



Harton Academy

NEWSLETTER

YOUR TERMLY UPDATE
DECEMBER 2020 ISSUE 8



WELCOME

Welcome to a slightly different end of term Newsletter, to round off a very challenging couple of terms leading up to the Christmas holidays.

This publication will give parents, students, staff, Governors and members of the community an update on all aspects of school life and the changes we have had to make to accommodate the daily COVID guidelines from the Department for Education.

After a very busy term since all of our students returned to full time education, I thought you would appreciate a detailed update since my weekly updates before the summer.

In terms of COVID, at the time of writing, we have had 36 students test positive and 11 staff. This is hardly surprising despite our very best efforts, due to the number of people on the site (1850) every day. It has been immensely challenging at times in many respects, isolating the correct students (and sometimes staff), ensuring that learning continues at home (although there will never be a substitute for face to face teaching), and attempting to assess the gaps in learning, particularly our year 13 and year 11 students.

We will be doing everything we can to provide catch up provision for the students and hopefully by the time they sit their examinations, they will feel a little happier and better prepared.

There is greater detail below on many of the key challenges from this term and no doubt a number of these will continue in the weeks and months ahead. Let us hope and pray that further vaccines are approved soon and we can return to some semblance of normality before Easter. At the moment, we are keen to go ahead with the revised Prom date on May

20th and the 6th Form Leavers' Ball on April 1st. Over 80% of students are keen to go ahead!

The last day of term, **Thursday 17th December**, is a half day for students and staff. The students will be dismissed on a staggered basis from 11:55am (please see below) and the Scholars' Bus and private transport providers have been informed.

Staggered departure times on Thursday 17th December:

- Year 11: 11.55am
- Year 10: 12 noon
- Year 9: 12.05pm
- Year 8: 12.10pm
- Year 7: 12.15pm
- Sixth Form: 12.20pm

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to everyone for your tremendous support which continues to make Harton the 'outstanding' school that it is.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas - stay safe and I look forward to welcoming our students back to school on **Monday 4th January 2021**. Please click on the following link if you wish to enjoy our '*virtual*' Christmas Concert - it showcases the fantastic talent we have at Harton and there are even a couple of surprise guests!

Click to watch
**Christmas
Concert**

or

Watch on
Vimeo
here



Best wishes
Sir Ken Gibson
Executive Head Teacher

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Harton Academy

Lisle Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 6DL

T | 0191 427 4050

F | 0191 427 1478

E | headteacher@hartonacademy.co.uk

W | www.hartonacademy.co.uk

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram

@HartonAcademy



CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION



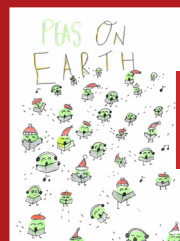
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2ND

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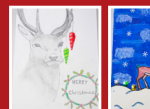
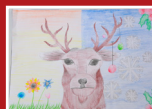
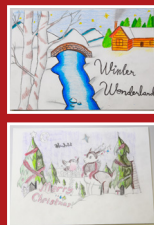
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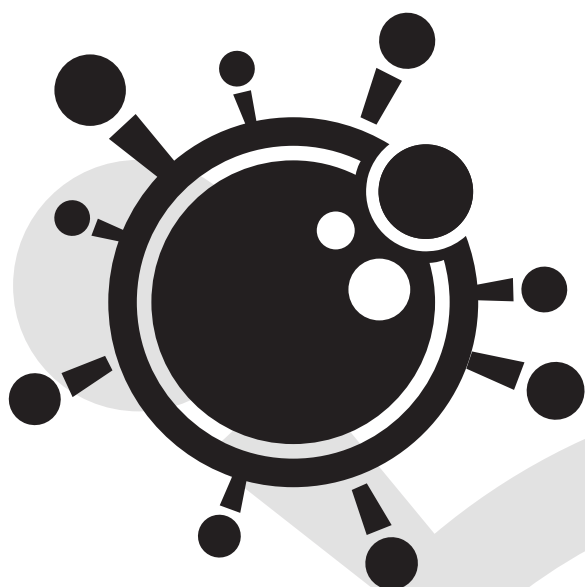


4TH

HABIBA
CHOWDHURY
YR8

A FEW OF THE RUNNERS-UP





COVID-19 UPDATE

We are delighted to report that, despite the negative aspects related to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Harton is faring remarkably well. At the time of publishing this newsletter, we have had 36 of our students who have tested positive for COVID-19, and 11 members of staff. It goes without saying that we do not wish for any of our school community or their families to contract this virus, but within the national context, things are going well. Public Health has commented that we are doing more than we need to, and this is reflected in our better-than-national attendance figures. In addition, given that we have 1650 students and around 200 staff, again our positive cases indicate we are doing the right thing!

