

HOULTON WINTER NEWS 2023



HOULTON
SCHOOL



Welcome from the Principal

Dear Houlton family,

As we approach our third Christmas together, I couldn't be more proud of the various wonderful ways in which pupils and staff have been getting in the festive spirit and showing kindness. When short days and the dark nights combine with a very long term it can be difficult to maintain a cheery disposition all the time; however, we had a lovely Christmas dinner together and it was extremely touching to learn that our College Captains and Pupil Forum wanted to prepare special Christmas gift boxes for children in Year 2 and Year 6 at our Trust's primary school, Henry Hinde. This all culminated today in our 'festive dress' day and the Festival

Extravaganza, raising money for the local Rugby Myton Hospice.

Whether we be Christians, of a different faith or of none, we all enjoy the festive period here in the United Kingdom. The Christmas holiday is a time for coming together, seeing family, meeting new friends and looking out for each other, just as those in the traditional nativity story once did.

As always, please do look out for anyone vulnerable or who might be spending Christmas on their own and consider whether an invite in for a warm mince pie or a pick from the Quality Street tub this year could make a real difference to them. As Maya Angelou once said,

'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.' Similarly, one of Dickens's most infamous characters, Ebenezer Scrooge, reflects on his actions and how he needs to change some of them at Christmas, ultimately promising, '...I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all year.'

The new year is a time of renewal, celebration and fresh starts for us all – Happy Hogmanay, stay safe, and I look forward to seeing you all in January 2024.

Michael McCulley
Principal

University of Birmingham Maths Day

10 Year 8 pupils were thrilled to visit the University of Birmingham earlier this term, to see what university life is like and to explore university-style mathematics.

Pupils explored Game Theory and how to ensure you win at Rock Paper Scissors, as well as how the theory of games does not always work when you are working with other people. Pupils also looked at population control and what would happen if a rabbit population got out of hand, as well as Professor Simon Goodwin showing us how much maths is just in an object we use every day, such as a phone.

Pupils then got to explore the University of Birmingham campus, visiting the Joseph Chamberlain Memorial Clock Tower, colloquially known as 'Old Joe', as well as the University Guild and the Sports Facilities.

By Miss Jasmine Etheridge
Head of Faculty: Mathematics and Numeracy



Houlton Lecture

Pupils recently welcomed Mark Pawsey, MP for Rugby, to Houlton School. Mark spoke to pupils about what it is like to be a politician and how he shares the concerns of people in Rugby in Parliament.

Pupils were also given the opportunity to ask Mark questions and it was evident we have some future Jeremy Paxman and Laura Kuenssbergs amongst us, with hard-hitting questions for Mark such as his views on providing green enterprise, providing medical support for new communities such as Rugby and even his opinion on Nigel Farage on 'I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here'.



Science

As the Christmas break approaches, we can't believe how quickly the year is going and the scientific concepts that our pupils have learned during this time!

Year 7: Unveiling Nature's Beauty Through Flower Dissections

In the fascinating world of biology, our Year 7 pupils have embarked on a journey into the intricate beauty of flowers through dissections. Armed with curiosity and scissors, they carefully explored the anatomy of various flowers. Among the many discoveries, pupils observed the different parts, such as petals, sepals, stamens and pistils. This hands-on experience provided invaluable insights into the reproductive structures of plants, enhancing their understanding of the crucial flowers play in the cycle of life.

Furthermore, pupils uncovered the wonders of pollination, learning about the importance of this process for the continuation of plant life. The practical aspect of the flower dissection not only engaged their scientific minds but also instilled a sense of wonder and appreciation for the intricate design of the natural world.



Year 8: Unleashing the Power of Chemical Reactions

Venturing into the realm of chemistry, our Year 8 pupils have been captivated by the thrilling world of chemical reactions. From understanding the basics to delving into more complex processes, they have been introduced to two key concepts: thermal decomposition and combustion.

