

Hope Tree School....

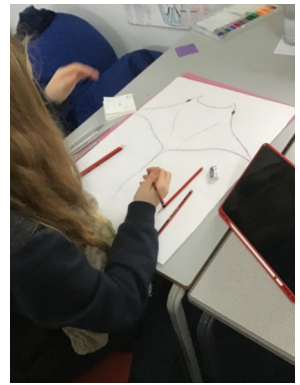
Skype's News

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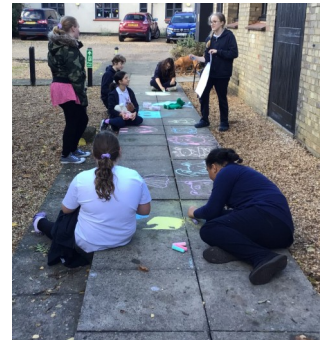
December 2023



A big thank you to Dr Jo Montgomery (Dr Jo Science Solutions) for her careers workshops and incorporating really important science regarding the impact of microplastics on our environment.



In September 2023, Hope Tree School welcomed 15 students back through the doors. In addition to our students, we opened a new building, a new cabin, new play equipment and 6 new members of staff joined the team. Ofsted had visited us in July and approved of our new accommodation, ensured that we were still meeting all the required standards and made many more positive comments about our offer. We started September with three classes, one in Key Stage 2 and two Key Stage 3 classes. In Key Stage 3 we introduced our students to some subject specific teaching, two lunch time clubs, coached PE sessions and several trips off site to enable the development of independence, resilience, life skills and perseverance. Read on to see what we have been doing.



Creativity

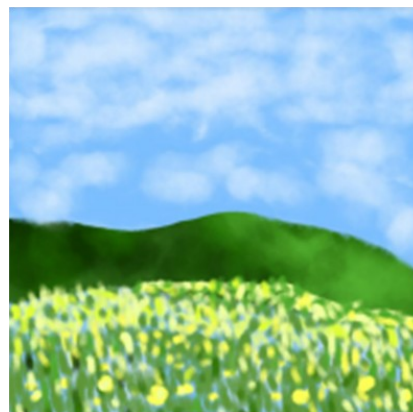
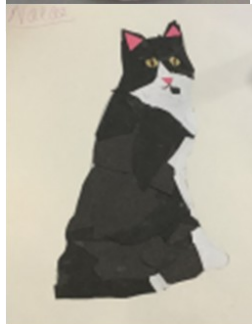
Our students have been working really hard on their Art and DT work this term and have produced some fabulous pieces. They have used a variety of media and each piece represents the unique ideas and talents of our students.



These pieces were created using inspiration from artists' pets (including Frida Kahlo, David Hockney and Andy Warhol) and the students created some amazing artwork experimenting with a range of different media.

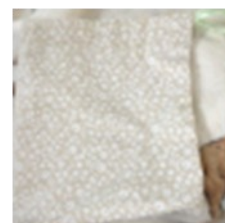


In Design and Technology, we looked at structures before designing mini rooms and using a range of techniques, tools and materials to construct some wonderfully creative models.



Fabulous landscape designs.

During the second half of the term, we used our new sewing machines to construct the drawstring bags we had researched and designed. Some of you may even receive a gift in one this Christmas!



The twelve days of Christmas inspired by our School dog Skye (affectionately known as 'Floofy') - do have a go with the tune.

- On the first day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: A sprout that she brought to Hope Tree
- On the second day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Two green headphones, and
- On the third day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Three pots of gems
- On the fourth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Four trampolines
- On the fifth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Five basket swings
- On the sixth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Six alpacas trekking
- On the seventh day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Seven exercise balls
- On the eighth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Eight frogs are hopping
- On the ninth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Nine students drawing
- On the tenth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Ten blue beanbags
- On the eleventh day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: Eleven wobble stools
- On the twelfth day of Christmas, my floofy gave to me: twelve Jellycats

School Trips

Anxiety and feeling overwhelmed by their environment has often prevented our students from accessing activities and opportunities out in the community. Here at HTS we feel very strongly that our students should have the same opportunities to access as many activities as they possibly can outside of school. This allows for the building of key life skills, confidence and independence. This term there have been several opportunities on offer.



Our Key Stage 2 students had a lovely day out visiting both The Raptor Foundation and Cuckoo Bridge Farm and Pumpkin Patch.



Hedgehogs class had an enjoyable day at [Audley End Miniature Railway](#). We rode the train through the enchanted forest, wrote letters to Father Christmas, made reindeer food and rode the carousel.



Our Key Stage 3 students visited Kettles Yard, They toured the house and responded to drawing prompts, then made books in an artist-led workshop.

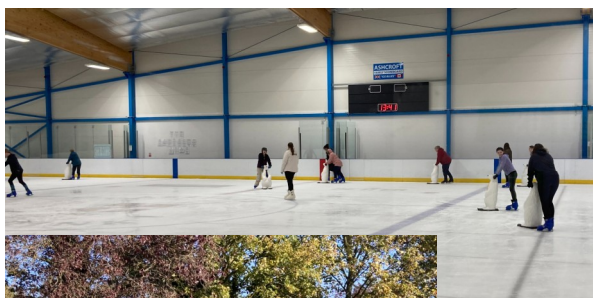
With the help of Cambridge Music HTS were offered tickets to attend the Annual Carol Service at Kings College Chapel in Cambridge. This a big busy event, but some of our students demonstrated real courage to attend.