It is always a tragedy when we are forced to send a year group bubble home. We have refined the school's own track and trace processes, so please do be reassured that, if we must make the decision to ask your child to self-isolate, this has been done with a heavy heart and only after a very detailed delve into their likelihood of being a close contact. Like yourselves, we believe the children belong in school, but only when it is safe for them and the school community. We really appreciate all of our families' support with this matter since

school re-opened fully in September. This is all the more noticeable in your support of the students wearing their face coverings when they are on the move or in especially busy indoor areas. We do urge you to continue to remind your child to bring their face covering to school.

In the event of your child self-isolating, teachers have undergone rapid training in the art of remote teaching, upskilling themselves in the various online platforms at our disposal such as Zoom, Teams, etc. We are continuing to refine our curriculum offer to the students, ensuring that those in self-isolation benefit from blended learning, whereby they can work independently whilst quarantined from school and then use this knowledge and new learning upon their return to in-school lessons. Ensuring the excellent attainment of all of our students, but especially our Year 11s and Year 13s, is vital, and we are doing all we can to mitigate against any knowledge gaps caused by the loss of their in-school education between March and September. We have been allocated £108,000 of Government catch-up funding, which will support us to address gaps in attainment over the course of this academic year.

We know how hard it has been for many of our children and their

families since March. Now that we have returned to some form of normality, we continue to support them, and are mindful that there may be additional mental health issues for certain students because of the pandemic. Please do be assured of our continued support in this aspect of their lives. Due to the work we do in promoting positive mental health, we were awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools in December 2019, and we have trained colleagues in place to support anyone with issues arising, signposting them and their families to the appropriate support networks. We check on the students' mental health, as and when we need to, during the course of the school day.



Masks are required in this facility



Allow AT LEAST 6 feet physical distance



Wash your hands frequently



OR

Use hand sanitizer that is 60% + alcohol

CURRICULUM PROVISION

It is with great pleasure that we are able to report that, despite the restricted nature of our return, all students are following their normal curriculum provision. This has only been possible as a result of the incredible professionalism of the staff, their adaptability and their drive to ensure all students receive high quality teaching at all times. We must also congratulate the vast majority of students for the maturity they have shown during this unprecedented time. Many subjects, in all three Key Stages, involve practical activity and this has proven to be one of the most challenging areas to accommodate.

Key Stage 4 and 5 students are able to access specialist teaching rooms which has allowed access to specialist equipment but practical opportunities still remain limited. This has been far more challenging in Key Stage 3, where students are based in a single teaching room for the vast majority of their timetable and therefore have very limited access to specialist equipment, with the exception of ICT. There has been, and continues to be, a significant investment in specialist subject resources to offer students safe practical experience within non-specialist teaching rooms. These resources can also be made available to Key Stage 4 students to maintain practical opportunities when working from home, during periods of isolation. There has also been a large investment in cardiovascular equipment to further support indoor PE lessons, as we move into the winter months.

There also continues to be significant investment in ICT provision, both in terms of software and hardware. All appropriate spaces have been utilised as teaching rooms, to overcome the difficulties presented by our 'zoned' year group arrangements. This has been achieved by ensuring these spaces, previously used for non-teaching purposes, are equipped with the latest educational resources such as mobile smart boards. These smart boards can be

used to further support 'normal' teaching arrangements, once restored.

There remains an on-going commitment to staff training, particularly in the area of blended learning. All staff have now completed basic training in the safe delivery of live streamed lessons and many have now been able to deliver such lessons to students during periods of isolation.

