

Quickfire Week

The week in bullet points

Week commencing 31st January - Week A

Week commencing 7th February - Week B

- ◇ LGBTQ+ History Month - February
- ◇ Year 12 Parents Evening - Thursday 3rd February

I hope this update finds you and your families well at this time. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the blog – the pages are packed with updates about educational experiences we are offering to our students, and examples of how we continue to work to improve our school. I am so proud that, despite the ongoing challenges, my staff continue to provide such a varied and high quality learning experience to our students.

I am writing this week to ask for your support in 3 key areas, and am asking you to discuss these with your child this weekend:

The Basics

We are seeing an increase in the number of students who are not attending school with the basic equipment. This weekend, can you please make sure your child has a supply of pens/pencils/ruler/rubber/sharpener etc and that they are bringing this equipment to school each day. Make sure too that they have their PE kit and bring this to school on days when they have PE lessons. Finally please ensure they have the correct school uniform including the school tie and black shoes (not trainers).

Online Behaviour

Unfortunately this week some of our staff and students have been victim of some very unpleasant online abuse. We have dealt with this extremely firmly as a school and are cooperating fully with the police who are also dealing with the individual who did this. This has served as an important reminder to our students of the need to behave appropriately online. Please can I ask for your support in discussing this with your son or daughter this weekend. Abusive online behaviour is treated by the school and by the police as a hate crime and can often, as has happened in this case, be traced back to an individual who will then be held fully responsible. Later this term we will be focussing on internet safety in school to remind our students of their obligations in this area.

Saying Thank You

It is always appreciated when students thank staff for their efforts. This week we have launched a survey on Teams asking all students to spend one minute thanking that one member of staff who has really helped them this term. We have over 1000 students on roll so I am hopeful that many students will take the opportunity to say a sincere thank you. If any parents wish to contact us to pass on their thanks to a member of staff, please also email the office and we will of course pass this on. All messages, from students or parents, will I know be greatly appreciated by our staff. If you would like to go one step further, please see the details enclosed on how you can nominate a teacher for the Kent Teacher of the Year Award.

Thank you for your support in ensuring that all our students attend school fully equipped to learn, act responsibly online and demonstrate good manners by thanking those who have helped them.

I will update you again in 2 weeks in what will be our end of term 3 edition.

Continued best wishes to you all.

Mr L. Preston
Principal



Aspire & Achieve Together

LGBTQ+ Month

This February, the Trust will be celebrating the lives and achievements of the LGBTQ+ community. LGBTQ+ Months aims to promote tolerance and raise awareness of the prejudices faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Keep an eye out on our social media pages to see all of the exciting LGBTQ+ activities that are taking place during February.



Year 7 Road Safety

This week, each Year 7 class took part in a virtual workshop led by the Road Safety Officers of Medway Council.

We want to equip our students with the knowledge to keep themselves and others safe, particularly since eleven year old children are the most likely age group to be involved in a pedestrian collision in Medway.

In each workshop, students were given the skills needed for independent travel to secondary school. They took part in interactive activities and creative tasks to help remember the advice.

