



# NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6<sup>th</sup> Form College



## Monday 4th March - Friday 8th March 2024

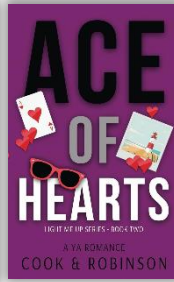
Last week we hosted our second HCCS Literature Festival. We first organised the Literature Festival in 2023 with the aim to foster a love of literature and writing amongst the school community. The buzz we felt amongst the students throughout that week was certainly special and something we wished to create over and over again.

### Author Visits



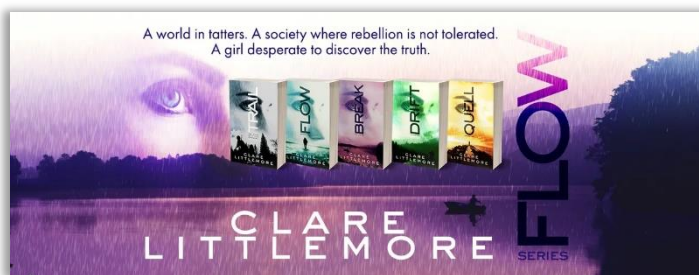
#### DJ Cook and H.A. Robinson

This year's Literature Festival kicked off in style on Monday 4th March with an author visit from co-writers DJ Cook and H.A. Robinson. They hosted an engaging assembly for our Year 8 and 9 students where they reflected on a number of important messages such as resilience and identity. This was followed by a Meet the Authors/Book Signing in the LRC. It was great to see students from Year 7 through to Year 11 engaging in the session, asking for tips and tricks to help them along the way with their own writing. It was certainly evident that HCCS has a selection of upcoming authors that we need to look out for in the future!



#### Clare Littlemore

On the second day of our Literature Festival, we were treated to a visit from dystopian author Clare Littlemore. Clare joined us to host a two hour workshop for a number of our KS4 students. Clare's workshops covered a number of topics such as 'How to create a gripping dystopian novel' and 'How to navigate the publishing world'. It was really interesting to hear about Clare's journey of self publishing, showing our students that there are lots of paths that can be taken to become a successful writer. All students were welcome to the LRC at breaktime, to meet Clare and ask any questions which they might have. Again, it was great to see how many students took the time to come and meet Clare, and take the opportunity to introduce themselves and ask questions.



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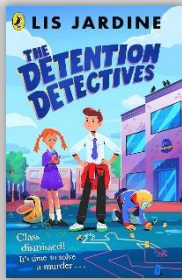
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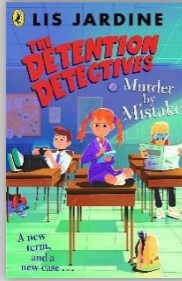
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## Lis Jardine

We closed our Literature Festival with a final author visit from Lis Jardine. Lis hosted an engaging assembly with our Year 7 students where she introduced the characters of her book 'The Detention Detectives', her life and how she became a published author. Students engaged in a Q&A session where they asked some fantastic questions about subjects such as overcoming writer's block and how authors create engaging characters. Following the assembly, all students were again invited to the LRC to meet Lis.



Overall it was great to see how many students engaged with the author visits. Author visits allow schools to bring characters to life, and our students are let into the authors' secrets with added tips and tricks. They are full of book recommendations, overflowing enthusiasm, writing ideas and encouragement to keep trying. Students learn about real-life stories of where individuals have been met with rejection and not given up. An important message for us all.

## Virtual Author Visits – Book Trust LIVE

During LRC lessons, our Key Stage 3 students have been engaging with a number of Virtual Author Visits hosted by BookTrust to promote reading for pleasure.



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### Year 7 – SF Said



SF Said is a powerful advocate for making reading a more inclusive experience for as many children as possible. His ambitions are to improve representation in books. His own books immerse the reader into worlds where characters explore their identities within systems of social injustice, inequality and prejudice.

