



Kirkby Stephen Grammar School

A co-operative Academy

NEWSLETTER

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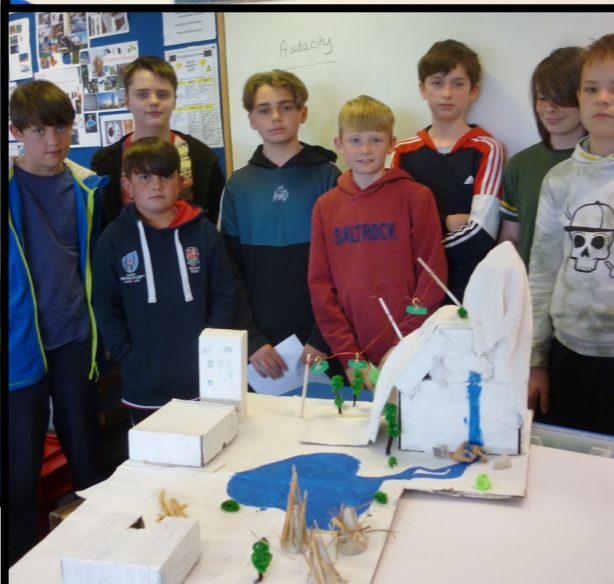
Issue 123, July 2021



Eden Valley
Sports Partnership

Year 7 Spanish and Art Enrichment Day

The 14th June provided an escape from the classroom for Year 7 who enjoyed an Enrichment Day organised by the Spanish and Art Departments. Students worked in groups of 8 to design a Spanish Holiday Resort and came up with some imaginative ideas for menus, activities. They made some fantastic models, which you can see from the photos. Year 7 worked excellently; using problem solving skills, managing the teams, designating who was doing what and being creative. At the end of the day each group presented their plans, ideas and models to the group. Mrs Wealleans and Miss Vela-Castro were incredibly impressed with their confidence in presenting their projects as well as the fantastic ideas that they had come up with. Well done to all of Year 7 for making the day such a success!

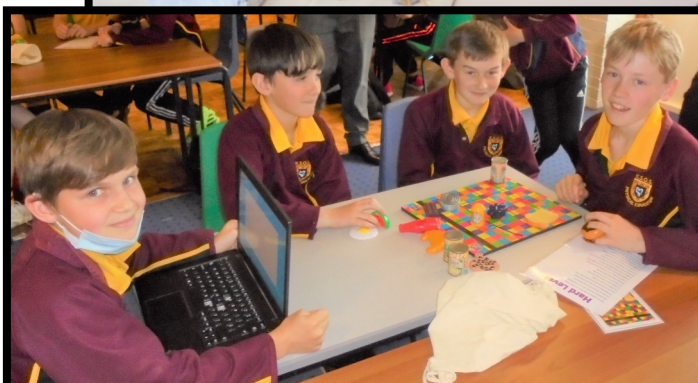


Year 7 & 8 Maths Puzzle Day

The Maths Department were happy to welcome back the Happy Puzzle Company, working with their new Covid Safe Protocols, to give Years 7 and 8 something different to get their teeth into.

It was great to see all pupils given the opportunity to take part in a fun group activity that promoted team work, problem solving and encouraged tenacity and resilience.

Mr Hey's highlight was seeing groups of pupils that don't usually hang out together, forming great teams and learning to work with each other's strengths and weaknesses. Ben Heys



Dear Parents, carers and students,

Well, as we approach the end of the strangest of years, possibly even stranger than last year, I would like to offer you the following reflections.

The staff of the school have had to adapt to teaching on the move. It is a massive challenge, trying to maintain high quality teaching while wheeling all of your equipment and resources around in a trolley from room to room. An integral part of good teaching is organising and controlling your environment, which is normally having everything set up and prepared in your own classroom before the students arrive to the lesson. This has been very difficult for teachers to achieve when they have been arriving at classrooms with the students already inside and sat down, while teachers have then had to set up the lesson. Teachers have also had to teach from the front of the room without being able to mix with the students and support them when they have been struggling with their work. Given all of these constraints and restrictions, I would suggest that the staff have done remarkably well to maintain consistency and routine in the students learning. Inevitably, systems and procedures have not always been as tight as normal but that hasn't been due to a lack of trying from all staff from senior leadership to teachers, admin, catering and cleaning staff.

