



**Teesdale School
& Sixth Form**

WINTER NEWSLETTER

December 2021



Dear parents, carers and friends

The Christmas holidays are here and I'm delighted to say that we have had a very busy term. Students have relished the opportunity to get involved in our rich extracurricular offer. We've had geography trips to Newcastle and Redcar; an awe-inspiring visit to the Lumiere Festival in Durham where students got to admire their own creations, and the Christmas tree festival at St Mary's Church where our students' musical talents were once again on display.

Our competitive spirit is back in action with sports fixtures back on the school calendar and I'm delighted to report that our football, netball and cross-country teams are performing very well.

Our sixth formers are once again leading the way as role models and by pursuing a number of exciting projects. They are currently in collaboration with St Christopher's School in Kenya. This Connecting Classroom projects aims to build leadership skills – students have set themselves the ambition of being peace advocates, and will be planning a joint sustainability initiative in the new year.

They are also involved with a 'Twinning Toilets' project providing much needed sanitation in Malawi, and will be fundraising in January.

We have also been celebrating our Twelve Days of Christmas, an annual event to promote kindness, generosity, fun and laughter. Students have enjoyed their Christmas lunch, worn their Christmas jumpers with pride, raised money for charity, spread Christmas cheer to the Beaconsfield Care Home and contributed to the TCR Hub's care package. I'm delighted by, and proud of, our staff and students' willingness to help others and share the Christmas message.

I am aware that Christmas is a time of great joy for many, but it can also be a time of sadness and loneliness for others. We have started to replant our memorial garden, with the hope that in the spring it will be filled with daffodils and tulips, and bring a smile to our faces as we are reminded of the hope and kindness we find in each other, and remember those we have lost.

I wish you all, a merry and peaceful Christmas and happy and healthy 2022.

Dan Pilling

Dan Pilling, Head of School

Students connect with Kenya

**A level history
students worked with
Northumbria University
this term.**

Alongside Dr Tim Livsey, students explored documents from the migrated archives of the former British colonies.

Students analysed documents from Kenya in 1963 and discussed what the archival material shows us about British attitudes of the time and what should be done with the historical records in the future.

Dr Henderson, Head of Sixth Form, said: "This was a great opportunity for our students. We are very lucky to have such strong links with local universities that allows our sixth form to encourage students to think beyond the parameters of the courses they are studying, and engage with their chosen academic disciplines in a different way."

Student leaders

Our student leadership team have been settling into their roles very well this term. We cannot wait to see what they get up to during the rest of the academic year. Here's what they had to say about their first term...

"This school year as a committee we have accomplished goals we have set and we have set out new challenges for the future.

At the end of November, we raised £156 as a group by fundraising for 'Children in Need' by holding a bake sale for every year group to enjoy.

Another exciting undertaking we are involved in is deciding on the theme for next

year's Year 11s prom in the summer!

We are extremely excited to be able to express the individuality of our year group and to be able to celebrate it together at the end of the school year.

In the future we, as prefects, are determined to help make the school a better place for younger year groups and we couldn't be happier!"



We're social!

Did you know that our school regularly posts on social media sites, Facebook and Twitter?

Our social media pages are a great way to connect to our online Teesdale School community. You can find photos, videos and important updates on our pages and see what your youngsters are up to in the classroom. If you don't follow our pages already, please give us a like or a follow to stay in the loop!



@teesdaleschool



@teesdaleschoolandsixthform

IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

07 JAN All students back in lessons after COVID-19 testing on the 5th and 6th of Jan. **Specific testing information has been sent to all parents.**

A traditional Christmas

By Chloe, Year 7

The fresh smell of gingerbread, the hanging of mistletoe, the stars twinkling above our heads, St. Nick chanting, "Off we go!"

Rudolph recalling how to fly, while happy carollers sing their songs, reindeers glide across the sky, the church bells going 'ding dong!'

Excited little girls and boys, writing down all of their wishes, drawing pictures of candy and toys, ending with (your name), hugs and kisses.

