

DECEMBER 2021

Welcome to the Autumn Term edition of our newsletter. There is much more to talk about this time as we have been able to return to providing a range of opportunities for students to get involved in. The sheer enthusiasm of the students has been amazing to witness, whether that is with attendance at academies or staying behind school until 5pm to engage in the Boys Network programme – it's fantastic to see everyone getting involved in the activities as a real antidote to all the pressures young people have faced over the past two years. It has also been wonderful to see students coming up with their own ideas and really taking an interest in their community and the needs of others. Each year group is now attached to a charity and the fundraising efforts in the last couple of weeks have been impressive – more details to follow in the new year.

I hope you enjoy reading about what everyone has got up to this term and I wish you all a very safe Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## WEIGHTLIFTING SUCCESS!

We were delighted to hear about the recent success of Alexis (Year 7) at the recent British Weightlifting Championships in Harrogate.

Alexis has been weightlifting since the tender age of 7 and (please pardon the pun) has gone from strength to strength. She trains three times each week after school at the Cube Weightlifting Academy where she has been coached by Josh and Tina.

This year's championship took place over the final weekend of November and involved Alexis and her family travelling down to Harrogate.



Not only was she battling against 16 other competitors in her Under 12 category but you may remember that was the weekend that 'Storm Arwen' hit and so she had to battle to just get there and back!

The effort was worth it – Alexis won gold in her category and is now the British Under 12 Weightlifting Champion!

Not resting on her success, Alexis is already setting her sights on the Under 13 competition as well as on improving her current standing in the world where she is currently placed fourth.

Well done Alexis!

## YEAR GROUP UPDATES

### Year 7

As the first term for Year 7 comes to an end I could not be more proud of the way the year group has settled into the routines of life at John Spence High School.

The year group have risen to the challenge of moving up to high school having had almost no opportunity to partake in the transition process that would normally take place. Students who were strangers in September are forming new friendships and it has been lovely to see each of our seven form classes begin to develop their own identities.

The term started under the shadow of the COVID pandemic and, frustratingly, we find ourselves still having to take steps to keep each other safe. Year 7 students have done their part and have acted on the advice and protocols that have been in place. As a consequence, I am pleased to report that the year group has consistently topped the weekly attendance figures throughout the term.

The year group continues to impress me with their general attitude towards all aspects of school life and their willingness to participate in the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that are available. Registration on Thursday morning tends to be a very quiet affair as large numbers of students attend the various sports academies and I am always pleased to contact home to let families know their child is going to be late because they want to go to one of the after school activities that are running.

This positive engagement is being reflected in lessons too where, week by week, students are picking up reward tokens that recognise their resilient, skilled or considerate behaviour across the range of subject areas that they experience.

Can I once again take this opportunity to thank you as parents and carers for your support in helping the year group settle into JSHS. It was always going to be a challenging start to the new term but, as I said at the start, I am immensely proud of the way this term has gone and I look forward to even more progress and success in the New Year.

Mr Crowe  
Head of Year 7

### Year 8

Year 8 have enjoyed a really positive first term.

We have celebrated individual student success weekly through staff nominations for student of the week - well done to everyone who has been nominated so far. Ruby and Adam were awarded students of the half term for their continued excellent behaviour and commitment to their work in lessons.

We have lots of talented students in the year group. Two in particular deserve a special mention. Ruby founded Jealous Jewels Co. She makes and sells jewellery and hair accessories along with Maggie Jo. You can check her out on Instagram or at her Etsy shop.



May I take this opportunity to thank all parents/carers for their continued support and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mrs Wyllie  
Head of Year 8

## YEAR GROUP UPDATES

### Year 9

Year 9 have had a solid start to the year and have settled into their new linear teaching groups well. There have been many positive comments about how much staff are enjoying teaching them and about how well students are working in their lessons. As you may know, attendance has been a big focus this year, so it would not be right to not congratulate Mr Gibson and 9DGI on being the best attending form class in the year group. Well done!

