

# Newsletter



Issue 4: September—December 2013

Achieving Success Together

## In this issue

**02** Amazing Key Stage 5 results

**03** Prestigious Engineering Scholarship

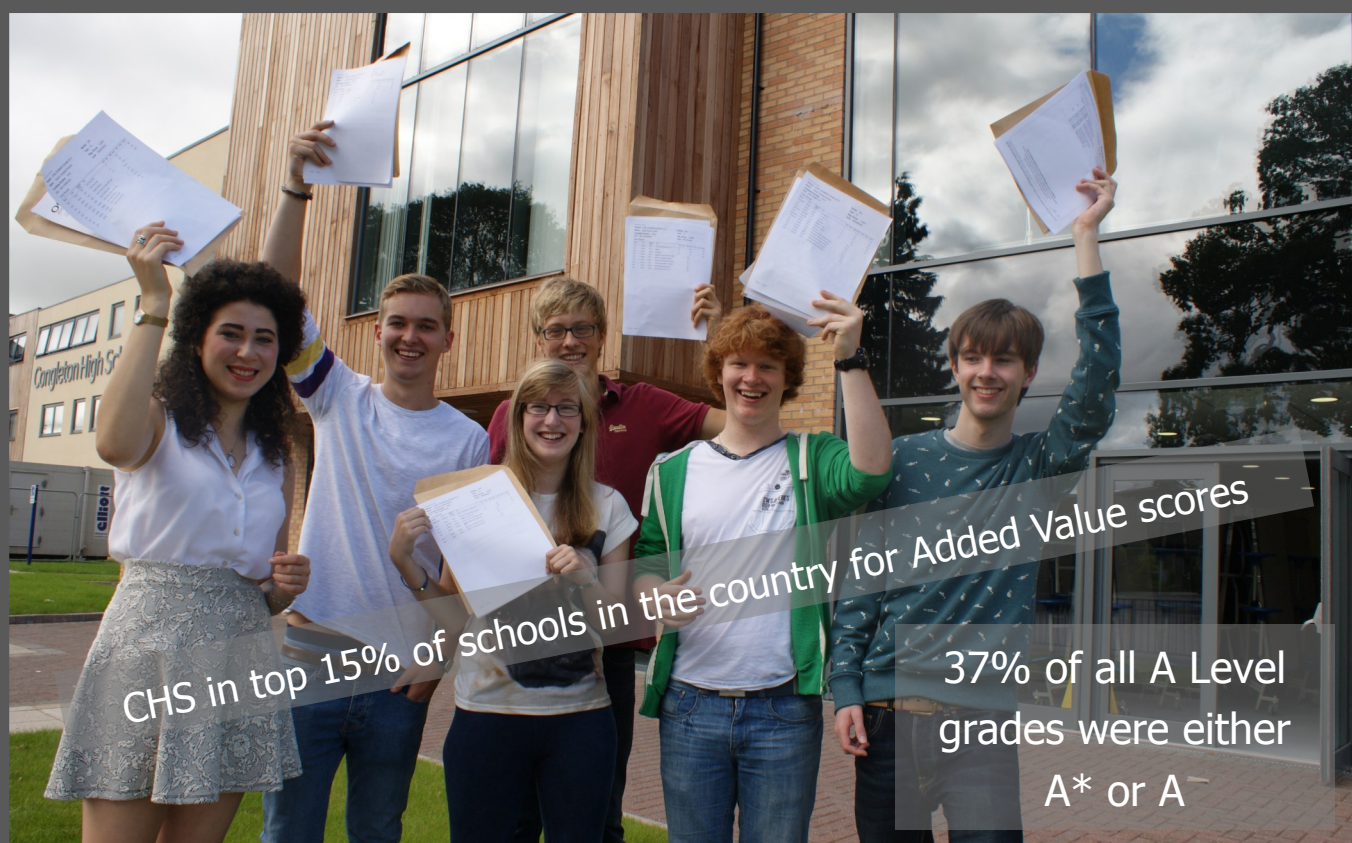
**04** Students vote for Mrs Taylor to be Pudsey

**06** Parents continue to be very positive about CHS

**10** Sports tour of Malta

**12** Praise for our Sixth Form

## CELEBRATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



CHS in top 15% of schools in the country for Added Value scores

37% of all A Level grades were either A\* or A

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our first newsletter of the 2013-14 academic year. It is hard to believe that the first term is almost over and Christmas is nearly here. When I last wrote to you in July, we were hoping for another good set of examination results in August and, thanks to all the hard work of students and staff, we had some of the best results in the history of the school (see our lead story below).

