

The Greater Horseshoe School



Wellbeing Award
for Schools

2023-2026

May 2024: Issue 35

Message from the Head Teacher

I hope everyone is enjoying their half-term break. I am really impressed with how well our students have done this term. There have been some great achievements, including many students taking their exams, a very successful trip to Poland, numerous awards at the Devon County Show, and much more. Keep up the fantastic work!

Lukasz and the Team

Dates for your diary:

- Green up day—7th June
- France trip week commencing 17th June
- Sports day Thursday 4th July
- Slapton trip week commencing 8th July
- Summer Fayre & Aspirations Day Tuesday 16th July from 3:30pm (all parents and carers invited)
- Prom/leavers celebration 19th July
- Last day of the school term Tuesday 23rd July



**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

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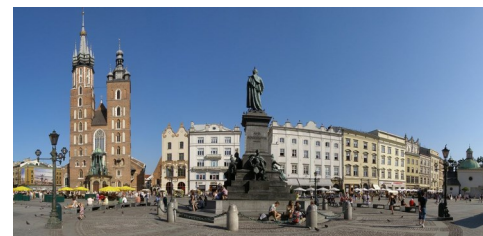
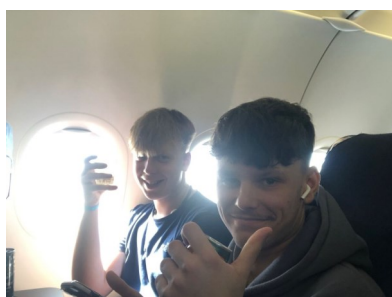
Residential trip to Poland

In April, students from the Greater Horseshoe School embarked on our first Poland Life Skills Residential. The eight students who attended were supported by four members of staff – Stacey Clements (trip leader and Head of Faculty for Life Skills), Lukasz Miecznikowski (Headteacher and native Polish speaker), Ian Mills (PSHE Teacher) and Rosie Underhill (Employment Coach).

We spent five days exploring the city of Krakow, which enabled our young people to utilise their independent living skills such as using public transport, managing their own money and using phrases in Polish! We also learned about the history and culture of Krakow including the origins of the city, the legend of St. Kinga and the salt mine and the role of Pope John Paul II who encouraged the Polish people to leave communist rule after the war.

We also took time to reflect on the darker chapter of Krakow's 20th century history by visiting Ghetto Heroes Square, Eagle Pharmacy and the Jewish Galicia Museum as well as Auschwitz-Birkenau, the infamous Nazi death camp now turned museum. Our young people took the time to reflect, asking questions like, 'What has to happen to a person to look at a 4 year-old child and see an enemy that needs to be killed rather than a 4 year-old child?' and 'how did normal people summon the strength and courage to do heroic acts in a world seemingly filled with violence and hatred?' They also considered why embracing and appreciating those who are different to us and respecting others was so important then and now.

Our students had opportunities to try Polish foods including the traditional pierogi, a dumpling filled with vegetables or meats. They even ate a traditional meal 164 metres under the ground when they visited the famous Wieliczka Salt Mine. They travelled down 320 stairs on a small staircase before working their way through the salt mine and travelling down another 800+ steps! We viewed intricate salt carvings created by hand, vast churches and long corridors all carved from the salt rock.



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Feedback from our students was positive:

"Poland was the best residential I've been on."

"The staff actually treated us like adults."

"I enjoyed getting to know people that I've seen around but never really knew before."

"Poland is the coolest country. I'd definitely go again."

"There was nothing bad about the trip, except maybe the walking!" (We did almost 90,000 steps while we were out there!)

Feedback from our parents and carers:

"Thank you so much for all the amazing teachers for organising this and for giving them such amazing opportunities and experiences."

"I'm very jealous!"

"I can't believe you squeezed so much in in such a short amount of time."

"It's great that they get the same experiences they would in any other school."

We are already busy planning our 2025 Life Skills Residential to Poland and have sent out invitations of interest to all 22 young people who are eligible to go! Full details are on the letter sent out at the end of April. Please return interest slips by 3rd June.



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Food Technology

This half term we have been looking at minerals and vitamins and how we use them in our bodies. We have tried a selection of different herbs and spices in our dishes and talked about the benefits of seasonal foods and buying local produce.

We have introduced some new flavours, like saffron and also tried a couple of fish dishes, which went down very well.

We have also had fantastic success at the Devon County show. Our mango chutney and blackberry and apple jam came first and second!

