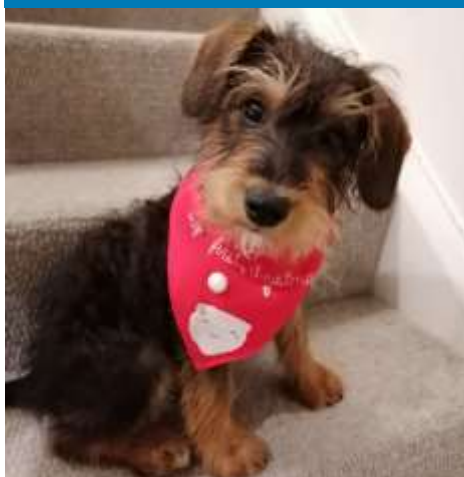


DECEMBER 2022



Welcome to the December edition of our newsletter. It has been a busy term and the articles represent just a fraction of what has been on offer in school this term; this is a reflection of the commitment of John Spence staff in providing as many opportunities as possible for our students. I hope that you enjoy reading about all that we've been up to. Ralph is wishing you all a very merry Christmas!



## BRING IT ON



In October a selection of Year 8 students took part in this year's 'Bring it on' Engineering event in Sunderland. After last year's virtual event it was great to meet engineers face to face and have a go at a range of engineering tasks.

Students explored Sub Sea, Automotive, Digital, Civil and Chemical engineering topics of the engineering sector and took part

in making structures, team building activities, controlling a digger and using robotic hands to pick up objects.

The highlight of the day was meeting a robotic dog worth £35,000 and watching it walk around the event all afternoon.

Students came away from the event with a greater understanding of the wide range of jobs available in Engineering and seeing first hand the new and emerging technologies which are constantly developing the world.

## Year 7

The Year 7 group have made a great start to life at John Spence and have demonstrated they are a group of pupils who are considerate to their peers. Over the first term they have continued to show a high level of engagement, not only in lessons, but for all aspects of school life; attending extra-curricular opportunities in all areas and showing a willingness to make a positive impact on our school community.

The year group were very anxious at the beginning of the term, but as time has passed their worries and apprehensions have slowly eased and most are now comfortable in their surroundings and their confidence has grown. Some pupils have had the opportunity to meet Ralph, our new school puppy who has joined John Spence this term also. He starts his life at John Spence at the same time as our year group and it will be lovely to see them grow together. He will spend some more time in circulation at school once his settling in period is over and I hope that he brings some joy and comfort to our pupils who need additional support.

There have been many opportunities for pupils to take part in new and exciting experiences including; sporting competitions, fixtures and tournaments, a trip to the theatre to see Cinderella, helping out at the North Shields Food Bank, to name but a few. Although uptake for extra-curricular has been good, I would love to see all Year 7 pupils attending at least one club in the New Year. I wish for them to challenge themselves and step out of their comfort zones, and be prepared to push themselves even more.

As a community, the Year 7s have adapted well to life at high school and the daily routines. The pupils have demonstrated their great organisational skills and continue to attend school with all pieces of equipment and looking very smart. One thing I would really like students and parents to do moving forward is ensure that pupils arrive to school on time. Punctuality is extremely important in every day life and it is more so when at school, as our form tutors only see the pupils in a morning and will often share relevant and important information with their class.

We consistently talk about resilience in school and many pupils have already shown us that they have the desire to be in school and learn, even if they feel a little unwell. Our attendance continues to be the best in school and I would urge parents and carers to encourage the children to come in even if they do not feel 100%.

I do hope that all children and families from Year 7 have an amazing Christmas and New Year. I do hope that the children appreciate the time they get to spend together with family and friends over the Christmas break and I look forward to seeing them all in 2023. Merry Christmas everyone!

Mr Burnip  
Head of Year 7





## Year 8

Since the last newsletter was shared, we completed Year 7 and have moved into Year 8. For the first time in what seems like a long time, it was a 'normal' start to the year in the sense we were not returning from a lock down or having to operate in bubbles. It was a huge relief and it meant that we could get straight down to business.

The end of Year 7 was rounded off with a final assembly. This was an opportunity to reward and recognise the success of the students who had achieved some excellent results in the Challenge Walk and 'Zone Day'. The assembly was also the first time we were able to present the 'Form of the Year' trophy.

