

HOULTON SPRING NEWS 2025



HOULTON
SCHOOL



Welcome from the Principal

Dear Houlton family,

Whenever we have a shorter half-term I always think the newsletter may be at risk of being a bit thin - but, of course, I needn't ever worry as this edition is absolutely brimming with all of the transformational learning experiences pupils have been enjoying, as well as so many great achievements across every aspect of our school community.

Pupils couldn't fail to be impressed by the Hogwarts-eque surroundings of Christ Church College, Oxford where graduates of the Brilliant Club Scholars' Programme were recently hosted and there was a palpable sense of joy and sensitivity when our

social scientists visited Butler's Mews Care Home.

.....
"Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need

For this bright morning dawning for you

The horizon leans forward

Offering you space to place new steps of change..."

...from 'On the Pulse of Morning' by Maya Angelou
.....

As a brand new school, this coming half-term is always extra busy for us as we now begin recruitment ahead

of welcoming our next cohort of 180 pupils - meaning that from September our 11-16 provision will be complete with 900 pupils. How quickly time has passed. We are also making preparations for the concurrent launch of our Sixth form in September 2026 and the potential launch of our new primary-phase provision, too! It's never boring at Houlton School!

I wish all of you a very safe and happy half-term break and look forward to welcoming pupils back to school soon.

Michael McCulley
Principal

Brilliant Club Scholars' Programme Graduation

This half term, 25 Year 9 pupils accompanied Miss Smith and me to a Brilliant Club Scholars' Programme Graduation at Christ Church College, The University of Oxford.

This was a wonderful opportunity to visit a truly impressive and historical site in Oxford and celebrate the academic success of some of our pupils.

Firstly, pupils spent some time in a lecture theatre with a representative from The Brilliant Club, reflecting on what they achieved and skills they acquired whilst working on their final assignments. Pupils in the Humanities group wrote an academic essay on this title: The Triumph after the struggle: Muslim Women's education in Uganda. Pupils from the STEM group had a slightly more creative task and explored this title: Optics in Medicine: Designing a Medical Imaging Device. This task required pupils to consider sustainability in Medicine, alongside technological developments.

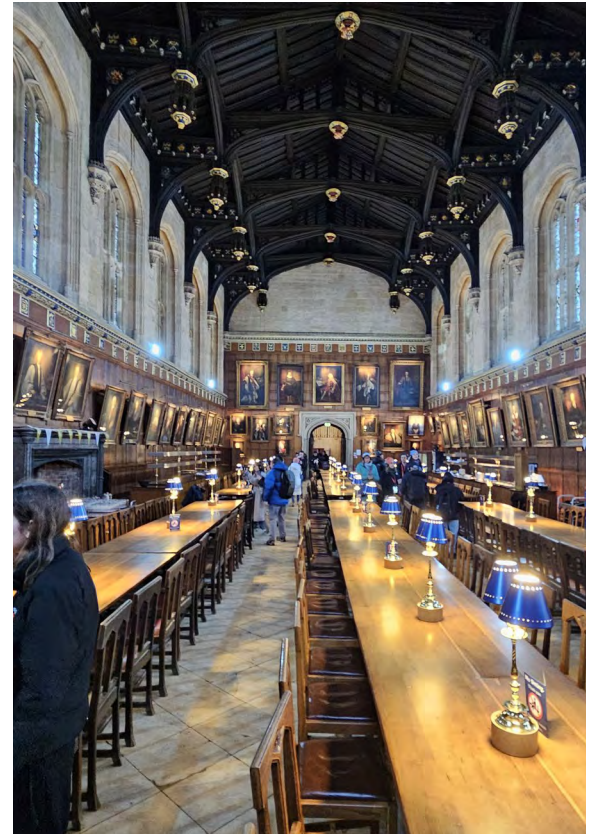
We then had a tour around the beautiful grounds and inspiring buildings of Christ Church College, including its vast 16th Century Great Hall, where students eat their three daily meals. With huge stone fireplaces, roaring fires and walls covered in priceless

oil paintings, exploring this space was a fantastic experience for us all. We were not surprised when our Student Ambassador, Victoria (a third year maths student), told us that the Great Hall had inspired Harry Potter sets and filming locations. It certainly reminded us all of Hogwarts!

After lunch, we headed to Oxford's Town Hall, another beautiful place of interest that was built in the late Victorian era. With its huge domed ceiling full of Gothic architecture and intricate mouldings, it was an honour for the graduation to be held inside such a grand building. The Lord Mayor of Oxford gave a keynote speech before pupils from Houlton School, and other schools across the country, went to the front to collect their certificates.

Congratulations to all of you who graduated, and I look forward to seeing what our Year 7 and 8 Brilliant Club Scholars can achieve later this academic year.

Ms Lancini
Assistant Principal



Top of the Bench Competition

A team of talented chemists from Houlton School competed in the prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) Regional Final on Saturday 11th January.