In Year 7, the structuring of teaching groups has been entirely reliant on the feedback received from primary colleagues. The lack of robust examination data, in the form of Key Stage 2 SATs, has resulted in groups being more mixed in ability. This has been addressed by appropriate differentiation across all groups and subjects. All students in Year 7 have now completed baseline assessments in mathematics and English. Further baseline assessment has been conducted using the internationally renowned MidYIS test which assesses student strengths and weaknesses in the four key areas of vocabulary, maths, non-verbal reasoning and skills such as proof reading and perception. This collective assessment information will be used, at an appropriate time in the New Year, to restructure Year 7 teaching groups, ensuring all students receive a level of support and challenge commensurate with their ability.

All subjects have now managed to complete meaningful assessments in all year groups, despite most year groups having suffered the inevitable inconvenience caused by periods of isolation. These assessments are essential for providing feedback about gaps in learning, resulting from the forced closure of schools, and to provide baseline information to further monitor student progress. The feedback gained from these assessments will be used to inform future curriculum planning and to structure appropriate intervention activities in the New Year.

Progress reports have now been sent home for the attention of Year 13 and Year 11 students, parents and carers. Other year groups will

receive progress reports following the Christmas break. Year 13 and Year 11 students, parents and carers will also receive a full written report, during February and March, offering feedback and advice to support final examination preparation.

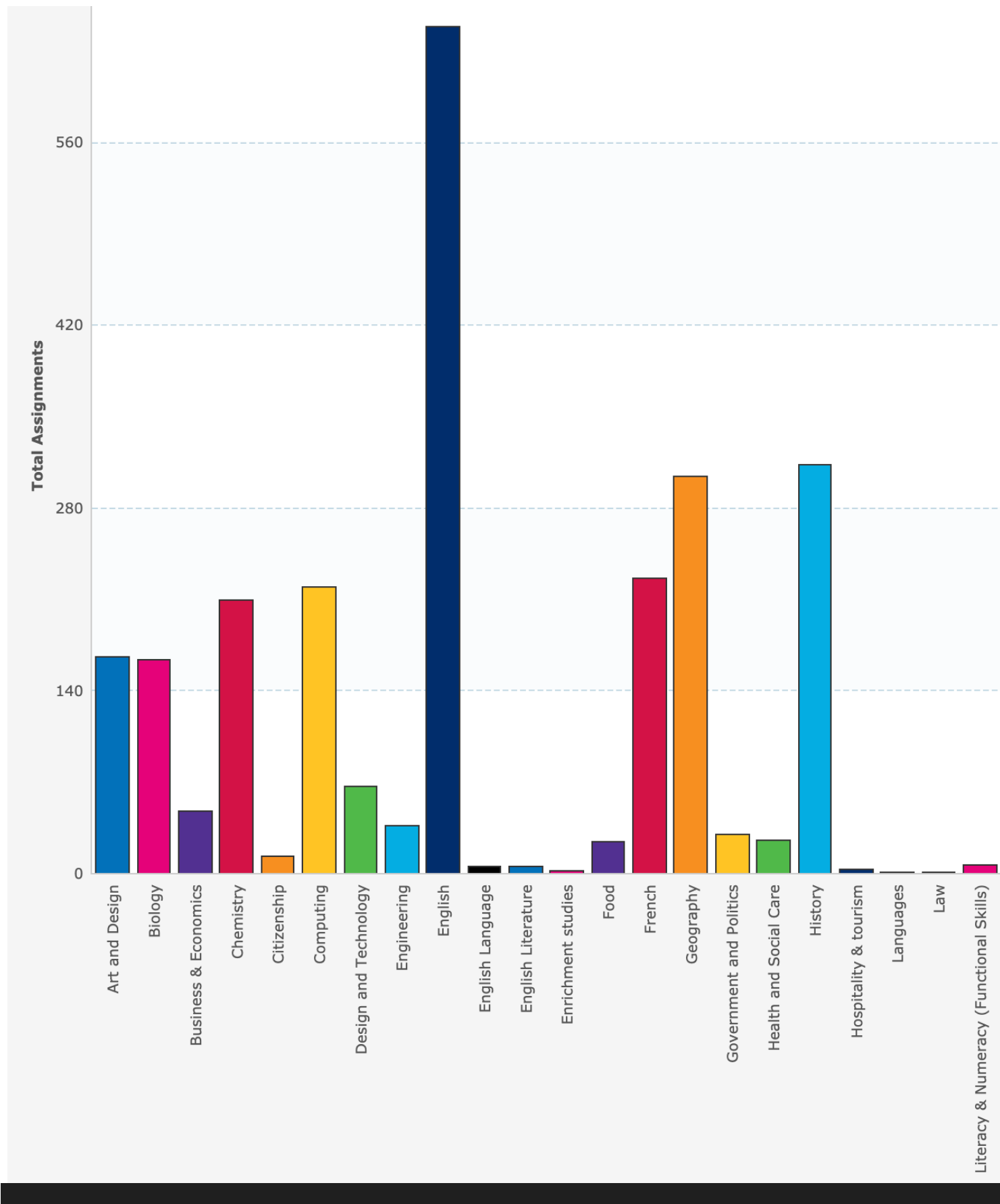
The educational landscape is ever changing which makes strategic planning considerably more challenging. It is hoped that recent announcements, regarding summer examinations and a possible vaccination programme, will be finalised in the early weeks of the New Year. This would then offer the security necessary to move from tactical response to strategic planning. This may also provide the opportunity necessary to offer examination students the experience of mock examinations.