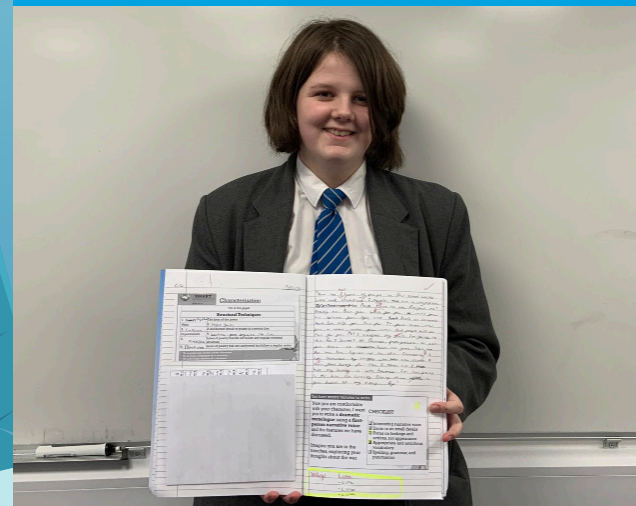
Parents preparing cookies and milk, out of reach of hungry paws, sleeping in beds of cotton and silk, everyone's waiting for Santa Claus!

Success for Rosie!

Rosie entered Barnard Castle Library's book review competition and bagged a brilliant second place!

Students were asked to either write a review or draw an image based on a book they have enjoyed. As runner up, she received a £10 book voucher for her brilliant entry.

Rosie said: "I entered this competition because I thoroughly enjoy writing and reading and I had just finished an excellent book which I wanted to share. I thought that if I could write a strong enough review I would possibly win, therefore coming runner-up is a great achievement."



Nature group is growing!

Our nature group have been working alongside the Tees-Swale project to plant some locally found species into our nature garden.

Using plug plants grown from locally gathered seeds, we look forward to seeing them grow in the coming years...

Our nature group meets on a Thursday after school in S8 - new members are always welcome!

A busy start for sixth form

This term has been very busy for our sixth formers, especially our Year 13 students...

Year 13 have been completing their UCAS applications, visiting university campuses and thinking about their post-18 options. We have a number of students who are applying to Oxford or Cambridge and they have done some interview preparation work with Richard Petty from Trinity College Oxford.

Joseph, a talented biologist and aspiring physiotherapist, did a work placement at a physiotherapy clinic earlier in the term and gained some valuable experience. Amy, who hopes to go into a career in media and communications, has been doing some journalism work for a local swimming club. These and several other exciting opportunities have kept students very busy on top of their academic schedule.

This term has also seen the return of the Rotary Interact Group who are working on a project with a school in Kenya. This has been made possible

by a grant from the British Council under the *Connecting Classrooms* initiative and promises to lead to an exciting sustainability project in the future. Students have also met with a local charity organiser and will be donating to Malawi as part of the *Twinning Toilets* scheme. There are also funds available to support a local community project that will be planned in January.

The Sixth Form Committee took the lead in organising Halloween and then Christmas film nights and arranging for Christmas gifts and cards to be delivered to a local care home.

They also designed resources and delivered sessions on sex and relationship education to their peers.

Throughout the weeks leading up to Christmas, a green screen has been a permanent fixture in the common room as filming of the Teesdale Christmas video took place. Watch this space for its public release!

Did you know?

1. The Dutch started the tradition of leaving milk and cookies out for Santa!
2. The busiest shopping day isn't actually Black Friday in November, but the Saturday before Christmas.
3. Jingle Bells was originally a Thanksgiving song.





Sporting success

This year has started out strong with lots of participation in clubs and competitions.

Our netball teams are back out on the field, playing friendly matches against other schools. They are showing brilliant teamwork skills and resilience. We can't wait to see them progress.

Competitive cross country returned and our Year 7 and 8 teams placed 2nd out of 12 teams - amazing!

It was great news for sixth form cyclist, Matthew, who has continued his assessments at Manchester Velodrome for the junior Great Britain Cycling Team this term.

Sailor, Finn, has continued to train with the Regional Training group for the North with a focus on moving into the UK Youth Squads following continued intensive training and competition around the country.

