



**ST BENET BISCOP  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY**



**Newsletter**  
Winter/Spring  
2023-2024

# Headteacher's WELCOME



**It brings me great pleasure to introduce another biannual round up of life at our school. The autumn term was, as ever, a busy period with lots going on.**

This edition contains a brief roundup of all the activities with which our students were involved. Before we knew it, Christmas was upon us and we were busy delivering our donations to the food bank, celebrating advent with form assemblies and making sure our year eleven and thirteen students are fully prepared as they head into the final few months of their studies. The new term is already under way and we've returned to school well rested and raring to go. It gives me a great sense of personal pride to see how committed our staff and students are at making St Benet Biscop a thriving learning community, with moral, spiritual and academic values at the heart of everything we do. I do hope you enjoy reading what we have been up to since September and hearing some of our plans for what is already proving to be an exciting and fulfilling 2024

**K Shepherd  
Headteacher**

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# A LEVEL MATHS TRIP

On Tuesday the 17th of October, a small group of us from A Level maths headed to Northumbria University for a maths talk that was split across three sessions. The first was on high level statistical work, studying the work of historical statisticians and their discoveries.



Secondly, we looked at the theories behind

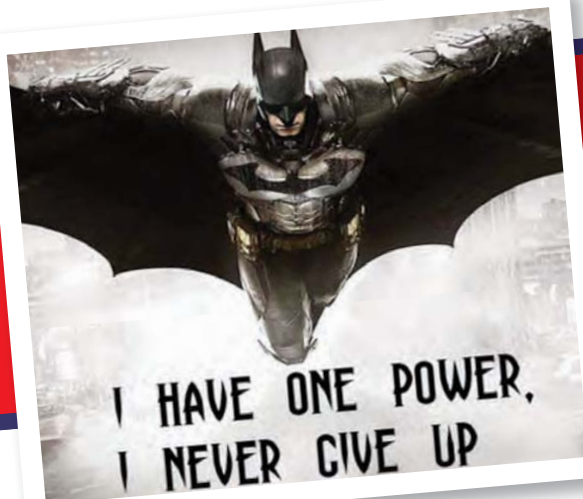
Platonic solids where we made models of shapes that were made with faces that were identical. We studied patterns like if you join the centre of each face together, what shape will fit inside?

Finally, we learned about the ubiquity of 'e' which informed us about interest rates. This brought high level maths into real world knowledge.

Throughout the day we were able to socialise with people from schools all across the north of England and even got a campus tour helping many of us to experience what it would be like to study at Northumbria University in the future.

Considering the next steps in education can feel like a daunting decision but this was a very useful glimpse of wider knowledge that I can incorporate into my A Level studies as well as giving a taste of uni life.

## Superheroes ASSEMBLE!



The term started with welcome assemblies for all year groups. A reading from Isaiah 40:31 was used as the theme, particularly focusing on the line "...they will run and not grow weary...". As the Great North Run was imminent, it meant that parallels could be drawn from long distance running with the stamina required to apply your best efforts to school, day in & day out across the whole year.

Everybody has special God given talents and each of us are totally unique and therefore Superheroes in our own way. Various super powers were discussed during the assemblies, but the powers of Batman were highlighted as the most powerful. The power to 'Never Give Up' and to show resilience is the key to success in both school and life. Although Batman is ordinary in many ways, it is the determination to do the right thing that was emphasised as a super power.

All students were set the challenge to do right

thing and to show respect and integrity in their dealings with all members of our community.





# BEST OF BENET'S

## *Bring Bells and Baubles to Barchester*



Thirty-five students, along with the performing arts staff, were invited to Barchester Care home in Bedlington to carol sing for their residents on Monday 18th December. The students were fantastic and it was lovely to see the residents joining in and singing along with the students. This was a fantastic opportunity to give something back to our local community and it really lifted the spirits of those residents who saw our young people perform.

*In the words of the manger, Tina...*

*"Just wanted to thank you again for such a fantastic performance from all your wonderful students and teachers. Our residents thoroughly enjoyed your enthusiasm and infectious love of music! It was a truly pleasurable, emotional and beautiful performance. I thank you for bringing so many of our residents back to life through song."*





## CINDERELLA TRIP TO NORTHERN STAGE

We took 240 students to see Cinderella at Northern Stage in Newcastle on Wednesday 6th December. These students were mainly year seven but they were joined by the A level drama group.

The show was a modern take on the traditional fairy tale and included lots of audience interaction; at one point, Mrs Ormsby was even interviewed by the Prince! The students were impeccably well behaved and joined in at every opportunity, including throwing 'snowballs' onto the stage as part of one of the scenes.

A great opportunity to see how traditional tales can be given a new lease of life through innovative direction and use of music.



**Medicine is a career that I have always considered as a possibility after school, but information around the course is often vague and confusing to navigate. However, this week, I attended a Medicine Experience Day at Newcastle University where we discussed entry requirements and alternate routes into medicine.**

This was extremely helpful as it set targets, and exposed us to the style of UCAT questions, making it a little less daunting.

My favourite part of the day was the clinical skills section where we mixed with other schools and second year medical students, learning the theory behind medicine and applying it to scenarios. For example, the theoretical side of blood pressure, and also why it is so important as a starting point from which to diagnose what's wrong with a patient. We also learned about how lifestyle is also an important factor. Ultimately, we got to take each others' blood pressure using an old fashioned cuff and also with a new one so we could see the difference and how much better and easier the new technology was.

This was an opportunity to get a feel for university life and ask people, who were recently in a similar position, relevant questions.

## Amazing Apprenticeships

### AMAZING APPRENTICESHIPS WORKSHOP

**Amazing Apprenticeships are an organisation funded by the government who work with schools, colleges and employers to tackle misconceptions and promote the benefits of apprenticeships and technical education.**

Year eleven students all attended a workshop in which they were introduced to many different types of apprenticeships available in the UK. Did you know that you can now do an apprenticeship in aerospace engineering, bespoke tailoring, cyber intrusion analysis, digital journalism, equine grooming, food technology, fashion studio management, public relations, nuclear science or even video game quality assurance?

Donna and Jodene from Amazing Apprenticeships did a great job on changing students' perceptions of apprenticeships. If you'd like to find out more, you can visit their website at

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com>



# OLD OAK

On Monday 2nd October, thirty sixth form media students took part in a visit to the Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle.

As part of the trip, students were given a tour of this unique building by Heritage Guides. As the only newsreel cinema still operating in the UK, students were given the opportunity to view some original newsreel footage from the 1950s. In the afternoon, students watched 'The Old Oak' film that had recently held its premiere at the Tyneside. The film is directed by Ken Loach, whose work features in the A- level syllabus, making this a really valuable academic experience. It was great for the students to follow in the footsteps of the cast and crew and connect their academic studies up to some local heritage.



## CHAPLAINCY CLUBS

On Monday and Friday lunch times, we have a flourishing Chaplaincy club, with a group of committed year 8 and year 11 students. On Tuesday and Friday lunchtimes, we have over sixty year seven students that attend across both days, and on Wednesday lunchtime we have about twenty year nine pupils. The aim of this club is to help to build the Kingdom of God on Earth. The club is in place to encourage young people to serve others in school and their local parish, and to take that service into their wider community. These students also take pride in raising awareness in school about charities close to our heart, as well as planning lots of exciting fundraisers for those charities.

