



**Teesdale School
& Sixth Form**

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021



WELCOME ...to our summer newsletter

I'm writing this as we approach the end of the academic year and ... what a year it has been!

I want to begin by thanking our students and you, their parents and carers, for your support, understanding, resilience, determination and good humour throughout the year; without that support, this challenging year would have been impossible.

I also want to formally recognise the contribution of all our staff: our teachers for their adaptability and professionalism; our site and cleaning team for hours of additional cleaning, maintaining zones and setting up a testing site; the catering team who continue to serve delicious meals in the most difficult circumstances; the office team who on certain days have felt like the phone would never stop ringing(!); and our pastoral team who have been looking after children who are self-isolating and

those who were nervous about the return to school.

But, especially to you, our students, I want to say a huge and heartfelt 'thank you'. I'm immensely proud of you: you have continued to try your best in your lessons; you have engaged with remote learning; you have followed every instruction; and, most importantly, you have kept smiling through it all! You have flourished – just like our wonderful nature garden.

We are looking forward to welcoming you back to school in September but, in the meantime, I want to wish everyone a restful and happy summer holiday.

Head of School

Hello to our soon to be Year 7s!

It's almost time for the move to 'big school' - we are so excited to meet you all!

We are so sorry that we have been unable to invite you into school this year.

Until September, keep your eyes peeled on the transition page of our school website [here](#). Check out our welcome video from staff and a virtual tour of the school.

We cannot wait to get to know you all and for you to get to know us and our wonderful school.

Don't be nervous: everyone is lovely and you will be right at home from day one!

See you all soon!

Hello!

Remembering Bethy

This term we paid tribute to Elizabeth 'Bethy' Smith who tragically lost her life.

Bethy's funeral took place last month and everybody at Teesdale School and the wider community took the opportunity to honour her life.

Bethy was very keen to help the environment so we used recycled, reused and repurposed fabric to tie to the school fence while taking time to remember Bethy and think about what she meant to us and to our school community.



Further remembrance events will be taking place in the future to honour Bethy's life.

Below are some words to remember Bethy:

"Kind and caring... Loving... Stood up for what she believed in... Fighting to do something about climate change... Caring about animals... Would help anyone or anything that needed help... Could have done anything she wanted to..."

IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

THUR 02 SEP - Year groups begin return to school, in line with government testing guidance.

THUR 21 OCT - Break up for half term

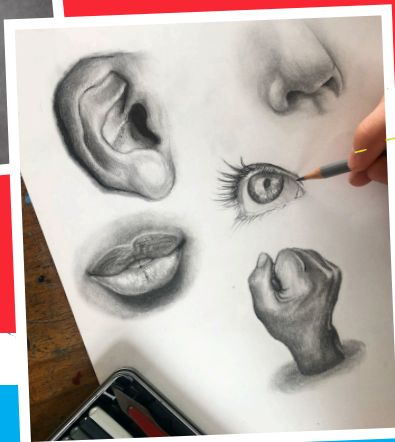
Please keep checking our website and social media channels for the latest updates.



Amazing art

Year 12 artist, Lewis, has worked incredibly hard this term on his observational drawing skills.

He has explored using photography to initially capture images of water running through hands, before editing and then painstakingly sketching out to A1 size! His superb use of tone creates a hyper-realistic outcome, which is phenomenal in real life. Well done Lewis and keep it up!



Year 7 poets

Miss Lavery was massively impressed by her Year 7 classes when they were set a piece of homework which required them to complete their own poem based on a topic of their choice.

The topics of the poem were very diverse with entries from motocross to sunset. Here is an excerpt from Charlotte's poem, *Life on the Farm*:

"You can see the grass in the meadow,
Swishing like the wings of a bird,
You can cuddle the friendly sheep,
You could bury yourself in their wool,
Soft as clouds."

We look forward to watching the year group develop further next year...



Stamp heros

Our Year 7 and 8 artists got creative this term, designing a stamp for the Royal Mail Heroes stamp competition.

