

The Greater Horseshoe School



Wellbeing Award
for Schools

2023-2026

October 2024: Issue 37

Message from the Head Teacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

This half term, many of our students have been working exceptionally hard, preparing for their exams in November. We wish them the very best of luck, and I'm confident their results will meet or even exceed last year's strong achievements.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Chris, who will be leaving us this week. Chris is stepping into an exciting new role within our company, beginning his headship at Copper Fields School—a brand-new specialist school in Gunnislake, Cornwall, dedicated to supporting autistic young people aged 4–16. We're grateful for all that Chris has contributed to GHS over the past five years, and we wish him every success in this next chapter.

This week also marks the beginning of the refurbishment of our Musers site. Students have quickly settled into the temporary setup at Bovey Tracey Football Club, and I'm excited to reveal the newly refurbished space in just three weeks. With additional classrooms, it will offer an enhanced environment to support high-quality learning experiences and strengthen our provision even further.

A huge thank you to all our students and staff for their hard work this half term. It's been wonderful to see so many positive activities, lessons, and events taking place. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable half term break.

Students return to school on Monday 4th November.

Lukasz and the Team



**ACORN EDUCATION
AND CARE**

The Greater Horseshoe School

t 01626 782 038, 07592504811
e lukaszm@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk
a Little Bovey Lane, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, TQ12 6RH
w <http://www.thegreaterhorseshoeschool.co.uk>

The Greater
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Ofsted
Outstanding
Provider

The Greater Horseshoe School



Lunchtime clubs

We consider our lunchtime clubs to be a really valuable opportunity for pupils to socialise over shared interests and have recently adjusted our clubs timetable to take into consideration the requests of our pupils which we established via a recent pupil survey conducted by our Student Council.

We have sports available on the MUGA every day and have alternatives to the MUGA most days with a view to increasing this to every day.

Monday			Football MUGA	
Tuesday	Nintendo Wii Library		Football MUGA	
Wednesday	Drama Garden room		Basketball MUGA	
Thursday	Games Science room		Football MUGA	
Friday	RPG games Musers	 	Handball MUGA	



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Farmwise

On Tuesday 8th October all of our younger students were invited along to an event hosted by Devon County Council and Farmwise at the Westpoint Arena Exeter. Over 1600 pupils attended the event and our young people managed the event really well.

We had the opportunity to look around different zones that had been organized. These included dairy, pigs, food, poultry, wildlife and pigs. The students all enjoyed holding chicks, meeting goats, learning about how to keep the national parks clean and tree identification.

Our students are looking forward to attending the event next year where they will have the opportunity to see the other zones on offer.



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Geography

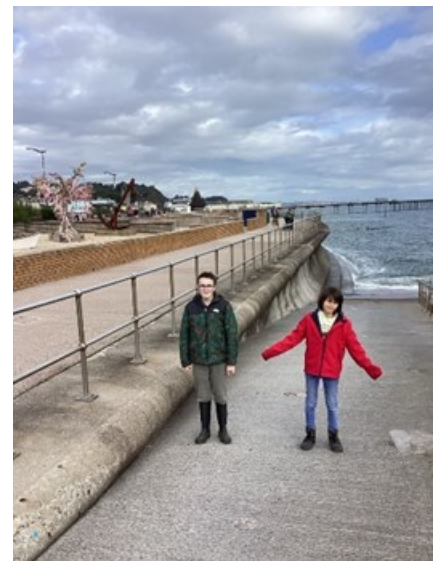
This half term the focus in Geography has been Coasts and Oceans. Students have been learning about coastal landforms, processes and habitats, learning about the world's oceans and the way we can protect them.

Activities have included making their own coastal landform models, creating their own rock pools and experimenting to help them understand processes such as erosion and deposition. Students have engaged well and enjoyed the hands-on activities

Some students have also gone on trips to Ness Cove, Shaldon & Teignmouth to explore the coastal features and rock pools.

Students are continuing to complete their ASDAN qualifications in Geography and The Environment, engaging the students in a variety of Geographical challenges including, this term, Food, Waste & Energy and Physical Processes.

Next term we are studying Rocks and Soils, exploring different rocks and soils and learning about different rock formations, and features like volcanoes and earthquakes.



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Devon Pumpkin Patch

Great fun was had at the Devon Pumpkin Patch this year! The students learnt about the different pumpkins and enjoyed seeing them all up close, being out in the fresh autumn air.



