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**SUTHERLAND HOUSE SCHOOL**

**School Newsletter**

Written and collated by Phoebe Doyle, with the help of our students.

2025 Spring Half-term 1

**School Notices:**

* Students return to school after half term on the 25th February.
* KS3 Handball 11th March

**Active Living – Handball**

On 16th January, at Harvey Haddon Leisure Centre in Nottingham, five students represented Sutherland House School in a Key Stage 4/3 inclusive indoor Handball tournament organised by Sports Nottingham. The five students were: Thomas M, Tom M, Riley, Theodore H, and Mason B. They were supported by familiar staff and for Theo and Mason this is evidence towards their Sports Leader level 1 Award!

Handball is a non-contact fast paced game. Sutherland House School played nine competitive games against other SEN and mainstream schools from Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The schools included Bracken Hill, Oakfield and Bluecoat school. Sutherland House School won 7 games and only lost 2. This was an excellent win loss ratio, and the players can be very proud of their efforts.

A group of people standing in a gym

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**Local community Notices:**

* Sunshine’s online cuppa & chat - Parent event, every other Wednesday
* Points of View – Free family art event at the Nottingham Contemporary until 15th February
* Festival of science and curiosity- Free family event held at Nottingham Libraries until 21st February

A person holding a bowl of food

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**National Citizen Service at Portland College**

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is all about helping young people get ahead in life – learning some fantastic new skills, meeting some amazing new people, and finding out how to make a real difference in the local community. Three students from Key Stage 4/5 were asked to represent Sutherland House School for the x3 day accredited and nationally recognised course.

Portland College’s programmes are fully inclusive, tailored specifically for young people with disabilities, learning difficulties and additional support needs. The sessions during the week were varied and each day there were a range of different activities the group participated in. The three students from Sutherland House School communicated positively with the staff, students and volunteers from Portland College. Furthermore, the three days are a positive contribution towards the students Preparing for Adulthood sessions and transition from Sutherland House School to their next placement.

Monday 3rd February: – Introductions by Portland College Outdoor Activity leaders and team. In the morning the group went for a walk around Harlow Woods and listened to the Portland staff speak about tree identification, bird sounds and animals found in the woods. In the afternoon the students took part in an orienteering activity in Harlow Woods, using a map to navigate around the wood and find ten markers. The students used their DofE map reading skills in finding all ten markers and completing the activity to a high standard.

Tuesday 4th February: – Students spent the morning on the zip line at Portland College. The activity required students to wear safety equipment including harness, hats, ropes and so on. All the Portland college instructors are fully trained and have a wealth of experience in this unique outdoor setting. The activity requires a head for heights therefore all the students did exceptionally well to participate and successfully conquer any fear of heights. After this they had a game of “Hunted” in the woods in which they used Walkie Talkies to communicate with each other and get back to the climbing wall without being seen. In the afternoon, the students were introduced to Archery. They learnt the skills of safely holding, loading and firing arrows into targets. All the colours of the targets were struck with two students getting several bullseyes in the process!

Monday 10th February: - In the morning session the group were demonstrated how to make and bake bread on an open fire. The students chose some sticks that were whittled by a NCS team leader and made the bread in the classroom. The students applied an herb and chocolate mixture and weaved it around the stick. All the students made the bread, enjoyed baking it on the fire and ate both flavours when cooked. In the afternoon the group were shown around the campus and the different buildings at the college, visiting all the main departments. Finally, they participated in a team building exercise, challenge and puzzle that pitted students Vs teachers. It was a fantastic way to complete their NCS and Portland College were full of praise and extremely positive about the three students. They have all been invited back in the future for team building days and new challenges!

Massive congratulations to the three students from Key Stage 4, who are the eighth group of students to successfully graduate from Sutherland House School with a 100% attendance record and the NCS award. This academic year eight students have successfully completed their NCS award at Portland College. The NCS award is a fantastic addition to any CV or resume and is recognised nationally as an endorsement of hard work, resilience, and community action.

A person mixing dough in a bowl

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**Music Hub**

Over the past term, some students have been receiving structured lessons to diligently practicing the violin, keyboard and explore a wide range of musical styles. Students also have engaged in activities and exercises that help them to understand and identify different pitches, volumes and paces, to enhance their overall musical ear. This exploration of music is integral to developing a deep-seated understanding of music theory. These Music Hub Sessions aim to inspire a passion for music and help students develop their musical abilities. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to grow, not only as a musician, but also as a creative thinker. These sessions are part of our commitment to provide enriching musical experiences and foster a love for music in our pupils. We believe that learning to play an instrument can have a positive impact on their overall development, boosting their confidence and enhancing their cognitive skills. The progress they have made has been delightful to witness, and their enthusiasm is truly inspiring.

 A child and child playing a violin

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**Positive social visit**

Some students participated in a Positive Social session with Dan, where they explored both the benefits and risks of social media. A key highlight was a video demonstrating how easily personal information can be accessed through social media accounts. Students also examined real-life examples of the consequences of posting without careful consideration. Dan emphasised how venting frustrations on gaming platforms can have serious repercussions, potentially affecting future careers and, in some cases, leading to legal trouble. The session also addressed the impact of online bullying and the importance of reporting harmful content to a trusted adult, school staff, or through social media and gaming platform reporting tools. Throughout the session, students participated actively, offering thoughtful insights and engaging positively in discussions with Dan.

A white board with many sticky notes

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**Videogame Museum**

On December 16th, a group of KS3 students visited the National Videogame Museum in Sheffield for an exciting and educational experience. During the visit, they participated in a one-hour workshop focused on the evolution of video game character design, with a particular emphasis on pixel art. Using a program called Piskel on laptops, the students had the opportunity to design and animate their own pixel art characters. To better understand the creative challenges posed by limited pixels and colours, they were encouraged to recreate familiar characters. In addition to the digital activity, the students engaged in a hands-on activity using small cubes to further explore the concept of pixel art.

Following the workshop, the students explored the museum’s collection, which includes over 100 games and various artifacts that highlight the historical and cultural significance of video games. The exhibits provided insight into how video games have shaped both gaming culture and society.

Alys, the workshop facilitator, was particularly impressed by how well the students engaged with the activities and their enthusiasm throughout the session. The entire group thoroughly enjoyed the day, spending quality time together while immersing themselves in the museum's interactive exhibits and games. It was a memorable and enriching experience for everyone involved.

A group of people sitting at tables with laptops

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**Aromatherapy**

This term, some students have been engaging in aromatherapy sessions. These sessions holistically enhance pupil physical and emotional wellbeing. Students can relax and gain a sense of tranquillity. We look forward to continuing these sessions next term. A person and a child sitting in a chair

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A person holding a child's hand

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