A significant development this year has been the school's remote learning provision via Teams. This hasn't always worked perfectly but was a significant step forward from the first lockdown last year when remote provision was much more hit and miss. Staff had to be trained and train themselves very quickly in the autumn term of this year to be able to run live and recorded sessions during the lockdown in January and February 2021. The skills they have learned whilst doing this will change the capacity for education outside of school and for homework forever, in my opinion. Next year we wish to consolidate the learning we have gained from this process by further developing and improving the provision of homework and the communication with students when they can't be in school for authorised reasons such as illness. I would like to thank all of the teaching staff, the support assistants and the technical support staff for the fantastic work they did during the second lockdown in providing live lessons, recorded material and resources to enable students to persevere with their learning at home under difficult circumstances. I firmly believe that all students who played their part by engaging with lessons and completing work during the lockdown were not significantly disadvantaged by the eight week period out of school. It is those who didn't or couldn't engage during this period who have been receiving and will continue to need additional catch-up support when we return next year.

I would also like to particularly thank all of the teaching assistants, admin staff, Mr Bromfield, Mrs McAllister and Ms Brunskill for their outstanding work in running the Hub Schools during lockdown. The teaching assistants supported the students in school extremely well so that our SEN students and those who were struggling to access work from home were able to make much greater progress in school than they would have done otherwise. Likewise, Mrs Knowles delivered all of the support sessions to SEN students remotely. Mr Bromfield did a superb job of getting the students into school and Mrs McAllister and the IT support team, did a great job of keeping the IT equipment running efficiently and of distributing laptops and fixing IT problems for those working at home. Finally, Ms Brunskill and I kept all of the other management issues running as smoothly as possible. I would like to thank Mrs Brunskill for her calm, cheerful and efficient support during lockdown when I was having to react to regular changes to the national agenda at short notice, such as setting up testing programmes etc.

And then, of course, there are our students, who have been incredible all year. They have had to tolerate split lunches, wearing masks in classrooms, hygiene regimes, restricted movement at lunch and during the day, the loss of extra-curricular activities and sport, remote learning at home and many other constraints on their experience of school. This will have taken its toll on them without doubt and only time will tell how much they have been affected by the last eighteen months of disruption.

However, the vast majority have borne all of this disruption with patience, resilience and good humour. They truly are amazing and I offer them my sincere thanks and a virtual round of applause.

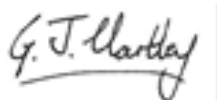
So, to this final newsletter of the year. As you can hopefully see, we have tried to offer as many enrichment opportunities as we have been able to do since returning in March. Clearly, these are a fraction of what we normally offer throughout the year but there have been some real highlights, such as the Y7 Spanish and Art day, the Y7 Politics project, the Y8 Robotics Challenge, the Rotary IT Challenge and, very importantly Y10 work experience, which I am delighted went ahead this year due to the hard work and dedication of Mrs Modlin, Mrs Sutterby and Mrs Hird. We have also managed to re-introduce some PE enrichment this term, which has been great to see.

Finally, we have included short profiles of our new members of staff, who will be joining us in September so that you can learn a little bit about them before they start. It was Ms Brunskill's great idea to include this. They are joining us due to members of staff leaving us or retiring. Mr Cottrell, our Head of English, is retiring at the end of this week. I would like to thank him for his committed service to the school in the five years he has been at KSGS. The English Department will be led by Mrs Newstead from September and Mrs Fitton will be taking over the majority of Mr Cottrell's timetable. Dr Rooks will also be leaving KSGS at the end of this year after one year with us. Dr Rooks has made a real impression upon our students, especially our KS3 students, and we wish them success for the future. Mr Anderton is joining the history department due to Mrs Butterworth reducing her timetable from full-time to part-time. Finally, Mrs Shannon is retiring at the end of this week after very many years of dedicated and fantastic support to many of our students and to the school library. She will be very much missed.

And so we hope that we will be moving towards a more normal year next year, if the Government and the DfE's suggested plans for September do not change over the summer. We hope to have teachers back in their classrooms, bubbles removed and most systems back to normal. I will be sending you all a letter this week outlining our plans in much greater detail.

I wish you all a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing all of the students and staff back in September for a much more stable and enjoyable year.

Best wishes,



Gary Hartley Headteacher



KSGS Welcomes New Staff



Hello, I'm Mrs Fitton and I'm really looking forward to starting at KSGS in September. Born and raised in Kendal and with my mother and father having come from Penrith and Workington respectively, I'm about as Cumbrian as it gets! I am happily married with two children: a daughter who is currently in Year Seven and a son who is in Year Five so I fully understand the challenges young people are facing at the moment not only from a teacher's perspective but from a parent's point-of-view too.