Everyone returned to school in September ready to work hard and achieve their very best. We had another first for the school in that all Year 11 students sat both their Maths and English GCSEs in November (again, see our lead story below). The students worked incredibly hard in preparation for these exams and we believe that come January when they get their results, they will be on their way to smashing our previous records.

This term has also seen both the main school and Sixth Form Open Evenings. At both events we have welcomed a record number of students and their parents to look around the school before deciding where they would like to continue their education. Last year we increased our Published Admissions Number for Year 7 to 200 due to an anticipated increase in the number of applications and we are looking forward to a record number of students joining us in both the Sixth Form and Year 7 in September next year.

I hope you will read and enjoy the many stories of student successes and efforts that are reported in the pages that follow. To keep up to date with what is happening in school during the term, please have a look at our website at [www.congletonhigh.com](http://www.congletonhigh.com), where you can also sign up for our monthly E-Newsletter.

All that remains is for me to wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas and I look forward to welcoming students and staff back to school on 6 January, ready to work hard and be the best they can be.

Mr D Hermitt, Principal

## CELEBRATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

### Record breaking results

This summer saw another set of record breaking A Level results for our students and a record number of Year 11 students staying on at CHS or choosing to join our Sixth Form from elsewhere. 16% of all A Level grades awarded were A\* grades, doubling the percentage received last year, and 37% of all grades achieved were either A\* or A. It was a similar picture with our GCSE results, with virtually all (98%) of Year 11 students securing the employers' benchmark of 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C, which is up from 92% last year and is a new school record. 43% of students secured more than 3 grade A\*/As, setting another school record.



### Top 15% for Adding Value

CHS is now in the top 15% of schools in the country for adding value (up from top 20% last year), with a score of 1022 overall. This score proves that we enable *all* of our students to study a wide range of subjects to a high standard. We are continually improving and are getting closer to our goal of being in the top 10%.

### English Baccalaureate

In addition, 29% of our students attained the English Baccalaureate last year, which is significantly above the national average of 22%. The English Baccalaureate is not a qualification in itself, but it recognises where students have secured a C grade or better across a core of academic subjects (English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language). This shows that the majority of our students have taken on the tough GCSE subjects like Humanities (History 78% pass rate) and languages (Spanish 83% pass rate), which leaves them well placed if this new benchmark promoted by the Government is valued by employers and takes off.

### November entry Maths and English GCSEs

This year, all of our Year 11 students took both their English and Maths GCSEs in November, which is another first for the school. Everyone in school did their bit to give the students the best possible chance in these important exams, from staff planning extra revision sessions to students in other years moving around school as quietly as possible to minimise potential noise disruption. We even altered the timings of the school day slightly to fit as closely as possible with the timings of the examinations, again to minimise disruption for the students. Mrs Dearnaley, Curriculum Team Leader for English, led a session for a packed room of parents where she explained the preparation we were doing with students and gained parents' support in the run up to the exams. Principal, Mr Hermitt, said *"I am delighted with the sheer hard work shown by our students and staff to prepare for these exams. Freed from the distraction of examinations in other subjects, students have thrown themselves into the preparation. Myself and Mrs Taylor have added our encouragement by doing the online revision tasks alongside the students and we completed the same English exam under exam conditions a few days later. We now know more about what it feels like to be a Year 11 student preparing and sitting these modern exams. We both passed with flying colours."* He added *"We now eagerly await the exam results in January when we can celebrate with our students who we are confident will be rewarded for working so hard."*



# PRESTIGIOUS ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP

Year 12 student Jayne Booth, was awarded a prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarship recently at a ceremony in London, supported by the Institution of Engineering & Technology and the engineering company BAE Systems.

Jayne was presented with her Scholarship by Jonathan Firth, Director of Operations & Projects at Virgin Galactic, and met the organisation that is sponsoring her Scholarship – the Lloyd's Register Foundation.

The Arkwright Engineering Scholarships support young people from across the UK who have the potential to be industry's future leaders in engineering and technical design. During their Sixth Form studies, Scholars receive £600 to support their technical courses and have access to a range of exciting opportunities to learn more about engineering, such as mentoring and company visits. The Scholars' schools also receive £400 per Scholar.

Jayne was chosen following a rigorous selection process comprising a detailed application form, a two-hour aptitude exam and an interview hosted at a top engineering university.

