



**Teesdale School**  
& Sixth Form Centre

# SPRING NEWSLETTER

March 2018



## WELCOME to our Spring Newsletter

It has been a term of travel here at Teesdale School. Our Euroscar winners have been to Strasbourg, another group of students visited Martinique and the annual battlefields tour of France and Belgium took place. We are delighted that our students represent our school, community and region so well.

Our musical, 'School of Rock', celebrated the talents of our students whose performances were inspiring. It is also impressive to witness staff, sixth form students and younger pupils working together to make sure the show is a success. This newsletter is the first edition which has been largely created and edited by a dedicated team of journalists and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Easter is a busy time for our students as they begin their final preparations for exams. Many students, their parents and teachers will feel that there is much to do and not a lot of time and can feel stressed and anxious. It's worth reminding ourselves that success comes from hard work, being organised, using the revision techniques you have been taught, and asking for help when you need it.

Finally, we hope you have a relaxing holiday and that the Spring sunshine finally makes an appearance!

Best wishes,

**Dr Janice Goriach and Ms Clare Ellis**  
Executive Headteacher and Headteacher

## Climbing high in the league tables

**In the latest publication of school league tables, Teesdale School and Sixth Form now appears amongst the top few schools in County Durham in most key measures of success.**

Teesdale pupils achieved the fourth highest score in Durham County with regard to the government's key measures for state schools which are, the overall 'Progress 8' measure and the proportion of pupils reaching a grade 5 or above in both English and maths. They also achieved the third highest percentage of pupils reaching grade 5 or higher in maths and also the third highest Progress 8 score for maths. Nearly a quarter of all pupils reached the highest grades 8 and 9. In maths, our overall progress score places us in the TOP 25% in England with our highest achievers ranking in the top 6% in the country.

Our Executive Headteacher, Dr Janice Goriach, said: "I have made my ambition for Teesdale School clear, that we will one day be one of the best schools in the region - our pupils deserve nothing less. The latest league tables show we are well on our way to achieving this aim. The changes we have made haven't always been easy, but because of them we are starting to see big improvements. I know I speak for all staff when I say that our school has an unshakeable commitment to becoming 'outstanding' and giving Dales' pupils access to the best education in the county. I am very proud of everything that staff and pupils have achieved so far and look forward to reporting lots more good news in the future."



# School of Rock...rocked!

If you're a fan of the theatre, Teesdale's recent production of *School of Rock* was certainly a sight to see! With a hard-working crew and an incredible cast, audience members left with wide smiles – with some even coming back the following night to watch the magic happen all over again!

*School of Rock* tells the tale of overly enthusiastic guitarist, Dewey Finn (Jack Black), who gets thrown out of his bar band and finds himself in desperate need of work. Posing as a substitute music teacher at an elite private elementary school, he exposes his students to the hard rock gods he idolises and emulates - much to the consternation of the uptight principal. As he gets his privileged and precocious charges in touch with their inner rock 'n' roll animals, he imagines redemption at a local Battle of the Bands...

Whilst the cast may have been the focus, the music certainly played a large role in the show's success so we talked to the band to see what they thought of it. Harriet Morris, a Year 9 student, told us that she played the keyboard in the band section of the production, which was great fun because of all the new music she was able to learn and how everything sounded amazing!

We also managed to catch Ms Ellis to see what she thought of *School of Rock*. She said: "It was an outstanding performance by an ensemble cast – thoroughly entertaining! It was clear to see how hard everyone worked. Congratulations to Mrs McGrath, along with the cast and crew, for such a polished performance."

We know we aren't alone when we say that we can't wait to see what production will be taken up next by the Teesdale music department! A huge well done to those who took part and we look forward to seeing what comes next.

By Kirsty McLachlan



Cartoon by Daisy Goodwin





# WINTER TERM HISTORY JOURNAL

If you have not read a copy of our termly history journal, *Past to Present*, you are missing a really interesting and insightful read!

Our Teesdale History Research Group, made up of students from Years 9 to 13, meet once a week to explore how history is connected to contemporary events. Once a term they produce the *Past to Present* journal focused on a particular theme.

This term's issue features medicine through time, Elizabeth I, Germany 1918-39 and the American West. It will be published shortly after Easter on the history curriculum section of our website.



## We're on Twitter and Facebook!



@teesdaleschool



facebook.com/  
teesdaleschool  
andsixthform

## Special dates for next term...

Here are some celebrations and other generally important dates within the next term. If there are some that you don't understand, why not broaden your horizons and look them up - you may get a better understanding of other cultures!