Thermal decomposition, the breakdown of compounds through heat, has opened their eyes to the transformative power of temperature. Through engaging experiments, pupils witnessed the profound changes that occur when certain substances undergo thermal decomposition, paving the way for a deeper comprehension of chemical processes.

Additionally, the exploration of combustion has ignited their curiosity. Whether it's the controlled burning of substances or understanding the oxidation of fuels, Year 8 pupils have been on an exciting journey to unravel the mysteries of chemical reactions. This foundational knowledge will serve as a solid platform for their future endeavours in the realm of chemistry.

Year 9: Harnessing the Power of Energy – Gravitational Potential and Kinetic Energy

In the world of physics, our Year 9 pupils have been grappling with the concepts of gravitational potential and kinetic energy. Armed with equations and a thirst for understanding, they have been on a quest to calculate and comprehend the dynamic interplay between these two forms of energy.

Gravitational potential energy, associated with an object's position in a gravitational field, has been a focal point of exploration. Pupils have investigated the factors influencing gravitational potential energy, gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between height, mass and the Earth's gravitational pull.

Simultaneously, the study of kinetic energy has propelled them into the dynamic world of motion. Through hands-on experiments and mathematical calculations, Year 9 pupils have honed their skills in determining the kinetic energy of objects in motion. This knowledge not only enriches their scientific acumen but also provides a solid foundation for the future in physics.

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



Computer Science

Safety has been at the forefront of Year 7's lessons this term. Using Google Interland, they have learned how to be good digital citizens while questioning what this can mean.

They have also looked at the effects of cyberbullying. All colleges have done a fantastic job of developing their understanding and are able to discuss this with great enthusiasm. As part of looking at the effects of cyberbullying, they learned about Abbie's story and how her accepting a party invitation led someone she considered a friend to start bullying her online and the fallout from this. We are impressed by the levels of empathy shown during this session.

Year 8 pupils have developed their understanding of last year's online safety work, looking specifically into malware and the effects these can have on people. While they found the use of the word worms entertaining, they also understood how worms can be used to deliver payloads and cause damage to computers. Pupils also investigated the WannaCry attack from 2017, a large attack that infected 200,000 computers. They also tested out the audio files for large text files, where pupils can listen to a narration provided to assist with reading large amounts of text.

Year 9 has returned to the world of binary and data representation this term. First, with a refresh of previous knowledge, it

was fantastic to see pupils who maybe did not understand the conversion processes last year understand and apply these skills. Pupils have also looked at hexadecimal and binary addition, which stretched preexisting maths skills and understanding. Finally, they investigated images and sound, where all colleges were subjected to Mr. Creswell-Peters' music taste (Queen: Bohemian Rhapsody) listening to it in both digital and analogue versions to see if they could tell the difference.

The new year brings new challenges and topics. Year 7 will start looking at programming, Year 8 will be focusing on developing skills with office-based computer programmes and Year 9 will advance their skills in Python.

Year 7 Reminder

School username and password for EduLink and signing into the computers: Y23 + surname + first letter of first name. The login for Google Suites, e.g. Gmail and Classrooms, is the username + @houltonschool.org.uk. The password for all of these will be the same password pupils set in school.



Homework Reminder

Each year group will receive homework on the following days, either Week A or B, depending on the college. Please ensure pupils are checking their EduLink for this. All years currently have one week of working time on homework. If the work is not completed, a Pre-C and 24-hour notice is issued. If it is still not completed, a C3 detention will be set.

Year 7 Wednesday

Year 8 Tuesday

Year 9 Monday

By Mr Matt Creswell-Peters
Subject Team Leader: Computer Science

English

This half-term, pupils have been exploring big themes in their English lessons, expanding their cultural capital and understanding the place of English literature and language in the world.

In Year 7, pupils have been continuing their learning about the refugee crisis, creating pieces of descriptive writing that investigate what it might feel like to be forced to flee their homes. They have also begun to learn the new skill of analysis and have been working hard to try and unpick messages and meanings within literary texts.

