



Dear parents and carers,

It has been a very busy two weeks since our last update and as I write this today (Friday 7th October) we are very much looking forward to our Open Day on Saturday when we can showcase our school to those students who are considering joining us next year. A reminder that as school is open for this extra day tomorrow, the school will be closed on Friday 18th November.

I would like to start by thanking those parents of students in Year 7 and Year 12 who attended the respective Welcome Evenings last week; both evenings were well attended and I know from speaking to some of those who attended that they were very useful events.

Year 11s start their first Prelim examinations today and continue until Tuesday 18th October. We wish them well for these examinations which will start to prepare them for what lies ahead in the summer. Once these examinations are completed and marked and returned to them, they will be able to see what gaps they have in their knowledge and will then work to plug those gaps in the coming months. Whilst discussing Year 11, I would like to remind all parents of Year 11 students that our 6th Form Open Evening is on **Thursday 17th November** from 6pm and we look forward to welcoming you to the school then to discuss our 6th form offer with you.

Year 13 will have their first Prelims after half term but next week those students who are applying for Oxbridge places have their assessments and we wish them every success.

We informed you all on our last blog of our new Classcharts system. Over 50% of parents have now signed up to this system and we have received some very pleasing comments about how useful parents are finding it. At the moment, as we embed the new system, we are not using it to its full capacity but in the coming weeks and months we will use it more and more widely so I would urge all parents who have not yet signed up to please do so. The details have been emailed home but if you need any assistance please contact the main school office who will be pleased to help you.

This week I had the pleasure of watching some of our students perform in the Icon Theatre's production of 'The ballad of St John's Car Park'. This was a great evening and another example of the growing range of arts-based experiences that we are offering our students. I look forward to providing further updates later in the year.

In assemblies we have been discussing Black History Month and also World Mental Health day – we have provided further information about both of these very important events in this blog.

Remarkably, when we send our next blog home in 2 weeks time it will be the end of this first term and the half term break will be upon us. The last day of term for students is Thursday 20th October and school returns on Tuesday 1st November.

Mr L.Preston
Principal
Holcombe Grammar School

Key Dates 2022 -

- Saturday 8th October - Open Morning
- Thursday 20th October - Last Day of Term 1
- Friday 21st October - Staff Development Day
- Monday 31st October - Staff Development Day
- Tuesday 1st November - First Day of Term 2
- Thursday 17th November - Sixth Form Open Evening 6pm-9pm
- Friday 18th November - Day off in lieu of Open Morning
- Friday 17th December - Last Day of Term 2

The office hours are changing from Monday 10th October.

Mondays-Thursdays the office will be open 7:30am-4:30pm.

Fridays the office will be open 7:30am-4:00pm.

Personal Development Lessons 2022

Personal Development at Holcombe Grammar School is part of everything we do. Our aim is that students develop into successful, well rounded, confident young people who are equipped with the academic and life skills necessary to thrive in the modern world. In addition to academic curriculum, extra-curricular clubs and pastoral programmes already in place, all students in all year groups now have a Personal Development lesson each week.

These PD lessons are delivered by the students' first port of call - their form tutors. The member of staff who see them every day and know them well as an individual can then offer bespoke lessons which meet the needs and aspirations of their tutees. To provide our students with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and habits that lead to healthy, happy and fulfilling adult lives, we have planned a curriculum that includes all statutory guidance on relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.

This is experienced through our 'Be Your Best Self' values which define Holcombe's ethos. So far this year, all students in Year 7-12 have been given the opportunity to develop a Class Charter around the UN Rights of the Child, review their understanding of choices and consequences, communication skills and emotional resilience strategies using the Fundamental British Values. Older students in Y13 have been taught how to use UCAS and complete university applications, manage their time and study skills, and we have also set up some very successful mentoring sessions between students in different key stages.

Our lessons promote dignity and self-worth, facilitating achievement, sharing in the life of the school community, encouraging responsibility and safety awareness. Using the programme of study below, we will as a school provide more opportunities to learn and engage in the challenges of a 21st century world with positivity, character and resilience.



