The Hermitage Herald

Hello!

Welcome to November's edition of Hermitage Herald – here to keep you up to date with everything that's been happening in our school. Here are the highlights of such a busy month here at Hermitage Academy – enjoy!

National Recognition for Outstanding Careers Education

We are delighted to share that Hermitage Academy has been awarded the prestigious Quality in Careers Award, a nationally recognised accreditation celebrating excellence in careers education, information, advice and guidance.

During the final week before half term, a Quality in Careers assessor spent a full day in school evaluating our careers provision and the support we provide for students as they prepare for their future pathways. The assessment explored every aspect of our careers programme, including how we develop students' awareness of opportunities, how we use Labour Market Information (LMI), how we meet the needs of individual learners, link curriculum subjects to future careers, and provide meaningful encounters with employers and workplaces.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. In fact, the assessor opened her formal feedback with a quote from our student panel: "Careers is everywhere!"

Throughout the visit, the assessor met with students, staff and parents, as well as our Careers Leaders, Mrs Marshall and Mrs Wake, gaining a comprehensive insight into the culture of aspiration that runs throughout the academy.

This award is a wonderful recognition of our commitment to ensuring every student is equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed decisions about their future. We are incredibly proud of this achievement and of the opportunities we continue to provide to help our students aim high and succeed in their next steps.





Careers News

Fifteen of our current Year 10 students recently attended a visit to the National Grid, where they participated in a range of engaging electricity-based workshops. The activities were thoroughly enjoyed by all students, with the interactive games and practical experiments proving to be particularly popular.

Years 11 and 12 spent time networking with employers from across the North-East, developing their understanding of different industries, the roles available within them, and the skills and qualifications required for future career success.

Year 10 and 11 students celebrate Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Success

Students in Years 10 and 11 are celebrating an outstanding achievement after successfully completing their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Awards, following two weekends of impressive expedition performances.

Over the last fortnight, our Bronze DofE cohorts have demonstrated exceptional resilience, determination and teamwork as they completed their qualifying expeditions. Students tackled lengthy walks throughout the Kielder countryside, navigated independently using maps and compasses, and worked together to prepare and cook meals in the outdoors. Throughout the expeditions, they showed maturity, perseverance and a positive attitude, overcoming challenges and supporting one another every step of the way. We'll never forget Matthew's legendary toasties!

The expedition section, however, is only one part of the Bronze Award. Over the past 12 months, students have also dedicated significant time to completing their Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections. We have been blown away by both their commitment and the incredible variety of activities they have undertaken. From supporting younger students through peer reading and homework clubs, to helping operate local food banks and caring for animals, our students have made a genuine difference within both our school and the wider community. Their willingness to give their time and energy to help others has made us immensely proud.

We are currently in the process of finalising assessor reports and completing the verification process for all participants. Once this is complete, students will officially receive their Bronze Awards. We would like to congratulate every participant on their fantastic achievement and thank the staff, volunteers and assessors at Simonside Outdoor Adventure, who have supported them throughout their DofE journey.

Looking ahead, we are excited to share information regarding our Silver DofE programme and will be in touch soon with key dates and details for students wishing to continue their Duke of Edinburgh journey.





The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an internationally recognised programme and a valuable addition to future university, college and employment applications. It enables young people to develop essential life skills, including resilience, teamwork, communication, leadership and independence, while also making a positive contribution to their communities.

Applications for our new Year 9 Bronze DofE cohort will open in December 2026. Parents and carers are invited to attend our information event on Tuesday 17th November, from 4:00pm to 4:45pm. For more information, please speak to Mr Ward or Mrs Ford in the Geography Department.

Congratulations once again to all of our Bronze Award participants on an outstanding achievement. We look forward to seeing many of them take on the challenge of Silver DofE in the near future!





What's happening in school?

Science Spotlight

The Science department have been busy this month, bringing excitement and wonder to the students through lessons, homework and extra-curricular opportunities.

