



**Teesdale School
& Sixth Form**

WINTER NEWSLETTER

December 2019

Dear parents, carers and friends

It has been a momentous year for Teesdale School and Sixth Form. An outstanding Ofsted judgement, superb exam results and then the perfect Christmas present from The Sunday Times, who named us as the North East State Secondary School of the Year. None of these achievements would have been possible without the support of parents and carers, the hard work of our students and dedication of staff. We would like to say a very big thank you to everyone involved and to recognise all that has been achieved as a team effort.

This year we have celebrated the twelve days of Christmas with displays, Carols, festive films, a craft fair and a fantastic Christmas concert at the Sage. Students and staff have watched with some curiosity, as our Christmas village has grown around the pond in the new nature reserve. Mr French has been the mastermind behind this festive wonderland and such is his enthusiasm for the project we are beginning to think that he may be considering new career opportunities at the North Pole.

There have been crimes against fashion as Christmas jumpers, ties and socks were donned to raise money for charity, and considerable crimes against music were witnessed during Christmas Karaoke.

Of course, it is easy to be swept up in the fun of the festive season, but the Christmas period is also a time of sadness for many. We have recognised this by participating in the 'Tins not Tinsel' project to collect products for a local food bank and each form class has contributed to the shoebox appeal. The willingness of our students to serve others ahead of themselves continues to be an inspiration.

Fundamentally, Christmas is about family. All those connected to Teesdale School are part of a wider family and we want to wish you a very Merry Christmas, to recognise and value every one of you, and to send you hopes for good health and happiness in 2020.

Clare Ellis

**Head of School
Teesdale School and Sixth Form**

Sunday Times State School of the Year Award

We are delighted to announce that Teesdale School and Sixth Form recently won The Sunday Times North East State Secondary School of the Year award!

The Sunday Times Schools' Guide (published every November) is widely acknowledged as the most authoritative survey of the country's best schools, which identified the 2,000 highest-achieving schools in the UK, ranked by their recent examination results. Our school was named the best state secondary school in the North East with mention of our success over the last year including the two-thirds of A level students who achieved grades A* -B.





Students explore the capital!

A group of Year 8-11 students had a marvellous couple of days exploring London earlier this term as part of an English theatre trip.

Students kicked off their adventure in the capital by watching two fantastic musicals - first up was an amazing performance of The Lion King at the Lyceum Theatre followed by the fantastic School of Rock at the Gillian Lynne Theatre.

Day two saw students practising their theatrics at the world-renowned performing arts venue, Shakespeare's Globe. Students took part in a specialist acting workshop before touring the spectacular venue on the south bank of the River Thames.

The visit to the capital was topped off with an exploration of the opulent Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington.

Our students had a wonderful time and as ever were a credit to the school when out and about.

THE JOKE CORNER

What is a snowman's favourite breakfast?

ICE CRISPIES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

20 DEC - End of term

06 JAN - Back to school

09 JAN - Year 11 parents' evening

16 JAN - Year 8 parents' evening

30 JAN - Year 8 options evening

14 FEB - End of half term

24 FEB - Back to School

To keep up to date with all news and events please visit:

www.teesdaleschool.co.uk

Year 7's capture amazing photographs

Over their half-term break, our Year 7 art students spent time capturing some beautiful photographs of their natural environment.

Students were inspired to get out and about to take their pictures and have explored a range of compositional devices to create a whole host of exciting shots!

We are all so impressed with the students' homework, here are just a few of the fantastic outcomes...



Students raise funds for Air Ambulance

Sixth Form students organised a Halloween bake sale last term raising over £80 for the Great North Air Ambulance Service, as a way to thank the organisation after rescuing their close friend.

Well done to all involved!

We're on Twitter and Facebook!



@teesdaleschool



@teesdaleschoolandsixthform



Izzy's Boxing Day Dip

Thoughtful Year 13 student, Izzy Semley, has signed up to join in on the Boxing Day Dip to raise money for brain injury charity, Headway, and has already smashed her £500 goal by raising just under £2,000 in just seven days.