HOME LEARNING

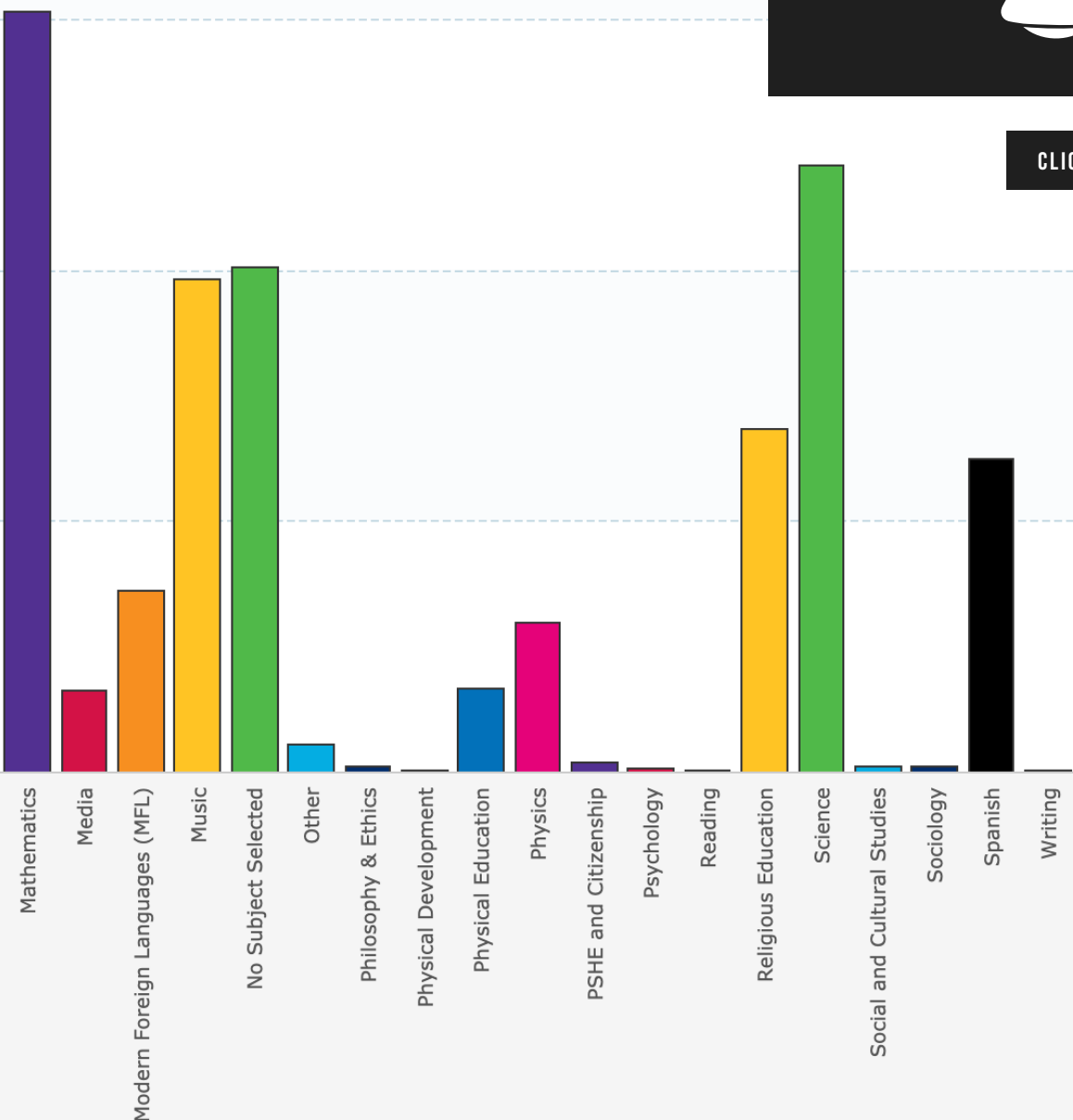
Staff, students and parents continue to use the school Frog VLE effectively to assign, complete and monitor home learning. In the autumn term, over 4100 assignments were allocated to students as either regular homework activities or as isolation work by their teachers.