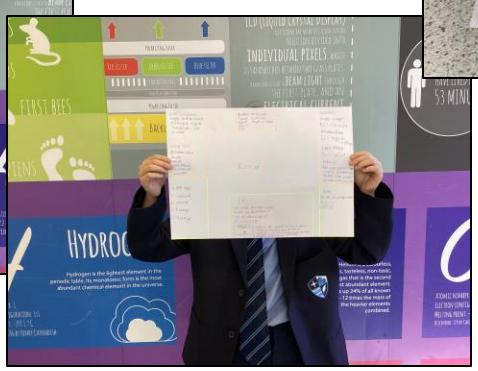
Space Week took place in school between the 5th and the 9th October. There were a variety of space-related activities within the Science department, including themed homework and other extra-curricular activities. The students were given the opportunity to create their own bottle rocket, make a model of the solar system or make a model satellite.

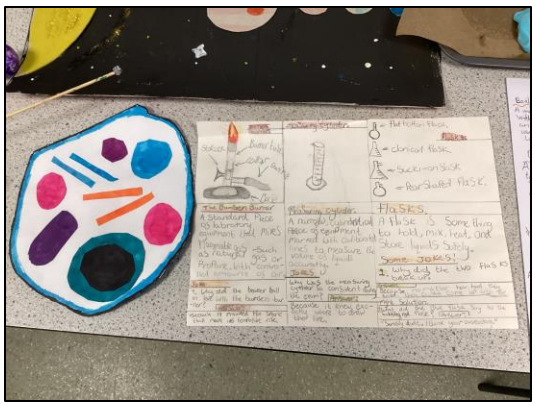
Of course, the students jumped on this and there were some amazing designs and models. Well done to Year 7 students Georgia FH, Matilda J and Emily P for their entries – they won 25 house points and of course, kudos from the Science team!

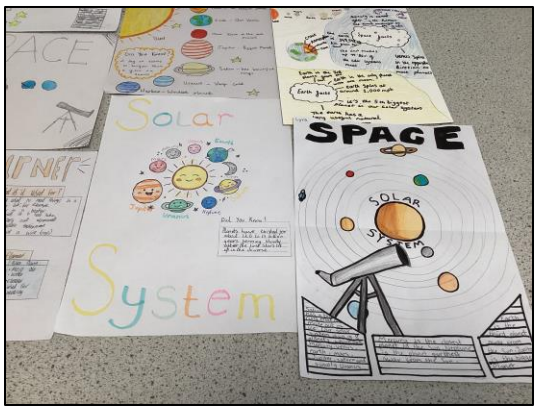


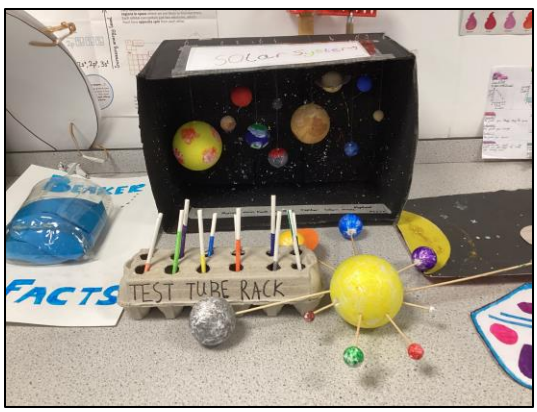
Mrs Thompson wanted to share fantastic science homework that has been created by 7X2, 7X3 and 7Y2. Making posters or a model of a scientific fact/piece of equipment etc. 7Y2 have also produced a poster or a model of an animal or plant cell. There has been some fantastic creativity, even making edible cell models!

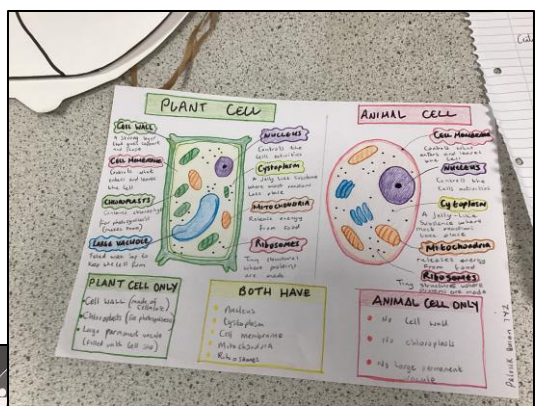












Mrs Dixon's Year 9 class developed their own revision resources for their assessment after half term. Well done to all!

What's happening in school?

