

NEWSLETTER

SwitchED2 July 2021

Message from Andy

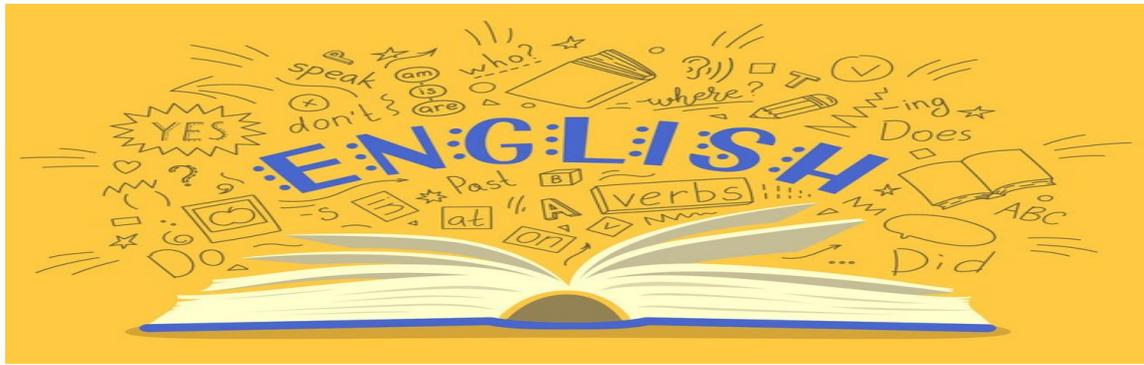
As the school year draws to a close, I would just like to say how incredibly proud I feel about how our young people have handled the disruptions encountered due COVID19 and still come through the other end smiling and with a raft of qualifications.

Whilst there have been some things we haven't been able to do, we have endeavoured to keep school as normal and of course enjoyable, as possible. There have been times when it has been challenging but these have more than been outweighed by the positive moments.

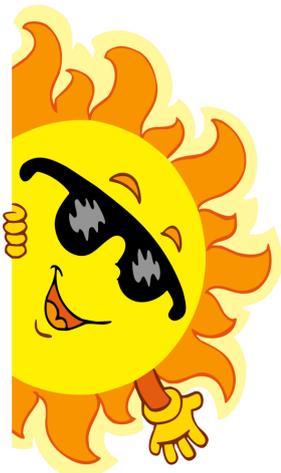
I haven't been given enough space on this page to list my highlights of the year but I am sure you will get a flavour from the staff messages within this newsletter.

Enjoy the summer break and stay safe.





This term we have focused our attention on our writing and speaking and listening skills. Students have produced a range of written work to suit a variety of purposes, taking into account the purpose, audience and required structure. Students have worked on how to set out formal and informal letters, emails, advertisements, application forms and reports. In addition to this we have worked on improving our speaking and listening skills by taking part in group discussions and in 1 to 1 practise interviews. Before half term students took their writing exams at Entry Level 3 and I am thrilled to say they have all passed, with some aiming for achieving their Level 1 before the end of term.



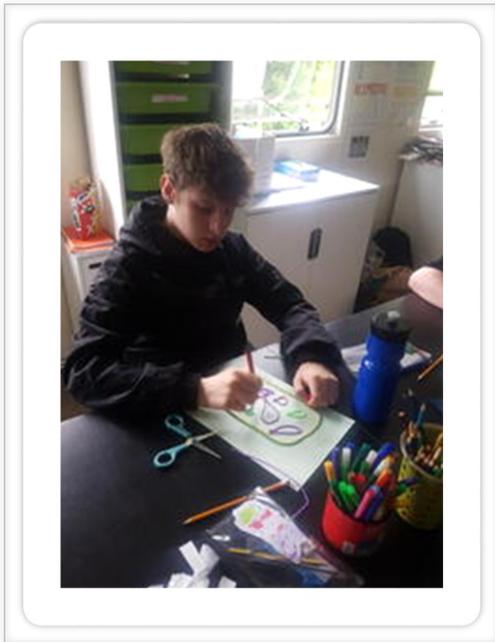
SCIENCE

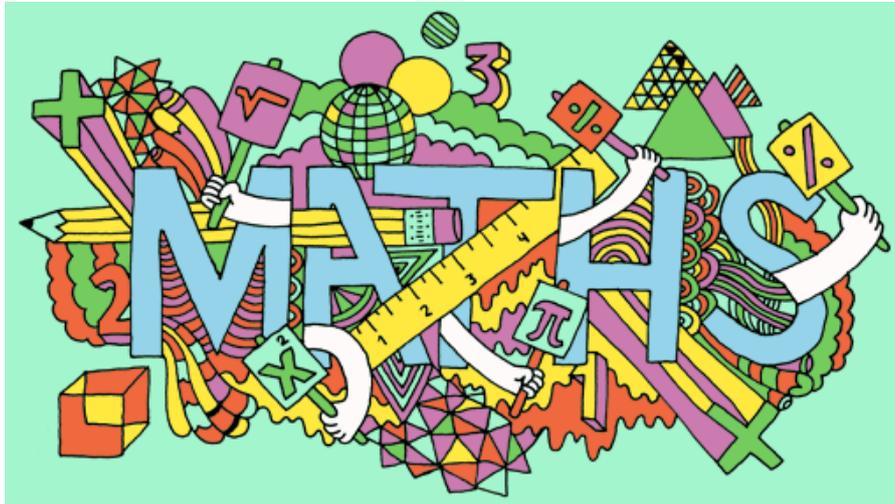
This year learners have been working towards a Level 1 Award in Science, the units they have completed are Exploring the Universe, Plants and Human Reproductive Systems.

