



**HERMITAGE
ACADEMY**

WINTER NEWSLETTER

December 2022

Dear parents, carers and friends, welcome to our Christmas newsletter...

"Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"

Dr. Seuss, How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

This term, as always, has been a long one. Despite this, our students remain a real source of joy. They have embraced the many opportunities afforded to them.

There has been a lot going on and our students have worked hard. Everyone has been involved with our 12 Days of Christmas activities, which have been great fun. Our choir delighted their audience at Lumley Castle and the trips to New York and Berlin were wonderful experiences for our students. I look forward to sharing this newsletter with you all to give just a snapshot of all we have to celebrate from this term.

For many of us, the festive period gives us the opportunity to spend valuable time with family, friends and loved ones. We hope, together, you have a restful and fun-filled time over the festive period. As always, please stay safe and we look forwards to welcoming our students back on Thursday 5th January 2023.

With best wishes for 2023,

Darren Stewart

Darren Stewart
Head of School

Dr Janice Gorlach

Dr Janice Gorlach
Executive Headteacher

Hermitage Voices

This term saw our fantastic Hermitage Voices choir perform beautifully at Lumley Castle for the Head and Neck Cancer Foundation's fundraiser.

Students performed to a packed audience in the stunning Garter Room getting everyone truly into the festive spirit. We are so pleased to see their talent celebrated in the community.



...and the votes are in!

All students have been involved in the democratic tradition of voting for their new Tutor Representatives this term.

Following a PSHE session on democracy and the key qualities of a rep, students were encouraged to put themselves forward and were then elected by their peers via a ballot.

Tallying up the votes was left to our dedicated councillors who took their role very seriously! Our Student Leaders announced the winners and presented our new Tutor Representatives with their badges. A huge well done to not only our winners, but all students who were dedicated enough to nominate themselves.



IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

20 DEC	Break up for Christmas
05 JAN	Back to school
17 FEB	Break up for half term
27 FEB	Back to school

Key Stage 3 skills

A group of talented Year 9 food technology students took part in a high skill cookery session after school this term to further develop their culinary excellence.

Students tackled the difficult art of making choux pastry, which they combined with a delicious and indulgent creme Chantilly and dark chocolate sauce to produce a moreish batch of profiteroles.



We're social!

Did you know that our school regularly posts on social media sites, Facebook and Twitter?

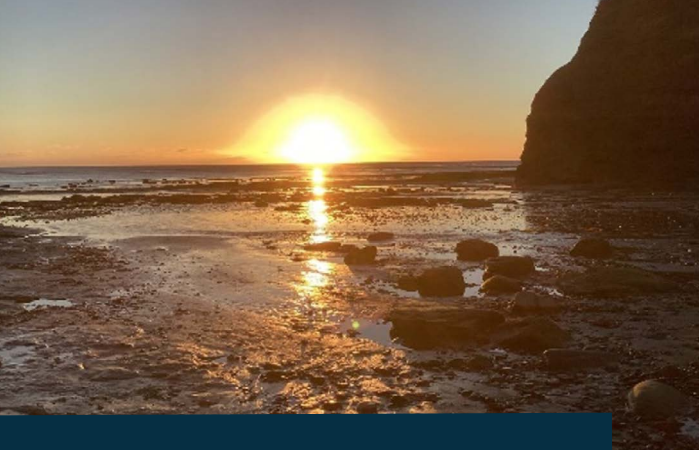
Our social media pages are a great way to connect to our online Hermitage Academy community. You can find photos, videos and important updates on our pages and see what your little ones are up to in the classroom. If you don't follow our pages already, please give us a like or a follow to stay in the loop!



@hermitage_acad



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Super science

It has once again been a busy start to the school year for the science department.

Mrs Nicholson and Mr Lloyd's STEM Club has proven very popular with Key Stage 3 students. They have been taking part in a habitats project that has involved bringing in materials from home in order to design a habitat of their choice alongside making polymer clay animals to go inside. Once finished, the club will then present their habitats to each other and vote for their winner who will receive a prize; watch this space!

In October the our A level biology students spent a weekend in Robin Hood's Bay with Mrs Smith, Mr Wainwright and Mr Jenkins as part of the practical element of their course. They sampled the rocky seashore, creating a shore profile and conducting their own personal projects investigation on the distribution of the different species along the shore. Every group managed to obtain statistically significant data. Everyone had a lovely time and all agree Mr Wainwright is an excellent chef!



Watch out Bear Grylls

A pack of 25 Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award students successfully tackled their expedition in Kielder this term.

The students were a credit to themselves, working hard and supporting each other as they camped, cooked and navigated their

way through the countryside. Great job everyone!



Dancing divas

As part of our 12 Days of Christmas activities, our dance club performed a routine to The Sparkling Diamond from the hit musical Moulin Rouge.

The performance went down a storm with a packed audience in the dance studio!



Magnifique!

It has been an extremely busy start to this year in our languages department beginning with the celebration of European Day of Languages in September.

Students took part in a competition looking at the origin of words and their meaning and they also had the opportunity to attend Dutch, Italian and foreign language film clubs!

Students in Year 7 and Year 8 put their French to the test at Foreign Language Games Club with Mrs Heath, playing games such as Guess Who and bingo!

In October, Mrs Sawyer launched the department trip to Cantabria in northern Spain to Year 8 and 9 students. The trip will take place in July 2023 and involves a number of exciting cultural activities including a trip to a Spanish market, a visit to some caves and also a safari park!



