

KIRKBY STEPHEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Issue 135 July 25

Spanish Trip 2025

Towards the end of the Spring term, we took 38 students to Málaga, Spain and what an amazing time we had! After the early start on Monday morning, we arrived in Spain to glorious sunshine. After a quick settle in to the hotel we had a walk along the beach and to the main shopping street in Torremolinos where students put their Spanish to the test buying ice-creams, drinks and souvenirs!

Tuesday was a visit to the Caves in Nerja, which were impressive! Students linked this with their Geography learning about how limestone stalagmites, stalactites and caves are formed. This was followed by a VR presentation where it felt like you were flying through the formation of the caves over thousands of years! The afternoon saw us returning to Torremolinos where we went to watch a traditional flamenco show.

On Wednesday we visited Málaga city centre. Students were spotting lots of words for shops that we had recently done in lessons and enjoyed the visit to the cathedral and the Picasso museum. Our final activity of the day was a visit to the Málaga bullring, where we had an excellent tour about the history and culture around this. Students also met a Matador (bullfighter) who showed the students how they 'dance' with the bulls and even had a go themselves with the capes.

Thursday was another full day of activities! After a visit to the beautiful Paloma Park in Benalmádena, we went to the port for a tapas lunch. All the students tried the different dishes or meatballs, squid and patatas bravas. We then had a visit to the Sealife Centre to learn about the marine life around the coast and in the wider world. An evening trip to the beach was enjoyed by everyone for a bit of paddling and sandcastle making!

On Friday we had a visit to Torremolinos centre for some last-minute souvenir shopping before heading home. It was a pleasure to take away such a lovely group of students who really got involved in all the different activities and learnt so much about Spanish culture. Y Vela-Castro



Dear Parents, carers and students

As the summer term draws to a close, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been an incredibly enjoyable and rewarding first term for me as Interim Head of School here at KSGS. It has been a real privilege to get to know the students, staff, families, and wider community during these past few months—and I've been so impressed by the warm welcome and the genuine sense of pride that runs through every aspect of school life.

From witnessing the outstanding sporting successes and musical talent of our students, to seeing them take part in key events such as Sports Day, the summer concert, art exhibitions and Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, it's clear that this school is not only committed to academic achievement, but to developing well-rounded, confident and compassionate young people.

This term has also marked the beginning of our transition to join Cumbria Education Trust (CET), and already our students have been able to benefit from this wider network. From Team Aerolyte representing KSGS at the CET Innovate Competition, to our golden ticket winners attending the first ever CET Student Excellence Awards—and all students taking part in CET's 'Be the Best You Can Be' Week—it has been fantastic to see our young people start to experience the exciting opportunities that come with being part of a strong and aspirational multi-academy trust.

I've thoroughly enjoyed seeing the strength of our community in action—whether through school trips, leadership activities, sporting fixtures, cultural visits or simply the everyday interactions that make KSGS such a special place to learn and work.

As I prepare to step into the role of Head of School full time from September, I'm genuinely excited about the journey ahead. I look forward to our students and staff gaining even more from being part of the wider trust in the new academic year, and to building on the strong foundations already in place as we move into the next chapter of our journey towards excellence.

Wishing all students, families and staff a restful, enjoyable, and well-deserved summer holiday. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in September.

Warmest wishes,

Nic Tweddle - Head of School

PRESENTATION EVENING 2025 - Celebrating the outstanding achievements of our students — academic, creative, sporting and personal.

These awards are a reflection not only of talent, but of commitment, resilience, and the power of supportive relationships between students, staff, and families. Congratulations to all of this year's award winners!

Host/Comperes: Head Boy, George Chappell and Head Girl, Tilly Rose

Guest speaker: Frankie Tinsley, talking about his personal career path and the creation of The Talisman Triathlon.

Student performers: Lillie Hoyle, Grace Bainbridge and Sophie Thompson



Year 9 Liverpool Trip

After arriving in Liverpool with Year 9 in good spirits, Mrs Sayers and Mrs Thompson from the Geography department led a walking tour from the Albert Dock leading up to different parts of the city centre to look at the regeneration of a major UK city. We walked through Liverpool One – one of the most successful regeneration projects undertaken in the UK, all the way up to Bold Street completing fieldwork on our way. We then visited the Chinese Arch and saw the impact of migration into Liverpool, on our way back to the centre students saw evidence of different transport systems around and urban greening projects. Our aim was to see how the environment around us changed as we wandered through the regenerated part of Liverpool and then into an area which has seen substantial decline. This will help the students who have picked Geography for their GCSE.

