



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Term 4.

I trust you all had a relaxing and enjoyable half-term break.

This blog is again jam-packed with updates of some of the great work that has been going on here at Holcombe. Particular highlights I would urge you to read in this edition are:

- An update on our fundraising last term
- An introduction to Timi and Amy-Rose – our new Head Boy and Head Girl
- Some fantastic sporting updates and news on recent trips we have completed
- And most of all we are sharing some of the impressive work that our students completed last week as part of Thinking Week – the quality of some of the work was breath taking and we thank those students who put such effort in to this.

Please note that our Shrek JR drama production is taking place on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March. Details inside the blog. Students have been working on this for many months and we are looking forward to sharing their hard work with you all very soon. Please do purchase a ticket – details inside.

Good luck to our Year 13s who finish their prelims next week, and good luck to our Year 11s who will find out the results of their most recent prelims in the coming days.

Finally can I ask for your support with ensuring that your child attends school with the correct equipment as we have recently seen a real rise in the amount of students without the basic equipment – pen, pencil, ruler, rubber, calculator etc. In particular, students need a range of colours of pens (blue, black, green, red) as we often use particular colour pens for particular activities in class. Thank you for your support with this.

Thanks for your ongoing support of all we are doing here. I look forward to sharing more updates in two weeks time.

Mr L. Preston  
Principal

#### Key Dates -

- WC 6th March - Year 13 Prelims
- Friday 10th March - Year 12 Apprenticeship Fair
- Friday 17th March - Year 12 Biology Trip (Wakehurst Place)
- Thursday 23rd March - Year 9 Options Evening
- Wednesday 29th March and Thursday 30th March - School Production
- Friday 31st March - Last Day of Term 4
- Monday 17th April - First Day of Term 5

## Charity Tag Day on the Last Day of Term

On the last day of Term 3, we held a non-uniform day to enable the students and staff to wear clothing that represented them. Students were asked for a donation.

This was in support of the charity Just Like Us, who work with the LGBT+ community for young people. The day was a huge success and as a whole school we raised an amazing £503.66. The money was counted by Kelly Oppong and Chiamaka Obosi in Year 12.



- LGBT+ pupils are twice as likely to be bullied
- One in four face daily tension at home
- Four in 10 LGBT+ young people don't feel safe at school
- 91% have heard negative language about being LGBT+ in the past year



# HOLCOMBE GRAMMAR SCHOOL Presents



# SHREK THE MUSICAL JR.



**Wednesday 29th March**

**Thursday 30th March**

**6pm**

**Holcombe Grammar School**

**Tickets £7.00**

**Purchase tickets**

**via +Pay**

Based on the DreamWorks Animation Motion Picture  
and the Book by William Steig  
Originally produced on Broadway by DreamWorks Theatricals and  
Neal Street Productions  
Original Production Directed by Jason Moore and Rob Ashford  
"I'm A Believer" by Neil Diamond  
Book and Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire  
Music by Jeanine Tesori

Shrek the Musical Jr. is presented through special  
arrangement with and all authorized materials are supplied by Music Theatre International

## Head Boy and Head Girl

You all have been waiting, and now it's time to deliver. Please welcome our Head boy and Head Girl, Timi Soyinka and Amy-Rose Friend!



Timi is a likeable, devoted person who always puts other people before himself. Working alongside Amy, Timi makes sure that we have "Any means necessary to achieve our goals", an attitude we are sure will bring a lot to the Captains Team. Timi expresses an ambition for the "Younger students to have a voice in the more senior years" and to make the school environment more collaborative. Timi's optimism sets him up there with head boys of the past, using them as inspiration and role models, and building on the legacy that they have left behind. Timi has a vision of a school that focuses on diversity and creating a "cohesive environment", a

vision that we believe will come to fruition due to his approachable personality.

Amy is a kind-hearted, caring but ambitious individual who always takes other peoples situation and needs into account. Amy supports everyone in the School Captains Team, going over ideas that are brought up in weekly meetings. Amy highlights that she is on a mission to "Prove to those that don't believe in me, that I can do things", an approach that will most definitely push her to do whatever she can to help the school. Amy wants to leave Holcombe Grammar School as a Head Girl that notoriously "Did the most things, got the most people involved, had the most fun but was always serious at times when seriousness was needed". Amy urges the younger students to approach all members of the Captains Team and to get involved in what they are planning on bringing to school.

I don't know about you, but these things alone persuade me that Holcombe Grammar School is in safe hands!