- **31st March – First Day of Passover** – celebration of freedom from slavery in Egypt
- **1st April – Easter Sunday**
- **2nd April – Easter Monday**
- **7th April – Last Day of Passover** – celebration of freedom from slavery in Egypt
- **8th April – Orthodox Easter**
- **9th April – Orthodox Easter Monday**
- **11th April – Yom HaShoah** – commemoration of the Holocaust
- **23rd April – St. George's Day**
- **20th May – Shavuot** – celebrates the harvest
- **15th June – Eid al-Fitr** – marks the end of Ramadan
- **17th June – Father's Day**
- **21st June – Summer Solstice** – Longest day of the year



## Land based course now an option at Teesdale

**At this term's options evening, students were able to choose an exciting new land-based agricultural course in partnership with East Durham College's Houghall Campus in Durham.**

For the first time, Year 8 students moving to Year 9 to study GCSEs and vocational qualifications were offered the new hands-on Level 2 qualification that explores use of land, as well as the application of science and technology in agriculture.

Houghall staff will deliver teaching in school and on student placements in regional agricultural facilities including at the Houghall Campus itself, which has recently undergone a £12.75 million redevelopment including a brand-new small animal care centre, agricultural centre, equine centre, new science labs and IT suites.

During the three-year course, students will study historical land use and the shift in emphasis towards sustainability, environmental management and public access. They will also find out how science plays a major role in the modern land-based sector by investigating different parts of the industry, the roles of plants, crops and animals, whilst also considering the importance of biosecurity.

# E-SAFETY | APPS TO BE AWARE OF

It's up to all of us, teachers, staff, students and parents to be aware of online dangers and do what we can to protect against them. Here are three apps that pose a serious threat to young people:

## yubo

### WHAT IS YUBO?

Yubo (used to be called Yellow) is an app that allows users to interact with new people, using location data to find other Yubo users nearby.

### WHY IS IT DANGEROUS?

There is increasing concern about the lack of safety features on this app and parents are being advised to talk to their children about the potential risks of using Yubo and about the dangers of sharing too much with a potential stranger. Police in several areas of the UK have alerted schools to concerns they have over child safety on the app, while the NSPCC has also shared a warning.

There are no privacy setting options and no way to block users. This means people can see all of the personal information that you post on your account.

Although location sharing can be turned off, to find nearby friends it needs to be switched on. By enabling location sharing, this will be shown to any other potential "friends" who view the account, along with the user's age.

There is also a lack of content control, meaning anyone can sign up and post inappropriate content viewable to younger users.

Over 18s are blocked from contacting younger users, however the app does not verify ages upon sign-up, meaning it could be exploited by those seeking to target children.



### WHAT IS SARAHAH?

Sarahah is an app that allows users to send anonymous comments to other users, with no way of the recipient replying or knowing who sent it.

### WHY IS IT DANGEROUS?

Sarahah - meaning "honesty" in Arabic - encourages anonymous "constructive comments" when you register and share your link on social media. You can also comment anonymously on your friends' accounts if you know their links. Parents and children's organisations are concerned that vulnerable teenagers are at risk from bullying and suicide. The App Store has reviews suggesting that Sarahah is being used for cyber-bullying.

An NSPCC spokesperson said:

"Apps that allow anonymous comments can be worrying as they could potentially be misused by online bullies to send abusive or upsetting messages.

"We'd encourage children using Sarahah not to share their user name publicly to limit who can communicate with them on the app.

"Our advice for parents is to talk to your child regularly about what they are doing on apps like Sarahah and encourage them to speak to you if they see something upsetting."



### WHAT IS MEETME?

MeetMe is a social network that introduces people to new people instead of connecting them to existing ones.

### WHY IS IT DANGEROUS?

MeetMe works almost exclusively to connect people with strangers. Immediately after creating an account, users set up their profile using an active Facebook account or email address. In a matter of seconds, various profiles pop up for other users in the nearby area. Users are encouraged to chat regularly and even meet fellow users in person.

With MeetMe Credits, users are encouraged to perform various tasks on the app. This gives the app an "arcade-like" feel; and people may forget that their actions on the app have very real, real-world consequences. They can become so caught up winning the app's games that they forget they are playing with real strangers.

MeetMe possesses an "open-door" policy in regard to its user profiles. There are no privacy settings; every detail a person adds to their personal profile will be present for anyone to see. The app encourages users to be very open and share personal details to "help" them build connections with fellow users. It's very common for sexually explicit and even pornographic material to find its way into user news feeds.