Term 1:
BYBS (Y7-12)
Employability (Y13)



Term 2
Life Skills (Y7-10, Y12)
Employability (Y11)



Term 3
Employability (Y7-10)
Life Skills (Y13)



Term 4
Safety (Y7-13)



Term 5
Relationships (Y7-10, Y12)



Term 6
Sex Ed. (Y7-10, Y12)

The Shaw Award returns to Holcombe

In March 2021, Mr Ted Shaw reached out to Holcombe Grammar School. He informed the school that his brother, Nevil Shaw, was a student there in the 1960s. Nevil put in a lot of effort at school and eventually earned a place at Swansea University, but he tragically passed away at the young age of 19 and was never able to take up his position there.

The Nevil Shaw Award was established by the school in the 1960s in Nevil's memory to recognise a student each year who best represents all the school stands for.

When Mr Ted Shaw contacted us in March 2021, he explained that he was now in poor health himself and wanted to know if the award was still being given out at the school. Unfortunately, the award had ceased some time ago due to changes in leadership over the years. Mr Shaw then worked closely with the school to create a new prize to be re-introduced to Holcombe to ensure that his brother's memory would continue to be honoured. At the end of each school year, one student will once again receive the Nevil Shaw Award for their dedication to their studies and hard work, as well as for living by the school's core values.

Sadly, Mr Ted Shaw also passed away in May 2021. Ted specified in his will that he wanted the award to be brought back to Holcombe Grammar School. With this, he generously donated £1,000 to the school, which will cover the cost of the prizes awarded to the winning student each year for the following 20 years.

In light of this, Holcombe Grammar School is pleased to present The Shaw Award, which now honours both Nevil and Ted.

Nathan Croft, a Year 13 student, received the first Shaw Award from the school on Friday 9th September 2022. Nathan is a fine student who embodies the values of kindness and generosity and demonstrates determination in his academic pursuits.

"I was delighted to explain the history to this award in our Year 13 assembly and then to present the inaugural award in the names of two remarkable brothers," says principal Lee Preston. "Congratulations to Nathan for this achievement. We're excited to offer this prize to a new student in the summer of 2023."



