



Whitby School
Ad finem terrae

newsletter

ISSUE 9





MESSAGE FROM WHITBY SCHOOL



As our first term at Whitby School draws to a close, we wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on the year so far. Staff began the term by unpacking boxes of books and equipment, setting up our classrooms and social spaces, writing lesson plans and policies. They have now established effective routines, deliver great lessons and support pupils to be the best they can be. Pupils and students shared some trepidation about what lay ahead, particularly our new Year 7 pupils who had moved to a much larger school than they were probably used to. Quickly, our pupils settled in and are a credit to themselves and their families in so many ways. They continue to wear their school uniform with pride, work hard in lessons and behave well around school. We are very proud of them.

Whitby School exists to serve our local community and if this first term is anything to go by, a strong and endearing partnership has been created. The new 'Friends of Whitby School' has already raised significant funds and formed a great partnership with parents and staff.

It is fabulous to give recognition and reward our pupils and students who bring our school values of Endeavour, Courage, Ambition and Character to life through taking part in a multitude of enrichment activities, acts of kindness and by challenging themselves to achieve or try new things. They have supported local charities and represented the school at national and international events. A party of students

recently visited the Netherlands, and a visit is planned to Kenya later in the year. We held our first music and dance concert a few days ago to showcase the wonderful talents of our young people. Our sports teams are winning competitions, our athletes and equestrians competing successfully both locally and nationally. Auditions are well underway for our end of year performance 'We will Rock You'. There is often so much going on it can be difficult to keep track! All this activity shows Whitby School is thriving and making a positive impact on the lives of our pupils, students, staff and families. We look forward to building on this early success in the months and years to come.

Finally, I would like to wish our school community, their family and friends a happy and relaxing Christmas holiday. Thank you for your support and we look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 6 January at the usual time.

Best wishes from staff and governors





WHITBY SCHOOL'S FIRST MUSIC AND DANCE EVENING

With over 80 pupils and students performing and a jam packed hall full of families and friends supporting, this was an evening to remember. Hosted by our very own comedy duo, Year 11 pupils Kasia and Sophie, the show was off to a strong start with the Junior Choir who sounded so confident and were looking particularly Christmassy. There then followed a wide range of ensembles and brave soloists on a variety of different instruments. The Funk Band performed and all of the Year 10 and 11 GCSE musicians performed in various ensembles together in pieces arranged by Mrs Beattie. Mrs Alderson had choreographed two contrasting and mesmerising dances that her Year 10 GCSE Dance group performed. The standard of every

performance, both music and dance, was extremely high and something that the pupils involved should be very proud of. All of the hours of teamwork and preparation paid off. In addition, Year 12 student Ben managed refreshments at the start of the concert and Year 11 pupils Roxy and Izzy managed the PA system. The evening was also a chance for the pupils and students to raise some money to purchase some music equipment for them all to use; an anonymous sponsor of the concert donated an amazing £150 and we also collected over £100 in donations on the door - thank you so much to everyone who donated for your generosity and also for supporting our pupils and students by coming to the evening.







SUBJECT FOCUS: ENGLISH

It has been a busy autumn term for English! Our Year 12 English language students are a superb, mature and talented group. This term they visited Teesside University and were involved in a 'Journalist for a Day' workshop. They learnt about researching topics, went out onto the campus to interview members of the public, and produced some superb pieces of very professional journalism. Some of our alumni currently work for Channel 4 and the BBC and we feel sure that our current A-level students have just as much potential.

This week Year 7 are going to the pantomime ("Oh no, they aren't! Oh yes they are!") We hope they have a brilliant experience! This term Year 7 have been focusing on poetry and have looked at a range of

poetic forms and styles. They have also produced some of their own poetry which has been wonderful!

In Year 8, pupils have continued their focus on the 'gothic'. Pupils have moved on from *Dracula* in the first half term to Susan Hill's brilliantly tense thriller *The Woman in Black*. They have been really enjoying this fantastically fraught novel and have been learning about the ways in which writers create dramatic and exciting effects.