Saketh (Year 9), Loic (Year 10), Ellen (Year 10), and Gloria (Year 9) earned their spot after a commendable performance in the preliminary round, which was held at Coventry University.

The final took place at the University of Birmingham's Collaborative Teaching Laboratory (CTL). The day was filled with a variety of activities. Following arrival and refreshments, the pupils tackled a challenging paper quiz and demonstrated their practical skills in the CTL's wet laboratory. After a well-deserved lunch, the team attended an engaging talk by Professor Tomislav Friščić on "Marvels of Mechanochemistry."

The day culminated in the exciting results and awards presentation. Houlton School was incredibly proud of Saketh, Loic, Ellen, and Gloria for their hard work and dedication.

Dr Jim Towey
Head of Faculty: Science



Computer Science

Exploring AI Computing

This term has allowed all classes to explore new topics and face new challenges in the developing world of computers, from the core concepts to advanced thinking around Artificial Intelligence.

The coming term will allow us to cement these concepts with pupils even further.

Year 7 have started looking at their next unit, focusing on app development and control systems with a focus on creating flowcharts. During one of our lessons, I got the opportunity to show them the Bluey Minisode "Robo Bingo" (which every pupil seemed to enjoy!) to help illustrate how computers require clear and direct instructions to function properly.

We as humans already know how to brush our teeth, but a robot or computer system (in this case a small red heeler, invested in her imagination) has no idea about the individual commands needed to complete this task, so requires step-by-step instructions.

Year 7 will continue to develop their skills around the core concepts of computational thinking next term.



Year 8 have started working on their Python skills, looking at the basics around variables, inputs and how Python can be used to print statements. As we practice these skills, we look at how they can be used to bring their game scripts designed last term to life.

Pupils will get the opportunity to learn about subroutines and IF statements, allowing them to make more advanced programs. Following Python, we will revisit the topic of data representation but with a focus on sound manipulation.

Year 9 have revisited Python, going back to basics and practicing their skills creating inputs, variables and outputting answers. They will use these skills to develop programs around choices after half term.

After this, they will delve into the world of Artificial Intelligence, a topic which is

becoming increasingly important, looking at the impact it has on the world around us.

The **Year 10** cohort continued to work exceptionally hard this term, focusing on the ethics and impacts of computers worldwide.

Recent topics of conversation that definitely drew their interest were the implication of LAWS (lethal autonomous weapons), the consequences of machine learning and algorithmic bias, the life cycle of a computer and the environmental impacts of improper electronic recycling.

The group have also tackled further exam questions, honing their skills and developing their abilities in answering these questions.

I am looking forward to continuing work with them throughout this year.

Mr Matt Cresswell-Peters
Head of Computer Science

Social Sciences Pupils Visit Care Home

It has been a busy half term in the Social Sciences department. Both Psychology and Sociology pupils have been fine tuning their research skills before applying them to different scenarios.

The highlight though for me has been spending time with residents and staff at Butler's Mews Care Home in Rugby.

Thirteen social sciences pupils, along with Vice Principal Buckenham and myself, spent an enjoyable few hours chatting to residents whilst drinking tea (there might have been the odd cupcake too!).

The residents were so generous with their stories and we all felt like we had learnt an awful lot from them. We were then treated to a three-course lunch where pupils were able to continue their conversations with the residents before playing some games – Scrabble was very popular!

We have more visits planned and are hoping to invite some of the residents to Houlton when the weather is a bit warmer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents and staff for their incredibly warm welcome.

I am still keen to bring these subjects to life for pupils so, to this end, if you or anyone you know works in a related field and would be willing to come and talk to the pupils about what 'A day in the life of...' is like I would love to hear from you: clarke@houlton.tlet.org.uk

Ms Emma Clark
Head of Social Sciences

Religious Education

RE Pupils Study Major Religions

This term in Religious Education, pupils have been exploring a range of faiths and traditions, with each year group focusing on a specific topic:

- **Year 7** have been studying Christianity, learning about its core beliefs, practices, and traditions.
- **Year 8** have focused on Islam, looking at the Five Pillars and key festivals like Ramadan and Eid.

- **Year 9** have been learning about Hinduism, exploring ideas such as karma, dharma, and the importance of festivals like Diwali.
- **Year 10** have started their short course GCSE in RE, focusing on Christianity, including topics such as Christian beliefs.

As the term ends, pupils are preparing for end-of-topic tests to review their learning and understanding. It has been a productive term, and we look forward to seeing how everyone progresses in the months ahead.

Mrs Dupinder Gatora
Head of Religious Studies

History

On January 27th we observed Holocaust Memorial Day, marking 80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

This year's theme, "For a Better Future," urges us to honour the memory of the six million Jews and countless others who perished, while committing to a world free from hatred and discrimination.

