



# The Hermitage Herald

September 2025



## Hello!

Welcome to a new academic year at Hermitage Academy and a whole host of amazing things happening in our fabulous school!

### A Magical Monopoly-Themed Open Evening at Hermitage!

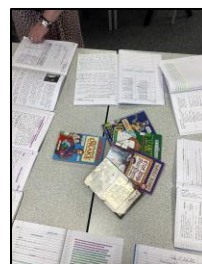
We were thrilled to welcome a record number of families to this year's Open Evening, designed especially for prospective Year 5 and 6 students. The event was themed around *Monopoly*, with our very own Mr. Monopoly guiding students on a fun-filled tour of Hermitage Academy.

Each department brought learning to life with exciting activities: spooky Gothic scenes in English, erupting volcanoes in Geography, cocktail mixing in Maths and delicious sample menus in the Dining Hall. Students collected stickers at each stop to fill their Monopoly boards, earning a reading book, bookmark, and sweet treat as a reward for their exploration.

The atmosphere was truly magical and it was a pleasure to showcase the creativity, enthusiasm and excellence that make Hermitage such a special place to learn. Thank you to all the families who joined us—we loved meeting you!

The deadline to apply for a secondary school place is **Thursday 31st October 2025**. Applications can be made online at:

[www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions)





## Hermitage Academy Art Exhibition Celebrates Student Creativity!

Hermitage Academy recently hosted a vibrant and inspiring art exhibition, celebrating the creative achievements of students across all year groups. The event was a huge success, drawing enthusiastic crowds of parents, staff and members of the local community.

The exhibition featured an impressive range of work from the Art, Design & Photography department, including expressive paintings, innovative mixed-media pieces and thought-provoking photography. Each display reflected the students' individuality, skill and the themes they've explored throughout the year—from identity and resilience to nature and social change.



Visitors praised the professional presentation and the emotional depth of the work, with many commenting on the confidence and creativity shown by the young artists. The exhibition not only highlighted the strength of the arts at Hermitage Academy but also reinforced the school's commitment to nurturing imagination and self-expression. Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event—it was a true celebration of talent and community spirit.

## Year 10 Take on the Elite Skills Academy Challenge

Our Year 10 students recently took part in the Elite Skills Academy, an exciting and engaging programme delivered by the British Army.

Throughout the day, students tackled a range of practical challenges designed to develop key life skills such as teamwork, resilience and problem-solving. From physical tasks to strategic thinking exercises, the experience encouraged students to push themselves and work collaboratively.

The day concluded with an inspiring career talk, followed by a Q&A session, giving students valuable insight into the wide variety of roles and opportunities available within the Army.



## European Day of Languages

On Friday 26th September we celebrated European Day of Languages and there were lots of exciting things going on during the week! Our official language for the day was Italian and students took part in a lunchtime quiz with Miss Chiarenza to test their Italian knowledge! In the dining hall students put their knowledge to the test by ordering their lunch in Italian and we were so impressed by the students' efforts!

During form time we celebrated diversity at Hermitage Academy and the many languages that are spoken



by students, which range from Romanian to Yoruba! All students took part in a form time competition to guess the teacher and the language being spoken. A huge congratulations to 10A3, 9A3, 8A1 and 8H3 who were our competition winners!

## Celebration Station Success!

Well done to all the students who visited our Celebration Station this month!

Students came along to share their achievements, bringing with them house points, golden tickets and certificates for uniform and attendance. We also celebrated a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including swimming, cadets and even a student who raised nearly £250 through a charity run – an incredible effort!

It was wonderful to see so many positive contributions and achievements being recognised. There's certainly a lot to celebrate at Hermitage Academy!

## Forest School: Learning Beyond the Classroom

Our Forest School programme is giving students a real breath of fresh air—literally! Set in the great outdoors, students are building dens, lighting fires and growing in confidence with every session.

### Why Forest School Works:

#### •Confidence Boost

Many students begin quietly, but by the end of the session they're leading, laughing and sharing ideas.

#### •Friendship Builder

Working together in nature helps students connect, collaborate, and support one another.

#### •Mental Health Benefits

Time spent outdoors has a calming effect and helps lift mood and focus.

#### •Real-Life Skills

From risk-taking and problem-solving to independence and resilience, students are gaining valuable life skills—all while getting muddy!

Forest School isn't just fun—it's transformational. Here's what some of our Year 7 students had to say:

"I feel more confident."

"I've made new friends."

"I'd love to do it again—it's helped me a lot."

"It's the best! I want to come back."

"I loved it."

