



Autumn

NEWSLETTER 2025

Issue 136



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HEAD'S WELCOME



Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter

As we come to the end of what has been a busy, vibrant and highly successful Autumn Term, I am delighted to welcome you to our Kirkby Stephen Grammar School Christmas Newsletter. This term also marks the end of my first term as Head of School at KSGS, and I could not be prouder of our students and everything that has been achieved over the past few months. Our students have embraced an incredibly wide range of opportunities, taking part in school events and extra-curricular activities across sports, music, drama, STEM, Food Technology, educational visits and much more, truly showcasing the talent, enthusiasm and commitment that define KSGS.

We have continued to excel in the sporting arena, with many of our teams progressing to county, regional and even national finals, which we look forward to competing in during the new year. I am particularly proud of our Year 7 students, for whom this marks the end of their first term at KSGS. They have settled in exceptionally well and have made a fantastic start to their secondary education journey. I am also delighted with the positive start made by our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they begin their final GCSE and A Level years, engaging well with coursework and NEAs and preparing thoroughly for past and forthcoming mock examinations.

KSGS is proud to be part of the **Cumbria Education Trust (CET)**, and this term some of our students had the privilege of representing the school at the **CET @10 Ten Year Celebration event**, which was a fantastic opportunity and a wonderful celebration of collaboration and achievement across the Trust. Through our continued work as part of CET, we have also seen a number of school improvements and building projects taking place throughout this term, with some continuing into the Spring Term. I would like to thank both our students and staff for their flexibility, resilience and positive attitudes in accommodating the changes brought about by this work.

This term, we have also enjoyed welcoming parents, carers and members of our wider community into school for events such as our Open Evening, Progress Evenings and Settling In Evenings for each year group, and I have greatly enjoyed meeting so many of you. The term has culminated in our fabulous Christmas Concert and Carol Service, which were a true celebration of our students' talent and commitment and a highlight of the school year.

We have also introduced our new KSGS Rewards System, which has been a huge success. Each week, students in every year group are recognised for achieving the highest number of reward points, learner of the lesson awards, excellent attendance, receiving no-consequences, and for consistently demonstrating our school values of **respect, responsibility and resilience**. It has been wonderful to see so many students already achieving Rewards Milestones, including the 100 Club Blue Star Badge and Bronze Badge, and I am very much looking forward to seeing who will be our first Silver, Gold or even Platinum award winners in 2026.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our students, staff and all members of the KSGS school community for their hard work, support and commitment, which have made this term such a success.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, restful break, whatever you enjoy doing, and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on **Tuesday 6th January 2026** as we continue to work together throughout the year ahead.

Kind regards,

Kind regards,

Miss N Tweddle
Head of School

KSGS AWARD WINNERS

Some of our Autumn Term Award Winners:



Form Winners (for Attendance and Achievement Points) and Learner of the Lesson Awards



Achievement Points Bronze Award Winners (250+ points)





Linking Education and Farming (LEAF)

Our Year 10 food students had a fantastic day out with LEAF, visiting **Westmorland Services** and then **Dunning's Farm**.

At Westmorland, students explored the wide range of careers in the agricultural industry, discovered how the farm shop sources sustainable local produce and even learned about butchery and apprenticeships.

The highlight of the morning was working with the chef to create their famous sausage rolls. Congratulations to Paige, Lauren, Ellen, Katie, Nancy and Leah for winning the sausage roll competition – complete with a bow on top!

After lunch, our students headed to the Dunning's Farm where they calculated how much grass the cows need each day, explored careers in farming, visited the milking parlour and even learned how the vet checks if the cows are in calf.

It was a truly informative, hand-on and inspiring day for our students – giving them a real insight into the work of farming, food and sustainability. Mrs Bell



Physics at Blackpool Pleasure Beach



In October Y11 students took part in a Physics Workshop at Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

Students took part in a workshop that explored the physics behind rollercoasters. The presentation took students on a journey through the process of concept and design of new rides and the steps to completion in Physics and Engineering as well as delving into technological advancements in communication which enable Blackpool Pleasure Beach to operate.

As part of the workshop, students learnt about the physics involved in rollercoaster engineering, from energy transfers to G-forces, to understand the real-life applications of physics and the construction of rollercoasters – from wooden classics to modern steel coasters.

Following the Physics session, students were then able to sample the rides and experience the physics for themselves.

Although the weather wasn't on our side, students had a fantastic day and were excellent ambassadors for the school. Vicky Knowles



Introduction to Local Government

KSGS were delighted to welcome Libby Bateman, John Murray and Adrian Waite, who spoke to our Year 10 and 11 students about how local government works. They introduced different political parties, highlighted the importance of voting, and explained why having a voice in our democracy matters. Students also learned what to expect at a polling station and the steps involved in casting a first vote. A highly informative and engaging session – thank you for inspiring the next generation of voters.