Oktoberfest Lunch

Last month we had a Greek takeover in the Dining Hall. This month it was the turn of Germany, as we celebrated Oktoberfest in school!

The students were treated to an authentic German menu, including frankfurter and Black Forest gateaux. Wunderbar!

Watch this space to see where in the world we visit next!



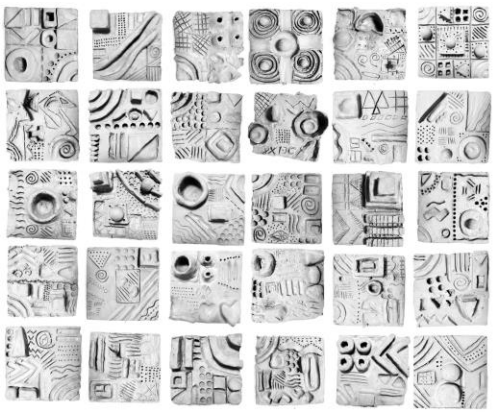








Clay Tiles – Year 8 Assessments



Year 8 students have been given the opportunity to work with clay as part of their assessment in art this term. I think you will agree they are beautiful!

Key Stage 3 Achievements

Well done to the Key Stage Three students who picked up postcards in assembly for their excellent efforts this term! We celebrate all the great things in assembly every week; these students picked up top points prizes, homework prizes and for gaining the most points for their houses! Super work superstars!









Sixth Form Open Evening – November 11th 2026

Considering Hermitage Sixth Form when you leave school? Add our open evening to your diary! Join us from 5:00 - 7:00pm and get a flavour of sixth form life with us. Our friendly team will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. We hope to see you there!

Year 11 and 13 mock examinations – Preparing for Success

The countdown is on for our Year 11 and 13 mock examination period, which begins on Monday 16 November. Over the two-week period, students will have the opportunity to experience formal examination conditions, demonstrate their learning and identify areas of strength and development ahead of their GCSE and A-Level examinations next summer. We are committed to ensuring that every student has access to the support they need during this important period and the following additional sessions are available to focus on key knowledge retrieval, examination techniques and strategies tailored to the examination taking place that day. Our GCSE students, who are experiencing formal examinations for the first time have a range of support inplace to help them succeed:

· Morning Booster Sessions – Start time 08:15am
· Lunch-Time Revision Sessions – Start time 12:30pm
· Period 6 Support - Tuesday and Thursday 3:00pm-4:00pm
· Online Evening Masterclasses – Via Teams.

REVISEWISE

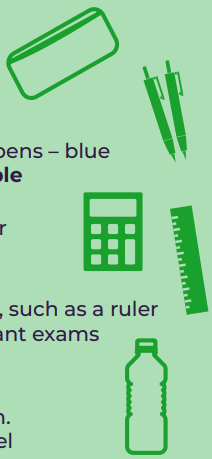
POD

What you cannot take into your exams:



- ☐ any type of phone
- ☐ revision notes
- ☐ any type of watch (this includes analogue, digital and smart watches)
- ☐ smart devices (e.g. Airbuds, smart glasses or tablets)

What you will need:



- ☐ a clear pencil case
- ☐ at least two black ink pens – blue pens are **not acceptable**
- ☐ an approved calculator for relevant exams
- ☐ appropriate apparatus, such as a ruler or protractor, for relevant exams
- ☐ a clear water bottle if you wish to take one in. It **must not** have a label

Other important information:

- ☐ Listen carefully to the invigilator's instructions, which will be specific to your exam. If you are unsure of anything, please raise your hand and wait for the invigilator to respond.
- ☐ Fill in your details on the front of your answer booklet.
- ☐ If you need an additional answer sheet, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to provide one. Remember to add your details to this sheet.
- ☐ If you need to use the toilet or feel unwell, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to escort you from the exam room.
- ☐ Remember to stay silent – talking to a fellow candidate could result in disqualification from all your exams.

If you have any questions about your exams, please ask your teacher or exams officer. ?

Students have been provided with their own individual timetables which outline their specific subject exams and seats. They have also been given guidance on the regulations that are in place to ensure that examinations are conducted fairly and securely for all candidates. Understanding expectations around equipment, exam conduct, attendance, and prohibited items will help students approach their examinations with confidence and avoid any unnecessary issues on the day (see poster for more information). Failure to follow examination regulations may lead to penalties and could result in disqualification from an assessment. Students should listen carefully to invigilator instructions and remain silent throughout the examination.