Year 7 and 8 have also been involved in this year's BookBuzz. Miss Thompson organised this brilliant event which involves pupils being able to select a brand new book of their choosing, alongside a mug of festive hot chocolate. We are so pleased that we could provide this opportunity for every child to own a book





of their own. We hope our Year 7s and 8s enjoy reading their books over Christmas!

We also hosted a successful 'Youth Speaks' event where our Year 9 teams - led by Mrs Plant - demonstrated skill and finesse with their speeches. After an excellent competition, our congratulations go to Christine, Chloe and Lilac our winners. We certainly have a few politicians of the future within our talented group of Year 9s.

Also in Year 9 is our new librarian team. These hard-working pupils have been giving up their time to help create a new library space. They truly are a credit to the school. In 2025 they will be planning book sales and reading competitions.

In terms of the Year 9 English curriculum, our focus is all about 'identity'. As we introduce themes such as fighting for freedom, we encourage pupils to think about their place in the world, and their relationships

with others. This half term, pupils have studied John Steinbeck's classic depression-era novella, *Of Mice and Men*. Whilst almost a century old, the universal ideas of friendship and the belief in a 'dream' still engages young people today. Steinbeck was writing at a time of unimaginable deprivation. America was facing devastating poverty after the Wall Street Crash, and migrant workers such as the novel's George and Lennie would travel from place to place, desperately trying to find work and constantly dreaming of owning a home of their own. Whilst our pupils may have different 'dreams', the themes of hope and hardships are still relatable today.

Earlier in the term, Year 10 and 11 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the National Theatre production of *An Inspector Calls*, and just two weeks ago, Year 10 also had the opportunity to watch an enriching, engaging performance of *A Christmas Carol*. Priestley's *An*





Inspector Calls was written shortly after the end of World War 2, and Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is now over 175 years old. Despite this, both of these core GCSE texts still resonate, powerfully, with the pupils who study them. Both texts focus on social responsibility, the importance of compassion and love, and the urgent need for society to offer both practical support, and meaningful kindness towards others. Within Priestley's classic drama, *An Inspector Calls*, we learn of inequality and injustice; and are guided to empathise with the poor and the destitute within our world. Likewise, in the case of Dickens' famous protagonist Scrooge, we are reminded that even the very worst of us has the power to change; to truly transform into better people. Dickens' Christian allegory is one of redemption and hope; a beacon of optimism that all of us, old and young, can appreciate. Students sometimes ask their English teachers, "why do we have to study English?" It goes without saying that English is an enabling subject which develops analytical and communication skills. Its transferable skills truly place the subject at the heart of most jobs and activities. But, far more than this, it is through the wonder and richness of beloved and brilliant stories, that English opens us up to the world around us, developing us into communities - like Whitby School -

which care for one another. We truly hope that our English curriculum encourages our young people to think, and to feel.

And so, as Christmas fast approaches, and as Tiny Tim says, "God bless us, every one!" From our English department, to you and yours, we wish you a peaceful, restful and hopeful Christmas.

Mrs L Whelan, Head of English





SPORTS UPDATE

Year 7 and 8 Dodgeball

Grand finale to what has been a successful first term for the sporting talents of Whitby School pupils. A mixed team of Year 7 and 8 participated in the Scarborough and District Dodgeball tournament at Pindar school. There were 8 teams competing in total and this fabulous group achieved second place after narrowly losing against the winning team of George Pindar School.

The team spirit began as soon as the boys were on the bus and continued throughout until they returned home. Dodgeball is one game that brings the competitiveness out of the shyest of people. It was an absolute pleasure to have been in the company of such motivated and enthusiastic players - the whole event can only be described as magical mayhem, moments like these are what bring us PE teachers such joy.





Dance Lessons

Year 7 and 8 girls are coming to the end of a wonderful half term of dance. Year 7s began their dance block with line dancing, developing their coordination, rhythm and working in unison. They then enjoyed creating their own line dances that had to include specific line dance techniques and be 32 beats before a change in direction. More recently they have been exploring 'Lyrical' dancing, and using lyrics as a stimulus for their own routines. They have worked on portraying emotion whilst incorporating jazz and ballet elements.