I studied English Language and Literature at The University of Sheffield. I decided that teaching was the job for me after volunteering with an organisation based at Sheffield Wednesday's football ground. Once a week, I caught the tram out to Hillsborough and helped young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to make progress with their literacy skills. I completed my PGCE at The University of York and I've been hooked on teaching ever since. Here I am, eighteen years later!

Unsurprisingly for an English teacher I have a passion for reading and the theatre. Before I had my children I enjoyed acting and directing with a theatre group in North Yorkshire and I've played everything from pantomime boy to Shakespearean maid!

We're lucky to live in such a beautiful part of the world so when I haven't got my nose stuck in a book I make the most of my

surroundings with lots of dog-walking alongside my Border Collie and I've recently developed a love of wild swimming. I wish everyone at KSGS a great summer. See you soon!



Hello I'm Clarity Williams I am originally from Ambleside but I have been living in the North East for six years.

I studied English at the University of Liverpool and went on to complete an MA at Lancaster University. In my spare time, I enjoy reading (obviously!), outdoor swimming and spending time with my guinea pigs, Betty and Basil.



My name is David Anderton and I will be starting as a Teacher of History (and possibly Sociology too!) in September. I have lived most of my life between Appleby, Brough and Kirkby Stephen, with a few years in between spent at Newcastle, so I'm definitely a local chap. When I was at Kirkby Stephen's Sixth Form I studied History, Sociology and English Literature and went on to study a degree in History (BA (Hons)) at the University of Northumbria in Newcastle. After three years away myself and my family moved back to the local area so I could do my teacher training with the University of Cumbria and the Dallam Teaching Alliance, where I trained at Dallam School in Milnthorpe and at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Penrith.

My hobbies include reading history and political books, writing and playing music and I'm a big fan of Star Wars! I'm really looking forward to starting in September: as I know from when I was at KSGS, the staff are lovely and the History curriculum is fascinating.

Anna Bartie — Head Girl

It has been an absolute pleasure to have become Head Girl. After the year we have all had it is not only mine but also in the Head Boy and the rest of the Senior Team's best interest to do as much as we possibly can to make the school an enjoyable environment for students and staff.



I have attended Kirkby Stephen Grammar School since Year 7 and just like James, attended Warcop Primary School. I have always been very school proud, getting involved in anything I possibly could from sports teams, school productions and school councils. Many of the girls lower down the school and parents may already know me from my extensive help with coaching and umpiring for our local netball team run by Mrs Paul (Westmorland Wanderers). This is something I had really enjoyed before the pandemic and is something I hope to pick back up next school year along with getting back into playing. Netball has always been the focus of my hobbies, but I also enjoy the typical things: reading, watching TV and hanging out with friends.

I am currently studying Health and Social Care, Sociology and PE at A Level and hope to go to University after Year 13 to study Primary Education. This is what I've wanted to do for as long as I can remember and with work experience placements is something I believe I will really enjoy.

As Head Girl, along with James, our main tasks so far have been to show around candidates who are applying for a position within our staff. We've also attended a few meetings with members of staff and governors where we have discussed our visions for the school and 6th form next year, as well as how any issues may be resolved. I look forward to carrying on to work in co-ordination with staff, governors, students and even parents in the coming school year and hope that, along with the rest of the Senior Team, myself and James can help create a fun and welcoming environment to our school and 6th form.



Lake District Mighty Hike

On Saturday 19th June I took part in the Mighty Hike with my sister Sue Hall, the school canteen manager along with a group of our friends. The Mighty Hike is a 13-mile hike for Macmillan Cancer in the Lake District.

The day started early getting picked up from Kirkby

Stephen at 8am. Our team arrived at Dalemain and set off across the start line to venture through the hills to hike the 13 miles to Glenridding. As a group we have been fundraising since January and have been on many socially distanced walks in preparation for the day. We were lucky with the weather, the sun was shining and the atmosphere was fantastic. The day was so well organised with plenty of water stops and at 4.6 miles a nice refreshment break with chance to seek any medical attention or snacks if needed.