In Year 8, our pupils have been learning about ancient Greek mythology and how the messages from many legends, like those of Medusa, King Midas and Icarus, are still relevant today. They have now moved on to looking at Norse mythology and the medieval era, as they start to learn about the epic poem 'Beowulf'.

In Year 9, pupils have expanded upon their learning from 'Jane Eyre' by exploring extracts from other Victorian literature, such as 'Oliver Twist'. They have been focusing on classism and poverty by understanding the theories of Thomas Robert Malthus and how these theories have affected the treatment of the poor across time.



Next term, we are looking forward to starting new topics with all our year groups. Year 7 will be moving on to explore a variety of poetry, Year 8 will learn about the play 'Julius Caesar' and Year 9 will be studying 'Journey's End', a play set during World War 1.

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

History

Reflecting on Remembrance: A solemn gathering on November 10th, 2023

In a poignant assembly held on November 11th, 2023, our school community came together to honour and remember the fallen heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. The remembrance assembly served as a poignant reminder of the profound importance of acknowledging the brave individuals who gave their lives during times of conflict.

Mr. Roy and Ms. Divver, two esteemed members of our school community, shared deeply personal connections to the war, emphasising the human stories behind the historical events. Their narratives provided a powerful insight into the sacrifices made by countless individuals and underscored the importance of preserving the memories of those who served.

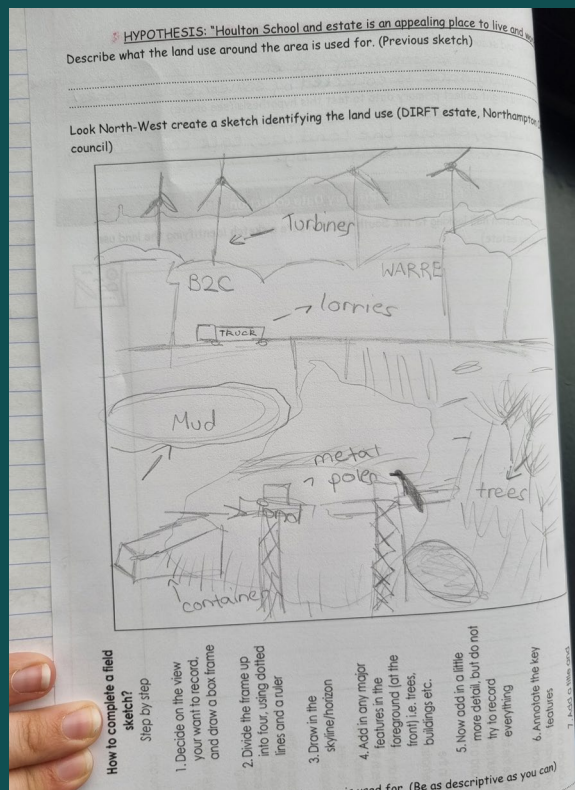
The assembly reached its emotional crescendo with a moving two-minute silence, during which the entire school stood united in quiet reflection. The collective hush served as a poignant tribute to the fallen, fostering a sense of unity and gratitude among the pupils and staff. As we observed this solemn moment, we were reminded that remembrance is not merely an obligation but a duty – to ensure that the sacrifices of the past are never forgotten and to strive for a future where peace prevails.

The assembly links closely with our Year 9 Big Question: Were the lions led by donkeys? This exploration challenged them to critically analyse the leadership of the past and draw connections to the present, fostering a profound understanding of the complexities



surrounding war and its consequences, as well as discussing the importance of remembrance.

By Mr Jamie Abbott
Head of Faculty: Humanities



Geography

In Geography, Year 7 pupils have been exploring the Big Question: Is Rugby an appealing place to live?