In our school, we dedicated assemblies and form time to reflect on the significance of memorials and the power of language. Pupils engaged in discussions about the role of memorials in preserving history and the importance of using language that promotes understanding and respect. By examining

the atrocities of the past, we aim to foster empathy and encourage actions that contribute to a more inclusive society.

We encourage everyone to continue this journey of remembrance and education. The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust offers valuable resources for further learning and reflection.

Let us honour the victims by committing to remembrance and striving for a better future.

Mr Jamie Abbott
Head of Faculty: Humanities



**HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY TRUST**

The Houlton Canon

This term will see the launch of the Houlton Canon – a huge list of recommended fiction and non-fiction books which have cross-curricular links.

If you are a scientist, why not try *We Are All Made of Molecules* by Susin Nielsen, or if you love Maths, what about *Things to Make and Do in the Fourth Dimension* by Matt Parker?

Two of my personal favourites: *Rooftoppers* by Katherine Rundell – a story set in Paris which follows the adventures of a girl named Sophie who sets out to find her mother after a shipwreck. The story is full of adventure, hope, and courage and is loved by Mr. Raffy, our Head of MFL. Secondly, *Run, Rebel* by Manjeet Mann, inspired our PE department. They said: “When Amber runs, it’s the only time she feels completely free – far away from her claustrophobic home life. Her father wants her to be a dutiful daughter, waiting for an arranged marriage like her sister Ruby. Running is a quiet rebellion. But Amber wants so much more – and she’s ready to fight for it. It’s time for a revolution.”

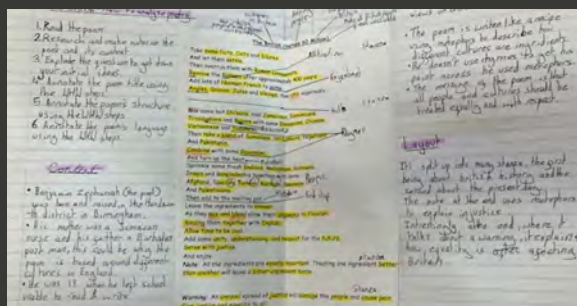
The exciting new Houlton Canon will soon be available to borrow and read in the Library.



What's been happening this term?

Year 7 are working on a Poetry unit this term. They have been looking at a range of poems and have been focusing on language analysis and how to annotate a poem.

Here is a lovely example of clear and concise annotation. This is the work of Georgia in 7 Obama.



Year 8 have been studying Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare. Many have been intuitive enough to see parallels in the assassination of Caesar with the overthrowing of 20th Century dictators (thus providing a link to our Holocaust Memorial work this term).

One of our key aims in teaching Shakespeare to Year 8 is to immerse them not only in the wonderful stories, but also in Elizabethan and Jacobean vocabulary.

Shakespearean Vocabulary List		
Below, you'll find a list of some of the most common words used by Shakespeare translated into modern English.		
ABHOR - To reject, disdain	CUNNING - Clever, sharp	LAND - Yard
ABSOLUTE - Without flaw, perfect	DESERVING - Merit, reward	LAPSED - Shocked, overcome
ART - Art	DRAW - To bring near, call to	MAD - Crazy, wild
ATTIRE - Clothes	EMBASSY - To track with the intent to kill	MATE - To confuse; to match
BALK - To hesitate, chop; to dispute	EXPERIENCE - Quickness	NOTE - Bill, list; to take note of
BRAVE - Handsome	FANCY - To desire	O'ER WROUGHT - Overcome
CHARACTER - Letter, word	FEAR - To scare, frighten	OFF - Often
COIL - Distress, trouble	FRONT - To oppose, affront, object	OUGH - Privy to, promised
COUCH - To go to sleep	GRAVE - To inter, bury	PAINFUL - Difficult, hard to do
	HEAVY - Sad, painful, mournful	PALL - To wrap up
	JUDICIOUS - Fair, equitable	PERPEND - To think of, consider
	KNAVE - A young boy, a servant	QUAINT - Beautiful, ornate

Year 9 have moved on in their English Learning Journey from the Victorian period and *Jane Eyre* to the literature of World War One. We have studied some thought-provoking pro-war propaganda poetry and some of the anti-war poems of Siegfried Sassoon. Now Year 9 are reading the play, *Journey's End* by RC Sherriff.



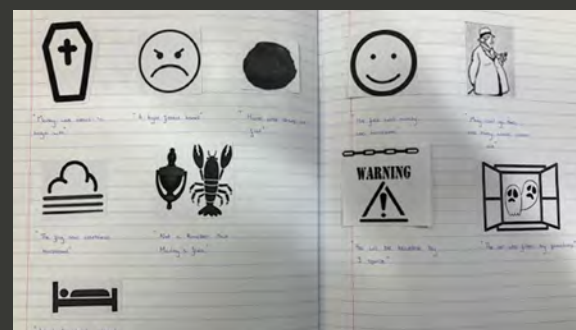
Sherriff was born in Hampton Wick in 1896 and educated at Kingston Grammar School, before working as an accountant. On the outbreak of war, Sherriff attempted to enlist but was rejected. However, in November 1915 he successfully applied again and joined the Artists Rifles for training. By September 1916, he had received a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the East Surrey Regiment. He arrived on the Western Front in October 1916 and spent four gruelling months with the 9th Battalion at Vimy Ridge and Messines Ridge. On 27 January 1917, Sherriff was wounded during a bombardment at Bracquemont. He received field hospital treatment and returned to the front line in time to participate in the notorious third battle of Ypres.

