

The Greater Horseshoe School



October 2023: Issue 31

Message from the Head Teacher

As we approach the end of this half-term, I am pleased with the remarkable achievements of our students. Five of our students achieved Level 2 First Aid training. Every one of our students has excelled during these past weeks, actively participating in their learning and community projects. Our commitment to supporting Riverside Community Centre, Bovey Tracey Primary School, and Bovey Tracey Football Club through various gardening and volunteer endeavours is making a substantial impact.

Furthermore, we've welcomed nine new students this September, and I'm delighted to report that their integration into the school community has been seamless. Our Student Council deserves special recognition for their diligent efforts in generating innovative ideas and providing valuable support in the review and implementation of our new behavior policy. Their contributions are instrumental in shaping our school's continued success.

I'm delighted to share that our school has achieved the Silver Award in our internal accreditation for Ask, Accept, and Develop (AAD). We are also actively working towards attaining the Wellbeing Awards for Schools (WAS).

Students return to school after half term on Monday 30th October.

Many thanks,

Lukasz and the Team



**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

The Greater Horseshoe School

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Animal Care

This term students have been reacquainting themselves at Chipley. The goats have been on walks, following the long break over the summer holidays. Both students and goats enjoy this as they are able to forage for fresh green leaves.



Students completing the City and Guilds Animal Care qualification have been completing induction tasks as well as starting to look at health and safety in the workplace.



The pigs have enjoyed being fed a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables.



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Students have had lots of opportunities to handle and clean the rabbits and guinea pigs this term. This term some students have been looking at animals whilst completing an AQA qualification. They have looked at different breeds, characteristics, how they like being handled, health checks as well as cleaning and feeding.



Next half term students will be looking at an introduction to animal care, rabbits, basic animal husbandry – pygmy goats, routine care of a pet or looking at maintaining the safety of self and others in the workplace.



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Food Technology

This half term we have been looking at root vegetables, such as potatoes, leeks, carrots and sweet potatoes, with our focus being carbohydrates.

The students have been cooking a variety of meals from casseroles and soups to the ever-popular pizza!!



We have been looking at cultural differences and enjoyed making currywurst with German pancakes.



We also had our annual Macmillan coffee morning, where we made over £60!!

A big thank you to all who contributed to this worthy cause.



We talked about Yom Kippur and made a honeyed chicken, which some of our children cooked and served to the Governors.

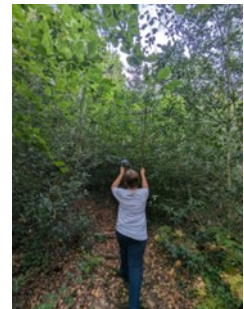
A very pleasing half term and now I'm looking forward to next half term, where we will be looking at rice, pasta and noodles, which will include Diwali, Christmas treats and Halloween.

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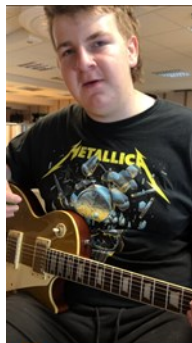
Arts Award!

We've now set up our school with the Trinity Arts Award, which means our students will be able to gain more qualifications from their amazing projects across Art, Music & Media. Already many of our students have been making good progress with the first section in our Nature theme this term through making soundscapes, relaxing LoFi music, photography, videography & amazing art projects.



RSL

After having some of our students from last academic year move on to colleges, we are slowly building up numbers again on our RSL Level 1 course with students looking to hone their skills in music. This term our fabulous Taavi has completed his second unit demonstrating amazing knowledge in instrument maintenance, health & safety & developing his guitar skills over a six week period using practice logs. Aiden has made an excellent start to the course researching and creating a presentation on "The Weekend" focusing on his career and influence.