## Personal Development

Students in all year groups have discussed online safety in a number of our Personal Development lessons this term. We have been able to give students information on the law, where to go for support and information around protecting their own online presence. Classes have explored the benefits and cautions of their online activities and worked together to analyse how they can avoid risk-taking behaviour to benefit their friendships and career opportunities.

Our students should be able to tell you what they have found out and how they plan to respond in order to behave safely online. [www.NationalOnlineSafety.com](http://www.NationalOnlineSafety.com) has many resources available to help these discussions in the household and we have attached one handout to help start conversations.

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

### National Online Safety

#### 7 questions to help you start a conversation with your child about online safety

#WakeUpWednesday  
Publish date: 07/11/18

- 1 Which apps/games are you using at the moment?**  
THIS WILL GIVE YOU A GOOD OVERVIEW OF THE TYPES OF THINGS YOUR CHILDREN ARE DOING ON THEIR DEVICES, ALONG WITH THEIR INTERESTS. REMEMBER THAT THEY MIGHT NOT TELL YOU EVERYTHING THEY ARE USING, SO IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO ASK THEM TO SHOW YOU THEIR DEVICE. BECAUSE NEW APPS AND GAMES ARE RELEASED REGULARLY, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THIS CONVERSATION OFTEN TO ENSURE YOU ARE UP TO DATE WITH WHAT THEY ARE DOING.
- 2 Which websites do you enjoy using and why?**  
AS IN THE TIP ABOVE, ASKING THIS QUESTION WILL ALLOW YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD IS DOING ONLINE, AND ENCOURAGE POSITIVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITY. ASK THEM HOW THEY USE THE WEBSITES, AND TAKE AN INTEREST IN HOW THEY CAN USE THEM IN A POSITIVE WAY. ALSO ASK THEM TO SHOW YOU IF POSSIBLE.
- 3 How does this game/app work? Can I play?**  
SHOW A GENUINE INTEREST IN WHAT THEY ARE DOING, WHILST YOU ARE PLAYING A GAME OR USING AN APP WITH THEM, IT MIGHT HIGHLIGHT SOMETHING THAT THEY DON'T NECESSARILY THINK IS A DANGER TO THEM, IF THEY ACT LIKE THEY DON'T WANT TO SHARE THEIR ACTIVITIES WITH YOU, QUESTION WHY.
- 4 Do you have any online friends?**  
CHILDREN CAN FORM POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE ONLINE, AND THIS HAS BECOME MORE COMMON THAN IN THE ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER OPTIONS, BUT THEY MAY NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FRIEND AND A STRANGER. YOU COULD MAKE THE QUESTION MORE SPECIFIC TO YOUR CHILD, FOR EXAMPLE, "HAVE YOU MET ANYONE ONLINE THAT YOU LIKE TO PLAY GAMES WITH?" THEY MAY NOT WANT TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOU, SO ENSURE YOU TEACH THEM ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.
- 5 Do you know where to go for help?**  
ALTHOUGH YOU MAY BE THE ADULT THEY TRUST THE MOST, SOME CHILDREN STRUGGLE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS ONLINE DUE TO CONFUSION OR EMBARRASSMENT. BECAUSE OF THIS THEY MAY STRUGGLE TO APPROACH THE NORMAL PEOPLE WHO WOULD HELP, SUCH AS YOURSELF OR A TEACHER. HAVE A CHAT TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT EXACTLY WHERE THEY CAN GO FOR HELP, AND HOW THEY CAN REPORT ANY ACTIVITY THAT THEY BELIEVE IS INAPPROPRIATE ONLINE.
- 6 Do you know what your personal information is?**  
YOUR CHILD MAY ALREADY KNOW WHAT THEIR PERSONAL INFORMATION IS BUT THEY MIGHT NOT THINK ABOUT HOW IT CAN BE SHARED. HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT PERSONAL INFORMATION IS AND HOW THIS CAN AFFECT THEM IF IT IS SHARED BEYOND THE INTENDED RECIPIENT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR CHILD UNDERSTANDS THE DANGERS OF SHARING CONTACT DETAILS OR PHOTOS, AS INFORMATION SUCH AS THIS CAN SPREAD QUICKLY ONLINE.
- 7 Do you know your limits?**  
CHILDREN MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF DEVICE OR GAME ADDICTION. TALK TO THEM OPENLY ABOUT HEALTHY HABITS AND ASK WHETHER OR NOT THEM SPENDING TIME ONLINE OR PLAYING A GAME IS AFFECTING THEIR SLEEP, PERFORMANCE AT SCHOOL, OR IF THEY ARE GENERALLY LOSING INTEREST IN OTHER ACTIVITIES. YOU MAY LEAD ON TO ENCOURAGING ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSING THE INTRODUCTION OF TIME LIMITS WHEN AT HOME.

