



Kirkby Stephen Grammar School

A co-operative Academy

NEWSLETTER

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Eden Valley
Sports Partnership

THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

On Friday 6th November Year 11 performed their Devised pieces based on asylums and witch trials for their practical exam. The following week Year 13 performed their Devised piece "It's all in your head." With all our theatres currently closed this was no easy feat in current conditions and with me confined to my teaching box. This meant that Year 11 and 13 really had to step up and do many things I would normally do for them.

YEAR 11



Year 11 in costume for their performance based on witch trials

Both groups were actually due to perform these pieces back in March this year when they were in Year 10 and 12. About two weeks after we went into lockdown to be precise.

I'm so pleased we finally managed to share all their hard work and talent with an audience and complete this exam. The performances were fantastic and all of the students have worked incredibly hard to pull this off (Year 11 haven't even been in the Drama studio since March!) The audiences for both performances were incredibly well behaved and supportive and believe me they had to endure a lot during the performance, as all of the pieces were very interactive and scary! A huge thank you to Mrs Woof for reorganising everything for us at very short notice when we realised it was the first time all the students had been in school. Thank you to Mr Alderson and Joe Thorne for helping with all the technical aspects. Thankyou to Chris Whitehead Joinery and the DT Department for their help with set. The Arts are battling on! Mrs Whitehead (Subject Leader for Drama)

YEAR 13



'It's all in your head', a Year 13 performance about mental illness



Dear Parents, carers and students,

For obvious reasons, this newsletter is not as packed full of articles and pictures about sports fixtures, school trips and visitors as usual. However, we felt that it was important to share with you what we have been able to do this term despite the restrictions placed on us by the pandemic.

You will see from the newsletter that we have been able to continue a range of practical activities albeit not quite as regularly. The sixth form have also continued their *Share a Smile* project on mental health and we have raised funds for local charities and organisations such as the *Eden Food Bank* and *Eden Mind*, as well as for national causes such as *Children in Need* and *The Royal British Legion*. School life may have changed but this doesn't prevent us from continuing to support local community needs.

We have also made two films that are available on the school website with the help of a parent of the school, John Chappell, who is also a professional cameraman and film-maker. The first was a film about the whole school, which we made for Year 6 Open

Evening. We did this because we could not invite Year 6 students and their parents/carers into school as we normally would. We hoped that the film would capture the atmosphere and the essence of the school, which I believe that it succeeds in doing, despite the fact that there is far too much of my face and voice in it. John is clearly a magician.

The second film was conceived and presented by the sixth form senior team, with a notable appearance by Mrs Steels, and was filmed and edited by John Chappell. Again, I believe that it captures the spirit of the sixth form and its leadership perfectly. I was so impressed by the confidence and clarity of the sixth formers, who are, as ever, a credit to the school and to themselves. The sixth form will also be spearheading our Christmas celebrations single-handedly with a wholly virtual Christmas show. I am sure that there will be some memorable guest appearances in their show as per usual.

To conclude my introduction, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of the staff for their dogged commitment and determination while working in unusually challenging circumstances. I believe that this term has been even harder for them than it has for the students. However, I would like to single out one or two members of staff for particular thanks.

Mark Bromfield is, as you all know, a long serving, loyal member of the school staff and local community. Many of you have sought out his help and advice, both in and out of school, and know how reliable and trustworthy he is. This term he has been hugely significant in the success of our Covid safety measures and in the general smooth running of the school. The fact that our whole school attendance is still over 95% and the number of exclusions and incidents of poor behaviour have been very low, is down to his leadership and decision making.

He has been ably assisted in this by Sally McAllister (our Business Manager), Suzie Wealleans (Head of Key Stage 4), Rachel Steels (Head of Sixth Form) and John O'Doherty (Head of Key Stage 3). This brilliant team have maintained the calm, purposeful atmosphere in school and I believe that the decisions they have made have hugely benefitted our students. They have been supported by the outstanding administrative team in school, who are the glue that help to keep the motor running and the wheels spinning. Without them we would all be sat at the roadside waiting for the AA to turn up.

Clearly, the experience of the students is dependent upon the teachers and the subject leaders being able to deliver a coherent and effective curriculum. Whilst many teachers are frustrated by the constraints that they have had to work under, I have seen at first hand just how well they are teaching and how good a deal our students have been getting this term. Inevitably, there have been some problems but on the whole this term has been far more successful than I could have imagined it would be. Also, we have been able to keep the vast majority of students in school all of the time and we have not had to send whole year group bubbles home at all. I personally believe that being in school regularly is the biggest advantage that we can give to our students, no matter how much effort we put into remote teaching.