The students then enjoyed a little free time to explore Liverpool One and have their lunch before heading back down to the docks to the ferry terminal. The students enjoyed a cruise along the river whilst listening to historical commentary of the city, including its involvement in the slave trade and how it became an internal port for goods and people emigrating to America. They got a fantastic view of the waterfront and all the changes which have taken place including the new football stadium, cruise terminal (with a vast ship in it with water slides) and M+S Arena.

After a final wander through the Albert Docks, we made our way home. The students were absolutely brilliant and really enjoyed their day. E Sayers Geography Department



Year 10 Blencathra GCSE Rivers trip

What an amazing way to spend the day. Year 10 travelled to Blencathra Field Studies Centre to complete a river study on the Glenderaterra Beck. The aim was to investigate how rivers change as they go downstream. The pupils measured the width, depth and how fast the water was flowing – considering it hadn't rained for 6 weeks we were lucky to find any water to measure. It was a gorgeous day, plenty of sun cream was required and plenty of accidental splashing took place. When we got back to school, we completed our write up which forms paper 3 of our GCSE. A huge thank you to The Foundation Governors, for supporting this trip and making it financially viable for all our students. E Sayers Geography Department.



Bronze DofE Expedition June 2025

24 Year 9 students took part in the Expedition section of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award on 14/15th June, starting in Conistown and finishing in Ambleside, covering about 30km over the two days.

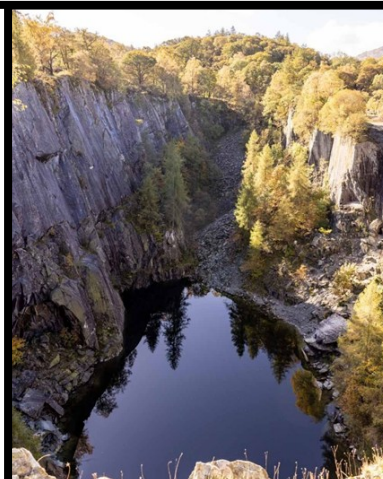
As we arrived on Saturday morning the weather was truly dreadful, with torrential rain, thunder, and lightning, but thankfully it started to clear quite quickly and the rest of the first day was relatively dry.

There were five groups, who all walked different routes to arrive at the campsite in Langdale by late afternoon, visiting some spectacular scenery on the way.

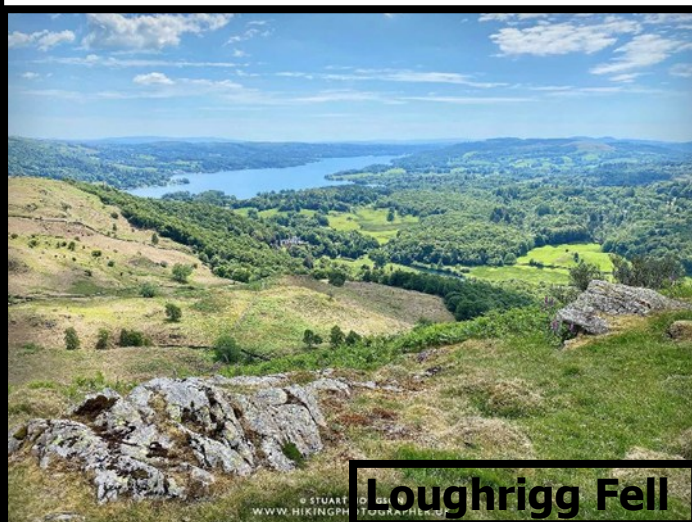
The students were very well behaved at the campsite, enjoying playing some ball games, chatting, and relaxing ready for day two. Luckily it stayed dry for most of the evening, only raining heavily once everyone was tucked up in their tents for the night.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny, and the weather remained dry until mid-afternoon, when a few showers started. The groups made their way over and

around Loughrigg Fell, finishing at Langdale Mountain Rescue Base. We are extremely grateful for their hospitality, as this makes an ideal finishing point, with toilets, refreshments, and a warm dry room for the assessors to debrief in. A Cottrell