B:M
2022
ART
COMPETITION

ACTION NOT
WORDS

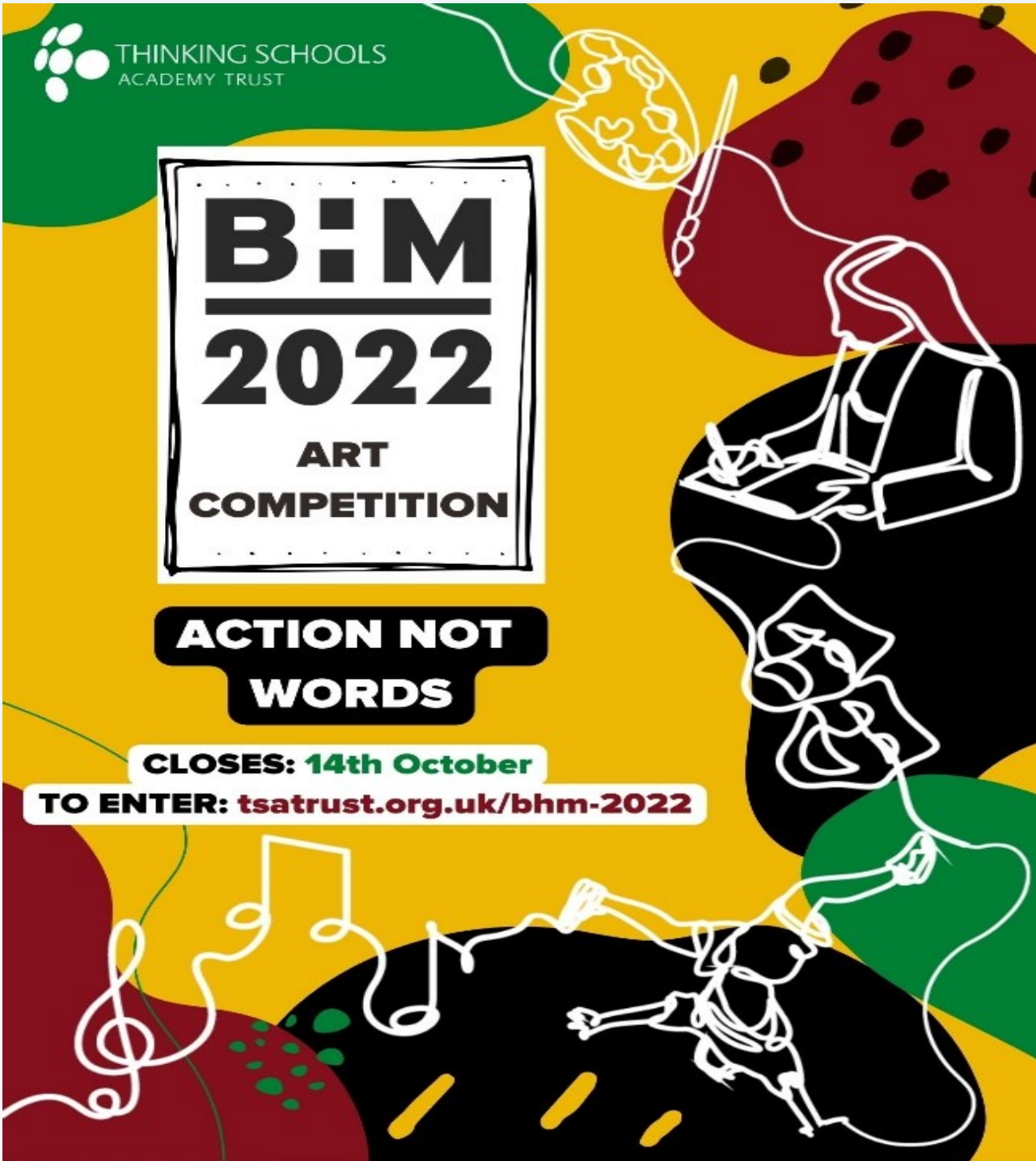
CLOSES: 14th October

TO ENTER: tsatrust.org.uk/bhm-2022



October is **Black History Month**. The theme for this year's celebrations in 'Action Not Words'. We began Black History Month with assemblies in which students learnt about the importance of celebrating the contributions of Black people from the Caribbean and Africa to British society. This was linked to article 28 and article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article 28 says every child is entitled to an education and article 2 says every child is entitled to be free from non-discrimination.

One of the activities which will take place this BHM is an Art Competition which is open to students and members of staff. We encourage all members of the Holcombe school community to showcase their talent in this competition. Whilst the celebration of Black History Month is important to our school community, at Holcombe Grammar we celebrate the diversity of our community all year round as we work together in an environment where respect is paramount because everything we do is in the best interest of the child.



The Holcombe Library

Our library has started the academic year to a tremendous success! Students have made use of the space for quiet work and revision, and the list of book borrowers is already pages long. Students and staff alike are of course encouraged to continue visiting the Library at lunch, making use of the community space. Of course, each day clubs run in the Library. Have a look and see what is on offer!



Open to all
students at
Lunch from
1:20pm-1:50pm

Holcombe Grammar
School

BOOK THIEVES

© The Holcombe Library
(B12)

SILENT READING
LITERATURE DISCUSSION
BOOK BORROWING &
RECOMMENDATIONS

EVERY TUESDAY
Break 11:00-11:20am
Lunch 1:20-1:55pm

Come to The Holcombe Library to join our book thieves club! Find a comfortable spot to escape the world and dive into the realm of literature. Discuss the very best of what you are reading and share ideas. You might also find a new book to borrow. Students and staff are all welcome!





Holcombe Grammar School

DEBATE

SOCIETY

FRIDAY LUNCH

1:20-1:55PM

@ THE HOLCOMBE LIBRARY

Visit the Holcombe Library to take part in our debate society. Open to students from all year groups and staff alike. A round table discussion on current affairs, issues and attitudes in our world today.



WRITER'S ROUND TABLE

WEDNESDAY - LUNCH - 1:20-1:55PM



@ THE HOLCOMBE LIBRARY

Are you a passionate writer? Come to the writer's round table to take part in weekly writing activities to perfect your craft. Become part of a team leading whole school writing competitions and take part in national contests as well! See you on Wednesday at the Library. All are welcome!





GRAPHIC NOVEL CLUB!



IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN READING, WRITING AND VISUAL ART, THIS CLUB IS FOR YOU! COME JOIN US TO READ, BORROW AND CREATE YOUR VERY OWN GRAPHIC FICTION!

ALL STUDENTS AND STAFF WELCOME!