In addition to this, I am delighted to be able to share some fantastic successes with you. Arjun, came 1st in the "Our Tomorrow" creative writing competition, with Ayla and Kadie as runners up. Mollie and Darcey have recently qualified to represent North Tyneside for the next round of cross country and a big thank you goes to Emma who has been helping to coach the Y8 girls football team in school as well as giving up her own time to help out at the Wildcats football sessions on a Friday evening.

It is wonderful to see students from Y9 taking full advantage of the extracurricular activities on offer. So far, the girls have formed a very successful football team and the boys have made it into the quarter finals of the county cup, winning 4 out of 5 games played. Credit must also be given to U14 boys Badminton champions and the netball team who have done particularly well, remaining unbeaten in their league and coming 4th in the Tyne and wear netball tournament! I am so proud to of all of the students involved and I cannot wait to see them build upon this in 2022.

I must also make a special mention to Natalia who recently won first place in the Tayside ice-skating trophy 2021 with a simply amazing routine. Please have a [watch](#) and I am sure you will agree she was very deserving of the top spot. A big well done Natalia!

2022 is going to be an exciting year with students choosing their GCSE choices. I don't know about you, but time seems to have flown by since I first met all of the children in Year 7 and it has been my pleasure to watch them grow and develop into the wonderful people they have become.

I hope you all have a lovely Christmas break and I look forward to welcoming all pupils back in the new year. Thank you once again for all of your support, Mrs Brown

### Year 10

What a busy first term we have had! Students seem to have really settled back into school, with the start of KS4 and their chosen option subjects. Although students are tired and ready for a break, I am proud of the resilience they have shown in the snapshot exams this past week.

There have been many successes of the year so far and I am glad students are embracing the wider school community. Mrs Winder has provided fantastic opportunities for students to participate in both the 'Boys and Girls Network' programmes whereby professionals from various companies within the North East mentor and provide guidance for future career paths. In addition to this, students showed skill during an expedition to complete their bronze award for Duke of Edinburgh. I am so pleased with the participation of Year 10 to the 'Active Independent Reading' and enjoy reading responses and reviews made on differing texts.

Staff nominated students to be awarded 'Year 10 Student of the Term' and I was thrilled with amount of positivity received. I am pleased to announce that **KATIE** and **CHARLIE** have been awarded! Katie is the only girl in Engineering and the work she is producing is absolutely fantastic! Charlie is just flourishing in every subject – he is efficient, organised and an overall hard worker. Well done to both students and all who were nominated.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2022. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Mrs Knight.



The Year 11 pupils have made a great start to their final year at John Spence!

They have been involved in many activities to help them prepare for post-16 life. They have attended several assemblies that have been held by local colleges and providers of further education.

On top of this the year group are regularly attending meetings with our Connexions officer and they are starting to plan the route they will take to get to their destination. Mrs Winder also arranged for the year group to take part in mock interviews for jobs in many different sectors, and the visitors we had in on the day commented that we have been the best year group she has ever done this with, which was really pleasing to hear.

I hope you all have a great Christmas and look forward to seeing you all back in school in the New Year.

Mr Burnip  
Head of Year 11

## ARTS ACADEMY LAUNCH

The start of the second half term saw the launch of our brand new Arts Academy. Eighteen students from year 7 have been identified to take part in the academy which will see them gaining experience across music, drama, visual arts, film making and music technology.

So far, the students have been developing their musicianship by playing on a variety of musical instruments but more recently, students have been combining the art forms of music, drama, film, editing and recording to put together a virtual version of our annual Christingle.



Unfortunately, due to Covid, we are unable to visit our feeder primaries to do our usual work for the Christingle but this has allowed our students in the arts academy to use their skills in order to record a version of the Christingle which will then be shared with the local community.

We look forward to next term, where the students will be creating their own radio show for the school community.

Mr Grazer



# THIS IS CREATIVE ENTERPRISE

This Is Creative Enterprise is back!

Year 9 students have the opportunity to join us for the latest creative opportunity to work with designers on live briefs.

