of adolescence perfectly.



I am really excited for this terrific new motion picture and am really looking forward to this addition to the already-brilliant movie franchise and feel it will be a terrific opportunity for viewers to connect even further with these beloved characters. I personally feel that the future of Disney Pixar is looking bright.

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Sam Henn – Writer
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EASTER SPECIAL

Easter Egg Ranking

WRITER’S NAMES: MAE BAXTER, ABIGAIL MA, ZOE FINNEGAN, SAM HENN, ERIN WONG

What is your favourite part of Easter?
I can guarantee that most people in response would say “The Easter Eggs.”
These sweet treats have become a traditional staple of this holiday. During this time, you will see aisles full of them in stores, wide ranges to counter everyone’s taste. In Christianity, the day was dedicated to observing the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter eggs themselves are a symbol of the Resurrection. Just as Jesus rose from the tomb, the egg symbolized new life emerging from the eggshell.
To celebrate this long-standing holiday, our newspaper team tested a number of different easter eggs and ranked them on a scale of 1-10. This was to see which was the most popular among the group. Here are the results:

Names	Creme egg	Kinder mini egg	Maltesers	Dairy milk	M&S chocolate egg	White chocolate
Mae	6	10	6	7	8	7
Abigail	6	7	9	7	7	2
Zoe	6	9	7	7	8	6
Erin	5	7	5	7	8	7
Sam	7	9	6	7	5	3



EASTER EGG RANKING

- 1. Kinder mini egg.
- 2. M&S chocolate egg
- 3. Dairy milk
- 4. Maltesers
- 5. Crème Egg
- 6. White chocolate



REVIEW

Lessons In Chemistry Review

WRITER’S NAMES: ERIN WONG

Adapted from the novel of the same name, the first episode of Lessons in Chemistry was released on October 13th, 2023. It once again successfully resonates with the audience by discussing major issues in society such as sexism and racism. Lessons in Chemistry is about a female chemist called Elizabeth Zott, who works in an all-male team at Hastings Research Institute in the 1950’s. She faces overt discrimination because of her gender. The head of chemistry at the Institute, Dr. Donatti, bans Elizabeth from continuing her research of abiogenesis. The only solution is to work with Calvin Evans, who has the authority to continue her research. They then fall in love and develop a romantic relationship. However, after she gets pregnant, she is forced to resign and leave her research behind.

“You will learn different people’s perspectives on life.”

Exhausted and worn out from looking after her daughter, Elizabeth seeks help from her neighbour, Harriet, a black woman who always speaks up for her community. They both find similarities in their stories and quickly become friends. Elizabeth then gains an opportunity by chance to host Supper at Six, a programme where she teaches her audience how to cook. The programme goes viral as it influences women across the nation to stand up for themselves.
The show stars Brie Larson, who I think is the perfect choice for the character Elizabeth. Her expressions and tone when speaking demonstrate how independent and strong she is, similar to her character in the novel.

Can you imagine how difficult it was for her to face all this disapproval and criticism from society?

While watching the show, you will learn and understand different people’s perspectives on life. Some of the lines are so impactful that they will make you put your laptop down or turn off your TV!

The show’s final episode was released on 22nd November 2023. Due to the popularity of the novel, the readers and fans are thrilled to watch it being visualised. It received nominations for two Golden Globe Awards: Best Limited or Anthology Series and Best Actress in a miniseries for Larson. Her chemistry with the other actors in this show makes it even more emotional, engaging and captivating. The narration of Elizabeth Zott and Calvin Evans’ relationship is also a highlight of the show; their pure love for each other is extremely touching in a plethora of ways.

I would personally recommend Lessons in Chemistry to anyone interested in history and different issues that exist in the world. It’s thought-provoking and motivating. With only 8 episodes in total, you will unconsciously finish the entire show in one day! I would also suggest reading the original novel after watching the show, so that you can see the differences in presentation between the two.



GLOBAL CELEBRATION

International Women’s Day

The fight for world-wide equality and diversity is still ongoing, perhaps now more than ever.

WRITER’S NAME: MAE BAXTER

“Imagine a gender equal world. A world free of stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that’s diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated. Together we can forge women’s equality.”
This is a quote from the International Women’s Day website, a world-wide platform which encourages people from all across the globe to gather together to raise awareness and educate people on issues females still face today, but to also celebrate and commemorate our differences.