When Floss, a close friend of Izzy, acquired a life-changing brain injury due to

a car accident, Izzy decided more could be done to raise awareness for the charity.

Izzy commented: "Floss' life isn't over, it is simply heading in a different direction and although the destination is unknown, with the support and understanding of people around her it can and will be made positive."



Remembering together

As part of our commemoration of Remembrance Day, students took part in assemblies to mark the 75th anniversary of three crucial WWII battles of '44; Monte Cassino, D-Day, and Kohima and Imphal.

The assemblies focussed on the collaboration of the many different nationalities who fought alongside each other to overcome the Axis powers.

At Monte Cassino, an army of 240,000 with troops from six continents were victorious resulting in the liberation of Rome; at D-Day, 13 nations collaborated in Normandy; and at Kohima and Imphal one of the most ethnically diverse Armies in history would come together to win one of the most remarkable victories of the war.

Coffee morning total

This term, students across all year groups entered our baking competition to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support as part of their national coffee morning.

A huge thanks to those who supported us. We raised a grand total of £328.50!



District cross country success

Well done to our junior and intermediate teams who competed at the district cross country this term.

There were some fine performances and several students qualified for the county championships to be held in January.

George Rabbett-Smith finished 2nd in his junior boys race.

Also qualifying for the county championships were:

Inter Boys - Nathan Mawer 5th, Lewis Porter 6th, George Peacock 7th

Inter Girls - Tia Bell 6th, Alisha Bell 8th, Niamh Linsley 13th, Jess Leech 16th

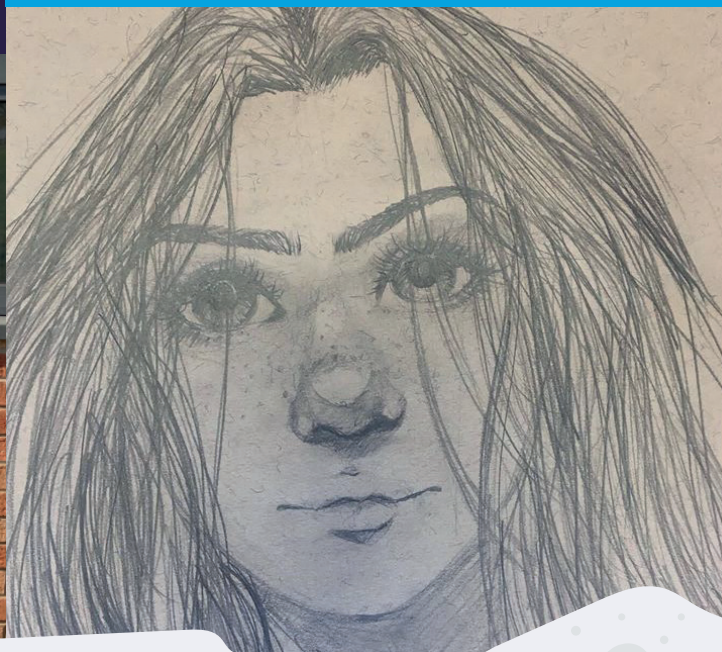


Year 11 masterpieces

Our Year 11 artists have been working very hard on their drawing skills this term.

They are currently exploring a variety of themes such as habitats, working and messages. They have been focussing particularly on creating tone when using pencil to create a realistic 3D effect. These drawings will be a part of their coursework portfolios, where drawing is an important component counting for 25% of their mark.

They have all done a fantastic job and should be proud of their progress - keep it up!



GCSE success

This summer we celebrated a superb set of GCSE results for the second year running just a month after receiving our 'outstanding' judgment from Ofsted.

18% of all grades were achieved at Grade 8 and above (the old A* equivalent), a superb achievement that showcases the strength of our school and the work ethic of our students.

Five students, Evie Scott, Grace Tarpey, Oliver Askwith, Jonathan Proud and Oliver Welsby collectively achieved 38 Grade 8 and 9s. Evie and Grace join a tiny fraction of students nationally who achieved six or more Grade 9s, gaining eight and six respectively.