## STEM Roadshow

Earlier this year we welcomed the UK's longest running STEM roadshow into the school. The roadshow is run by BAE systems, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy who employ over 50,000 engineers across the UK and are committed to inspiring the next generation with activities that encourage and support a highly skilled workforce of the future.

Year seven and year eight students were treated to a highly interactive experience which has inspired them about their lessons in school and life outside of school. The show took students on a journey from the depths of the ocean to the far reaches of outer space, giving students an understanding of our place in the solar system and how engineering will allow us to explore more of these uncharted areas and the science and technology needed to survive in these extreme environments. The theatre show culminated in a five metre diameter inflatable model of the Sun with students guesstimating the number of marbles (a scale representation of the Earth) that could fit inside the Sun.

## SCHOOL MASS

This term we have been inviting the local clergy into school to celebrate mass for our year seven form classes in the chapel. This has been a wonderful opportunity for our students to spend time with God and receive his Grace through the Body and Blood of Christ. In time we hope to invite parents/guardians and parishioners to mass as well.





# REMEMBRANCE DAY



**In the days leading up to Remembrance Day, all students at St Benet Biscop spent time with their tutor group, where they created paper poppies and wrote beautiful prayers for all those impacted by war. These poppies were used to create wreaths that were placed on nearly every door in school. The colour red flowed up and down every corridor, helping us remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice.**

On the 10th of November a remembrance service was held in the school chapel, where a representative from every form respectfully placed a prayer poppy on the tree. This tree was flooded with red poppies and prayers for the fallen. Michael Elliot, a Year 11 student, played the last post for our service.

The rest of the school watched a virtual reflection about the importance of Remembrance Day, and the selfless sacrifices that were made during WWI and WW2. The assembly also included a powerful recording of Michael Elliot playing the last post. This then led into a two-minute silence that fell across the school at 11am, to honour and remember those who fought for us.





# MATHSPICNIC



Advanced Mathematics  
Support Programme®

**On Wednesday the 29th of November, 64 year nine students took part in a 'Maths Picnic' run by the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme.**

The Maths Picnic was a fun competition consisting of sixteen teams of four. Students discussed maths and used problem solving methodology to work cooperatively to solve the challenges in the allotted time. The challenges included puzzles with dominos, dice and logic squares.

All students who took part were a credit to the school, with the organiser of the competition commenting on their engagement, thinking skills and behaviour.

The winning team won a prize and will be awarded a certificate in recognition of their achievement.

Well done to Josie Forster, Lexie Hardy, Kiera Richardson and Grace Skinner for winning the competition!

## ***Grace Thompson***

"The questions we answered were a bit more logical and required a lot of deep thinking, not just using a formula to get an answer. It was a fun, brain racking experience. It could be frustrating, however the relief of figuring out a hard question out was extremely gratifying."

## ***Eleanor Kew***

"The maths picnic was fun. The equations we had to solve and the questions we had to do were complicated so we hard to really think about how to complete them. We persevered and got everything done. Overall I really enjoyed it"

## ***Aiden Bolton***

"The maths picnic was fun, especially with friends, it was very competitive and exciting. My favourite parts were the questions about the numbered dice and the block puzzles."

## ***Franciszek Tyrlik***

"The Maths picnic had very challenging questions, which was good for using your brain in a more creative way."



# Full STEM Ahead!



**Determined to show our girls the many opportunities they can take if they follow a STEM career, St Benet Biscop have given 12 year 10 girls the opportunity to be involved in a Girls Get Set programme put together by Baker Hughes, PII Pipeline Solution. This**

**company is world-wide, working with technology, and oil and gas, to move energy forward into the future by designing, manufacturing and servicing transformative technologies.**

The Cramlington branch, which the girls visited, work mainly on “PIGs” (Pipeline Inspection Gauge), who survey gas lines by formulating information which the analysts then create reports for major companies, providing them with data on the state of their pipelines and if they need repairs. This company requires the use of multiple STEM roles in order to achieve their goals, ranging from computer coding, communication officers, sales teams with mathematic understandings and engineers.

The Girls Get Set programme allows the girls to go around this company’s building, learning all about the different roles and are provided with opportunities to give some of the roles a go. When we arrived on site the students were split up into small groups and divided out among 3 different workshops. These activities consisted of; a physics demonstration - looking at how they use physics calculations to make sure the P.I.G can be used in the correct pipelines. A 3D printing session, showing how these printers have helped to advance technology even further – they were even allowed to print off their own little objects, which the students loved! Then they were shown around the workshop floor – meeting the engineers who create the P.I.Gs, being able to see

how they inspect the machines, the integrity of them and watched some of them being repaired or built too.

The girls were even given a small challenge by the engineers, could they beat the huge magnets on the P.I.Gs and pull the metallic spanner off? Unfortunately, none won, but the engineer even struggled too!

The students were invited to attend a Q&A session too, allowing them to speak to a few key members of the staff – including site manager and software and mechanical engineers. This gave the girls the chance to ask any questions they had about the STEM roles in this business, how the different roles work and even how they

felt about their jobs. They even discussed career pathways into this type of business, leading into the discussion of the world of engineering – which the girls were particularly interested in. Especially the apprenticeships they offer to all students after they finish their GCSEs.

The girls were so excited for their return visit, which was much more hands on, working with in the construction workshop side-by-side the engineers. They were able to help create and design some of the P.I.Gs, giving them an insight to what an engineering role is really like. As well as the many STEM roles that are out there. A very insightful and successful trip to which some of the girls were excited to pursue further.

## MagneScan™

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# European Youth Olympic Festival



**GABI FREEMAN**

**In the summer, I travelled to Slovenia with Team GB to compete at the European Youth Olympic Festival. As soon as racing started it was exciting. My first race was on the first day of the competition. I was obviously nervous but I didn't have an amazing race and I know I could have performed better.**

I had a 3-day rest until my next individual event. I knew this was my stronger race, so I was looking forward to it. I went into the semi final 7th from my heat, then I swam a relay which was a mixed one so two males and two females were allowed to do it and I got picked. When I stood up to jump into the pool right before my race, I realised I was going to be racing 6 males who were a lot faster than me. We ended up going 1st into the final so I was pleased with how it went overall.

From my individual semi-final, I went into the final 6th out of 8. In the final, I made a little mistake on the start and came out 7th, but I still managed to swim a good time.

I was looking forward to another relay, this time an all female event. In the heat we went into the final 2nd and I managed to get a personal best time from it. Then in the final we came out 3rd which we were all very happy with.

Overall, it was an amazing experience which I will be forever grateful for. Being a part of Team GB is great because we all felt like a team and no matter what the outcome was, everyone supported everyone; this is really what sport is all about.



## ISF U15 Gymnasiade Brazil 2023

**GABI FREEMAN**

**I also went to Brazil with the English Schools Association; this was to compete at the ISF U15 Gymnasiade Brazil 2023. We travelled to Brazil on the 19th of August. I knew most of the team going as I was representing England this time. We were given a training session before it went straight**

**to racing as we had two full days before the first race day.**

On the first day of competition I had my strongest event, in which I swam well but not exactly how I wanted to. I finished 1st in the final. On the second day, I had one of my favourite swims and I didn't do what I wanted, but I did end up winning the event. On the next day, we had an educational day which we went sight seeing, so I was able to see Christ the redeemer and other sites of Brazil.