We are incredibly proud of the maturity, resilience and commitment Year 11 have demonstrated so far this year. The forthcoming mock examinations are not simply a test of knowledge; they are an opportunity to practise effective revision habits, build confidence and gain valuable experience of GCSE examination procedures. With the extensive support available both in school and online (Student POD), we encourage every student to make the most of the opportunities on offer. We wish all Year 11 students the very best of luck and look forward to celebrating their successes over the coming weeks!

What's happening in school?

Extra-Curricular and Enrichment Spotlight

Extra-curricular clubs provide students with opportunities to explore new interests, develop skills, stay active, and build friendships outside of their normal lessons. We are proud to offer a huge range of clubs and activities before school, at breaktime, and during lunchtime, ensuring there is something for everyone to get involved in. Since September, an amazing 558 students have attended at least one extra-curricular club, which is a fantastic achievement and reflects the enthusiasm and commitment of our students. We encourage all students to take advantage of these opportunities and try something new. Our full extra-curricular timetable can be found using the link below.
Extra-curricular clubs | Hermitage Academy



So far, students have debated whether tuition fees should be abolished, fast fashion, and if robots should replace teachers!



Darts: These students were right on target, showing off their darts skills and competitive spirit!

Voices: Our Voices Choir is hitting all the right notes, bringing together students from every year group to sing, perform and shine!





All Year 12 students took part in a hands-on **First Aid Workshop**. During the session, they developed valuable practical skills, including bandaging techniques, the treatment of various types of wounds, and basic resuscitation procedures.

The experience provided students with excellent opportunities to develop their knowledge, practical skills, and understanding of potential career pathways.





Games : It's all fun and games at Games Club, where students roll the dice, make new friends and enjoy a little friendly competition!

Halloween Disco



Our annual Spooky Halloween Disco, held on 19th October, was a huge success! The evening was packed with spooky costumes, impressive dance moves, and plenty of exciting games that kept everyone entertained throughout the night.

It was fantastic to see so many students embracing the Halloween spirit with their creative fancy-dress outfits filling the dance floor.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event so special. We loved seeing all of your amazing costume efforts and hope everyone had a fang-tastic time!

















New School Production Reveal!

Our Chamber choir performed the song "Shadowland" to all Key Stage 3 assemblies this term, to launch the School Production, 'The Lion King'.

Our chamber choir consists of Year 11 students Emily F, Olivia T, Harry H, Sophie G and Oliver P, as well as Emma K in Year 10 and Jaxon W in Year 7.

Charlotte M in Year 12 introduced the show reveal in assemblies, encouraging students to come along and try out for the show, but also to encourage students to give performing arts a try, whether it be on the stage or behind the scenes.

What's happening in our Hub and in the Community?

We have a strong pastoral offer here at Hermitage Academy, and as well as support for students within school, we can also offer information, guidance and support for families too.

Family Hubs



Best Start Family Hubs provide continuous support for families through every stage of childhood and adolescence. Whether you're expecting a baby, raising a toddler, or supporting a young person with additional needs, the hubs offer guidance, activities, and access to local services to help families thrive.

They are open 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday. Please call 03000 261 111 for more information about their services.

Grounding Techniques:

Grounding techniques are essential for managing stress and emotional regulation, especially during the time away from school when children may experience increased anxiety and worries. Here are some practical grounding techniques that families can use to promote calm and connection.



Rainbow Guide for Mental Health and Emotional Support







Youth Practitioner Group

Some of our students enjoyed a creative pumpkin painting session during the Youth Practitioner group at school. The activity encouraged self-expression, creativity, and positive social interaction while helping to celebrate the autumn season.

Sports Round-up - October

Girls' Football:

- The Year 7 girls' football team delivered a brilliant performance, winning both of their games! They scored plenty of goals and showed fantastic teamwork, determination, and support for one another throughout both matches

- Well done to our U13 girls' football team in the County Cup. They didn't come away with the win, but showed excellent resilience, determination and teamwork in a highly competitive game from start to finish. They battled until the final whistle and never gave up. A performance to be proud of!