DofE update Term 1 2022

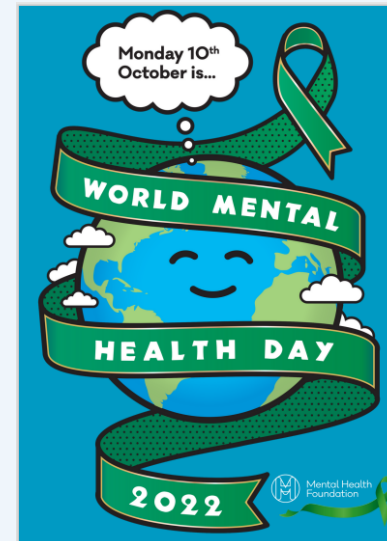
Well done to the 29 students from Year 11 who all took part in the Bronze Qualifying Expedition over the last weekend of September. All five groups on the venture performed really well and took the torrential rain on the Saturday afternoon and evening in their stride. All the groups were strong showing good navigation skills and teamwork over the course of the weekend. The students' performance on the expedition is encouraging for the future with Silver DofE enrolments taking place after Half Term. I hope that many of these students will sign up. Can I also say a big thank you to the staff that helped out over the weekend as the expedition could not run without them, Miss King, Miss Panayiotou, Mrs Thompson, Miss Wilson and Mr Zygmant.

Mr Giles Phillips

DofE Awards Manager

World Mental Health Day


Monday is World Mental Health Day and the theme for this year is to make mental health and wellbeing a priority for all. We have talked about this in assemblies this week and have asked students that may have issues with their mental health or are finding things difficult, to reach out and talk to somebody. If you think that your child needs some support then please let us know. If we cannot help then we will signpost you to someone who can. #TimetoTalk




Thinking at Holcombe

The focus this edition is *Thinking in Lessons*


One major shift that students will experience this academic year is the updated and revamped icons used for thinking tools in all lessons. In your child's lessons, they will be familiar with using thinking maps, hats and keys. They will also expect tasks based on learning habits, such as retrieval practices, feedback and paired work. At Holcombe, these practices are now sign posted to students with quick and simple icons. In a lesson, tasks for thinking and learning will become routinely implemented when students see these icons on the board. Have a look at a few samples below and do discuss with your child the use and significance of their thinking habits at school!




Individual Task
This is to show the task is an individual task, so should be carried out independently. Communication with other pupils will be defined by the teacher.




Paired Work Task
This is to show the task is a paired work task, pupils should work together in their pairs to carry out the task. Communication should be between the pairs only, unless defined otherwise by the teacher.




Group Task
This is to show the task is a group task that will be carried out in defined groups or tables. These may or may-not be defined by the teacher. Communication should be between the group members only, unless defined by the teacher.





Group Discussion Task
This is to show the task is a group discussion task. This could be a class based discussion, or varying sized groups as defined by the teacher.





No Hands Up
This is to show the questions being asked to the class will be targeted by the teacher. Please do not raise your hands, but be ready with your responses to the questions – you could be next!





Targeted Vocabulary
This is to show the words being used are key targeted vocabulary that will be vital to teaching and learning of this lesson, sequence of learning or topic.





Self Assessment
This is an opportunity to reflect upon your own work and record the strengths and areas of improvement in your work.




Peer Assessment
This is an opportunity to give and receive feedback from a peer about the work undertaken or being undertaken.




Group Feedback
This is an opportunity to give or receive group feedback. This could be general feedback to/from the class or smaller group, or more specific for a defined group of pupils.




What Went Well & Even Better If
Pupils or peers record a set amount of positive points about a piece of work and then improvement comments that they can use to improve and progress work further. Often coupled with the Yellow, Blue or Black Hats.




Cold Task
A task used for self, peer or teacher assessment to see the starting point of a given topic or sequence of lessons. This is carried out before any teaching or learning has been carried out. Find out what is already known or where misconceptions maybe.




Hot Task
A task used for self, peer or teacher assessment to see the level of understanding after a sequence of lessons or a topic has already been taught/learned. This is carried out after the teaching or learning has been carried out. Find out what has been retained and if there are any gaps in knowledge or understanding.



Recap Task
This is to show that the task is based upon recapping knowledge and understanding of processes, information, topics or lesson(s). This should be tasks designed to reinforce and summarise knowledge and understanding.



Recall Task
This is to show the task is based upon recalling knowledge, information, understanding and processes from past learning, in the aim to be ready to use with the current/next topic/lesson(s).



Retrieval Task
This is to show the task is based upon remembering and then applying past knowledge information, understanding and processes from past learning to inform answers where topics can be inter-levered.