

Introducing our New Headteacher



Mr Zaheer joined Teesdale School in September 2024. He is also Headteacher at another school in the North East Learning Trust, Rye Hills Academy. Some of our reporters have conducted an interview with Mr Zaheer to help us get to know him!

We first asked what Mr Zaheer's future plans are for Teesdale. He was clear that as a Headteacher there is always lots to do and we adapt and change wherever necessary. Excitedly, he shared that he takes inspiration from sport. If a team makes small improvements in different areas, it will ultimately make a big overall impact. If as a school we continue to be a tiny bit better than yesterday, he shared this is when he feels goals are achieved.

Mr Zaheer wanted to state that he believed that Teesdale school was a great school before he arrived with evidence in results and OFSTED.

However, what he hopes to achieve within our school community is a consistently calm and stable environment with embedded routines. Greater rewards is another aspect within our school community that he really wants to focus on. For example, we just celebrated our Year 11 students finishing their mock exams with a huge pizza celebration which was a great success. Mr Zaheer pointed out that this was actually the highlight of his experience at Teesdale so far.

Before we got to the fun questions, we asked one more serious question. We asked what the biggest impact was that Mr Zaheer would like to leave on Teesdale. His number one priority is to ensure that students are safe at school. Maintaining a culture where students keep themselves safe and feel comfortable to speak up when necessary. He further emphasised his passion that at the root of everything in our school, he wishes to ensure that every student leaves Teesdale having had every opportunity to reach academic success. This goal was the foundation of the decision to create setting across all lessons, allowing students to reach their potential.

Now, let's move onto the juicy details! Mr Zaheer revealed to us exclusively that his favourite Christmas movie has to be the

original Home Alone. It was first released when he was a child, so it brings back fond Christmas memories!



We then asked him to tell us his favourite biscuit, to which he replied "I haven't met a biscuit I don't like". However, when pressed on this important matter, we reached the conclusion that it is in fact a Bourbon.



Taking a more savoury approach, he shared his favourite crisps are Walkers Heinz Ketchup (controversial, we know) and Pringles Texas BBQ.

Finally, he revealed that his most listened to music artist is The Kings of Leon, but he is currently more into podcasts!



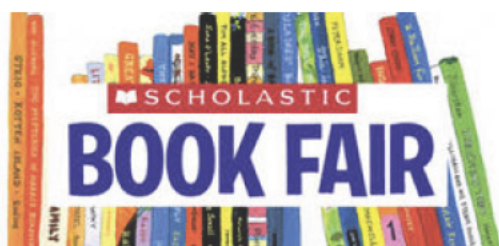
Scholastic Book Fair

Teesdale has recently taken part in their first Scholastic Book Fair in 21 years. We decided that our students had waited long enough, it was time to bring it back!

From the 20th-26th November, we had three stocked bookcases delivered for our students to browse. The books we had delivered covered a wide range of age categories and genres for all of our students to enjoy. From The Hunger Games to Percy Jackson, we even had a few self-proclaimed anti-readers intrigued by our Fortnite selection and TikTok sensations.

The fair was held during lunchtimes in our Vibrancy area and it's fair to say that it got rather busy in there. Students from all year groups were popping by to see what was on offer and create their Wishlist. What a pleasure it was to see so many of our students reading blurbs, discussing books with friends and showing an overall excitement to read.

It was brilliant to see lots of teachers having discussions with students about what they enjoyed reading and discussing their personal favourites. Staff received some fantastic recommendations!



Barnard Castle Christmas Light Switch On

On Friday the 29th of November, it was time for Barnard Castle to switch on their glorious Christmas lights. The event took place with a parade at 6:30pm from Star Yard, Horsemarket and onto Scar Top. The parade finally finished at the castle, where a colourful light show took place.



On Scar Top there was a range of food vendors including Piggy Blinders, The Crown and Crepe Expectations. There was also food and drink provided in the methodist church where Santa's grotto was also situated.

The Christmas lights were organised by TCR Hub in partnership with Barnard Castle Town Council, Barnard Castle Lights Committee, English Heritage, The Witham, the

the Methodist Church and local businesses, supported by community groups such as The Clique and The Lions.