Instrumental Study

Alongside any termly plans, our music team always ensures that there are opportunities to progress on their preferred instruments. We've been so impressed with our keen students developing their skills in singing, guitar, drums, bass, ukulele & piano over the term! There has been a marked improvement from all the students who have drum lessons here at GHS. We now have two students working towards their RSL grade 3 drums and 4 students on Debut and grade 1. It's great to see how many more live performance workshops we are able to do now that we have a plethora of music students covering a wide range of instruments.

Band Club

Our band club continues to grow in members and talent with an amazing half term focusing on learning "All Star" by Smash Mouth. Next we will be learning Another Brick in the Wall by Pink Floyd!

The main focus this term in media has been photography, which the students have engaged with really well. There have been trips to the beach, moor and zoo to get lots of content for the nature themed scheme of work for this term. The students are now editing their photos and creating movies to present their work, which will go towards their Arts Awards qualifications.

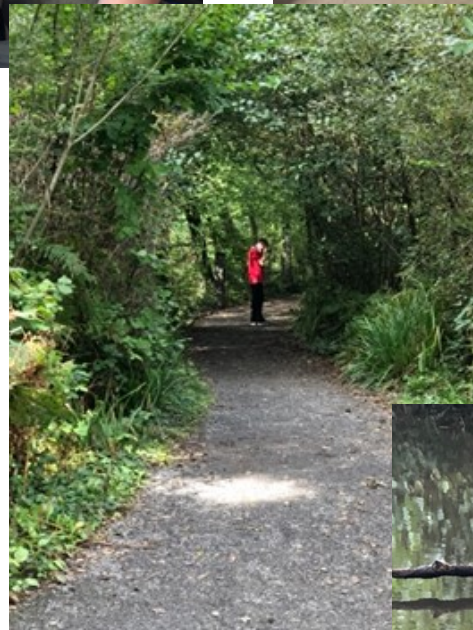
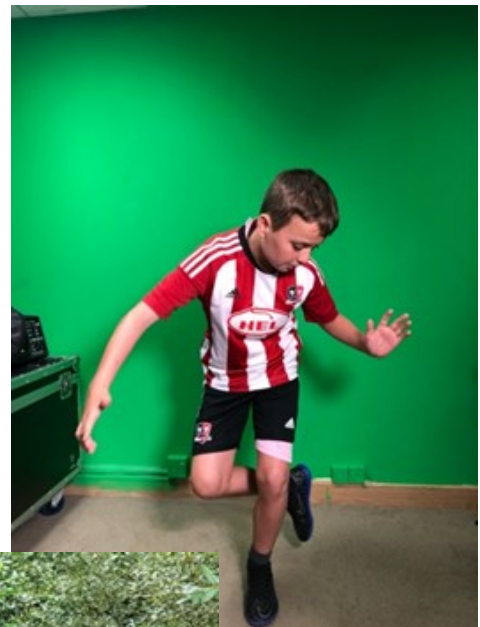
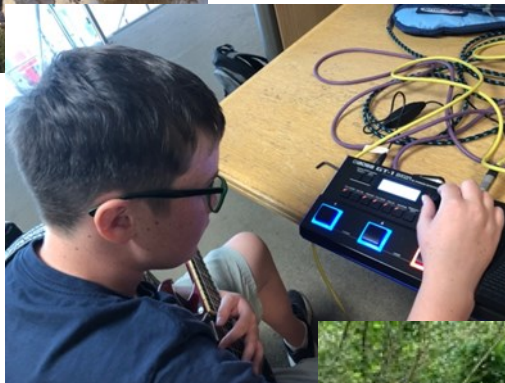


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Media

Straight back into a busy schedule for media and IT. Our young people have all been tasked to become nature photographers. We've been out and about from the lakes of Stover to the barren wastelands of Dartmoor. We've had some wonderfully creative results with excellent photos. Once everyone gathered the photos they've been learning how to make lovely moving galleries in iMovie. They have all been animating and using the Ken Burns effects. They've then been adding music. Talking of music, one of our students has created a very professional demonstration video to show users how to set up a complex guitar unit. Another has been creating weekly match reports from Exeter City. On the IT front we've started a new qualification that we're hoping all students will have a go at. Digital Functional Skills starts at entry level 3 and is a brand-new look at IT and how important it is in our daily lives. We're hoping that everyone will keep having fun and learning these vital life skills.