Huge congratulations must go to Mr Douglas' form class who were the first winners of the award. The trophy is presented to the form class who have accumulated the highest number of points across several categories: fewest number of detentions; fewest referrals to the Behaviour Centre; most students with zero sanctions over the year and the form class with the highest attendance percentage. Runners up this year were 8KHo and 8JPa. There was only a small difference in points across all seven form classes and it really does highlight how the contribution of every student can have an impact!

As part of that final Year 7 assembly, we also presented a number of awards and certificates for a range of awards. This all culminated in the presentation of our first 'Students of the Year' awards. It was a huge privilege to present Sophie (JPa); Francesca (CEn); Maisy (JWe); Logan (DGr); Riley (KHo); Jed (JDo) and Maisie (SMa) with their certificates. I know form tutors found the nomination process difficult as each form had several students who could have won the award but this just highlights how many students in the year group are displaying the attributes that we are all striving for.

These attributes were demonstrated admirably back in September when we received an email from a lady who had been caught up in a hit and run car accident. She was left in a very distressed state and, sadly, no one stopped to help. However, the situation was rescued by two Year 8 boys – Daniel and Jacob who had seen the incident and managed to get some images of the offending vehicle; they then stayed with the lady until her husband arrived and were then able to share their images in the hope that the other vehicle could be traced.

Back in school, we moved toward the half term and students were challenged to submit a Halloween story for our annual writing completion. The overall standards were very high across the school and a number of students were highly placed for their competition entries. It was therefore fantastic to see that the overall winner was another Year 8 student – Daniel.

This spirit of completion and participation is reflected in the weekly totals of students who are submitting reviews as part of their on-going AIR work as Year students are regularly submitting the most numbers of reviews.



As I complete these few comments, the students of 8CEn are preparing for a 'Bake Sale' that they have planned in order to raise funds for the PDSA. There are some amazing-looking bakes arriving and preparations are well underway for the break time sale. We wish them well and hope it is a great success!

Mr Crowe  
Head of Year 8

# YEAR GROUP UPDATES

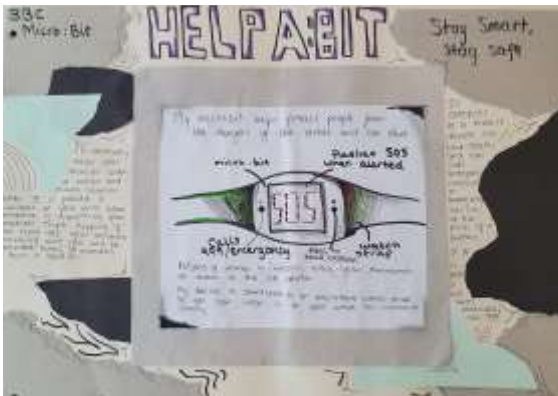
## Year 9

As we end the first term of Year 9 there are some students that deserve a particular mention for their efforts this year so far. Layton for his ongoing resilience, Josh for his dedication and commitment to Ice Hockey outside of school; he has a trial for England and also to represent Great Britain (Good luck Josh!) and Cleo for her wonderful performance at the Year 11 leavers assembly.

We have some very hard working and talented students in our group and I am incredibly proud of their achievements so far. As you know we celebrate Year 9 achievements weekly through nominations to staff and all of those nominated receive a postcard home and a mention in assembly. Well done to all of those students nominated. Their hard work does not go unnoticed. As we look ahead to the New Year, Year 9 have some important decisions to make in terms of their Key Stage 4 options. More information to follow and a date for your diary is **Wednesday 1st March** options day. Can I take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support, and I wish you a very Merry Christmas, I look forward to welcoming Year 9 back in the New Year.

Mrs Wyllie  
Head of Year 9

## Year 10



As 2022 draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the pupils in Year 10 for the mature attitude they have demonstrated towards the first stage of their GCSE journey. The transition from Year 9 to GCSE is not an easy one, however since September, the number of positive comments from staff about how well students have settled into their new subjects has been really lovely to hear.

Pupils have completed their very first GCSE style mock examinations to give them a taste of what real GCSE examinations will be like in 2024. While results for all subjects have not yet been finalised, I really

do hope that students achieve results that reflect their hard work. As we move in to the second term of Year 10, I ask for your continued support in encouraging students to work as hard as they are able to, both in school and at home to enable them to develop the skills and resilience needed to go as far as they possibly can. I always like to give some special mentions in newsletter updates and this one is no exception. Firstly, I would like to give Molly (10DDo) recognition for all that she does, Molly is a fantastic student, who works hard and always gives 100%, she also has some pretty commendable swimming commitments outside of school. In addition to this Molly came first for the European Region in a world wide competition which Mrs Winder entered Molly's work into. The BBC micro-bit is a worldwide competition which involves coding with a micro-bit and designing a product to help with a United Nations Global Goal. This is an amazing achievement which Molly should be extremely proud of.