Out of his experiences at Ypres he forged his play, *Journey's End*, which was published in 1928. The play is set over four days leading up to a massive German attack on the British trenches in March 1918. It captures the tension, claustrophobia and barely concealed terror as a new recruit to the company, Lieutenant Raleigh, discovers that his former

childhood friend and hero, Captain Stanhope, has changed almost beyond recognition.

Year 10 are now working on their second GCSE Literature text, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. Pupils have been working their way through this classic text with an eye on metacognition, retention and revision techniques. One of these revision methods is Dual-Coding.

Here is an example of this from Liv in 10 Armstrong.



Dual coding, put simply, means providing an image to link to key bits of information, thus allowing more material to be retained as pupils have less to process at one time.

As Oliver Caviglioli explained at ResearchEd 2017, words can be complicated. If they are spoken and there is nothing to accompany them, then they are “invisible,” “transient” and aren’t retained. Over the course of this term, we will attempt to turn a novel of over 30,000 words into a series of easily memorable images. Exam success guaranteed!

Keep on reading!

Mr Ben Coleman
Head of English and Literacy

PHRSE Pupils Explore Empathy, Diversity, and Relationships

In our PHRSE lessons this term, pupils have been engaging in thought-provoking discussions and activities around relationships.

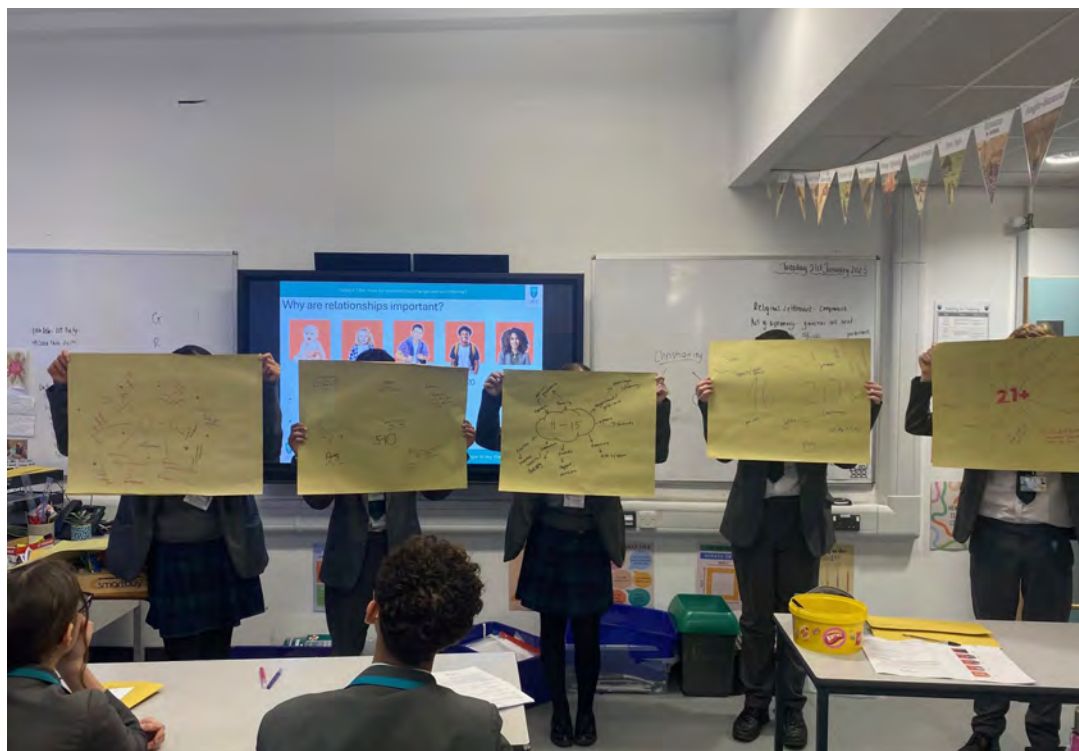
These units of work are designed to foster understanding, respect, and empathy among our pupils, which will support them in navigating both their personal relationships and the wider community.

Year 7 pupils have been exploring empathy and understanding what makes a good friend. They've looked at the qualities that help build strong, positive relationships and how they can demonstrate kindness and support to others in both school and beyond.

Year 8 pupils have focused on diversity and the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act. Through this, they've gained a deeper understanding of how celebrating differences can make our school a more inclusive, welcoming place for all. They've also discussed how these values are essential for promoting respect and understanding in society.