Friday, 8th March marked the annual holiday which aims to inform everyone on the many issues women face on a day-to-day basis. This includes, violence, abuse, sexist comments and much, much more. This year’s theme is to “Inspire Inclusion.” The focus of this particular theme is to educate and influence others to see the value women have in our society, to include others and build a sense of belonging and empowerment throughout the world.

“There is still an ongoing fight for women’s basic human rights and needs.”

The first International Women’s Day was held in March 1911; this year marks well over a century of history and change. Much has changed since that first year. For example, in 1900, American women could not vote, serve on juries or run for elective office. As we know today, this is not the case.
Around 109 years ago, the First World War broke out. This caused many women to take up once fully male-dominated jobs. They were paid barely anything compared to the men who had worked for the same job beforehand. In fear of females taking over the work industry, hundreds of thousands were sacked and for years later remained unemployed.
In 2024, many of these changes are apparent, but there are still ongoing problems that demand equality in our world. These are problems we see on a daily basis: online or face to face.



A march in Manchester, spreading the message about International Women’ Day

In 2005, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) published its first report on the global status of women’s representation in news. They showed that women make up 17% of the news on radio, television and in newspapers. In that 17%, more than 75% of them appear in stories covering health and social issues and entertainment, little to none featuring in business and politics.

Media is the most powerful force influencing the way we perceive the world that surrounds us. By underrepresentation of women and portraying them in a stereotypical and limiting way, the media presents an incomplete and distorted reality. Our generation and the ones to follow will grow up thinking the women can’t work for their own business or have any say about governments and politics.

There is still so much to be done to successfully reach equality all around, and International Women’s Day hopes to ensure that we know this. However, there is still an ongoing fight for our basic human rights and needs. We have not reached full inclusion, even though many people may say so. The facts and statistics above are advocates of that.

Short timeline of the women’s rights movement:

- 1912 – Women gained access to most government administration positions.
- 1913 – Women gained the right to vote
- 1927 – Women were placed on equal footing with men in regard to divorce and the custody of children.
- 1952 - Full rights to serve in all official capacities were granted.

World-renowned journalist, feminist and activist, Gloria Steinem, explains: “The story of women’s struggle for equality belong to no single feminist nor to any one organization but to the collective efforts of all who care about human rights.”
Organizations, groups and individuals can all play a part to ‘Inspire Inclusion’, whether that be at work or at home or a post on social media. Even though International Women’s Day is only one day, that does not mean the principles do not apply to everyday life.

To truly include women means to openly embrace their diversity of race, age, ability, religion, body image and how they identify. Women must be included in all fields of endeavours.
International Women’s Day educates and teaches people about the difficulties of being a woman in patriarchal societies, whilst also celebrating and spreading the diversity and inclusivity all across the globe.

Vibrant, Inclusive, Proud

INTERVIEW

Mr Ross Interview

WRITER’S NAME: MAE BAXTER AND ABIGAIL MA

Mr Ross is the headteacher at our school, leading and supporting every member of staff and every pupil to get the best education possible whilst at Ellesmere. Every day, he works tirelessly to ensure our school runs the way it should, so our newspaper team thought it would be interesting to interview him and ask him about his role as the headteacher and what that includes, but also a deep dive into what he likes to do outside of the school.

What is your favourite part of Ellesmere?

“My favourite part is almost certainly the relationships between the students and the staff. I have worked in a lot of schools, but this is the one where staff have the most respect for children and the children have much trust in the staff.”

“I’d like there to be even more support for children that need it. [I believe] that’s something we could improve on.”

What does your role of headteacher include?

“That’s the brilliant thing about being the headteacher, it includes so many things: doing duties, looking after children, looking at the way forward for teachers, students and the school overall. It also involves recruiting and keeping staff, sometimes disciplining staff but not very often! Looking at all the students who are coming in, making sure we’ve got enough money to pay for everything we need to and making sure the timetable works properly. But out of everything my main role is making sure that every child that comes into this school gets the best education possible.”

What do you like to do in your spare time?

“I like watching films and walking in the countryside. I’ve got a grandchild and four children, so I do lots of stuff with them. I also keep fish; I’ve got three quite large fish tanks at home. I have games night with my friends where we get together to play all kinds of board games and card games.”