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Horticulture

At the Chipley Mill Farm site we have continued with our autumn jobs, one of which has been to harvest the vegetables. The students all enjoyed a group harvesting and cooking session when the sweetcorn was finally ready, and they found the corn on the cob delicious. They all agreed that vegetables taste better when they are freshly harvested and especially when you have grown them from seed yourselves!

Next we will be harvesting the pumpkins on Halloween ready to carve!



We have also braved the weather with the continuation of daily Farm Jobs. We have completed many tasks together, such as the removal of the invasive Himalayan Balsam and the mulching of paths. The main focus of these sessions is socialisation, communication and team-work; pupils have made great progress with this.



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Some pupils are taking part in community gardening projects during Work Experience lessons. We have been going to the Riverside Community Centre to help with the beds around the Library entrance, and we have been helping in the grounds of Bovey Tracey Football Club. We will soon be going back to Bovey Tracey Primary School to help to prepare the beds for winter too. We always get so many compliments from passers-by who like to let our young people know that they are doing an excellent job.

Back onsite, the Horticulture (Year 10 and above City + Guilds) and Gardening students (Year 9 and below) have been building skills by completing winter gardening jobs such as harvesting, weeding, preparing the ground, controlling unwanted growth, planting bulbs, making winter planters and using a variety of tools and machinery.



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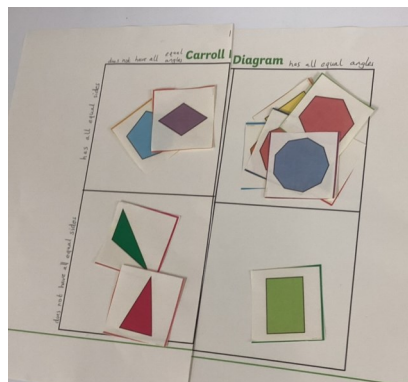
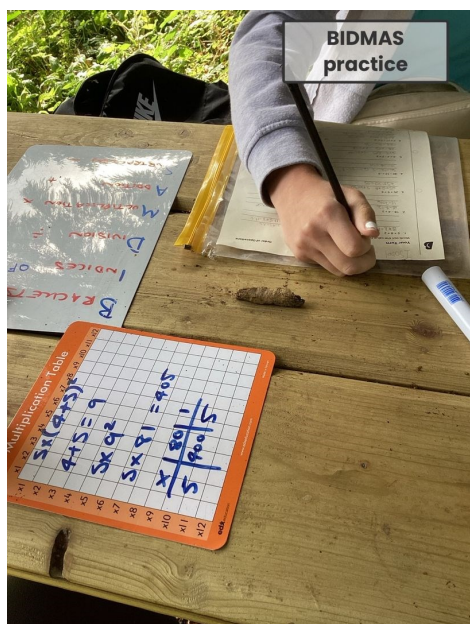
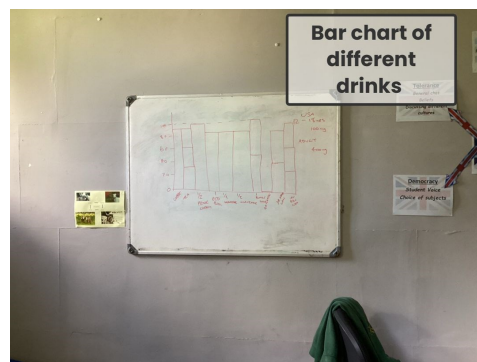
Maths

It has been brilliant to get back into school after the summer, working with the students in a range of games and learning activities, as well as welcoming many new students to the school.

The autumn term has seen students deepening their understanding of shape and space, with additional work on key skills in manipulating and understanding numbers. Activities have included creating a range of "Top Trumps" style data cards, researching the richest people in the world and creating our own 3D shapes physically and virtually on the computer.