Throughout the year pupils have participated in a variety of science investigations and experiments ranging from testing household products for acidity and alkalinity, using various sphere shapes to identify different sized planets and creating a set of lungs using recyclable materials.

Some learners conducted their own science investigation, using a range of materials in order to identify which ones were the best insulators.

Learners have adhered to health and safety throughout and been able to identify the necessary equipment necessary for each experiment. They have produced written reports and presented their findings in a variety of different formats.





The students' preferred warm up activity this term has been Countdown—it certainly brings out their competitive spirit!

Key schematic themes have included:

- angles, lines and shapes
- perimeter and area
- averages
- using coordinates
- handling data
- generating sequences



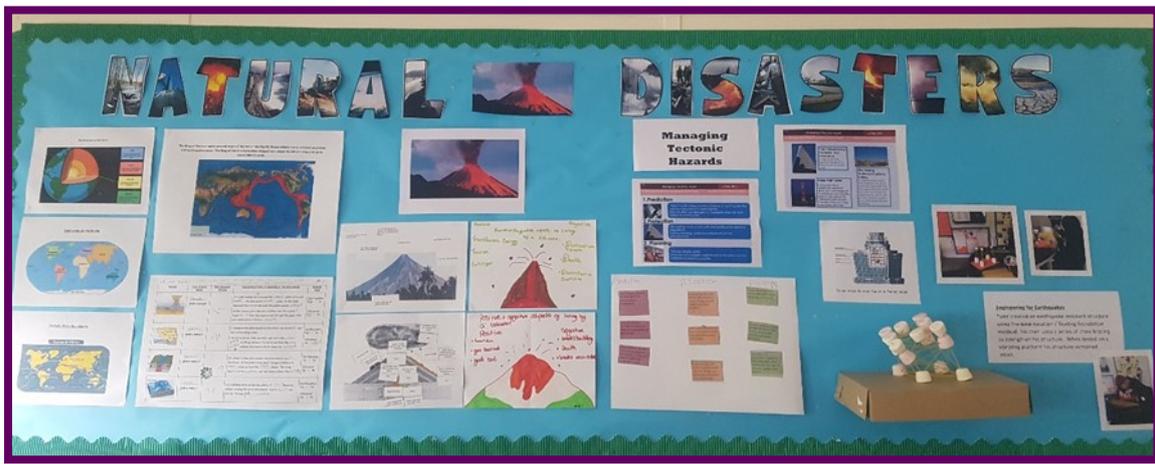
At the beginning of the year, we focussed on number, algebra and solving problems. As we progressed through the year, we have worked on data and stats such as tally charts using Tangtastic sweets— of course these had to be eaten at the end. Who said maths was boring!

We have also been producing hypothesis to prove / disprove theories through data investigations.



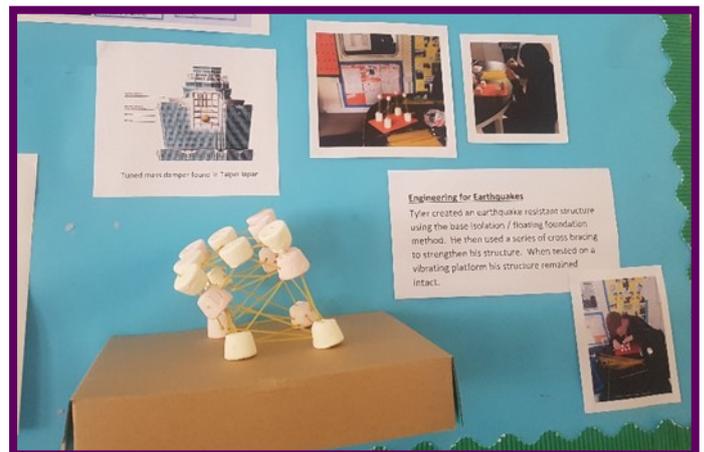
Summer newsletter





During the last term we have been studying a range of natural disasters. Students have learnt about the structure of the earth and tectonic plates by taking part in a range of activities including videos and practical tasks. We have explored a range of volcanos and identified features of shield and stratovolcanoes. Students have also considered the positive and negative aspects of living by a Volcano and have enjoyed watching a range of documentaries on the topic.

Following this we have looked at the causes of earthquakes and tsunamis and how countries are using engineering to protect the population. Alfie and Tyler produced some great models using spaghetti and marshmallows. They considered the latest engineering techniques such as base isolation and cross bracing to build their structures to withstand our earthquake scenario.