I would also like to mention one of the most heart-warming and considerate acts of selflessness and kindness that I have seen this year from 3 very special girls from Y10. Ruby, Zoe and Leah all helped to keep a small child safe one morning before school. The child was very young and had managed to get out of the house and was wandering the streets alone. Ruby, Zoe and Leah stayed with the child, stopped him from wandering off, rang for help and came directly into school once they were satisfied the child had someone looking after him, as well as apologising for being late into school! As ever, thank you for your continued support and I wish you all a happy and healthy new year.

Mrs Brown  
Head of Year 10

# YEAR GROUP UPDATES

## Year 11

What a busy first term we have had! Students seem to have settled back into school really well and have demonstrated a more studious approach as they start their Year 11 journey. Assessments are coming thick and fast, as pupils begin to prepare themselves for the real deal in the summer. As the pressure begins to build, I am proud of the resilience they have shown to date as they learn to cope with the demands of their final year at John Spence. It has been great to hear so many positive stories about pupils focus and application to their studies.

Mrs Winder continues to provide copious amounts of Post-16 network opportunities. Pupils have had weekly assemblies which have seen local Post-16 providers come and give pupils an idea of what to expect when choosing to apply to their college/6<sup>th</sup> form. Pupils have also had a mock-interview day where the employers who attended were really pleased with Year 11's effort and would have given some that excelled, a job on the spot!

Intervention in the morning has already shown to be having a positive impact and it is great to see so many pupils really making the most of it. As we continue through the year, pupils will have further opportunities to attend intervention for various subjects and I would simply ask them to make the most of every opportunity that is offered to them, to ensure they reach their full potential.

I asked for nominations from staff for Year 11 student of the term the standout winners were: Evie and Luke. Both have impressed staff around school and have clearly displayed an outstanding attitude towards learning and are going above and beyond. Well done both!

I have some incredibly hard shoes to fill whilst stepping in for Mrs Knight. I think we would all agree that she has done an amazing job in shaping the year group into who they are today! I will now do my upmost to help the year group get across the finish line and hopefully be pleased with their achievements when opening their envelopes in the summer. This will come through hard work, resilience and a commitment from our pupils to want to do the best they can.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2023. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mr Betts

Head of Year 11

## FAMILY LEARNING SESSIONS



This term The Northern Learning Trust offered some family learning sessions to our Year 7 and Year 8 families. These have been received with great enthusiasm from parents and carers. They offered 10 spaces for 4 weekly sessions, each lasting 2 hours, with the focus on making low cost hand made Christmas gifts, such as bath bombs, honey soap and face scrubs.

The parents spend the first half an hour in a peer group, building relationships with each other. The children then join the adults for the remainder of the session for craft making. It has been a pleasure to watch the families sharing this experience and working together. It has also given school an opportunity to get to know the

parents and carers and build up a positive working relationship with these families, as well as a chance to develop the community spirit of school with parents and carers.





## FOODBANK FRIDAYS



A volunteer from the food bank came to visit the pupils in Year 7 during their assembly; to ask for volunteers to help The Bay foodbank.

The response for helpers from Year 7 has been fantastic, with almost all of them wanting to get permission from home to participate.

Each Friday three pupils give up their time volunteering to collect food donations from Morrisons and deliver them to The Bay foodbank.

The volunteering has now also extended to other year groups who also wanted to get involved, making it a favourite Friday activity across the whole of the John Spence community.



# CAREERS

## YEAR 11 MOCK JOB INTERVIEWS

All of our Year 11 students got the chance this half term to apply for a fictional job, complete an application and then interview for the job.

Twenty five employers joined us to conduct the interviews, who all were extremely positive about the professional and ambitious manner in which the students conducted themselves.

Well done Year 11!

## YEAR 8 NHS CAREERS WORKSHOP

This week we hosted a drama production of Careers in the NHS. Year 8 students learnt about the routes into the NHS, including BTECs and apprenticeships and explored the wide variety of job roles to choose from. The students enjoyed the interactive and original format of the event hugely!

## LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION BULLETIN

Did you know that the North East of England has four industry sectors that are growing at a huge rate? These areas will offer lots of opportunity for our young people over the coming years.