On the last day of racing, I had won the event as well as getting a personal best time. I was also involved in 2 relays which we won and overall the team came together to support everyone. We had a very strong team, so there were a lot of podiums for a lot of different swimmers which was really exciting. The English association also put together a little competition for parents and supporters at home and some of our school teachers were able to take part. I was very happy with my achievements over the summer. I was able to come home with five golds and the top female award from the English Swimming Association.







## Year 7

# My Journey So Far

**Coming to secondary school can seem like a challenging step. Year seven student Isaac Redpath gives his verdict on the year so far.**

**Six years of primary school was only an appetizer to what I would experience in St Benet's. I have double the amount of PE lessons, many more science experiments and loads of extra curricular activities.**

Going on a school trip to the theatre has been one of the highlights of my time so far at St Benet's. We went to Newcastle to see a performance of Cinderella at Northern Stage. It was a funny and entertaining show and also linked into our English studies with its use of satire. I'm looking forward to going on plenty more trips as I move up in the school.

I also loved the after-school basketball training sessions with Mrs. Flynn. We had the chance to represent the school in a basketball competition where I, as one of the team captains, helped the year sevens slam dunk our way to a well-earned victory.

I thought, after being in primary school for so long, going to high school was going to be a difficult task to overcome: new lessons, new teachers and new people to meet along the way. However, after the first few days, it was a breeze. School days are so much better when they are structured; I love having a timetable so I can look forward to my favourite lessons.

Overall, year seven so far has been challenging but, more than anything, fun and rewarding. I wonder what awaits me in the coming years.



# COSTA RICA

## July-August 2024

Next summer, an intrepid group of ten students will be visiting Costa Rica. In 2018 I took a group to Ecuador and the students and staff had an amazing, exhilarating albeit exhausting time. We then were due to travel to Cambodia in 2020 but due to Covid we couldn't travel. So, this time it is Costa Rica. Who knows where we will go in future years?



We are travelling with Camps International and will do voluntary work in at least three villages. The students will also have the opportunity to do a scuba diving course for a few days.

We will be staying in camps in the beautiful and biodiverse remote rainforest of Costa Rica where we will work alongside conservationists to protect the natural environment and discover an array of colourful marine life. We will be working alongside local people, and learning about innovative and sustainable solutions to environmental issues and getting involved in inspiring projects to support the environment, wildlife and community. We are really looking forward to seeing the local wildlife, especially the monkeys, toucans and, hopefully, turtles.

The expedition will be challenging and is designed to push students (and teachers) outside of their comfort zone; by being away from home, staying in an unfamiliar environment, experiencing different foods, different types of people and even the climate can be challenging. As well as this, we will undertake activities which we have never done before which can be physically and emotionally demanding.

Though Costa Rica accounts for only 0.03% of the earth's surface, it holds 6% of the world's biodiversity – however, it's under threat from human activity. Our work here will help support conservation efforts such as reforestation, beehive construction and lime-washing trees, as well as projects to encourage eco-tourism in the area. We may also take part in jaguar monitoring and work in the endemic palm nursery for ecosystem regeneration.

The camps are the heart of the expeditions and are built and staffed by locals in the traditional style. We will be staying in a range of camps and sleeping in anything from tents to hammocks or bunkbeds.

All the students have fundraised in many ways to pay for their trip. However, jointly we are fundraising to pay for travel to and from Heathrow.

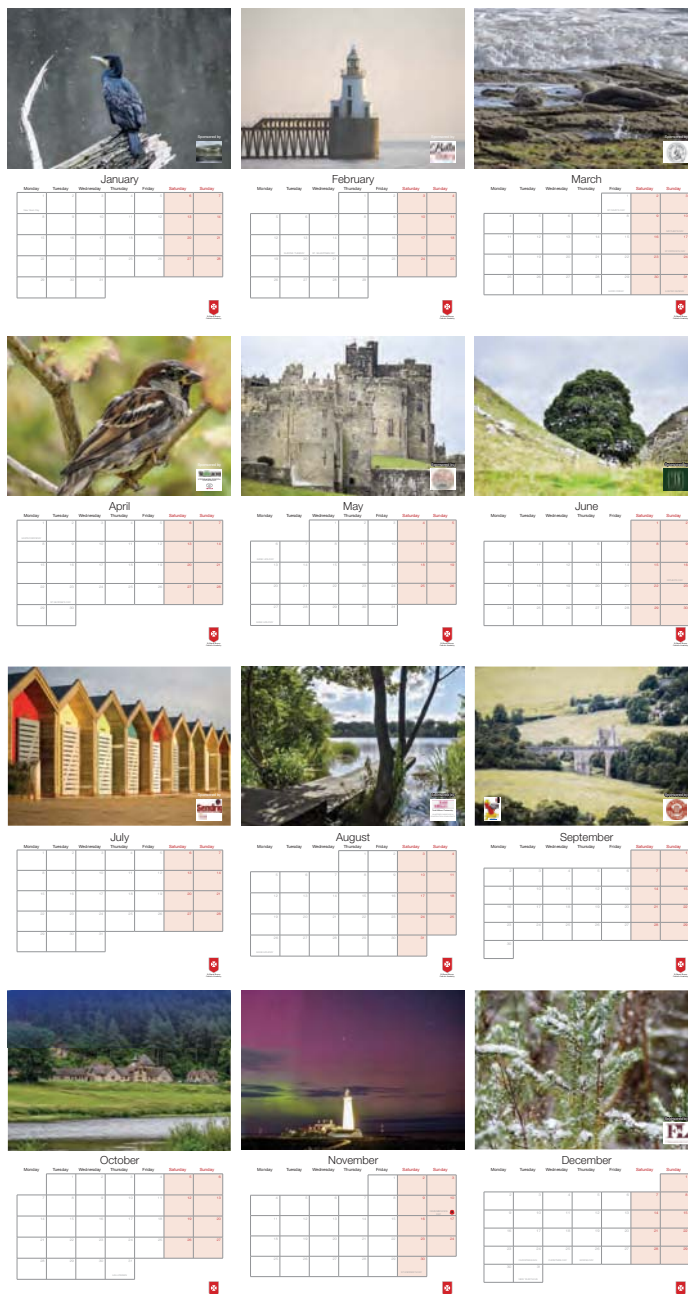
*We have produced a calendar to sell, all of the photos being taken by NorthEast Camera, a business set up by Noah in Year 13. Also, most of the pages have been very kindly sponsored by local businesses.*

If you would like to support us by buying a calendar there are two ways that they can be purchased.

1. Pay £10 in the school Ipay account and your calendar(s) will be available for your son/daughter to collect from student reception
2. Ask your son/daughter to bring £10 cash to student reception and they will be given a calendar.

*We will also be selling cakes at the school show again in the spring.*

**Mrs Clear Hill**



# YEAR 7 MEET THE TUTOR

We recently had our annual 'Meet the Tutor' event to enable parents, carers and teachers to come together to discuss how our year seven students had settled in. The focus was on what is going well, and it was an opportunity to share any concerns and to ask questions. We received very positive feedback; parents and carers appreciated the kind, constructive comments from teachers who obviously knew their children well and held them in high regard.