Some students have been able to work towards their Entry Level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications, with several passing their formal assessments. Older students will be preparing over the half term break for the upcoming Functional Skills exams at the beginning of November.

After celebrating some brilliant results at Functional Skills and GCSE level over the summer, we have been able to start our first post 16 AS level qualification with Maths in Context. We are so proud of everything our staff and young people are doing!



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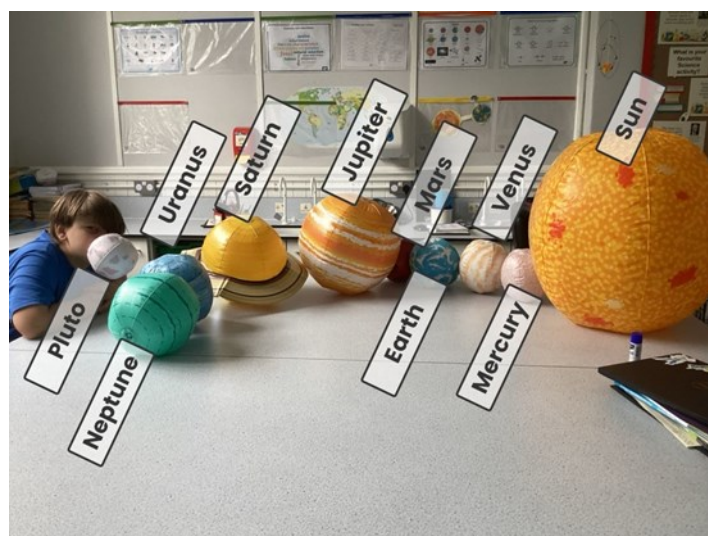
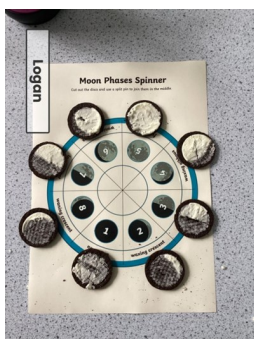


Science

During the summer holidays we were busy completing our brand-new science lab, offering our students the opportunity to develop their skills of scientific enquiry using scientist grade equipment.

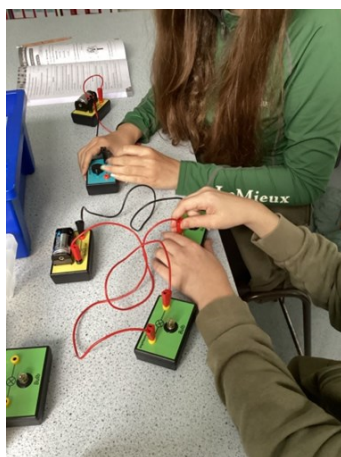
We are investigating the world of Physics in Science across the school this term with all of our students.

Those working within our B2 assessment framework have been looking at space, forces and seasonal changes. They spent time exploring the solar system (and beyond), looking at moon cycles and how time is affected by planet movement. We then moved on to look at forces, from a simple push/pull to how gravity and water resistance work. Finally, we have explored seasonal changes through recording the weather, temperatures and looking at seasons through months of the year. Next term we will continue with Physics, looking deeper at Sound & Light and Electricity.



This year we have lots more students starting their AQA Science qualifications and are taking their first steps towards GCSE.