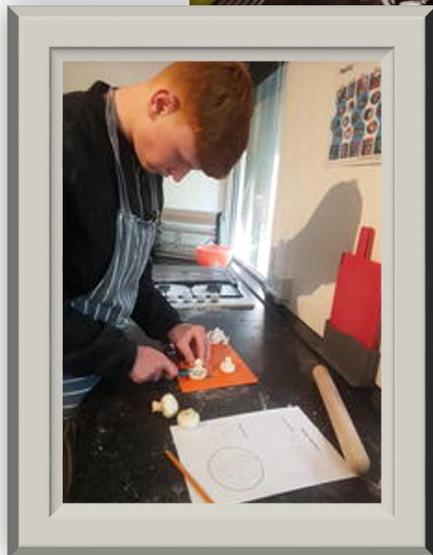


FOOD TECHNOLOGY

Food technology lessons are possibly the most favoured by the students—certainly feedback from parents enjoying the results would certainly suggest so!

The focus is to promote a love of cooking whilst acquiring the knowledge and skills through practical work to become a competent chef and to gain success academically and beyond.

The aim is to embrace and celebrate success for all in a creative “can do” environment where a positive attitude is seen as the only option. Teamwork and peer group support is valued and pupils are individually supported and guided at all levels in order to achieve their potential.

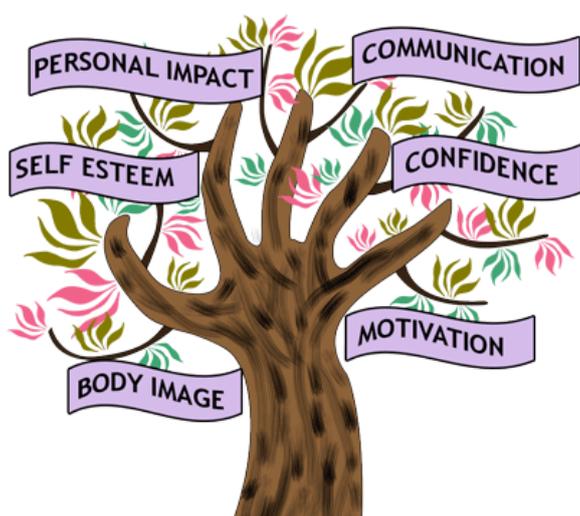




Learners have been focusing on a variety of PSHE topics, these have included developing a Healthy Lifestyle, Knife Crime, County Lines, Drugs and Alcohol and E-Safety.

Following on from this, learners covered topics on Sex and Relationship Education where they have identified Sexual Health services within their local area and have explored issues around gender stereotyping, sexuality, contraception and STI's. Guest Speaker David Morris from Cumbria Sexual Health Team also visited school and gave a talk on age and consent. Learners approached the topic in a mature manner and all of them contributed positively to the classroom based discussions, respecting others' opinions and listening to each other empathetically. They also went on to participate in role play activities, which included dressing up and setting up the classroom as a clinic. Learners took it in turns and re-enacted a short scene "A visit to the local Sexual Health Clinic".

Employability and career opportunities have been much of the focus for this term, several learners have produced a CV and Covering Letter. Some learners have actually applied for courses and received conditional offers of acceptance.





During the Spring term, learners had the opportunity to complete some ICT units, several have achieved units in Sending and Receiving emails, Online Basics, E-Safety and others have passed their ICT Functional Skills Entry 3. This involved them using a variety of different softwares and programs such as Excel, Word and Publisher as well as editing and formatting data.



