

Hope Tree School....

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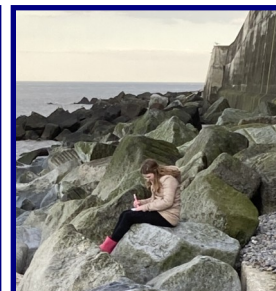
Skye's News

April 2025



Hilltop Outdoor Adventure Centre #3

For so many students school trips are more of a nemesis than a joy. At HTS, we recognise the challenges that school trips can have for our students and do our best to try and enable any student who wishes to, to participate. In our first year we took a handful of students for a day trip to Hilltop which was very successful for those who went. In our second year we went for two days and one night and this year we had three days and two nights—what an achievement for those who stayed for the full trip and also those who took their first tentative steps to try some of the trip. As a school we are very proud of you all.



Classroom learning in West Barn (Years 8 and 9)

English

This term in English, our year 9 cohort set their sights on exploring GCSE texts including Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Students have been working to successfully analyse and evaluate relevant themes in the texts, such as loneliness and isolation and power and conflict, as has been evidenced through their quote identification and explanation of key language techniques. Our year 8 group has enjoyed looking at current events and examining how tone, bias, structure, and other literary elements all play a role in the effectiveness of the news pertaining to different audiences! They have gone on to create their own Hope Tree News production to demonstrate and apply their understanding.

Geography

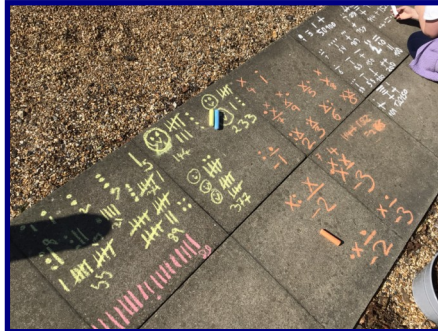
Our focus for Y8 has been the topic of Weather and Climate. We have learned about precipitation patterns from relief, frontal and convectional rainfall across the UK. We have studied the effects of air pressure and high and low pressure weather systems. We have also used our own weather instruments and observations, plus maps and online data, to investigate our weather. In Y9, we have been learning about Forests and Forestry with a focus on the UK. We have learned about forestry as a primary industry and the products and livelihoods linked to forestry. We have also learned about different kinds of forest management through time, including sustainable approaches, and the value of woodland as a source of biodiversity, and ecosystem services such as carbon capture. We have been preparing for our field trip to Hardwick Wood which will take place next term.

Science

Chemistry has been our area for this term in Science and has included learning about atoms, elements and compounds. Year 9 students have carried out the chromatography required experiment and Year 8 students have explored how catalysts speed up chemical reactions. In Year 9, students have been looking at properties of elements on the periodic table, bonding, alloys and the forms of carbon. In Year 8, students have been exploring metals and non-metals, combustion and polymers. Students across Year 8 and 9 have been working with some new scientific equipment, chemicals and have explored how to record results carefully.

Maths

This term in Willow students have had a geometry focus and have worked hard to develop confidence in drawing a range of mathematical constructions. They have also looked at the four shape transformations. In Ferrets, students have looked at angle properties in polygons and have also been developing their algebraic thinking and modelling skills, working up to using algebraic techniques to solve real-life problems. In Ocelots, students have continued to enjoy 'chicken maths' and exploring a number of mathematical topics through their own interests. These have included exploring different number systems, such as that used by the Mayans, and creating our own number systems



Mayan number system

History

In Year 8, we have finished our study of the English Civil War, and focussed on the phenomenon of Witch Hunting and Witch trials of the 16th and 17th Centuries. We have most recently been reading original sources to understand the rise of Matthew Hopkins in East Anglia, and the causes of the Salem Witch Trials in New England. Y9 students have been continuing their studies of the 20th Century. This half term we have moved into 1950's and 1960's with a focus on the civil rights struggles in the U.S.A. Students have been creating powerpoint presentations on the work of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and John F. Kennedy.

PHSE

In PSHE, students in Year 8 and 9 have been looking at body modifications, dental hygiene and looking at what factors may influence healthy living choices.



Classroom learning in Nursery House (Years 5, 6 and 7)

English

In English students learnt about persuasive writing including advertising. They created their own adverts to try and persuade consumers to eat healthy foods. They also wrote their own poetry about personal experiences and feelings. This half term they have explored Aesop's Fables and Greek myths to link in with our topic on Ancient Greece. We looked at the features and style of these stories and the students had an opportunity to write some of their own.

