

HOULTON SPRING NEWS 2022



HOULTON
SCHOOL

Welcome from the Principal

Dear Houlton Family,

As we near the end of our first half-term of the new year, I am struck by how many of our pupils are rapidly maturing - from those who are now taller than me already, to the complex and sensitive issues many of them are handling so impressively within their rich, diverse and challenging curriculum. The snowdrops and crocuses are beginning to bloom and they're always such a positive reminder of the sense of renewal, hope and vitality that Spring brings to all of us each year.

This half-term, I was privileged to hear from a number of pupils following their assembly about LGBTQ+ History month as we had lunch together in the refectory. When I began my teaching career, Section 28 meant educational professionals could never have embraced broaching this important cultural understanding with pupils. Yet in 2022, so many of our impressive young people were incensed by the bigotry of the past;

they have been emboldened to ensure that they are the transformers in our world - taking the lead to ensure that the society of tomorrow is peaceful, accepting and celebratory of the differences that make us all who we are. Our Houlton family is truly inspiring.

You will see that Ofsted's lovely remarks about the community we're building together have recently been made public - a very strong foundation upon which I assure you we will all continue to build as we grow together.

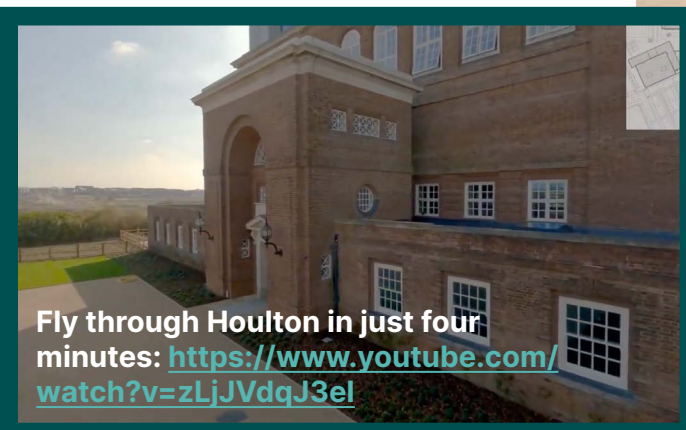
As an aside, I must say I was relieved to pass Mrs Forrest in the corridor looking so well earlier - see our story on recent activities in Science to find out why!

Finally, you will have seen from the press that schools are finding it a great challenge to operate a 'business as usual' model right now, with all of the challenges the pandemic continues to bring. May I please

say a huge thank you to the team for ensuring that things have been running smoothly since January and for supporting colleagues who have needed some time away. Kindness is a core value for us and I have seen it in strong evidence every day.

As always, thank you for your continued partnership and support - I am so proud to be the Principal leading our very special family.

Michael McCulley
Principal



Ofsted praises Houlton School in newly released pre-registration inspection report

In a newly released report, Ofsted inspectors have praised Houlton School, which is run by the Transforming Lives Educational Trust (TLET), for the provision that was put in place by leaders ahead of opening for the first time in September 2021.

The report, which relates to a statutory pre-registration inspection that took place in May 2021, details findings based on compliance with expected standards across a range of areas including: quality of leadership and management; spiritual moral, social and cultural development of students; and premises and accommodation.

During their visit to the brand-new school, inspectors reported that leaders and trustees "are highly effective and have considerable experience in running successful schools." They added, "leaders are suitably ambitious for this new school community. They are determined and committed to providing a world-class education and transforming the lives of all stakeholders."

After scrutinising a range of documentation and speaking with school leaders, the Trust CEO and the Chair of the Trust Board, inspectors also concluded that: "Leaders place spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at the heart of the curriculum so that pupils flourish and are well prepared for life beyond school...Policies and plans for personal, health and social education reflect the trust's values of kindness, loyalty and courage, and the school's commitment to developing confident individuals and responsible citizens."

On the suitability of the premises and accommodation - which features a £39m,

20 acre campus that occupies the Grade II historic listed buildings that previously housed Rugby International Radio Station, as well as brand new state-of-the-art buildings - the report also concluded that: "The school campus provides a range of classrooms, laboratories and specialist teaching spaces resourced to enhance pupils' learning... The school has a large sports hall, a dance studio and extensive outdoor space."