Finally our term ended with a group of students going into central London to watch Elf the Musical at the Dominion theatre. 11 student travelled by train and tube to the theatre where they took their seats for the show. Loud music, flashing lights, a flying sleigh and snow. A fantastic trip and all the students should be proud of themselves.



Learning outside the classroom



**Ice skating,
canoeing and
basketball**

A word from the Farm

An extraordinary event at the farm this term. Phoenix, one of the female alpacas seems to love seeing our students so much that when they arrive she comes trotting over, looking for carrots, saying hello to everyone. One day she decided that she would just sit down for a group of our students to sit with her....



**Thank you
Phoenix!!**

Classroom News:

Our students continue to work hard engaging in their learning and acquiring new skills.

English: Our first English unit in KS3 this term was Language and Literature Across the Ages which was a brief introduction to a range of literary examples from history. For Old English students looked at Beowulf, for Middle English at Chaucer, then Shakespeare and the Romantic poets e.g. Blake, Shelley, Keats. Finally they looked at Oliver Twist as a lead up to the next half term's study of a whole Dickens text.

In the second half of this term Manta Rays studied A Christmas Carol and started developing knowledge and skills for analysing texts e.g. pathetic fallacy, understanding a character in different contexts, allegory and symbolism, selecting quotes from the text, pathos and inference.

Meanwhile, Elephants studied Great Expectations and, similarly, began working on recognising different techniques used by the author e.g. atmosphere, character development, relationships between characters, pathetic fallacy and foreshadowing. Students used deductive reasoning and found evidence in the text to support an argument.

Maths: This term our students have worked in smaller groups which has allowed them to practice more skills, consolidate previous learning, begin the process of closing gaps in their knowledge bases and build confidence. The different groups have covered a good range of topics which include measurement and converting units, angles and parallel lines, area of 2D shapes, calculating perimeter, fractions, ratio and algebra. Different students work in various ways with some preferring more practical maths and others feeling confident to challenge their maths knowledge and work out answers to complex and tricky questions. A good term all round.

Science: Science this term has involved making slides and using a light microscope to observe them. Students have looked at names of organelles in a cell, the differences between plant and animal cells, features of specialised cells, the function of cell membranes and the differences between diffusion and osmosis.

In our forces unit students named a range of forces and used force arrows to show where these occur. They predicted the outcome when forces are unbalanced and measured force using a Newton meter and related the results to Newton's laws of motion. Dr Jo from Dr Jo's Science Solutions visited and conducted some Science sessions about microplastics and oil spills which had practical elements and related to a topic many of our students are interested in - marine life.

Geography: In Geography this term we have covered Deserts and Rivers. The deserts unit involved locations of deserts, landforms, climate and the impact of weathering, plant and animal adaptation, ecosystems, desertification and human activity in a variety of desert locations. This topic led to thinking about global warming and climate change, and human activity in Antarctica and the Arctic. A visit to Byron's Pool and The Cam in Grantchester launched our unit on Rivers. We then moved onto how humans use rivers, the water cycle, the parts of a river from drainage basin to mouth, with a closer look at the River Severn.

RE: In R.E. students have been comparing Christianity and Islam, they have been asking and discussing big philosophical questions, e.g. about the meaning of life. In the lead up to Christmas they have been thinking about whether Christmas has lost its religious meaning and how different people celebrate this time of year.

History: In History, we began The Renaissance with a look at opposing historical perspectives regarding Gutenberg's printing press, and primary and secondary sources. This was followed by trade routes, European exploration and empires, Renaissance art and finally Martin Luther and Protestantism. In the second half term the Tudors were our focus, starting with the War of the Roses and Battle of Bosworth and how history is written by the victors. Then Henry VIII and the factors that contributed to the split from Rome, Edward VI, whether Bloody Mary was deserving of her nickname, Elizabeth I, a recreation of the Spanish Armada and the reasons it failed.

Art: Art is very popular with students often choosing to work on their projects in their free time. They have made huge steps in being more adventurous in trying different materials and techniques and developing the use of a creative journal to record this. They have made animal portraits using drawing and enlarging techniques, and have also made landscapes, using painting and mixed media, inspired by David Hockney.

D&T: In D&T students made a 3D model of a room and developed confidence using new materials and tools. In Textiles they sewed a drawstring bag and produced a range of bags with different designs and fabrics.

Computing: In Computing this term the topics covered have been computing systems (programs and the operating system, and the physical components that store and execute programs) and manipulating data in spreadsheets (using functions to calculate and sort data).

PHSE: Our students have looked at two main areas this term, mental health and wellbeing and a unit looking at and understanding the impact of drugs and alcohol. Many of our students felt able to share their own knowledge/experiences with their peers alongside asking very important questions. One class then designed their own poster for our younger students discouraging them from mis-using drugs or alcohol in the future. Our students were very discerning, wanting their posters not to scare the younger students but ensure they had important information.

PE: PE this term for some was a tale of two halves. Great enjoyment was had by most on the lake continuing to practice their canoeing skills and towards the end of term most of our students were able to enjoy ice skating sessions. Less students enjoyed the opportunities to practice their ball skills in basketball and football but for those who did gains in confidence and ability were many.

A big thank you to all our staff, external coaches that have given our students amazing opportunities to grow their knowledge bases, practice their life skills and build their confidence this term.



Merry Christmas from all at HTS