For more information, visit [www.northeastambition.co.uk](http://www.northeastambition.co.uk)



Digital



Advanced  
manufacturing



Health and  
life sciences



Energy

## USEFUL LINKS AND UPCOMING EVENT



### Useful Links

Interested in supporting your child to find an apprenticeship? Visit [www.findanapprenticeship.gov.uk](http://www.findanapprenticeship.gov.uk) to search latest vacancies and sign up for alerts.

### Upcoming Event

January is Futures Month at John Spence. There will be a wide range of Careers related activities including a business breakfast, careers speed dating and assemblies.



# SPORT

## BOYS BASKETBALL



The U14 boys basketball team has got off to a great start in the current season! The year 8 & 9 combined team have been working hard competing in the North Tyneside CVL. They have played multiple schools in the borough, displaying fantastic game play but also showing true resilience and sportsmanship.

A special mention to our year 10 leaders who have also been coming along to the training sessions and matches to coach and referee. The leaders will continue to support the basketball team as the year 8 team represents the San Antonio Spurs in the upcoming Jnr. NBA.

The latest Basketball England franchise will see schools from all over the country compete throughout the 22/23 season.

It is great to see basketball growing amongst multiple year groups! If you would like to get involved, KS3 training is Wednesday lunch time and KS4 training is Wednesday after school!

## RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP



This year we have been blessed with superb sport which has graced our televisions, phones and tablets. From local games to world class events, it is always nice to see the superstars of the sporting world battling it out in whichever sport. However, to be part of it, to watch it live and support the opening weekend is something else!

Mid October we did just that with a number of different activities. First of all we attended the Squad on the Tyne event, entering four teams, Year 7 boys and girls and similar with Year 9. For some, it was their first every Rugby experience and to do that playing in an actual stadium (Kingston Park) was a special occasion for many. Every single player did so well and it was fantastic to see the progress they made and the efforts they showed.

The next opportunity came at the same stadium, but it was to be flag bearers for the Scotland v Italy weekend opener. We had a fabulous response to the opportunity which was open to all pupils at John Spence. We narrowed this down to 24 lucky pupils from a range of year groups who performed in a professional manner for spectators from all over the world. Well done to everyone involved.

On the playing field we have seen the Rugby fixtures generate some momentum which is great to see following on from the slow recovery from the pandemic. Opportunities to play are available for all boys and girls in all year groups. We are also strongly supported by our local clubs to offer more playing opportunities within the community. With the legacy of a home World Cup we aim to inspire new players all the time so if anyone is interested in finding out more please contact Mr Pilkington at: [adam.pilkington@johnspence.org.uk](mailto:adam.pilkington@johnspence.org.uk)





# SPORT

## LEADERSHIP



As a school we are proud to support and be approached by various organisations to send some of our leaders to various sporting events across Tyne and Wear. This year has started with a number of pupils reacting to offers via Google Classroom, pupils being selected due to their 100% attendance record, their involvement and keen interest in a certain sport or by their exceptional work within the classroom.

We have great relationships with the likes of North Tyneside PE and the Panathlon Challenge, but the work Mr Pilkington does with the local primary

schools also offers opportunities. Opportunities so far have included:

- Tuesday Club
- Littleton Football (Year 5/6 Competition)
- Swimming Gala
- Panathlon Challenge
- North Tyneside Indoor Athletics
- Tyne and Wear SEND Athletics
- Year 5/6 Netball

Last year we had 27% of our pupils involved in some form of Leadership and we aim to improve this in this academic year through more opportunities in the near future. We value the employability skills that come as a result of pupils putting their name forward to volunteer and lead and it certainly enabled the pupils to be skilled, resilient and consideration, leading a Fit for Life attitude!



As lead school for Leadership, Coaching and Volunteering we are working closely with Whitburn School in Sunderland, creating a Leadership structure to create a greater extra-curricular workforce using Year 10-13 students. We also have a fund to support RISE (our local Active Partnership) to create a Youth Board.

We have also developed the leadership skills of our Year 10 Sports Studies pupils as part of the coursework requirements of their course. All pupils delivered either a football, rugby, basketball, badminton or netball session to Year 7 pupils. All pupils did a great job and this will go towards their coursework grades.



## SPORT

### GIRLS FOOTBALL IN SCHOOLS #LETGIRLSPLAY



John Spence has always been proud to support the opportunities for girls to play Football, either in lessons or during extra-curricular clubs and competitive opportunities against other schools, not forgetting the well-attended Girls Football Academy on Thursday mornings.