The school also set up over 3000 parental accounts to allow parents and guardians to view and monitor work set for their children. All parental contacts should now be in receipt of these log in details. If you have not received them or if you require any support using the VLE, please contact ictsupport@hartonacademy.co.uk putting Frog VLE as the subject. Both during normal school times and when students are isolating,



it is essential they complete any home learning set by their teachers. Students have been issued with guidance on home learning and a copy of the document they received can be viewed here: <https://harton-tc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/custom-import-v2/06112020095755.pdf>. Staff have all also received training on the use of Microsoft Teams to safely deliver live lessons to isolating groups of students or when they are

themselves isolating at home. As a school, we would like to say a huge 'thank you' for the support we are receiving from many of you in making sure your child/children engage in home learning. This will be of huge benefit in ensuring they do not fall behind in these unusual and challenging times.




FrogLearn

Learning Platform & VLE



[CLICK TO ACCESS FROGLEARN](#)



HARTON 6TH FORM Virtual Open Evening

NOW AVAILABLE

CLICK FOR VIRTUAL OPEN EVENING

HARTON 6TH FORM NEWS

The Harton 6th Form Open Evening was virtual this year and a welcome video and subject videos are available on the 6th Form website for potential applicants to look at. Hopefully this will help students in making informed post-16 choices.

The application deadline is the end of January and interviews will start in mid-January.

In addition, the Transition video for year 6 parents can be found using the following link:

<https://harton-tc.co.uk/main-school/information/school/virtual-open-evening/>

POST-16 OPTIONS

Year 11 students have all been shown an options video outlining the different pathways available post GCSE examinations. A research task has been set to ensure that students take ownership of this process but support is offered if students need additional guidance.

If students need careers advice or support with applications, we have **drop in sessions** in the library on **Thursdays from 3:20pm - 4:00pm**. We only have space for up to 10 students each week, so we will have to operate on a first come first served basis.

HARTON 6TH FORM IN HIGH DEMAND

Harton 6th Form had record numbers of students joining in September 2020 and we were delighted to be able to offer five new courses: Spanish, French, Product Design, BTEC Music and Criminology. Currently, we have just over 300 students in the 6th Form and have already received high numbers of applications for 2021.

RECORD NUMBERS OF EARLY UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS

This year, we had 22 students apply for the early UCAS deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, Veterinary Medicine, Medicine and Dentistry. 12 students have applied for Oxford or Cambridge this year and many have recently received notification that they have an interview - which is great to hear - and we wish them all well. Three of our students were successful for Oxbridge last year which was the best we have ever had. Hopefully, this year, we will have even more!

HIGHER LEVEL APPRENTICESHIPS

We are delighted that two former students have offered to deliver Teams meetings, informing students of alternative opportunities to going directly to university. Matthew Smith is currently working full time at Nestle in York where he is working as a Load Compliance Consultant. He is not only being paid a good salary but also being sponsored through a degree which

is fully paid for by the company. This is certainly a growing area and we are keen to ensure that students can make informed decisions about pathways, after completing their level 3 studies at the 6th Form.