You will be able to sample this at our Summer Fair next term.



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Snacks during breaktime

The Greater Horseshoe School we are always seeking to improve children's health and well-being. One important aspect of this is the snacks which children may choose to bring to eat during their morning break.

All students are provided snacks throughout the day which include toast and fruit.

We are asking that if your child brings a snack to school then this should be a piece of fruit, vegetables or breadsticks. If your child has a diagnosed medical condition that affects their eating choices then please let their class mentor know. No children should bring sweets, biscuits or crisps to eat in school. We would also like to remind you that children should have water in their bottles in the classroom and not fizzy drinks.



Eco news

Green up day is approaching...

On **Friday 7th June** we will be having our second **Green Up** day. Last year it was a great success with students joining in on all three sites to help to plant up the borders and planters so that we had an altogether more leafy and colourful environment to learn in.

You may want your child to wear old clothes on the day, and wellies and gardening gloves would be useful too. We have wellies and gloves onsite if they need to borrow some.

If you would like to donate a plant to help us to green up, we would be hugely grateful!!



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Devon County Show

This year we took 44 students to the Devon County Show. This annual trip is full of excitement, interest and discovery. Students learn about agriculture, farm animals and machinery and so much more. They meet representatives from local colleges and businesses, take part in activities, collect freebies and soak up the atmosphere.

Many of our students helped to create entries for the competitions and we won lots of prizes, including 1st prize for the scarecrow again! This year our scarecrow was Tom Daley to fit the Olympics theme. He drew lots of attention from the passers-by.

Lewis Wright took part in a radio broadcast with BBC Radio Devon, alongside Rosie and Nina. He spoke confidently and articulated his answers very maturely, making us really proud.

It was a huge achievement for our students to manage the bustling environment of the show, which they did magnificently, and they have again come back full of aspirations for the future.

Thank you to Rosie, Amy and Nina for making the trip possible.



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Geography

This half term the focus in Geography has been all about Rivers. Students have been learning the features of a river, how they change, river habitats and how we live next to rivers.

Activities have included making river models, making rafts to help calculate the speed of the river, collecting animals from the river and making water wheels.

There have also been a lot of trips up onto Dartmoor to see where the river that runs through the farm (The River Lemon) starts, looking at river landforms (waterfalls and meanders) on the River Dart and looking at reservoirs and how we collect river water.

The Year 9 & 10 students have been continuing their ASDAN Geography and Environment courses. More units have been completed. Topics have included learning about the wider environmental issues, their local environment and learning about other countries.

Next term we will be learning about Habitats, exploring the different habitats around the school and surrounding areas. We will also be heading to Slapton for our annual residential trip in July.



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Music

We've had a fantastic term exploring songwriting, music production and composition ideas over the term with students working towards our Arts Award qualification. We've had students making pop songs, remixes, video game-inspired compositions and more all whilst learning to record and develop their ideas along the way. We can't wait to share these great projects with you – keep your eyes peeled on SeeSaw. Our learners undertaking our level 1&2 RSL course are also doing very well, with the fantastic Taavi completing his level 1 with distinction after two years of hard work. Our other students recently passing their first unit sharing their knowledge of musical elements & genres. Next term we will be focusing on summer performances where students will have another half term to prepare and share music to an audience.

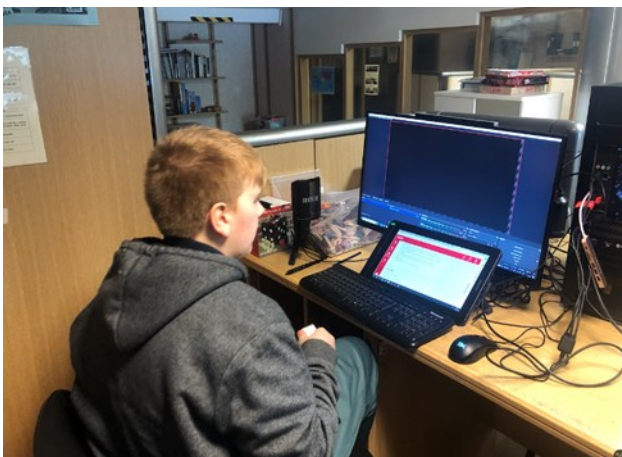
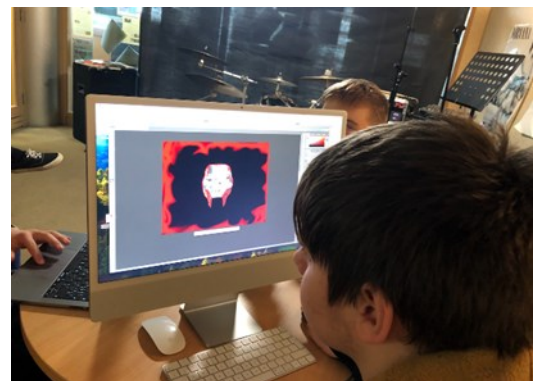