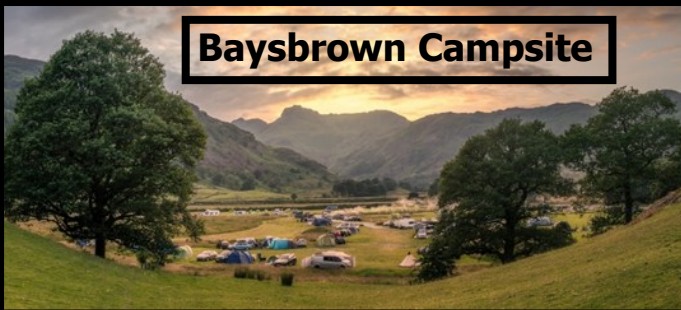


Hodge Close Quarry



Loughrigg Fell

Baysbrown Campsite



Year 8 Investigate Limestone LANDSCAPES AT Malham

On Friday 13th June Year 8 geographers escaped to the wilds of Malhamdale. Students carried out a range of activities to present their observations of the features of limestone landscapes and the processes responsible for them. They investigated the opportunities that the limestone creates for people and the impacts that the resulting tourism has on the environment and local economy. They also observed the role of The Yorkshire Dales National Park in managing tourism and its impacts to ensure that tourism is sustainable. Students were able to take advantage of the fair weather and walked to the base of the cove where they saw the rich variety of birds and wildlife and the people that this attracts, as well as the skilful climbers who were scaling the scar face. Having climbed the hundreds of steps built to aid the many visitors, they reached the impressive limestone pavements and dry valleys made famous by featuring in the penultimate Harry Potter film. Although there was much huffing and puffing on the way up to the top of the cove it was agreed that the views were worth the effort. Students rewarded themselves with an ice cream at the local store back in the village of Malham. I would like to thank the staff who accompanied the trip and commend all the students on their impeccable behaviour.

Mrs Thompson



Innovate 2025 Kirkby Stephen D&T and Food department put up some really stiff competition in the Cumbria Education Trust Innovate Competition. This year the competition centred around turning waste into something useful. Danny Modlin, Zak Harrison, Issac Dobson and Sam Alderson decided to turn waste walking energy into electrical power by harnessing a piezo-electric material, which turns compression into a small electrical charge. As the group were interested in flight, they decided to investigate the use of this energy for electric powered flight. They produced an impressive model to demonstrate their concept and presented this in front of a panel of judges. Unfortunately, the group just missed out on first place. However, the Year 7 group just had a week to prepare compared with the winning Year 9 group who had 6 months. I'm sure you'll agree the heroic effort that these pupils put in deserves a big medal. K Gough DT department



Year 10 Mock Interviews
Huge congratulations to our top interview stars 1st place: Jenson 2nd place: Archie 3rd place: Olivia
Style points were also on show: Best dressed female: Bella 2nd place: Catherine
Best dressed male: Leo 2nd place: Zak
A massive THANK YOU to all the amazing interviewers who gave up their time to support and inspire our students. Your input made a huge impact and helped build confidence and experience for the future. Mrs Bell

As part of *National Thank a Teacher Day* (Wednesday 18th June), Miss Tweddle organised a lovely opportunity for students to say thank you. National Thank a Teacher Day is a day designed to celebrate and show appreciation to teachers and school staff for their hard work and dedication. Students were each given post-cards to write messages of appreciation to staff members. Throughout the day, these heartfelt notes were written and posted in a special post box where they were then delivered to staff. It was a great way to give a huge *THANK YOU* to all the amazing staff at Kirk-



Year 10 Work Experience The start of June, marked an exciting week for Year 10 students as they took part in Work Experience Week – a fantastic opportunity to step outside the classroom and experience, first-hand, the world of work. Throughout the week, our students were placed in a wide range of workplaces, including local businesses, shops, primary and nursery schools, salons and offices. These were all either local, London or as far afield as Switzerland! Here our students gained an insight in to daily routines to developing essential skills such as communication, team-work and time management. They shadowed employees, assisted with tasks or simply observed the fast pace of a busy workplace, something which the Year 10s embraced with maturity and enthusiasm.