Mrs Bell



KSGS pupils took a walk on the wild side in a visit to Blackpool Zoo



The year group enjoyed the sights and sounds of the attraction, while also taking part in some educational workshops.

The cross-curricular trip saw pupils exploring animal behaviour to help their creature poetry in English and their animal-themed works in Art.

They also learned about habitats, animal adaptations, and endangered species to support their learning in Science and Geography.

Pupils said it was an amazing day out and they loved the interactive workshops, where they got to explore a number of interesting items, including a giraffe's enormous femur.

The big cats and lemurs were among the favourites of the day, but the pupils' experience was topped off by seeing a baby elephant — part of the zoo's conservation efforts to preserve the endangered Indian elephant.

The annual trip also helps our Year 7 pupils make lasting friendships as groups bond on their expedition around the zoo's animal trails. Ms Newstead

Dairy Expo at H&H, Carlisle - Think Dairy

They watched a cow being milked, a cow's hooves being clipped, explored career stalls, learned about the many roles in agriculture, and collected 'money' to take part in an auction.

Together they raised over £7,000 – and with Finn as our spokesman, they even won us the cow... who's now living in our library! What a great day – well done Y10!

Mrs Bell



Sixth Form Team Building Day

The Sixth Form have been involved in a fantastic Team Building Day run by Wise Up Team Building. They have had to solve some tricky puzzles and work really hard together to complete the tasks. The organisers commented on how smart our students are and even had to add new activities as our students completed them so quickly! One of the Wise Up Team commented that she had never seen a task so well sorted. Well done Sixth Form!

KSGS Christmas Concert



What a truly wonderful evening at our Christmas Concert! Our students shone in every role — from those on stage to the many working tirelessly behind the scenes. Each and every one of them was outstanding. A huge thank you to Mrs West for organising and delivering such a spectacular show. We are also incredibly grateful to our supportive school community for celebrating and encouraging our students, and to Eden Farm Supplies for their generous donation of the beautiful Christmas trees.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR NEWS

Triumph on Home Soil: 2025 Tug of War World Championships



From 3-7 September, the England Tug of War Association had the privilege of hosting the 2025 World Championships at Nottingham University. With approximately 2,000 competitors representing roughly 20 different countries, the atmosphere was electric, with team spirit and patriotism running high throughout the event. Very proud to represent her Country and be a crucial part of the squad was Lilly-Grace Dunning, competing alongside former KSGS student Carley Thwaites.

The team put in a stellar effort and earned a bronze medal in the fiercely competitive Junior Girls 480kg weight category, finishing behind powerhouses Chinese Taipei and South Africa. Lottie Dunning

Congratulations, Henrietta!



A huge well done to Henrietta P (Year 8), who represented Team GBR at the Modern Pentathlon 2025 European Championships in Turkey last week!

Competing against athletes up to two years older, Henrietta put in an incredible performance — finishing as the 3rd GB girl overall and helping Team GBR secure the Silver Team Medal!

What an amazing achievement — everyone at KSGS is so proud of you, Henrietta!

Gold for Yanic!



KSGS's Karate superstar has won gold at a prestigious national event.

Year 11 pupil, Yanic Voican, took the title of English International Open Champion Cadet-57kg at the tournament in London in September.

Yanic also competes internationally, coming 7th out of a field of 30 competitors in Leige this month. He has also fought in tournaments in Berlin, Spain and Italy. He is part of the Northern regional team and the British squad and holds a black belt in the martial art.

Due to an injury in Leige, Yanic had to take a couple of weeks out but is back training hard at the Mitsuru Karate Club under sensei Mark Holding. His mum, Carla, said: "He doesn't give up, he keeps training hard to improve his position." Yanic has been practising karate since he was seven-years-old and has been fighting in competition, known as kumite, for the last three years. He also passes on his skills to those less experienced, teaching at Sedbergh Karate alongside his other senseis, Sharon Healey and Reece Healey.

Everyone at Kirkby Stephen Grammar School wishes him luck in his next competition at the World Federation Karate Youth League in Venice in December. Sarah Newstead

Dance Competitors - Olivia and Poppy

The girls competed in the IDTA Nationwide Medallist of the Year, Freestyle and Rock 'n' Roll Dance Championships at The Winter Gardens in Blackpool. They competed in many dances including solos, teams and paired dances. The absolute highlight was Olivia and Poppy reaching the final in the Freestyle Fast Pairs and finishing 7th overall in the country. They competed against over 60 pairs of dancers and got through 5 or 6 rounds in a huge category. So we were incredibly proud and thrilled when they got to the Nationwide Final for Freestyle Fast Pairs and finished 7th! Ruth Steel



National Schools Equestrian Association



On Sunday, 30th November, 3 students represented KSGS at a National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) Eventers Challenge Competition at Northallerton Equestrian Centre.