The Chief Executive of the Arkwright Scholarships Trust, Dr Martin Thomas, commented: *"This year's assessment process was extremely tough. Any secondary school can become affiliated to enter students, and this year we had 1371 applicants competing for just 371 Scholarships. Jayne and all of our new Scholars have absolutely phenomenal potential for future careers in the engineering profession. Congratulations to Jayne!"*

Assistant Principal at Congleton High School, Mrs Bartley added *"This is a fantastic achievement! We are delighted that Jayne, who is committed to pursuing a career in engineering, will receive support from one of the country's leading engineering organisations. And as a school, we are proud once again that one of our students has been awarded this prestigious Scholarship."*



Pictured: Jayne being presented with her certificate by Eileen Kingham from The Lloyd's Register Foundation.

## CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

We always know when Christmas is approaching because entries start coming in for our **Christmas card competition**. Each year students submit some outstanding, colourful and original designs and the task of picking an overall winner is always extremely difficult. Curriculum Team Leader for Art, Mrs Vale, explained *"This year, students produced some extremely well thought out designs based around the theme of stained glass windows and the standard was really high."* Congratulations to the overall winner, Dalya Shanati in Year 8 and to the runners up Emma Williams in Year 9 and Lewis Edwardson in Year 7 and thank you to all the students who entered their designs.



One of the highlights for staff and students this term is also the annual **'Celebration of Christmas'** at St Mary's Church, Astbury. For the benefit of parents and students who are new to CHS, this is where coaches transport all staff and students to and from St Mary's Church on the last day of term for a very special service of celebration, before returning to school and departing for the Christmas holidays. It is a very special occasion when the whole school is able to come together and remember the true spirit of Christmas. After the popularity of the staff



Christmas video of 'Amarillo' last year, students will no doubt be looking forward to seeing what the teachers and support staff have put together for this year. For now though, it is a closely guarded secret, filmed mainly after school when no students are within ear shot!

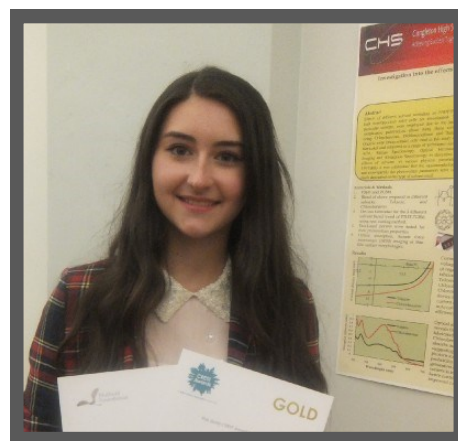
The last week of term also sees many students congratulated in our **Praise Assemblies** for each year group and many students enjoy getting out of school together on various **Reward Trips**.

# CHS STUDENTS ARE TOP SCIENTISTS

Two of our Year 13 students, Hannah Priday and Victoria O'Hara, were among some of the top Science students in the North West to be presented with awards for the high level research they have undertaken in the fields of Physics and Veterinary Science respectively, during their Nuffield Science Research placements during the summer holidays.



The students were presented with their awards at the prestigious Nuffield Science Research celebration event, held at the Liverpool World Museum in October. At the event, both Hannah and Victoria presented their work very effectively to the judges, parents and teachers present. Hannah also received a Gold CREST Award for her work and Victoria's research is to be published.



We are proud that a large number of our high achieving students have been selected for these outstanding awards over the past few years, and have subsequently gained places to study competitive courses at top universities.

## STUDENTS VOTE FOR MRS TAYLOR TO BE PUDSEY

Staff, students, and parents all gave tremendous support to our efforts to raise money for BBC Children in Need this year.

Staff and students took part in a non-uniform day and organised a range of activities to inspire pupils and encourage them to participate in a number of fundraising activities. Through the course of the week there was a Pudsey raffle and a 'Who's your Pudsey?' competition. Students were also given the opportunity to vote with their cash to see a member of the Senior Leadership Team wear a Pudsey outfit for the day. This activity proved to be one of the most popular, with over £200 raised to see Mrs Taylor taking on the role of the fundraising mascot.

As an additional treat students were entertained by a group of talented staff as they took part in an X Factor battle of the bands. The stakes were high and the competition was stiff amongst those who participated.

All in all the week has provided a wealth of opportunities to have great fun whilst making a positive difference to children and young people throughout the UK.

