



**HERMITAGE
ACADEMY**

SPRING NEWSLETTER

April 2020



WELCOME to our spring newsletter

These are indeed strange times! While we all continue getting to grips with terms such as 'self-isolation', 'social distancing', 'shielding' and 'lock down', it would be too easy for us to forget all of the great events that our students have been accessing during the last term. We don't want to do this! So, the content of this newsletter will celebrate that.

Over the last couple of weeks, I am conscious of how many staff went way beyond the call of duty in helping to keep things as calm as possible in school for our students. I am also conscious of how many of our students acted so maturely and respectfully when they were uncertain of what was going to happen – they are a credit to you as parents/carers.

A joint effort between school, parents and students allowed us very quickly to pull together packs, resources and home learning activities so that our students have access to education at home in these unprecedented times. Everyone has demonstrated huge resilience and the 'community ethos' that permeates Hermitage Academy is ever evident.

As the great writer Maya Angelou said: "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them". Despite everyone's weariness, the anxiety of students, parents and staff – everyone is doing an extraordinary job in extraordinary times.

Thank you and stay safe.

Darren Stewart
Head of School

Dr Janice Gorch
Executive Headteacher

Dancing showcase

Our school's fantastic dance company 'Conversion Dance' performed at the Gala Theatre this term in 'Slide', a showcase of dance talent from all across the Newcastle and Durham areas.

The showcase was organised by TinArts as part of U-Dance's national dance competition 'Pulse'. Our students from Years 7-11 took part in a dramatic dance piece called Freedom Within, performed to music from the musical Sweeney Todd.

Our students were amongst some of the youngest competitors and received some fantastic feedback from the judges, making us all very proud.





The business of food

To get the New Year off to a positive start, Year 10 hospitality and catering students enjoyed a visit to Blackfriars restaurant in Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Whilst there, students experienced working life at one of the city's leading high end restaurants and gained insight into the business of food.

Students explored the industry in terms of the wide range of opportunities in this global industry and learned about career progression from the team at this award winning venue, including business

owner, chef and waiting staff who shared their own journey and experience.

The visit culminated in a creative task where students had to work as a team to plan and pitch their own new restaurant concept to the restaurant's owner and head chef, with Hermitage students being in the winning team!

Visit from Cloud Singh

After completing a half-term unit of work on Sikhism, our Year 8 students had the opportunity to meet Cloud Singh in their RE lessons.

Cloud is a white British convert to the Sikh faith and works for the North East Sikh Service. He answered questions about the impact of Sikhism on his life, why he became a Sikh, the Sikh community and what it is like living as a Sikh in Britain in the 21st century.

As well as answering our students' questions, Cloud also explained the aspects of racism he has encountered and elaborated on stereotypes

to remind our students of their responsibility to be tolerant and respectful of everyone, regardless of faith.

Mr Welch, Head of RE, said: "Cloud is an exceptional role model and patiently responded to a large number of questions. His visit has significantly deepened our students' knowledge and understanding of Sikhism and it was great to see the group challenge him with many profound questions."



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Due to the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we cannot commit to any fixed school events at the moment. Parents' evenings and other planned events in school are postponed until further notice.

Please keep checking our website and social media channels for the latest updates.



Ewan's rugby success

Talented Year 10 student, Ewan, has been chosen to play as part of the Newcastle Thunder Under 16s Rugby Academy after being successful in a thorough selection process.

Ewan played his first games for Thunder Academy in December and has recently started on their development pathway to help him progress within the sport. Ewan's hard work and commitment to rugby has already been recognised by the Newcastle Falcons, whose development pathway he is also involved with.

Congratulations Ewan - keep up the fantastic work!



Gymnast Beth's success

Congratulations to talented student, Beth Darby, for her recent gymnastics success!

Beth competed at Durham City Gymnastics Club in the 11-12 FIG (Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique - the governing body of competitive gymnastics) age group on behalf of her gymnastics group, Northern Hope.

Not only did Beth receive a silver medal, but she was verified by a British Gymnastics National Coach to compete in future competitions. Well done Beth!



We're on Twitter and Facebook!