Toby in Year 7 is following in Finn's footsteps by also training with the Regional Training group for the North in his particular age group.

We are so proud of all of our sporting superstars!

The return of clubs

This term saw many extra-curricular clubs return, much to the delight of both students and staff.

Science club

Tuesday evenings have seen students develop their practical skills and confidence around safety and equipment. During the term, the group have developed from gaining their Bunsen Burner licences, through to carrying out biochemical tests on food and making salt crystals by reacting Sulfuric Acid and Copper Oxide.

Netball club

Students from all year groups have attended and it has been a pleasure to have the sixth form team supporting and helping to develop the younger players.

Rugby club

We are extremely fortunate to have linked up with Falcons Rugby Club. This term we have had Rugby development officer Andy Reynolds in school supporting lessons and an after-school club for both boys and girls in Year 7 and 8. As a development towards a school club link, our students were given the

opportunity to play some friendly games against Staindrop School at Barnard Castle Rugby Club.

Just Dance club

Each Thursday students attend Just Dance Club in the drama studio to have some fun with music and exercise over lunch time. With lots of laughing and choice of each song to dance to – students have been really enjoying attending and bringing along their friends to the next session!

Girls' football and cricket clubs

Girls from Years 7-10 have been attending cricket club to develop their skills in bowling, batting and fielding. Our footballers have completed skills training, 5 aside tournaments, full pitch games as well as taking part in coaching sessions by one of the Year 11 girls from our Sport Science class who has been doing an amazing job. The girls have progressed their skills, knowledge and confidence in football.



Teesdale talk their way to the top at debate day

Students from Years 9 and 10 showcased their debating skills this term at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee as they competed in the first annual inter-trust NELT Debate Day.

Students from six secondary schools within the North East Learning Trust came together to compete against one another.

Teesdale School competed against The Academy at Shotton Hall over the hotly-contested topic of 'Social Media: A Force for Good in the World?'

Other schools debated topics such as 'Should we ban junk food in schools?', 'Should we still have the monarchy?' and 'Should there be any limits on free speech?'

While all schools performed brilliantly, we were incredibly proud of our students who really shone, resulting in the team claiming the victory and trophy as Best Overall Team. Alice (Year 9), Tess and Blake (Year 10) represented the school exceptionally well, with Miss Lavery, accompanying English teacher, saying that: "All three students spoke clearly and confidently in their roles. Their passion and knowledge shone through and I couldn't be prouder of them all and the way they represented Teesdale."

Tess also spoke fondly of their afternoon: "I'm really happy that I had the opportunity to take part in this competition which has highlighted my talent for public speaking. It's something I'd love to pursue further."

Well done, Team Teesdale! Here's to next year!



Tasty work

Students have been cooking up a storm this term...

Year 7 students have really enjoyed cooking during lunch club. They have been making treats to take home, and sometimes even prepare their own lunches! The most beloved creations have been pizzas, crumbles, and cupcakes.

The Year 7s have been lucky enough to have the very welcome support and guidance of our Year 11 chefs, who have shared their knowledge and experience by helping them in their practical activities. In fact, one Year 11 is using this opportunity to achieve one of her skills awards for Duke of Edinburgh's Award!

A favourite memory from this term was providing the pupils with the opportunity to work with mussels, which were graciously donated by the Food Teacher Centre Fish Heroes programme.

Year 8, 10 and 11 pupils created and enjoyed dishes including Thai mussels and moules mariniere. We are incredibly lucky to have taken part in the programme, which aims to ensure that every child gets a chance to prepare, cook, and eat fish before they leave school.

We ended the term with a Christmas bake sale where students made delicious cakes, biscuits and other sweet treats during lessons and at home to support the event.

We raised a brilliant £174.20 which was donated to our local food bank!



Christmas joke

Who tells the best Christmas jokes?

Reindeer. They sleigh every time!



A busy term in the Teesdale ART DEPARTMENT

This term, a group of our after-school artists took part in a series of workshops to create large floral lanterns, for the Lumiere, the festival of light in Durham.