In **Year 9**, pupils have been reflecting on the different types of relationships they may experience throughout their lives, from friendships to family and romantic relationships. They've examined how these relationships evolve and how to manage the changes that come with growing up, learning valuable strategies for maintaining healthy relationships.

Finally, **Year 10** pupils have been exploring the crucial topic of consent as part of their Relationship and Sex Education. They've learned about the importance of clear communication,



mutual respect, and understanding boundaries in all relationships, and how to approach these sensitive topics in a responsible and informed way.

We are incredibly proud of how our pupils have approached these lessons with maturity, openness, and respect. Their thoughtful contributions and willingness to engage with these important topics reflect their growing understanding of what it means to be a considerate and responsible member of our community. These lessons are vital in equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to build healthy, positive relationships throughout their lives.

Mrs Becky Cooper
Head of PHRSE

Business Studies

Year 10 Business Studies Trip to Cadbury World

Year 10 Business Studies pupils recently took an exciting and educational trip to Cadbury World, where they explored the history, production, and business operations of one of the UK's most beloved chocolate brands.

The day began with a fascinating journey through the history of Cadbury, from its humble beginnings in 1824, when John Cadbury first opened a small shop in Birmingham, to its growth into an internationally recognised brand. Pupils learned about the company's Quaker roots and its commitment to ethical business practices, including its early adoption of fair working conditions and charitable efforts.

A highlight of the trip was discovering how chocolate is made. From the sourcing of cocoa beans to the intricate process of

roasting, refining, and moulding, pupils gained valuable insight into the craftsmanship behind every bar of Cadbury chocolate. Watching molten chocolate being transformed into delicious treats was truly mesmerising!

The group also attended a business talk, where they explored how Cadbury operates as a successful global brand. Topics included marketing strategies, production efficiency, and sustainability efforts, giving pupils a real-world perspective on business concepts studied in class.

Of course, no trip to Cadbury World would be complete without some fun! Pupils enjoyed the interactive rides, tried their hand at chocolate piping, and, of course, indulged in plenty of sweet treats.

A huge thank you to Ms Fleck and Mrs Forrest for supervising this magical experience. It was a truly unforgettable day filled with learning, laughter and, most importantly, chocolate!

Mr Jamie Abbott
Head of Faculty: Humanities

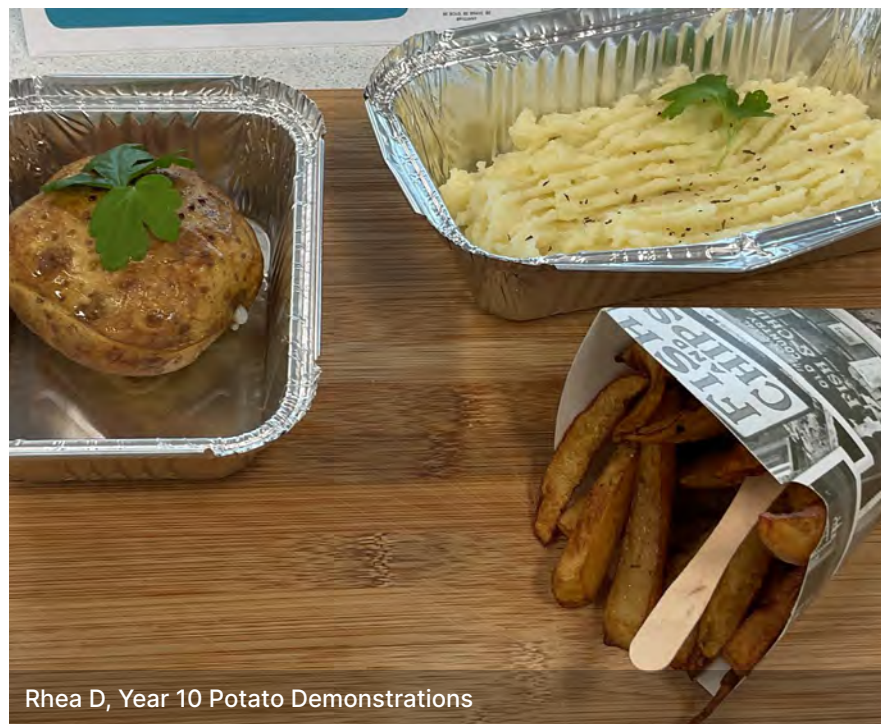
Walks of Wonder

As a Head of Faculty, I have the distinct pleasure and privilege to witness a breadth of achievements across Design & Technology, Fine Art, Photography and Food Preparation and Nutrition as I dip in and out of lessons.