Some students have been offered weekend work from this week, with a couple even being offered an apprenticeship at the end of Year 11, which is amazing. We would like to extend a huge thank to all the local businesses and organisations who welcomed our students so warmly and made this week possible. It is a hugely beneficial experience for the Year 10. Finally, well done to our Year 10 students for representing the school so positively. We are very proud of the way you approached this important week of work. Mrs Bell

Year 7 Visit the Centre for Life, Newcastle



Recently, our Year 7 students enjoyed an exciting trip to the Centre for Life in Newcastle. During their visit, they took part in an engaging workshop that explored how electricity is generated. Through hands-on activities, the students gained a clearer understanding of the science behind electricity and its importance in everyday life. After the workshop, the students had the opportunity to explore the Science Centre's many interactive exhibits. They enjoyed discovering a wide range of fascinating displays that brought science to life in an exciting way. A particular highlight of the day was the special science show celebrating 25 years of the Centre for Life. The show featured impressive experiments and demonstrations that captivated the students and made the occasion even more memorable.

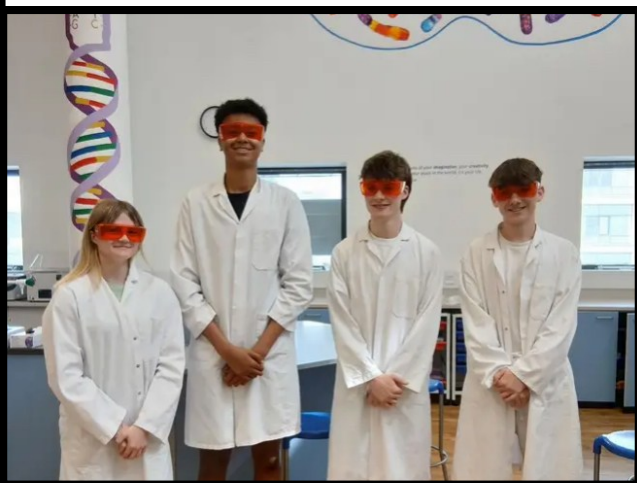
Overall, the trip was a fantastic chance for Year 7 to experience science outside the classroom. V Knowles

Year 12 Students Take Part in Forensic DNA Workshop at the Centre for Life

Our Year 12 students also recently visited the Centre for Life in Newcastle for a fascinating forensic DNA workshop. During the session, they learned how scientists use DNA analysis to solve crimes and bring evidence to life.

Students had the opportunity to use specialist equipment as part of a hands-on activity involving gel electrophoresis. They compared DNA fingerprints from three suspects against a sample found at a crime scene to determine which individual might have committed the crime. This practical experience gave them valuable insight into the techniques and tools used in real forensic investigations.

The workshop provided a unique chance for Year 12 students to apply their classroom knowledge in a real-world context, deepening their understanding of biology and forensic science.



Year 10 First Aid Training Our Year 10 students participated in CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) training session designed to equip them with life-saving skills. The session was conducted by qualified instructors from First Responders.

The training covered essential CPR techniques, including how to recognise cardiac arrest, call for emergency help and perform chest compressions.

Students also had the opportunity to practice on mannequins, allowing them to gain hands-on experience and confidence in delivering effective CPR.

In addition to practical training, students learned about the importance of using a Defibrillator and how to operate one safely.

All students were fully engaged and actively joined in.

A very big thank you goes to Brian, Lucy and Rebecca for teaching these hugely important skills. Mrs Bell



The Kitchen Garden Project is well under way!

This month we have managed to get the garden cleared, levelled out(ish) membrane down (almost) and raised beds have started to go in. We have also had so much fun collecting yummy ripe red currants all to be baked into yummy muffins and made into fresh fruit coulis for this week's year 9 presentation assessments. Our cherry trees are ripening and the collection process will soon begin!

We want to say a massive thank you to several local businesses and charities for supporting us so far, particularly JT Atkinson for donating all the stone and compost this week and delivering it all for free. Jason Winder of Winders for squeezing us into his busy schedule. Kirkby Stephen United Charities for donating £400 enabling us to get the project going and buy some initial tools. Our own school governors for kindly donating money so we can buy a green house, and Tim Holmes for donating over 30 strawberry plants and blackberry plants.

We are looking forward to updating you soon with our progress and look out for a cherry jam sale coming up soon! Niki Walker Teacher of Food and Nutrition.



Year 8 art students Impress with Creative 3D Sculptures

Our brilliant Year 8 art students have been busy showcasing their creativity and imagination through a fantastic and strange 3D sculpture project in their art lessons. The results have been nothing short of amazing!

Using a variety of materials and techniques, the students created a wide range of imaginative and characterful sculptures. From bold abstract forms to playful figures full of personality, each piece reflected the individuality and hard work of its maker. The attention to detail and the creativity on display were truly impressive.