The KSGS team were Lilly Grace riding Takota Cool Runnings (Chilli), Annabelle riding Barlous (Tommy) and Lydia riding Ceide Rose (Dora).

'Whilst competing as part of a team, riders learn to communicate, compromise, be supportive of each other enjoy the successes that can be created from trust and a belief in each other.

Angela Tyson

KSGS supports Children in Need 2025!

A huge thank you to our incredible KSGS community for your fantastic support for Children in Need today! Students and staff embraced the spirit of the day by swapping parts of their uniform for all things yellow and spotty — bringing brightness and smiles across the school!

At lunchtime, students took part in Pudsey's Penalty Shootout and Pudsey's Puzzles, brilliantly led by our Sixth Form Leadership Team. A big well done to everyone who joined in the fun!

Together, we raised an amazing £146.98 for a brilliant cause. Well done to all involved — your kindness makes a difference!



Celebrating KSGS at CET@10!

We were incredibly proud to see our KSGS students shine on stage at The Garden at Eden during Cumbria Education Trust's 10-year celebration — CET@10.

Our amazing Sixth Formers, Nicolas and Martha, took on the role of comperes for the entire event — and they were absolutely fantastic!

As part of The CET Journey, our pupils shared heartfelt stories about their experiences at KSGS — reflecting on the opportunities, community spirit, and values that make our school such a special place. Their confidence and passion were truly inspiring.



A huge well done to all our students, Jessica, Tabitha, Poppie and George, who represented KSGS so brilliantly — you really showed what it means to Be the Best You Can Be.

[READ MORE](#)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Welcome to the latest PE Department round-up!

It has been an exceptionally busy and brilliant period across all year groups, filled with outstanding commitment, teamwork, and numerous success stories both in lessons and extra-curricular activities. The enthusiasm from our students has been infectious, and we are delighted to see so many embracing the diverse opportunities available, from competitive fixtures to new clubs like winter athletics, girls' football and laser run.

Although Mr Bromfield leaving the department, after 29 years, has left a huge hole to fill, I can certainly say that my team of Mr Luke, Miss Hall, Mr Hibbett, and Mrs Beaumont have more than stepped up to fill the void. Dive into the details below to catch up on all the exciting developments and celebrate the efforts of our young athletes.

Mrs Paul, PE Department Curriculum Leader

Regional finals here we come!

A massive well done to the U14 and U16 netball teams, who have qualified for the regional finals in the new year, for the second year running.

The U16 team competed first at the county finals, winning all their games straight through to the final match against the host, Sedbergh School. The team took control of the game from the start and were crowned county champions, regaining their title, which they won as a U14 squad.

A week later, it was the turn of the U14 team. With a few injuries, the squad had to make positional changes. However, it never stopped this team from working hard and finding themselves in their first county final against Sedbergh School. At full time, a 10-10 score line took a very tired team into extra time. On this occasion, just missing out on the title, however, being runners-up still gets us to the regional finals.

Well done to all players - an amazing achievement.



Eden District Cross Country News

Well done to all KSGS students from across all year groups who competed in the district finals. The school is known for its tough course, which includes the big drive up the hill.

Resilience, one of the school values, was definitely on show, with a depleted squad due to illness and lots of runners still recovering but choosing to run. The team worked hard throughout the races and cheered each other around. A big thank you to Mr Luke, staff and 6th form students who helped on the day, which make such an event possible.





Boys on Form

The boys have had a busy term of sporting fixtures. The U12, U13, U14, U15 and U16 rugby and football teams have had regular games against Queen Katharine's, Kirkby Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale. These have enabled the boys to progress as teams, make new friends in their year groups as well as play some high-quality sport against tough opposition.



Alongside all the fixtures, we have entered various county cups and competitions. The U13 football team have progressed to the 3rd round of the football county cup, and the U15 rugby team are in the semi-finals of the rugby county cup. The next rounds of these will be played after the Christmas break.



It has been fantastic to have so many pupils at training and representing the school. Keep up the good work boys. I look forward to continuing to watch you progress over the year.