With local talent coming out of John Spence and into the professional and semi-professional game such as Shelley Brogden, Jessica Brown and Georgina Spraggon it is fantastic to have local role models for the young girls in our area.

For the past four years we have been heavily

involved within the Youth Sport Trust mission to support the FA Inspiring Change strategy to allow equal access to Football by 2024. We are seen as a beacon school nationally in supporting this and are regular used for case studies and discussions about exemplar practice. It was no surprise then that we received a call from BBC journalist Helen Richardson!

On the 17th of November the BBC cameras had all eyes on John Spence Girls Football Academy!

The Girls Football Academy featured on both BBC Politics North\* and BBC Breakfast highlighting the importance of Girls' Football within the PE curriculum in schools, capitalising on the success of the England Women's football team European Championship win in the summer.

The girl's academy session was filmed and featured heavily throughout the news snippet.

The girls represented excellently in what was baltic weather on the day! Both Ella (Year 7) and Ruby (Year 9) were interviewed by Political Reporter Helen Richardson and talked about the importance of Girls Football within the curriculum, highlighting the opportunities that they have at John Spence when it comes to girls football as well as it helping with their ambitions in football as they grow up.

Ruby is an excellent ambassador for Girls Football and is currently in post as the Barclays Game Changer for North Tyneside. She regularly works with other Game Changers from the North East to think of ways to create more opportunities for girls to play. As part of the work, Ruby has been into local primary schools, attended NUFC Women games (received a free season ticket) and also created FIFA cards from her skills as a player and ambassador. Ruby coaches at the local Wildcats sessions (Girls Football for Primary aged) which are open to all young girls in the area and held at John Spence 4pm -5pm in partnership with North Shields Juniors. Ruby is a real asset to the school and local area.

It is fantastic to see Girls Football on the rise and we are so proud to be riding the wave with it. The Lionesses certainly have made an impact on the sport, as have the NUFC Women's team. The St James Park experiences they have recently had have been excellent family days out at a low cost. Check out their website for their next fixture!

\*The feature will be available to watch on BBC iPlayer until the 18th of December.





# SPORT

## BACK IN FULL SWING...

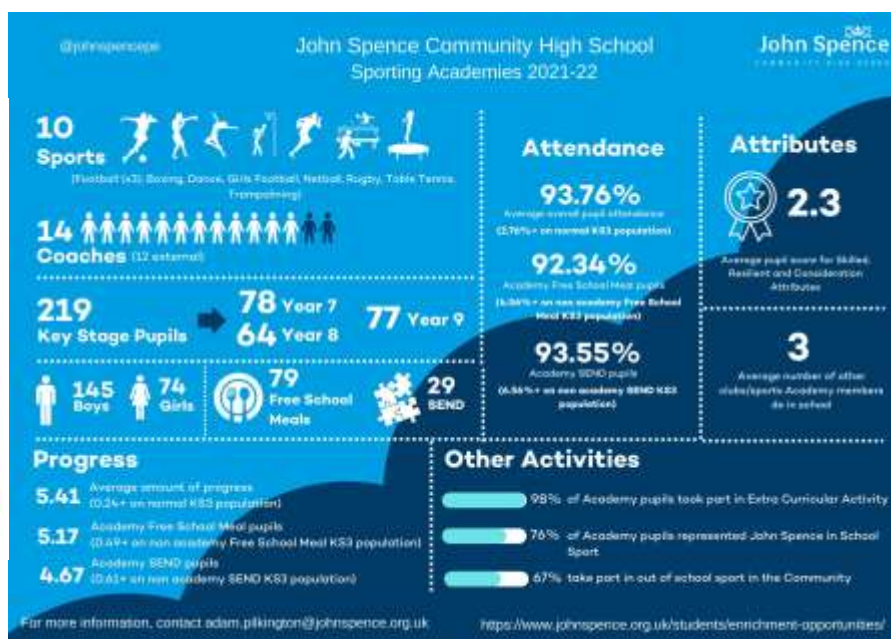
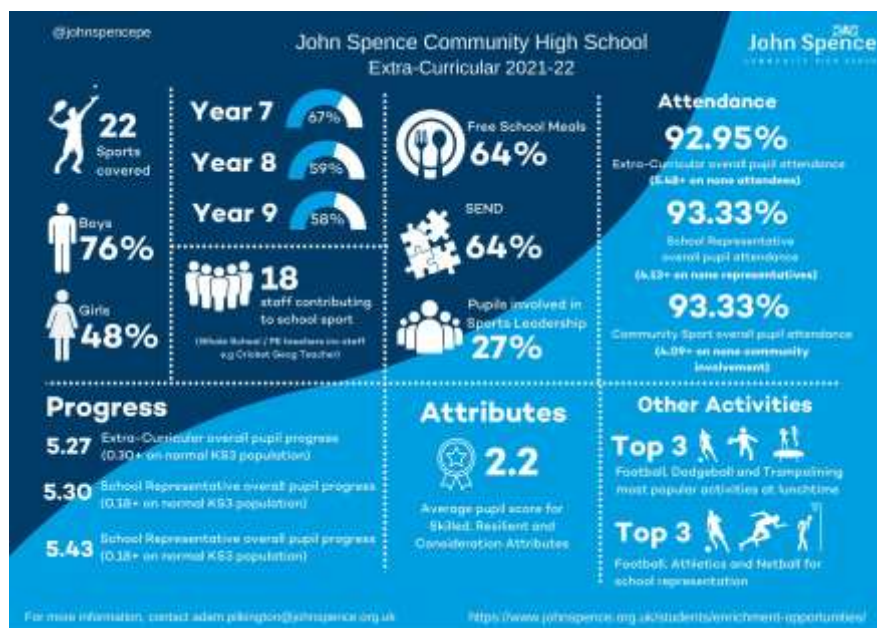
The term has been super busy for everyone involved in PE and School Sport at John Spence. We finally feel like we are back up and running at full speed after the past couple of years.