Michael McCulley, Principal at Houlton School, said: "At Houlton School innovation, aspiration and excellence are at the heart of all we do, and I am incredibly pleased that this has been recognised by Ofsted."

"Of course, since the time of the inspection we have welcomed our founding Year 7 pupils and it has been a great privilege to see them flourishing in their new secondary school, making the most of the world-class learning opportunities we have to offer in this unique and truly inspirational setting."

James Higham, CEO of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust, added: "From the very outset, we have been absolutely clear on our vision for this wonderful school. The many positive comments we received as part of the pre-registration inspection are a testament to the efforts of everyone involved in making this vision a reality. Our thanks go to all of our partners who have worked tirelessly with us to provide such an exceptional school for our pupils."

Houlton School's pre-opening inspection was carried out by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, under section 99(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. A copy of the full report can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1047333/Houlton_School.pdf



Community Kindness

As part of their Community Kindness project, 7W have been collecting goods for the local food bank. Over the past couple of weeks, they have collected over 200 items that will be donated to those in need in our local community. We'd like to thank everyone at home who sent items in to the collection and Mr Abbott and Mr Hill are incredibly proud of the work Winton put into this project. Well done!



Murder Mystery

Our Houlton scientists carry out forensic tests to find the culprit

It was a cold and wet December morning when pupils at Houlton School learnt of the tragic murder of Mrs Forrest, our teaching assistant. When making a cup of morning coffee, she was ruthlessly poisoned and left for dead on the staff room floor, only to be discovered by her devastated colleagues. But not all of the Houlton colleagues were equally devastated, and many of them had their own motivation for committing this heinous crime!

Houlton science pupils were given the task of acting as forensic scientists, and over the course of multiple practical lessons they investigated different pieces of evidence to narrow down the suspect list.

The first task involved filtering the “poison” to remove the sand and dirt, which had been added to help hide the poison. This didn’t stop our scientists, however, who then used evaporation to extract the mystery poison. Now that the poison had been extracted, Houlton investigators used flame tests to compare the colour of the flame with a series of known chemicals which allowed them to identify the metal in the poison.

A pen had also been found at the scene along with a murder note. Using chromatography, the forensic scientists compared the pen to other pens until a match was found, providing further evidence and further narrowing down the suspects. Muddy footprints also left the crime scene, and new knowledge on acids and alkalis and how they affect garden plant life allowed investigators to identify the murderer as someone with acidic soil in their garden... we were getting closer.

Finally, an investigation into rates of reaction using calcium carbonate and hydrochloric acid identified that the poison must have been ground into a fine powder if it was to dissolve in time for the murderer to flee the scene before Mrs Forrest became suspicious. When added to all the other pieces of evidence, this led to only one conclusion...

Miss Etheridge killed Mrs Forrest!

**By Mr Aaron Griffin, Head of Faculty:
Science and Computer Science**



World Book Day event

We are very excited to inform you of the upcoming plans for World Book Day on Thursday 3rd March. Houlton Pupils will be taken off timetable for the day to participate in a series of activities celebrating the power of literature!

In addition, we will be hosting a very special visitor: author Ele Fountain!

Ms Fountain will be giving a talk to the whole year group about her book, ‘Boy 87’, which they studied in their English lessons last term. She will then be running two creative writing workshops, which 60 of our pupils will have the opportunity to attend. These pupils will be selected based upon the dedication and effort that they put into their homework; the more time spent upon Bedrock the greater chance that they will be chosen to participate.

On World Book Day, we would also like to conduct a book swap, where pupils

and staff bring in books that they have read and swap them, for free. This is a wonderful way to help pupils read a wider range of literature and to rejuvenate your bookshelves at home. Please begin sending in donations for the book swap if you have them. Due to COVID, we would like to isolate them for 72 hours before the book swap, so the earlier that donations are made, the better.

Finally, we will be holding a baking competition on the same day, where pupils can create book-themed bakes to sell to their peers. The top three cakes will win a prize and all of the money raised will go towards buying new stock for the school library. If you have a budding baker at home, please encourage them to be creative and get planning!

**By Mrs Sian Warde, Head of Faculty:
English, Literacy and Drama**



LGBT+

History Month

LGBT+ History Month is a chance to shed new light on the history of lesbian, gay, bi and trans people in the UK.