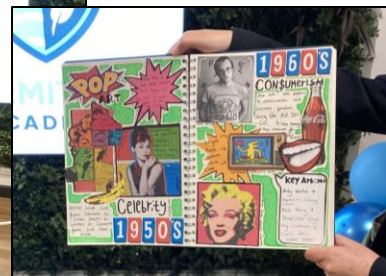
We're proud to offer this enriching experience as part of our curriculum at Hermitage Academy.

## Welcome to Year 7 Students and Parents!

Year 7 - the newest members of our school community have settled in brilliantly!

From conducting experiments with microscopes, playing songs on the keyboards, and taking part in football and netball trials, our Year 7s have made a fantastic start and are already thriving in their new environment.

It's also been heartwarming to see our older students supporting Year 7s as they find their way around the school and helping them feel at home. We're proud of the kindness and community spirit shown across all year groups.







## Discover Music at Hermitage Academy



This week, our Year 7 students in 7Y1 enjoyed a special taster session exploring the exciting opportunities available to learn a musical instrument at Hermitage Academy.

Led by Mr. Stokoe, the session included a live demonstration of the violin, sparking curiosity and enthusiasm among students. We're proud to offer a wide range of instrumental and vocal lessons through Durham Music Service, including:

-  **Brass**
-  **Woodwind**
-  **Guitar**
-  **Vocal coaching**

Learning an instrument is a fantastic way for students to build confidence, develop discipline, and express creativity. If your child is interested in taking up lessons, please encourage them to speak to Mrs. McMullen or Mrs. Robson for more information.

Let's make music a part of their journey at Hermitage!

### Year 7 Parent Information Event

We'd love to invite Year 7 parents to our upcoming Parent Information Event on Tuesday 7th October from 4pm.

Please use the link below to confirm your attendance:

<https://forms.office.com/e/peCrXqCyYN>






# Homework Heroes!

At Hermitage Academy, we believe homework plays a vital role in supporting our students' learning journey. It's not just about reinforcing classroom knowledge—it's about stretching and challenging students, encouraging independent thinking, and nurturing a love of learning. Each month, we celebrate the most impressive homework submissions from across the school. These pieces showcase creativity, effort, and a genuine passion for learning. We're incredibly proud of the dedication our students show beyond the classroom—and we look forward to sharing more outstanding examples in future newsletters!

Homework Hub (for all year groups) is held in IT1 every Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtime, and Thursday and Friday after school (3pm-4pm). See you there!



Hermitage Academy


Head of Achievement homework support in IT1 (Computer room)

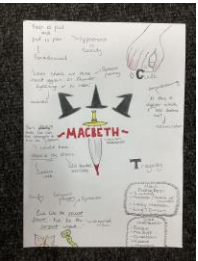
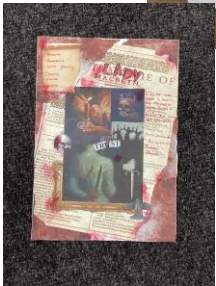
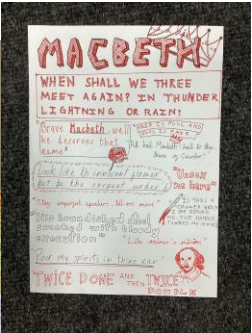
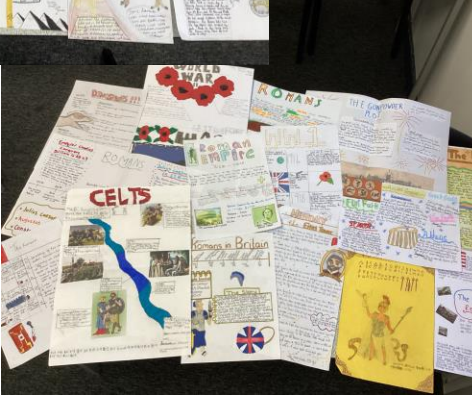
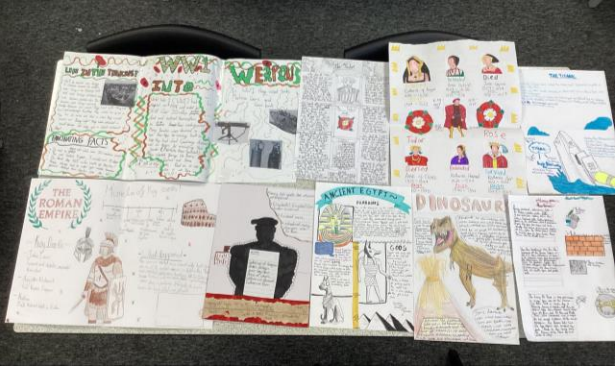
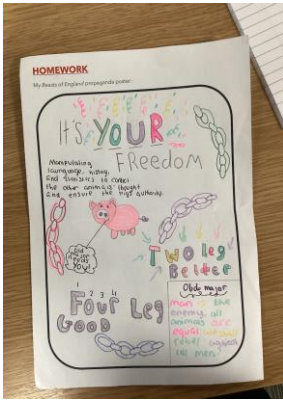
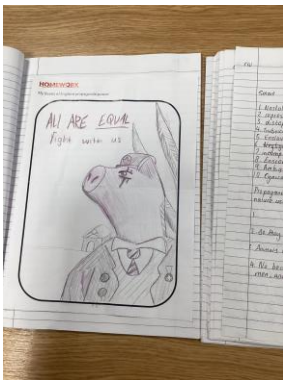
Homework Hub