I'm a believer

This term one of our talented Year 10 students, Dan took the stage by storm with his stand-out performance as Donkey in Gateshead Musical Theatre Company Junior Section's production of Shrek the Musical.

This part was a perfect role for Dan, who studies drama at GCSE and trains in musical theatre with the Lee Brannigan Performing Arts Academy. Dan stole the show, giving a fantastic and hilarious performance as the fast-talking friend of Shrek.

The icing on the cake came as the cast were given a standing ovation, led by a group of Year 10 boys, who had come especially to support and praise their friend.

NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association), which is the charity for amateur theatre societies, was in

attendance that evening and offered wonderful praise for the production and its young cast. They had particular praise for Dan in their review, saying that he gave a "bravura performance" and that there "is no one better at this level to play the comedy role of Donkey". We are so proud of Dan and cannot wait to see him in his next production. Definitely a star of the future!



Did you know...

- All of the items in the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" total 354 gifts.
- The origin of stockings being hung on Christmas came from the Dutch custom of leaving shoes full of food for St. Nicolas' donkey which would then be filled with small gifts by St. Nicholas.
- Many of the festive traditions we have in the UK today came about in the Victorian era – such as Christmas cards, gift-giving and crackers, as well as traditional foods like mince pies and roast turkey! Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert were huge fans of Christmas, in fact!

Year 12 Caitlin is on fire... or should we say ice?

Caitlin has recently been busy competing in figure skating competitions.

Firstly in the Tayside International Trophy competition in Dundee, Caitlin competed in the Advanced Novice 15+ ladies section and placed 2nd!

for the British Ice Skating qualifier events for the next two seasons, and hopefully, gain a place at the British Championships!

Caitlin also competed in a national skating competition in Aberdeen in October, placing 3rd. This has given her the scores to move up to the junior ladies section, meaning she can apply



BOXING CHAMP

Year 11 boxing star, George, became the 75kg national development champion after winning a boxing competition in Banbury during the October half term.

He is now Tyne Tees and Wear Champion for 67-70kg and 70-75kg. George's dream is to box for Team GB in the Olympics one day - you can do it!



Anti-bullying Week 2022

To mark Anti-Bullying Week this term our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors kicked off their campaign 'be the upstander'!

The ambassadors began by promoting their ideas and objectives for the year ahead during assembly each morning.

The group put together a PSHE session titled 'Be The Upstander' which was delivered to all students in the hope that each student is confident in knowing how to identify unkind behaviour, how to support someone who may be experiencing unkind behaviour and how to report it.

The group ended the week supporting the Anti-Bullying Alliance's Odd Socks Day, encouraging all staff and students to wear their odd socks in celebration of our uniqueness and individuality...although there were a few soggy odd socks due to the rain!

To quote our ambassadors, 'In a world full of bystanders, be the upstander!'



Hermitage remembers...

At the Hermitage Academy we marked Remembrance day on the eleventh day, of the eleventh month at the eleventh hour with a two minute's silence and a rendition of the last post, expertly played by one of our Year 9 students, Thomas H, on the bugle.

The week before Remembrance Day, all students heard an assembly where they were asked to consider what is meant by service and why we remember those who served. Students found out about Owen Bernard who served as a medic in the Falklands War, as well as Adam Williams, one of the first paramedics on the scene after the Manchester Arena bombing. This helped them think about the experiences of those who serve us and the sacrifices they make, and why remembrance is important.

Lessons from Auschwitz project

Mr Widdowson and four sixth form historians jetted off on a day trip to Poland as part of the Holocaust Educational Trusts Lessons from Auschwitz Project this term.

The group had attended an orientation seminar on Zoom before the trip and then set off from Newcastle airport at the crack of dawn on a flight to Krakow.

From here they got a bus to Auschwitz 1 where they were given a guided tour around the camp and were shown the prototype gas chamber as well as the commandants house where his wife and children lived that backed onto the camp.

In the afternoon they were taken to Auschwitz 2 (also known as Birkenau) where they were taken to see the accommodation as well as the remains of the shower block gas chambers. Our historians participated in a ceremony of remembrance.

The students found it to be an unforgettable experience and one that they all agreed should be undertaken by everyone to help them fully understand the horrors of the Holocaust. The group have since attended an online seminar to follow up the trip, this included the opportunity to listen to survivor testimony. They are now planning their assembly that they will be delivering in school around the week of Holocaust Memorial Day, to pass on their experiences to ensure that it is not forgotten.



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Making the move to teaching is easier than you think...

Did you know you can train to be a teacher in our school? Training to teach in our school with North East SCITT takes less time and is more affordable than many people realise. Our nine-month courses begin every September meaning you could be starting out on a new career before you know it. Many people worry they don't have what

it takes to make the move into teaching, but with training and support from our team of experienced, outstanding teachers who are right beside you from day one, we always prove them wrong. If you have a good degree and the desire to learn new skills and make a difference, then we'd love to talk to you.

Thinking about training to teach?

Come and spend the morning at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee or Browney Academy in Durham to get a taste of what teacher training is like with North East SCITT.

19 th	January	2023
8 th	February	2023
10 th	March	2023
18 th	April	2023
19 th	May	2023
8 th	June	2023
27 th	June	2023

Virtual taster days also available. Please check our website for more details.



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