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety  
Dates of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is accepted on. Content as of the date of release 07/11/18

# SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

## Attendance over One School Year

- 98% = 4 days absent from school.
- 95% = 10 days absent from school.
- 90% = 4 weeks absent from school.
- 85% = 6 weeks absent from school.
- 80% = 8 weeks absent from school.

### Attendance Statistics over 5 Years (Years 7-11)

- 85-90% = About half a year off school
- 80% = 38 weeks off school.

(This equates to one whole school year missed!!!)

### WHY IS REGULAR ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?

- Students who attend classes are more likely to succeed.
- Frequently absent students often slow down classmates.
- Missing classes increases the risk of falling behind.
- Truancy is linked to higher dropout rates.

### Attendance Matters On Time: First Time, Every Time



What Zone Are You In?

.... Every Day Counts

### Year 12 Uniform Review Panel

Year 12 Students were invited on a Sixth Form Uniform Review panel by Head Girl Amy-Rose Friend. Amy-Rose was hearing the challenges some teachers faced when asked by students why certain things could not be worn, after asking "When was the last time it was reviewed" Amy-Rose saw an opportunity to get a student voice forum together and created the panel. A non Sixth Form staff member Mrs. Brookes-Smith kindly offered her time to chair the meeting, encouraging views and opinions, asking for solutions to some of the issues as well as pointing out the reasons behind some decisions that simply could not change. Feedback from that meeting which was minuted by Maddy Watts will be collated and fed back to SLT for discussion, this will then be fed back to the panel at a later date. Well done, Amy-Rose for getting the panel together and getting the student body heard.

Uniform review panel were: Amy-Rose Friend, Nathan Akinrogbe, Maddy Watts, Monika Deo, Natalie Czyz, Ollie Smith and Joe Button.



### Year 7 Football Fixture

The year 7 football team started their term 4 season in emphatic fashion with a 6-3 victory over Hundred of Hoo school. A fiercely competitive first half ended with Holcombe leading 3-2 thanks to a hat trick from skilful forward Ezra Hatega. The second half started with super-sub Alfie Speller scoring with his first touch of the ball! After a fightback from the opposition Holcombe reasserted their dominance in the final 10 minutes with goals from Dylan Drabble and Jude Simmons. All the players should be proud of their effort and attitude as the squad look to continue their good form in upcoming games. Training takes place every Friday after school and all year 7 students are welcome to attend.

## Multi-Faith Room

Here at Holcombe Grammar, we are delighted to announce and publicise our Multi-Faith Room. We are proud to respect the rights of a child to express their religion and create an inclusive community. Students have been using the room for meditation, lunch time worship and congregational prayers. The room is available for all year groups to utilise and are welcome.

On asking one of the room's users for some feedback Ebrahim in Year 13 said, "The Multi-faith room has provided the opportunity for me to be able to pray outside of home and to be able to get closer to Allah in my spare time so that I do not miss any of my prayers".

Another user in Year 13, Halimat said, "It is good to have a Multi-faith room because people can perform their religious obligations when they are supposed to".

If any students would like to use the room for their faith, please ask them to express their interest at the office.