National Hockey Finals Hat-trick

The U18 hockey team have only gone and done it again. This squad will be travelling to the Nottingham Hockey Centre in February to compete in the Tier 3 National Hockey Finals. The team began their journey playing within the Cumbria County round, beating all teams to reach the North West Championship. This final took us out of the county and on a road trip to Timperley's Hockey Centre, where we faced tough opposition and poor weather conditions. Winning two matches, drawing a third and having a better goal difference resulted in the team being crowned the North West of England Champions and a place at the nationals.



This is an amazing achievement for a small school, and to achieve it for a third time is outstanding. We are all very proud of our players and wish them luck and enjoyment at the finals.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in your child's Physical Education journey. Your encouragement at home makes a big difference to their success and confidence. We wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas.

Mrs Paul, PE Department Curriculum Leader

EDEN VALLEY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Girls' Football

This term the Sports Partnership hosted a Secondary School football festival in Penrith. This is crucial in allowing girls to take part in a sport where the National team have been hugely successful, and the only way to keep the National team being successful is to improve the sport at grass roots level. By allowing these girls the opportunity to play football, some never having played before, they all thoroughly enjoyed their day. Later on we hosted a primary school event where 3 young leaders from KSGS refereed and one leader quoted, "This is my dream day, football in the morning, football in the afternoon and football training tonight!"



Sports Leadership

This term we have had nearly 20 events in various locations in the Eden Valley working with 22 primary schools and the surrounding secondary school helping to lead at the events. The Kirkby Stephen pupils have been brilliant, we cannot fault their efforts and patience when working with the primary school pupils. They have to learn new skills quickly as well as think on their feet. By giving them some responsibility and ownership, it's great to see them grow in confidence over their time leading at these events.

We look forward to continuing our work with at Kirkby Stephen Grammar School as Eden Valley Sports Partnership, to offer new opportunities for the pupils and help them become more independent and push them out of their comfort zone.





EduLink Updates: Behaviour, Calendar & Noticeboard Now Added

We are pleased to share that new features have been added to EduLink, including Behaviour and Noticeboard. These updates will make it even easier for you to stay informed about your child's progress and school life.

EduLink provides access to a wide range of important information, all in one place. You can view attendance, reports, homework, and now behaviour updates and key school dates, directly through the app or [EduLink website](#). The app can be downloaded from the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

Please note that Parents' Evenings will now be arranged exclusively through EduLink. You will need to log in to book appointments when events are released. Any messages regarding adverse weather will also be sent to parents/carers via Edulink.

If you are still struggling to get started with EduLink or need help accessing your account, please get in touch—we are happy to support you via admin@ksgs.cumbria.sch.uk

Staff Changes:

We have a few staffing updates to share with our community. Ms Zheng, our Music teacher, will be starting her maternity leave this week. We wish her all the very best at this exciting time. Mrs West will be returning to school to cover Ms Zheng's Music lessons during her absence, and we are delighted to welcome her back.

We are also pleased to welcome Mrs Beaumont, who joins us to teach Physical Education one day per week.

Finally, Mrs Ousby will be retiring from her role as SIMS & Systems Manager at the end of the Autumn term, after nearly 29 years with KSGS. We thank her for her dedicated service and valuable contribution to KSGS and wish her a very happy retirement.

KIRKBY STEPHEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL SIXTH FORM **OPEN EVENING** 5-7PM WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026



" Leaders are passionate, caring and know students well.

There is an uncompromising drive to provide as many experiences as possible for students, to raise aspirations, broaden horizons and meet their individual needs.

Students display extremely positive attitudes to learning and are proud to be members of the sixth form."

Ofsted

WHY CHOOSE K.S.G.S.?

- ✓ Small school, big aspirations
- ✓ Subject specialist teachers
- ✓ Consistently good teaching
- ✓ Strong academic success
- ✓ Close family atmosphere
- ✓ 100% of students achieved their desired next step in 2025

Register here for our Open Evening



www.ksgs.cumbria.sch.uk

JOIN OUR TEAM

We are looking for talented individuals to join Cumbria Education Trust.

Explore the roles below and apply today! Join a forward-thinking trust, full of growth and excellent professional development opportunities.

Can't find a suitable job right now? Join our Talent Pool and be alerted as soon as the role you are looking for becomes available!

KEY TERM DATES

Autumn Term ends

Friday, 19th December 2025

Spring Term begins

Back to school: Tuesday, 6th January 2026
(KSGS does not have an inset day on this date)

Half term

Monday, 16th – Friday 20th February 2026

Spring Term ends

Friday, 27th March 2026

You can view further term dates, and each year up until 2028-2029 on our website.

[OUR CURRENT VACANCIES](#)

[TERM DATES](#)



SEE YOU ON TUESDAY, 6TH JANUARY 2026!