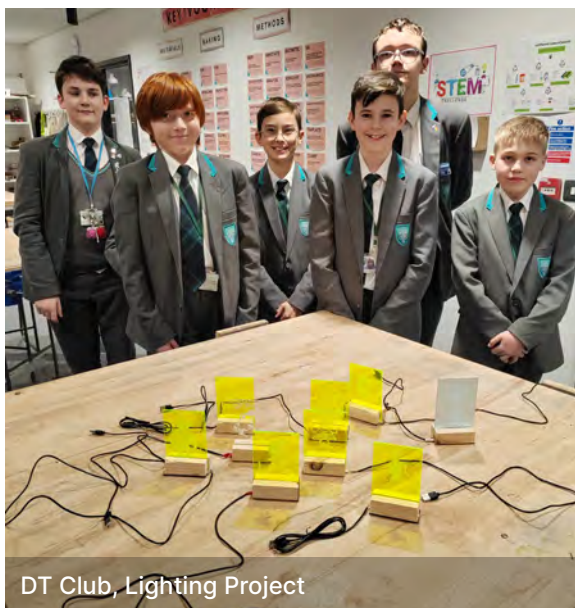
Over this last half term, I have been in awe of the tenacity, resilience and commitment our pupils have shown to their creative studies. Intensive ceramic workshops, cheesecake masterclasses and photomontage experiments have all contributed to what has been a broad and ambitious creative curriculum.

It is with absolute pleasure that I highlight some of the fantastic work which I have witnessed over this term in the kitchens, workshops and art studios of Houlton School.

Mr Russell Hill
Head of Faculty: Creative



Rhea D, Year 10 Potato Demonstrations



DT Club, Lighting Project



Daniel M, Year 9, Drawing



Anna J, Year 10, sketchbook

Year 10 Get Creative with Photography and Ceramics

Our Year 10 Photography pupils have been pushing the boundaries of creativity this term, blending self-portraits with other imagery to produce striking pieces.

Meanwhile, our Year 10 Art pupils had the exciting opportunity to work with local potter Tony Dix. Drawing inspiration from utilitarian architecture, they crafted unique ceramic vessels while learning a range of techniques. Now, they're eagerly awaiting the final reveal as their creations emerge from the kiln!

We can't wait to see the finished results!

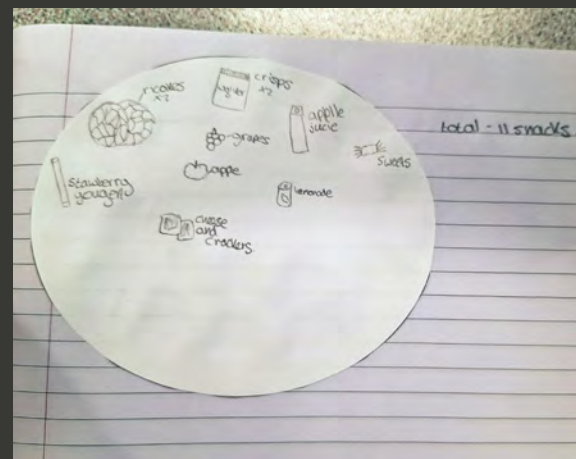
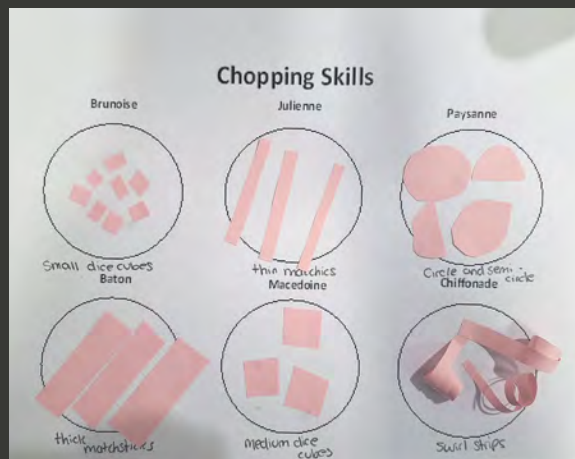
Ms Ruth Woodcraft
Head of Art & Photography



Year 7

Pupils have been studying diet categories of people and the food best suited to them. They have also been trying to establish what foods and drinks are classed as snacks and totalling how many snacks they consume in a day.

In addition, pupils had the chance to make cheese turnovers, making pastry from scratch, learning the breadcrumb technique and shaping.



Year 8

We have been looking at the Big Question: Where does food come from and is it processed?

Through this question pupils are exploring primary ingredients and secondary processed ingredients. They are then learning how the ingredients we purchase begin to lose their nutritional value due to the processing they undertake.

We have also researched the nutrient of fat present within different types of cream and opted to use whipped cream in a cheesecake.