We were delighted with the response and the take-up of appointments. Events such as 'Meet the Tutor' are an important part of school life, enabling home and school to come together to discuss the students in our care and to foster good relationships.

## SIXTH FORM Peer Readers

There are many benefits of reading and here at St Benet Biscop we aim to promote a love of reading in many ways. This term, we have launched the sixth form peer reading programme. Students from year 12 and 13 volunteer their time to support reading with year 7 students during registration.

Ninety students in total are taking part and they meet weekly to read together. The sixth formers have been trained in how to support reading and during these sessions the younger students read their chosen fiction book and get help with decoding difficult words, discussing the plot of the story and have a chance to form a friendship.





# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING at SBB

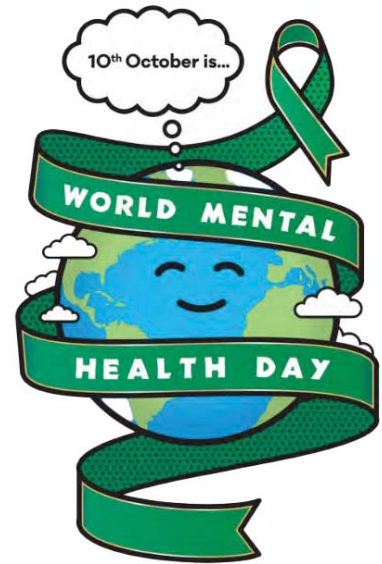
To celebrate World Mental Health Day on the 10th October we considered how we can best be resilient and look after our mental health. During Core Studies, we looked at ways to build up a mental health and well being toolkit. Students used resources from the Samaritans to consider how they can build up their resilience and why this is important. With their form tutors they discussed which stressful situations they might find themselves in and what would be the best coping mechanism they could use to deal with the situation.

The Mercians visited school in November to talk to Key Stage four students about mental health. The Mercians are a group of Midlands-born indie rockers who are bringing back the raw, unfiltered sound that the region is known for. They have already sold out the O2 Leicester on their first headline tour date, have over half a million streams on Spotify and have been number 1 in the Alt Charts.

The band have had their own issues with mental health and shared these experiences, spreading awareness and also talking about treating each other fairly and respecting everyone around us for our differences, whether that be our gender, race or sexuality. Students liked that there was a group of relatable men on stage sharing their experiences - good role models! They all said they were brilliant musicians, and it was an exciting way to start off their week.

The performance and talk were excellent. Students were asked to consider:

- The link mental health has to self esteem and where they can find support if they are struggling.
- The importance of treating each other fairly.
- Why diversity should be celebrated, what to do if you're being discriminated against and why it is wrong to discriminate against other people.
- Gender sexism, stereotypes, the risks of this behaviour, and the importance of respect and treating everyone fairly.



## KEY STAGE THREE ART HOMEWORK

Year Seven William Dixon and Olivia Kew

As part of their botanical art and illustration study, year seven did an observational study of a flower. Fantastic use of tone and colour!



# LET'S GET READY TO RRRRRRRUMMMBLE (at St Benet's)



When you think of wrestling, what do you imagine? Perhaps it's giant men in masks, with comic book muscles, hitting each other with furniture whilst an over-excited commentator screams over a baying crowd, somewhere in America.

One of our students, a young woman from Northumberland, is performing powerslams on that outdated stereotype. Year 12 student, Anya Hex (not her real name), is a talented and experienced wrestler, taking part in matches across the UK. With her eerie demeanor, Hex both breaks boundaries and beats her opponents (most of the time). Dressed head to toe in black, with her face painted, Hex challenges the typical expectations of the sport. She has achieved many feats within her company, such as being the first all female triple threat, first inter-gender match and first female tag-team.

Recently, she took part in a match against two American wrestlers, who travelled here from Texas in order to fight. Unfortunately for her, she was unable to win this match, despite putting up a very good fight. In the upcoming year, she will be competing against many other people, across the UK and internationally. The Undertaker – watch your back!

## KEY STAGE THREE ART HOMEWORK

Year Eight students Neve Graham and Ella Shields

used photographs as inspiration to try and capture light and shade using a tonal pencil. Superb effort!





# YEAR 7 RETREAT DAY

On the last day of the October half term, we decided to give our year seven students the opportunity to step back from every day school life, and have the chance to bond with their form class, while reflecting on their faith.



The retreat theme was guided by the Gospel account of the risen Jesus meeting the disciples on the "Road to Emmaus". We explored how Jesus meets us in the midst of our lives and desires to walk and talk alongside us. We might sometimes struggle to see Christ alive in our world, but we can recognise God's love through the love of others, through creation, through stories of people around the

world and through prayer. Jesus sees us for all that we are and loves us completely. He has equipped us with gifts and talents and sends us to share hope, light and love in our communities and with all we meet.

There were workshops throughout the day that helped delve deeper into the theme of the retreat in fun and exciting ways. There were opportunities

for arts and crafts, music, quizzes, sports, team building and reflection time.

This was a really fun day, but an important one too as our year seven students were adjusting to their new school. It was a day that helped them to consider their beliefs, but also to forge new friendships and it allowed them the opportunity to get to know their new teachers.





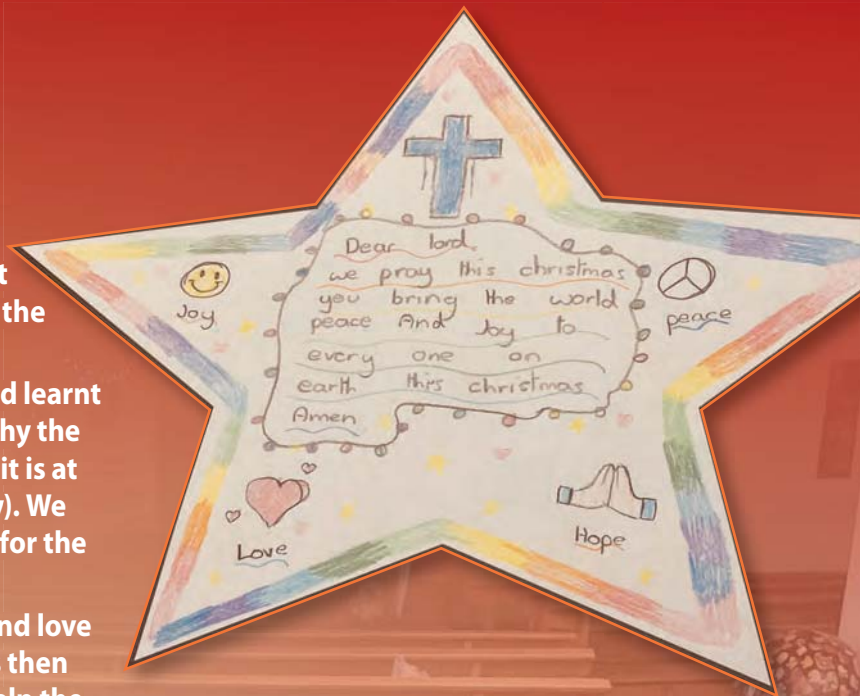
# YEAR 7 RE

In our RE lessons we have been learning about the community and part of this was to look at the features of the church.