This year, LGBT+ History Month is building towards Pride 50 – the anniversary of the first Pride event in the UK. This year focuses on celebrating the many momentous achievements the movement has had over the past half a century. During this pivotal year, we'll be exploring the history of some often overlooked identities, and showing how we are always stronger, better and prouder together.

Pupils recently enjoyed a powerful assembly on celebrating difference and the power of language, which was very well received.

Have a look at the file on Google Drive: it celebrates one overlooked figure each day for the next 30 days.

**By Mr Jamie Abbott, Subject Team Leader:
Humanities**



Crêpes and Churros!

As part of the Languages and Culture Club, pupils at Houlton School had a go at making and tasting delicious Spanish and French recipes! In our crêpes workshop, pupils had to follow a recipe written in French, which led to some very interesting but nonetheless delicious interpretations of a French classic. Pupils then learnt about the origins of crêpes and the Chandeleur.

For our Spanish week, we tried churros with chocolate, a typical Spanish breakfast treat, and looked at the traditional ingredients and ways churros are made in Spain. Pupils had a try with cinnamon, the traditional way, and had their own twist on churros toppings (one group even tried them with maple syrup!)

If you would like to discover foreign cultures through learning about cultural dishes and traditions, then the Languages and Culture Club is for you! We will be rotating groups next term and there will be a sign-up sheet just outside my door.

By Mr Matthieu Raffy, Subject Team Leader: Modern Languages

‘After the idea, there is always plenty of time to learn the technology’ - James Dyson

In January we launched two new spaces within the Design & Technology department, namely the Ideas Lab and The Making Hub. As we move ever closer to the rigors of GCSE examinations, it is critical that pupils develop an understanding of the theoretical principles that govern the design and making process, and I hope that these well-defined spaces will support pupils on that journey. As a strong believer in the power of collaboration, these spaces will soon be teeming with activity as pupils investigate and decipher complex problems in collaboration with department staff. Encouraging an open dialogue between each pupil is central to the development of our young designers, inside and outside the classroom and our staff learn just as much from their innate creativity.

‘Be Bold, Be Brave, Be Brilliant’ - Our Creative Core Values

Generating ideas is by far the biggest challenge for our pupils as they rely on lived experience, social conscience and their ethical and moral positioning. The most common question heard within the Ideas Lab is ‘Sir, I don’t have any ideas’, and, therefore, this is the question that we aim to solve without compromise or judgement. Our young designers are encouraged to look at the wider context and the larger problem at stake, provoking their ambition and igniting their ability to create our future.

Pupils this term have so far experienced the following:

Technical Drawing (CAD), Laser Cutting (CAM), Plastic Forming, Cardboard Construction, Rapid Prototyping, 3D Printing, Product Analysis, Design Strategies, Iterative Design and Evaluation principles.

By Mr Russell Hill, Subject Team Leader: Creative

Can we turn junk into funk?

Design is synonymous with the past, present and future and our pupils have been firmly seated in the present whilst exploring the Big Question: Can We Turn Junk into Funk?

Turning milk bottles into plastic sheets and corrugated cardboard into furniture, our young designers have presented some incredible ideas which they will prototype in order to increase a products life cycle and contribute to a more sustainable future and reduce waste.

As we move through an ever -changing world, our designers are required to skillfully navigate the pressing issues that dominate our world, poised to respond at a rapid pace. This term has been focussed on eco design and a designers ethical responsibility to contribute to our climate emergency.

It is without question that all our designers have been an integral part of what is fast becoming an innovative & creative department; however, occasionally a select few achieve the unexpected. I congratulate the following on their excellence this term:

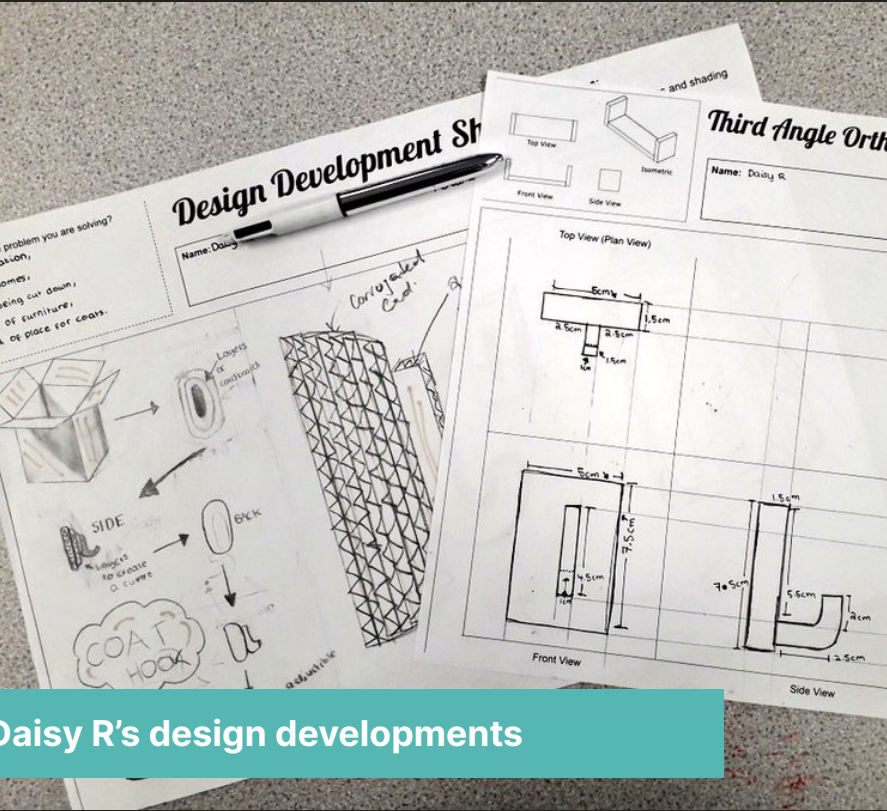
Tillie H	Joel GM	Daisy R
Rhea D	Georgia H	Elisa S
Hayden R	Oliver P	Lena M
Harry S	Leah P	Willow M



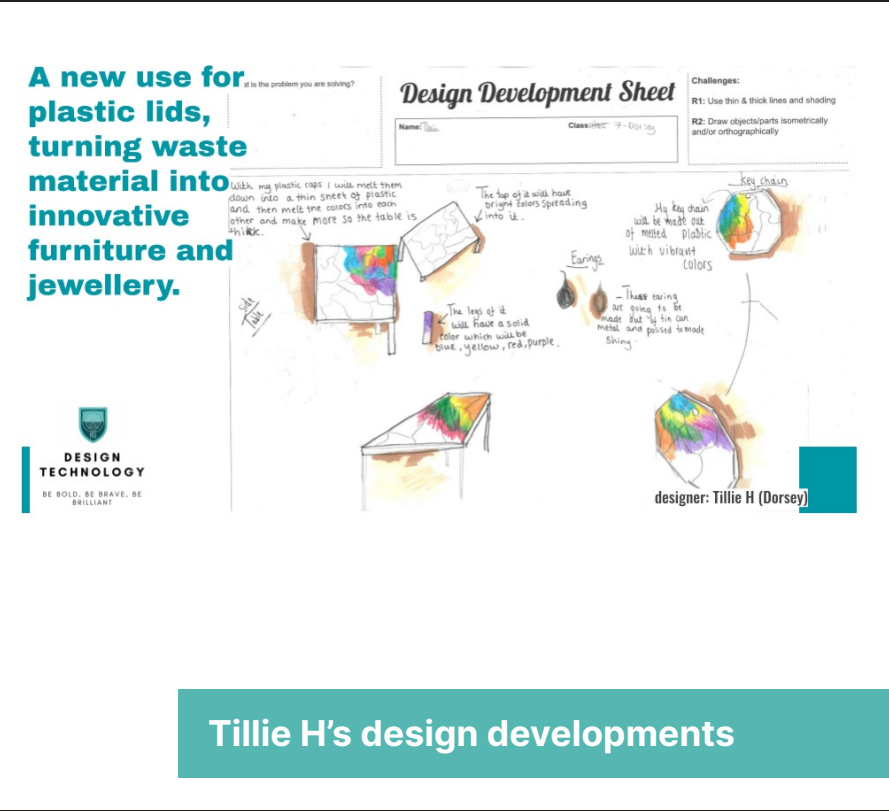
Plastic lids turned into sheet material



Joel M exploring his prototype



Daisy R's design developments



Tillie H's design developments

Can Art Change Minds?

It is without question that art has the ability to change society and our pupils are becoming incredibly adept at cultivating their artistic voice. Houlton artists have been responding to political, social and economic happenings and discovering if art has a place among such issues.