Everything—including your profile information—is out in the open and easy for everyone to see.

## MYSTERY DONATION

For several years Teesdale School has been the grateful beneficiary of a very generous anonymous donation. This year the donation was once again given and it was even more generous.

Last year we used some of the money to repaint and re-purpose one of the 1st floor areas that we turned into our Laurea Achievement Centre. The centre is now a bright, welcoming space that many of our students use to get the one-to-one support they need to reach their goals.

This year we plan on using some of the money to make much needed improvements to the main school hall and put the rest towards our new library.

To our mystery donor, whoever you are, the staff and students at Teesdale School would like to say a very big thank you, you are helping us to make a real difference in school.



## Help for Nepalese girls

**This term, Teesdale School's Rotary Interact Club sold homemade red button badges to raise funds to buy reusable feminine hygiene kits for girls in Nepal.**

The sale, that coincided with International Women's Day on the 8th March, raised well over £100.

The kits allow Nepalese girls to attend school and get a good education rather than stay at home, or even worse, be banished from their homes, which is often the case when they are on their period. Some girls have even been known to die as a result of being banished for several days at a time.

The kits are made by Barnard Castle's Rotary Club members and other Rotary members across the country.

If people want to buy a button and donate to the campaign they are still available from the school office and from Café 15 in Barnard Castle and Victoria Dental Practice in Darlington.

## History lecture series returns

**Our second annual Teesdale School History Lecture Series took place on Tuesday 6 February with students from across the north east visiting our school to hear from leading historians.**

More than 150 students attended from schools in the North East Learning Trust to hear a range of lectures from prominent university academics including Professor Jeremy Boulton and Dr Felix Shulz of Newcastle University and Professor Richard Rex of Cambridge University.

Professor Boulton spoke about venereal disease in the early modern period and helped students see the difficulty that medics had dealing with syphilis before the discovery of chemical compounds and antibiotics. His colleague, Dr Felix Schulz, taught students about the dangers of a mono-causal explanation of history in relation to the collapse of the Weimar Republic and Hitler's rise to power.

Dr Simon Henderson, our Head of History and Sixth Form, spoke about prejudice and paternalism that motivated U.S. government policy towards Native Americans. The event concluded with Professor Richard Rex of Cambridge University explaining how Elizabeth I's 'religious settlement' of 1559 was in fact anything but, and outlined how it left divisions that later led to civil conflict.

Dr Henderson said: "We are delighted that we attract such expert speakers to our school, which demonstrates our commitment to providing the very best academic opportunities for students."

# THE IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING AND RECYCLING OUR PLASTIC WASTE

Why should thousands of tonnes of plastic sit unused in landfills – which can take from 450 to 1,000 years to decompose – when it could be recycled, such as plastic bottles that can be recycled up to eight times? Instead we let it waste away or end up in our oceans to breakdown into micro plastics.

According to *Surfers Against Sewage*, 'marine litter' has risen rapidly over the last 20 years. Marine litter occurs when plastic is thrown away thoughtlessly, blown away from landfills, flushed down toilets or swept down rivers.

Scientists have shown that up to 12 million tonnes of plastic is entering our oceans every year – that's a rubbish truck full every minute! This includes plastic bottles, cotton buds, cans, straws, food wrappers, fishing nets and bags polluting our oceans every year. This litter, of which 90% is plastic, either continues to float through the oceans, drifts onto our beaches or (as most of it does) goes into the ocean to float around in 'plastic patches' and sink down to the seabed, stopping photosynthesis, crushing ecosystems and destroying vibrant coral reefs that are home to incredible marine life. Estimates suggest that around 700 marine species are affected and that 100,000 marine mammals die because of this plastic pollution every year.

## Species that are most at risk are:

**SEA TURTLES** - 86% of species of sea turtles mistake plastic for food that can cause blockages in their digestive systems. A 2013 study showed that 50% of sea turtle deaths are caused by the ingestion of plastic.

**SEA BIRDS** - One million sea birds die each year due to plastic pollution and over 90% are found to have plastic in their stomachs. A species that has been one of the most affected is the Laysan albatross because of the way they hunt for food. The albatross skim their beaks along the water's surface, catching both a meal as well as accidentally collecting the plastic, which they feed to their chicks.

**SEALS AND SEA LIONS** - These animals are at risk of infection and death as they often get tangled in debris such as bags, fishing nets and packing bands. This plastic can strangle or become embedded into the animals, causing horrific wounds and exposing them to severe infections.