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Climbing Adventures at Our School: Indoor and Outdoor Climbing Success!

Our students have been reaching new heights—literally—through their engagement in both indoor and outdoor climbing activities. Whether scaling a rock wall in the gym or tackling the real rocks outdoors, they're embracing the challenges, learning new skills, and having a blast along the way.

Indoor Climbing: Building Strength and Confidence

Our indoor climbing sessions offer a fantastic way for students to build strength, coordination, and self-confidence. With a variety of routes suited to different skill levels, students can challenge themselves while progressing at their own pace. The controlled environment allows them to focus on technique and problem-solving, making it an excellent introduction to climbing for beginners and a great practice ground for more experienced climbers.

Outdoor Climbing: Embracing Nature and Adventure

Taking climbing outside brings a whole new set of challenges and rewards. Our outdoor climbing sessions let students experience nature up close, as they navigate real rock formations and adapt to changing conditions. It's an opportunity for them to apply what they've learned indoors while enjoying the fresh air and beautiful landscapes. This hands-on experience fosters resilience and a sense of adventure, helping students develop a love for the outdoors.

NICAS Qualifications: Climbing Towards Success

We are thrilled to see our students engaging enthusiastically with the National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme (NICAS) qualifications. These qualifications help students develop their climbing skills in a structured way, from learning basic techniques to mastering more advanced skills. Many of our students are already making fantastic progress through the NICAS levels, demonstrating their commitment and passion for the sport.

Climbing, both indoors and outdoors, has become a highlight of our school's outdoor education program. We're proud of our students for taking on new challenges and showing such enthusiasm and determination. Here's to more adventures and achievements on the climbing walls and beyond!



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ODE and PE: Mountain Biking and Football Achievements This Half-Term

This half-term, our outdoor education learners have shown tremendous progress during their mountain biking sessions. Making the most of local bridleways and the exhilarating single-track trails at Haldon Forest Park, they've taken on a variety of challenges designed to build their confidence and skills. From the flowing green trails, perfect for developing fundamental techniques, to the more challenging blue and red downhill tracks with technical terrain, each session has brought new opportunities for our students to push their limits.

As part of their learning journey, students have been working towards progressively advanced AQA awards in mountain biking. These qualifications recognize their achievements as they master both the physical and mental demands of the sport. Their dedication to improving balance, coordination, and trail navigation, as well as their resilience when tackling tougher routes, is truly commendable. The experience has been as much about personal growth as it has been about technical skill, with students developing stronger relationships with their peers and instructors, learning to support one another through challenging sections.

At our school, outdoor education and physical activity are integral to our learners' weekly routine. Not only do these activities promote physical health and well-being, but they also play a vital role in building trust, teamwork, and a positive school culture. The benefits extend far beyond the trails, positively impacting academic engagement and social development across the board.

Alongside mountain biking, this half-term's PE lessons have been equally rewarding. Our students have been participating in football sessions, where they've focused on drills developed by the FA to hone their skills and deepen their understanding of this popular sport. From mastering ball control and passing accuracy to developing strategic thinking and teamwork, the drills have provided an engaging and structured approach to improving their abilities on the pitch.

Our dedicated PE tutor is also planning some exciting opportunities, with upcoming fixtures and visits to local stadiums on the horizon. These experiences will give our students the chance to see professional-level play and gain inspiration from the wider football community, reinforcing the lessons and skills they are developing in their weekly sessions.

We are incredibly proud of the progress our students are making this term, both in the exciting world of mountain biking and on the football field. Their commitment, determination, and enthusiasm continue to make these physical activities a vibrant and essential part of our school life.



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Band Club

This term has been an exciting journey going back to explore different types of music, artists and genres from the 1950s all the way up to the modern day. Our band club have been learning music from different decades to put together a set to share at our first GHS Open Day. They were able to prepare a set through weekly rehearsals to play 5 songs using a mixture of songs they have learnt before and new songs they learnt this term including Stand By Me (Ben E King), Another One Bites the Dust (Queen), Creep (Radiohead), Another Brick in the Wall (Pink Floyd), Blitzkrieg Bop (Ramones). A special shout out to our returning student Katie who prepared a beautiful opening performance with one of our Band Club members Lawrence on piano before moving onto a brilliant performance of Cream's Sunshine Of Your Love to kick off the amazing music at our open evening event. It's fantastic to see that every term our club improves not only their musicianship but also their independence in being able to perform without staff members support.



