

The Greater Horseshoe School



April 2024: Issue 34

Message from the Head Teacher

Welcome back to children and parents/carers after the Easter Holidays. We hope you all enjoyed your break and did lots of enjoyable things.

The Summer term is always a busy term and there is plenty going on in school and with some of our students attending residential trips:

- Poland trip week commencing 22nd April
- France trip week commencing 17th June
- Slapton trip week commencing 1st July
- Sports day Friday 28th June
- Summer Fayre & Aspirations Day Tuesday 16th July from 3:30pm (all parents and carers invited)
- End of year celebrations TBC

Next week, we have eight children going on a residential trip to Poland. We hope they will enjoy this fantastic opportunity to learn more about Poland's history.

Lukasz and the Team



**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

The Greater Horseshoe School

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Animal Care

This term the animals have returned to their appropriate enclosures. Joy, Ginger and Dotty are now able to roam more freely around their pen, hide in the trees and enjoy the pig ark. The goats have constant access to the shed and the grass area outside. They are enjoying eating any leftover fruit students provide them with.

The rabbits and guinea pigs are enjoying living in the shed. Students have been laying grass seeds in the outdoor pens, ready to move them out to the grass pens for the next few months through the day. This term students have been assisting with looking after the animals, making sure their needs are met and health is checked daily. They have learned about risk assessments, looking after pigs' health and what they know about animals.

The City and Guilds students have been working extremely hard at Pennywell. They have been learning about dangers in the environment, different types of animal feed, how it is stored, disposed of and labelled. They have been able to meet a wide range of animals while on site and helped to move animals when required.

Next term students will be looking at the rainforest environment, moving and handling goats, mucking out farm animals and cleaning water supplies for a variety of animals. Some students will be involved in daily animal checks and understanding how they develop.



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Art

This term, one of the key focuses has been on students exploring shading and tone in their artwork. Through various techniques and exercises, they have been learning how to bring depth and dimension to their creations. Understanding shading and tone not only enhances their technical skills but also encourages creative expression and attention to detail. There has also been lots of time for personal projects which has allowed students to explore their own interests and help bring their ideas to life! Next term, we will be continuing to look at 'The Elements of Art' in depth and will be focusing on Colour!



Careers

This term we have been busy learning about the Digital world and preparing for College Applications. Many of our Year 10-Year 13 students have been discussing their futures with myself either in formal advice sessions or within their structured Careers Lessons.

We have implemented more discussions about young people's futures within all aspects of the curriculum and have started the process of working towards the Quality in Careers Standard. This is a prestigious national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in secondary schools, colleges and work-based learning. This should support us in getting better outcomes for our students and ensuring the highest quality of careers related learning is provided at all levels.

We have also been hard at work developing our own Key Stage 3 Careers Curriculum to provide students the opportunity to learn about their future right from Year 7 as well as continuing to integrate the Key Stage 4 Princes Trust Curriculum, which many of our Year 10 and upwards students are engaging with.

Year 11-13 students have started applying for their next steps in preparation for leaving us when they are ready. Year 10s are considering where they would like to complete their Work Experience in the summer term and into next year and will begin visiting colleges over the summer and into the Autumn Term. In the summer, we have arranged an employer visit to Pneumatics in Somerset (the factory that makes "Henry" vacuum cleaners) to learn all about factories and the different roles within.

We are also starting to prepare for our Summer Fair, to which we will be inviting local businesses, education providers and parents, so watch this space! If you know any employers who would be willing to come along to this, please don't hesitate to contact our Careers Lead (Oli Masters) to organise this.