***“Why should children read? Because reading opens minds & hearts. It helps us imagine different lives, different worlds, and helps us build a better world. So keep reading books with kids, and encouraging them to read. There is nothing more important. #literacy” SF Said(2020)***

### Year 8 – Taran Matharu

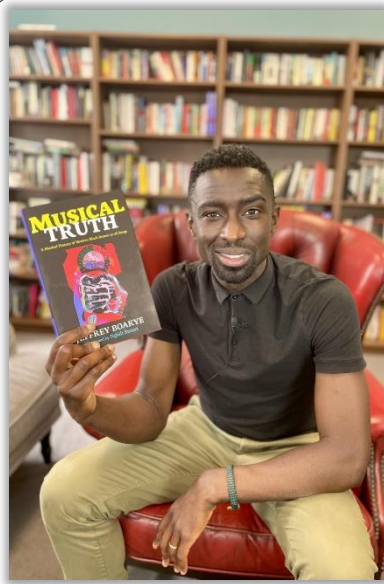
Taran was born in London in 1990 and found a passion for reading at a very early age. His love for stories developed into a desire to create his own, writing his first book at 9 years old. Taran's Virtual Visit explored and celebrated a number of authors who had their works published at a very early age, proving to students that anything is possible!





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## Year 9 – Jeffrey Boakye

Jeffrey is an ex-teacher turned writer known for weaving together complex issues of our time in an accessible and engaging way. With a particular focus on issues surrounding race and masculinity. Our Year 9 students were introduced to Jeffrey's book 'Musical Truth: A musical journey through modern black Britain' inviting students to think about and reconsider events they may or may not have learned about in school through a thrilling and musical journey.


*"Reading really is a portal into worlds you haven't visited and lives you haven't lived. I'm lucky - I learned from a fairly young age that reading is a form of escapism and exploration that I think we all need, from time to time. Finding a good book is a gift to yourself. The hours spent in those pages are a special kind of magic, and sometimes, the lessons learned can stay with you for a long time". Jeffrey Boakye (2023)*

## Competitions



A number of exciting competitions ran throughout the week to engage pupils and staff.

Tutor groups were invited to battle head to head in our annual World Book Day Kahoot. Congratulations to our winning Tutor Groups for 2024:



Congratulations to this year's winners:

Year 7 - 7AP - Year 8 - 8IW - Year 9 - 9RH - Year 10 - 10AD  
Year 11 - 11SP



### Where's Wally Hunt

On Monday 4th March, Wally-Watchers across the school were set off on a hunt to find Wally hidden around the school grounds. Over 150 pupils took part and were rewarded with a sweet treat for taking part!

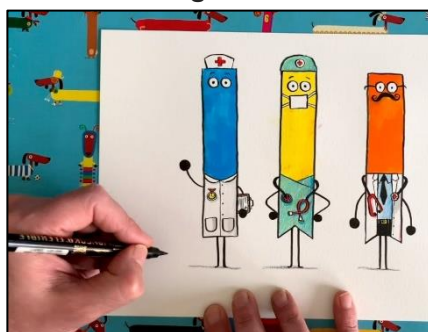
### Scavenger Hunt

Tutor groups were invited again to participate in our annual scavenger hunt. Tutor groups had to work together to find a book related to the given clues.



## Draw Along Sessions

Students were invited to join us in the LRC at lunchtime throughout the week to take part in a series of draw along sessions. We were joined on the screen by illustrators such as Rob Biddulph and Liz Pichon who guided students step by step to assist them in creating some of their favourite characters.



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## Open Mic Sessions

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March, students and staff were invited to join us at break and lunchtime in the LRC for an Open Mic Reading Session. This is the first time we have run an event like this and we were blown away by the students' participation. Students participating read a piece of their own choice. This was a mix of their own stories and poems as well as their favourite pieces from other writers. It was evident to see that we have an array of budding authors amongst us!



## Author Videos

A huge thank you to the following authors, who all filmed personalised videos for HCCS which were shown during tutor time.



Bryony Pearce



Jan Dunning



Kelly McCaughrain



Marisa Noelle

## Author Videos

Our International Student Ambassadors were invited along to attend a live event hosted by BookTrust Represent. This was a virtual school event presented by Waterstones Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho. The event celebrated authors Jasmine Richards and Sabine Adeyinka, who shared their journeys into bookmaking, highlighting the artistry of book creatives from under-represented communities and backgrounds. We were also extremely lucky to win 50 copies of the two books 'The Unmorrow Curse' by Jasmine Richards and 'Jummy at the River School' by Sabine Adeyinka, which meant each student who took part was able to take a copy of each book home with them. Further copies are available in the LRC if any other students would like to loan.



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## Masked Reader

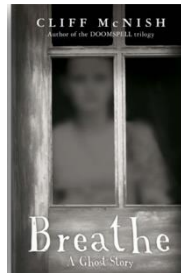
Staff took part in our very first HCCS Masked Reader in a very special 3 episodes which were played to students during tutor time. They had great fun guessing who was behind the masks!