Delving through over 300 pages of current newspapers, pupils have responded to current affairs by selecting words and reappropriating them to create phrases and slogans that can offer new meanings. Exploring the work of artist Barbara Kruger, pupils were tasked with creating a large protest poster which became part of a collective performance around the school site, exploring art as a form of activism and a socially engaged practice.

In addition to text works, pupils have been immersed in a breadth of historical material from artworks which explore the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s to performance art that raises questions about women's rights in 1960s America. Each lesson pupils analyse a piece of artwork and are encouraged to develop their subject specific vocabulary in response to themes, images, context and the embedded meaning within each artwork.

It is crucial that all pupils are exposed and encouraged to develop their critical faculties in the context of art so they are equipped with the historical knowledge and technical theory attributed to a range of artworks and art making methods. This knowledge forms the core of Art and Design practice at Houlton School.

"Art is not what you see,
but what you make
others see."

Edgar Degas

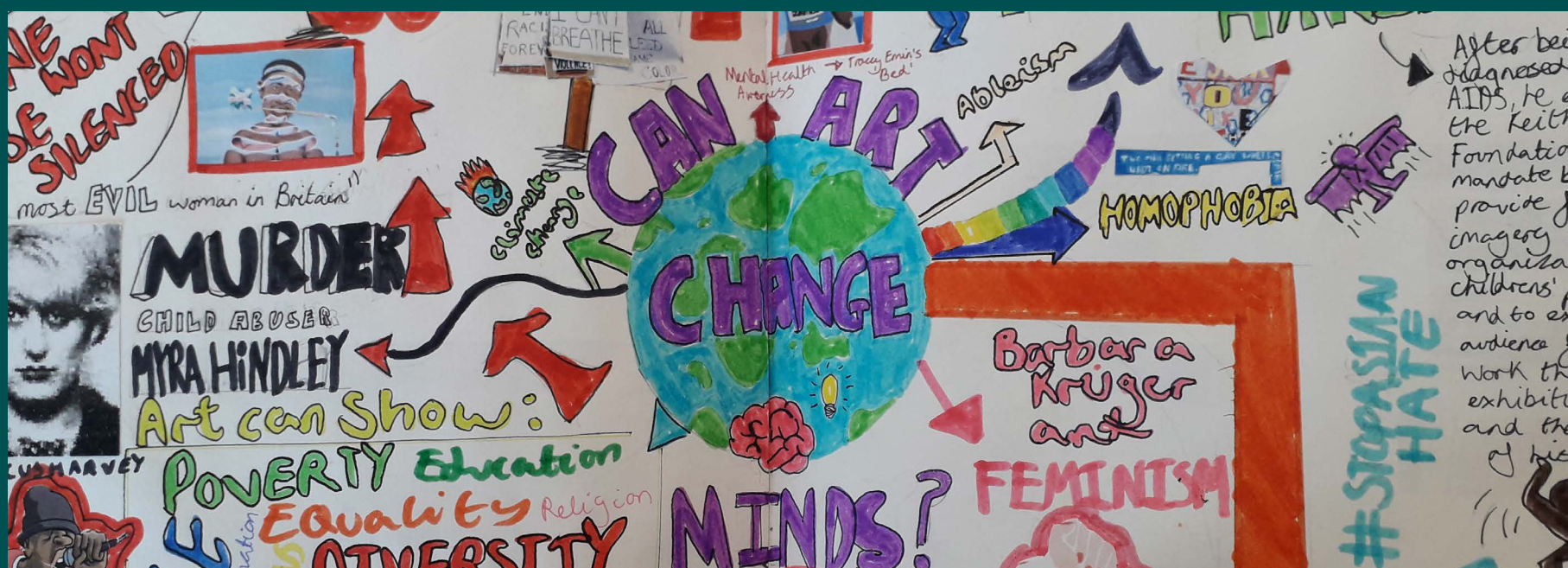
“Art opens everything up to such a bigger spectrum of people. And this is why I personally believe art is powerful, because art saved my life.”