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The Greater Horseshoe School 5th out of all the OFG schools that took part in the competition.

Our students were invited to take part in an OFG wide competition to design a thriving yet sustainable city using an Energy Town simulation. In the game points are awarded for community happiness, a good economy, stable energy supply and a positive environment. A score of 451,397 topped our school leaderboard and our student scores put The Greater Horseshoe School 5th out of all the OFG schools that took part in the competition. Well done everyone on creating your fantastic sustainable cities 😊

If you would like to have a go yourself the game is available at [EnergyTown Game | Wonderverse \(wonderverselearning.com\)](https://www.wonderverselearning.com). See if you can achieve a score above 450,000!



Newton Abbot Museum (museum-newtonabbot.org.uk)

The relaxed visit session is aimed at allowing people to explore our galleries in a calm and relaxed environment where we will ensure our sound levels are reduced. There will be a quiet space available away from the galleries, as well as sensory bags and ear-defenders available.

These sessions are great for visitors with Autistic Spectrum Disorder or other communication and sensory needs and their families / carers but are suitable for all.

If people are unable to attend a relaxed visit and are unsure about visiting during our usual opening hours, they are welcome to contact the museum to find out when the quieter times are (no groups, less visitors etc...).

To help people prepare for their visit we have made a social story which I have attached, and further information can be found on our access page: [Museum Access - Newton Abbot Museum \(museum-newtonabbot.org.uk\)](https://museum-newtonabbot.org.uk)

If people have any questions about the Museum's relaxed visits or require any further information, please email groups@newtonabbot-tc.gov.uk or phone 01626 201121.

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Food Technology

Autumn 1 has been a busy start to this academic year.

We have been looking at seasonal fruits and vegetables and where our food is grown. We've been lucky enough to cook some of the produce grown at Chipley farm. The students made a delicious, spiced pumpkin and coconut soup, where most of the ingredients were grown and picked at the farm. They have also cooked meals from a variety of ingredients, including butternut squash, sweet potatoes and apples.

Some of the students helped with our latest open evening. They prepared the sausage rolls, scones and biscuits and a few stayed behind after school to serve parents, to support their city and guilds Entry 3 award.

A lovely start to the year



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Art

Over the last half-term, the students have been doing lino-print, mono-print and leaf prints with Lisa, in art. The students have worked incredibly hard to create designs, carve their own lino-plates and use a tabletop printing press, to create some amazing art!

The mono-prints have seen the students use their observational drawing skills, together with the leaf printing, utilising the natural resources that are in abundance during in the autumn season.

Some of the work is going to be on show, at 'Paradiso' in Bovey Tracy, during the half term, along with other work produced with Alana, which includes mixed media and some fabulous digital art!

All of this will showcase the amazing creative talents of the students at the school. A huge well done! To all the students involved.



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YOUNG ARTIST EXHIBITION

You are invited to an Exhibition of Talented Young Artists at Gallery@Paradiso, 83 Fore Street, Bovey Tracey.

This special event will showcase the incredible work of emerging artists providing a platform for their creative expressions and unique perspectives.

The exhibition will be open from October 25th to November 2nd. Viewing from 11am to 4pm daily.

Don't miss this opportunity to experience the future of art and support the young talents who are shaping it.

We look forward to welcoming you to this exhibition of creativity and innovation.

jane.loder@paradiso.org.uk

Bovey Tracey Paradiso Arts Limited, 83 Fore Street, Bovey Tracey, Devon, TQ13 9AB

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Travel training skills and careers fair

Our recent trip was a great success! Despite being fully reliant on public transport, everything went smoothly, and I believe it proved how effective this approach can be.

This outing offered our students a chance to socialize while developing essential travel training skills. They also enjoyed meaningful interactions with professionals, including a train conductor, and gained insights into various career paths. The careers fair was a perfect fit for our students, allowing for personal and focused engagement.

I'd like to mention two students in particular—JJ and ED—for their outstanding participation. They confidently interacted with employers throughout the event, making the most of each encounter.

On our return to Newton Abbot, we stopped at No Limits for a drink, where students completed their employer encounter passports to document their experience.

JJ said, "Today has been quite enjoyable, It has been good." "I did not realise there were over 200 jobs in the army".

TC said "I enjoyed the train that was pretty cool"

ED said, "I now know how to get to Exeter, and this is what it will be like when I go to college".