Amongst many notable achievements, Oliver Sayer, Imogen Harrison, Oliver Askwith and Rachel Atkinson exceeded national projections for progress between the start of secondary school and their GCSE exams by an average of two whole grades.

An impressive 62% of students reached grade 5 or above in both English and maths. In English, 88% of pupils achieved a grade 4 and in maths, 78% reached this important standard (the old equivalent of C+).

In mathematics, 11% of all grades achieved the highest Grade 9 for the third year running, well above the national average. 19% of all maths grades were at Grade 8 or above, 21% of all History grades reached this standard and 23% of all Geography grades. Triple Scientists results were exceptional and topped by Physics, where 61% of all grades reached 8 or above. The strength and depth of performance across the whole cohort is exemplified with 48% of entrants gaining the prized Distinction Starred grade in BTEC Sports and 36% in BTEC Art.



Fun Christmas facts:

Mince Pies

Although now mostly vegetarian, in Victorian times, mince pies were made with beef and spices.

Tangerines

The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes from 12th-century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and tangerines at the houses of the poor.

Wassailing

Carols began as an old English custom called wassailing, toasting neighbours to a long life.

Stockings

Hanging stockings out comes from the Dutch custom of leaving shoes packed with food for St Nicholas' donkeys. He would leave small gifts in return.

Christmas Trees

Nearly 60 million Christmas trees are grown each year in Europe.

Noel

The word Noel derives from the French expression "les bonnes nouvelles" or "the good news".

The Birth of Jesus

Many theologians estimate that Jesus wasn't born on December 25 but sometime in September between 6BC and 30AD.

Turkey

Before turkey, the traditional Christmas meal in England was a pig's head and mustard.

Banning Christmas

In 1647, after the English Civil War, Oliver Cromwell banned festivities. The law wasn't lifted until 1660.

Ethan's Great North Run

A huge well done to Ethan who took part in the Great North Run back in September.

Ethan raised a whopping £1135 for Heel and Toe, a charity which provides free therapy for children with cerebral palsy.

He has worked extremely hard in the run up to the event, training in all weather. His hard work and effort truly paid off as he beat his personal best time during the race.

Congratulations on a fantastic achievement!



Exam invigilators required

To start end of February 2020.

Salary Band: NELT SCP 3 - £9.36 per hour, payable at the end of each session.

Casual hours – must be available in May and June. Full training will be given and if interested, please contact the school for an application pack.

Closing date Friday 24 January 2020.

Students compete in endurance dinghy race

Congratulations to Year 7 students Max and Reuben and Finn from Year 8 who, along with other members of the Teesdale Sailing and Watersports Club, recently took part in the Southport 24 Hour Race - the UK's number one dinghy endurance race.

The race is continuous over the entire 24 hours, even in extreme weather conditions, taking place at the Marine Lake at Southport.

The boys contributed to the Club completing the whole 24 hours and 57 laps!



Student art featured in exhibit



Before summer, a group of our students worked with artist Pollyanna Turner to create artwork that challenges gender stereotypes.

Earlier this term we were lucky enough to see the work displayed in a public exhibition, Stepping Out the Box, as part of Changing Relations at Locomotion, Shildon.

It was fantastic for students to re-engage with the work and see it in a professional exhibition.

One student said: "It feels really special and meaningful that other members of the public are going to see it. It's exciting to see it outside the classroom."

A level success

Teesdale Sixth Form celebrated again this summer thanks to a spectacular set of A level results, with 44% of all grades awarded at the school A* or A, 26% A*, and 85% of all grades C or above.

Our 'value added' score (how far pupils exceed their expected grade upon joining) was also more than half a grade higher than last year, and well above the national average score.

There were some notable individual performances including: Emily Sams who achieved 3A*s and an A; Isobel Hutchinson, Bethany Windle and Daniel Gaskin who each secured 3 A*s – Daniel's being one of the top 50 maths grades in the country; Edward Sabey and Henry Wood, who have both gone to Sheffield University to study different aspects of engineering, secured 3 As and an A* and 2 As, respectively.