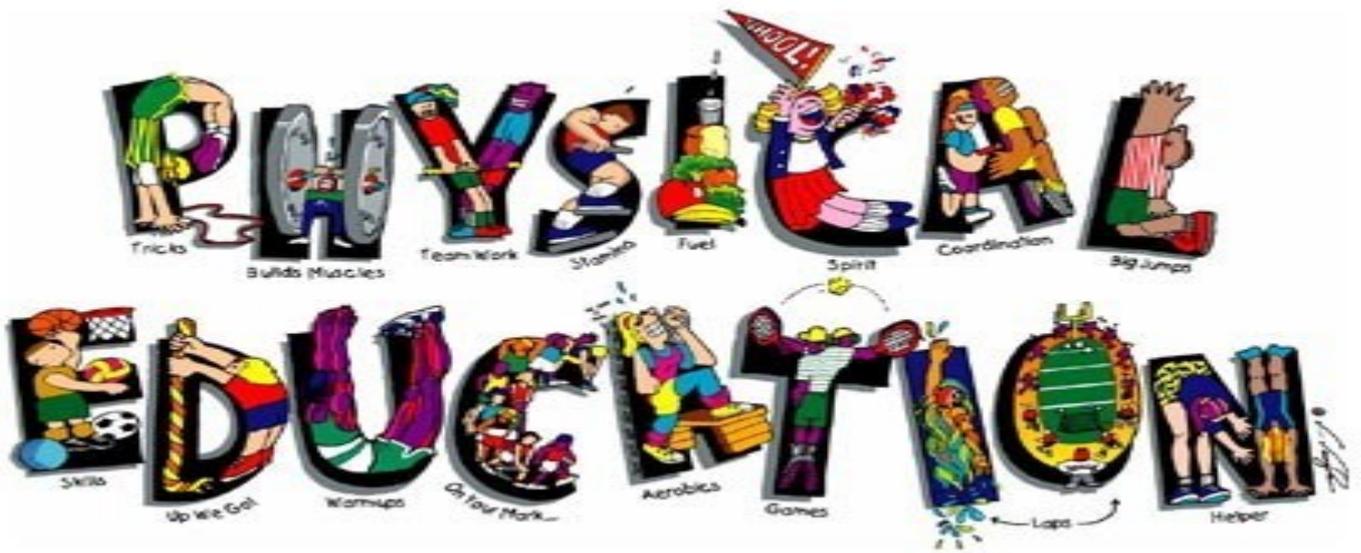
Landbased studies and animal care



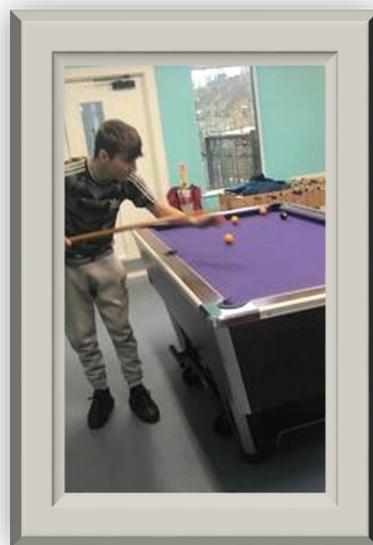
Land-based and animal care activities have been limited this year, however, early in the year, learners managed to plant a variety of seeds and bulbs. They prepared the raised beds before planting and this involved several hours of digging and weeding. Carrots, onions, garlic and chillies are just some the crops they planted this year.

Due to the very limited land-based activities, this was often replaced with other activities in and around the school site, such as washing cars, den making and outdoor cooking and dining in the forest.



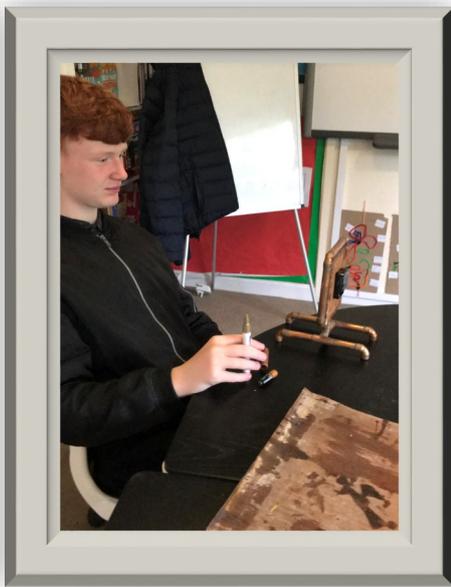


Students have taken part in a range of activities over the last term, these have included: Bleep test, students tested their fitness levels by attempting progress further through the levels each week, Tyler demonstrated the most stamina and managed to complete level 13! During our football sessions students have shown off their tricks and skills with some spectacular goals being scored by Jude. Alfie was certainly the dodgeball champion, his accuracy when throwing and skilful dodging led to him be on the winning team most games. Whilst some students have enjoyed the more physical sports, others have opted for a more relaxed approach with Brad and Luke preferring a chilled game of pool.

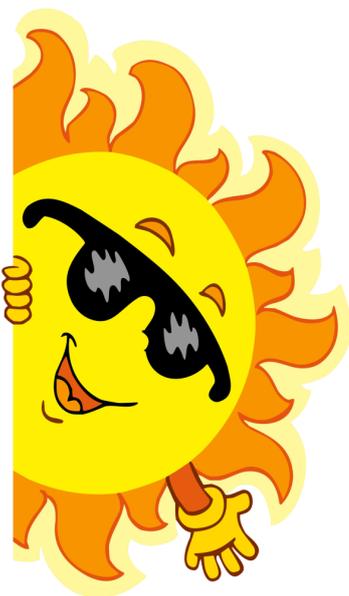


Design & Technology

I am delighted to have been able to introduce design and technology to the curriculum this term. It has certainly been received well by the students and they have had great fun designing and making clocks and spice racks from copper pipe.



They have also made hanging wooden bird feeders, one of which is positioned at the back of the school and has attracted a wide variety of birds including robins, chaffinches, blackbirds, wrens but most intriguingly—big bird



Otherwise known as
Jo Whyke!



Motor Vehicle Maintenance



Throughout the year our motor vehicle students have performed a wide range of activities, from visibly checking the safe condition of a vehicle to changing a flat tyre on their own.

We started the year concentrating on health and safety in the workplace and identifying potential hazards around us and others. The students displayed the ability to perform responsibly in the workshop environment and have worked together to create a safe place to learn and work.

They know how to safely use and put away all tools in the workshop which includes the safe storage and disposal of hazardous materials.