Year 8 lessons have seen the girls dance through the decades, beginning in the Charleston era, rock 'n' rolling into the 50s, swinging into the 60s and more recently 'bus stopping', 'hustling' and 'bumping' into the 70s. The girls have approached each decade with a brilliant attitude and lots of energy and enthusiasm. The changes in confidence, when compared to lesson one, has been wonderful to witness.

Thank you girls for a brilliant term of dancing.

Mrs Harrison





Year 7 Cross Country Success

The Year 7 girls team shone throughout their league races this season. As a team they had two first place finishes and one second place finish resulting in them being crowned the District Champions. Four of the girls from the squad have now been selected to represent the district at the County Trials in January due to their fantastic individual performances - good luck to Amelia, Sophie, Ella and Phoebe when they compete on Saturday 11 January at Aireville Park, Skipton.



Hockey Lessons and Club

Hockey lessons have been underway this past half term. The girls have been getting to grips with new skills and techniques and transferring them into small-sided games on our fantastic astro-turf facility. There is a wealth of talent for hockey within Whitby School and we're really fortunate to have some great local clubs for both boys and girls to join to really excel at this sport. Hockey club is now underway on a Wednesday after school and will continue after the Christmas break. The spring term will also see Year 7 and 8s participate in their first hockey tournaments against other schools in the district.





YEAR 7 TRIP TO THE PANTOMIME



Year 7 pupils were lucky enough to visit the Sleeping Beauty pantomime at Darlington, starring singer, TV actor and musical theatre star Lee Mead, Hi-de-Hi! star and panto legend Su Pollard and panto comic Josh Benson and fabulous Dame Jamie Jones. They were joined by Mamma Mia: I Have a Dream star Stephanie Costi in the title role, and performer Olivia Foster-Browne as the Enchantress.

Pupils had a fantastic time and were a credit to the school.

Some pupils have already shared their feedback on the trip.

Lily commented that the pantomime was **'really, really funny'**.

Finlay stated that he **'enjoyed the panto'**.

Grace said, **'I really enjoyed the pantomime I thought it was very funny and would love to go again'**.

Ebony said that she had **'the time of (her) life at the panto in Darlington'** and that **'the characters were amazing some were dramatic, some were romantic'**.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common it is for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

Meet Our Expert

John Inasley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>



EAST COAST YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR COMPETITION!

ECYMY is a competition for all pupils and students of classical music up to the age of 25.

Whether you're just starting out on your musical journey, a talented 20 something or in your final years of music college, ECYMY is a place to develop your performance skills, show everyone what you can do and learn from one another. Many winners of the competition go on to be successful professional musicians. Don't let this intimidate you though - their ethos is very much about enjoying making music, whatever level you happen to be at right now.

