



□ EMS students at the coffee morning with charity mascot Alice Mouse.

EMS fundraises for Alice House Hospice

by Steve Hope

TEA, coffee and cake were served at The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College when parents and carers of the new intake of Year 7 students came together for a coffee morning to raise money for Alice House Hospice.

The coffee morning, held in the main school hall on Friday, October 1, was run by student representatives from each house under the watchful eye of the house leaders. Staff and students at EMS are assigned to houses where everyone can compete in various competitions and activities to earn house points throughout the year.

Students were invited to nominate a charity close to their hearts to raise funds for this year and chose Alice House Hospice.

A heartfelt letter from a Year 7 student brought everyone to tears when it was read out – giving no doubt that the local Hartle-

pool charity would be the 2021 beneficiary.

The coffee morning was a huge success, raising a total of £849.74 which was added to a pot which will be donated to the charity in the summer term.

Glenn McLintock, leader for St John Boste House said: "On behalf of all the house leaders I would like to thank the students, staff, parents and carers who supported the coffee morning."

"It was a wonderful opportunity to welcome families of students to the community of English Martyrs, something we have not been able to do for such a long time. We are overwhelmed by their generosity."

Janice Forbes, community fundraiser at Alice House Hospice, who attended the morning, said: "We are delighted to have been chosen by the students of English Martyrs as their charity. I look forward to working with English Martyrs School throughout the academic year."



Welcome to new Mini Vinnies

AT HOLY Rosary Catholic Academy we have a well-established Mini Vinnies team, a group of young people whose mission is to turn concern into action, writes Mrs Lowe.

Their focus is to help those here, near and far away who are less fortunate than ourselves.

This term the children in Key Stage 2 were invited to apply in writing to Miss Whalen, our RE co-ordinator, if they wished to join. They needed to explain why they thought they would make a good Mini Vinnie, demonstrate that they understood the responsibility they would

be accepting and give examples of how they had helped others.

On September 28 each new Mini Vinnie was presented with a certificate and a badge during the whole school worship.

Their mission has not long begun but they have already created posters asking for food donations for our local food bank. They read Matthew 25:35-40 focusing on: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink," an important message which we can all apply to our daily lives.

Well done children – you will make a difference!



□ Well wishers Michael Piercy, David Tindall, mum Carol Greenwood, Phil Smith and John and Maureen Bailey at Alex's business launch and farewell.

Alex begins a new adventure

by John Bailey

ALEX Greenwood, the first Northern Cross Kickstart graduate, has successfully launched his own one-man business.

The official launch of Alex's IT and gardening enterprise captured the idea perfectly aboard motor vessel Watchful in Hartlepool Marina on Thursday, October 14.

The occasion also marked the end of a positive six months of work experience and training Alex had undertaken when employed by the paper using the Government's Kickstart programme.

There to see the new enterprise safely off the slipway were Northern Cross board member Philip Smith and business advisor and Kickstart coach Michael Piercy.

Since late spring Michael has helped to pilot Alex through a sharp learning curve of understanding how to help older readers access Northern Cross using online technology and become proficient with software challenges.

All-rounder Alex was also soon helping to sort out computer hiccups for the paper's own staff and board, and quickly became a popular and sought-after visitor round the North East as well as guest at video conference board meetings.

Guests at the farewell and launch party aboard Watchful included David Tindall, a team leader for Alex among Holy Family parish stewards at St Joseph's, Hartlepool, during the corona pandemic, and Alex's mum Carol, a staff member



□ Alex, right, and his mum Carol present Michael Piercy with cake and wine to say thank you for his support. They're joined by Phil Smith.

at St John Vianney primary school.

Maureen Bailey, who had Alex visit when he worked on understanding the computer software of Hartlepool 'street angels', also joined the launch.

Michael Piercy drafted a CV for the business launch citing the work Alex has completed. Backing the thrust and wizardry of the work has been Hartlepool IT entrepreneur Kris Middleton.

As a volunteer Alex had been doing stalwart work stewarding at the back of St Joseph's, Hartlepool, during the pandemic. Then the Government launched the Kickstart scheme for 16 to 24-year-olds.

"It can only be the action of the Holy Spirit that brought different threads of Catholic life together such that the Northern Cross was able to employ young Alex for six months," said Michael.

"Alex developed confidence, used his initiative – especially in the field of computer support – and charmed all those he went out to help under the Northern Cross banner. With those achievements

under his belt he is now launching his career running his own business, continuing to offer support to those who find computers difficult, but also doing a little gardening here and there – a very good balance to a lot of time in front of a screen."

There was a surprise for mentor Michael – Alex had organised a cake, card and a special bottle of wine to wish him a very happy birthday. He even made an impromptu speech.

As Watchful rang to the sounds of the birthday song, the vessel's catering chief Pauline Field rustled up a sole candle for Michael to blow out.

Alex backed his business launch with a display ad in Northern Cross. It brought an immediate response – his first job to help tidy and sort a Gateshead garden for two of the paper's readers.

Michael said: "We at Northern Cross are not only grateful for his presence under Kickstart but also anticipate substantial future co-operation with Alex. Onwards and up!"

Science rules at Holy Family Primary



□ Jaw-dropping science – an experiment at Holy Family Primary.

HOLY Family Catholic Primary School in Darlington has secured the Primary Science Quality Mark to celebrate its commitment to excellence in science teaching and learning following excellent work in science over the past two years, writes Jennifer Rutherford.

Deputy head teacher, Mark Shield and Leanne Elgie, science lead at Holy Family – which is part of the Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust – led the project.

"It's been a great opportunity to

highlight the importance of science in our curriculum and to inspire the children," they said. "They have really enjoyed experimenting and we hope to encourage and build on this enthusiasm in the years to come."

The PSQM programme ensures effective leadership of science, enables schools to work together to share good practice and is supported by professional development led by local experts.

"Schools which achieve PSQM demonstrate commitment and expertise in science leadership, teach-

ing and learning. Associate Professor Jane Turner, PSQM national director said: "There was never a more important time for primary children to have high-quality science education. The coronavirus pandemic has made everyone aware of the impact of science on our daily lives. "Primary schools have an important role to ensure that children understand how science works and keeps us healthy and safe. The profile and quality of science in each awarded school is very high."