The sculptures will certainly bring a burst of colour and energy to our art spaces. Staff and students alike have been blown away by the quality and originality of the work.

A huge well done to our Year 8 artists – your effort, enthusiasm, and talent have really shone through in this project. We can't wait to see what you create next! Mrs Wealleans



GCSE & A Level Art Exhibition – Thursday 3rd July

On Thursday 3rd July, we proudly hosted our end-of-course Art Exhibition, showcasing the outstanding work of our talented GCSE and A Level students. The event was well attended by students, parents, staff, and members of the public, all of whom were treated to a stunning display of creativity and skill.

The exhibition featured an impressive range of artwork, from striking large-scale canvases to innovative and creative dress designs. Each piece reflected the hard work, dedication, and artistic flair of our students, and the variety and quality of the work on display were truly inspiring.

Guests enjoyed a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, with tasty nibbles and refreshments adding to the evening's success. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting on the high standard of the work and the professionalism of the exhibition as a whole. A huge well done to all of the students involved – your creativity and effort made the evening a real celebration of artistic talent. Mrs Wealleans

Making KSGS sporting history What a year for the school's hockey and netball teams. The students at KSGS have exceeded all expectations by achieving their best ever results in both these sports. The year so far, has been outstanding. From participating in highly competitive fixtures at Nationals and Regional level, but also exceptional participation within friendly school fixtures, interschool games and an all-inclusive lunch time provision for all. Numbers and commitment to school sport has never been as high, which goes along way to helping towards the team's success.

NETBALL SUCCESS:

The teams have yet again won all of the Eden district titles from Years 7-11. The squads have also won all the tournaments without losing a single game and the Year 7 & 8 teams also managed to field two teams. The U14 & U16 teams competed in the county finals winning both trophies to be crowned the County Champions. This is the first time that KSGS has managed to gain both titles in a year against a strong Sedbergh team. Both these teams went on to represent Cumbria at the regional finals.

All the school teams have won all their games this year across the age groups, whether that be in a competitive or friendly fixture environment. Which is outstanding for such a small school.

HOCKEY SUCCESS:

The hockey teams have also had a great year, gaining many trophies and titles along the way.

KSGS have managed to win all but one of the County titles from Year 7 through to Sixth form.

The U12 team are the South Cumbria champions.

The U13 team are the 11 a-side County champions and County 7 a-side runners up. This squad went on to attend the regional finals held at Cheshire.

The U14 team are the County champions and attended the regional finals held at Cheshire.

The U15 team are County champions

The U16 team are the County runners up

The U18 team are the County and the North West regional champions. This team also gained a Bronze medal at the National finals held at Nottingham. The U18 team recently attended a 7's invitational tournament held at Austin Friars. Playing 4 games to reach the final against a very strong RGS Newcastle team. KSGS was the first school ever to regain the cup title, winning after a very exciting penalty stroke thriller.

As subject leader, I am so proud of all the students involved within KSGS sport this year.

Their commitment to school sport is amazing.

Hard work and resilience really do pay off.

Well done everyone! Mrs Paul





London Marathon Challenge

On 28th April I ran the London Marathon raising money for the Great North Air Ambulance. It was an exceptionally hot day in London which made it hard going but with the support of the amazing crowds I made it round in 5 hours 21 minutes. I wanted to say a massive thank you to everyone who supported my fundraising; parents, students, colleagues and the wider community. The total came to a phenomenal £1360! I am absolutely blown away by everyone's generosity and being able to raise such a huge amount of money for an essential service that the charity provide.

Miss Vela-Castro



Run, Jump and Throw – Let's go!

KSGS has had a great season with athletics. Lots of students have been able to represent their school in different track and field events to show case their individual talents. This year we have been running an athletics club through the winter with help from an outside coach, trying to help our students improve on technique and aim towards gaining their Eden or Cumbria vest.

The first meet of the season was the Year 8,9 & 10 District event held at QEGS which saw 15 of our athletes finishing first or second in their events to qualify for the county championship which was held at Sheep Mount, Carlisle. A special mention goes to the Year 10, 4 x 100m relay team which remained unbeaten from Year 7 with their slick change overs.