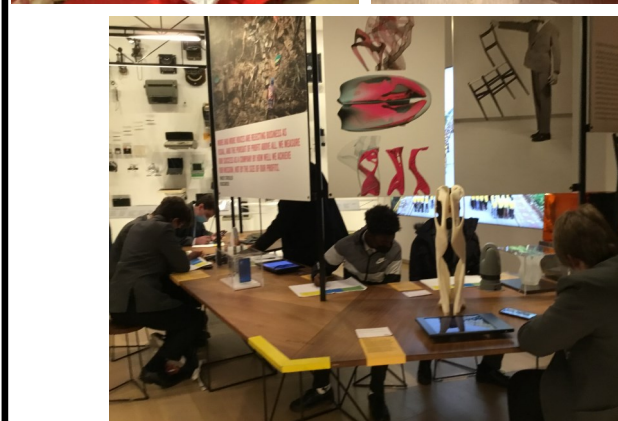
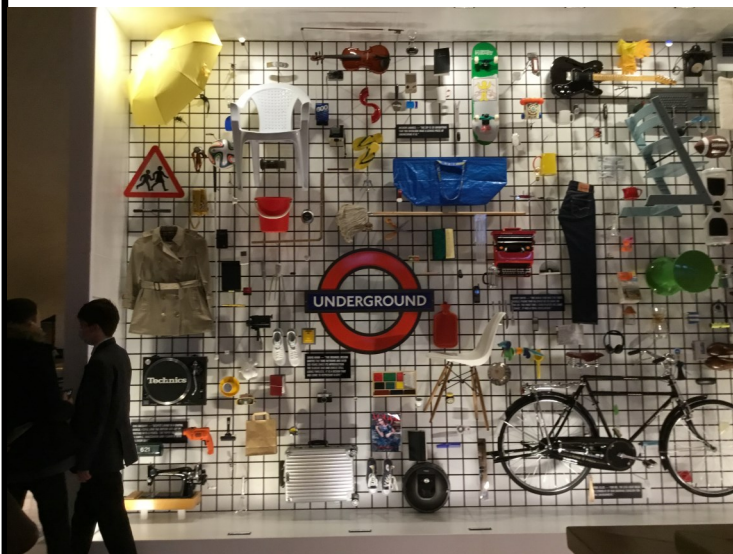
We look forward to hearing how the students will put this information into practice outside school in the near future.



DT Trip to the Design Museum

Year 10 Design & Technology students visited the Design Museum in London, to help to complete their GCSE course work. They explored what the design museum had to offer, including the 'Designer, Maker, User' exhibition which looked at the development of modern designs and how they accommodate the ever changing user needs.

The pupils also took part in a workshop which focused on sustainable and smart materials, which are those materials that can react to their environment. The highlight of the visit was viewing the design icon wall, which showcased a range of classic and contemporary well-know designs such as the London underground sign, the Ikea carrier bag and The Dyson DC01 amongst other well known products.



Martin Luther King Junior Day

Martin Luther King Junior day was celebrated on Monday 17th January. As a school we were reminded in assemblies of the importance of the Civil Rights movement in addressing the inequalities which exists in the USA and how we can continue to practice and promote equality in our school community.



Lessons with the Lords' Programme

On Monday 17th of January, Sixth Form politics students had the opportunity to meet virtually with the Lord Colgrain through the 'Lessons with the Lords' programme ran by Parliament.. Lord Colgrain is a hereditary peer and a member of the Environment and Climate Change Committee alongside the Rural Economy Committee. He is local to the school, passionately advocating for the Medway Towns, and has spoken on behalf of the local area on numerous occasions. We had the fantastic opportunity to ask many wide-ranging questions, from his opinion on 'Party Gate' to his views on the status of the House of Lords and further Parliamentary reform. I personally was very interested to learn about his opinions on the benefits that Hereditary Peers bring to our parliamentary system.

Lord Colgrain stated that hereditary peers are from a wide range of backgrounds. He argued that hereditary peers provide the House of Lords with an element of experience, independence and knowledge that life peers often lack. This countered the belief that hereditary peers provide very little input or benefit; and are merely lucky to inherit the position. The differing perspectives were very enlightening. Lord Colgrain was able to provide a detailed answer to every question and was very passionate about his work, which impressed the class. All students were given the opportunity to ask at least one question and very much valued the experience and chance to interact with somebody at the heart of our current political system.

UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools (RRSA) Update

Students and staff at Holcombe Grammar School are celebrating receiving the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award.

We began our rights respecting journey in September when members of staff and parents were informed of our ambition to become a Rights Respecting School. Since then we have formed a Steering Group of students and members of staff who have begun to educate the school community about rights. Our decision to embark on this journey is based upon the fact that the RRSA involves young people and the school community learning about children's rights and putting them into practice daily. Rights respecting is not only about what children do but also, importantly, what adults do.

The Bronze award is the first stage of the RRSA and recognises that we are, Rights: Committed, and that the foundations are in place for our journey towards Silver: Rights Aware.

Next, we begin our work towards the Silver Award. This will include ensuring The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) underpins our values and decision making. The whole school will learn about the CRC and how the articles can be exemplified in all we do by:

promoting knowledge and understanding of the Convention throughout our school community.