Finally, I would like to personally thank Michelle Brunskill (PA to the SLT), Mark Bromfield and Sally McAllister for supporting me very recently when I had to deal with a family bereavement. Their support and kindness has been a great comfort to me.

I wish you all a merry Christmas, whatever you are doing, and hope for a much better year in 2021.

Gary Hartley Headteacher



I'm Morgan Sowerby, I am Head Girl at Kirkby Stephen Grammar School. I have lived in Kirkby Stephen all my life and have been at this school for almost seven years now. I am confident and outgoing and want to achieve what is best for the school and the sixth form. I am particularly passionate about the mental well-being of students and want to make sure everyone feels comfortable enough to talk about any issues. I am currently studying history, sociology and art. I wish to go on to do an apprenticeship in management or a university course surrounding history, as I love the subject and I am interested in how the past has influenced the laws, politics and democracy today.



I am Isaac Clapham, Head Boy of KSGS. I am currently studying history, geography, and media and am interested in studying history at university and possibly going into a teaching career afterwards. This first term has been a busy one, with many things happening within the sixth form. Many of the Year 13's have applied for university, with many getting results. I have had four conditional offers to study History at four universities, Lancaster, Leeds, Manchester and Northumbria.

One of the recent events the sixth form students have thrown themselves into is the Christmas Show, where students have been given creative freedom to produce funny and uplifting sketches and performances towards the theme of a sixth form TV night.

The enthusiasm and imagination shown by some of the students, making their performances and the atmosphere created by this, has been encouraging to see. Another event the sixth form has been involved in is making a sixth form virtual open day video. During this, members of the senior team were involved in presenting an Open Day video to show what sixth form life is really like. It was good fun for all who took part, and the resulting film came out well.



Geography for Class 9Z We have had a busy term in Year 9 studying Natural Hazards such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis. They have all worked extremely hard and thrown themselves into the tasks asked of them. The highlights were definitely the volcanoes students made at home and then brought into school. Some were perfect models with volcanic bombs suspended out of the top and a few even blew up! (The wonders of baking powder and vinegar or a bottle of coke and a mint imperial). They were great fun and the whole class really enjoyed taking part.

The next challenge was to build a three story building which could withstand an earthquake. After learning about counter-weighting and numerous other ways in

which buildings can be constructed to withstand an earthquake the class set to. There was lots of frustration as buildings collapsed all over the science lab but each group managed to create a building out of cardboard, paper straws and polystyrene. They rose to the challenge and learnt what an important role engineers play in saving lives right around the world. Erica Sayers



GAME DESIGN In lockdown Year 7 and Year 8 took part in a weekly online Game Design module organised by Mrs Park. Each week students followed the video Mrs Park had created, or the handouts to produce a game which they then submitted, with each game linked to a specific skill. We saw some fabulous chase games, our own take on 'Sonic' as well as some amazing mazes. The final week was 'freestyle' week with students encouraged to totally design their own game building on all the skills they had developed. From that a shortlist was drawn up, with students and staff then voting for their own favourites. A big thank you to Kirkby Stephen Grammar School Friends who supported the IT department by donating the prizes, a fabulous hand-held console on which students can play their very own game. All the students were winners, but the favourites as voted for by Year 7 and 8 were the games designed by Oliver Slack and Alfie Maltby.



Thankyou to all the Parents/Carers who donated food items this term to the Upper Eden Food Bank and who supported the non-uniform days. The non-uniform day on 23rd October raised £154 raised – split between The Royal British Legion & Upper Eden Foodbank. The students raised £276.89 for Children In Need.

Thank you also to the Ladies from Mellors Catering who have adapted the serving of school meals to continue to provide lunch for all our students.



Year 9 Investigating Tectonic Hazards.

We were delighted by the quality and range of volcano models that the Year 9 students brought into school. They were tasked with creating a 2 or 3D model, to illustrate their understanding of either a named shield or strato volcano. Models varied from George and Jacob Chappell's intricately structured baked cones, Jess Whittle's 3D clay model to Lewis Staley's 2D jigsaw. Most were accurately annotated to illustrate their deeper and accurate understanding of their particular structure and character. Fantastic effort all round! Mrs Thompson



Head Boy Isaac Clapham & Head Girl Morgan Sowerby, laying the poppy wreath at Kirkby Stephen Memorial in memory for Remembrance day on 6th November, watched on by Headteacher Mr Hartley.



Alex Cottrell with the ITV news crew and her novel

Lockdown was a stressful time for everyone, so instead of letting it get me down I decided to write an 86,000 word novel called "Before Its Time". It's a clash between sci-fi and fantasy with a gothic undertone set in 1842 London.