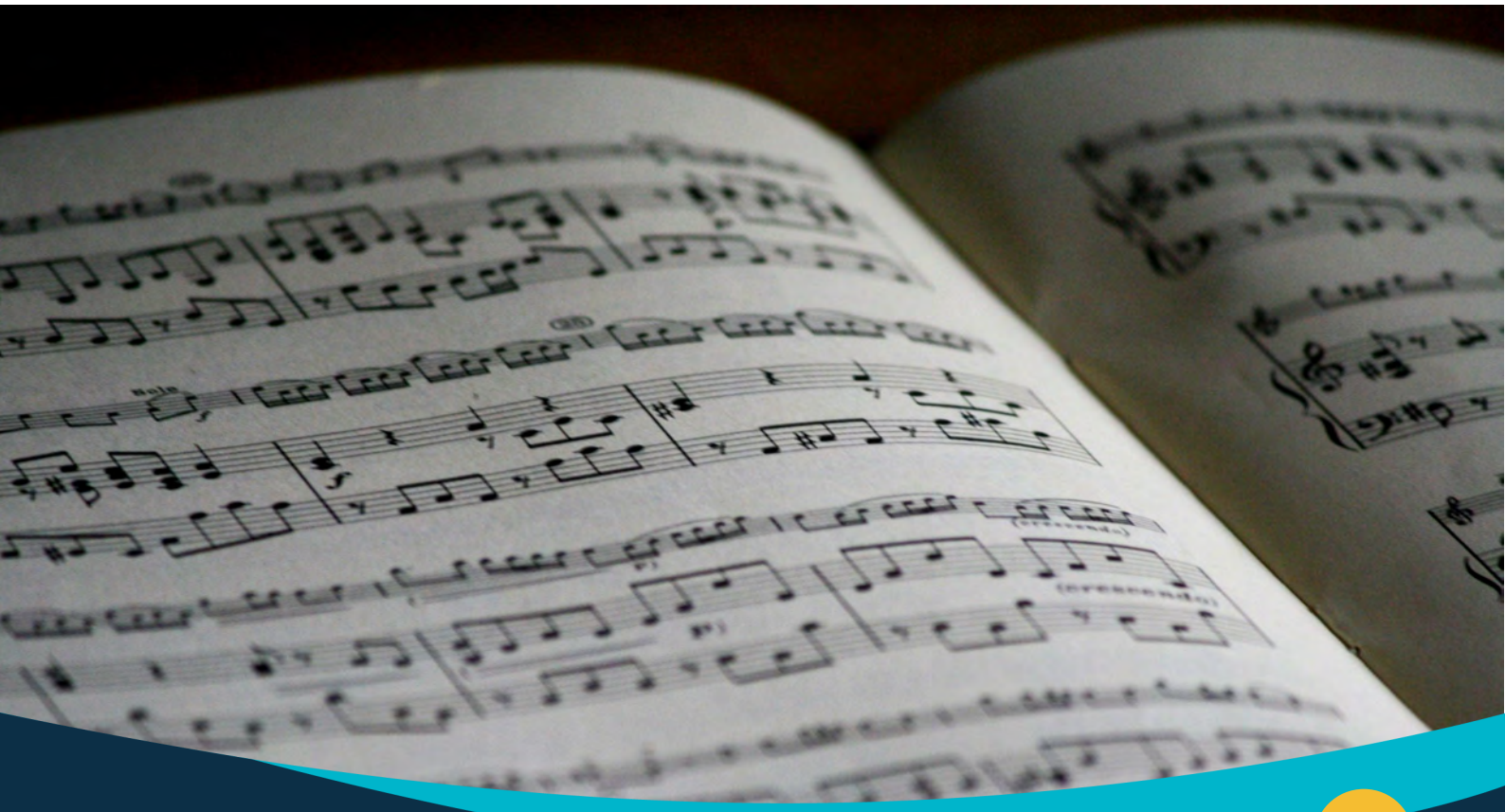
There are two rounds:

Round 1 is via a video submitted to YouTube **no later than 31 January**. We choose two candidates from each category to go through to

Round 2, a live concert hosted by Hornsea Recital Club on **Saturday 1 March 2025**, where the winners for each category and an overall winner will be decided.

Full details [HERE](#)

Pupils/students are to let Mrs Beattie know if they are entering and if she can help in any way.





SIXTH FORM SUBJECT FOCUS: ENGLISH LITERATURE

What will I study?

Words matter. Wars are started over them. Great love affairs happen because of them. Studying English literature will give you the chance to read, think and discuss. In a world filled with 140 characters, Instagram and Snapchat, how often do you get the chance to fully absorb yourself in a good book? From Dracula to The Handmaid's Tale, A-level literature is about amazing novels, poems and plays. Through these great literary texts, students get to grips with a range of texts covering a range of important issues, helping them to think about the world around them and to question and consider everything. Our students are often creative writers, as well as enthusiastic readers and participate in a range of literary competitions. In addition, students will have access to a range of exciting theatre trips.