GYM AND ENRICHMENT

We are delighted that since half term we have been able to open up opportunities for 6th Form students to access the Wellness gym and also to opt to take part in various enrichment opportunities on a Wednesday afternoon. We currently offer the following:

- Driving theory sessions
- Football
- Film club
- Book club
- Sign language
- Business and enterprise, and
- Debating.

After Christmas, we will be looking to expand this further, helping the students broaden their horizons, meeting new people and developing new skills.

harton

Innovation & Progression

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

Across the school we again have high numbers of students completing this well renowned award and currently have 12 students on the gold award in year 12 and 7 finishing the gold award in year 13. The expeditions have been on hold but we look forward to getting back to the great outdoors soon, seeing the students face various challenges and having to show resilience and determination over several days.

ZAMBIA EXPEDITION 2022

We are hoping to resume the overseas expeditions for the current year 12 students and the destination for 2022 is Zambia in Africa, with the opportunity to visit Victoria Falls, together with completing a community project, trek and cultural visits. Initial interest appears strong so we are hopeful that a team can be formed in the New Year. These expeditions can be an amazing experience.

NCS

Well done to all the year 12 students that made the most of the opportunity to complete the Autumn NCS programme at South Shields Football Club. Sadly, the full summer programme was cancelled but a revised programme was offered which focused on offering fun activities that help develop key transferable skills and the students were also required to complete a community action project.



LOWER SCHOOL NEWS

HARTON ACADEMY - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD (YEAR 7, 8 AND 9)

This Award is very much based upon the principles of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and allows you to develop key transferable skills and qualities that will really help your future progression.

The aim of the award is to encourage young people to develop in the following areas:

1. Volunteering (Giving time to help others)
2. Skill (Trying new things)
3. Physical (Keeping healthy and fit)
4. Challenge (Stepping out of comfort zone)

Challenge Activity examples

High Rope / Go Ape / Surfing / Flow Rider / Zip Lining / Putting up a tent and cooking / Scuba diving / Go Karting / Mountain Biking / Body Boarding / 5 mile walk / 8 mile bike ride / Gliding / Coasteering / Ghyll Scrambling / Clip and Climb / Rock Climbing / Paddle Boarding / Orienteering / Caving / Abseiling, etc.

Bronze Award (Year 7)

4 hours of each of section 1, 2 and 3 and then one challenge activity.

Silver Award (Year 8)

6 hours of each of section 1, 2 and 3 and then two challenge activities.

Gold Award (Year 9)

8 hours of each of section 1, 2 and 3 and then three challenge activities.

Certification / Record of Achievement

Students are expected to take full ownership of completing the award and to work independently. It requires that students record what they have done on the evidence sheet and to then show this either to their Head of Year or Mr Burroughs. Once all the sections have been completed and signed off, students will receive a certificate that can go in to their Record of Achievement

file. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is offered to all students towards the end of year 9 and we hope that lots of students will progress on to this Award when the opportunity arises.



PASTORAL PAGES

Back to School

Monday 4th January 2021 - All Students return to school after the Christmas holidays!

SCHOOL'S OPENING TIMES FOR STUDENTS

We would like to remind you of the school's opening times for students. With the exception of the scholars' bus services, students must arrive no earlier than ten minutes before they are permitted into school. This is because we are keen to keep our year group bubbles separate, which we know you will appreciate. We need to ensure your child is safe on our school premises, which is why we urge you to remind them of their lesson starting times, shown below. Also, as the weather turns colder, students will struggle to wait outside for any length of time, and we cannot permit them into school earlier than these stated times. Thank you for your support during these extraordinary times.

LESSON START TIMES

Years 7 and 11

8.30am - arrive to school from 8.20am

Years 8 and 10

8.45am - arrive at school from 8.35am

Years 9 and Sixth Form

9.00am - arrive at school from 8.50am

NUT ALLERGIES

A number of our students suffer from medically diagnosed food allergies, some of which are severe airborne allergies. In school, all the food we serve is nut-free, and our Catering and DT Food teams take all reasonable measures to ensure that students' food allergies

are accommodated for. However, lunches are currently eaten in more confined spaces (the classrooms) and most of our students bring a packed lunch to school at least four days a week. Therefore, the school cannot be completely 'nut-free', as no assurances can be given that food being brought into the building will not contain traces of nuts.