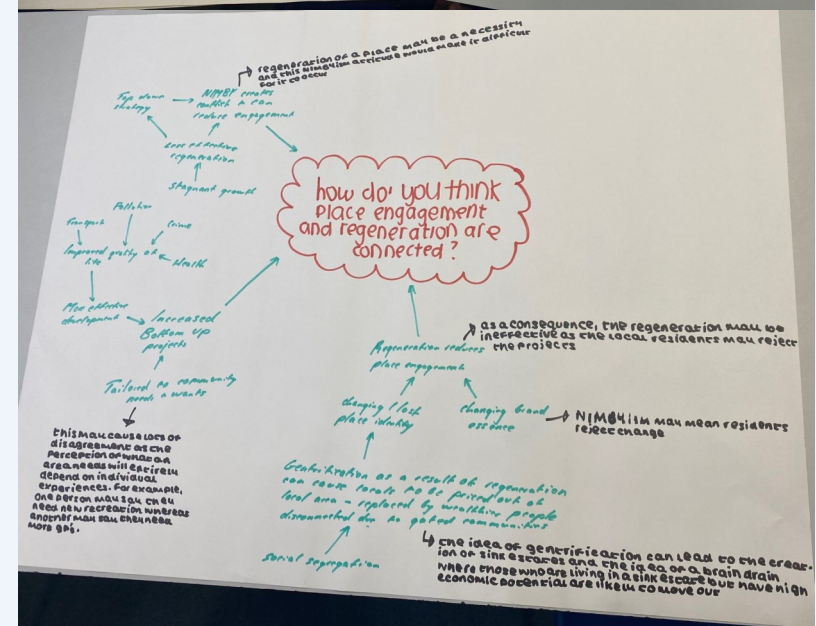
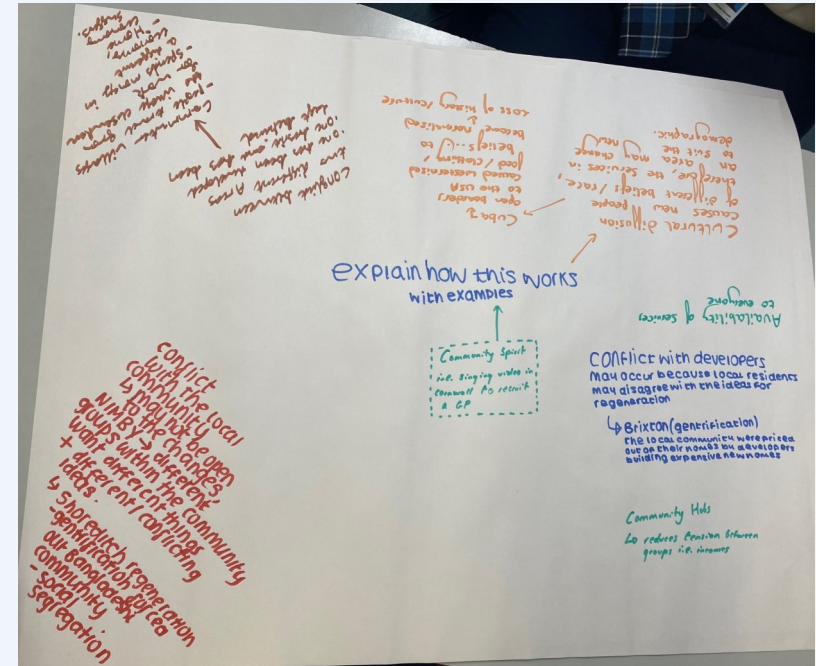
## Kent County Swimming Championships

Noah Dodd (Year 8) and William Larter (Year 7) competed in the Kent County Swimming Championships at the London Aquatic Centre in the Olympic Village. After some amazing races Noah achieved three bronze medals (50m, 100m and 200m breast stroke) and William achieved six medals overall (200m freestyle, 200m backstroke, 100m freestyle, 100m backstroke and 50m backstroke). Well done!



## World Thinking Day 2023

Year 12 A level Geographers have been learning about how regeneration projects can bring peace to communities where inequality and social segregation once caused conflict.



## Trip to Queen's College, University of Cambridge

As part of the Holcombe experience to foster success and ambition for our hardworking students, we were invited to visit Queen's College, University of Cambridge. We took thirty of our Key Stage Four students for a fantastic day, in the glorious sunshine to learn about exciting pathways and possibilities for their future. During the trip students had the opportunity to speak to current undergraduates about their experiences, a small group tour of the college (with niche nuggets of history only insiders would know!). A tailored Q&A session with the representative of the university, who was kept very busy for the duration by our student's engagement.

On the day, one of the key aspects of the presentation which I would emphasis was the importance of developing a "**curious learner**", engaging with "**super-curricular activities**". Super-curricular activities meaning learning about a topic or subject in greater depth outside of the set curriculum. So, a student interested in psychology and neurology may develop their interest in brain function and how it influences human behaviour via listening to podcasts from British Psychological Society, watch TED talks relating to scientific research into the human brain, read books such as *The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat and other clinical tales* by neurologist Oliver Sacks, go online to explore new research in the New Scientist, complete a free online webinar on UNIFROG, visit the Science Museum in London, and so on. This differs from extra-curricular activities which is engaging with activities outside of the set curriculum (such as our clubs on offer at school.) By engaging with super-curricular activities regularly, our students would keep a log of what resource they engaged with, write a brief description of what knowledge they learnt, with the date. This ongoing log would be invaluable when completing a personal statement for applications, especially strong UCAS applications. Please see the [link](#) for potential super-curricular ideas.