During the year we have covered different aspects such as maintaining lights and changing bulbs if needed as well as checking fluid levels in and around the engine and topping up accordingly. The students also looked at tyre conditions such as pressures and treads and were able to determine if a tyre was safe and road legal with the task of changing them on their own if the tyre did not meet the correct criteria.

All the students understand the responsibility to maintain a safe road legal vehicle and the risks and dangers involved if they don't which will hold them in good stead for the future when they are able to venture out into the big wide world.

This year like last, has thrown us all many challenges but the way the students have adapted is a huge credit to themselves. I have really enjoyed experiencing all the team spirit and togetherness the students bring to the workshop and classroom and would like to wish the leavers all the luck and success in the future and look forward to seeing those returning after the summer break.

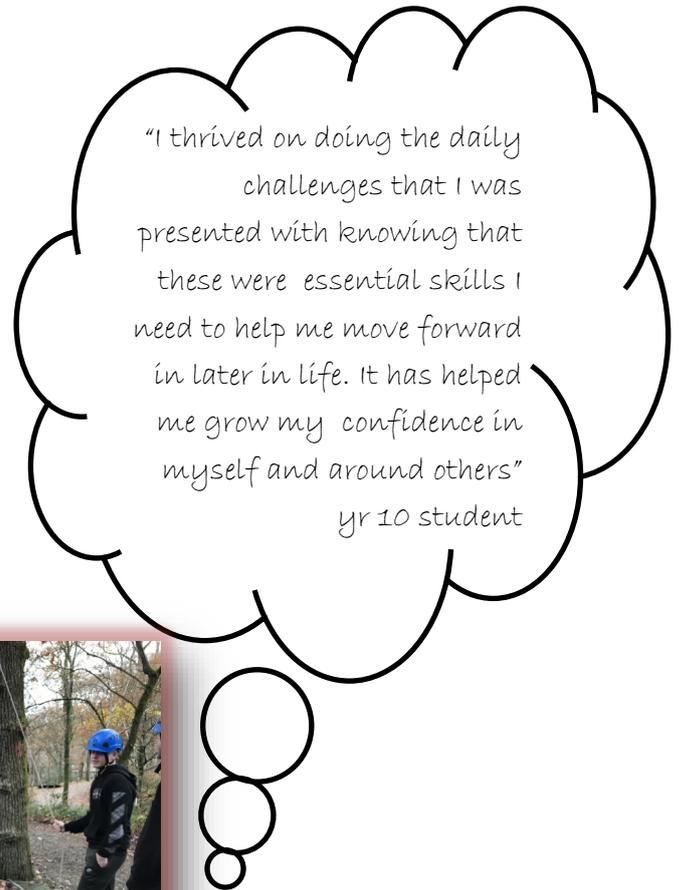


This term our students have taken part in a range of activities at Coniston Waterpark, including:

- ◆ Canoeing
- ◆ Platform Climbing
- ◆ Kayaking
- ◆ Crate stack challenge
- ◆ Ghyll Scrambling
- ◆ Paddleboarding



The participation and engagement levels have been excellent. The students have been faced with a number of challenges throughout the term and have always give it their best shot. The aim of the term was to highlight the importance of communication skills, team work, leadership and self-resilience.



"I thrived on doing the daily challenges that I was presented with knowing that these were essential skills I need to help me move forward in later in life. It has helped me grow my confidence in myself and around others"
yr 10 student



Jude chilling under the topiary top hat



Educational Visits



We're all going to the Dalton Zoo

In May, the whole school was provided with a first-class zoo experience dedicated to inspire in people a respect for animals, the environment and the world in which we live through authentic experiences and sustainable practices.

We were fortunate to have the weather on our side which also added to the fantastic experience enjoyed by all.



Educational Visits



We were delighted in June to further enhance our enrichment activities with a visit to Turbary Woods Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Preston

This facility offers a unique collection of over 90 birds of prey including eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, vultures and more unusual species.

All the birds are housed in large open fronted aviaries, sheltered in a woodland setting. We experienced first hand the breathtaking flight of a falcon. Hawks, owls, and other varieties were also flown at the sanctuary and students were able to gain hands on experience and knowledge about these fascinating birds.



Our Community Project



Throughout the year we have made a range of animal treats and toys.

Learners made cat pom pom jingle toys, rag chew toys made from jeans for dogs and fruit and fibre gnawing sticks for small rodents such as guinea pigs and rabbits. Learners decided they would donate these to a local Animal Care Sanctuary in Lancaster.

Learners delivered these to the centre and received a huge thank you from Michael the School Liaison Officer.