Pupils recently embarked on a thrilling journey here in Houlton, Rugby. Armed with sketchpads and clipboards, they delved into the heart of our community. The pupils conducted fieldwork that included sketching the landscape, counting cars to understand traffic patterns and conducting an environmental perception survey to gauge how our local environment is perceived by its inhabitants.

Year 8 pupils are exploring the Big Question: Is there blood in my mobile?

Our Year 8 pupils took on a global perspective by exploring the complex issue of conflict minerals in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Through in-depth research and analysis, they uncovered the impact of mining activities on local communities and the environment. This eye-opening experience challenged our pupils to think critically about the interconnectedness of our world and the responsibility we bear for our global footprint.

Year 9 pupils are exploring the Big Question: Should humans have access to the earth's natural resources?

Pupils dove deep into the critical question of whether humans should have unlimited access to natural resources. Focusing on water and food security, these young minds explored the delicate balance between human needs and environmental sustainability. Engaging in discussions and debates, they grappled with the ethical implications of resource use and the urgent need for responsible practices to ensure a secure future for our planet.

By Mr Chris Youmans
Subject Team Leader: Geography

Religious Studies

Year 7

In an insightful and engaging term, Year 7 pupils at Houlton have been on an interesting journey, exploring religious beliefs that shape our world. The curriculum this term has been centered around understanding different faiths, looking into holy scriptures, exploring places of worship and appreciating the diverse ways in which believers express their faith.

Throughout the term, pupils have been actively engaged in studying sacred texts from various religions, gaining valuable insights into the beliefs that guide millions of people around the world. From the Bible and Quran to the Guru Granth Sahib and Torah, pupils have had the opportunity to look deep into these texts, fostering a sense of respect and understanding for different religious traditions.

Year 8 Update

At Houlton School, the spirit of cultural diversity thrives, fostering an environment where various traditions are not just acknowledged but celebrated. Recently, the focus has been on the vibrant and illuminating festival of Diwali, igniting curiosity and engagement among pupils as they immersed themselves in understanding this significant celebration.

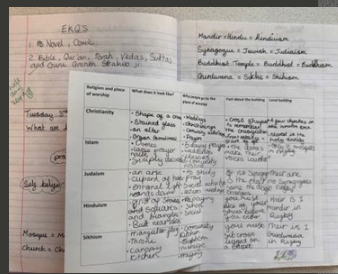
Diwali, known as the Festival of Lights, holds profound cultural significance for millions around the globe, particularly those of Hindu, Jain, Sikh and some Buddhist faiths. It symbolises the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance and the triumph of good over evil. This auspicious occasion spans over several days, each marked with unique rituals, joyful gatherings and the illumination of homes with diyas (traditional oil lamps) and vibrant decorations.

Pupils dove into expressing their understanding of Diwali through creative poster-making. These vibrant artworks became a window into their interpretations and connections to the festival. Displayed around the RE department, they spread the spirit and importance of Diwali to everyone.

Let the light of understanding and respect for diverse cultures continue to shine brightly at Houlton throughout the year.

By Miss Dupinder Ghatora
Subject Team Leader: Religious Studies

Aim of Punishment	What does it mean?	Christian view	Muslim view
Retribution - An aim of punishment to get your own back: Eye for an eye.	Depending on how serious the crime is you get a higher or lower punishment. For example, if you murder someone you will receive a long prison sentence.	- "Take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." - Do not make is generally should receive a punishment which is as severe as the crime.	An eye for an eye crime means if life is taken a victim can gain justice or ask for the death penalty.
Reformation - An aim of punishment to change someone's behaviour for the better.	Might some people stop committing crimes which may stop people from suffering if they do not like the punished.	Everyone should be treated with respect regardless of what they have done. Everyone is not equalised by many Christians.	Necessary for offenders to seek God's forgiveness and to become purified.
Deterrence - An aim of punishment to put people off committing crimes.	- Punishments used to be in public to deter others. - helps off crimes and makes them behave better. - helps society will change. - helps society to be a better place.	Do not take revenge my dear friends, leave your place for God's wrath. If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat. Do not a replacement for punishment but to be done at the same time.	Necessary for offenders to seek God's forgiveness and to become purified.