In response, we asked for their names.

“At the moment I’m very into Lake Malawi and they’re breeding at the moment, so I’ve got a lot of fish babies.”

What is your funniest/ favourite memories when teaching?

“So many; I once burnt a whole right through a teacher’s desk in my third week of teaching. I’ve got so many memories of experiments gone wrong! I once burnt through fifteen people’s blazers in one particular science experiment.

I remember building and flying a rocket over my first school which we made from a drinking fountain bottle. It went over a 5-story building which was really cool, and the kids all loved it!

Of course, one of my funniest memories is watching the head of physics hand glide off the school roof. It was hilarious!

However, there’s nothing better than when a kid comes back years after leaving and tells you how successful they’ve been.”



What was your route to getting where you are today?

“Lots and lots of hard work. To begin with, I didn’t want to be a headteacher and had no idea what I wanted to do. I was actually a restaurant manager for 5 years before I started teaching. So, just working extremely hard for many years got me where I am today.”

Going forward, what changes would you like to see in the school?

“I’d like to see a bigger building because we’ve got a lot of children here at the moment, and even more on a waiting list. We’ve always got double the number of applicants to places. So, to see the school extended would be brilliant, which may happen.

I’d like there to be even more support for children that need it. More help on mental health and awareness because that’s something a lot of our students may be concerned about. That’s something we could improve on. Especially being hit by the pandemic at such a young age, we are still seeing the effects of that. I’m always looking to strengthen our mental health support.

As I’ve talked with many students, I still want a farm. Chickens, maybe a goat. Kids love all that stuff, and it’s also extremely useful and educational. Maybe in the future.”

What’s your advice for Y9’s choosing their options?

“Do what interests you the most. Everyone has to do the core subjects, and if you’re desperate to go to university, you should probably do a language. Other than that, do what sparks an interest in you. GCSEs are hard and the step up from Y9 to Y10 is big and when it gets to Y11, you have a lot of work to do, so if you don’t like it, it’ll be a drag so you have to do what excites you.”

Expanding on our question, we asked him what options he chose when he was in school.

“I did English, maths and French in Y10, I then did German which was a terrible mistake I hated every minute of it. I did geography which was actually quite interesting, and we did a good field trip at the end. I also did tech and triple science.”

If you weren’t a headteacher, what would you want to be?

“I’d really like to work in a bookshop, I think that would be really cool. I’ve had many other jobs; I’ve worked as a restaurant manager, receptionist, a bar, and a band, so any of those too.”

Mr Ross will continue to inspire both pupils and staff as the headteacher of our school.

What’s your message to students?

“Work hard and be nice. Be the best you can be!”

From this interview, we have listened to some hilarious moments in his teaching career and learnt what he would do to improve our school. Mr Ross will continue to lead Ellesmere to success and victory, whilst inspiring and taking the time out of his already busy day to check in with teachers and students alike.

Vibrant, Inclusive, Proud

GLOBAL CELEBRATIONS

Ramadan Mubarak!

WRITER’S NAME: ABIGAIL MA

“Ramadan Mubarak” is a phrase you may be familiar with and may have heard recently, with its literal meaning being ‘Happy Ramadan’. It’s estimated that around 1.8 billion Muslims around the World will celebrate Ramadan in some form this year. For Muslims, it is a month of reflection, community and coming together with family, friends and fellow Muslims. This year, Ramadan started on the 10th of March, and it will last until April 9th. However, the date of this religious celebration differs every year since Islam follows a calendar based on the cycle of the moon - a new moon first appearing in the sky marks the start of this holy month.

The month of Ramadan is a crucial part of Islam, and its traditions are practiced everyday by Muslims during this time. Many people are aware of Muslims fasting during Ramadan but there are many misconceptions surrounding it; many Muslims fast (meaning not eating or drinking) between the hours of sunrise and sunset but they do usually have two main meals not during this period of time. ‘Suhoor’ is the meal usually eaten just before dawn and ‘Iftar’ being the meal after sunset.

“It’s a month where we are able to build our knowledge of Islam and better ourselves for the coming year.”