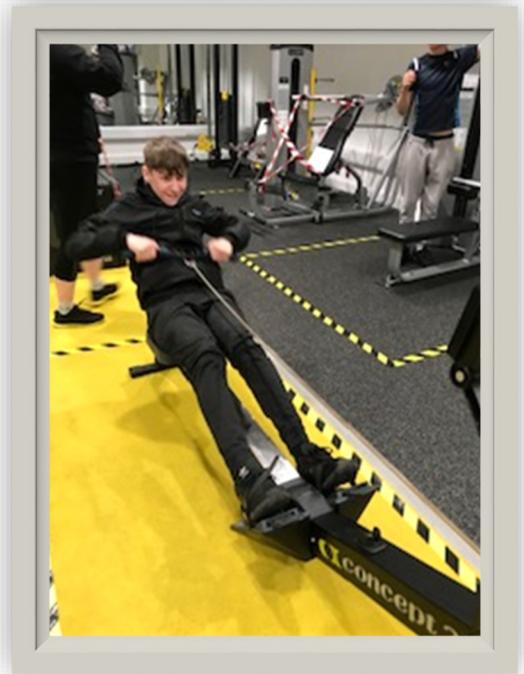
ENRICHMENT

Once lockdown was lifted, we began to enjoy our Enrichment activities again. Learners participated in a wide range of fun and engaging activities. We visited Level in Preston and played ten pin bowling and Lazer Tag, the learners chose their teams and competed against each other in 20 minute Lazer Tag shoot out. Of course, Alfie's team won.



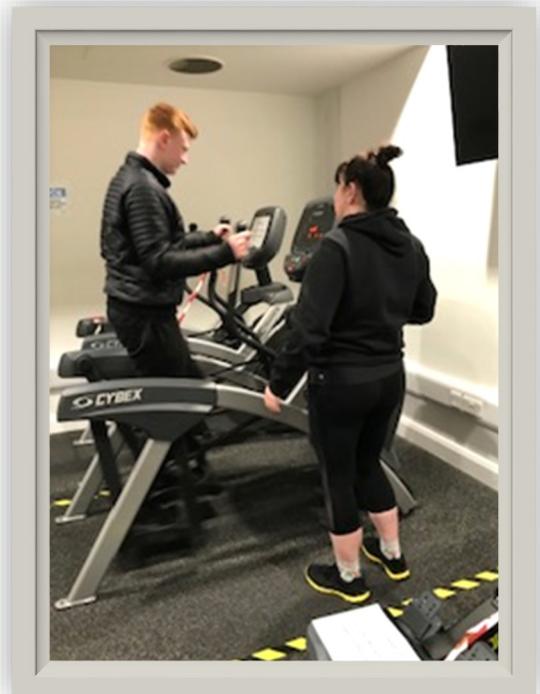
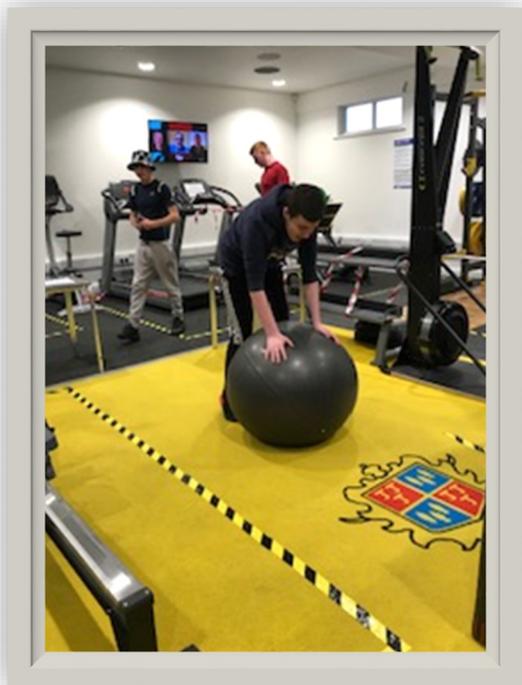
Learners also experienced an afternoon at X-height at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre in Lancaster, they were faced with a set of personal, race against time and team challenges. Jude led the way and attempted every obstacle course and challenge set by the instructors. He even broke records for the fast climb on the clip and climb equipment.

ENRICHMENT



We also visited Kendal Rugby Club and used their gym facilities and enjoyed several games of football and rugby on their state of the art 4G football pitch.

Leaners have been practising their football skills and setting each other tasks and challenges, such as penalty shoot outs, crossbar challenge and best skill performance.



ENRICHMENT

Another activity to enhance our enrichment programme since Easter was visits to Bessy Beck Trout Fisheries at Kirkby Stephen

Bessy Beck provides fly fishing for all ability levels and all ages. The lakes have been established for a number of years and have a varied fly life and they are suitable for any form of fly fishing. They are stocked from a rearing facility at Bessy Beck with triploid rainbow trout and blue trout.

Fly fishing promotes and enables social interaction as well as independence, increasing self-esteem and confidence. It provided our students with not only new experiences, but goals, personal achievement and a sense of progress.



Jude and Tyler examining their catches of the day!



Weigh



release back into pond



or cook and eat!