The successful day was a delight, our Holcombe cohort were a credit to our school, demonstrating the best of their Holcombe Habits. Below are a few examples of the feedback from our year 10 and 11:

- "During our trip to Queen's college - Cambridge, we were given a detailed and in depth look at university life and were offered advice on what A-level subjects would be best suited for individual preferences. This was followed by a tour of the historic campus, where we received an insight into students' life from the perspective of current students. Overall, I left Cambridge with a better understanding about university options". Matthew Johnson
- "From the Cambridge trip I got a better understanding of how to apply for a university. I also learnt about how I should adapt my A-levels to whatever course I want to do for university. Other than that, I also gained a better understanding of the independence that the students in University get given and how much responsibility is placed on them. This is important as It would help to develop me furthermore into becoming a mature adult". Ben Cardwell
- "Thank you for the opportunity to go. I think the best thing was the opportunity to talk to current students and get their opinions and thought on the Queen's College and the university. Also, the food was amazing!" Finn Gregory
- "I learnt about the process of university application. I now understand the requirements of a Russell Group university. I also learnt about the other aspects of university life such as the extracurricular opportunities on offer". Charlie Read



## World Thinking Day Competition

The following 9 entries were selected as demonstrating thoughtful, creative and personal interpretations of the World Thinking Day creative competition brief of 'Our World, Our Peaceful Future'. Students were inspired by the student drive team, the Thinking Ambassadors', assemblies all through last week. All these entries will be rewarded with vouchers, and their work published in an anthology to be shared with staff, students and parents online. Well done to all involved!



I was inspired mostly by the peace aspect of the theme, hence why I chose a dove for the main image. Doves are symbols of peace in various places and I feel like they are a good representation of what the future should be. The dove flying freely in the sky representing us as people being free from all burdens as well as being free from discrimination and being accepted for who we are. It is also a representation of the world that I want as it is flying freely uninterrupted by anything. I then chose to use the symbol of peace incorporating it into the sun in front of a blue background which represents the sky. I did this as the sight of a clear sky with a bright and vibrant sun signifies (to me) a new day full of new opportunities. I chose a simple colour scheme with only three main colours that are all light bringing a soft and gentle atmosphere synonymous with what I would associate a calm, tranquil and peaceful world to. In summary, I think a Peaceful future should be a world where people can live freely with nothing restricting that freedom. - Ehud Ankrah

Zigi's Trip to Oblivion by Hasan Deringol:

A place that no one had ever heard,  
Auschwitz was the buzzing word.  
From every month that had to go,  
It was not going to be an enjoyable show.

From the ghetto and on the road,  
With trucks full of living woe,  
Pretty soon your hair will go,  
Shaved off with the striped pyjamas to show.

I am no longer a name but a number,  
To the Nazis I'm less than an animal.  
To be headed to a death of permanent slumber.

Sickness and disease is rife,  
And I know I will probably lose my life,  
But I pray and hide until that blessed day when liberation came.  
And I can tell my story again and again.  
To those who need to listen so everyone will know, that's my mission!

My inspiration for my poem came from the Holocaust Memorial Day assembly at school where I learnt about the really ugly horrors committed by the Nazis. Eventually, there was world peace, but it cost millions of innocent lives. In this poem, a Jewish teenager who was named Zigi Shipper tells the story of his hellish journey to Auschwitz from his homeland; Poland. He had been living in a ghetto with his grandfather. The conditions at the ghetto was so appalling that Zigi's grandfather died from a lack of nutrition. This is why we need to have world peace, because atrocities like this should never happen again. I put myself in the shoes of Zigi as I wrote my poem, and know that I would have been very afraid and traumatised from what I saw.

The unnecessary loss of millions of lives during the Holocaust proves to me that the only future that children should look forward to is in a peaceful world. Luckily, Zigi survived the horrible event of World War Two and if peace is to be achieved, there should never be a World War Three. My life has been lived in peace since I was born, and I don't want to ever have to live or nearly die in the same way that Zigi did.

## World Thinking Day Competition 2

Our World, Our Peaceful Future by Ryan Gurnett:

We are one, we live in one world  
We have one life, one hope, one dream  
A dream of peace, a dream of tomorrow  
A hope that tomorrow can be better than today,  
That peace and happiness are not so far away.

We have one world now, but what of tomorrow?  
The future isn't now, isn't made, isn't secure.  
But a future can be made, made from hope,  
A hope that tomorrow can be better than today,  
That peace and happiness are not so far away.

The future isn't set in stone, it is yet to be made  
So can be what we wish. It can be peace.  
A peaceful future in a world built from hope,  
A hope that tomorrow can be better than today,  
That peace and happiness are not so far away.

This is our world,  
This will be our peaceful future.