In one of our lessons, we visited the chapel and learnt lots of new things. For example, we learned why the chapel is in the middle of the school (because it is at the heart of everything we do as a community). We also learnt about advent and the preparation for the birth of Jesus.

We explored the themes of hope, peace, joy and love and learnt about the advent wreath. Our class then wrote prayers to those who might need our help the most at this time of year.

*Marcus Johnstone (Year 7)*







# BEAMISH

## THE LIVING MUSEUM OF THE NORTH

**After several months studying Dickens and learning about Victorian England, a winter trip to Beamish was the ideal opportunity to develop students' understanding of life in industrial Britain. Sixty year ten students took the short journey to Durham and the long voyage into Christmas past.**

Lukas, in year ten, gives his account of the day.

On arrival, we were all tasked to go knocking on the doors of the Beamish town houses and shops, seeking money to increase the quality of life for the poor and get them out of the workhouses. My group and I put ourselves in the shoes of the "portly gentlemen" from A Christmas Carol and set off on our quest to collect some shiny shillings from the townspeople.







Firstly, we visited the drapery. It was a struggle but the draper (a Victorian clothes and fabric seller), reluctantly gave us two measly pennies. The chemist, on the other hand, was extremely charitable and it didn't take much to coax some currency out of him. Happily, he handed over a shilling and sixpence.

With high spirits, we moved on to the solicitor's house. We had just been told that this man had a lot of money and we had high expectations. Stepping into his office, we presented our cause and told him about the hunger and devastation in the workhouses. Every point we made, he countered with increasingly heartless arguments, quoting Scrooge, "Are there no workhouses?". It really put into perspective the Malthusian ideology held by many rich men back under Queen Victoria's reign that we have been studying in class. After a long-fought battle, we left empty handed and disappointed. The spirit of Ebenezer Scrooge lives on in County Durham!





The last stop was the bank. With the mood rudely dampened by Scrooge's successor, we would have been happy with anything. Much like the chemist however, he was very charitable and enjoyed boasting of his philanthropic behaviour. We stated our arguments and walked away with another three shillings!

After just an hour, we could only begin to imagine the struggles of those campaigning for the better conditions for the poor at Christmas time. Already tired, we went searching for some much-needed food. I set my eyes on the bakery. Its walls were lined with all sorts of delicacies: cakes, biscuits, pastries, like the Ghost of Christmas Present's throne. I decided to purchase a freshly baked sausage roll and a gingerbread, both were delightful.

Overall, we had a great day and got a real sense of Dickens' world as well taking part in a fun and well organised activity.





# Skiing Lessons... In Sunderland?

Ahead of our trips to Davos in February, when eighty students across years ten to thirteen will be hitting the Swiss Alps, we've all been learning the basics at the dry slope in Silksworth. So far the lessons have largely been a great success. We've had a couple of knocks here and there (dry slopes are horrible to ski on, so we keep reassuring the students it's going to be much more fun on proper snow next year) but to their absolute credit, every student who has picked up an injury has dusted themselves off and got back on with it. The difference this will make to their enjoyment in Davos is immense as it means rather than learning the basics for the first few days out there, once they've got the feeling of snow under their skis they'll be away and carving up the whole resort.

From lesson one, where students would slide slowly about six metres down a gentle slope, wobble slightly, then cross their skis and fall over, we've reached the point by lesson four that some of the students are coming down the entirety of the "big slope", rather than just the nursery slope and the confidence that this has given them before the trip is amazing.

One student (who has asked to remain nameless) asked me last week, "are the slopes in Davos much bigger than Silksworth?" "How much bigger do you think they are?" "Maybe three times bigger?" "Try three hundred times bigger..." cue a dropped jaw and a realisation of just how awesome our trip in February will be. Sam, a year twelve student, said "I've really enjoyed it, I think I'll go again before we go to Davos so I can hone my skills. It's made me even more excited about going to Davos next year."



## OPEN EVENING FOR PROSPECTIVE YEAR 7

**Our annual open evening for prospective students was held on September 26th. This was a fabulous evening allowing families to see what our school has to offer. The buzz in the hall at the start of the evening was lovely to witness, with the primary school students excited to see what the 'Big' school is all about.**

The first part of the evening involved a short speech from Mr Shepherd, to outline the values and vision of our school. He was then eclipsed by an address given by Lilly Pegg from Year 8. She spoke eloquently about her experience of our school and also gave the adults in the audience her top tips about supporting their child to successfully make the move from Primary to Secondary school.

It was then off to visit the various sessions given by subject areas. A keen set of student guides masterfully delivered families to departments where they could speak to teachers and, more importantly, meet our current students.

It was especially powerful for the families to see our students in action and we received countless messages, congratulating our students on their mature, honest and helpful nature. They truly were impressive to see and, as ever, are the best ambassadors we could wish for.





# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

## AT ST BENET BISCOP CATHOLIC ACADEMY

By Zoe Robson

**Women's football has increased in popularity and now plays a big part in society, especially in St Benet Biscop. When I first joined in year 7, I trained every week with the school team and played every Mondays- tournaments and games. As the years went on, I took it upon myself to plan training sessions and suggest ideas to the school coach.**



In year 10, I helped coach the team every week and continued to participate with the school games. The leadership opportunities given to me by the sport teachers were incredible and they also guided me when it came to planning the training. They also helped me gain the confidence to lead training sessions which not only improved the players but also me personally too.

For the past two years I have been the girls football team's coach and have enjoyed every minute of it. It is amazing for the girls to have this opportunity at school as it builds their skills and develops them as players and more importantly, people. It is so important that young women are not treated any differently to men in sports because women's football is becoming a significant part in everyone's lives, so the school's team shows the girls that they are no different to boys and should be applauded just as much.



## A LITTLE BIT **ABOUT OUR TEAM!**

**Since September, the girls under 14's team and under 16's team have played many games and won a fair few. This is so inspiring for younger girls as they need to see that football for women is so important as it has been overlooked for so long, until recently**

One member of the girls under 14's team, Evie Hall feels that "the most important thing about school football is teamwork but also spending time with my friends". Evie is hardworking and very enthusiastic to do well in her sports, she attends football every week and plays all games. She also plays for three other teams- East Northumberland County, Newcastle Benfield and Bedlington United. Over the last two years, I have watched Evie's skills improve massively and her ability to lead a team, on and off the field has increased significantly. Many other players also play for teams outside of school, including Sunderland ETC, Cramlington United and Cramlington Town, plus many more fantastic teams! Inspired by England's Lionesses, and Northumberland's own Lucy Bronze, women's football is certainly roaring to victory.



# MYSTERY SOLVED!



Year 9 have delved into a Stevenson classic – 'Jekyll and Hyde'. Throughout the autumn term, fantastic work has been produced exploring and unravelling the detective fiction, and solving clues to who the ominous Mr Hyde is. Brilliantly presented work has been a credit to Y9, alongside their narrative mapping skills. Here is a small selection of the skilful classwork produced, in line with our KS3 English curriculum.