Sawm, one of the five pillars of Islam, which are the core principles of the Islamic religion, states that, if able to, a Muslim should fast during Ramadan. Fasting allows Muslims to devote themselves to their fate and encourage spiritual reflection on both their own lives and of those less fortunate. In addition to this there are also a plethora of other actions that Muslims try to adhere to, such as ‘Zakat’ - another pillar of Islam - which involves helping those in need by giving to charity. With Ramadan being a time for prayer, benevolence and charity, most Muslims try to give up bad habits; these could include more personal acts but also general things such as drinking, lying or smoking.

This time has a sacred significance in the Islamic religion since it is during this month, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, that Muslims believe the first verses of the Qur’an - Islam’s Holy Book - were first revealed to the Prophet Muhammed by Angel Gabriel in A.D. 610. Within Islam the Prophet Muhammed is believed to be the last Prophet, who received and shared Allah’s teachings after the Qur’an - the direct teachings of Allah - was shown to him. The word ‘Ramadan’ itself can be translated from Arabic to ‘scorching heat’ or ‘dryness’ since originally the month occurred at the hottest time of the year, but the calendar changes have resulted in its’ rotation of seasons over time.

The five pillars of Islam:

- 1. Shahada (faith)
- 2. Salah (prayer)
- 3. Sawm (fasting)
- 4. Zakat (charity)
- 5. Hajj (pilgrimage)



To mark the end of Ramadan there is a festival called Eid-al-Fitr and is estimated to be celebrated on April 10th this year. Not only do Muslims celebrate breaking their fast but they also thank Allah for the strength he provided them within the past month. It’s one of the main religious holidays in Islam, Eid-al-Adha being the other, and it’s common for large groups of families and friends to gather to share meals. Muslims will adorn themselves in their finest clothes - typically, the traditional salwar kameez -, go to special services at mosques and also give money to charity.

Since its’ origin in the 7th century, Ramadan has been a time for millions of Muslims to connect with others and their religions. Many Muslims within our school have been fasting and I spoke to one Muslim in our school to find out about what Ramadan means to them and their favourite aspects. “In my eyes Ramadan is a month for spiritual growth and connecting with Allah alongside learning self-control. It is a month where we are able to build our knowledge of Islam and better ourselves for the coming month. We are urged to do as many acts of worship as possible in this month as our rewards are doubled at this time. My favourite aspects of Ramadan include the breaking of fast, also known as Iftar, not only because I’m able to eat again but because it’s such a rewarding feeling for lasting that long without food or water. Another is the cleansing of our souls as this truly helps to strengthen our faith and make us a better person by putting ourselves in the shoes of the less fortunate and seeing what they go through every day. Lastly, of course, I really look forward to Eid-al-Fitr as it’s the celebration of a month of fasting and when families meet up to have meals together and celebrate.”



EID MUBARAK!

INTERVIEW

Mrs Harrison's interview

WRITER’S NAME: ERIN WONG

Mrs Harrison joined Ellesmere as the head of English last year and has already made such a huge impact on both the English department and the school as a whole. This half term, our newspaper team interviewed Mrs Harrison as many students were curious about her teaching experiences and what she does outside of school.

When we asked her what inspired her to become an English teacher, she answered, “I’ve always loved English. I’ve always loved reading and writing. It comes quite naturally to me. But I didn’t automatically want to become an English teacher. I got a degree in English first, and then worked in an office which I found a bit boring. Soon after, my brother was then qualified as a music teacher at a school. He thought I might enjoy teaching and therefore, he led me in that direction. I’ve been doing this since the middle of the 1990s.” She also mentions that her brother was her biggest inspiration. “In terms of teaching, it was my brother who encouraged me. He’s almost 70 and he is still teaching in a classroom. He refuses to retire.”

“I used to teach A-level language and I absolutely loved it; it’s so interesting.”

We then asked Mrs Harrison what book she recommended for students to read, “Ultimately, I would say, find a genre or author that appeals to you. I wouldn’t say read this or you have to read that. For me, I love the novels by George Orwell. He’s one of my favourite writers. I love 1984 and Animal Farm. But I have such a wide taste. It’s very hard to pick my favourite author or genre. I am always discovering new books.” Revising can be a stressful and tiring process; therefore we asked Mrs Harrison for some tips when it comes to revision - especially for any Y11 students, “English language and English literature are very different. For English literature, because we do a lot of poems and texts, like Romeo and Juliet, you have to make sure you’re familiar with the plots, characters and themes. If you know them, you will get a massive head start in the exam. For English language, it is about the exam techniques and learning how to answer the questions in certain ways. Also, always pay attention to your spelling, punctuation and grammar."