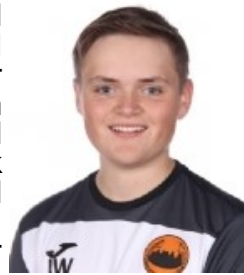
The views were beautiful and the company was excellent, we had a lovely day and have raised over £2000 for Macmillan which is a charity close to our hearts. We would like to thank the school for allowing a non-uniform day to help with our fundraising efforts.

If anyone would like to donate please go to www.justgiving.com and search for Kathryn Modlin. Thank you.

James White — Head Boy

Firstly, I would like to say I feel privileged to represent the school and sixth form as Head Boy, for the next academic year. As a unit, together with the Head Girl and the Senior Team, I will work hard to promote the school alongside staff and governors.

I have been at KSGS since Year 7, having previously attended Warcop Primary School.

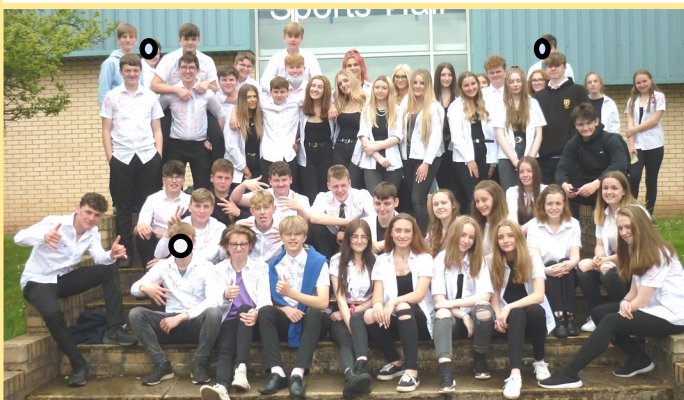


I am currently studying Sociology, Media and PE at A Level. I hope to pursue a career in sports broadcasting, and I am looking to attend University at the end of Year 13. I have a keen interest in all sports, including football and support the local Blues (Carlisle United). I am a member of the Carlisle United Supporters Panel and often speak post-match on BBC Radio Cumbria, giving my views on the team's performance.

I have already enjoyed introducing prospective candidates for recent teaching vacancies, to the school and, in the future, I look forward to working alongside the Head Girl and other Senior Students, to make the sixth form a more academic space and also to create a more inclusive environment for all ambitions.

Senior Team for 2021/2022 are

Louis West	Jonny Keetley	Eleanor Bowness
Matthew Dixon	Erin Evans	Ross G-Steadman



Year 11 Leaving Day

The year 11 students have experienced an intense couple of months completing assessments and as a fantastic group of young people they have coped amazingly well with the many challenges, disruptions and uncertainty that they have been presented with during the Covid pandemic.

It was important that we at KSGS were able to provide the traditional leaving experience for the students with leavers hoodies, leavers celebrations, shirt signing and hopefully also a prom which has been rescheduled to take place in August at the Roundthorn Hotel in Penrith as long as Covid restrictions are lifted.

On their leaving day, Friday 28th May, the Year 11 students marked the end of their 5 years at KSGS and said their final farewells to staff and students. We were so pleased to be able to let the students experience their leavers day after such a hard year, providing a free lunch, a slide show of their time at KSGS, shirt signing opportunities as well as an afternoon of bench ball and rounders. Students were in good humour and enjoyed spending time with their whole year group, Mrs Wealleans, Mr Bromfield and their form tutors to mark this important milestone.

We hope all students have some fond memories of their time at KSGS and wish them luck in their next steps whether at KSGS 6th form or elsewhere.



Royal Mail HEROES stamp design competition

This term, in their art lessons all students in years 7 to 9 were given the opportunity to design stamps for the Royal Mail National Stamp Design Competition.

The theme of this year's design was 'Honouring the key workers and volunteer heroes of the Coronavirus pandemic'.

The competition organisers listed a few areas that the students could consider when developing their designs such as, NHS frontline workers, school staff and support staff, supermarket workers, delivery drivers, emergency services, military personnel, vaccine scientists, food bank volunteers, public transport workers, cleaners and Captain Sir Tom Moore. Students were encouraged to consider a wide variety of subjects as there were 8 stamps to be designed.

Designs were to be colourful and creative to honour our pandemic heroes. The winning 8 designs will be approved by Her Majesty The Queen before being made into stamps to go on sale.

Prizes for the 8 winning stamps are £1,000 in high street vouchers with the school also receiving some cash reward if the students are successful, money that will help to improve resources in the art department for all students in the school. In addition to the 8 winners there are also 120 prizes on offer for regional winners and runners up.

