



**Teesdale School  
& Sixth Form**

# WINTER NEWSLETTER

December 2022



## Dear parents, carers and friends

In my first term at Teesdale School as Head of School, I have begun to appreciate the sense of community and family that makes the school so special. Parents and carers, students and all staff are the reason for that. This school belongs to the community, and those who work and study here are part of something much bigger than can be contained inside the physical building itself.

This newsletter is packed full of examples of things I have noticed and appreciated in this school – boundless creativity from staff and students, excellence built on discipline, dedication, and a determination to be the best.

My favourite memory of this term came at the Halloween disco for Years 7 and 8. As younger students at a secondary school social event, there was a little hesitancy, a little wondering what was cool and what was not. Until that was, our student leaders in Year 11, helping out at the evening, took to the dance floor! Before long everyone was up, staff included, busting their own moves to the music provided by our sixth form DJs. A really special sense of togetherness and community ensued.

Ask any teacher and they will usually say that the autumn term is the longest. The falling leaves, the slowly creeping retreat of afternoon daylight, and the strive to establish solid foundations for the second half of the academic year, can be tiring. But it is also a term for meeting new faces, building relationships and sharing the excitement of the twinkling lights that bring the promise of important time spent with family and friends.

Fundamentally, Christmas is about family. For some that provides wonderful memories, excitement, and fun. For others that can be uncomfortable and difficult, and we acknowledge that as well. All those connected to Teesdale School are, however, part of a wider family and we want to wish you a very Merry Christmas, recognise and value every one of you, and hope for good health and happiness for all in 2023.

**Anna Cleckner, Head of School**



## Pop up restaurant success

**At the beginning of the month, we celebrated a very successful Christmas pop up restaurant thanks to our brilliant students.**

The hardworking group raised over £1,300 to donate to the TCR Hub to help provide meals for local families in need this Christmas. A delicious three-course menu was served to guests who were also treated to some live music courtesy of Theo C and Beth S on the piano and Thomas B and Dan M performing a guitar and vocals acoustic set.

Story continued overleaf...

## Continued from front page....

Sixth formers and Year 11s waited on tables and washed up in the kitchen, but the real stars of the evening were the chefs. Year 12 students, Evie A, James C and Grace P under the supervision of teacher, Katie Swinburne, worked from 8.30am to be able to serve the 50 guests between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. We even had a visit from the BBC and appeared live on the evening news!

Head of Sixth Form, Simon Henderson, said: "This is what our sixth form is all about. We want students to work hard in their studies and aspire to achieve the best that they can academically, but we also want our students to use their talents and passions to enrich the lives of others. Evie, James and Grace really enjoy cooking and have a real flair for it. Through the development of their skills, they have been able to do something really meaningful for their local community."

[Watch a video filled with rave reviews here.](#)



## IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

**20 DEC** Break up for Christmas

**04 JAN** Back to school

**16 FEB** Break up for half term

**27 FEB** Back to school

## A message from our head students

"As we approach the end of our first term as head students, we would like to say a massive thank you to everyone for the support you have given us in our new roles, and the contributions given to us by our fellow head students in the years below. We would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. We can't wait to bring your new ideas to life as we start a fresh year in 2023."

From Libby, Finn, Rory, Wilf and Ameila and the student council in younger years

## 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



## Nurturing nature

**Did you know that since the 1950s, there has been a 97% decline in the species-rich natural hay meadows? And of the remaining 3%, approximately half of these are found in the upland farms of the North Pennines – most specifically Teesdale! As a result, we are keen to learn more...**

We are collaborating with the Tees Swale Project which focusses on restoring the diversity of lost meadows and educating people around the challenges faced by upland farmers.

We began the term with Year 10 students receiving an assembly from Kerryanne and Beth, engagement officers from the project, who 'sowed the seeds' about the importance of nature recovery. From here, Year 10 classes each took part in a session where they took actual seeds from rare native species and planted them into pots; making a note of the species, geographic location of the seeds and the date planted.

The next element was a rather chilly but spectacular November visit to Low Way Farm, an upland farm in Holwick. Joined by Kerryanne, Beth and other colleagues, the students took part in some restoration planting activities. They also had chance to interview the farmer to learn about farming in harmony with nature in Upper Teesdale.

Students learnt about traditional practices, which have been passed on through generations in order to support the species-rich landscape. Students will return to the farm in the summertime in order to compare the landscape and carry out ecological sampling.



## Thinking about your next steps?

**Future options and careers has been a big thing at Teesdale School this term.**

As well as learning about specific career opportunities within lessons, some of the activities students have taken part in are critical business thinking sessions in form time, careers drop down day, careers assemblies and Green Careers Week.