MUSIC EXCLUSIVE

The BRITs: Historic Moments

WRITER’S NAME: ZOE FINNEGAN

The Brit Awards are an award show for people to receive a physical token of their hard work, to be put out there into the world and showcase their talent. People are recognised for what they can do, however the show has an infamous history for troublesome guests, iconic rivalry and historical firsts, and these are a few of the many examples:

1. Little Mix Make History

In 2021, Little Mix made Brits history by becoming the first ever girl group to win the “Best British group” award. After 10 years in the music industry, they finally received the recognition they deserve. During their speech, they thanked many other girl groups that inspired and helped them in their journey to success, including bands such as Spice Girls and Girls Aloud, along with giving credits to their former bandmate, Jesy Nelson. This win marked a memorable and important moment in history, that changed the way the Brits awards would forever be perceived. This win broke another barrier in the battle against sexism and the fight for diversity.

2. Oasis vs Blur

The famous feud in the 1990’s, known as “The Battle of Britpop,” was mainly started due to the tension created at the 1995 Brit Awards. Blur was breaking records, earning 4 awards in one night, which was unheard of at the time. After winning these awards, they left Oasis with an unsatisfactory singular award. The well-known arrogance of the Gallagher brothers led to many interviews filled with distaste for the southern band, and sparked the conflict between the two, along with the split in the media of who was better: Blur or Oasis? This argument still goes on today, but we can trace it back to this iconic evening.

3. 1996 Michael Jackson Interruption

In 1996, Michael Jackson decided to do his first and last Brits performance. He performed his track “Earth Song” but was disrupted by a member of the audience who found the act “boring” and was “upset at his attempt to make himself look Christ-like.” Jarvis Cocker, lead singer of Britpop band Pulp, had snuck up onto the stage in order to crash the gig, disturbing Jackson’s set. Jarvis was later arrested, but was soon released without charge, and this is an example of the controversial and memorable altercations that have taken place at the Brit Awards.

Many of us were also curious about Mrs Harrison’s hobbies and what she does outside of school, and she responded with, “I got into running. Never in a million years did I think I would get into running. I used to think I would never do a 5k. And now I’m doing 10.4k! In the nice weather or in the summer months, I like to ride a bike. I like going to the countryside and going for a walk. I enjoy spending lots of time with my family, and socialising. I also like watching Netflix series. I try whatever is on and get recommendations.”

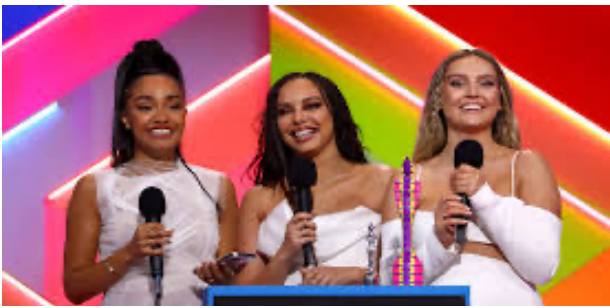
Starting from Y10, English will be separated into two segments: English language and English literature. We were wondering which one Mrs Harrison prefers teaching, “I think I would say English literature. I used to teach A-level language and I absolutely loved it; it was so interesting. You learn loads!”

“As long as you’re happy and have found something that fulfils you, that’s all that matters.”

Mrs Harrison has been teaching for around 30 years, so we asked her what her favourite memory when teaching was, “There was one boy when I had been teaching for only three to four weeks. He asked me if I wanted to fight with him. He was really angry and aggressive towards me. But I found out that there were all sorts of issues surrounding this boy. The headteacher told me that he had been absent for a long time, and this was his first day back, so he found it difficult. But the boy was always nice after that and he also apologised.”

Finally, we asked Mrs Harrison what her message to the students at Ellesmere is, “Just do your personal best. That’s all you can do. We are all different. Some of us are very academic and have the natural ability. Some people find it very difficult and see themselves as a failure. But no one is a failure. There is always something for everyone. Some people are just late developers. If things don’t go right, it’s not the end of the world. But as long as you are happy and find something that fulfils you, that’s all that matters.”