**FISH** - Fish are increasingly at risk from microscopic plastic which is ingested and difficult for them to rid themselves of. Also many studies suggest that fish including brown trout, cisco, perch and others eaten by humans have ingested plastic microfibrils at least once.

**DOLPHINS AND WHALES** - These mammals accidentally ingest the plastic mistaking it for food. This can be fatal as it can obstruct the stomach and intestines as well as puncture the stomach lining causing them to starve. An example of this is of the Cuvier's beaked whale, which became stranded near Bergen, Norway. This type of whale feeds at depths of a mile or more in the sea but was found to have 30 large pieces of plastic in its stomach after its death.

## How can you help?

Reducing your plastic footprint will help fight against the plastic tide that is choking our ocean life. To do so try and find ways to minimise your plastic consumption, such as choosing reusable drink-ware and always having your own mug or water bottle handy. Buy biodegradable products rather than plastic ones, e.g. toothbrushes and cotton buds, reuse plastic bags, buy stainless steel straws instead of always using a new one and get involved in plastic clean ups which helps get rid of plastic pollution.

## More information:

[www.greeneducationfoundation.org](http://www.greeneducationfoundation.org)

[www.plasticoceans.org](http://www.plasticoceans.org)

[www.greenpeace.org.uk](http://www.greenpeace.org.uk)

[www.theworldcounts.com](http://www.theworldcounts.com)

By Clara Holmes  
and Stefani Jakonic-Bond



# 9 TIPS FOR LIVING WITH LESS PLASTIC



1

Bring your own shopping bag



2

Carry a reusable water bottle



3

Bring your own cup



4

Pack your lunch in reusable containers



5

Say no to disposable straws & cutlery



6

Skip the plastic produce bags



7

Slow down and dine in



8

Store leftovers in glass jars

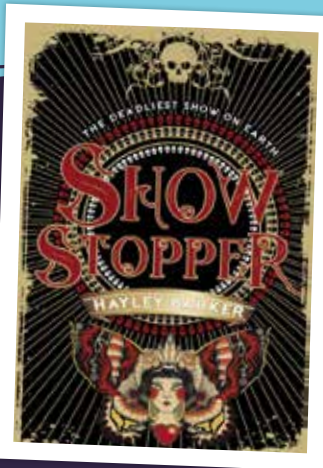


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## BOOK REVIEW

# SHOW STOPPER

**AUTHOR:** HAYLEY BARKER  
**PUBLISHED:** 2017  
**GENRE:** SciFi

Filled with thrilling twists and turns, beautiful love stories and tackling controversial subjects, *Show Stopper* has to be, by far, one of the most magnificent books I have ever read.

Set in a twisted version of a utopian future full of racial segregation, the story focuses on two very different characters, Ben and Hoshiko. Ben is a 'Pure' who lives in high society and has absolutely no troubles in the world. Hoshiko is a 'Dreg' who was stolen away from her home and family in the slums to perform in the circus until her death. When their two worlds suddenly collide, Ben and Hoshiko must fight to survive an onslaught of racists, politicians and murderers.

*Show Stopper* had me laughing, crying and everything in between, with beautiful characterisation and a heartbreaking love story. Barker's brilliant debut focuses on a somewhat touchy subject but it is this that makes it so spectacular. By centralising the story on racial segregation, Barker has created a masterpiece that smashes two very different characters together and forces them to put aside their differences for love and survival. Also, the way in which Barker has told *Show Stopper* from these two different perspectives makes the tale even more in-depth and engaging! However, while *Show Stopper* is an amazing story, I would not recommend reading it if you are squeamish.

Other than that, I would highly suggest reading this thrilling novel to anyone - FIVE STARS!

**By Daisy Goodwin**



## Can you find your way out of the maze?



## Cross Country

A number of our talented students competed alongside schools from across Durham in the county championships earlier this term.

Josh Mawer, our Year 11 sports captain, finished 9th in the intermediate boys race and has been selected for the County Durham cross country team. Will Wood, also in Year 11, qualified for the same race finishing a creditable 26th place. Our younger students were also in action gaining their first experience of higher level cross country. In the junior race, sisters Tia and Alisha Bell competed together finishing in 42nd (Tia) and 52nd (Alisha) place. Mia Dowson finished 42nd in the girls race and George Rabbett-Smith came 44th in the boys race. George Peacock also took part in the boys race but sadly had to withdraw due to an injury.