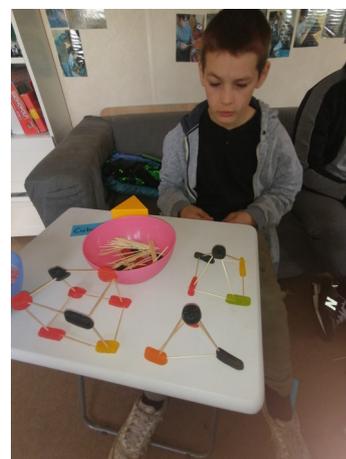


Nurture Cabin

Maths

We love games in the cabin and the best learning experiences are when we are enjoying ourselves so a lot of maths has been taught through this method. We have enjoyed playing fraction card games, board games to encourage addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and bingo style games to support our knowledge of shape. We have also had fun using smarties and wine gums to support data handling, percentages, ratios and drawing both bar charts and pie charts.

When we are not playing games we have fun exploring maths in a practical way. We enjoyed recapping perimeter and area by measuring objects around the school, working out angles which were created using masking tape on a table and drawing scale diagrams of benches to be built in the garden area.

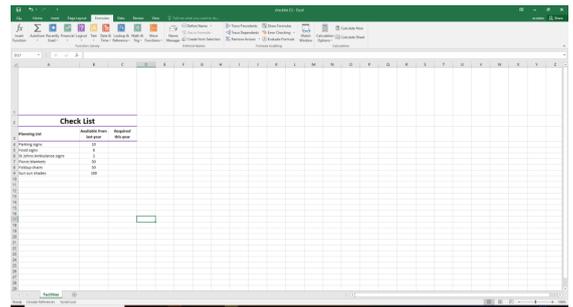




Nurture Cabin

Computing

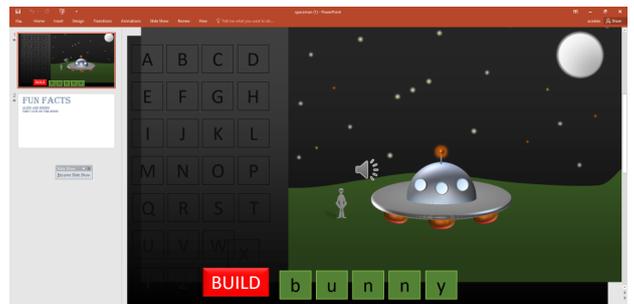
Q: What do you get when you cross a computer with an elephant? A: Lots of memory... and this is certainly what we needed with everything we have covered in Computing this year. We started by looking at spreadsheets and quickly realised it was an area in which they could all Excel! Pupils demonstrated that they were able to enter formulae into cells, edit data, create graphs, design their own spreadsheet for a specific purpose and use further functions including



AVERAGE, MIN and MAX. Most pupils have used these skills to support their work towards vocational and computing qualifications.



Following on from spreadsheets we investigated the benefits of PowerPoint and used these to create our own memory games and quizzes. Now



if you ever find yourself on Who Wants to be a Millionaire and need a phone a friend I'll volunteer myself as my knowledge about Jelly Babies is second to none!

Our final unit used a piece of software called Audacity which enabled us to create our own songs and jingles and I have never heard some of the pupils so quiet! Once we had overcome our shyness we have imported music into the software as well as create voice recordings.

Alongside these directed sessions the pupils have also used the internet to research the Romans amongst other things and used word processing software to support their English work.



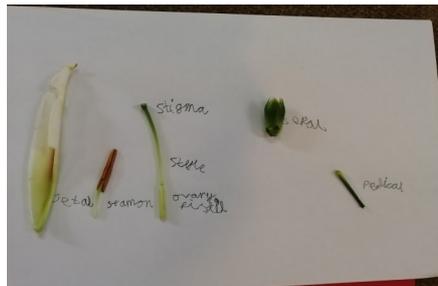


Nurture Cabin

Science

We LOVE science in the cabin and it is always met with enthusiasm. Alongside the curriculum based topics we have also explored a range of WOW investigations based around

food science. The first was a challenge to create the perfect sherbet recipe and the pupils loved exploring with the combination of bicarbonate of soda, citric acid and icing sugar to create the perfect taste, although we did have a few sour faces throughout the process. Once we had mastered the sherbet we moved on molecular gastronomy (edible water bubbles). It took a bit of practice to get the perfect bubble which we could hold but I'm sure you understand how tricky this can be when starting with a simple cup of orange squash! A final WOW investigation which went off with a bang, literally, was when we experimented with making our own ice packs. I'm not sure any of us believed that the ingredients we used to make our drinks fizzy could cause such a cold reaction, it was simply amazing. More fun was had with this investigation when the pupil realised that a gas was created during the reaction and if the bag was left sealed it eventually popped... I'm glad we explored that part outside! We have also had the opportunity to dissect owl pellets, and although this was not met with great enthusiasm it was fascinating to see how many bones came out of such a small pellet!





Nurture Cabin

Art



The pupils enjoyed a trip to Grizedale to follow clues to find a selection of contemporary sculptures hidden in the forest. Over the following weeks at school, they created self-portraits from clay which were painted when they had dried out, animal sculptures carefully carved with sculpting tools from a bar of soap, tin foil sculptures inspired by the artist Giacometti and giant insects cut out carefully with a craft knife from thick cardboard.