We are looking for those who are interested in exploring the fashion sector. We will be looking at areas of trend prediction, design, illustration, production, fashion business, marketing, styling, journalism, editorial, social media, fashion photography, fashion communication and more.



Fashion is not just clothing! It influences everything; football strips, social, political, economical and technological issues.

Look on your google classroom to see the briefs for this year and apply through the link.

## BRING IT ON! VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

At the beginning of November a selection of Year 8 and Year 9 students took part in this year's virtual 'Bring it on' Engineering event.

Students were set an Engineering task on the theme net zero and worked in groups to design, develop and make their ideas to fit the theme. All students worked hard, independently and enthusiastically to produce some of the following:

- Electric helicopters with wheels to help generate more energy
- A washing machine that recycles water and generates its own energy from the condensation from the hot water
- Electric powered quad bikes and buses
- Wind turbines
- A child's moving toy horse
- A scarifier which generates energy to power a tractor
- An Archimedes screw linking a dam so fish can swim up and down it
- A recycle bin which rotates a propeller every time rubbish is put in to generate energy for other uses.

We can't wait for next year's Bring it on event!



# CAREERS

## YEAR 11 PREPARING FOR NEXT YEAR



Another busy half term with representatives from a huge variety of local colleges and sixth forms hosting assemblies to our Year 11 students. In September, pupils attended a taster morning at Tynemet College and QA Sixth form, to experience College life and try out a subject specific course.

As part of their preparation for leaving John Spence Year 11 took part in our annual mock job interview event which took place in November. Pupils selected a job from a list of 6, then worked through a series of tasks to prepare them to be interviewed by a representative from that business. The preparatory work involved thinking about dress code, body language and punctuality, as well as reflecting upon individual strengths and weaknesses.

Understandably, the students were very nervous but the event was a complete success with many employers stating that the pupils were well prepared, articulate and organised. Some of our Year 11 students also attended a days taster session at Kirkley Hall, getting the chance to explore courses around animal care and land management.

Well done Year 11!

## YEAR 10

Meanwhile, a small selection of our Year 10 pupils have begun their journey on the Girls Network and Boys Network: two organisations that pair employer mentors up with students for sessions throughout the year.

They are building up great relationships with their mentors, some even meeting for Bubble Tea in Newcastle to talk about resilience!



## YEAR 9—CAREERS AND OPTIONS

As year 9 pupils move towards their options process, we are beginning to build in a program of careers related activities designed to give pupils the opportunity to consider how their option choices might be impacted by their career ambitions.



We began by hosting a drama workshop designed to encourage pupils to follow their own career pathways and make the right choices.



This was followed up with a guest speaker presentation by Tim Bailey, director of Xcite Architecture in Newcastle. Students asked Tim questions around his career choices, the challenges he had faced and his proudest achievements.



## CAREERS

### YEAR 8—BRING IT ON! VIRTUAL WORKSHOP



As part of the Design & Technology department's focus on career pathways, some of our Year 8 and 9 pupils recently took part in a virtual day long workshop which focuses on careers in Engineering.

Pupils got the chance to participate in interactive challenges and activities designed to provide an insight into the role of an engineer.



We are always looking for employers, small business owners and volunteers to build into our careers provision. If you would like to be involved, please contact [kate.winder@johnspence.org.uk](mailto:kate.winder@johnspence.org.uk)

## ALUMNI



Did you attend John Spence? Would you like to get involved in our Alumni program to give something back? If so, sign up to our new Alumni Community. Please contact [kate.winder@johnspence.org.uk](mailto:kate.winder@johnspence.org.uk)

## FUTURE EVENTS

**Futures Month - January:** A program of drop down events, careers lessons and guest speakers.

**Inspiring Futures North Tyneside – Careers Fair:** Thursday 6th January from 10:00am-5:00pm. All parents of year 10 and 11 welcome from 3:00pm onwards.

**University Explained Parents Evening:** 26th January 5:00-6:00pm - Open to parents of Year 9, 10, and 11 students. A chance to hear about the financial myths surrounding University and to talk face to face with all of the local Universities.