Little Mix receiving “Best British Group Award in 2021



4. 2023 “Best Artist” category

In 2022, in place of “Best British Female Artist” and “Best British Male Artist” categories, was the “Best British Artist” category, created to promote inclusivity often found in this event. In the first year it was introduced, Adele was the winner, however in its second year, the ceremony faced some backlash. Fans discovered that not a single woman was voted for the category and began to attack the decision through media. This mishap was then blamed on the lack of “commercially successful releases in 2022 compared to those by men”, and it was revealed that the longlist of eligible artists consisted of 12 women out of the 71 chosen, making up only 17%. Because of this, it made many wonder, should the individual categories be reintroduced?

“... A new level of captivation to award shows.”

5. Disruptive Hosts

Throughout the history of the Brits, there have been many unbelievable moments, some even sparked by the hosts themselves. Creating conflicts by insulting guests, the hosts have been well known to be unprofessional at times. Starting with 2012, as Adele was accepting her Best British Album award, she began to overlap into Blur’s performance time. Unfortunately, for host James Corden, him rushing her and kicking her off before she had time to finish resulted in lots of backlash, many believing he was being disrespectful. Another instance occurred in 2008, when couple Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne had been the elected hosts. After a seemingly unargumentative evening, it took a turn as Sharon Osbourne began to loose her temper with Vic Reeves, insulting him and throwing accusations.

The occasionally unhinged and overall entertaining ceremonies are constantly bringing up new and unpredictable issues every year, amusing fans and bringing a new level of captivation to award shows.

INTERVIEW

Mr Davis Interview

WRITER’S NAME: MAE BAXTER

Ellesmere Park High School offers many opportunities to counter for all of the student’s interests. This includes academic subjects like Maths or Science, but also the creative ones like Art and Drama. Our school is known for its incredible creative arts department, and that is clear in the live lounges on Fridays, the amazing lessons and skills taught in the classrooms and all the trips we go on.

Mr Davies is an art teacher, who not only embraces these imaginative skills but also teaches students everyday a plethora of different things, ranging from learning about certain artists like Vincent van Gough or being practical and making abstract work. He inspires students to be innovative, and independent, pushing them to eventually create art pieces they’re incredibly proud of. In this interview, we will be asking him about his route to getting where he is now, and what his favourite moments have been whilst being here at EPHS.

“[Art] is ultimately quite relaxing which is really important in your GCSE’s because you can have a break.”

Our first question was: why did you choose to teach art here at Ellesmere?
“Originally, when I finished my A-levels, I wanted to be a biology teacher, but then I chickened out of going to university and had a year to find myself. At that point, I decided I wanted to do art.

Whilst I was in University, I took lots of tour groups around the campus. I was quite good at showing them around and teaching them what University was truly like. That’s when I thought: ‘I’m going to be a teacher.’
I went to be trained as a teacher in Oasis in Salford and started looking for a job during lockdown. Ellesmere came up, so I applied for it and had an interview with Mr Gordon and Miss Barker. I’d interviewed for a few jobs that day and was insistent they didn’t want me. But surprisingly, they were the first to call me back, and I joined and that’s when I started here, almost 4 years ago.”

We followed up with the question: why is art an integral and crucial part of a student’s curriculum?
“I think art is *the* most important subject, alongside English, Maths and Science because these days a lot of people go on about the EBACC and STEM subjects, but if you look at the industries in the UK now, the creative ones are one of the biggest. Most of the jobs involve being creative and the skills employers look for are skills you get in an art or photography environment. You get to learn more, think creatively, make up your own ideas and start going on your own personal journey. Ultimately, it’s quite relaxing which is really important in your GCSEs because you can have a break. Schools are recognising more now more than ever how important it is and we’re very lucky here - that’s why I love Ellesmere - because a lot of schools don’t put as much investment into art, music and drama whereas here we’ve got the best art and music department I’ve seen in any schools so we’re extremely lucky.”

Facts and statistics proving Mr Davis’s point that the creative industry is one of the largest in the country. There were over 3.12 million jobs in 2017, and that has only increased.