1999  
Chapter analysis

Starts  
- 'robustly cramped'

Task

1. Attention ✓
2. Attribution ✓
3. Comparison ✓
4. Subtle ✓
5. Quoted ✓
6. Verbs ✓

Character

Mr Utterson - taking on the role of detective  
Mr Jekyll - the role of the villain  
Mr Hyde - the role of the villain (or Jekyll's darker side)

People become interested in other people lives, because creates a sense of mystery

will create a sense of mystery and suspense because he is fearful might die and has his life on the line

Utterson meets Mr Hyde for the first time. He thinks he looks deformed, Mr Utterson goes back after Mr Hyde left.

Imagery  
- simile  
- metaphor

adjective  
- superlative  
- comparative

noun  
- proper noun

verb  
- action  
- linking

adverb  
- manner  
- frequency

Prepositional phrase  
- relative clause

Relative clause

adverb  
- manner  
- frequency

990 23  
Chapter 10

Utterson and Enfield asked Jekyll to go on a walk. He says that a mystery because he is locked inside his house, but from 2000 and 1900.

Utterson  
- falling action  
- resolution

Utterson's important to the novel, because Hyde and Jekyll die.

How can we identify what the text is about? We can use the text to identify the main idea.

What techniques are being used? Includes an example of a simile 'He is as pale as a ghost'.

How does this quotation link to the other chapters? We can see the link to the other chapters.

1999  
Chapter 10

What should I do? I felt a sudden spark shoot down my chest. I got rid of him. My mind was foggy, yet my mind was clear. I will take him, say! He is a vile swindling down a tree.

Typical social customs and values of the 19th century were quite different to ours now, especially those attitudes towards women, social class, age, education and religion.

19th century language is usually much more verbose, less-fruited than the text is usually very wordy and can seem overly-complicated for modern readers. The vocabulary used to be more complex too, used more polysyllabic words in their writing (as in words with more than one syllable) and Latin root words, as in words based on...

The Gothic  
- scary monster  
- Antagonist  
- Mystery

Gothic and Crime Fiction  
- Excluded by new technology

London

Porter and Blake's Working Class  
- Excluded by new technology

Power and Politics  
- Excluded by new technology





# YEAR 10 Maths Centre for Life

**Year 10 students had the amazing opportunity to visit the Centre for Life in Newcastle for a day in November.**

The day was filled with enrichment workshops to inspire students to take their mathematical studies further. It included sessions on complex numbers, a question of climate change and even card tricks. The activities combined mathematical, communication and teamwork skills and offered students another way to express and develop their enjoyment of mathematics. They even completed some science experiments. During lunch they had the opportunity to explore the Centre for Life and all it has to offer. Hopefully, more students will have this opportunity in the future as the day was enjoyed by all the students that went.

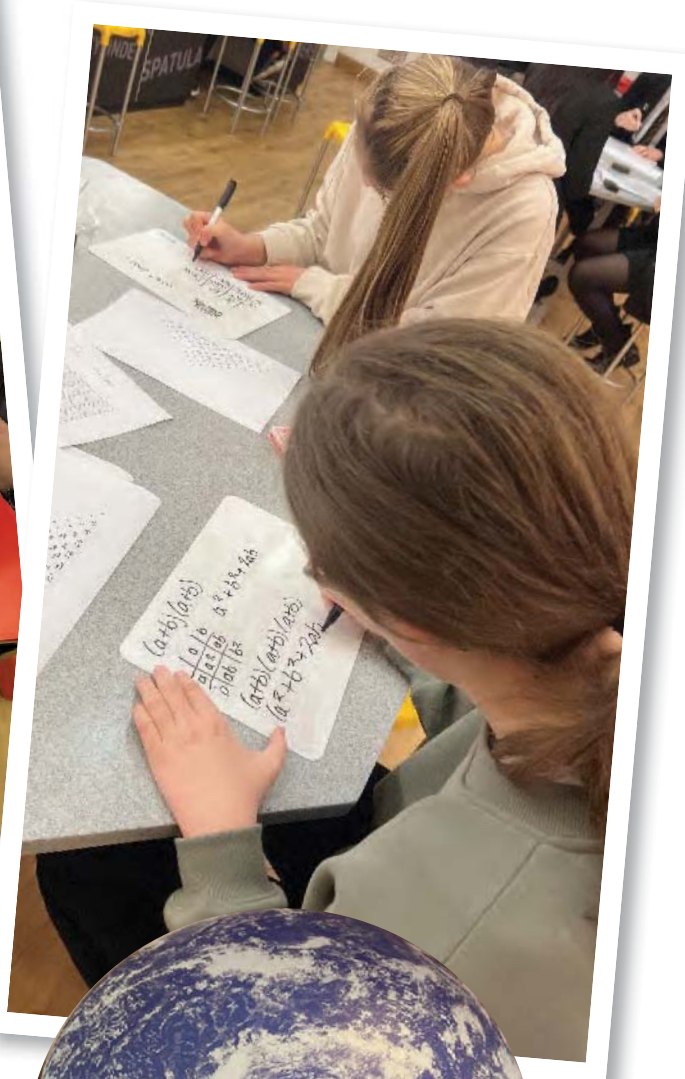
*"It was a very interesting learners experience and very enjoyable. It was immersive, interactive and had intriguing activities"*  
James Kain

*"I enjoyed the trip overall and in particular the magic workshop because we were able to interact with the tricks and got a deck of cards to practice for ourselves"* Reuben Yarrow

*"I really enjoyed going to the Centre for Life, it was educational and I learnt about Maths outside of the classroom and about the climate"* Paige Hetherington







$i \times i = -1$   
 Imaginary numbers.  
 decoding signals  
 make radar useful for aircraft control  
 predict the real world of  $i$