Languages

Language and Culture Club Extravaganza!

Our popular Language and Culture Club has been a hit! 🌍 ✨ Pupils immersed themselves in French fun, playing Monopoly en français 🎲, exploring the streets of Paris on Google Maps 🗺️, and enjoying the delightful French film, "Le petit Nicolas"! 🍷 C'est magnifique! 🇫🇷

Big Questions Galore!

In Year 9 French, we're looking into the dynamic between parents and teenagers – exploring the age-old question: "Entre parents et adolescents, y a-t-il des disputes?" 🇫🇷 Meanwhile, Year 9 Spanish is pondering on the stylish query: "¿Estamos adictos a la moda?" 🇪🇸 Let the intellectual journey begin! 🚀

Dreamy Escapades in Year 8!

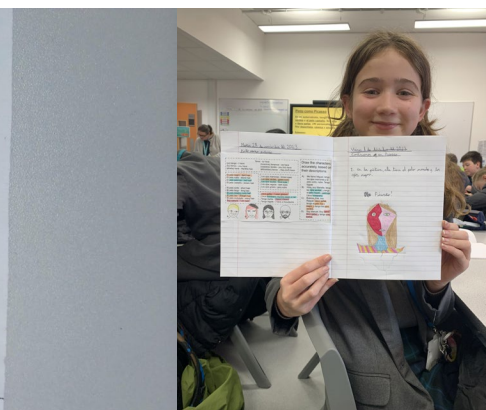
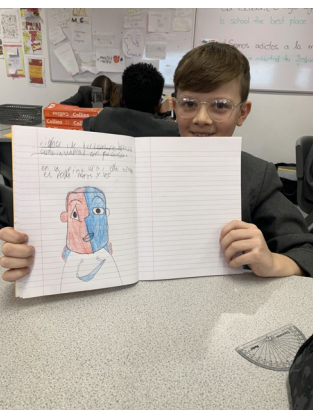
Year 8 French pupils took a virtual voyage, contemplating, "What would be my dream holiday?" ✈️ While in Year 8 Spanish, pupils pondered the intriguing question: "Is school the best place to learn?", learning about different school systems, such as the Mexican's education system.

Year 7 Explorations!

Our Year 7s dove into thought-provoking inquiries. In French, they pondered, "Can we like everything?" And in Spanish, they looked into the Big question: "¿Quién está en mi burbuja?" : Who is in my bubble?

Wishing you all a Feliz Navidad, Joyeux Noel and happy new year!

By Mr Matthieu Raffy
Subject Team Leader: Modern Languages



Art & Design

Year 9 visit Tate Modern

A selection of Year 9 pupils visited the Tate Modern in December, to develop their understanding of art practice and the various ways in which artists make art.

Pupils explored all gallery spaces and worked through an art treasure hunt activity to familiarise themselves with as many artworks as possible.

Our young artists are expertly crafting their own studio practice and it is wonderful to see such a wide range of explorations and art-making happening within the art studios at Houlton School.

By Mr Russell Hill
Subject Team Leader: Creative



V&A Innovate National Schools Challenge

Will we make the final for the 3rd consecutive year?

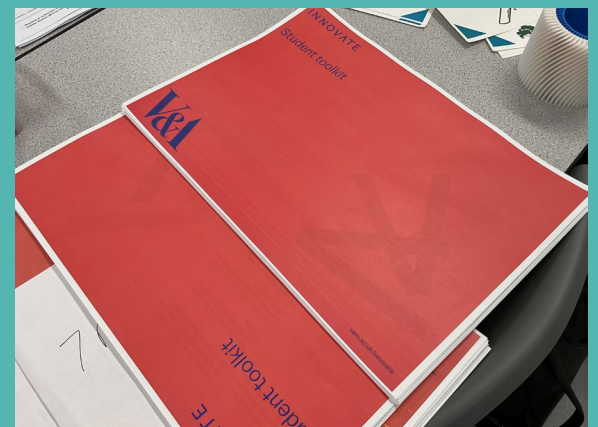
Over 180 Houlton School pupils took part in the day-long, action-packed V&A Innovate challenge this year, supported by our Year 8 and Year 9 Creative Champions.