@Hermitage_Acad



facebook.com/HermitageAcad

Ecuador - Hermitage World Challenge 2021

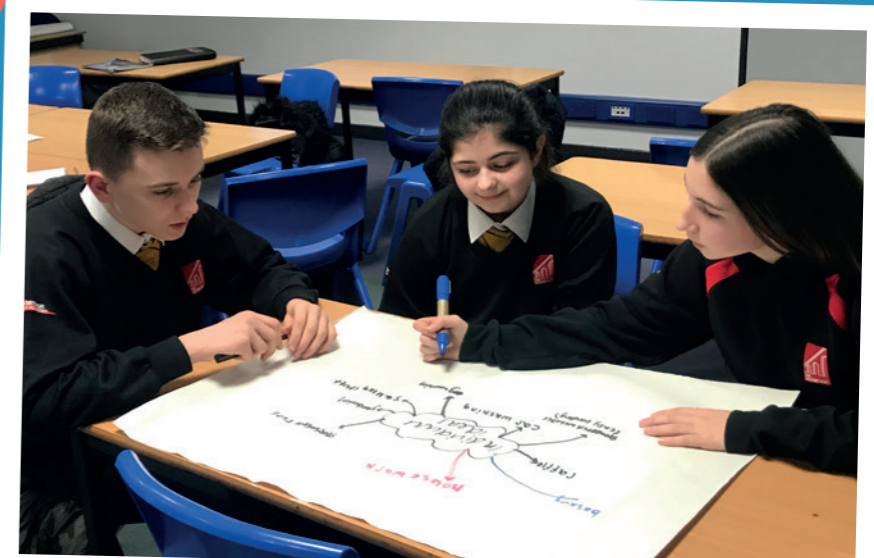
Earlier this term, students involved in Hermitage World Challenge 2021 held their first planning meeting to decide what they will be doing in Ecuador next summer.

Whilst in Ecuador the students will be involved in a project that will aim to help a local community to share and preserve their traditions whilst protecting their environment for future generations. World Challenge partner with villages to help develop sustainable practices for livestock and dairy farming, jam production and reforestation, they also help villages to engage with tourists as a means to generate income.

For the trekking phase of the adventure the students have chosen to visit the Northern Andes, they will visit areas off the beaten track in the

northern highlands and learn about the culture and fauna of this beautiful region. They will trek past local villages, farmland and a crater lake before heading to the cloud forest. They will also have the opportunity to visit waterfalls, climb a volcano or visit high altitude lakes.

The ethos of World Challenge is that the students raise all of the funds for their expedition, plan their travel and accommodation and manage their budget when in the country so there is a lot of hard work ahead for the team to ensure they are best prepared for their adventure!





Holocaust Memorial Day

Students at Hermitage Academy took part in a range of activities to mark Holocaust Memorial Day at the end of January.

The day marked 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis against the Jews in Europe.

Joining groups around the country, students created their own Memorial Flame artwork which was chosen to be displayed at the regional memorial ceremony in Durham Cathedral. A group of Year 9 students

were selected to listen to survivor testimony and take part in Holocaust education seminars at Durham Cathedral and our Holocaust educational ambassadors from Sixth Form ran Holocaust memorial assemblies. Abbie McBride and Amy-Rose Skelton also wrote a leaflet on their experiences visiting Auschwitz, you can download a copy of their leaflet [here](#).



Students unveil mural

Talented Hermitage students have created a 32 feet long mural that has been installed at Chester-le-Street Police Station.

The mural, created in art lessons, is based on the 'proceeds of crime' for which local police granted £1000 worth of funding for photography and sculpting in the art department.

The police were really impressed with the mural and loved how much could be learned from just looking at it.

Art teacher and project leader, Mr French, said: "I am extremely proud of all the students who took part. We had a great day out at the station and our thanks go out to the police for the £1000 donation, which we are very grateful for."



Teacher training opportunities

Shotton Hall
SCITT
School Centred Initial Teacher Training

Did you know that Hermitage Academy helps to train the next generation of new teachers and are looking for new recruits to start in September 2020?

Through the North East Learning Trust, we are a partner of Shotton Hall SCITT, the Trust's very own outstanding teacher training provider.

Trainees start their training at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee,

before undertaking placements in schools right across the North East.

Applications are now open for primary and secondary courses starting in September 2020 with bursaries of up to £26k available for certain subjects.

To find out about entry requirements and the opportunities available, as well as hearing from people who have taken the leap and changed career visit:

www.shottonhallscitt.co.uk