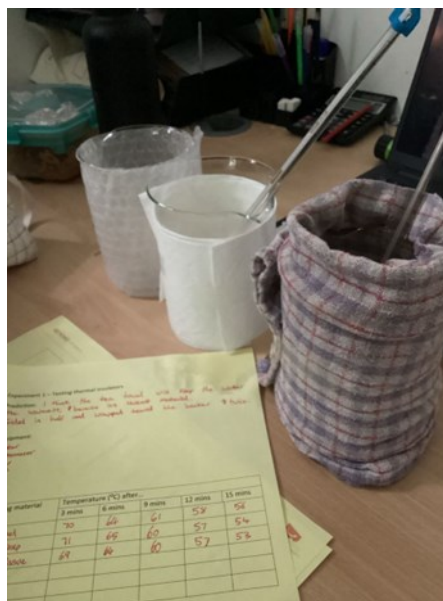
Our first year Entry Level Certificate groups have started this year, looking at electricity, creating circuits and investigating parallel and series circuits. They pushed this knowledge on to domestic electricity, looking at how we power the appliances in the home, and have taken apart (and fitted back together) plug sockets to see the different components inside and what types of wires create a circuit in a device. They also looked at how power is generated and how the national grid works. Next term we continue with the module looking at Magnetism and electromagnets.



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The students completing their second year of Entry Level have been building on their knowledge from the ELC 1 modules and have been studying energy. They have been exploring different energy stores and ways in which energy can be transferred. Through this they have completed our first assessed practical exam and experimented with different materials to find the best insulator. Following this, they looked at the different way energy is generated, from fossil fuels to renewable resources. Next term we will continue this module looking at Forces & work and Atoms & Radiation.



This year we thrilled to have our first student working towards a GCSE in Science after achieving a Level 3 in his Entry Level Double Award last year. He is now building on this knowledge in all three disciplines (Physics, Chemistry and Biology) making good use of the new lab and his new-found skills.

Some students have taken on an ASDAN Science Short Course this half term. This is comprised of a series of challenges that aim to support and test their scientific enquiry and how and why things happen in our world. They have been completing activities linked to the Space Physics module, including the creation of some great Top Trumps cards with data about our solar system. Other challenges in store for next half term include researching evidence that the moon landings were real!



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Geography

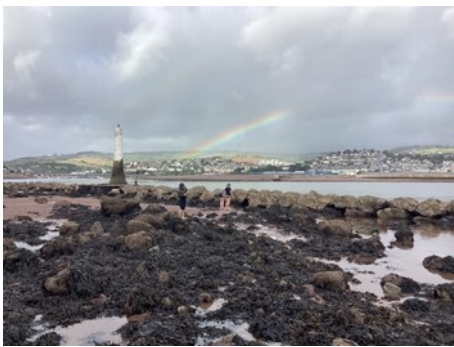
This half term the focus in Geography has been Coasts and Oceans. Students have been learning about coastal landforms, processes and habitats, learning about the world's oceans and the ways in which we can protect them.

Activities have included making their own coastal landform models, creating their own rockpools and experimenting to help them understand processes such as erosion and deposition. Students have engaged well and enjoyed the hands-on activities.

Some students have also gone on trips to Ness Cove and Shaldon to explore the coastal features and rockpools.

For the first time we are offering the ASDAN qualifications in Geography and The Environment, engaging the students in a variety of Geographical challenges, and we have had 6 Year 10 students start this course this autumn.

Next term we are studying Rocks and Soils, exploring different rocks and soils and learning about different rock formations, and features like volcanoes and earthquakes.



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Eco School News – GHS Goes Green

We are pleased to announce that last year we achieved our status as a Green Flag Eco School thanks to all the efforts of the staff, students and wider community that are part of the GHS family.

This year we continue our journey to be even greener and take on more eco challenges spreading our message wider than before! Our Eco Ambassador on School Council has already completed our Environmental Review and chosen our three main actions for this year: Waste, Energy and Marine.

Each month we have a whole school focus on one of the Eco Topics and this term we have focused on Waste and Litter. During tutorial sessions students have been challenged to think about ways we can reduce waste at school and home and the impacts of litter on the environment. Students have taken part in the Great British Beach Clean, making something useful out of something someone has thrown away, having a debate with someone about if they think fines and litter picks will stop people littering or going out to investigate where the litter hotspots are in our local area ready to do a whole school litter pick next term!



Our top tips for reducing Waste and doing your bit are:

Turn the water off when you are brushing your teeth so you don't waste water

Turn lights and appliances off when you are using them or in the room so you don't waste energy

Don't buy stuff you don't need!