Clubs have been well attended, academies thriving and festivals/competitions/fixtures taking place multiple times a week involving boys and girls from all year groups.

Everyone at John Spence, from Governors down, understand the benefit that participating in sport/physical activity has on all our pupils social, physical and mental wellbeing and as a school we would like to thank you as parents in supporting our vision to 'Energise a generation through active opportunities inspiring a 'Fit for Life' attitude for all.'

All of our updates, results and pictures can be found on our Twitter page @johnspencepe

Please look at some of the impact we had last academic year:





## TRIPS

### NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

# NOUGHTS & CROSSES

*Sephy and Callum sit together on a beach. They are in love. It is forbidden.*

*Sephy is a Cross and Callum is a Nought. Between Noughts and Crosses there are racial and social divides. A segregated society teeters on a volatile knife edge.*

*As violence breaks out, Sephy and Callum draw closer, but this is a romance that will lead them into terrible danger.*



On the 19<sup>th</sup> October, the drama department took 30 of their students to the Northern Stage to watch the award winning performance of 'Noughts and Crosses.' Pilot Theatre is committed to presenting younger audiences with big ideas relevant to their lives right now. For our students, it may well be their first encounter with this form. Getting it right is a big ask, and there's no bigger issue for young people today than systemic racism. Malorie Blackman's Noughts and Crosses is as relevant today as it was when it was written over 20 years ago. Yearning for a world where we're free to love whoever we choose, is a tale as old as time – think Romeo and Juliet, West Side Story – but this tale of forbidden love is set in the context of racial segregation, capital punishment and

systemic oppression of a single community...in an altered reality that could be any time, any place and yet is every time and every place. This award-winning theatre adaptation by Sabrina Mahfouz is uncomfortable, challenging the audience to face up to their own discrimination and prejudice, just as Sephy and Callum have to. Inspired by infrared photography, Simon Kenny's 'familiar but different' set design is versatile, simple and suggestive, the costume design is subtle and yet indicative of the clear differences between the two groups in this society. Using screens to show on TV what is happening on the stage works well, making the connection that what we see on TV is happening in real life somewhere, to real people. The action on stage is enough to hold the attention of every audience member. You forget who's around you, just like you should. You're invested in these two young people before you, full of dreams and potential, kindness and love – and yet seemingly powerless to make change happen. We all have something to learn here. Ending on a note of hope, there is still much to be done for all those of any age who, like Sephy and Callum, believe that a better world is possible.



# TRIPS

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM



On the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, the drama department took 30 of its Key stage 4 students to watch the chaotic, calamitous and comedic 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' at the Northern Stage.

This was Shakespeare as you've not seen him before, in the round and very much brought to life with relevance, grit and a large dose of

Northern attitude. The different strands of Shakespeare's best loved comedy entwine, as do the modern cultural references with traditional text. It lifted the script off the page and into your lap, enticing you to become part of the show at times.