David Tovey

Artist, Museum of Homelessness,
Tate Exchange

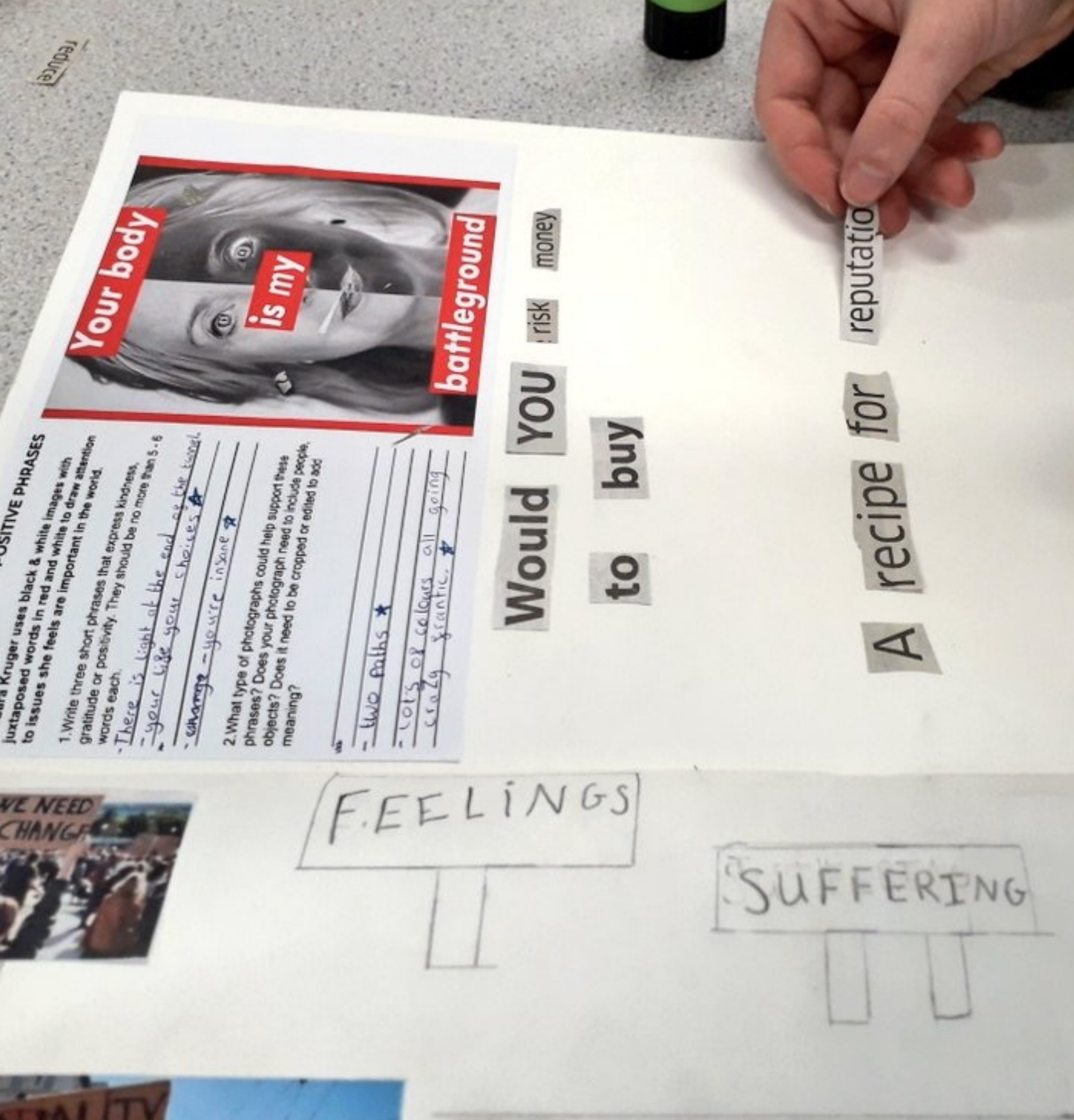
"I do think that art can change society. I don't think it's one artwork that does it, I think it's the collective effort of artists and institutions together."

Bojana Janković



Artists who have demonstrated a commitment to our core values this term are:

Leah P	Jude T	Nicole C	Michelle G	Aaryan K	Anna Z
Logan E	Isabella F	Charlotte G	Imogen H	India L	
Mackye S	Elisa E	Olivia R	Alice C	Harry S	
Gabi K	Sofia M	Ant S	Harrison E-S	Amelia Y	



Grayson's Art Club - Channel 4

Over 30 pupils across Year 7 will be submitting their work to the annual art club, organised and presented by Grayson Perry on Channel 4.