This term also marked the launch of our Year 10 and 12 work experience which will take place the week beginning Monday 3rd July 2023. All students from Years 10 and 12 will attend a workplace for five days so they can get fully immersed into the world of work and potential career pathways.

As well as this, our careers advisor, Caroline, joined us this term. Caroline will be completing 1:1 career interviews with students throughout her time here. She also offers a careers drop-in session on a Tuesday lunchtime in the Vibrancy Area.

For more information about careers - such as labour market information, future study options and career paths - please see our weekly careers newsletter, which is posted on our social media and emailed out.

## A trip to the theatre



**Students from Years 9 to 11 enjoyed a visit to the Theatre Theatre Royal in early November to see the much-acclaimed Stephen Daldry production of 'An Inspector Calls'.**

As well as having a fantastic time, members of the public commented on how well behaved the group were.

Harriet in Year 11 was keen to share her experience of the professional production of a set GCSE text: "The stage play allows us to see changes in mood along with the destruction of their family in a literal and shocking way. This experience is one I will carry with me and I already want to see it again."



# Lessons from Auschwitz

**This term saw four of our Year 12 historians complete the Lessons from Auschwitz project with the Holocaust Education Trust.**

The project involved a series of seminars and a day-long trip to Auschwitz itself. Students will now go on to plan a project to share their experiences with younger students in the new year as part of Holocaust Memorial Day.

One of our students Evie, explained: "I would say the trip was a humbling experience, which made Everyone realise how lucky we are to live in a more privileged society where we aren't judged for our identity. It was also very informative and I have learnt a lot about the camps, especially Birkenau."

Jack added: "Overall, it was a chilling day which really opened my eyes into what life was really like. With previous studies on the holocaust this really put the devastation and the disgust of the events that occurred into perspective."



# Sporting stars

**It's been a busy first term of the year in the PE department. We have several committed students who not only participate in lunchtime and after school clubs, but who also compete in local competitions!**

In netball, we have fielded teams in the local South West Durham league and to date the year 10 girls remain undefeated whilst the other year groups have had a mixture of wins and losses against some good competition.

In football we have fielded both male and female teams in the South West Durham leagues and the girls have had the opportunity to participate in some indoor futsal fixtures designed to increase girls' interest in the sport.

In cross country we are proud that several students have qualified for the County Championships on the 14th January after representing the school and themselves at the South West Durham Championships held at Barnard Castle School. We are just waiting for the finer details of this new venue to be confirmed.

A team of Year 8 male and female athletes took part in the School Games Indoor Sports Hall athletics at Bishop Barrington. Next up in the School Games calendar is

dodgeball for our Year 9 students in January.

We also have students that are competing at Northern Regional Standard.

In swimming, we have been represented by students participating for themselves and their clubs at the Northern Region Swimming Championships in Sheffield with all students achieving personal bests and top placings in their events. Teesdale Swimming Club is always on the look out for new members...

In archery we are also proud of the progress being made by one of our students who has recently competed and won her category at the Northern Counties Championships. As this newsletter goes to print, she will be attending the Junior Nationals in Warwickshire.

Internationally, we continue to have students that compete at the highest levels in sailing and cycling and we continue to be extremely proud of their accomplishments.



## Did you know?

**The tallest Christmas tree ever displayed was in Seattle, Washington, measuring 221 feet tall.**

**The abbreviation 'X' in xmas is not actually an abbreviation. It stands for "Chi" which means Christ in Greek.**



# Geographers in Glasgow!

**This term saw our keen A level geographers head to Troon beach and Glasgow for a three-day fieldwork trip to enhance their A level course knowledge.**

Students gained a deeper understanding of their course and got to try out a range of human and physical geography data collection techniques. It wasn't all work of course, pupils challenged themselves both physically and mentally during an evening rock climbing, balanced out with some well deserved relaxation time and good food in local restaurants.



## The language detectives are back!

**On Thursdays the Language Detectives have been linking up with students from Durham University to discuss the amazing benefits of learning languages and we've also had some taster sessions in Italian and Russian (special thanks to Dasha, our Russian language expert!)**

In January we'll be heading to Durham to join the university students on a day of activities in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures – it promises to be a fascinating and enlightening day learning about what it's like to study languages at university.



## Can you work out the Christmas song?

**'Rodolfo era uma rena com um nariz encarnado. Que brilhava no escuro e era mesmo engraçado.'**

Clue = nariz means 'nose'.



# A busy term in the Teesdale ART DEPARTMENT

Take a look at all the fantastic news from our art department this term...