Make tasty things from leftovers – don't throw waste food

Choose things that don't have plastic wrappers - like shampoo bars – or reuse any plastic containers you do have

As part of our Eco Schools War on Waste we are again taking part in The Big Battery Hunt and a Bag 2 School collection.

We have set ourselves up as a battery recycling centre and have arranged a collection of unwanted clothes, bedding and other textiles in a Bag 2 School collection at the beginning of December - more information coming soon!

Please spread the word to all your friends and family to help us collect for these two great causes to prevent unnecessary waste getting to landfill.



Last year we collected **1123** batteries and stopped them from going to landfill - how many can we collect this year?

We all have clothing in our wardrobes that we haven't worn in ages! In a world of fast fashion, we now have a lot of stuff - but when it comes to a clear out what do you do to make sure the environment comes off best?



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Exams

We are absolutely delighted to share with you the achievements of some of our students in their summer exams.

-89% of students entered passed their Functional skills L1 and L2 units passed (Maths, English, ICT).

-100% achieved GCSE Pass Grades 9-3. 50% of our GCSE students achieved Grade 4 or higher.

-100% students entered for Entry Level Certificate Gold in English achieved a Grade 3, the top score.

-100% students achieved Entry Level Science (Double award) Grade 3

These are just some of the successes, a huge achievement for our students. There has been an incredible amount of work they have put in, with our team of staff. Worth always saying that whilst gaining qualifications is not the only route to success, these have opened up many opportunities for our students to progress even further. At the end of last year, we said goodbye to four of our students, where they have continued their journey on to new courses, including to South Devon College, Exeter College and The Jockey School. A huge congratulations to these students and we wish them the best of luck. Their successes continue to inspire other students to their own journeys.

Chris Clements

SENCO:

We are delighted to introduce some new members to our team, who will be supporting the school. Hannah Hamlin, Educational Psychologist and Mia Angelos is an Occupational Therapist. Both bring their experience to the school, working alongside other schools in the Outcomes First Group of Schools and will help us share good practice in supporting students directly and support the staff team in meeting students' needs. A very warm welcome. For more information, please contact Chris Clements, SENCO chris@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk



Hannah Hamlin

Regional Senior Educational Psychologist

Pronouns: she/her



Mia Angelos

Regional Specialist Occupational
Therapist

Pronouns: she/her

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Work Experience

This half term has been a fantastic start to the year regarding work experience. Many the gardening and horticulture students have been continuing with our community links in Bovey Tracey at Bovey Primary School, Bovey Community Centre and maintaining the grounds at Bovey Football Club. Some of our animal care students have been helping with the running of a local farm including checking for lame sheep, cutting back brambles in the fields and counting the flock within the farm. The students have been learning about the processes of how farmers earn their income and all the maintenance that is involved in the running of farms. We have some exciting upcoming links with a community café in Teignmouth where one of our students completed volunteering during the summer holidays. Next term we will be continuing to source placements for the vocational students to give them an insight into their future



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PSHE

This term in PSHE we have been looking at good and bad risks, how to assess these and minimise the dangers in everyday life. We have been helping the students assess risks online, in the home, road safety, and how to manage these and what to do to make safe choices. Most recently we have been looking at when we should make 999 calls and how to make them, and some basic first aid procedures.

KS4 students have been looking at mental health, what are individual causes, and different methods for grounding themselves and how to manage and reduce the stresses in their lives. Several older students have completed a course to gain their FAA Level 2 Student First Aid. This is the first time we have offered this course and plan for more of our young people in the future. Congratulations to Aidan, Braiden, Charlotte, Izzy and Lewis! You were a credit to our school.

Student Council

We have welcomed several new students to Student Council this half-term. Welcome Ben, Olivia and Cedes who join Jaz, Ethan, Aiden, Jazzy and Alfie on our successful Student Council. We look forward to seeing what you will achieve!