V&A Innovate is an annual National Schools Challenge, asking pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 to work in teams of between 4 – 6 to design a solution to a real-world problem. The V&A is asking pupils to work in teams to follow a human-centered design process and respond to one of the three challenge themes inspired by V&A collections.

This year, Houlton School pupils worked with the theme of 'play' to explore, research and develop working prototypes, considering places of play, objects of play and people who play. Teams were expertly imaginative and we saw everything from edible football pitches to sensory toys for dogs.

Mr Hill, working with teams ahead of submitting their designs and portfolios to the V&A for judging, said: "I am so excited to be able to offer this opportunity to our pupils and hope to build on our previous success. It is a real pleasure to witness our pupils tackling real world problems, using their creativity and problem-solving skills through independent teamwork."

Best of luck to all teams!



Music

The past half-term has been a very successful time for all in the music department.

Our Year 7 pupils have been exploring pitch and reading notation through the keyboard and have been very enthusiastic about learning to play a wide range of songs on the keyboard.

Our Year 8 pupils have been exploring Jazz and Blues Music, learning about its history and how it transformed the music of the 20th century. Pupils have learned to play simple 12-bar Blues songs, and some have been experimenting with improvisation. It is great to see how far pupils are developing their instrumental skills.

Year 9 pupils have been investigating the history of popular music, from its origins in America to how we still see these features in modern music. Pupils have learned a variety of famous guitar hooks



and riffs and have been learning to play modern examples of pop songs in their groups.

Instrumental lessons have continued to be a success for all pupils involved and we are seeing excellent progress, even for those that have only just started this year!

Our Carol Concert is set to be a great success and we are looking forward to welcoming you all to a lovely celebration.

By Mr Peter Bridgwood
Subject Team Leader: Performing Arts - Music

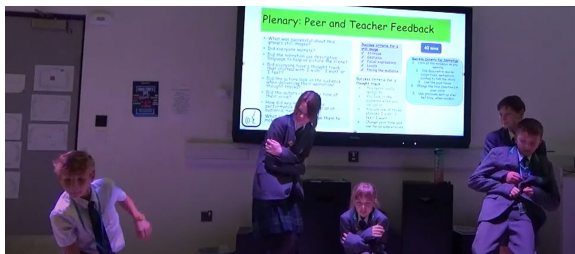
Performing Arts

Year 7 Acting

This half-term, pupils in Year 7 have been learning about the refugee crisis. This scheme has coincided with their English studies, where they have recently read 'Boy 87' by Ele Fountain.

Pupils have responded to several stimuli (starting points used to create pieces of theatre), such as some of the heartbreaking images seen in the media and a [Save the Children campaign](#) that really brings home the situation.

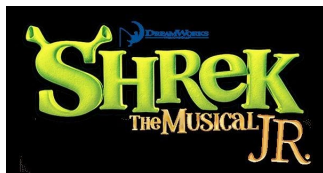
Our Year 7 actors have been perfecting the skills of still images and narration while working on delivering thought-provoking thought tracks, making the audience feel a sense of pathos towards their characters.



Pupils pictured: Tymon, Isabella, Tyler, Matilda and Alfie, 7A.

Shrek The Musical Jr

Houlton's Performing Arts Faculty is excited to announce this summer's school musical, Shrek the Musical Jr!



At the start of December, many pupils across Key Stage 3 turned up for our audition dates.

Pupils demonstrated innovation and aspiration by being bold and taking risks by

singing, dancing and acting in front of their teachers and others.