Year 9

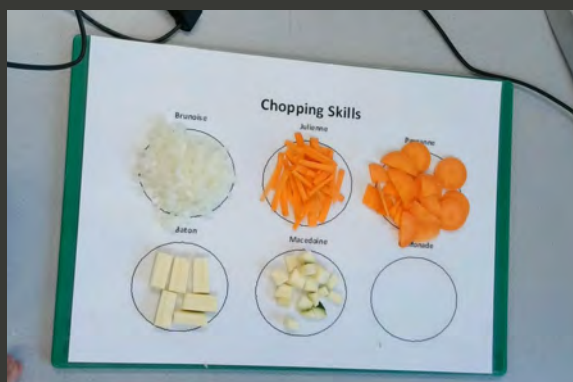
Pupils have been continuing the Big Question around principles of nutrition and learning particularly about chopping skills applied to a variety of vegetables targeted towards their age range.



Year 10

Our budding Head Chefs have been busy cooking up a storm with wonderful flavours and skills demonstrated through making fresh pasta, lasagne, and shortcrust pastry for quiche fillings.

Mrs Baldeep Devgun
Head of Food Preparation and Nutrition



Hello! Bonjour! ¡Hola!

Welcome to the latest update from the Languages Faculty! We're proud to share the exciting work our pupils have been doing this term.

At Houlton, all language learning is underpinned by our three pillars: vocabulary, grammar, and phonics. To this strong foundation, we add our own unique pediment: culture. By learning language through culture, we ensure a captivating and transformational experience for every pupil. Here's a closer look at what's been happening in French and Spanish.

French

Our **Year 10** pupils have been tackling the Big Question: Is school the best place to learn? This thought-provoking topic has allowed them to deepen their skills in vocabulary, exploring terms linked to education and opinions, while also strengthening their grammar by practising comparative structures and persuasive phrases. Alongside this, their phonics work has focused on pronunciation techniques to ensure clarity in their upcoming writing and listening assessments.

To make learning truly transformational, we've woven French culture into their studies. Pupils have explored how education systems differ in France and the UK, sparking some fascinating debates about school life. Bien joué, Year 10!

Our **KS3** pupils have also been hard at work, tackling Big Questions such as "Qui suis-je?" (Who am I?) and "How can we live a healthier life?" These questions have encouraged pupils to build their vocabulary around identity, family, and healthy habits, while also refining their grammar skills with verb conjugations and adjectival agreements. To make it all come alive, they've been exploring French traditions, from food to sports, to understand how culture shapes lifestyle. Their enthusiasm has been fantastique!

We're thrilled to see our pupils engaging so deeply with French, and we're equally excited about our trip to Paris. This cultural immersion will give pupils the chance to experience the language in action, from ordering croissants in a boulangerie to seeing iconic landmarks like the Catacombes. Parents, a gentle reminder: please bring your child's passports to reception for photocopying as soon as possible. Merci beaucoup!

Spanish

In **Year 10**, pupils have been exploring the Big Question: "¿Quién está en mi círculo?" (Who is in my circle?). This has provided a fantastic opportunity to build their vocabulary around relationships and social life, while practising key grammar concepts such as reflexive verbs and possessive adjectives. Their phonics work has focused on mastering accurate pronunciation to help them shine in their writing and reading assessments.

As always, culture plays a central role in our learning. Pupils have been learning about the importance of family and friendships in Spanish-speaking countries,

comparing customs and traditions with their own experiences. This cultural insight has made their studies even more engaging – muy bien, Year 10!

For our **Year 8** pupils, the Big Question has been "¿Por qué tenemos vacaciones?" (Why do we have holidays?). This has allowed them to expand their vocabulary around travel and leisure, while practising grammar structures like the past tense to describe holidays. To add cultural depth, pupils have explored popular holiday destinations in Spain and Latin America, such as the beaches of Costa del Sol and the vibrant festivals of Mexico. Their creativity and curiosity have been a joy to see.

For our **Year 9s** heading to Barcelona this summer, preparations are well underway! The trip will offer an incredible opportunity for pupils to apply their Spanish skills in real-life situations, from navigating the bustling streets of Las Ramblas to exploring the stunning architecture of La Sagrada Família. Parents, please remember to bring passports to reception for photocopying to help us finalise the details – ¡gracias!

At the Languages Faculty, we believe that learning a language is about more than just words; it's about opening a window to another world.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to sharing more updates soon.

Merci et à très vite! ¡Hasta pronto!

Mr Matthieu Raffy
Head of Faculty: Modern Languages



Dance

Dancers Shine at Careers in Dance Event

On Tuesday 9th January, pupils from the BTEC Dance course, along with a selection of Year 9 dancers, attended the Black Country Dance Hub's Careers in Dance Event—a fantastic opportunity to explore future pathways in the dance industry.

Throughout the day, pupils took part in four diverse and inspiring workshops, led by professional dance companies and colleges, experiencing a range of styles and techniques. In addition to the workshops, they visited the marketplace, where they engaged with representatives from dance companies, colleges, and universities, gaining valuable insights into training and career opportunities in the industry.

Our pupils represented the school brilliantly, showing enthusiasm, commitment, and a real passion for dance. It's safe to say they gave it their all, resulting in a few sore muscles the next day! Well done to everyone who took part.