It tells the story of Hermia who is given an ultimatum to marry Demetrius, live forever alone or die. She escapes with her true love Lysander to the woods, followed by Helena and Demetrius. Mischievous fairy, Puck, wreaks havoc, things don't go to plan to comical effect and Bottom undergoes a hilarious transformation. Interspersed with this, the entertaining yet inept Mechanicals are rehearsing for a play. Their rehearsals build up throughout the play to a final showpiece, providing light to the sometimes darkness of the woods.

The mix of accents was refreshing: Liverpudlian, Glaswegian, Geordie, as is the fact that one of the main characters, Lysander played by William Grint, was a Deaf actor. The integration of sign language into the performance is ground breaking, it really works with the characters and performances. A hilarious performance enjoyed by all!





## TRIPS

### RACING TO SCHOOL—EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Students from John Spence were welcomed at Newcastle Racecourse on the 15th of November, to attend a workshop 'Racing To School - Education Programme' hosted by Racing Together. 'Racing To School' supports and enriches the learning and development of pupils using the context of racing and thoroughbred breeding to deliver exciting, hands-on activities in an open air environment.

Students participated in interesting tasks such as 'what happens in the weighing room', 'learning the jockey's kit', 'parade ring possibilities' and 'the race day roles'. Students represented the school splendidly and were a credit to the school.

### KS3 PANTOMIME



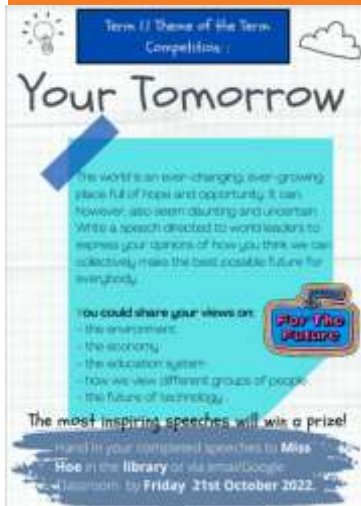
On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 36 students look forward to watching the *Cinderella* pantomime at Newcastle Theatre Royal (oh yes we are!).

This is an annual tradition at John Spence, and really works to put us all in the festive spirit, as well as acting as a well-earned afternoon of entertainment for our hard-working students.

As well as being fun, it is also inspiring to see such a production on stage, and will hopefully inspire our students in their creative thinking and storytelling.



# LIBRARY THEME OF THE TERM



Our library 'theme of the term' has made a return this year, and with it, lots of activities and competitions designed to inspire, entertain and improve our creative and critical thinking. The first theme of the school year was 'New Beginnings', and students were challenged with writing a speech to world leaders expressing their opinions about how they think the world should be running in order to make it the most inclusive, effective and brightest possible place. We had over 50 submissions for the competition, and the winners were as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Alivia (7BTO)**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Millie (7BTO)**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Abigail (7BTO)**

Each wrote an inspiring speech covering issues they feel passionate about including the environment, the education system and social equality to name but a few!

Alongside this, students got involved with activities including inspiring the next generation of John Spence year 7s by writing a 'how to' guide on life in our school, writing a

letter to our 40-year-old self, writing a potential book blurb for our autobiography and making a time capsule to revisit in a year's time!

As a seasonal treat, there was also a Hallowe'en inspired creative writing competition which saw over 150 students write creepy tales, poems, and comic strips all around the spooky season which made for some entertaining, albeit frightening, reading. We had so many brilliant entries that, alongside the top 5 winners, 13 students received a certificate of recognition of their efforts!

The winners were:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Daniel (8KHO)**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – George (7CMT)**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Alex (8KHO)**
- 4<sup>th</sup> place – Elisha (7LGR)**
- 5<sup>th</sup> place – Jacob (7RHO)**

With **Mr Gibson** proudly winning it for the staff!



Students are currently tucking into our new theme of the term, 'Community Spirit' in-keeping with the various historic and important events taking place over the months of November and December including Armistice Day, Christmas, National Anti-Bullying week, Children in Need, Abolition of Slavery day and so many more! It also coincides with the texts students are currently studying in class, with the likes of *An Inspector Calls*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist* and *Small Island* all raising important issues about equality and community.

The competition is to write a poem advertising any of the events coming up to highlight the importance of community, and activities include a 'pay it forward' acts of kindness bingo (why not have a go at it yourself over the Christmas holidays?!) and the opportunity to make somebody's day by sending them a letter full of inspiring and thoughtful good will! Entries are coming in thick and fast, and we look forward to reading each one and crowning our winners after the Christmas break.