The standard of performance and skills was strong across all three strands of the arts.

We were most impressed with those learners who had gone that extra mile and had added in little dance routines to their singing auditions, who had braved the American accent during the acting workshop and had choreographed some daring moves!

Mr Bridgwood, Miss Connolly and Miss Henry-Moore would like to congratulate every individual who took part; we look forward to working with you as a cast in January 2024.

Christmas Performing Arts Performance



On Tuesday 12th December, over 75 pupils from Houlton's acting, dance, cheer and co-curricular clubs came and showcased their talents at our first Christmas Performing Arts Performance, raising money for The Trussell Trust and for future Houlton School shows.

Cheer produced an impressive display with amazing tumblers and stunts, whilst Dance put on a crowd-pleasing performance to The Greatest Showman, incorporating props within their choreography, which got the audience bopping! Acting retold their version of Twas the Night before Christmas through the eyes of 3 spoilt children, demonstrated what chaos would be caused if well-loved Christmas characters went onto the

gameshow Pointless and finally showed life through the eyes of a shopping mall Santa.

To top this off, the event was hosted and stage managed by a team of KS3 performing arts ambassadors who did everything from getting acts in on time, delivering comedic skits and controlling all the lighting and music. Well done to everyone who was involved!

Streamed Live Theatre

Please note, all Houlton pupils now have free access to streamed theatre shows from the National Theatre.

Login: <https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/home>
Username: **HXXVYZ**
Password: **TGGBKT**

(The log in button can be found in the top right-hand corner of the landing page. If you copy and paste the details, please be very careful not to include any invisible spaces as these will invalidate the details.)

Once on the page, pupils should click Browse Contents and click Videos.

[This log on must not be offered to anyone external to Houlton or posted on social media.]

Miss Henry-Moore's recommendations:

1. Treasure Island *recommended for children aged 9+
2. Jane Eyre *recommended for children aged 12+

By Miss Michelle Henry-Moore
Subject Team Leader: Performance Arts - Acting



First Aid

Once again, all Year 7 tutor groups have undergone CPR awareness training.

Restart A Heart Day falls in October every year, a worldwide initiative to train as many people as possible in lifesaving techniques.

In the new year, all year groups will be learning how to handle a defibrillator. Watch this space...

By Miss Annie Divver
Pupil Experience: Year 9 Mental Health and First Aid Leader

PE

Curriculum lessons and our Big Questions for this term are:

Year 7 – How can we outwit opponents in racket sports? (Badminton)

Year 8 – What happens to our bodies when we exercise and why? (Netball)

Year 9 – Does personality matter? (Table Tennis)

Co-curricular opportunities this term:

- Rugby
- Football
- Netball
- Volleyball
- Badminton
- Cheerleading
- Dance

Our PE department staff are looking out for the following qualities in pupils to consider them for our 'Pupil of the Term Award', to be presented before the Christmas break.

These qualities include:

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

The pupil who wins this award will receive an R2 and a piece of sporting equipment!

Club updates

A well done to our Year 9 pupils who competed in the badminton tournament a couple of weeks ago, playing against Rugby Free, Rugby High and Ashlawn. We have our Year 7 tournament coming up before Christmas too.

It has been great to see the excellent numbers at our co-curricular clubs again this half term! Some clubs may be changing after Christmas, please keep an eye out for any information given by PE staff.

After Christmas, our sports will be Gymnastics and problem solving for Year 7 and Basketball for Year 8 and Year 9 pupils.

We look forward to many more fixtures in the new year for our pupils to attend and participate in.

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

By Mrs Abbie Oldham
Subject Team Leader: Physical Education





HOULTON
SCHOOL

Houlton School
Signal Drive, Houlton, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23 1ED

Telephone: 01788 593 300
Email: hello@houltonschool.org.uk
www.houltonschool.org.uk

 @HoultonSchool |  @HoultonSchool |  @houltonschool