Our very own Art Department along with some of our fantastic students created some pretty spectacular light up sculptures to carry in the parade - we can safely say that the event was a success!

Christmas Relax and Revise Strategies

7 top tips to boost your GCSE revision



Although it is a very important time for many of our students when it comes to revision, it is also essential that everyone takes some time over Christmas to relax and spend time with family.

However, when it does reach the time to dig out your books, here are a few strategies to ensure you are getting the most out of your revision:

- Revision cards. / Flashcards.
- Create a timetable for revision times.
- Set a main goal for the end of the week and mini goals for throughout the week.
- Compare with friends.
- Mind maps.
- Checklists to remind yourself of the progress you have made.

Whatever you do, remember to enjoy your break and take some time for yourselves!

FESTVE ACTIVITIES

Christmas Cookie Recipe

Ingredients:

- 280g of flour
- ½ teaspoon of baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon of salt
- 170g of unsalted butter
- 150g of granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 2 teaspoons of pure vanilla extract.
- 15-20 colourful hard-boiled sweets

Optional toppings before baking

- 1 large egg white or 2 tablespoons water (30ml)
- 65g of granulated sugar or sprinkles.



Staff Favourites!

Our staff favourites for this half term include films, books and food!

Mr Kelly: The Empire Strikes Back, Goldfinger and steak and chips!

Mrs N Bell: About Time, Rebecca and cheese (all of it!).

Our Team...



1. Whisk the flour, baking powder, and salt together in a medium bowl. Set it aside.
2. In a large bowl beat the butter and sugar together until completely smooth and creamy.
3. Add the egg and vanilla and beat until combined.
4. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix until combined.
5. Divide the dough into 2 equal parts. Place each portion onto a piece of lightly floured parchment paper. With a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough out to about 1/4-inch thickness. Use more flour if the dough seems too sticky.
6. Lightly dust one of the rolled-out doughs with flour. Place a piece of parchment on top. Place the 2nd rolled-out dough on top. Cover with plastic wrap or aluminum foil, then refrigerate for at least 1-2 hours.
7. As the cookie dough chills, begin crushing the sweets into pebble-sized bits.
8. Once cookie dough has chilled, preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Line 2-3 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Carefully remove the top dough piece from the refrigerator. If it's sticking to the bottom, run your hand under it to help remove it.
9. Using your large cookie cutter, cut the dough into shapes. Using your small cookie cutter, cut out the centre shape. (You don't need the centre piece—re-roll it!) Re-roll all the remaining dough and continue cutting until all is used. Repeat with a 2nd piece of dough. Note: It doesn't seem like a lot of dough, but you get a lot of cookies from the dough scraps you re-roll.
10. Carefully arrange cookies on baking sheets 3 inches apart.
11. Fill the cut-out centres about 3/4 full with crushed sweets. The sweet pieces melt and expand, so you don't need to over-fill.
12. Bake for 12-13 minutes or until sweets have melted and the cookies are lightly browned around the edges.
13. Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet until the melted candy centre sets, about 15 minutes. Once melted candy centre has set, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Festive Wordsearch!

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Y	T	A	Q	E	U	Q	G	C	S	A	I	N	T	N	I	C	H	O	L	A	S	K
P	I	E	L	C	A	Y	O	S	E	N	A	C	Y	D	N	A	C	T	F	Z	I	Q
C	V	C	M	E	Q	G	N	F	T	J	C	T	A	G	G	R	W	S	W	Q	R	Y
H	I	J	B	M	I	V	G	P	M	J	H	P	F	K	N	B	Y	T	Z	J	Z	N
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I	Y	B	V	E	Z	L	E	V	L	D	R	E	F	I	N	O	C	E	U	E	H	A
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S	A	N	G	E	L	C	O	L	P	W	B	U	C	L	F	P	S	E	N	G	V	Y

ADVENT
ANGEL
BAUBLE
BETHLEHEM
BOXING DAY
CANDY CANES
CHRISTMAS

CONIFER
DECEMBER
EGGNOG
ELF
JACK FROST
JINGLE BELLS
MINCE PIES

MISTLETOE
NATIVITY
NORTH POLE
PRESENTS
SAINT NICHOLAS
SNOWMAN