Empowering the young people in our community to see themselves as rights respecting global citizens.

Instilling advocacy for fairness and children's rights within the school community, locally and globally.

"I am thrilled that we have achieved this award so early in the year. This is a great achievement considering we only started this journey in September. I am hugely grateful to all those staff and students who have played a role in achieving this award. We now turn our attention to achieving the Silver Award and we will keep you updated". - Mr Preston, Principal



Lion King Trip

Last week some of our Year 7 students enjoyed a trip to the Theatre to see the spectacular show, The Lion King. They all had a roarsome time and sang along to hits such as Hakuna Matata, Circle of Life and Can You Feel the Love Tonight.



Kent Teacher of the Year Awards

Don't forget to submit your nominations for this years Kent Teacher of the Year Awards!



Kent Teacher of the Year Awards

2022

Let ANY member of school staff know how much they are appreciated - we want to celebrate all of you!

Closing date: 28th February 2022

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Giving Children the Knowledge and Motivation to be the best they can be

Enter a nomination today!
KMCHARITYTEAM.CO.UK/TOTY

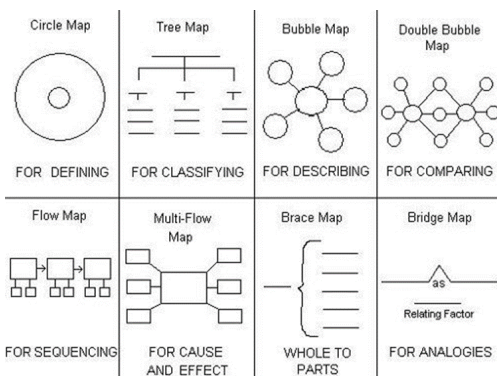
Thinking at Holcombe: *Thinking Maps*

Hyerle and Alper (2011) state that, 'Thinking Maps serve as a device for mediating thinking, listening, speaking, reading, writing, problem solving, and acquiring new knowledge' and for our Trust schools these visual representations provide a method to communicate the thinking that is taking place in the heads of our students. The infusion of Hyerle's Thinking Maps across the whole curriculum has provided our students with a method to sort and present information, providing a rich vocabulary to express and discuss their ideas in relation to the content they are studying and their underlying thinking. The shared common language across all subjects and key stages helps to improve our students' confidence and competence in their learning.

Despite the differing contextual demands of our different schools, for both staff and students in TSAT, the Maps have provided a strategy to explore curriculum content in a way that enables students to form meaningful links to previous learning and structure their work in a digestible format. We have found, especially for younger students, the levels of confidence relating to learning new content has increased, as has the quality of students' metacognition when talking about their learning. By the end of Year 7, students are already more articulate when discussing their thinking.

Our school student planners have visual images and explanations of the eight Thinking Maps – and they can be summarised below:

Thinking Map	Thinking Process
Bubble Map	Describing
Double Bubble Map	Comparing and contrasting
Tree Map	Classifying
Brace Map	Identifying whole/part relationships
Flow Map	Sequencing
Multi-Flow Map	Causes and effects
Circle Map	Defining in context
Bridge Map	Seeing analogies



Student Achievement

As a school we love to share student achievements and news. Please read below for an accomplishment that was achieved recently by one of our Year 11 students.

Joseph Bell (Yr 11) has always had a real interest in aviation, in particular, becoming a pilot and would love to pursue a career within this field. Back in September, Joseph applied for a position on the Biggin Hill Futures Week programme. The programme introduces students to the world of aviation in an operational airport, covering air traffic control, ramp operation, piloting and general operational procedures.

After a lengthy application process and tough competition, Joseph received the delightful news that he had secured a place on the programme.

We are so proud of Joseph and as a school we wish him all the best!



BIGGIN HILL

Holcombe Grammar Social Media

Please follow both our Facebook and Twitter pages for important updates, exciting news and celebrations of students achievements.



Facebook - TSAT Holcombe Grammar School



Twitter - @holcombegramma1

Key Dates 2022

February	LGBTQ History Month
Thursday 3rd February	Year 12 Parents Evening
Friday 11th February	Last day of Term
Monday 21st February	First day of Term