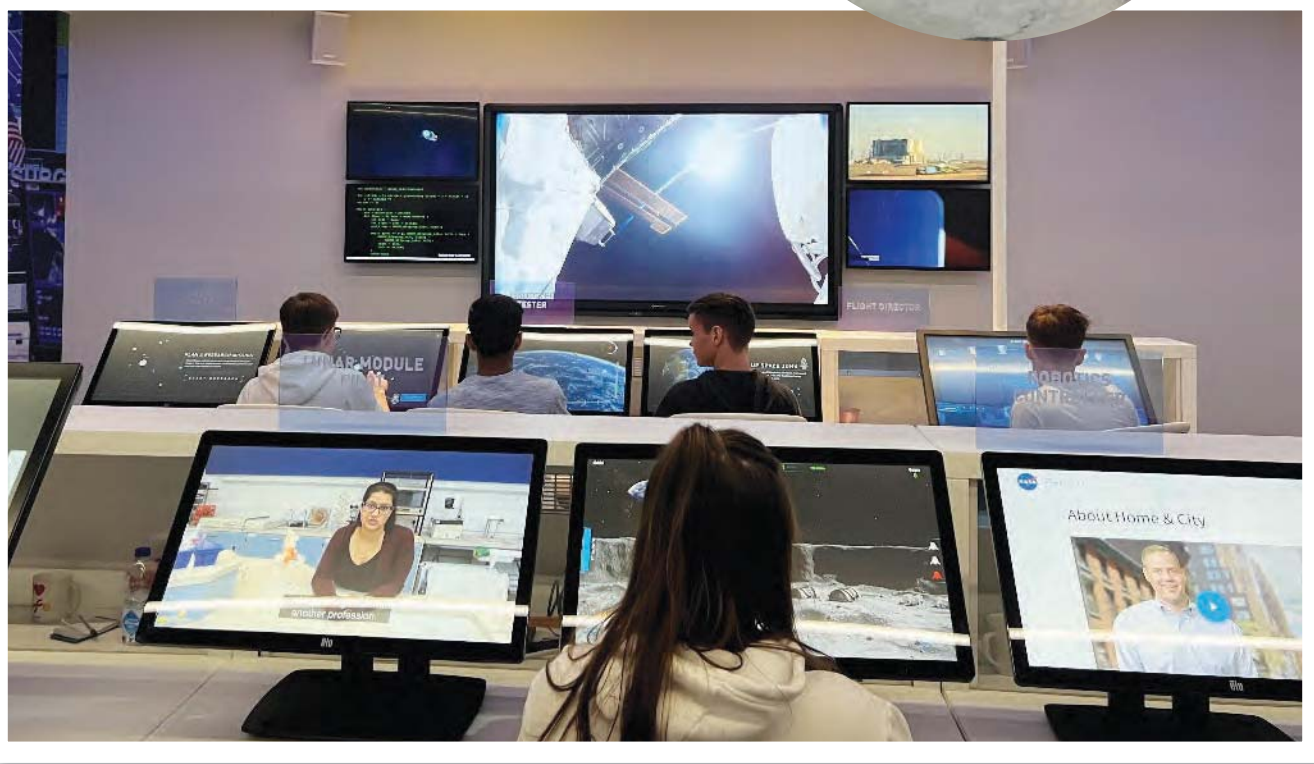
$i^2 = -1$	$i^3 = -i$	$i^4 = 1$
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$(4+2i)(3+4i)$   
 $12 + 16i + 6i + 8i^2$   
 $= 12 + 22i - 8$   
 $= 22i + 4$

$\sqrt{-6} = \sqrt{6} \times \sqrt{-1}$   
 $= 4+i$   
 $= 4i$

$9+7i$	$21+14i+9i+6i^2$
$2+6i$	$15+23i$
$10+5i$	$35+15i-14i-6i^2$
$2-8i$	$41+i$
$11+2i$	$3-5i-6i+15i^2$
$+2i$	$18-11i$
	$14-4i-6i+18i^2$
	$-4-42i$

$(3+2i)(7+3i)$   
 $(7-3i)(7+3i)$   
 $21+9i+14i+6i^2$   
 $15+23i$   
 $\frac{58}{-}$





# CRIME WRITING COMPETITION

A hooded figure in a dark jacket is seated at a laptop, positioned on a dark, textured surface. The figure is centered in the frame, with their face obscured by the hood. Above them, a bright light source, possibly a window or a light fixture, casts a strong glow, creating a dramatic silhouette effect. The background consists of dark, jagged rock formations, suggesting a cave or a hidden location. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and intense.

Over the last half-term, many of our young writers have had the opportunity to flex their creative muscles through taking part in our Crime Writing competition. The creative prompt provided for the competition was 'An Accidental Criminal', with four tickets to the 'Bay Tales Live' Crime Writing festival in March as a prize. The judges were so impressed with the standard of entries submitted, meaning that selecting four winners was a huge challenge. Nevertheless, the judges were able to come an eventual decision that the winning entries were written by Ronya Lane, Sophie Bramley, Phoebe Fletcher and Cheyenne Saculingan. Below, you can read excerpts from each winning narrative. Enjoy!





**Phoebe Fletcher 11H**

## **An accidental criminal**

I've never liked locked doors, they've always taunted me, it's like; 'Hey look you can't open me.' I just want to be inside, change my clothes and go to bed. Is this my house? It's not like I've just killed someone, but I have. I have and I hate it. I have and I feel the eerie presence of the angry ghost at the palm of my hands. They want to pin me against this locked door and strangle me like I am some beast. But I am a beast, it was an accident, but it turned me in to this thing, this monster, this violent, angry, devastated little boy. My mother always warned me to keep my anger to myself, you never know when you might hurt someone Charlie. But I didn't listen to that woman, my mom. It wasn't even supposed to happen, how was I meant to know doing that would kill her. My wife. I never knew what would happen if I didn't hold my anger in, my mother said I would be like my dad. I don't know what he did but one day he was there the next he was gone. This all was an accident; I can say that happily. Except this was not a happy moment, I have just killed someone.





**Sophie Bramley**

## **The Cabin in the Woods**

It was 1932, a cold and dismal winter night. The ground outside coated in a thick layer of powdered snow, untouched and unstirred by animal nor man. It was a harsh season on all species, and every animal was tucked into their burrows and nests, meanwhile a dimly lit log cabin sat amidst a small but spacious clearing. Inside said cabin, was a group of 4 men, it was supposed to be 6 but two were out checking a nearby wooded area. The first of them all was a man named Garry, the leader of the group, short and stout, yet a tough 43-year-old veteran. The second and third were two twins, by the name of Jerry and Kirk, both were aged 36. They were born in a nearby mining town, and both shared the same ginger hair and brown eyes - almost identical to each other. The fourth was a man by the name of Clark, a 31-year-old wildlife specialist and part time artist who decided to tag along, for education's sake. Finally, the pair outside were Lars and Halverson, on an exchange trip from Norway. They were on a hunting trip, a part time job they took up to help pay for taxes and such. Usually, they would head out in the morning, take their hunt and leave within the next day, but something didn't seem right this night.