This poem stemmed from my hope that tomorrow can always be better, that today is just a foundation to build a better tomorrow. Violence, for me, should always be avoided, and the only future worth having is one in which there is peace, and life is better than it was. The stories of hope and resilience coming from war-torn places worldwide never fail to inspire me, and I always hope that a future of peace, where all humans live in one peaceful world, isn't far away, and can be achieved. At the end of the day, for better or worse, all humans are part of the same species and deserve to be treated as such. In the future, I hope that that will be a reality. I also strongly feel that the future is what we make it. No part of the future is set in stone, because it hasn't happened. Therefore, peace is always possible for the future. I believe that a determination for peace will overcome any desire for war, and if we truly work for peace, the future will be peaceful. This is summed up in the simple message of the final stanza. We will achieve peace.

Our World, Our Peaceful Future by Serena Toussaint:

Dear soldier, may I weep on your wounds  
Let my tears heal your tortures and blues  
Cry for the blood, for vengeance, for desolation  
All to create a harmonious nation.

A delicate, sweet eyed rose has the deadliest thorn  
True that we are free but the blood shed is more  
Fathers bury their sons, mercilessly suffocated  
His mother weeps as his sister grows in bitter hatred.

Are we truly free, experiencing true tranquillity  
Or is there a streak of venom poisoning our society  
A bed of roses, thorns pricked the skins  
From the murderous conscience we fight from within.

There were slaves bound to inescapable chains  
Constantly praying the pain away  
Now there's a field of bones, labelled by dusty tombstones  
Where they twist and turn, can't you hear their unbearable groans.

I still remember those chains  
Rusted by innocent blood that runs in my veins  
The glass shattering wails echoes in my brain  
Feeling their cuts and bruises, can't withstand the pain.

Say all is fair in love and war  
Where the strong conquers but the weak falls  
Can't you acknowledge 'the weak' were humans too  
They had blood, veins and families like you.



### World Thinking Day Competition 3

A piece from Phoebe Mos-Igani:



Peace is when there is no war and there is a state of tranquillity.

My interpretation of Peace is when there is "Unity in cultural diversity" hence the fabrics I have used are an incorporation of two different cultures, the African culture and the Western Culture. On the front of my piece (the cup area) there is an element (dark blue) on the right side but the left doesn't mean even if one culture has something the other doesn't, we are still one. On the back of the piece I have used one fabric which is significant because if we have the same goal, ambition and vision the cultural differences are no longer noticed and all we see are just individuals that are bound together by a common goal which are the stitches. An example of a goal that we can work towards is a better environment and slowing down the rate of climate change which is why the source of my fabric is thrifted or scraps. The raw hems show the imperfections of both cultures despite that we living without conflicts creates a tranquillity society that the next generation will be proud to carry on.

White Flower by Maddy Watts:

This wounded creature now battered and torn,  
Ripped up, rutted out, all ragged and worn.  
Its bones are the rubble of a home we once knew,  
Its veins are the streets that blood trickles through.

Its heart torn out and stamped in the dirt,  
Its cries, just echoes of terror and hurt.  
Its lungs full of smoke, to war it was thrust,  
Chanting "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust!"

And as the dust settles, on this soulless place,  
A dying creature, no love will embrace.  
A watery sun sits sober in the sky,  
With time marching on, in the blink of an eye.

Wounds start to heal but the scars run deep,  
Tears turn to salt, for the lost souls we weep.  
This desolate place, a land for the dead,  
Yet a tiny, white flower bravely raises its head.

Weathered and worn, and so weary from war,  
With this single white flower, hope will restore.  
For this dying creature, new hope will embrace,  
Drawing strength from the flower, alone in this place.

A small glowing ember starts to grow from within,  
For this dying creature new life will begin,  
It drags itself up, takes its heart from the dirt,  
And shelters the flower from terror and hurt.

## World Thinking Day Competition 4

Our World, Our Peaceful Future by Abdulazeez Aileru:

Peace, the elusive dream we seek  
A world where love and kindness meet  
Where hate and anger refuse to speak  
And every single person is valued, unique.

What is the need to protest for equality,  
For all races and nationalities?  
It's essential to harmony  
And the main part of humanity

We are born with different colours and hues  
But we bleed the same blood, like glue!  
We dance to the same beat and drum  
So why don't we ALL have a lot of fun?

Let's destroy all prejudice  
And destroy discrimination high and nice.  
We shouldn't discriminate due to age, gender or race,  
Because in reality, we all live in the same place.

So let's sow the seeds of love and peace  
For we live in harmony where wars cease.  
Let's blossom in our hearts and minds  
And let the world become a better place to find.