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Drama

In Drama, our new topic is focused on devising. This means the group will be creating their own piece of theatre, taking inspiration from other practitioners and theatre makers. To introduce this, we are looking at technical theatre. This incorporates all the aspects of theatre design: set, costume props and lighting. To enhance the learning, we had a trip to Theatre Royal Plymouth's production centre (TR2). The students had the opportunity to have a tour of the rehearsal rooms, where we saw how the 'page to stage' process begins. We then looked at the costume department, where we explored their archives and then met one of the costume designers. They showed us the original sketches for a few recent shows, including Frantic Assembly's *Metamorphosis* and *We Are Not Alone*. We also saw some of the costumes from famous shows including, the body suit for Marty the zebra from *Madagascar*. One of our students was given an item of clothing from *Beyond Paradise*, a TV show that was filmed locally and which donated some costumes to the department. We then met a wig maker who was working on a wig for Joyce from *Stranger Things* (the theatre production that is currently showing in the West End). We then explored the set workshop, where they were building parts of the set for *The Artist*. Finally, we joined three professional acting coaches who led a devising workshop for us. This was designed to help us on our journey through the devising process. I was so impressed with how well all of the students responded. They were confident and very creative.

The following week, we went to the Theatre Royal to watch *Life of Pi*. It was an amazing show that combined puppetry with mixed multi-media, to recreate the well known story. We were very impressed with their innovative adaptation and the amazing sets, costumes and puppets.



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Horticulture

This term has seen the horticulture students completing City and Guilds assessments. This included preparing the beds for this season's crops. They've all done very well and should be extremely proud of themselves!

We also took a trip to RHS Rosemoor. The students were able to walk the grounds and look at a huge variety of gardens. It was very useful to see the different examples of seasonal tasks and what goes into maintaining the grounds. All of which will be useful, should the students wish to pursue a career in horticulture after completing their qualifications.

Next term we will start growing crops and maintaining the allotment.



Spring 2 Star Readers

Students can be nominated for a Star Reader award by fellow students or staff for their excellent engagement, effort or progress in reading. The student awarded Star Reader each week is given a book voucher and can purchase a book for themselves to keep, as well as a school copy of the same book to go in the library.

Congratulations to all our students who have been awarded star reader this Spring term and well done for all your hard work and effort in reading! We look forward to celebrating many more. Keep up the great reading.

Our big event this term was World Book Day. Thank you to everybody that got involved. We had various activities and competitions running throughout the week and it was fantastic to see students and staff dressed up on the day.

Star readers this half term: Harvey, Ethan T, Izzy D, Alana, Mina, Hayden and Fin.

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Science

B2

This half term we have been exploring “wonderful water”. The children have been exploring the states of matter and looking at how substances change from solid to liquid to gas. We have investigated different ways of melting ice and turning it to liquid and different ways we can see condensation. We have ordered to process of state changes and seen how all of these are reversible. Finally, this week we have explored and sorted different types of rocks and looked at how fossils are formed as well as observing different examples of local fossils collected by our colleague Mark.



ELC 1

This half term we have continued with the Chemistry module we started before Christmas. We have looked at the differences between elements, compounds, mixtures, and pure samples. The pupils have drawn the electron structure of the first 20 elements of the periodic table and explored different ways of separating mixtures. Finally, the students looked at bonding of elements and used this knowledge to complete their practical coursework on the melting point of substances for their qualifications. After Easter the students will be exploring the natural world in the “feeding relationships” biology module.

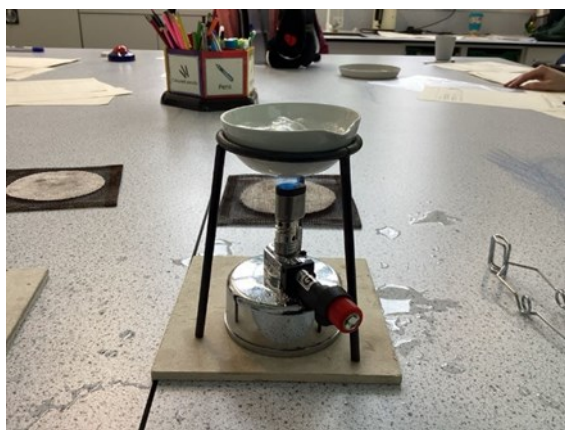


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ELC 2

This half term the students have been finishing off their chemistry module work to be sent off to the exam board in May. They have been exploring “Chemistry in our world” which looks at the real-life applications of chemistry, from the way we process water to how we power our homes. They have looked at climate issues in the way we extract and break down crude oil and its effect on the environment before looking at alternative ways to create power. They have also completed their Chemistry practical coursework on the purity of different water samples. We will be exploring the human body in the last biology module of the qualification.