Literature that changes our world. Join us on the journey!

What do students do afterwards?

Last year, 100% of our students gained a grade C or above; 66% gained A/A* grades. Students have gone on to study English literature, history, psychology and media-based degrees. Some are enjoying careers in the media, such as SKY and Channel 4 and others are continuing their studies at top establishments such as Oxford University.

How will I be assessed?

80% exam; 20% coursework.

What can I do to prepare?

Talk to other students who are already doing the course and ask them what they have done or wish they had done.

Read widely; anything that takes your fancy and inspires you to think and discuss.





KEY DATES

To find out more about upcoming events and visits, please view the Whitby School Calendar.

Friday 20 December..... School closes for Christmas break, 3.30pm

Monday 23 December - Friday 3 January Christmas Break

2025

Tuesday 7 JanuaryYear 11 Basketball at Lady Lumley's

Thursday 9 JanuaryU13 Hockey v Fyling Hall (H)

Thursday 9 JanuaryCounty Cup v King James (A)

Saturday 11 January NYSCA County Cross Country Trail at Aireville Park, Skipton

WB 13 January Year 12 and 13 External Exams

Tuesday 14 JanuaryYear 10 Basketball at Lady Lumley's

Tuesday 14 JanuaryYear 9 Parents' Evening, 4.00-6.00pm (Prospect Hill site)

Tuesday 14 JanuaryYear 9 PSHE Drama Workshop 'It's not love'

Wednesday 15 JanuaryYear 9 Girls' Football at Norton

Thursday 16 January Year 8 Hockey (H)

Thursday 16 January Year 10 Hockey at Lady Lumley's

Friday 17 January Primary Change 4 Life at the Prospect Hill site

WB 20 January Year 12 Trial Exams

WB 27 January Year 9 Trial Exams

Monday 27 January 'Making Waves' Higher Education Workshops

Wednesday 29 January Year 9 Pupils' Emergency Day at Scarborough Tec

Wednesday 29 January UCAS Deadline, 6.00pm

Tuesday 4 February Options Evening, 4.00-6.00pm (Prospect Hill site)

Wednesday 5 February Year 9-13 Apprenticeship Evening, 4.00-6.00pm (Prospect Hill site)



MEET THE STAFF

Senior Leadership Team

Mr D Thornton – Headteacher
Ms S Boyd – Deputy Headteacher
Miss J Caddell – Deputy Headteacher
Mrs J Bradley – Assistant Headteacher (Prospect Hill site)
Mrs K Mallender – Assistant Headteacher (Airy Hill site)
Mr A Whelan – Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form)

SENDCo

Mrs H Kirk – SENDCo

Safeguarding

Miss J Caddell – Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs J Bradley – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Heads of Year

Mrs A Harrison – Year 7
Mr A Raw – Year 8
Mrs J Cassell-Osowski – Year 9
Mrs A Scales – Year 10
Ms A Ruberry – Year 11

Care & Achievement Coordinators

Miss A Clarkson – Year 7
Miss E Hutton – Year 8
Miss K Wilson – Year 8
Mrs R Jackson – Year 9
Mrs H Ross – Year 10
Mr D Taylor – Year 11
Mr J Daley – Year 12 & 13







NOTICES

Cambridge University Biology Challenge

Congratulations to Molly, Angus and Ziva for being awarded 'Highly Commended' for their entry in the first round of this year's Cambridge University Biology Challenge. The team worked hard to put together an academic essay, responding to the question: 'Does behaviour fossilise?'. For the second round, they have submitted their response to the next question: 'Discuss an aspect of winter or Christmas from a biological perspective'. We look forward to hearing how they get on in the next stages!



Friends of Whitby School

The Friends of Whitby School team would like to thank everyone who purchased tickets for the first Christmas draw, and the Businesses who were so generous in donating prizes.

We raised an amazing £1,395.00.

Our next meeting is Monday 13 January, 4.00pm at the Airy Hill Site, if you have any ideas for future events or would like to volunteer please come a long.