Next was the County finals where we witnessed some great performances across a range of disciplines. Outstanding performances lead to Archie Steel (hammer), Tabitha Paul (high jump & triple jump), Maddie O'Doherty (shot) and Harriet Stafford (80m hurdles) gaining their Cumbria vest to compete at Middleborough athletics stadium. On this day, Tabitha Paul achieved the qualifying standard to be one of the 25 Cumbrian athletes selected to attend the English school's national finals held at Alexander Park, Birmingham at the end of July. H Paul



Cumbria Education Trust Student Excellence Awards



A huge congratulations to the nominees of this year's golden tickets, who will be attending a prestigious awards ceremony on Thursday 10th July to find out if they have won an Cumbria Education Trust Student Excellent Award in one of the following areas; Respect, Resilience, School Contribution, Community Contribution, Responsibility, Student Leadership, Outstanding Progress and Kindness.

These incredible students have gone above and beyond—not just in academics, but as leaders, change-makers, and compassionate members of our school community. A big shout-out to all of our nominees—we had **52 nomination votes across 37 different students** this year, which shows just how many brilliant role models we have in our school community.



Summer Music Concert Review

This year's summer concert was made almost entirely of KS3 students who not only performed in the concert, but also took care of the stage management, lighting and sound and front of house. They were an amazing team.

A key feature of the show was the emerging bands that are now evolving naturally due to the great balance of confident vocalists, keyboard players, guitarists and drummers that we have in school, complemented by the addition of our young female bassist Izzy Rawlins in

Year 7. Some band highlights were Daisy Robertson making her first vocal solo of Yellow by Coldplay with her supportive Year 8 team. It was also great to see a confident performance of Brazil with Amy Lee Shields performing an ambitious and secure guitar solo, alongside a premier of Mia Longden on bass, Alex Schug on drums and Talula MacDonald and Poppy McNaughton on vocals. We even had a brand new Year 7 band starring Evelyn Foster on vocals, Kristina Kuchernko on guitar, Lillie Hoyle on keys and Aidan O'Brien on percussion. A shout out must go to Joe Henson in Year 8 who supported an array of bands both on drums and bass. Some stand out solos were Coincidence performed by Magdalene Stafford on guitar, Homeward Bound performed by Grade 6 singer Grace Bainbridge and Golden Sluimers by Rory Hewetson on piano.

Any concert would not be complete without the year 7 dancers, choreographed by our outstanding volunteer, Liz Botterill. In just a couple of days they learnt 3 dances – Flowers performed by Olivia Steel, How Will I Know, performed by Sophie Thompson and Shut Up and Dance performed by Immy Hughes and Nicha Greenwood.

It really was a great evening. All the students who contributed were courageous and represented the ethos of confidence and communication that is so important to the way we deliver the Performing Arts here at KSGS. K West Music Teacher

🏆 SPORTS DAY 2025 – WHAT A DAY! 🌟🏠🏆

A massive well done to all of our incredible students who gave it their all on the track and field! 🙌🏆

🏠 Congratulations to HOUSE WHARTON –

our 2025 champions!

🏠 Harcla came in a strong second

🏠 Musgrave took third



🏃🏆 We also witnessed some AMAZING new records being broken – a true testament to the talent, teamwork, and tenacity of our students!

Record breakers:

- ★ 🏠 Tabitha Paul - High Jump
- ★ 🏠 Tabitha Paul - 300m
- ★ 🏠 Harry Allison - Javeline
- ★ 🏠 Kathryn Sansom - Discuss
- ★ 🏠 Year 7 Boys Wharton Relay Team
- ★ 🏠 Year 9 Boys Harcla Relay team

The Janette McWhirter Shield was won again for the fourth year in a row by Tabitha Paul! This shield is awarded to the student with the most points on the day.

Year 11 Prom – Roundthorn Hotel, Thursday 26th June

What a night to remember! On Thursday 26th June, our Year 11 students celebrated the end of their secondary school journey in style at the Roundthorn Hotel. The tables were ready with decorated sunglasses and a white, black and gold theme throughout with balloons and table confetti.

The students arrived in an array of vehicles dressed to impress as they took to the red carpet for photos, every student looked absolutely fantastic.

The evening was filled with laughter, dancing, and unforgettable memories. After a fabulous 3 course meal and mocktails, the students took to the dance floor and danced the night away, celebrating their hard work, friendships, and the exciting future ahead. We are incredibly proud of each and every one of them. Their maturity, positivity, and energy made the evening a true success. It was a joy to see them come together for such a special occasion.

Well done, Year 11 – you did yourselves proud!

Mrs Wealleans