This half-term Student Council have introduced the GHS Key Elements to the whole school. The Key Elements are for all members of our school community. Many of our students fully embrace these Key Elements already while others find some a little more challenging at times. Students will have the opportunity to achieve points for rewards by demonstrating these in their lessons and outside of lesson times.

This has been introduced by our students and as a response to Student Voice feedback rather than by staff so we're really excited to see how this works!



Key Elements created by Student Council

Respect each other.



Everyone is an individual and should be treated as such.



We approach learning with an open mind.




Our actions should maximise benefit and minimise harm to people, wildlife and the environment.



We go beyond our school community.



We develop as a person, not just academically.

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ART

This term in Art, we have been developing our understanding of line and how it is used within art. Line is one of the formal elements of art. Line may be two-or three-dimensional, descriptive, implied, or abstract. In addition to lots of line drawing using the light pads, students have experimented with line in many different ways. They have studied artists who are well known for using line in their work, such as Vincent Van Gogh. After learning about the artist and how he used line and colour to create his paintings, students created their own inspired artwork using oil pastels and expressive mark making. As well as a chance for students to develop skills and express their creativity, all of this hard work is being put towards their portfolio for the Arts Award!

Plus, this art journey is helping our students think and talk about their own work and their peers' art, which is an important skill. They're becoming better at looking at art and thinking about what they like and why they like it. Next term, we will be exploring another element of art – texture!



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Family Support

We are already halfway through the term!! Over the holiday, there are plenty of places, around Devon and beyond, offering Halloween themed activities. Although this can be a fun experience for many, this can be a little overstimulating for some so, as you know your young people the best, please do use any information available to plan any events beforehand. Also coming up is Bonfire Night. There are usually several firework events organised around the county as well as the option to have your own at home. However you decide to celebrate this, please do so safely and ensure your children and young people are aware of the dangers and know the Firework Code.

Firework code

Only adults should deal with setting up firework displays, the lighting of fireworks and the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used (and remember, alcohol and fireworks don't mix!). Children and young people should be supervised, and watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance. Follow these top 10 tips for a safer fireworks party:

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable, and check the time you can legally set off fireworks
2. Only buy fireworks which carry the CE or UKCA marks, keep them in a closed box, and use them one at a time
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire
10. Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.

The holidays, for some of our young people, can be particularly tricky as they struggle with a lack of routine and changes so here are some tips to help:

- Try to keep to a routine where possible e.g. bedtimes, mealtimes etc
- Have a visual calendar so they are able to see and prepare for events e.g. the return to school/days out
- Use a social story to aid preparation for changes, transitions, rewards.

Try to organise some activities throughout the holidays.

Please keep looking out for emails on upcoming events, support services, courses and funding as during the I will continue to send out information about what is available for families but, should you have any specific worries or issues that you would like to discuss, then please get in touch. You can contact me directly by email on SarahS@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk and I am also available to contact on 07435 815755, from 8.30am to 4.30pm, Tuesday to Friday during term time.

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Support Services during the holidays

During the holidays, there are several services which you will be able to contact for support and advice, should you need it:

The Devon Information and Advice (DIAS) service is a really helpful resource to look at. DIAS provide specific advice, links and guidance to families for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability. <https://devonias.org.uk>
Pinpoint Devon has links and information to thousands of services available in Devon. You can search for these using keywords in different locations, to find a suitable organisation near you. Please visit www.pinpointdevon.co.uk. For services in Torbay, please visit the Torbay Council website www.torbay.gov.uk and for Plymouth, please use the Plymouth Online Directory [Plymouth Online Directory - Plymouth Online Directory](#).

If a child or young person (under 18) is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can now access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) 24/7. Please contact 03300 245 321 during normal hours (8am-5pm, Mon to Fri) or 0300 555 5000 outside these hours. There are also services such as Shout, Kooth and Young Devon, who are able to support young people with mental health needs.

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/> for parents of children aged 0 – 19 to get in touch to ask questions and talk 1-1 about any parenting questions.