Head of Achievement homework support in IT1 (Computer room)

Lunchtime: Tuesday - 12.15 - 1pm  
and Wednesday - 12.15 - 1pm

After school: Thursday and Friday 3-4pm (Weeks 1 & 2)







Using School Cloud to support parents

Parent and carer event

Tuesday 30th September, 4-5pm.

Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/2uX7d00>

## Parent Information Events

We held the first of our Parent information events in school this month: 'Using School Cloud to Support Parents'. Many parents attended this informative talk, where Mr. Rowles talked through how to access our system for online Parents' Evenings. If you were unable to attend, a copy of the take-away booklet is available on the school website.



# Student Sporting Achievements – September Highlights

We're incredibly proud to celebrate the individual sporting successes of our students this month, both in and out of school. Here are just a few of the fantastic achievements from our talented young athletes:

## Rowing:

### Elliot F (Year 10)

Following his double gold success at the 2025 Scottish Rowing Championships, Elliot has now added a national medal to his collection! Competing at the 2025 British Rowing Championships in the double category for Chester-le-Street ARC, Elliot and his partner qualified with the third-fastest time in the time trial, progressed through the semi-finals with the second-fastest time, and secured a bronze medal in a fiercely competitive final. A fantastic achievement – well done, Elliot!

### Emily M (Year 8)

Congratulations to Emily, who earned a medal at the Bradford Rowing Regatta in the U13 Jx2 category. A great result and a testament to her hard work and dedication!



## Cycling

### Lucas S (Year 8)

A huge well done to Lucas, who took part in the 'Coast-to-Coast' race over the weekend! A brilliant effort – we're very proud of your determination and commitment, Lucas. Keep it up!

## Cricket

### Tommy D (Year 8)

Well done to Tommy, who stepped up to support the Under 15 team for Chester-le-Street Cricket Club. His fantastic performance helped the team win the Glenn Robinson Memorial Trophy, overcoming two strong teams in the process. Excellent work, Tommy!

### Tom S-P (Year 8)

Congratulations to Tom, who was part of the team that won the Under 12 Red Sky County Cricket competition over the summer holidays. A brilliant achievement!

## Athletics

### Willow S (year 8)

A big well done to Willow, who recently took part in the Harrier Cross Country League for her year group. She also completed the Junior Great North Run on 7th September, alongside many other Hermitage Academy students – a fantastic effort!

### •George B (Year 8)

George also ran the Junior Great North Run at the start of September, managing to raise £780 for the Red Sky Foundation!

We're so proud of all our students who continue to challenge themselves and represent Hermitage Academy with pride. If your child has an achievement you'd like to share in a future newsletter, please do let us know!

## Charlie's Inspiring Fundraiser for Changing Faces

We'd like to give a special mention to Charlie, one of our remarkable students, who has been receiving well-deserved media attention for his incredible fundraising efforts in support of Changing Faces – a charity that has supported him since a car accident he experienced ten years ago.



To mark this milestone and give back to the charity, Charlie is taking on a 10-mile run to represent 10 years since the accident. His route will begin at Durham Cathedral, follow the River Wear, head out of Durham along the A167, stop at Chester-Le-Street Town FC, and finish near his home – with a special stop at Hermitage Academy along the way. The route includes some challenging hills, but Charlie's determination and resilience are truly inspiring. His "10 Miles for 10 Years" challenge will take place during half term on **Sunday 26th October**.

In addition, Charlie has been invited to a special awards dinner hosted by the charity in November. If you would like to support Charlie's fundraiser, donations can be made via the following link:

<https://loom.ly/TZ1WBAQ>



We are incredibly proud of Charlie and wish him all the best for his run!



## Sports Round-up - September

September has been a fantastic month for sport at Hermitage Academy, with students showing great commitment, teamwork, and enthusiasm both in school and beyond. Here's a look at some of the highlights:

### Football

#### •Year 7 Trials

The new academic year kicked off with trials for our Year 7 football team. We're excited to see a strong squad forming and look forward to a promising season ahead.