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Family Support

We are already halfway through the term!! Over the holiday, there are plenty of places, around Devon and beyond, offering Halloween themed activities. Although this can be a fun experience for many, this can be a little overstimulating for some so, as you know your young people the best, please do use any information available to plan any events beforehand. Also coming up is Bonfire Night. There are usually several firework events organised around the county as well as the option to have your own at home. However you decide to celebrate this, please do so safely and ensure your children and young people are aware of the dangers and know the Firework Code.

Firework code

Only adults should deal with setting up firework displays, the lighting of fireworks and the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used (and remember, alcohol and fireworks don't mix!). Children and young people should be supervised, and watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance. Follow these top 10 tips for a safer fireworks party:

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable, and check the time you can legally set off fireworks
2. Only buy fireworks which carry the CE or UKCA marks, keep them in a closed box, and use them one at a time
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire

Make sure that the fire is out and surroundings are made safe before leaving.

The holidays, for some of our young people, can be particularly tricky as they struggle with a lack of routine and changes so here are some tips to help:

- Try to keep to a routine where possible e.g. bedtimes, mealtimes etc
- Have a visual calendar so they are able to see and prepare for events e.g. the return to school/days out
- Use a social story to aid preparation for changes, transitions, rewards.

Try to organise some activities throughout the holidays.

Please keep looking out for emails on upcoming events, support services, courses and funding as during the I will continue to send out information about what is available for families but, should you have any specific worries or issues that you would like to discuss, then please get in touch. You can contact me directly by email on SarahS@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk and I am also available to contact on 07435 815755, from 8.30am to 4.30pm, Tuesday to Friday during term time.

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Support Services during the holidays

During the holidays, there are several services which you will be able to contact for support and advice, should you need it:

The Devon Information and Advice (DIAS) service is a really helpful resource to look at. DIAS provide specific advice, links and guidance to families for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability. <https://devonias.org.uk>

Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD) also have lots of advice and guidance in their resources section [Resources Archive - Children and Family Health Devon](#) .

The Devon Services website has links and information to thousands of services available in Devon. You can search for these using keywords in different locations, to find a suitable organisation near you. Please visit [Advice, Support and Assistance | Devon Services](#) . You can also look in the family support tab on the Devon County Council website [Family support in Devon](#). For services in Torbay, please visit the Torbay Council website www.torbay.gov.uk and for Plymouth, please use the Plymouth Online Directory [Plymouth Online Directory - Plymouth Online Directory](#) .

If a child or young person (under 18) is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can now access Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) 24/7. Please contact 03300 245 321 during normal hours (8am-5pm, Mon to Fri) or 0300 555 5000 outside these hours. There are also services such as Shout, Kooth and Young Devon, who are able to support young people with mental health needs.

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/> for parents of children aged 0 – 19 to get in touch to ask questions and talk 1-1 about any parenting questions.

The NSPCC also have lots of information and advice on how to support children in young people, particularly if you have a concern about them. Please visit their website on www.nspcc.org.uk . If you're worried about something a child or young person may have experienced online, you can contact the NSPCC Helpline, for free support and advice, by calling [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk. Due to an increase in demand across the service, **the voice Helpline is currently available 10am–2pm Monday to Friday**. You can still email help@NSPCC.org.uk at any time for free, and you don't have to say who you are. If your child needs more support, they can contact [Childline](#) on 0800 1111 or by visiting the website to get advice on other ways to get support.

If you are concerned about the safety of a child in Devon and want to speak to someone, or if you are a child worried about your own safety, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.

If your child is at immediate risk ring 999.

A parent's guide to creative expression of emotion at home



Often, when a big feeling happens for children and young people, it pops up with no warning. These helpful tips on how to use arts and creativity alongside your children and young people at home will help you find ways to safely express and manage emotions, create 'feel good' brain chemicals, help reduce stressful feelings and develop thinking skills.

These activities are designed for you to do together. This is important as it helps build a strong, supportive relationship, enabling you to explore emotion and develop a shared language for communicating feelings.

Many favourite memories relate to one or more of our senses. For example, during a walk through the woods, the smell of a campfire might stimulate your brain to bring back a memory of a similar time, maybe a cub camp or toasting marshmallows on the fire, in turn this could make you smile or have a warm feeling. All of the activities below will engage different senses and help to develop expressive, emotional language during the activity.