The story follows 17 year old Catherine Rosebury. Convinced that she killed her best friend and haunted by the ghosts of a traumatic childhood, she is caught up in a titanic battle between science and magic on the streets of Victorian London. Pursued by a secretive occult society, The Elysian, Catherine must confront her past and, with her quarrelsome group of friends, gain control of five mysterious lockets to prevent The Elysian from changing the destiny of civilisation.

I wrote the book, not only as a way of dealing with the stresses of lockdown, but as a way of helping my friends with their own mental health, offering an escape during hard times, particularly as Catherine feels like she lacks control over her life and is somewhat trapped by her emotions. Ultimately, though, I wanted my book to portray a sense of magic, hope and escapism.

I sent off my novel to a few agents and publishers in the hope that I can get my book in print. So far I haven't had any offers but I have been approached by a publisher who's shown interest. I've also been getting

media attention, having recently done an interview with ITV Border News. This was re-tweeted by Philip Pullman, writer of the novels that inspired His Dark Materials, which was amazing as he is one of my influences. Furthermore, the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald have written an article on me as well as an interview with a student journalist from City London university for an online magazine. Alex Cottrell Year 13 student

Year 8 Textiles Reversible Masks & Christmas Hats



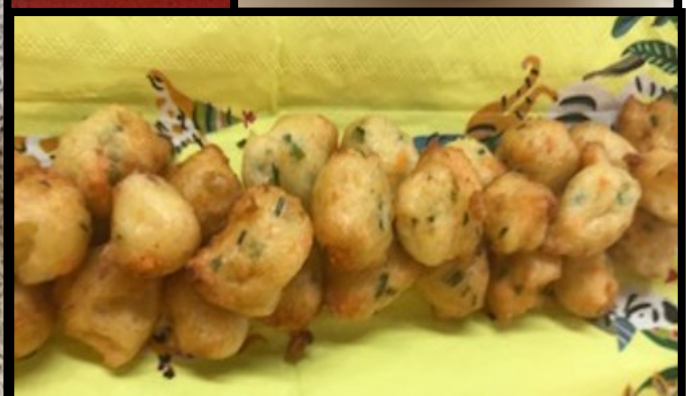
Year 8 students have been doing a textile project this term, making facemasks. They have used recycled materials where possible, and developed embroidery, appliqué and sewing machine skills. For a bit of Christmas fun we have also started making winter hat Christmas tree decorations, again with a recycled focus. Year 8 will begin food work in January. Helen Adams



Year 11 course work. The theme is street food from around the world.

Year 11 have been working on their final course work project. The theme is street food from around the world. Students have demonstrated a range of higher-level technical skills to meet this brief.

Helen Adams, Food Technology Tutor.



The school held a non-uniform day for Children In Need.



The ladies from Mellors catering dressed up in their Pudsey T-shirts and also baked Pudsey Bear cakes for pudding at lunch time



Year 7 boys in non-uniform and Pudsey ears



PE students did 100 bounces on the trampolines for Children In Need. A Competition for the fastest 100 bounces was won by Corey Tallentire in Year 7 and Tilly Rose in Year 9

Pictures are of Kayleigh Garcia, Corey Tallentire and Lewis Witterick



Why learn languages in 2020?

Learning a language has never been more important than it is now. The world of work is becoming more and more language focused and students who learn a language will have an advantage over others who haven't.

Two common misconceptions about languages are:

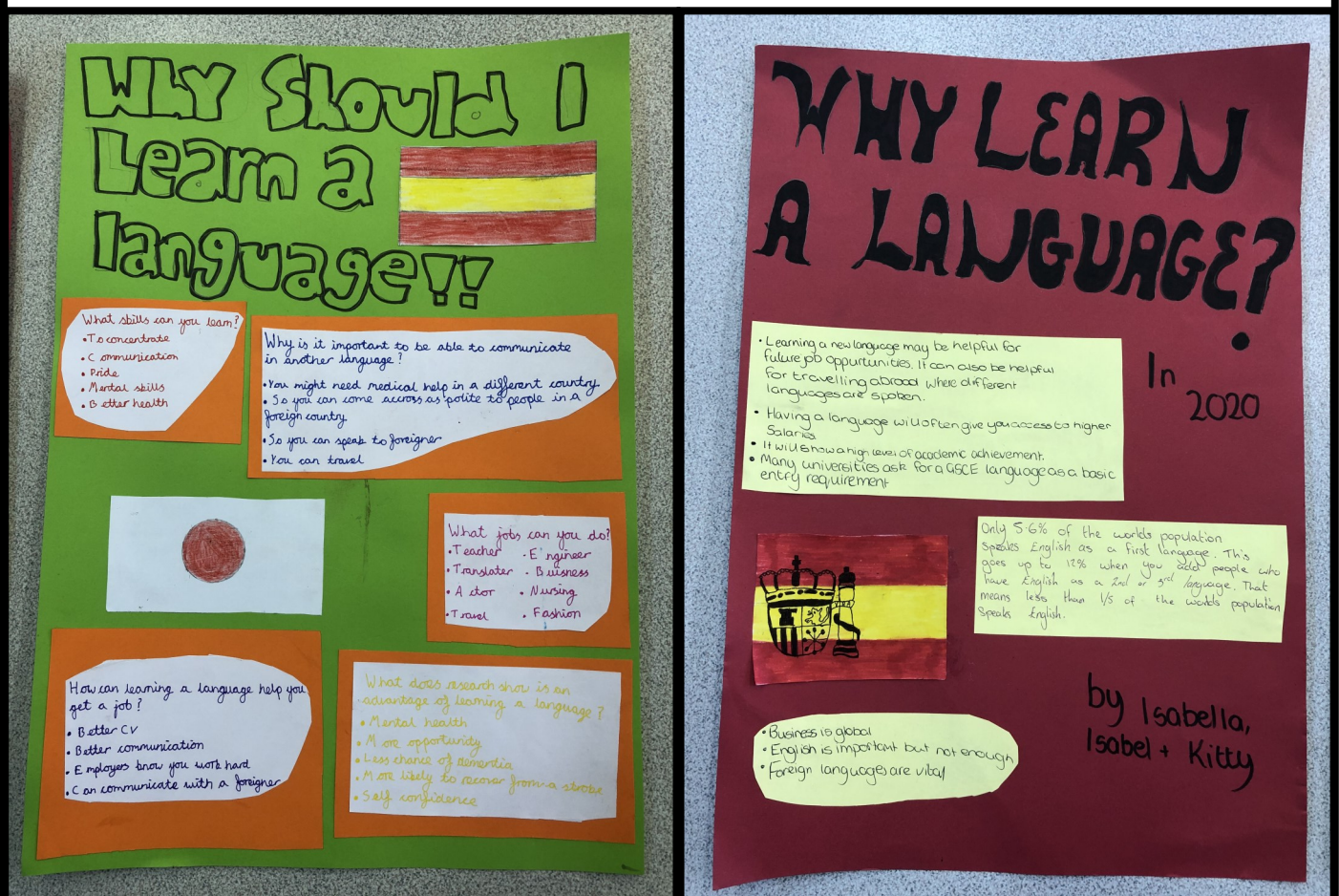
Everyone speaks English so why do I have to speak another language?

Only 5.6% of the world's population speak English as a first language. This rises to 12% when you add in people who have English as a second or third language. Holiday resorts do often have very little need for foreigners to speak much of the local language but being able to communicate in even a few basic words (hello, please, thank you) will make the locals feel you are making an effort and help break down language barriers.

Why do I need to learn a language when my phone will translate everything for me?

Technology is a great tool and can really help you learn a language but it will never be able to replace human interaction. Translation apps can be frustrating as they take time to translate and are often not correct – they don't take into account context, word order and grammatical concepts. Learning a language is about creating relationships with people through good communication skills; this is something that employers really value.

Year 9 recently spent two lessons thinking about how languages could be used in their futures. They worked in small groups to create a poster to encourage young people to study a language. Many of them were unaware at the beginning just how many jobs you could link languages to, how much they are valued in the workplace and how many different opportunities they can give you. Miss Vela-Castro



Share a smile — Share a smile is a student-led project for the benefit of student's mental health and to increase awareness of it. In previous years past students have led projects such as random acts of kindness week where tokens of kindness were left around Kirkby Stephen for locals to find and receive, for example, a meal for two at the Pennine. Some students leading the project receive mental health training to help and counsel the younger students meaning that those who could be scared to go to teachers can talk to the older students. This year our project has been disrupted by the pandemic meaning that we have been restricted in what we can achieve, so we aim to refurbish the medical room so that all students will benefit not only for physical injuries but also for their mental health. We also aim to help during form times, although we cannot go in and carry out activities, we will send their teachers activities for the students to carry out to improve their awareness of mental health. This project is funded and mentored by the Eden Mind Mental Health Charity, which not only works with our school but many schools in Cumbria. Usually with small groups we could exchange ideas and help each other to achieve something better but, again, with the pandemic we sadly cannot. Regardless of this, we aim to make a real difference to the community and our younger peers especially after the year we have all had.

Felicity Brook, Shannon Churchill and Bridget Tams Sixth Form Students



**GCSE Art
summer
2020**