There are a wide range of subjects to teach, so we asked: If you weren’t teaching art, what subject would you teach?
“I love science. Art and science are opposites really, but I loved science in school and was really good at it, especially biology and chemistry. So, I was going to go to university and do it, but I was a bit nervous when I was 18 and wasn’t ready. However, I loved chemistry and loved mixing all the chemicals. As much as I hated maths, I loved formulas at the time, and I liked understanding the periodic table, so I was really into that. Plus, I see what you get from other science teachers, and I think it looks really enjoyable. So, it would probably be science. Also, I love food tech and went on my teacher training as a food tech teacher and enjoyed it so probably food tech as well because it’s very practical.”

We then asked: Who are your greatest inspirations?
“In Year 9, you do a project in surrealism so it’s all about artists that are a bit weird and wacky, so I absolutely loved Salvador Dali and I really loved Vincent van Gogh. I like the artists who’ve had a bit of trauma in their life. If you interview Mr Gordan, he will say the opposite. He loves all the paintings of ships and moody skies, but I honestly love the wacky ones and the abstract ones!”

What do you like doing outside of school?
“The one thing I’d say about being an art teacher is that I don’t make much art at home anymore because when you do 5 hours of art in school, it kind of takes out of doing it at home. I also like to meet up with my friends and go to the cinema to see all the new films. I also love going travelling, going on holiday, seeing new places. Every time we’ve got a holiday, I try to go somewhere new.”

This sparked the question: what kind of films do you like?
“I love a sci fi film, I can’t wait to see Dune that’s just come out. I also love space films – I geek out at them. Or (I get called an old person because of it), I love watching period dramas such as Downtown Abbey. So, space, period dramas and sci fi films are what I enjoy most.”

In a couple of weeks, Y9 students are picking their options, so we thought it was important to ask: why should students pick art as a GCSE?
“There are 2 main reasons.
1. The creative skills you get because that’s really important for jobs. Employers want to see that. Art is a super good subject for that, it’s fun, it’s very practical. That’s why I think everyone should choose either art or photography, so you’re not sat in a classroom all the time.
2. You learn so many things. You’ll get better at drawing and painting and sculptures. And you can apply that to almost anything.”

“[School] is an amazing opportunity to do new things.”

We wanted to find out what his highlights of his time at EPHS are: What’s your funniest or favourite memory from teaching?
“Teachers have to be professional all the time, but there is the odd occasion where someone falls over or does something silly and I can’t help but laugh. I actually have to walk away because I can’t stop laughing.
However, the funniest memory whilst teaching is not the students, but us teachers. Sometimes we might make a mistake and you don’t notice it, or we’ve said the wrong thing or on occasions done a demonstration a bit wrong and me and Mr Gordon or me and Mrs Ayre will have a bit of a laugh or joke about it.
I remember once me and Mr Gordan were teaching the exact same lesson to Year 8’s and we looked at the outcomes at the end and they were so different, and we couldn’t work out why. We’re both art teachers so we both have completely different ways of teaching, but it’s the memories with the teachers which are hilarious.
My favourite is when a kid overcomes not being able to do something, especially at GCSE. I won’t let you do anything you’re comfortable in so you will always be challenged but at the end of it you will love it and be proud and want to take a picture to show whoever you’ve got at home and that’s the best thing about teaching.”

Finally, what’s your message to students?
“My message is to make the most and enjoy school because if you ask any adult, they will say school is an amazing opportunity to do new things. I wish I’d taken every opportunity whilst I was in school. I’m friends with Mr Parsons and if I get to sit and listen to him teach English, I end up wishing I’d paid more attention is my English lessons. I go into a science class and see all the things you’ve learnt, and I’m amazed. Ultimately, my message would be to take the most out of your school life because you learn an awful lot and if you don’t take it, you’ll regret it later on.”

Our school wouldn’t be what it is today without teachers like Mr Davies to show students that school isn’t just about siting in the classroom but being creative and developing and experimenting with new ideas. Art is crucial to our everyday life, and we see it on a daily basis, and this interview shows us how truly important it is for a student’s curriculum and why it is so helpful for us in the future.