## Creative Writing Workshops & Competitions

### Year 7 & 8 – Ghost Stories with Cliff McNish

During English lessons, Year 7 and 8 students took part in a virtual writing workshop with author Cliff McNish. The workshop explored how to construct a successful ghost story. Students were then invited to write a ghost story to enter into our creative writing competition. The competition closed today (Friday 15th March), and we have had an abundance of entries that we can't wait to read.



We will be choosing three winners overall to receive a prize:

**1st Place** - £10 Amazon Voucher, book and a goodie bag

**2nd Place** - A book and a goodie bag

**3rd Place** - A book

The winners will be announced on Wednesday 20th March. The top three entries will be published in the school newsletter.

## Year 9 – Remembering Nell Competition

Every year, we run a creative writing competition for Year 9s in honour of Nell Jones. A pupil who tragically lost her life in the Manchester Arena attack. Students have worked hard on their entries with their teachers, exploring how to write a successful short story and are then invited to enter their stories into the competition. The competition closed today (Friday 15th March). We have created a staff panel who will be reading and voting on each entry, and winners will be announced in due course.



We will be choosing three winners overall to receive a prize:

**1st Place** - £20 Amazon Voucher, personalised trophy and a book.

**2nd Place** - £15 Amazon Voucher and a book

**3rd Place** - £10 Amazon Voucher and a book.

The top 3 entries will be published in the school newsletter.



## Holmes Chapel Community Pre-School

Year 8 students, Georgie and Mimi, joined Miss Moores at Holmes Chapel Community Pre-School to share a number of story baskets. The students were mesmerised by their enthusiasm and expression whilst reading and really enjoyed passing around the themed baskets as they listened to the stories.



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## Starbooks Café – Book Tasting Event

Our first Starbooks Cafe opened its doors this year and welcomed students to Sip, Taste and Read in a special book tasting event. A selection of students were invited to share their favourite books with each other in a carousel style activity with their peers. As they rotated around, students filled in their menus, sharing their thoughts on the front covers, blurb and first pages of each chosen book before rating each book on their initial thoughts. The tasting event aimed to provide students with new ideas, and titles, which they may have previously bypassed. This, of course, was all enjoyed with juice, biscuits and jazz music to set the cafe style scene.



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## Cheshire Education Library Service



The Education Library Service (ELS) supports our school by providing quality resources to enrich learning and promote reading for pleasure. They host a series of events throughout the year, such as the Cheshire Schools' Book Awards, which we take part in annually.

We were lucky enough to receive a visit from Susannah and Chelsea from the ELS team, who worked with a number of our Student Librarians for an afternoon. Students proudly showed off our LRC to them both, talking through the processes of their duties, the collection and how it is chosen. They then hosted a fabulous book related quiz for students before providing them with a host of book related badges and goodies!

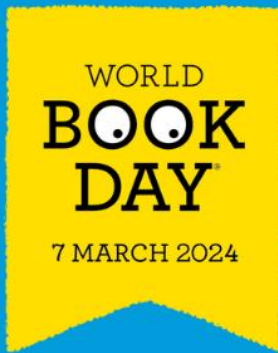






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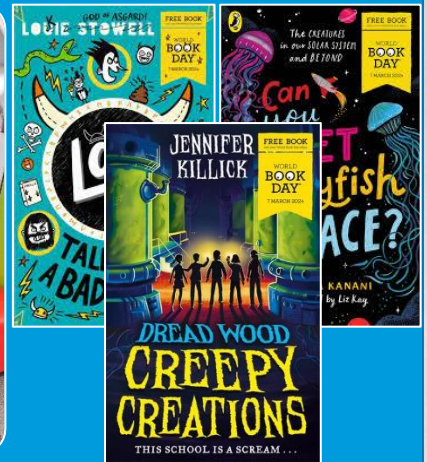
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## Free World Book Day Titles for Year 7

All of our Year 7 pupils were invited into the LRC to choose and take home a World Book Day title of their choice as part of our World Book Day Celebrations. It was great to see a buzz amongst students as they chose their titles. We really hope they enjoy reading them. All titles are available to quiz on Accelerated Reader too, so please encourage them to do so once they have finished!