- Our U14 girls' football team also played in the County Cup this term. Unfortunately, we were beaten by an experienced St John's team. For a team of mostly Year 8 students, they performed exceptionally well against older girls and showed great resilience throughout the game. These girls are going places!

- Our Under 14 girls' football team continued their winning ways in the league this term, beating Belmont 6-2 in a great game. Special shout-outs to Freya R for a fantastic hat-trick, Marcie M for scoring her first goal for Hermitage, and Olivia H for volunteering to go in goal and even scoring whilst in goal! Amazing!

Boys' Football:

- After a busy half term of fixtures, our Year 8 boys' football team finished with a 5-0 win against Tanfield!
  The team scored some brilliant goals, special well done to our goal scorers: Luca G, Fynn W, Alfie-Joe W, and Ellis P, who scored two! We're so proud of the whole team, keep up the great work!



- The Year 9 Hermitage football team returned to form with a brilliant 6–0 victory over Tanfield, showcasing sharp attacking play and real composure across the pitch. Goals from Dan N, Ethan H, Finn L and Lennox S. Lennox also picked up player of the match for being outstanding throughout!



- Our Year 10 football team had a fantastic, dominant win against St Leonard's this month. The team won 7-0 with a number of different goalscorers. A special mention goes to Daniel T for his two goals, including a brilliant free kick! However, the team also were unfortunate to come away with a defeat against Tanfield, unable to break the 'Tanfield curse'. The team gave their all throughout the game, hitting both the bar and the post, but unfortunately ended up losing 3-1. There is still plenty to play for in the league during the second half of the season!



Sports Round-up - October



Mixed Football:

- The mixed Year 10 football team won an absolute thriller in the County Cup against Whickham School. The game ebbed and flowed and eventually finished 4-4, with two goals from Alfie W and two great finishes from Ted M and Charlie G. After extra time, the game remained deadlocked and penalties loomed. The first five penalties from each school were completed, leaving the score at 5-5. A special mention goes to Charlie A, who reluctantly volunteered to take a penalty and scored! At 8-8, we were just one penalty away from progressing to the next round. Up stepped Ethan W, who scored to secure our place in the next round! Thanks also to all of the students who came to support the team, demonstrating the excellent school community we have at Hermitage Academy!"







- What a game for our Year 7s a 9–6 goal fest away to Tanfield. The boys and girls were outstanding in the first half, taking a 6–2 lead with confident, attacking football. The final score didn't fall our way, but the performance showed real promise. Special mention to Henry for an unstoppable rocket of a goal, Bonnie/ Savannah for superb debuts, and Thomas/ Archie for sharp dribbling and a composed goals!

Netball:



- Well done to our Year 7 & 8 netball teams on a brilliant start to the season. Their resilience, teamwork and sportsmanship have shone through in every match, and we look forward to seeing their continued progress and development throughout the year.

- Our Year 9 and Year 10 netball teams took on Durham Johnston in some fantastic fixtures. A huge congratulations to our Year 10 team, who secured an impressive 26 goal victory! Both teams demonstrated outstanding teamwork, determination and resilience throughout their matches, doing themselves and the school proud. A special shoutout goes to Nancy C and Faye E, who were named Players of the Match for their excellent performances.





- Well done to our Year 9 team on a fantastic, closely fought game against St Bede's! A special congratulations to Sus-Ann, who was deservedly named Player of the Match for her outstanding performance.

Sports Round-up - October

Basketball:

Well done to our Year 9 basketball team who travelled to High Tunstall to compete in the U14 English Schools Basketball competition and came away with TWO brilliant victories!

The team played Durham Johnston and secured a 53–44 victory, and the team also won against High Tunstall, 63–25! Special mentions to Alex P who showed outstanding work as our specialist rebounder, making a real impact on the court! Shout out also to Jamie N for his excellent dribbling skills and a superb captain's performance, leading by example throughout! An excellent team effort, showing great skill, determination and teamwork in both matches. Well done to all the boys for representing Hermitage so brilliantly!



Rugby:

Houghton Rugby Club are looking to recruit new players for their Under 13s boys' rugby team.



They are keen to welcome boys currently in Year 8 who may be interested in giving rugby a try. All abilities are welcome, and no previous experience is needed.