As Subject Leader for Art I was extremely impressed with the standard of the entries and would like to thank all students for their hard work and effort whether we have any winners or not. I was so impressed with the work, that before they were packaged up and posted off we colour copied as many as we could to display in the main corridor of the school, so that all the students and staff could witness the amazing designs.

Winners and regional winners/finalists will be notified through their school by Royal Mail by the 30th September 2021, fingers crossed! Mrs Suzie Wealleans

Tomorrow's Engineers EEP Robotics Challenge 2020-2021



Kirkby Stephen Grammar School have again taken part in the Tomorrow's Engineers Robotics Challenge competition.

This year as per many other events this has been virtual, and means we have missed out on a trip to Nissan, Sunderland (for the regional heats) and to the NEC Birmingham (for the finals).

This is the second year that Kirkby Stephen have entered a team in the national competition, improving from an impressive 3rd place last year in the North West Region to being announced winners in the virtual round last week.

This year instead of just 10 Year 8 students making up the team, co-ordinator and Computer Science/IT

teacher Julie Park has encouraged all Year 8 to take part, with regular weekly lessons from March (when school returned) until the submission date in May. Julie states that "the students have been fabulous and have designed some fabulous Lego robots which they have programmed to carry out a number of challenging activities. There has been highs – when robots have successfully completed the challenge and lows – carrying around school 8 boxes of Lego as well as having to do it all virtually".

The students are now one of 6 schools who will compete in the national round at the virtual Big Bang Fair later this month.

Our thanks go to Mr Richter and Mr Park (who have helped out), as well as to the sponsors of the competition: Helsington Foundation, Engineering UK, Royal Air Force, Rolls Royce, Network Rail and of course STEM and our STEM adviser Helen Heggie who has been a huge support.

Work Experience 2021 On 14th June Year 10 ventured out of the classroom and into the world of work. This year has been unlike any other and we started to plan the work experience placements way back in January via our remote lessons in lock down. Students were asked to produce a letter of request and a CV, they then had the task to find a suitable work placement. This was not an easy task as many businesses were closed due to the lock down and others were reluctant to take a student on because of restrictions and many other factors that have affected business during the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, against all odds students persevered and found placements. We had students in local primary schools, cafes, shops, photographers, hairdressers and many further afield in various business settings. As a school we cannot thank the placements enough for offering an experience of the world of work. It is a vital part of our students education and can shape their aspirations and dreams for the future.

During the week staff from the school made many phone calls to check on the progress of our students and all received really positive feedback. After speaking to my Year 10 class I was amazed at the response when I asked them if anyone had been offered employment and 10 hands were raised, this is phenomenal.

Kacey Hall attended Kirkby Stephen Primary School, she said "I had a really good week, I was quite shy and very nervous on my first day but after I met the teacher, Miss Thwaites and she talked me through tasks, I was able to work in smaller group tasks and really enjoyed getting to know all of the pupils. I have decided that I would like to become a teaching assistant in the future."

Reuben Parsons went to a local builders and has said that he enjoyed learning new skills and experiencing demolition jobs and helping to plasterboard and prepare a room ready for plastering.

Tom Turnbull went to a local garage and they commented on his willingness to learn and his good practical skills.

These are just a few of the success stories from the week, we really do appreciate any placements offered to our students, we could not do it without the businesses involved offering their time and expertise to offer such a worthwhile experience.

If you would like to be involved with next year's placements please get in touch via email Mrs K Modlin katybeckwith@ksgs.cumbria.sch.uk

Year 10 Study Smart revision workshop This term Year 10 students have been taking their Mock exams. In order to help prepare them for this, all Year 10 students took part in an hours revision and study skills workshop called *Study Smart*, delivered by one of the outreach team from Northumbria University.

Study Smart is an interactive workshop designed for students taking their GCSE's. The session covers learning styles, revision techniques and tools, transferable skills and other top tips for revision.

Hopefully, the students found the workshop helpful and can use these techniques to develop their own revision strategies, especially the information provided about consolidating their notes each day into small revision cards or reference notes, an ideal task to do during the 40 minutes tutorial that all students currently have on their timetable.