Students came up with some brilliant designs honouring the heroes of the pandemic. Key workers, NHS staff, Joe Wicks and Sir Captain Tom Moore were amongst some of the popular choices inspiring their designs and there were plenty of rainbows to add lots of colour! We are looking forward to seeing who the Queen chooses as her winners



Portraiture project

Year 10 artists have been working hard creating beautifully presented artist research pages for their portraiture project. Students have researched the work of Mark Powell and Oscar Ukonu who both create incredibly detailed portraits using biro. Students have created their own responses to the artists' work and we are so pleased with how they have turned out. Well done Year 10!

We're social!

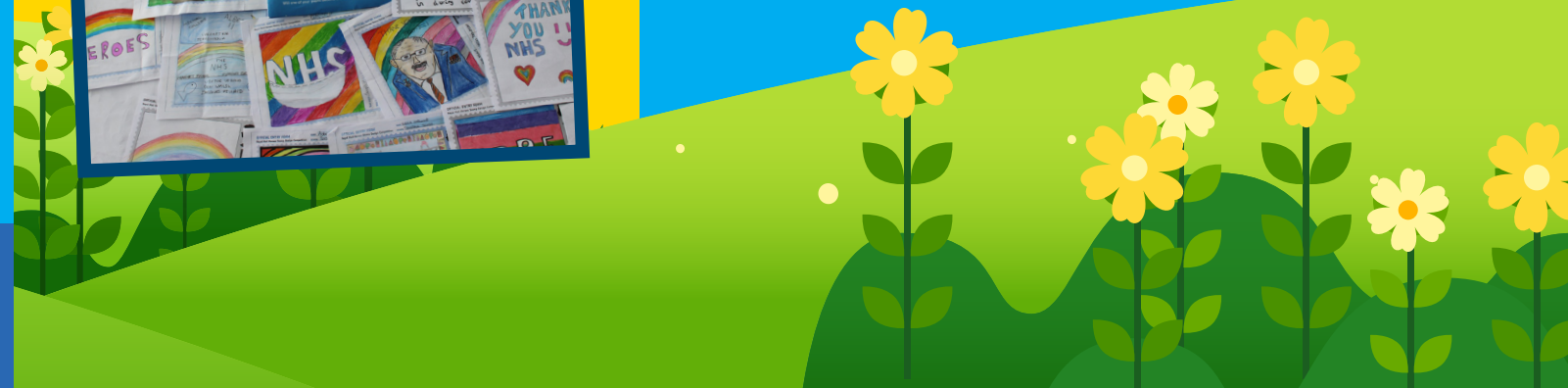
Follow our social media accounts to stay up to date with all of the latest news from around the school!



@teesdaleschool



@teesdaleschoolandsixthform



Digging into the past

Year 7 historians are working with local archaeological organisation, 'Dig Ventures,' on a virtual recreation of St. Mary's church in Barnard Castle.

Several students took part in workshops down at the church in the pre-pandemic world of education with the current project designed to allow students to explore the history of the local area in a digital way.

The year 7 volunteers are using a specially designed Minecraft world to build the church as it was in 1500 using detailed floor plans and written documents testifying to

how the church looked all those years ago. The aim is to eventually create a virtual Barnard Castle at different points in the past as part of a wider local history project.



Wonderful watercolours

Year 7 and 8 artists have (very excitedly!) been back in the art rooms this term and have been working hard to develop their watercolour skills.



Breeding success!

Our new nature garden is thriving!

Two of our deluxe garden bird boxes were immediately occupied this spring – one by great tits and the adjacent box by house sparrows. The sparrows liked their apartment so much they returned to lay a second clutch which are currently just fledging.

At least an additional four species including blackbird, starling, collared dove and wood pigeon also nested in the school grounds surrounding the garden, so a lot of young birds have been visiting the garden feeders.

The pond has cleared nicely and has a diverse fauna. Yellow flag, water mint, marsh marigold and forget-me-nots have been added as marginals and a dwarf water lily is becoming established.

Garden and wild flowers are attracting insects and we were pleased that an orange tip butterfly was spotted near the cuckoo flowers – the food plant for its caterpillars. At present orange hawkweed (fox and cubs) is striking among the buttercups and ox-eye daisies.

We have recently started a nature club, led by one of our biologists Miss Moks. Our students would like to paint and draw the wildlife, develop the bug hotel, bring on caterpillars for release as butterflies and hopefully look after some rescue hedgehogs that can't be released back into the wild.

2021-2022 could be a busy year!