This year, in particular, with the cost-of-living crisis, many more are struggling to pay bills and in need of support with food and other essentials. If, over the holidays, this is something that you do need support for, there are many food banks and other organisations that can help families with this. Please use Pinpoint to look for support or contact your local council and ask for advice on what services are local to you. The Trussell Trust has several food banks in locations around Devon. Please see their website for details at www.trusselltrust.org. There are many other foodbanks in locations all over Devon. To find your nearest one search for foodbanks near me or look on Pinpoint Devon. Some that are available are Teignbridge Homeless Action Today (THAT) and Homeless in Teignbridge Support (HITS) in Newton Abbot, Rediscover Church and St Thomas Community Larder in Exeter, Exmouth Food Bank, Dawlish Community Larder, Exmouth Food Bank, Crediton Foodbank, Okehampton Foodbank and Dartmouth and District Foodbank. Some of these also offer support for utility bills and other essentials.

There is also funding available through the Household Support Fund for eligible families. If you need support or a referral for one of the food banks, please contact Sarah on 07435 815755 or email SarahS@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk.

The NSPCC also have lots of information and advice on how to support children in young people, particularly if you have a concern about them. Please visit their website on www.nspcc.org.uk.

If you are concerned about the safety of a child in Devon and want to speak to someone, or if you are a child worried about your own safety, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.

If your child is at immediate risk, ring 999

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Attendance

As you may be aware, since the pandemic, school attendance has become a national concern. At the Greater Horseshoe School, we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important that students arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that students should not be at school if they are unwell. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and failing to attend this school, on a regular basis, will be considered as a safeguarding matter. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason and an attendance plan would then be in place. We do understand that our children, at this school, have sometimes previously struggled in their settings and will ensure that we work with you to put in place an individual plan, that is tailored to support their needs, and help them to return to education. If you would like some information on what you can do to support your child, if you are concerned that they are struggling to attend school, please visit <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/school-anxiety-and-refusal/>

However, if your child is unwell, you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, giving the reason for their absence, by phoning either the school reception or Chipley farm. If we have not been informed by 10am, we will contact you by telephone or text.

Online safety

During the holidays, many young people spend more time online. Although the internet is a wonderful tool, it does come with some issues and risks.

As you may be aware, there have been concerns raised nationally about what children are accessing online and the age at which they are being exposed to adult content. Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza reported in May that [most young people have seen pornography by the age of 13](#). The children's charity, the NSPCC, has launched a campaign in Plymouth, to raise awareness of the impacts of online pornography on young people, which is being supported by Plymouth Council, public health, police and local schools. With access to the internet being readily available to our young people, it is important that we try to understand how to safeguard their experience and limit access to inappropriate content. This is no easy task, with your young people likely being far more tech savvy and up to date with the latest social media and sites available. Algorithms are also designed to send linked content for users to view, based on what they are watching. So, if someone watches a certain type of video or accesses a certain type of content, they are likely to be sent more of this type of content to view. This is a great tool but does also mean that, if young people are viewing inappropriate content, they will likely be able to access a large amount of it, which can then normalise this sort of content and give them an unhealthy view or expectation of relationships.

What can you do.

1. Keep an Open Dialogue with your Children
2. Educate Children on the Risks of Social Media
3. Follow Age Requirement Guidelines
4. Set Ground Rules for Social Media Use
5. Stay Up to Date on Your Child's Privacy Settings
6. Consider Products That Help You Monitor Online Activity
7. Utilise Cyberbullying Resources
8. Ensure your Internet Filters are in Place at Home

If you're worried about something a child or young person may have experienced online, you can contact the NSPCC Helpline, for free support and advice, by calling [0808 800 5000](tel:0808 800 5000) or emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk. Due to an increase in demand across the service, **the voice Helpline is currently available 10am–2pm Monday to Friday**. You can still email help@NSPCC.org.uk at any time for free, and you don't have to say who you are. If your child needs more support, they can contact [Childline](#) on 0800 1111 or visiting the website to get advice on other ways to get support.