A huge well done to all involved so far! All details of the competitions and activities

can be found on the Google Classroom communication page.

## CLUBS



STEM club returned this term with a series of fun activities aiming to give our students an opportunity to engage with science and technology outside of their normal science lessons. STEM club kicked off the term with some fun hands on activities investigating how static can be used to make hair stand on end (and give each other electric shocks!) and also making some impressive marble runs that ended up extending their way out of classrooms and into the corridor!

It would have been rude not to do some pumpkin carving at Halloween so we did that as our spooky STEM club extravaganza and then of course we had to investigate fireworks for bonfire night. Mr Dodd also treated our students to an explosive demonstration that almost deafened us! Mrs Dobison put her degree in forensic science to good use by introducing students to some CSI techniques employed to catch criminals.

We also invited in a local marine biologist who told us all about her amazing job and all of the creatures she encounters in her line of work. She even brought some of them along and we had a hold, even after being warned about how savage rock pool creatures are (e.g. crabs can be very bad tempered and dog whelks are pretty much cannibals!). If this sounds like something you'd be interested in you should check out Rock Pool School on Facebook as they often have pop up marine biology events for children (and adults) in our local area on a weekend and in holidays.

STEM club is a popular club that we currently run for our Y8 students, however we would not turn away super keen students from other year groups so if anyone is interested please see Mrs Owens for more details. As well as engaging activities we also try to organise trips and guest speakers so our students can get a wider perspective on STEM current affairs and careers. Watch out for more fun science-stuff in the coming weeks!



## AIR-MAZING

At the time of writing, soon after the Week 9 AIR deadline, the young people in the school have submitted just over 2500 separate reading reviews. This means that a young person has sat down, read a text, had a think, typed out their thoughts, and uploaded them to the Communication Classrooms over 2500 times. That's pretty impressive.

All responses are acknowledged. That's our promise. So every submission that is sent in, long or short, will be read and a response will be sent back to your child. We'll encourage, we'll praise and we'll offer advice to improve. The idea is that the next one will show progression, and the one after that, and....

We provide articles, short stories, sports journalism; we recommend texts and suggest interesting alternatives based on preferences shared by your children. We love it when they choose their own, when they find and enjoy their own texts. It reminds us of when we were young, discovering Roald Dahl, JRR Tolkien, Jacqueline Wilson and George RR Martin for the first time. We love to read and we'd love your child to love to read too.

So please help us by encouraging your children to participate. 2500 in nine weeks is still fewer than 300 on average a week and that's about where we are. Imagine if we could hit 500 a week? What a dream it would be to top 700? Then, well, we can only shiver at the thought of a full house (or near enough) of over 850 returns in a single week. What a collective effort that would be: parents, carers, relative, school staff and, most significantly, the students themselves.

It's easy to opt out, right? Why not opt in?

Please feel free to ask any questions about the AIR programme that you have. All details are accessible via the school website and in every AIR task description on the Google Classroom of your child.

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## YEAR 11 RSE WORKSHOP



All year 11 students recently attended a relationship and sex education (RSE) workshop. The workshop was delivered by an organisation called Brook and the two hour session focussed on; consent, STI's, contraception and coercion/control. The students engaged well in the session and were a credit to the school.

## M10 MISSION

Next summer Alex (11JCA) is participating in the [M10](#) which is a trip to Mexico in the summer 2023 to help build houses, serve the homeless and run activities for children. He will be attending training programmes locally then putting his training into action in Mexico.

Alex is determined to raise £2000 to go. Alex is the first student from John Spence to participate and will be one of over 40 students from the North East. He hopes to take part in some money raising ventures in the coming school year so would really appreciate support from his fellow students and staff.

He has already managed to raise some of the funds by gutter cleaning. Good luck Alex!







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

£548.75!!



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.



## KINDNESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Two girls one in Year 9 and one in Year 10, Abbie (9KBL) and Jayden (10DPE), were rewarded by a local resident with boxes of chocolates. This was in order to show his appreciation and gratitude for the way they helped him when they were on their way to school one morning.

They saw his dog run away after it had been attacked by another dog, being elderly, the gentleman was not able to run after and retrieve his dog himself. The girls immediately sprung into rescue mode, dropping their bags, running after his dog and making sure both he and the dog were alright. Well done Abbie and Jayden, excellent work!







Please remember

Pupils return to school on **Monday 9th January 2023**