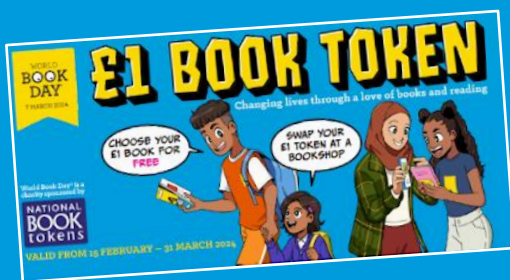
We have a small selection of titles left over, so please ask Miss Moores in the LRC if there is a particular title you are interested in.



## World Book Day Tokens

All students, Year 7 through to Year 13 were issued a Book Token which they can use in store until Sunday 31st March 2024. The token can be exchanged for a free WBD title or used as £1 off another children's title in store. If your child's book token has been lost, you can download a token from the following link:

<https://www.worldbookday.com/digital-tokens/>



## World Book Day Rewards Breakfast

As part of our World Book Day celebrations, we held a rewards breakfast for our Reading Mentors and LRC Assistants. This was a chance for us to say a huge thank you to two fabulous teams of students who assist us on a weekly basis in a number of ways.

Firstly, our LRC Assistants, who give up their own time to help with the day to day running of the LRC, completing tasks such as shelving books, planning displays and assisting students. Secondly, our Reading Mentors, who are on hand to help us to run a number of Literacy Interventions, assisting and supporting some of our struggling readers. If you are interested in becoming a part of either team, please email the Literacy Team at [literacy@hccs.info](mailto:literacy@hccs.info)



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## Story In A Day

Throughout the day, students were introduced to part of the story 'Underlay Underlings' by Joseph Coelho. A short story published in Read, Scream, Repeat in 2023. By the end of the day, all students and staff had shared the story as a community. We loved hearing student's thoughts and predictions through the day as to what they thought would happen.

Read, Scream, Repeat is now available to loan from the LRC.



## Fancy Dress

This year for the first time, we opened up our World Book Day Fancy Dress to all students and staff in our school community. Students were invited to come into school as either their favourite book character or with an item of orange clothing in order to raise money for our chosen charity, Read for Good. Overall, we raised **£123.26**, which will be combined with money raised later in the year during our Readathon. This will help to fund the Read for Good's hospital programme, providing the best brand-new books and resident storyteller visits for children in the 30 major children's hospitals across the UK.

Congratulations to our Fancy Dress Winners:

**Staff:** Mrs Fellows

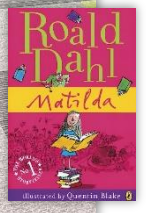
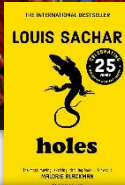
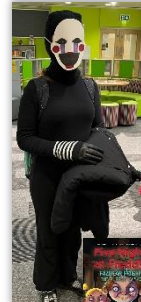
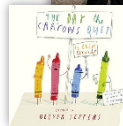
**Year 7:** Willow P

**Year 8:** Georgie P and Mimi F

**Year 9:** Poppy R and Lilly A

**Year 10:** Archie J, Tom H and Angelo O

**Year 11:** Eleanor B



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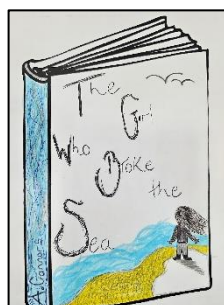
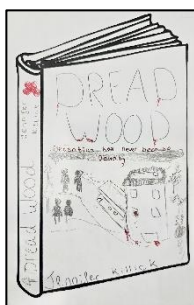
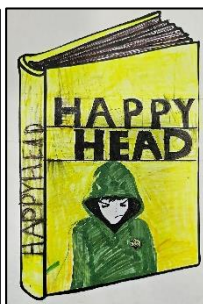
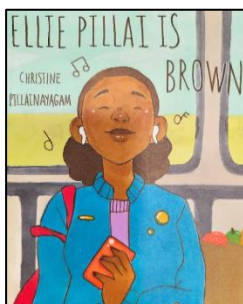


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## Student's Stories, Poems & Illustrations



### The Room

Bare, white-washed walls trapped us in, and bright lights shone from the ceiling. A straight line of anticipating children sat ahead of a large desk. Behind it, sat an expressionless woman with a cropped blonde bob. "Next please," she ordered vacantly. The queue edged forwards. Shuffling feet broke the silence. 2 wide metal doors towered behind her; children were taken through either one. At the front, she asked my name. Scanning a long list, she responded, "9."

2 burly guards shoved me into another plain room with a revolting smell. Where were the others? The doors slammed and bolted shut...

The Room by Esme W (10AD)