Many of the cohort went on to study at elite universities including Nina Holguin who went on to study ancient and modern history at Worcester College, Oxford. In total 68% of students secured a place at coveted Russell Group institutions.

Head of Sixth Form, Dr Simon Henderson, said:

"As ever, we are incredibly proud of our students and the commitment, drive and determination they have shown. They are an inspiration to all those who work with them and to the wider community."

Year 12 students also celebrated with Robbie Lavin, Evie Peacock and Caitlin Rudge completing certificate level BTEC qualifications having spent the last year developing their skills as a stepping stone to apprenticeships.

Robbie took up a highly competitive position at GlaxoSmithKline. Evie entered the fire service and Caitlin joined a local primary school to work in early years' education.



Year 9 artists

Our talented Year 9 students made a fantastic start to the year by practising their tonal drawing skills, inspired by the work of Peter Randall Page.

Students recorded pieces of Peter's work using different mark-making techniques. The project, based on natural forms, will see students exploring a wide variety of areas and materials, such as photography, ceramics and textiles. We are excited to see how their work develops further over the year.

By Daisy Goodwin, Year 13



Depaul charity visit

At Teesdale Sixth Form we are about more than just exam results. We believe that it is important that our students make a positive impact on those around them and make a difference in the local and wider community.

Earlier this term, Year 12 and 13 students attended a session run by homelessness charity, Depaul. Over 80,000 young people face homelessness or hidden homelessness each year in the UK and Depaul works to provide practical help to those in desperate need.

Students took part in a game to simulate some of the problems faced by young people at risk and explored some of the difficult decisions they have to make.

The Sixth Form Committee will be leading efforts to raise money for Depaul in the coming months.



Shotton Hall



School Centred Initial Teacher Training

Teacher training opportunities

Did you know that Teesdale School helps to train the next generation of new teachers and we're looking for new recruits to start in September 2020?

Through our sponsor, The North East Learning Trust, we are a partner of Shotton Hall SCITT, the Trust's very own outstanding teacher training provider.

Trainees start their training at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee, then undertake placements in schools right across the North East, including here at Teesdale School and Sixth Form.

Applications are now open for primary and secondary courses starting in September 2020 with bursaries of up to £26k available for certain subjects.

To find out about entry requirements and the opportunities available, as well as hearing from people who have taken the leap and changed career visit: www.shottonhallscitt.co.uk

New sixth form exchange programme

Teesdale Sixth Form is about to embark on an exciting exchange programme with a school in Bavaria. Plans are now in place for students from Oettingen in Bayern to visit us here in Barnard Castle in March next year, with the reciprocal visit from Teesdale students there in the autumn.

The project is a comparative study of the impact of industrial and technological revolution on rural communities.

Watch this space for more updates...

Mewhort scholarships

After our amazing A level results, we were delighted to award Mewhort Scholarships to some talented sixth formers.

Daniel Gaskin was awarded the top prize of £1500 for each year of his undergraduate study at Durham University. The panel of trustees were not only impressed by his clean sweep of A*s at A level and his maths score which placed him in the top 50 students in the country but the way he presented himself during interview.

Edward Sabey, Isobel Hutchinson, Lucy Deere, Nina Holguin, Henry Wood and Heather McLachlan were each awarded £1000 per year of undergraduate study.

Edward and Henry both went to Sheffield University to study different aspects of engineering.

Heather completes a trio of aspiring engineers and went on to study at Glasgow University.

Lucy is following her dream to become a dietician at Chester and Isobel is now studying biological sciences at Liverpool. Nina joined Worcester College, Oxford to study ancient and modern history.

Another group of Mewhort Scholars recently wrote to the Trust to tell them of their success. Among them was Rhiann Llewellyn who graduated this year with a first class honours degree and Alec Sabey who was recently accepted into the Royal Army Medical Corps.

The scholarships are just one of the many ways that Teesdale Sixth Form provides its students with top class opportunities.



JOKE CORNER

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?

A Christmas quacker!