By Victor Uzoma:

Peace be with the world so wide  
Let us lay our arms aside  
No more will we fight and bicker  
Time to heal and make things ticker

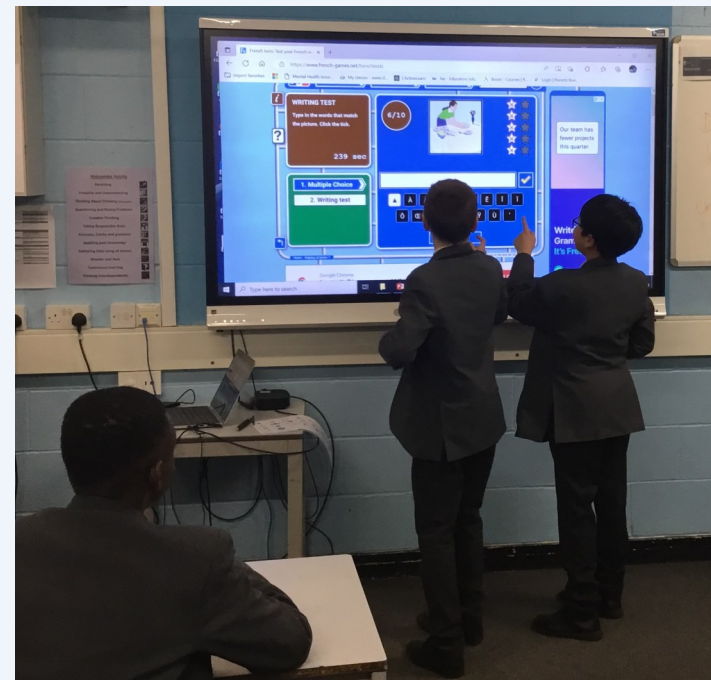
A world of love and serenity  
Where hatred and war have no entry  
The thought of peace shall fill our hearts  
It's time to make a brand new start

Let us build bridges of peace  
Instead of walls of wars increase  
And spread the message of love  
From the heavens above

A world of peace we shall teach  
For each and every one to reach  
Let us show that we all care  
And live with harmony everywhere.