Activities

Key phrases to try out during the activities are: "Show me", "I'm curious about...", "Let's try it together"

Sensory words to try:

bright, shiny, dim, sparkly, scary, crunchy, squeaky, hard, soft, cold, warm, silky, mushy, rough, scaly, sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, fruity. Feel free to add your own words to this list.

Sensory exploration

From birth through childhood and beyond, sensory exploration helps to make sense of the world around us by using our senses of tasting, smelling, seeing, touching and hearing. Engaging our senses will help us to learn and retain information well, it is crucial for brain development.

Activities to try: Baking using store cupboard ingredients, kneading bread dough, making a calm bottle, creating a sensory garden/tub, for older children and young people they enjoy making slime, creating new culinary dishes or natural fruity facemasks to invigorate the senses.

Music and movement

Helps to increase body awareness, spatial awareness and co-ordination. This allows children freedom to communicate all sorts of emotions without judgment or expectation. Music can offer us the opportunity to experience loudness, quietness, energy, calm and everything in between.

Activities to try: Dance, percussion, creating playlists linked to a feeling, rough and tumble play, tai chi, yoga, silly walks, silly faces, follow my leader. Music is one of the most fundamental ways we can express emotion, older children and young people could be supported to compile playlists to reflect a range of feelings and emotions. Music has a fundamental impact on the reward pathways of the brain and can trigger "feel happy" chemicals which can help to calm and regulate.

Animals and nature

Nature exists as a free, magical and endless source of calming and soothing. Within nature and in our homes, animals offer an instant source of joy, unconditional love and increase our levels of oxytocin, the love hormone.

Activities to try: Spending time looking, listening, foraging, smelling and touching the things that nature offers us. Just remember to wash hands, remove your rubbish and forage safely. Try sand play, mud play, water play, mini beasts, hugging/stroking pets, cloud watching, star gazing, rain drop races, dancing in the rain, running along a beach, walking through the woods. For teenagers, they enjoy seeking out risk taking behaviour and trying new things. The outdoors is a great way to enable teens to take calculated risks and push their boundaries to the limits. Fishing, hiking, rock climbing are some great ways to support them in this way.

Drawing and painting

Getting messy is a great way to engage the senses and helps children to create shapes and images for fun and to explore emotion.

Activities to try: Painting rocks, mandala colouring, painting an image to show a feeling, hand or foot painting, landscapes, self portraits.

Our adolescents too need to have a creative outlet to explore emotions. Journaling is an excellent way to allow them to express emotions through drawing, scribbling or even painting.

Story telling, writing and drama

Using a puppet to tell a story or act out an event that has happened will help with sequencing, order sorting and problem solving.

Activities to try: Puppet theatre, comic corner for reading together, writing stories together, telling funny stories.

Make and model

Encouraging children to make something out of nothing will help them to explore sensation, switch on their imagination and feel pride in what they have created.

Activities to try: Junk modelling, play dough, clay, shaving foam shapes.

"It is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self."

Donald Woods Winnicott



Barnardo's Exceed Service DICE

A **free** 4-week Online Parenting Support Programme

DICE provides families with information, advice and support to help them provide a safe and protective environment for their child or young person.

Supports families to understand the risks young people face in modern society.

4 week online free universal support for parents/carers of pre-teens and teens who are worried about parenting in the modern world, with the risks and challenges this presents.

The programme is running on a regular basis throughout the year. Please ensure you contact Exceed to request a referral form and a space or you can use the QR Code below which will take you to our referral via google forms.

exceed@barnardos.org.uk



01752 256339



exceed@barnardos.org.uk



www.barnardosexceed.org.uk



Session 01 Introduction and talk about the life of a Teenager

The teenage brain, why teenagers might take risks and the pressures they face in the modern world.

Session 02 The exploitation of children and young people

Grooming—what it is, how does it happen, where and by whom? How can we spot the signs? Active listening techniques, advice and guidance, managing stress and pull factors.

Session 03 Digital Dangers

Social media, sexting and nude selfies How can we be better digital parents/carers?

Session 04 A safe place to share ideas about parenting

Parenting top tips - Practical advice and information about the support available. Communicating effectively, life parenting a teenager, support networks and working together.

The Barnardo's Exceed service is open 9am - 5pm Mondays to Fridays (not including bank holidays)
We aim to get in contact with you within 1 working day after receiving your enquiry.

For all enquiries, further information or a referral form please contact - exceed@barnardos.org.uk