To safeguard the health and wellbeing of students suffering from severe nut allergies, we ask that all parents and carers avoid – wherever possible – sending their children to school with packed lunches containing nuts (particularly pistachios, peanuts, hazelnuts or cashews). If students do choose to eat these types of snacks within school, please encourage them to take a drink and wash their hands after they have eaten, to avoid the trace of nuts being spread. Parents/carers should also regularly remind their children to refuse any food items that may be offered by other students.

If you would like to inform the school of any medically diagnosed food allergies affecting your child, please contact the School Office.

ATTENDANCE

You may have seen the recent BBC news article (24th November 2020), 'Collapse in Secondary School attendance warning.' Teaching unions warned of a crisis in school attendance and asked for schools to be able to operate on a 'rota system'.

Students, parents and carers have been a superb help to our staff in their efforts to keep Harton Academy open, to all year groups, throughout the pandemic. We are extremely grateful for all of your support!

Staff would also like to thank all parents and carers for ensuring that they followed Public Health England's guidelines, and did not send their child (children) into school, when they were aware that there was a possible risk of transmission of COVID-19.

We would ask that parents and carers continue to follow PHE criteria, when considering whether or not they should send their child (children) into school.

HARTON ACADEMY'S LATEST ATTENDANCE FIGURES

YEAR 7 - 95.22%

YEAR 8 - 93.78%

YEAR 9 - 93.66%

YEAR 10 - 91.12%

YEAR 11 - 89.17%

YEAR 12 - 97.59%

YEAR 13 - 94.74%

WHOLE SCHOOL AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

93.58%

Whilst these figures are lower than we would normally expect, they compare extremely favourably with the latest National picture. On 3 December, attendance in state-funded secondary schools was 81%, up from 78%.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Holiday Dates for the Spring/ Summer Terms Ahead

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Break up Thursday 17 December, students return to school Monday 4 January 2021

FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2021

Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February 2021

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Break up Thursday 1 April, students return to school Monday 19 April 2021

MAY BANK HOLIDAY

Monday 3 May 2021

SPRING HALF TERM HOLIDAY

Monday 31 May to Friday 4 June 2021

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Break up Friday 23 July, students return to school Tuesday 7 September 2021

Please refer to the school website for confirmed holiday dates for the full academic year 2021/22: www.hartonacademy.co.uk

GYM MEMBERSHIP PRICE STRUCTURE

Harton Sports Centre Gym is open again and is a COVID safe space to train. We go above and beyond all Industry Regulations and Guidelines to ensure we are providing a safe environment for everyone.

OUR PROCEDURES INCLUDE

- Timed 55 minute gym slots, bookable on our MyWellness app
- Gym attendance limited to 20 per session (Industry Guidelines state 30)
- Sanitising stations
- Marked training zones to assist with social distancing
- Antibacterial Sprays used by all members on all equipment immediately after use
- Hourly cleans by staff after each session
- Excellent ventilation

LOW MEMBERSHIPS FEE

Memberships are £20 per month and we don't tie you into a long term contract – we just require 30 days' notice to cancel a membership. Fitness Programmes and Group Fitness Classes are also included (subject to Government restrictions).

- Youth Memberships - (Secondary School Students) are also available for £15 per month.
- Please call us on 0191 4274055 to make an appointment to join or to be shown around.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION, WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OR TO BOOK IN FOR A FREE SESSION, PLEASE CALL US ON OUR DIRECT LINE:



0191 4274055



HARTON
SPORTS CENTRE

www.hartonsportscentre.co.uk



Or email us at:
schooldirect@hartonacademy.co.uk



A huge congratulations to our 2020-21 cohort of trainees who have successfully completed their first term of ITT training. Their efforts and dedication to their chosen profession during these unprecedented times has been second to none and very much appreciated at Harton Academy and our partner schools.