GCSE

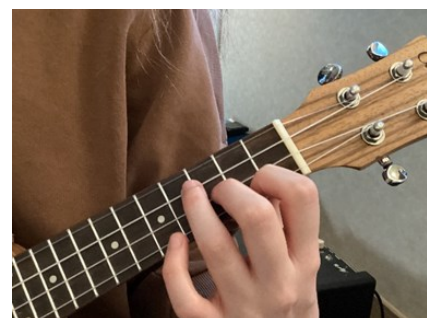
We are getting closer and closer to our first ever GCSE science exam season and have been busy learning as much as we can before the big day! In Biology we have looked at more Human Biology in the form of reflex actions, the nervous system, aerobic respiration, and anaerobic respiration. In Chemistry we have explored reaction rates and how temperature, concentration, pressure, and catalysts effect rates of reactions. We have looked at how energy is given off and used in experiments and how some reactions can be reversible. In Physics we have discussed acceleration, velocity, speed, and motion through a range of angles which has crossed over into Maths learning. After Easter we will be finishing off the last few modules before the exams and focusing more on revision and practice questions.

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Musers

This term has been all about our young people exploring the creative focus of an arts organisation of their choice, including the type of work produced, created or housed and the artists they typically work with as part of their Arts Award accreditation. Students have had the opportunity to reflect on their previous experiences at events they have attended such as theatre, music, film, galleries, museums, festivals as well as learning about local arts organisations around us like Exeter Phoenix, Theatre Royal & Princess Theatre. Throughout this section of the Arts Award, students have been encouraged to use IT skills to find relevant information and images using search engines and present their work using Microsoft apps such as word, publisher or power point. Of course, running alongside this our students have been encouraged to continue developing artistic skills with support from our fantastic teachers on their personal endeavours and exciting projects for example this term ranging from instrumental lessons, singing, recording songs, music production, ensemble experience, script for animation, creating an original Dr Who story, comic sketches, comedy and parody songs. We have been here to support you every step of the way; we are so proud of your dedication to the arts and how well you have all taken to gathering evidence towards our Arts Award qualifications.



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Performance

At the end of the term, a number of students have helped prepared music to put on their own show at Bickington Village Hall with an afternoon of fantastic performances to support our RSL external examination. This has involved weeks of dedication to rehearsals and instrumental practice. Some even helped setting up the space with all the required equipment such as lighting, PA system, amps, effects pedals, drum kit, microphones and seating. We had three amazing acts who each prepared a set to present to an audience:

- 1) Cedez, Alana & Ryan performing a relaxed set of Ocean Eyes & Lost Boy to settle in our audience.
- 2) Band Club consisting of Ethan T, Aiden, Lawrence, Taavi & Cedez performing 4 songs – Shotgun, Another One Bites the Dust, Teenage Dirtbag & Bad Romance (rock edition!).
- 3) Last but not least, our headline RSL Level 1 band who have supported Taavi to achieve his performance unit towards his music qualification. Taavi prepared two fantastic pieces and arranged rehearsals with his session musician band members Lawrence, Rupert and Simon to perform I Don't Love You (My Chemical Romance) & Everlong (Foo Fighters) in response to the RSL brief "Reconciliation".

You all performed with a level of professionalism showing off the skills you have gained on your instruments, voice & performing in groups. We are all so very proud of your achievements this term and how you have been able to reflect on the event for further improvements in the future!



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PSHE

This half term in PSHE we have been focusing on Health and Wellbeing with all students.

The younger students have been looking at ways of living a healthy and balanced lifestyle in terms of diet, sleep and exercise, as well as good and bad role models and the negative influences of social media. We have also looked at the stresses and strains of modern lifestyles and different coping strategies that individuals can use to relieve these.