Boys' Dance Workshop with Ascension Dance

A group of Year 7 and 8 boys recently took part in an exciting dance workshop with professional dancers AJ and Ben from Ascension Dance. The session introduced them to contemporary dance, parkour techniques, and creative movement tasks, pushing them to move in new and dynamic ways.

More than just a dance workshop, the day was about challenging stereotypes and proving that dance is a powerful, athletic, and creative art form. The boys threw themselves into every task with enthusiasm and determination, showing that dance is just as demanding and rewarding as any sport.



We can't wait to welcome Ascension Dance back in the future for more sessions!

BTEC Performing Arts Pupils Inspired by Ashlawn's Production of 9 to 5

BTEC Dance and Acting pupils recently had the opportunity to visit Ashlawn School to watch their fantastic production of 9 to 5. The show was packed with incredible talent, and our pupils were truly inspired by the performance.

We are grateful for the invite and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We look forward to more TLET Performing Arts collaborations in the future!

Miss Frankie Connolly
Head of Dance

Acting

Houlton's First Ever Performing Arts Scholars Society (PASS) Takes Centre Stage!

Exciting news from the Performing Arts Department - Houlton has officially launched its very first Performing Arts Scholars Society (PASS)! After an outstanding turnout, 42 talented Key Stage 3 pupils have been selected to be part of this prestigious group, with 14 specialising in Acting, 14 in Dance, and 14 in Music.

Auditions were no small feat! Each hopeful performer dedicated themselves to learning and delivering an impressive one-minute monologue for acting, choreographing and performing a one-minute dance routine, or showcasing their musical abilities in a one-minute piece. The musical talent on display included clarinetists, pianists, vocalists, and guitarists.

With such enthusiasm and dedication, we needed two full after-school sessions to see every audition, and the standard was exceptional. A huge thank you goes to the Year 10 Performing Arts pupils, who took on the important role of being on the audition panel. Their keen eye and expertise played a crucial role in selecting our first cohort of scholars.

Being a part of PASS is a fantastic opportunity for our young performers. Members will now have the chance to attend additional theatre trips, workshops, auditions, performances, recitals, and concerts, all designed to help them hone their craft and develop their skills in the performing arts.

For those who didn't make it this time, don't be discouraged! There are still plenty of ways to get involved, including school productions, dance and music clubs, and exciting backstage roles - so keep pursuing your passion!

But the excitement doesn't stop there. Houlton School is currently applying for Artsmark status, a nationally recognised accreditation for schools committed to arts education. Achieving Artsmark will not only enhance our school's cultural and creative curriculum but will also provide greater opportunities for our pupils to engage with professional artists, external arts organisations, and industry-standard resources. This will have a lasting impact, not just for our school but also for the wider community, fostering a vibrant arts culture in the local area.

A huge congratulations to everyone who auditioned, and an even bigger thank you to those who made this possible. We can't wait to see what the future holds for our incredible PASS members and for the Performing Arts at Houlton!

Stay creative, stay passionate, and keep performing!

Mr David Bird
Head of Acting

PE Updates

This half-term has been packed with energy and enthusiasm in PE! Here's what our pupils have been up to:

Year 7 – Gymnastics & Team Building

Year 7 have been learning key gymnastics skills like rolls, jumps, and balances, working together to create routines. They've also taken part in team building activities to improve communication and teamwork.

Year 8 – Team Building & Fitness

Year 8 have enjoyed team building challenges, developing problem-solving and cooperation skills. They've also focused on fitness, learning about different training methods to boost endurance and strength.

Year 9 – Table Tennis & Team Building

Year 9 have been sharpening their table tennis skills, improving hand-eye coordination and tactics. Their team building sessions have helped develop teamwork and communication.

Year 10 – Table Tennis & Handball

Year 10 have progressed in table tennis, refining their techniques and strategies. They've also taken on handball, learning key skills like passing, shooting, and defending.

This half-term has also been an exciting one for our Year 7 netball team, who have been competing against other local schools. They have played fixtures against Avon Valley and Bilton so far, with three more matches to come. The team is progressing well and gaining confidence with every game.

A special mention goes to Isaac in 8D, who competed in the Warwickshire Schools Cross Country Championships and finished an impressive 3rd overall in his year group. Well done, Isaac!

Year 7 and 8 also competed in the indoor athletics competition at Harris, putting in fantastic performances and narrowly missing out on progressing to the next level of competition.

Next half-term will see the return of rugby fixtures and girls' football, giving pupils more opportunities to compete and develop their skills.

We're proud of all our pupils for their effort and enthusiasm this half-term.

Co-curricular opportunities this term:

- Mixed Football (Tuesday's)
- Netball (Tuesday after school)
- Running club (Thursday after school)
- Girls Football (Wednesday after school)
- Volleyball (Tuesday after school)

Please follow our X page with all news regarding fixtures, results and PE department news. @HoultonPEdept

Miss Abbie Hartfield
Head of PE





HOULTON
SCHOOL

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