Working with Mr Hill, each pupil will receive

1:1 tutorials in the run up to the submission deadline to ensure the best possible chance of creating a spectacular artwork.

We can't wait for you to see their work and I wish each artist the best of luck!

countries, abroad or at home. #HoultonFamily

By Mr Russell Hill, Subject Team Leader: Creative

PE and Dance at Houlton



Curriculum

We have had a busy term in PE over the last six weeks, with Netball and Rugby being the focus within curriculum lessons. Our pupils have been exploring our two big questions this term, which are 'How do we play Rugby safely?' and 'How do we become effective Netball players?'

We are pleased with the effort and attitude the pupils have demonstrated in lessons, embracing the challenges along the way. Next term our focus turns to Gymnastics, Problem Solving & Fitness and Health.

Co-curricular lunch clubs

Our lunch time club offers have been well attended this term with Badminton being kept on due to the popularity. It is great to see pupils wanting to enhance the skills they learnt and developed during their first term.

Our Handball club has increased in popularity since the start of term with pupils now gaining a good understanding of the rules and tactics to play effectively in fixtures. We have also introduced recreational Netball every lunch time on the MUGA for any pupils who wish to participate.



Co-curricular after school clubs

Throughout this term we have seen an increase in numbers at our Rugby club, which has been fantastic. We continue to encourage both girls and boys to attend this club, which Mr Williams is running every Tuesday after school until 4:15pm.

This club will continue up until Easter when we will be participating in Rugby fixtures against other schools around the district. Our other after school clubs this term have been Netball and Football with the football being run by Mr Raffy and Mr Abbott. Next term our fixtures will be for both Rugby and Girls' Football.

Fixtures & Results:

Netball fixtures:

Vs Bilton – (L) 4-2

(Player of the match awarded by opposition was Rhea in Armstrong)

Vs Parker – (W) 11-8

(Player of the match awarded by opposition was Megan in Armstrong)

Upcoming Netball games before half term:

Vs Guilsborough @Houlton

Handball fixtures:

Vs Ashlawn (Both boys and girls teams played)

Boys: 1 – 10 (L)

Girls 4 – 5 (L)

Vs – Lawrence Sheriff – (W) 8-3

Upcoming fixtures remaining this term:

Vs Avs 14th Feb (Boys team)

Vs RFSS 15th Feb (Both boys and girls' team)

Dance

This term we have been exploring different styles of dance, which has included some excellent pupil-led lessons to showcase their specialisms. Daisy from Armstrong delivered some Commercial Choreography, whilst Daisy from Obama showcased her Tap skills. We also had Chloe from Winton leading an Irish dancing lesson with Sofia preparing additional Irish dancing videos as she was away on a trip while the sessions were running.

We have currently looked at Street, Irish and Bollywood and we are going to look at the Jive, Charleston, Pasadoble and Tap after February half term. Pupils have been set a homework research task for Dance looking into the history of each style, from where it originated and what key terminology would be associated with it.

This term, the PE department has launched a 'pupil of the term' award and we will be looking for some, if not all, of the below:

- Gone above and beyond to help out in PE/ Dance lessons
- Demonstrated exceptional effort and enthusiasm consistently across the term
- Taking an active part in our co-curricular clubs and teams
- Positive attitude and a willingness to learn
- Polite, punctual, reliable and organised pupil

Our first PE/Dance pupil of the term is: **Rhea D, Armstrong**

Rhea has been an exceptional pupil since the start of her Houlton journey in September. She has applied herself in PE lessons, always giving 100% in everything she does. Rhea's attendance at our co-curricular has been fantastic and she is even having to alternate clubs so she can do more than one. She is always extremely polite and punctual and sets the highest standards for herself.

Other nominees included:

- **Tillie H, Dorsey**
- **Harry M, Armstrong**
- **Olivia K, Armstrong**
- **Brandon M, Obama**

The winner will receive a free 'sports ball' of their choice, R2 and postcard home and recognition on our PE notice board for the following term. Our nominees will receive an R1 and positive postcard home.

We are pleased with the effort and attitude the pupils have demonstrated in lessons, embracing the challenges along the way. Next term our focus turns to Gymnastics, Problem Solving & Fitness and Health.

Please follow our twitter page with all news regarding fixtures, results and PE department news.

 @HoultonPEdept

By Miss Abbie Hartfield, Teacher of Physical Education



HOULTON
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