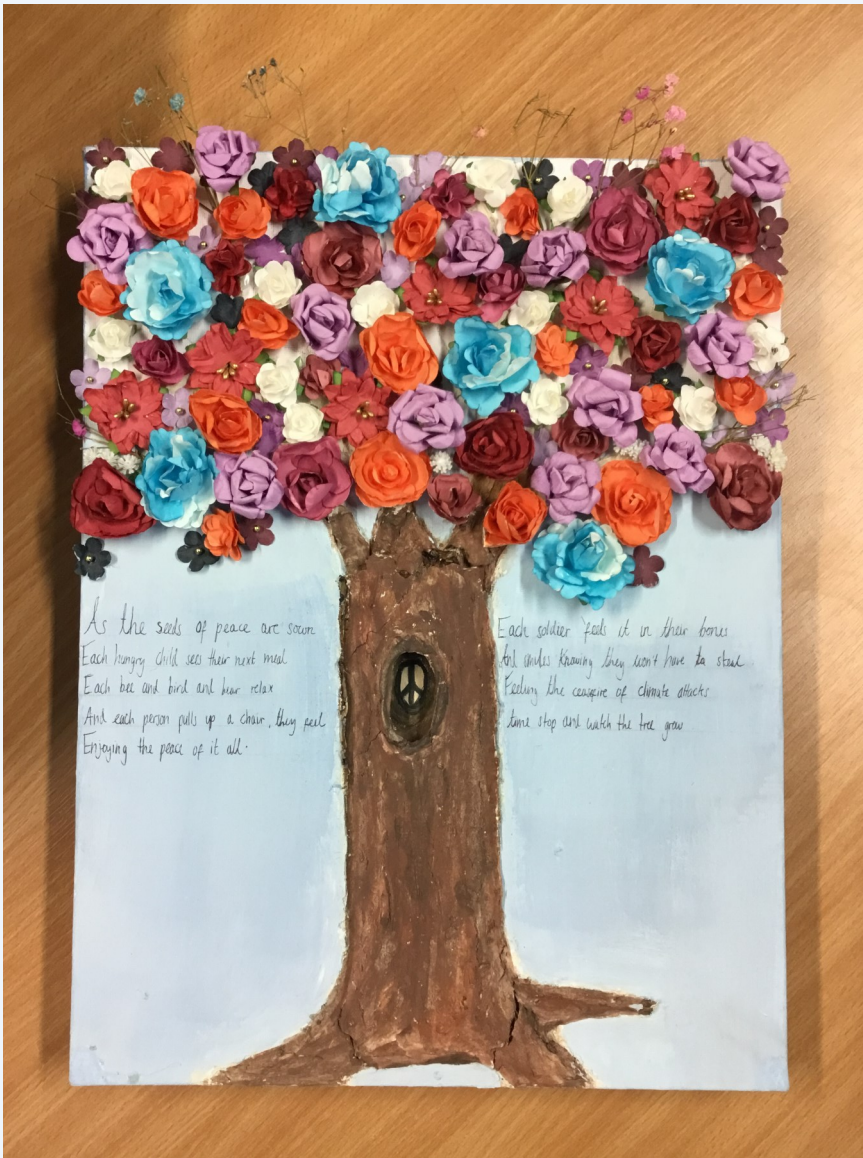
## French Club

Every Wednesday lunch time, French club takes place in S15 where students choose a range of activities to practise their French skills. Students bring any homework they need support with. We play games, look at the cultural elements of France and French speaking countries as well as doing songs, which is a lot of fun!



## World Thinking Day Competition 5

By Hafsa Turay:



My idea of a peaceful future is one where all factions of the world are able to experience the full extent of the earth's beauty as the chaos is gone from their lives and so this piece of artwork is centred around the idea of a 'peace' tree.

My first thought of our peaceful future was to do with nature hence the tree but the more I thought about our world I realised it was about more than just nature. The tree itself is simple but at the centre of the tree there is a hole containing a peace sign. This is to represent how peace is what is at the heart of each functioning community and habitat, where everything and body is interconnected. It is what I imagine our future to be like- where all communities and governments and people come together like the flowers on the tree to create something even more beautiful than they would have if they were alone.

The poem further elucidates the idea of peace in both society and nature. I used the poem to create a picture of a world where not only we can stop worrying about the future but where animals and plants will also stop having to fear their own habitats, and us, afraid that they will be attacked.

## World Thinking Day - Thinking Ambassadors

On the week beginning 20th February, Holcombe celebrated Thinking Week, focusing on the theme of World Thinking Day theme of "Our World, Our Peaceful Future". As part of our celebration the student Thinking Ambassadors delivered an assembly to each year group about developing thinking habits. Within the assembly, the idea of neuroplasticity was discussed, which is the ability of the brain to form and change neural connections, especially in response to learning. The assembly examined the role this plays in the development of habits based on day-to-day activity and this will be discussed further with more assemblies throughout the year. Examples of habits used in the real world were given to show the impact of how developing our Holcombe Habits now can be beneficial in the future. In the assemblies the students also launched the World Thinking Day competition, encouraging students to create entries about the theme of peace. Some made some artwork, others poetry and some even made fashion garments! We look forward to sharing these with you and celebrating the outstanding creative efforts of these students soon!

Many lessons throughout the week included a focus on the theme of peace including examples such as PE looking at the role that sport has played in fostering peace; Computer Science in KS3 designing artwork and animations on the theme of peace and kindness; Drama in year 9 looking at conflict resolution within the play 'DNA'; Physics (in triple Science) in year 10 looking at the peaceful application of radioactivity and nuclear power; Religious Studies in year 11 looking at peace and conflict in Northern Ireland; Geography in year 12 exploring how regeneration strategies in urban areas can tackle inequalities and segregation to create peaceful communities. In addition to this, Thinking Week was celebrated through many of our extra-curricular clubs, with students listening to and writing poetry on the theme in the Library, and debating whether it is unrealistic to expect to achieve world peace in 2023.

The Thinking Ambassadors involved in delivering the assemblies included students from years 8,9 and 12 and through reflecting on their involvement they have identified habits that they have used and developed in the process of making and presenting the assemblies. Everybody took a responsible risk in presenting the assemblies, a daunting but positive experience. Putting themselves out of their comfort zones encouraged them in future to put themselves in more uncomfortable situations like public speaking. Staff and students were very impressed at how it all turned out. The ambassadors used continuous learning and said that they "learned what our strengths and weaknesses are", explaining that preparing for it enhanced their organisational skills. Presenting clearly enhanced their accuracy, clarity and precision and they also performed metacognition (thinking about thinking) and thinking interdependently when giving each other feedback.

As you can see, Holcombe Habits are not just used in lessons, they are also used in presenting in assemblies, and in many other ways at school and in life. The students will definitely take these ideas into account and the ambassadors are looking forward to promoting the development of thinking skills further. The students urge others who are interested to get involved. Feel free to see Miss Cook in M14 if you do want to get involved.