The club's aim is to give more young people the opportunity to get involved in rugby, develop new skills, build confidence, and enjoy being part of a team.

Cross Country Running:



Well done to selected Year 9 and 10 students who represented our school in the English Schools' Cross Country Cup held earlier this month. Out of 71 runners, Year 10 student Isla FH came in 8th, Year 9 Faye came in 11th, Year 10 Faye C finished 20th and Year 10 Isla W finished in 39th place (photo above).

The school came 4th out of 12 teams, which is an excellent achievement! Well done ladies!



...and news just in:

Congratulations to our outstanding Year 9/10 Girls' Cross Country Team, who have continued their season with another exceptional performance.

Having successfully progressed through the county heats, the team went on to compete against the strongest schools from across the North-East region, including teams from North Yorkshire. Demonstrating tremendous determination, resilience and teamwork, the girls finished an impressive 3rd overall, securing their place in the English Schools' Cross Country Cup National Finals 2026.

We wish the team the very best of luck as they travel to Rawcliffe College, Leicestershire, to compete on 5th December. We are incredibly proud of their success to earn a place at this prestigious event. Good luck, girls!



At Hermitage we...

We are pleased to introduce a new feature in *The Herald* that highlights the exceptional students we have at Hermitage Academy.
The messages featured have all been written by members of staff who wish to recognise students for their hard work, positive attitude, kindness, resilience, and contributions to school life. As part of our IMPACT Behaviour Curriculum, we will celebrate a selection of students each month who exemplify our values and consistently demonstrate outstanding conduct and commitment.

At Hermitage we interact:

- Flossie G was the only student from her Primary school and came to Hermitage on her own. Instead of letting this stop her she has thrown herself into making friends and has really settled well. She is always thinking of others and moved to sit next to a friend in class who was feeling alone. Flossie always asks about how my day is going - she is a delight to see every day! *(Mrs Howard and Mrs Dewell)*
- Well done to the student leaders who delivered an excellent assembly last week on ReviseWise, offering helpful tips on how they prepare for assessments. Well done to Elliot F, Chloe Y, Olivia T, and Emily F *(Mrs Marshall)*
- Every lunchtime Hayden makes his way to the PE office to share his daily joke with the department (some are better than others). It brightens our day! *(The PE Department)*

At Hermitage we have manners:

- Chloe Y and Alfie W in Year 11 – both ask every morning how I am and wish me a good day as they leave form time. *(Mrs Dixon)*
- Tom SP in Year 9 always says, "good morning, good afternoon, Hi Miss." Asks how I am. Just a very polite and well-mannered student. *(Mrs Robson)*
- Jaxon S in Year 7 is consistently well-mannered and kind towards staff and students, he sets a wonderful example to others! *(Mrs Ferdosian)*

At Hermitage we are prepared:

- All of 11I Science – They are proactive in their approach to revision, at the end of each topic we have made revision resources we can take home and revise from, including flashcards and mind maps! *(Mrs Dixon)*
- Year 11 French students have made great progress since their Y10 first speaking mock, arriving on time, ready to complete all three elements. Some outstanding scores from some or our linguist stars and great progress made for all! *(Miss Chiarenza)*

At Hermitage we aspire:

- Jayden F in Year 10 – Jayden has great aspiration in science, so much so he prepared his own revision materials for his upcoming end of topic test in Physics. *(Mrs Dixon)*

At Hermitage we are curious:

- In our careers lesson, class 7Y1 looked at university as a career path and how the texts they were studying in class were also studied at Cambridge, Manchester and York universities *(Mrs Howard)*
- Year 12 and 13 students attended a lecture from Teesside university about Zombie satellites , and talked about opportunities and university life *(Mrs Wake)*

At Hermitage we are tolerant:

- Employers from a wide range of sectors engaged with Year 11 and Year 12 students, providing valuable insights into their organisations and the diverse career opportunities available within their industries. Students actively participated by asking thoughtful and relevant questions, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of different job roles, career pathways, and the skills required for future employment. *(Mrs Wake)*

Hermitage Good News!

Good News!

Lots of good news this month! Please do share with us any exciting news, things you have been involved in, or anything that you are proud of – we'd love to hear about it!