#### •Year 8 Boys

Our Year 8 team continues to grow in confidence and skill. While results haven't always gone their way, their determination and teamwork have been outstanding. Keep it up, boys!

#### •U14 Girls

A huge congratulations to our Under 14 girls' team who won their first match of the season! Their energy and commitment were superb – we're excited to see what the rest of the season holds.

#### •Year 11 Boys

A brilliant 3–1 win against Durham Johnston has seen our Year 11 team progress to the next round of the English Schools' competition. Special mention to James C, who played up a year group and delivered an exceptional performance at centre-back. Well done to the whole team!

#### •U15 Girls

Another fantastic result from our Under 15 girls, who secured a 5–1 victory in their first ever English Schools' competition match. Congratulations to Lily P and Alice S for their goals – what a start!

#### •Year 9 Boys

The Year 9 team began their season with a narrow 2–1 defeat to a strong Cardinal Hume side, who reached the final 32 last year. They bounced back impressively in league matches, winning two and drawing one. A superb start to the season!



### Netball

Our netball teams made a strong start to the season in their matches against St Leonard's. Students showed excellent teamwork, enthusiasm, and motivation throughout – a great foundation for the term ahead!



### Flag Football

Flag football – a fast-growing, non-contact version of American football – is gaining popularity and will feature in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Hermitage Academy is proud to be part of this exciting movement!

A group of Year 8 students attended a training day at Kingston Park, where they took part in NFL-style fitness tests, training drills and even visited the Vikings' locker room. They played two matches against other schools and won both! The students represented Hermitage brilliantly, showing resilience, teamwork and respect throughout the day.

We're incredibly proud of all our students for their sporting achievements this month. Whether competing, training or supporting their teammates, they continue to embody the spirit of Hermitage Academy.







What's on in School - October

Date	What's on - October
1 <sup>st</sup>	Aspiring Professional Programme – 1-2pm Year 12
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup>	DofE Silver Qualifier
7 <sup>th</sup>	Year 7 Information/Meet the Tutor Evening
8 <sup>th</sup>	Durham Works workshop (am) Year 11 Sunderland University visit (pm) – Year 12/13
9 <sup>th</sup>	Parent Information session – Years 8, 9 and 10 (4pm)
14 <sup>th</sup>	Iceland Parent Meeting (4pm)
16 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11 Information Evening
17 <sup>th</sup>	Book swap – Lunchtime – English Dept
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Tutor Parents' Evening (online)
27 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup>	Iceland trip (during half-term)

Celebrating Healthy Competition at Hermitage Academy

At Hermitage Academy, we believe that healthy competition helps students thrive. Throughout the school day, students earn positive house points for their efforts, achievements and contributions—these points all count towards the house totals.

House Points		
Half-Term		
1.		8,488
2.		8,423
3.		7,966
4.		7,963

Each week, students are given a challenge based on our ‘wheel’—a set of values and behaviours we encourage across the school. We celebrate success with postcards, prizes and recognition for the winning form group and standout students in each year. Everyone at Hermitage Academy—students and staff alike—is part of a house, creating a strong sense of teamwork and belonging. At the end of each half term, the house with the highest total wins a special prize. Here are the current house point totals, along with the top points scorers for each year group for the month of September:

Date	Assembly topics - October
WB 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Trying something new
WB 6 <sup>th</sup>	World Mental Health Day
WB 13 <sup>th</sup>	Revision is its own Reward
WB 20 <sup>th</sup>	Single sex assembly

Share Your Child's Achievements with Us!

The ‘Good News’ button on EASI is a simple way for you to share your child’s achievements outside of school—whether it’s sporting success, creative accomplishments or anything else they’re proud of. We love celebrating the wonderful things our students do beyond the classroom, and your child could be featured in the next edition of *The Herald*! This month, we’ve heard some fantastic updates:

-  **Leona-Grace** swam her first 100 metres
  -  **Joel** celebrated his team’s football cup win
  -  **Hannah** has been roller skating
  -  **Evie** proudly shared that she’s earned lots of points
  -  **Savannah** swam two lengths and “nailed it!”
  -  **Ellis** made it onto the school football team
  -  **Freddie** completed a coding course
- Keep the good news coming—we can’t wait to hear more!



7	Jacob S/Charlie C
8	Hayden K
9	Thomas D
10	Corey H
11	Macey M
12	Lauren M
13	Katie M



Keep in touch

We would love to hear from you if you have anything to share about your child. We always want to hear about sporting achievements, hobbies and interests that your child has outside of school, or even if you have something you think one of our staff should know, please do get in touch:



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