UPPER EDEN ROTARY GROUP IT CHALLENGE



Due to Covid restrictions it has taken a while to conclude the annual Upper Eden Rotary Challenge competition. The students (who were then all in Year 9), produced a variety of business documents demonstrating their fabulous IT skills. This included designing a corporate ID for their company as well as producing a website and a variety of business documents such as a template letterhead, a business letter, a business card and a brochure. Teacher Julie Park states that "this competition gives our students some excellent skills for the workplace". Our thanks go to Upper Eden Rotary Club for their generous sponsorship and continued support.

Classroom Politics — In their Personal Development lessons this term, both Year 7 and 8 have been looking at different aspects of the UK political system.

Year 8 have completed an introduction to national politics and democracy, which ended with them developing their own political parties and subsequently contacting their local MP about the key issues which matter to them. In response, MP for Penrith and the Border Dr Neil Hudson will be hosting a live meeting with Year 8 via Zoom on Tuesday 13th July. This is very active citizenship, and it will allow students to talk directly to Dr Hudson about the issues they highlighted.

Year 7 have been learning about local government, the role of councillors and have also looked at town planning issues. As part of the topic, students worked in groups to identify the positive things about their local area, whilst noting down the things they felt needed to be improved. This information was then sent to their respective local councillors and hopefully soon, students will receive some feedback. Their final task was to design their own town from scratch, adding features to also make them more environmentally friendly. Well done to Harry Slack (7Z) and William Kidd (7Y) who won the town planning challenge.

To help both year groups understand more about the work of Parliament, MP's, Lords and voting, all Year 7 and 8 students took part in an online workshop on 18th June. This was delivered by senior education and engagement officers from UK Parliament. Along with learning about different features and functions of parliament, students were also given the chance to ask questions. These ranged from 'how much does the PM get paid' to 'what are your views on the new Australian trade deal'. This only goes to show how politically aware some of our younger students are- which is great stuff!! Joanne Sutterby



PE enrichment — In addition to the timetabled PE lessons we now see Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 for at least one lunch time practice per week sometimes twice per week. Mainly playing rounders and cricket, looking at getting all abilities active and enjoying being back with their classmates through structured games. All pupils are challenging themselves to beat their personal bests in athletics during lessons, as well as measuring themselves against the 2018 county champions to see where they would come if events were to be taking place. Oli Luke

GCSE Drama Exam

Year 11 completed their scripted performance exam on the 21st of April.

Students chose monologues from their favourite plays to perform in the Drama studio. Whilst most students chose to perform, Luke Coatman opted to do lighting and Abigail Mason and Francesca Teasdale both designed and made set for the exam.

In the face of so many challenges thrown at them due to covid Mrs Whitehead was delighted that Year 11 managed to complete this practical exam against all odds. Isaac Robinson delivered a very humorous performance of Shane from the play 'Raz.'

Josh Robinson played a very convincing and menacing bouncer from John Godber's play 'Bouncers.' Esme Kirkbride delivered a very emotional and apt performance from 'Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?' Emily Hilland, who has gained a place at Kendal College to continue studying Drama, delivered an entertaining monologue from 'Girls like that' warning about the dangers of social media. Jenna Drury went for a heart breaking rendition of a monologue from 'My Mother said I never Should' and Amelia Dinsdale chose a challenging monologue from 'DNA' which she executed brilliantly. Finally Bethan Sowerby chose the role of a cocktail waitress and treated us to a monologue from 'Shakers' also by John Godber. Mrs Whitehead has thoroughly enjoyed teaching their class and would like to wish them all the very best for the future.



DIRECTED BY
LAUREN WHITEHEAD

THE VOID

JUNE 22ND

Welcome to the Void

In June Year 12 Drama students, Sam Holmes, Erin Evans, Chris Smith and Lydia Milne finally performed the long-awaited show 'The Void' for their practical exam. An amazing piece of devised drama created partly from home in lockdown.

Year 12 Drama students have been fantastic throughout this process often going above and beyond. Talk about self-motivation and determination. They have faced so many Covid related challenges such as not being able to perform to their families, losing half their audience and losing their Sound Technician just before the exam. It has been quite soul destroying for them, but they have been so resilient and have completed their exam with professionalism and sheer determination. After all the show must go on! I am incredibly proud of them and their achievements.

We are hoping to deliver a second performance in September as they deserve to perform to a complete audience after working so hard. I feel so privileged to work with such an amazing group of young people.

Thank you to Mr Alderson for doing a brilliant job filming the exam and doing the lights. Thank you to Anna Bartie our original sound technician. Thank you to Melissa Souter and Molly Macdonald for your help with projection.

Mrs Whitehead