SCHOOL EVENTS

Options Evening

WRITER’S NAME: ABIGAIL MA

Starting from Year 9, students will be able to choose some of the subjects they do and don’t want to do and therefore what they will study at GCSE level. So, on the 21st of March, Year Nine options evening was held. Options evening is an event with the aim of informing students and their guardians about the options process, the different routes you can follow, and information about each subject. There were tables set up for each subject, each with a plethora of information about what the course will entail, skills you both will need and acquire and future career opportunities using that subject.

“Think about subjects [you] enjoy and what [you] are strong at.” ~ Mr Farmer

Choosing your GCSE subjects can be a confusing time, so we asked some teachers at the evening what their advice is for any Year 9’s. Ms Ayre’s advice for any students wanting to pick art was, “You should take it even if you feel that your skills are not up to par and the reason for that is because we will teach you and shape you into autonomous and independent artists so that when you leave school - no matter what career you go into, whether that is a creative career or a non-creative one - you will have skills like problem solving, innovation and creativity that you can easily apply to any career path. It is a heavily saturated market of people with degrees, so if you have a creative background, you are more likely to be employed, no matter what job you go for because people want creative problem solvers. Everyone’s got a degree but not everybody has a creative brain.” Mr Davies also added, “It is the number one skill that is rated in the 2023 employer's guidebook, to have a creative mindset. It is something that employers want.”

Mr Farmer, careers advisor at Ellesmere, was also at the event and shared his advice to students and carers about thinking further ahead to things like college, university, apprenticeships and jobs. In response to being asked to share some advice for any Year 9’s he said, “I would advise students to think about subjects they enjoy and what subjects they are strong at. I would tell them to start thinking about what they might like to do in the future and if they’ve got career ideas, what subjects might link to those ideas. Don’t choose the subjects that all your friends are doing, and I would tell them not to choose subjects based on who their favourite teacher is because that might not be the teacher they get.”



In addition to giving advice, we also asked teachers about what their subject offers at GCSE and why students should pick it. Miss Hobbs said, “My subject is design and technology and it’s also textiles. At GCSE, we offer the chance to be creative, practical, use your computer skills and problem solve in loads of different ways that maybe aren’t just writing. It can be drawing, making and using all sorts of methods.”

Mr Theo shared why he thinks students should pick R.E, “I think students should pick RE because it teaches students to be able to look at different perspectives, religions, cultures and how religion fits into society today. We explore more about how the wider world is affected by religion and a lot of the world’s conflicts come back to people’s different beliefs. Also, the skills you learn, things like debating and analysis, are really useful for when you go on to college and university because if you’re more interested in the academic route, a lot of the well-known universities really like the fact that R.E offers those skills. It’s complimentary to any career path as well, not just the academic route because what job do you go in to where you don’t have to learn about people, backgrounds and cultures?”

Mrs Lloyd, Head of Modern Foreign Languages, told what skills choosing Spanish would give you, “It enhances your accuracy skills so you can more precises in languages generally and that also helps you in any other areas you may choose. It will help you in terms of communication skills, you will feel more confident to talk to people in any language. There are lots of job opportunities using a language since the skills you have are very transferable such as resilience, teamwork, translation and cultural understanding.” Finally, we asked Mr Franklin what the difference is between triple science and combined. “The difference between triple science and combined is that there is more content in triple science, so you do about space, microbiology and more which you don’t do in combined. So, if I were to be advising somebody on whether they should choose combined or triple, if you want to have more science on your timetable than what you already have then choose triple, if you’re happy with the amount that you’re doing than maybe combined is for you.”

“I wanted to find out about the range of different subjects.” ~ Year 9 student

During the evening, many guardians of Year 9 students attended and were talking to the staff here at Ellesmere and with their children in order to help the students choose options that are right for them. We a spoke to a few parents about what they were hoping to get out of the event, one replied with: “The range of subjects, what they comprise of and what the exams will involve. Also, I wanted to find out about the different college options in the area.” Another said, “An overview of all the subjects you can choose from, information about how many you were able to choose and what is on each course.” And of course, an abundance of Year 9 students was present at the evening, and one had this to say: “I wanted to find out about the different subjects, what I had to still do and what I don’t. It’s been really helpful in telling me what each GCSE is like and what I would be best doing.”

All Year 9’s will now be thinking about what options they are going to tick on their form, but it is apparent that the options evening provided them with some essential and useful advice and information that they will all be thinking about.