# TRIPS

## G.C.S.E DRAMA WORKSHOP

### \*Splendid Productions

*"The best, most creative company around."*

This half term a mixture of students were fortunate enough to experience a full day's workshop with Splendid Productions. Splendid, a company who create challenging, vibrant theatre for young people, delivered a range of educational workshops to year 9, 10 and 11 students. Students explored key theatrical practitioners by being provided with a toolbox of techniques and exercises on how to approach a text as well as how to devise from a stimulus.

Splendid Productions are a fantastic way for students to learn technique and apply the style of practitioners into their work. So many influences, from Lecoq, Berkoff and Brecht that can all be referred to in lessons. All of the students involved in the workshop showed great determination, resilience and skill.

A huge well done!



## KS3 PANTO TRIP



The Panto trip this year is to see 'Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs'.

A group of 36 Key Stage 3 students will take a coach to the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, on Thursday 9th December for the matinee show. They will leave after lunch, miss period 5, and return to school around 5.15pm.

We are sure they'll thoroughly enjoy the show!

*"Oh no, they won't!"*



## CLUBS



On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November, the John Spence cookery club restarted having been missed last year, and it was full of the usual hustle, bustle and fun as it has always been.

Over the course of 7 weeks, students, carefully guided and supported by staff will prepare,

cook and, most importantly, eat an array of dishes from soup and pizza to gingerbread and Bolognese.

Each dish is carefully crafted and teaches students valuable and everlasting skills, with the added bonus of the dishes being nutritious and tasty.

Students are already looking forward to hosting their own celebration meal on the 16<sup>th</sup> December to staff and special guests to show off their hard work and new found skills.

Many members of staff have kindly given up their time to help out with the club; it wouldn't have been such a success without them.



## SPORT



*(U16 County Schools Squad: Rhianna (Captain), Payton , Katie , Josie , Jessica , Scarlet , Abi and Matilda )*

The U16 netball team have started the netball season brilliantly winning all their league matches so far.

The girls also finished as champions at the U16 North Tyneside Netball Tournament, which is a brilliant achievement- scoring over 40 goals and conceding only 6!

A combined year 10 and year 11 netball team took part in the Tyne and Wear County Netball tournament on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November. The standard of netball at the tournament was outstanding and the girls played exceptionally well to finish in 4<sup>th</sup> place. The girls should be very proud of this achievement and the progress that they have made in netball. The year 9 Netball team also competed at the county netball tournament where they played some excellent

netball, again finishing in 4<sup>th</sup> place. The girls should be immensely proud of their effort and resilience shown when playing such strong opposition.

The year 7 and 8 netball teams have been working exceptionally hard in netball academy to improve their netballing skills. The girls have been taking part in regular matches on a Monday after school against other schools in North Tyneside. The year 7A team have won all their matches so far and the year 7B have shown excellent dedication and resilience when playing tough opposition.

The year 8 team have had a number of wins so far and again are in a strong position as we move into the new year.

The year 7, 8 and 9 teams will have the opportunity in the new year to be crowned North Tyneside champions like the U16 team!

There are a number of netball clubs which are highly regarded within the local area such as Seatonians Netball Club at Whitley Bay High School and Beacon Netball club at Marden Bridge.

A number of current John Spence students attend the netball clubs and have really developed their netball skills.

If you require any further information on these netball clubs then please contact Miss Benson using the following email address:

[nichola.benson@johnspence.org.uk](mailto:nichola.benson@johnspence.org.uk)



*(U14 County Schools Squad: Hannah (Captain), Chloe , Millie , Maddison , Molly , Ayla , Jessica , Rhiannon and Chloe )*





This year for  
Children in Need we  
raised a fantastic...

£579.15!!



Thank you to all of the students and staff who took part in a non-uniform day and contributed their £1 to such a worthwhile cause.





**Please remember**

Year 8-11 pupils return to school on Tuesday 4th January for their covid test and then return home, returning to school on Wednesday 5th January at 9.40am and going to form classes.

Year 7 pupils return on Wednesday 5th January for their test and then go to lessons as normal