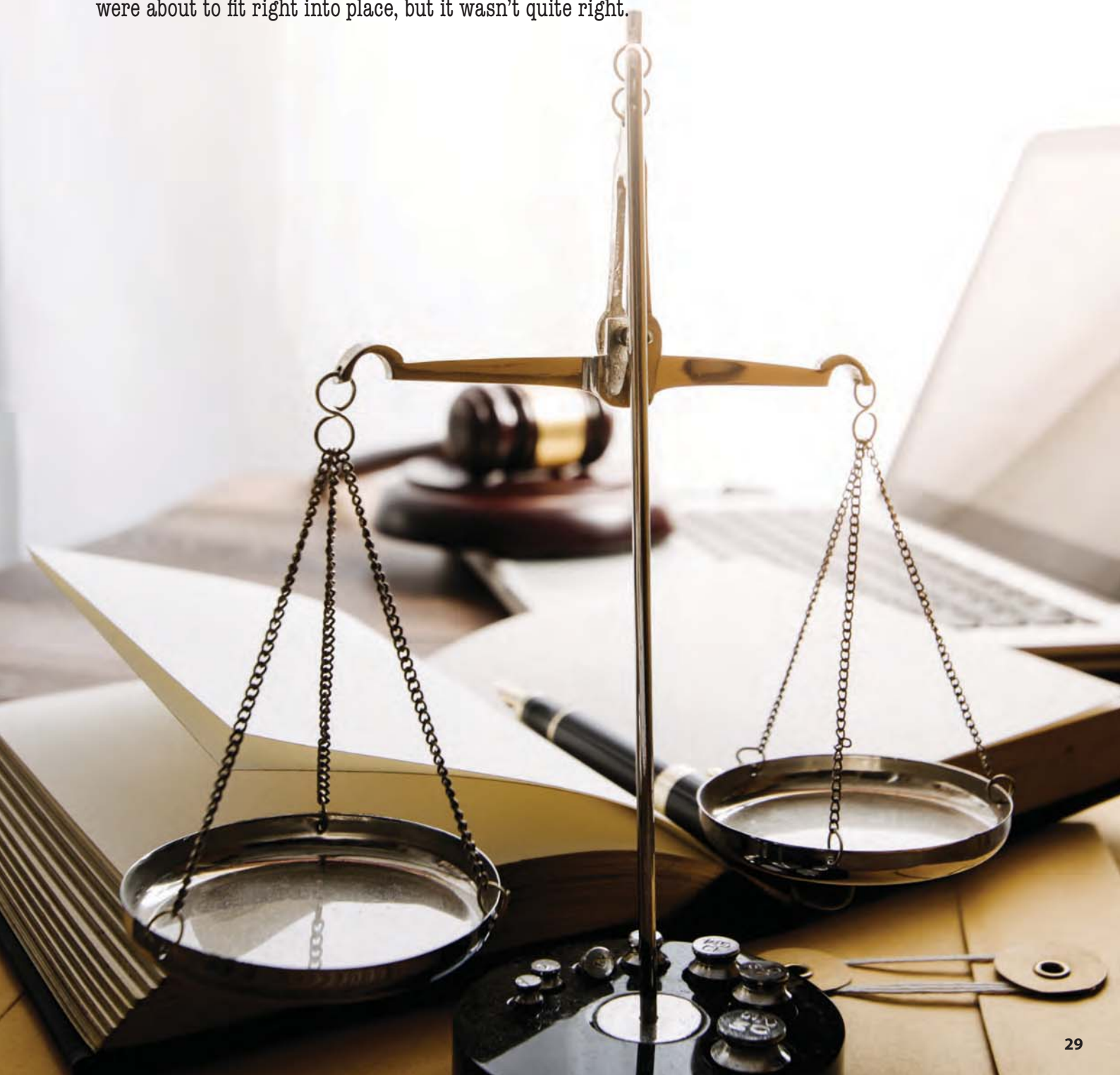


**Cheyenne Saculingan**

## **Stand in the court**

It's not normal for me to be interested in stories, yet this story I found and thought to be a complete nightmare, was truly, most horrifically, true. It was nothing more than damp, torn, pages when found, but it wasn't that which made my mind grind like cogs, it was the continuous words that drifted through my brain after I read the terrors. The name reminded me of a person, a person that I knew only for a moment. For a while it lingered in my mind, I thought it was only there to haunt me, but really, it was there to remind me...

Today started like my usual, wake up, brush my teeth, and get ready. However, today was a different day, a reminder, a celebration, a miracle I could not believe. It was my 25th birthday in the winter. Such a joyous occasion for my family and me, though I had other plans, I had plans to achieve my dreams! Becoming a lawyer, being seen and heard as intelligent just how I imagined myself to be. All were about to fit right into place, but it wasn't quite right.





A person with dark hair, wearing a dark hooded jacket, is crouching in the center of a narrow alleyway. The alleyway is flanked by tall, dark buildings. At the far end of the alley, a bright sun is setting, creating a strong orange and yellow glow. The ground is paved with cobblestones. In the distance, a wall of small, glowing lights is visible, creating a warm, atmospheric scene. The overall mood is contemplative and nostalgic.

**Ronya Lane**

## **Just Over the Wall**

11/12/1952

Dear diary,

Today is my fourteenth birthday. My Oma and Opa got me this diary as a birthday present on my 12th birthday, but I didn't really use it, until now. When I was opening my presents, I overheard my Oma and Opa whispering in the kitchen about my Mama. You see, my mama had left when I was six, she told me she will be back soon I waited and waited but she never came. Some nights I'd dream about her, it always felt so real, I could see her shiny, dark brown hair, her deep blue eyes shone like sapphires in the cold winter sun. But in the dreams, I would always see a tall man with steely, cold eyes staring at me, he wore an obsidian black suit, a silver tie. As we were looking at each other I felt a chill run down my spine. But I then I heard her speak which diverted my attention back to her. Her voice was as soft as summer rain as she whispered to me gently explaining that she will be back in time for my 7th birthday. On my 7th birthday I sat and waited on the doorstep in my thin jacket watching the snowflakes dance gently to the pallid cobblestone street. I waited for what seemed to be hours, but she never came.



# Christmas Show and Carols in the Community

**On the 12th December, our students performed a cabaret style Christmas spectacular to spread festive cheer and raise money for the upcoming musical, Hairspray.**

The show sold out and despite the awful weather, the hall was packed with people who had come to see the students share their talents. As well as having whole cast numbers such as Jingle Bell Rock, O Holy Night and many others, there were also some brave students who performed solos or small group numbers. Hosting the show were Mrs Anderson and Mrs Maughan who managed to keep to time, proving that Christmas miracles are real.













We also raised funds in the wider community, visiting Blyth Asda where we sang Christmas songs. This took place over six hours and students were encouraged to sing in two hour slots. However, some selfless students stayed all day in order to help raise money. Thanks to the generosity of the people who donated, we raised £1150, this is £50 more than last year. All proceeds go towards the school show, which will be performed in February.


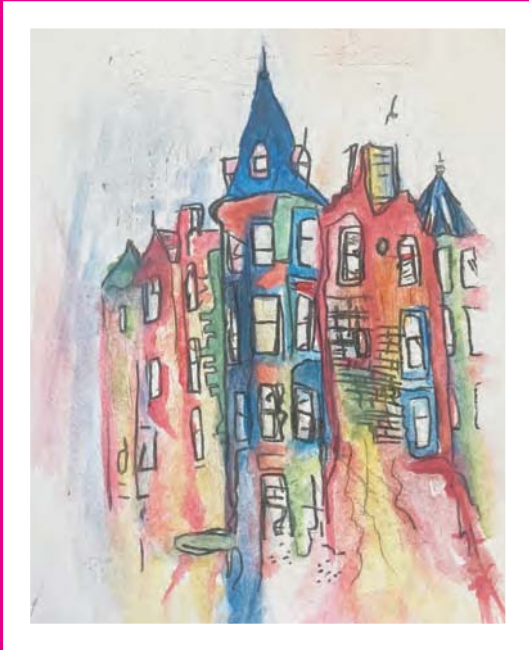
Thank you to everyone who came to the Christmas show or donated money to the singers at Asda. We hope that you will also come and see Hairspray to further support our talented students. Tickets are available from student reception or iPay.





# KEY STAGE THREE ART HOMEWORK

In year nine, Nayomi Catania and LJ Sergote have been looking closely at architecture. Here they have done an artist study and attempted to recreate the techniques themselves in a similar piece of art. Amazing level of detail!




Artist Analysis  
Rowan Leckie

Key Features:

- Strong line
- Strong, repeated shapes creating a sense of pattern.
- Bright washes of colour, dribbles and splashes of colour.
- Close ups of sections of old Edinburgh buildings.

Materials:  
Pen, ink, watercolour





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