Students worked with a visiting artist to fuse plastic together in big sheets. They created their own intricate patterns by cutting sections of plastic out, before laying them on top of each other. Next, these were sewn together to create a range of petals and constructed into the flowers. Lights were hung inside to create a chandelier type effect and around 25 of these flowers lined the streets leading away from the Cathedral. The piece is called Plastica Botanica and is displayed on South Bailey, outside St John's college.

Students also contributed to a mini city of illuminated buildings which took up residence in College Green. 'Home' was their inspiration.

Libby in Year 12 created a fantastic three-tiered building and Year 7 Kitty's vocals were played along with other voices from around County Durham. The piece is called City of Light, City of Stories.

On Thursday 18th November we were lucky enough take the students to see their creations in real life! We were amazed at how impressive their work looked and it was lovely to see the looks on their faces, when they recognised Kitty's voice! The students loved watching the animations projected on the Cathedral and interacting with the various artworks around the city.



Perfecting portraits

Year 10 Artists have been working hard in their art lessons, developing ideas on their theme of portraits.

These two pieces are by Harriet and Verity. Harriet has been exploring using acrylics in her work and is looking forward to painting on canvas next. Verity has been inspired by the work of Ler Huang and has enjoyed exploring adding shapes to her portraits. Well done girls and keep it up!



Dark room creations...

Year 12 Photography students have been exploring using the dark room this term and have had a go at making their own photograms!

They explored laying different objects over their light-sensitive paper to see what different effects they could create. These were in response to the photographer, Ion Zupcu. Well done Year 12!



Light Up Barnard Castle

Earlier this term, our A level artists took part in two exciting workshops with visiting artist, Gemma Mccoll. Students worked collaboratively to create large willow sculptures of fish in preparation for 'Light Up Barnard Castle', a parade which took place earlier this month.

The parade comprised of the handmade willow lanterns, decorated in blues and greens inspired by the River Tees, the water that connects us all through the dale. It is through community that we are connected, so the river felt very appropriate as it winds its way through our villages and towns. Our artists created the fish for the parade, with local primary school students creating smaller lanterns to represent the water, in what was a very special evening.

We were proud to parade our showstopping fish lanterns and had so many comments on how fantastic they looked. The event was made extra special as it was also Neeve's 18th birthday and she was nominated as chief lantern parader! A big shoutout to our fantastic paraders Matthew, Neeve, Lucy, Abbie and Alysscia...





**North East
SCITT**

Did you know that our school is a partner of North East SCITT - an organisation that trains new teachers in schools across the north east - including in ours!

Whether you're a new graduate, in your final year of university or considering a change of career (it's never too late you know!), North East SCITT's high-quality school-based initial teacher training courses can provide you with the best start to a new career in teaching. They are based in the North East Learning Trust's lead school, The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee, but training happens in schools all across the region.

The quality of training they offer is rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted for both their primary and secondary courses. Along with this they have a proven track record of amazing

results and high employment rates. The programme gives you the opportunity to learn to teach 'on-the-job'. Unlike traditional university courses, you are in the classroom from the outset, interacting with pupils and teachers and learning first hand the knowledge and skills you'll need to become an outstanding teacher.

You will practise in a broad range of schools, gaining experience in different areas including special educational needs and disabilities, behaviour management, English as an additional language, phonics, and maths mastery (for primary only).

You will also be allocated a subject mentor from a team of specialists with vast experience who will introduce you to school life and help you to learn how to teach your subject.

At the end of the 10 month course you'll be a qualified teacher with a PGCE from Durham University.

So if you're thinking of teaching - there is no better place than through our school partners North East SCITT - please get in touch - we know they would love to speak to you!

Subjects available:

**Primary
Computing**

**Design and
technology**

Drama

English

History

Geography

Maths

Music

**Physical
education**

**Religious
education**

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

**Modern
foreign
languages**



Try a teacher training taster day...

If you're thinking about training to teach, you can come and spend the morning at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee or Browney Academy in Durham to get a taste of what teacher training is like. Find out more and book your place at:

www.northeastscitt.co.uk/taster

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