## Libby's inspiration

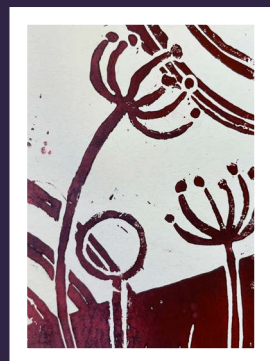
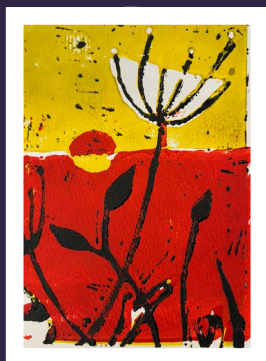
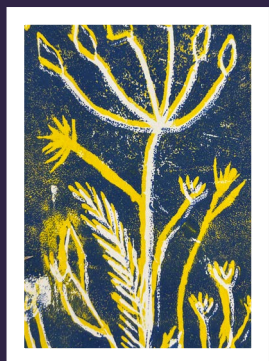
**Libby in Year 13 is currently exploring the theme of time in her work and has been inspired by a recent visit to the Bowes Museum.**

She said: "I really enjoy investigating the contrast between modern and historical art styles. As this is one piece in a series, all the backgrounds are different as they are done experimentally and in the moment. I find this way of working really exciting as I am never sure of what the outcome is going to look like."



## Print-tastic!

**Year 10 artists have made a fantastic start to their Key Stage 4 course this year by exploring the topic of natural forms. Students studied the printmaker Angie Lewin and have created their own lino prints inspired by her work. We think they have all done a fantastic job!**



## Rio's installation

**Year 13 artists Rio has worked really hard this term to create her own installation piece.**

She says: "My work has been heavily inspired by maximalism and the work of Sasha Bikoff. I enjoy the use of clashing colours and intricate patterns that tie the pieces together. I have taken these ideas to create my own space, a kaleidoscopic symphony of colour that can be enjoyed by all."



# A great start for Year 7

Since joining Teesdale School in September, Year 7 artists have been working hard on learning about the formal elements of art and design.

More recently they have been exploring the work of German expressionist, Franz Marc and his colourful paintings of animals. We are so impressed with how hard Year 7 have been working on blending their

watercolours and they have created some fantastic pieces of work. We look forward to seeing how they continue to develop.



## Barney Bees

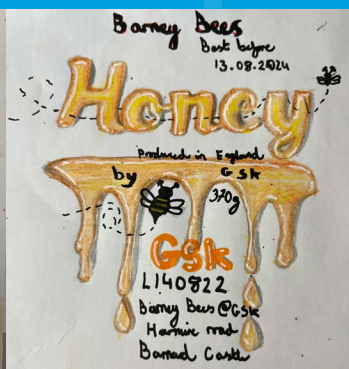
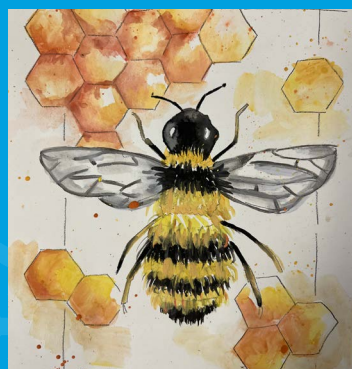
This term, our Year 9 artists took part in an exciting workshop to design a new packaging label for GSK's very own honey - Barney Bees.

Fran and Liv came in from Glaxo to talk to students about apprenticeship options available at GSK, and also the aspects which need to be considered when designing packaging for a

product. Students then took part in a practical workshop, building on their classwork to design a new label for the honey which is made by the bees living in the hives on site. We are so excited to see which

design will be chosen to be printed on the jars, which will be available for sale!

Watch this space!



Find more of our students' amazing creations over on our social media pages.



North East  
SCITT

# Train to be a teacher in 2023

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Find out more at: [www.northeastscitt.co.uk](http://www.northeastscitt.co.uk)

## Making the move to teaching is easier than you think...

Did you know you can train to be a teacher in our school? Training to teach in our school with North East SCITT takes less time and is more affordable than many people realise. Our nine-month courses begin every September meaning you could be starting out on a new career before you know it. Many people worry they don't have what

it takes to make the move into teaching, but with training and support from our team of experienced, outstanding teachers who are right beside you from day one, we always prove them wrong. If you have a good degree and the desire to learn new skills and make a difference, then we'd love to talk to you.

## Thinking about training to teach?

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 with North East SCITT.

19 <sup>th</sup>	January	2023
8 <sup>th</sup>	February	2023
10 <sup>th</sup>	March	2023
18 <sup>th</sup>	April	2023
19 <sup>th</sup>	May	2023
8 <sup>th</sup>	June	2023
27 <sup>th</sup>	June	2023

Virtual taster days also available. Please check our website for more details.



Newcastle  
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