Year 7

- Kayaan B got in touch to let us know he won a trophy with Park View AFC U12 as captain! That's brilliant news! Well done!
- Thomas D wrote in to say,' I have been working hard over the past couple of months for my jujitsu grading. I gained my 6th jujitsu belt (I only started training in March 2025) I am now a blue and white belt. I only have 4 belts left until I reach black belt.' That is fantastic news Thomas!



Year 8

- Roman H has been selected to join the County Durham Swimming Hub and Northumberland & Durham Development Programme. Selection to both programmes is highly competitive and represents the first formal step on the Swim England Talent Pathway. Amazing!
- Katie M won Birtley's got talent, a local talent competition this month! She auditioned in the summer and was invited to the final. She sang her socks off 4 times and made the final 3 based on judges scores. The audience then voted her the overall winner. She won a trophy, £100 cash and they've asked her to sing and switch on the Christmas lights which is very exciting!





Year 9

- Indy H used some of her time in half term to scale Roseberry Topping in Cleveland, with her parents. This was to raise awareness for breast cancer awareness month. Indy added, 'My aunty Joanne, and my Nan both suffered from breast cancer. It was tiring but worth it! Also the weather was bad!' We think this is an amazing achievement and well done for the hard work it would have been walking up to the top!
- Aiya S got in touch to tell us that she has completed the UN qualification course and she passed the final test, with a very impressive 100% score! Amazing work Aiya – well done!
- Well done to Cameron S who was recently awarded the coaches' award for cricket! Well done Cameron!


UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

United Nations

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This certifies that

aiya [redacted]

has completed the

The Human Rights Council and Its Mechanisms

through the e-Learning Tool

21 October 2026

Issued by

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Remember! Any good news you wish to share, please press the Good News button on your EASI profile and tell what you are proud of!

Positive Points and Praise

Totals	Top Categories
26,825 Actions	2,950 Aspiration - 11.00%
844 Students	2,809 Attendance Award - 10.47%

In total over the month of October, students in Years 7-13 collected a whopping 26,825 points in total, with the 'Aspiration' award being where the most points were awarded, with 'Attendance Award coming in a close second; it is fabulous to see so many of our lovely students striving for success.

At school we love recognising students' hard work and positive attitudes; we take time in assembly to showcase the fantastic things our students are doing, through shout-outs, postcards and prizes. We encourage you to share in these celebrations at home too.

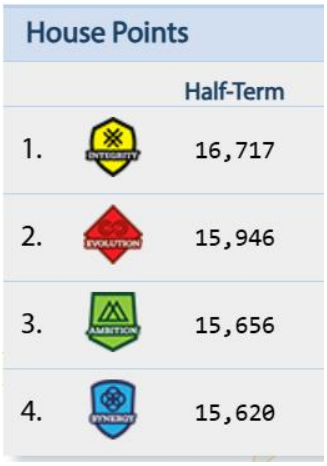
These students have collected the most positive points across October. Well done to all students mentioned here!

Year	Top Points
7	Matilda J
8	William P
9	Bobby G
10	Magdalene C
11	Adam H
12	Charlotte M
13	Jumana F

House Points Update

Our house points system means that every student and member of staff in school can contribute to a central cause.

Well done to Integrity house, who are currently in the lead with 16,717 points!



These are the totals for the end of the first half term, and you can see the students are working hard to earn kudos (and prizes) for their houses!

Assembly Schedule – November 2026

Date	Assembly topics - November
WB 9th November	Remembrance
WB 16th November	Anti Bullying/International Mens' Day
WB 23rd November	Respect in the Community
WB 30th November	Domestic abuse and violence

Dates for your Diary – November 2026

	What's on?
November 9th	Online SEND parental meetings (Year 11)
November 11th	Remembrance Parade in school Sixth Form Open Evening (5pm-7pm)
November 17th	DofE Information event (4pm-4:45pm)
November 27th	Flu Vaccinations

Other ways to Keep in touch

If you have anything to share about your child, or anything that may be happening in the community that you think we would like to hear about and could feature in our newsletter, please do get in touch.
Also, please let us know what you think of our newsletter! We'd love to hear from you!

0191 388 7161

enquiries@hermitageacademy.co.uk