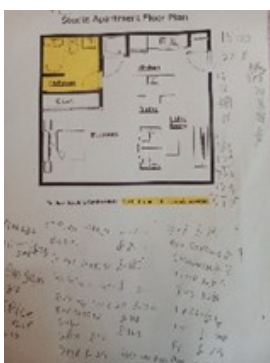
The year 10 and 11 students have been looking at the laws and social impacts of different substances, such as alcohol, drugs and smoking and vaping. We have also looked at how to spot and manage social difficulties with county lines, as well as using positive influences of role models that we can use to aspire us to achieve great things within society.

The eldest students have been looking at mental health and wellbeing and examining different strategies to cope with changes in life. Also looking at body image and the pressures of media. Students have been able to explore different coping strategies that they can personalise for the range of scenarios that they might find themselves in so they can deal with these positively.

Independent Living Skills

This term, in independent living skills we have been looking at 'a place of our own'. We have talked about what type of home we want to have when we are older, and we have tried furnishing an apartment on a budget. Some of our students have visited a range of stores and charity shops comparing the quality and price of items. We've looked at the safety aspects of buying second hand furniture and what to do if we aren't satisfied with a purchase.

Recently, Braiden was given a fantastic opportunity to spend a day training to be a Barista @Voyager coffee. He had a great day and learnt a lot, gaining an Essential Barista training certificate. Well done Braiden!



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Interventions Team

This half term the Interventions Team took part in our first Rainbow Review Day. This has enabled us to look at all the young people in the school and the different clinical provision that they are accessing and what can be incorporated to support them further. This has further developed the relationship between our clinical, interventions and education team to create a more fluent provision for the young people at the school.



We have had some changes to the team. We are delighted to share that Katie Lobb (who has been the Assistant SENCO for a number of years now) has successfully become the SENCO and coordinates the SEND provision. Chris will focus on leading the Quality of Education at the school. As SENCO Katie can be contacted on katiel@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk.

Amanda Cox will be supporting Katie with Education Health Care Plan reviews and take the lead on Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and Ask, Accept, Develop (AAD) in the school.



In addition, Danny Hawkins started his Thrive practitioner training. Throughout this course he will look at a specific way of working with all children that supports healthy social and emotional development. The Thrive Approach® teaches you how to be and what to do, in response to young people's differing and sometimes challenging behaviour, providing targeted strategies and activities to help them re-engage with life and learning.

As a school we are striving to embed Thrive across all three sites of the school, by developing the skill set of our practitioners and sharing these skills with staff. As an additional step to further develop thrive we will be running a pilot course for Family Thrive in the second half of the summer term. If there are any parents/carers that feel this would be something that they would like to be part of please do not hesitate to contact me (katiel@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk). If you would like additional information about family Thrive, please follow the link below.

<https://www.thriveapproach.com/services/parents-and-carers>

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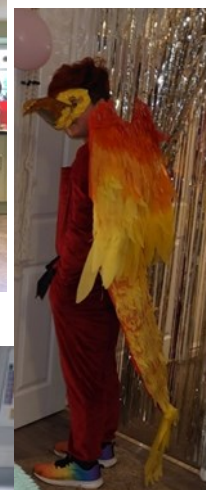
World Book Day at GHS

World Book Day celebrations went with a bang this year, with some amazing collaborative activities between students and staff that encompassed the ethos the GHS School Community.

Staff and students dressed up in their favourite book characters on the day; students engaged in the Guess The Reader (GHS' version of Masked Reader) which was enjoyed; students got creative with their chosen doors as book covers; and even our in-house Therapy Pup, Lizzy got in on the act.

What a way to celebrate and promote reading for pleasure!

A huge thank you to everyone who made it all happen.



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Family Support

With the clocks due to change, and hopefully starting to see some warmer weather soon, you will be able to have some time out and about, with your young people this Easter.

Holiday Activities & Food Programme Easter 2024

The Holiday Activity & Food Programme went live on 1st March 2024. Priority is for children on Benefit related Free School Meals and there are 83 clubs operating over Easter, for up to 4 days with over 6000 places to allocate to children across Devon. This is the final year of the programme.

All eligible children have previously been sent a HAF code.

There is a change the extended criteria due to demand and the categories are listed below. You don't get a code for extended criteria places as you will just need to contact the provider and ask for an extended criteria place under one of these categories.