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Media / IT

This year is certainly moving fast and has literally been packed with more exciting projects. We're delighted to have received our brand-new Media Centre PC. This will allow us to make pretty much any type of content. From podcasts to animation, gaming videos etc. We're introducing students to the whole Adobe Suite along with Unreal Engine and Clip Studio Pro. We have also started to use professional drawing tablets with some fantastic results immediately. We have also gone retro with a (very kindly donated) Nintendo Wii which we've hooked up to our Elgato streaming board. If anyone has any old unused consoles lying around we'd love to add them to our collection. We've had more brilliant Wix website work and students tying up loose ends for those who are completing this year's Arts Awards. We're very lucky at Musers to be able to combine every style of music, media and IT, meaning that students can gather confidence in the most flexible and fun yet in-depth way. This even means multitrack recording. We've got lots of records being made as I type. Please keep your eyes peeled for a major celebration event that we're planning for next half term. You'll all be welcome.



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The importance of Play

Play has been recognised and is supported throughout our setting and incorporated into not only Thrive and Nurture but all subjects. Children and young people develop their creativity, imagination and cognitive, emotional and physical strength through play.

Initially, children and young people use play to interact with the world around them: it is how they learn, and how they relate. By listening, paying attention, sharing and taking turns, a child/young person learns how to explore their own feelings, develop self-discipline, express themselves and understand the impact that they have on their peers and friends. Play also helps children and young people to develop confidence in who they are by enabling them to build the social skills needed to interact with others and form relationships.

KEY INFORMATION

- Play is essential for healthy brain development. It improves the cognitive, physical, social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.
- Creative play promotes social and emotional development by integrating feelings with activities and relationships.
- For good mental and physical health and to learn life skills, children and young people need a variety of unstructured play opportunities from birth through to adolescence.
- Thrive uses the creative arts and play to help children and young people explore their emotions without the need to use words.
- The Thrive Approach incorporates arts and play-based activities as a way of building the supportive relationship a child or young person needs to become more open to learning.

Ways that parents and carers can support this are:

- Make dedicated time each day to check in with your young person about how the day has been.
- Have regular 'special' times together on weekends and during the holidays where you can participate in activities the young person enjoys.
- Have a jar containing ideas of activities that the young person would like to do together from which they can select when you have time and space.
- Invite your young person to share their experiences and make time to do activities together, such as going for walks, completing household tasks or cooking a meal, to create opportunities to talk about things in a less pressured way.
- Make emotional health and wellbeing part of your family conversations and explore ways to support everyone's wellbeing.

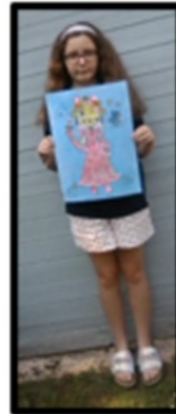
Reference: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989. Geneva: United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> (accessed on 18 March 2020)

<https://www.thriveapproach.com/about-thrive/the-thrive-approach/underpinning-science-and-theory/play-creativity-and-the-arts>

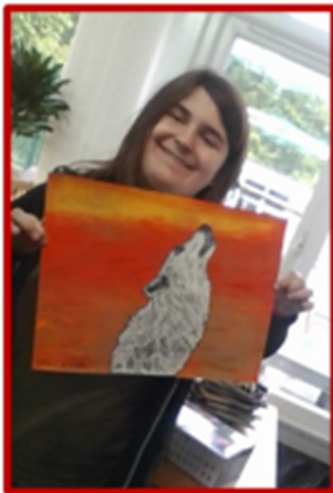
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Logan 😊



Grace 😊



Olivia 😊

Lisa has been working with some of the students in art, to create mixed media work this term, and here are some of the fabulous results! All the students have worked so hard and should be super proud of their achievements!

Well Done!



Theo Y 😊



Toby 😊