Science

In Science we looked at Health and Reproduction, learning about the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals. We then explored materials and their properties, comparing and grouping everyday materials on the basis of their properties, including their hardness, solubility, transparency and conductivity.

PHSE

PSHE has explored belonging and the community, and challenging stereotypes. We have also evaluated media sources and learnt about sharing things online, recognising what is appropriate to share. We also looked at money and work, including influences and attitudes to money and financial risk.

Geography

In Geography we identified and described key geographical features of the United Kingdom, explored the rivers and coasts and named important cities within the UK. We also learnt about the physical geography of Greece and the population and culture of Greece today.

Maths

In Maths Zebras learnt about ratio and proportion. They did some algebra, starting with simple function machines and then moved onto solving some one step and two step equations. Zebras also explored fractions, decimals and percentages as well as area, perimeter and volume. Flamingos have completed work on area and measurements. They investigated multiplication and division, calculating fractions of amounts and using non-unit fractions. They also learnt about decimals and percentages. They have measured and calculated the perimeter of composite rectilinear shapes in centimetres and metres. They have also investigated statistics, reading and interpreting line graphs and tables.

History

In History we investigated the changes in healthcare over the centuries and the important breakthroughs in medical advancement. We investigated the Ancient Greeks and their way of life. Learning about the achievements and inventions and the important people of the age and how modern-day life has been influenced by the ancient Greeks.

Computing

In Computing students learnt how to create their own presentation about healthy eating using Google Slides. They have also been word processing using Google Documents. They have learnt skills such as adding and editing images, changing the look of the text, adding tables and sharing files and adding animations and slide transitions.

RE

The students learnt about Islam and Buddhism in RE including key beliefs, their origins, and practices



Art and Design

For the first half term Willow and Ferrets tackled the tricky genre of 'Still Life' creating some amazing observational drawings and paintings. We sought inspiration from a range of post-impressionist artists, including Paul Cezanne, whose influence can clearly be seen in some of the students' work.



This was followed by us taking on the role of 'Activist Artists'. Influenced by the work of Luba Lukova and Keith Haring we sought to share our message by screenprinting posters and T-shirts featuring our own designs.



Meanwhile, Ocelots were introduced to the work of Dame Barbara Hepworth. Her abstract art wasn't liked by all, but we attempted to work in her style to create pieces for our own mini gallery, while exploring a range of sculptural techniques.



After the half term break, we explored portraiture and photography. Inspired by a range of artists and photographers we created a range of portraits of ourselves (in role) and some familiar friends.

In Flamingo class students learnt about drawing the human form in Art before using a range of materials to create mini sculptures. They also animated animals making paper puppets which they used to create short animations using Stop Motion. Zebra students have explored a range of different printing techniques to produce work inspired by the natural world. They have also explored food inspired art using mixed media.

Design & Technology

In Year 9, both Willows and Ferrets got the chance to use a commercial kitchen in the Orchard Park Community Centre. Here they created a variety of dishes whilst being introduced to new Food Technology skills, hygiene and food safety.

Year 8 explored a variety of surface decoration techniques in Textile Technology. They were given the opportunity to use these skills to produce an item of their choice.

Zebras were introduced to the safe use of woodworking tools in Design and Technology. Cutting and shaping wood and then using nails to produce a decorative item for the home. They also got to have a Food Technology lesson trying and analysing Greek foods as a cross-curricular link to their project theme.

Flamingos kept to their theme of the Greeks in design and technology by designing and making a vase display, then a labyrinth. They also explored the use of textiles in early civilisations then, in a Food Technology lesson, they tried and analysed Greek foods.

Learning outside the classroom

Gayton Farm:



A glorious spring day, and many of our students went to visit Gayton Farm. We had been invited to spend time there following the births of many lambs. As you can see the babies were a big hit with our students who really enjoyed the opportunities for a hands on approach and to be able to nurture their love of animals. As part of Duke of Edinburgh one student took the opportunity to practice their skill—photography.

PE:

Students across the school have participated in a number of PE activities this term. These have included our annual visits to the Trampoline park, badminton and small group swimming.

In the second half of the term students return to the gym space at Huntingdon Gym where balancing, jumping, swinging and bouncing were all part of the fun.

Basketball, small group swimming and Pilates were the options for second PE slot and many students enjoyed the opportunities that Pilates brings.