This term the pupils have been experimenting with different printing techniques including linocut, Lego printing and fabric printing to create their own design on a t-shirt. They have moulded their own stamps from clay and used textured materials and aluminium foil to create stamps.



Design Technology

The pupils have enjoyed upcycling into denim bowls, this involved lots of glue and very sticky hands! They were surprised when we successfully cut up old t-shirts and sweatshirts to make tote bags without a needle and cotton in sight! They made some really cute baby turtles by weaving a selection of coloured wool around pre-cut sticks and on a larger scale they attached large canes with string to create a wigwam in the woods and weaved large strips of material between the canes to create a cover.

pairs of jeans and turning them



Music

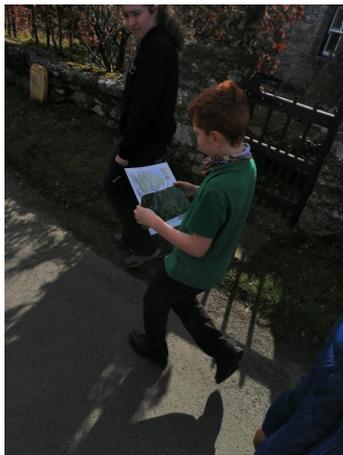
Fantastic progress has been made in guitar lessons. The pupils are working their way through the Rockschool grade books and have been playing tunes such as Dakota, Green Onions, The Man Who Can't Be Moved and many more. This has meant learning chord shapes and melody lines as well as some of the often used scale shapes on guitar.





Nurture Cabin

Humanities



Within our environment we have the luxury of an amazing outdoor space and we have used this as much as possible in our sessions. We especially enjoyed getting outside to develop our map reading skills. The pupils enjoyed learning about map symbols and six figure grid references whilst participating in orienteering activities around the farm and they were then able to apply this knowledge in a random drop off activity. Thankfully the pupils didn't have to go the extra mile on this trip as they managed to accurately guide us back to school using the most direct route.

More recently we have been enjoying investigating the Roman period. We enjoyed learning about Roman Banquets and the unusual foods they enjoyed to eat... flamingo tongue and stuffed dormouse probably won't make it onto any of the pupils plates but we did quite like the sound of the desserts until we tried to make a cheesecake. We have also researched Roman architecture and made our own mosaics which are proudly displayed in the garden area design by the pupils.

Welcome to our roman menu
Prepare to be disgusted

Starters
flamingo lounge
Dormice stuffed with pork covered in fish guts

First Course
Sea urchins boiled in olive oil served with lamb brains
Roasted parrot with some beef covered with honey

Second Course
Ostriches served with garam and honey
Sows womb served with lamb brain

Third course
Peacock served with peacock eggs
Dolphin served with jellyfish and sea urchin

Dessert
Honey cake
Grapes

Cookery

It has been a pleasure to watch the children growing in confidence and becoming independent cooks. The savoury dishes they have made include mini schnitzels with a tasty garlic sauce, mini pizza quiches and soda bread with a variety of dips. We discovered that making cake pops was a very messy process as were double dipped shortbread biscuits, there was lots of washing up and cleaning work tops afterwards!





Nurture Cabin

Horse Riding

All the pupils have had the opportunity to attend horse riding sessions at Witherslack Hall Equestrian Centre. Pupils have completed a variety of stable management tasks including mucking out stables, grooming and learning the colours, markings and points of a horse. It has been lovely to see young equestrians developing their riding through different activities; hacking down local roads and bridleways, having a try at mounted games, and some even progressing to sitting trot and cantering!

I wonder if the ponies Alvin, Peaches, Scrumpy & Cathy have enjoyed it as much as we have.



Forest School

Hidden on Ulpha Fell is our forest school base where we have spent many afternoons enjoying the woodlands. Pupils have built wooden dens, tipis and tarp shelters, and made mud pies, musical sistrums, bird seed cakes and flags. Lunches made over a camp fire have been a highlight of the trips, accompanied with an essential toasted marshmallow or two. Some of the cabin have successfully completed the discover stage of the John Muir Award.



And so to next year

Term 1 - Autumn 2021

Development Days: Tuesday 31 August, Wednesday 1st September

Term Dates: Thursday 2nd September - Friday 22nd October

Autumn Break: Monday 25th October - Friday 29th October



Term 2

Term Dates: Monday 1st November - Friday 17th December

Christmas Break: Monday 20th December – Monday 3rd January 2022



Term 3 - Spring 2022

Development Day: Tuesday 4th January

Term Dates: Wednesday 5th January - Friday 11th February

February Break: Monday 14th February - Friday 18th February



Term 4

Term Dates: Monday 21st February – Friday 1st April

Spring Break: Monday 4th April - Monday 18th April



Term 5 - Summer 2022

Development Day: Tuesday 19th April

Term Dates: Wednesday 20th April - Friday 27th May

May Day - Monday 2nd May

May Break: Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June



Term 6

Term Dates: Monday 6th June - Wednesday 20th July

Have a wonderful summer break, stay safe and we look forward to welcoming our students back on Thursday 2nd September