- Children in care
- Children previously looked after
- Children with EHCP
- Young Carers

This is a link to the parent pages of the website [Information for parents and carers – Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families) for further information.

There are also lots of other places holding activities and events over the Easter Holidays. Please look at [Things to do in Devon this Easter 2024 - Devon with Kids](#) for some ideas and information.

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.

I will continue to send out information about different courses, support and funding available to 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.

Additional Support Services in 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>

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.

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<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.

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.

To find information on services available in Devon, there is no single place to search now. Please use the links below, if there are any particular services you are looking for.

[Devon Connect](#) lists events, services, and volunteering opportunities provided by not-for-profit organisations across Devon.

[Give Food](#) enables you to find the nearest foodbank.

[Devon Services](#) lists public and community service providers.

You can check if a childcare provider is registered on the [Ofsted website](#). You can also use Ofsted's '[Find an inspection report](#)' facility to find childcare providers and childminders in your area and see how they are performing.

For care homes and personal care agencies please go to the [Care Quality Commission](#).

Information is available on the Devon County Council website for [adult day services, respite, personal care and enabling services](#), and you can also find information about [finding a personal assistant \(PA\)](#).

You can also find information about the [care leavers local offer](#), and the [SEND local offer](#).

[Buy with Confidence](#) provides a register of businesses that have been thoroughly vetted and approved by Trading Standards.

[Devon Communities Together](#) provide a range of information, including a list of village halls across Devon.

For services in Torbay, please visit the Torbay Council website www.torbay.gov.uk.

For Plymouth, please use the Plymouth Online Directory [Plymouth Online Directory - Plymouth Online Directory](#).

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

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. Those with attendance below 50% would be classed as a 'severe absentee'. 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/>

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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.

As a school, our overall attendance, so far this year is currently, **83.9%**. We would expect this to rise during the year, as our new students have completed any transitional timetables and we go towards the warmer months, when there are usually fewer severe illnesses circulating. However, we do ask that you support your young person to attend, whenever possible, and please contact us, at the earliest opportunity, if you are concerned about their attendance and would like any support.

Internet Safety

Over the holidays, your young person may spend more time online as much of children's lives are now spend online, in one form or another. This could be on social media or online gaming. Knowing how to keep your child safe on the internet can be difficult. For more information and guidance on different sites and potential issues please visit Keys Safeguarding Parent Resource Hub on https://parenthub.thekeysupport.com/?from_OSH , the Safer Internet Centre on <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers> or the NSPCC on <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/> .

Please also see this guide on how to keep young people safe whilst gaming [Gaming Infographic web-scaled.jpg \(1810x2560\)](#) (oursaferschools.co.uk)

We have also been made aware recently that some of our students have been watching some of the more adult themed cartoons, such as Hazbin Hotel, Friday Night Funkin and Edds World. Although these appear at a quick glance to be suitable and appropriate viewing for our younger children and young people, the content can be very adult themed. In Hazbin Hotel, for example, there is profanity, sexual themes, drug use, drinking, and mentions of subjects like sexual assault and abuse. A lot of episodes have scenes that deal with sensitive topics like abusive fathers, domestic abuse/violence, betrayal, abusive bosses, dysfunctional families, loss, very severe self-loathing, and many other sensitive topics, that could be quite emotional for some viewers. Google search information says "Hazbin Hotel is a mature animated series set in a halfway house of sorts in hell. It's run by Lucifer's daughter, who hopes to save the lives of sinners by guiding them toward heavenly redemption. Themes centre around the concepts of good and evil, and violence is abundant, frequently sexual in nature. A steady stream of F-bombs and countless other expletives are used by nearly all characters, there's also drinking and drug use. A main character is a sex worker/porn star who's shown constantly propositioning others, having sex with demons, and being abused by his pimp/manager."

We would recommend that you are aware of the content/themes of any shows, games or programmes that you child is watching/playing, even if they appear to be appropriate. You can check this out by visiting [Age ratings and film classification | BBFC](#) or [Games Rating Authority](#) .