Thank you to everyone  
who helped us raise our  
incredible grand total of  
£1785.91





# WORKING WITH OUR PARTNER PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Once again this term, we have been doing a lot of work with staff and students from our partner primary schools.

## Transition to CHS

At the start of the new school year, 168 students joined us in Year 7, coming from primary schools in Congleton and beyond. As they started with us, we looked back with current Year 8 students and their parents to evaluate how they thought their first year at CHS had gone and we received some extremely positive feedback.

One student, Ewan Lang, summed up his experiences *"I went into Congleton High School with high expectations and everything at CHS is as good, if not better than I hoped it would be."*

Deputy Principal, Jim Barlow, who leads on transition, explained *"We start working with the students at our feeder primary schools in Year 5 or even earlier. As well as providing support in their own environment, all students have many opportunities to visit the school to take part in workshops to learn new skills and activities."* We work very closely with our partner primary schools delivering projects in English, Maths, Science, PE and Drama throughout the year. Tracey Walklate, Head at Quinta Primary School, added *"The transition to CHS is seamless. The close links between our schools ensure that for the children this is just another step on their educational journey."*



## Cultural Diversity Day

At the start of September, students from our seven partner primary schools took part in a variety of activities relating to Cultural Diversity.

Activities included wheelchair basketball, Bollywood dancing, a Fair Trade chocolate game and a drum workshop, that all brought multi-national themes together. The students' responses to the activities were overwhelmingly positive and everyone involved agreed that the aims of the day had been achieved. The workshops not only encouraged inter-group working but also required the students to consider a range of moral, ethical and cultural issues in a fun and interactive way.



CHS holds the Gold Cultural Diversity Quality Standard in recognition of our extensive work in promoting a greater awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity. However, this was the first Cultural Diversity Day involving students from our partner primary schools.



## Primary Schools Art Exhibition

Then in October, primary schools from across Congleton came together to celebrate their students' artistic talents at our annual Primary Schools Art Exhibition.

Well over a hundred parents, students and their teachers attended the prize giving, where students from reception to year six were able to see their work on display. The theme this year was 'the little town with the big heart' and the competition was judged by Fiona Hampton, Design Director at Berisfords Ribbons in Congleton and a Governor here at CHS.

Commenting on the quality of entries this year, Curriculum Team Leader for Art, Helen Vale, said *"We get fantastic support from the primary schools to host this exhibition and once again the quality of work produced by these young artists has been outstanding."*



# KEEPING IN TOUCH

We are increasingly using e-mail as a method of communicating with parents as it is quick, efficient and cost-effective for the school. Please therefore make sure that we have your current e-mail address so that you do not miss out on important communications. As we start to embrace the new technology available to us, we also now have several other ways in which we can distribute information and news about what is happening in school. You can follow us on Twitter:



@CongletonHS — for general school news and announcements



@PhysEdCHS — for PE news and up-to-the minute information about fixtures etc

You can also sign up for our monthly E-Newsletter via the homepage of our website at [www.congletonhigh.com](http://www.congletonhigh.com)



Thank you to the 275 parents who completed our annual online Parents' Survey earlier this term. We are very pleased that the vast majority (93%) of parents and carers continue to agree with the 13 statements provided by Ofsted, which is the best result we have ever had. Very few parents disagreed with the statements and in some year groups 100% of parents agreed with several of them.

Principal, David Hermitt said *"We believe that we can improve our work even further. We have already begun to act on the constructive feedback regarding weaker areas of our work like supporting parents to help their children by increasing our direct contact with parents via email and telephone. It is clear from analysing the detailed responses in our survey that improving our communication with parents will pay dividends. In January we are launching our on-line portal which will allow parents to look at a lot of data on their children at any time."*

The detailed percentages are as follows in rank order:-

- The school keeps my child safe (97%)
- The teaching is good at this school (96%)
- The school is led and managed effectively (95%)
- My child enjoys School (94%)
- Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school (94%)
- My child is making enough progress at this school (93%)
- The school helps my child's particular needs (93%)
- The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (93%)
- The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle(90%)
- The school informs me about my child's progress (90%)
- The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns (89%)
- The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour (89%)
- The school helps me to support my child's learning (88%)

If parents have any concerns about anything in school they can contact their child's form tutor using the links on our website and if their concerns are not resolved they can simply contact me at [Principal@congletonhigh.com](mailto:Principal@congletonhigh.com) so that I can follow it up.

### Ofsted's Parent View



Parents and carers may be interested to know that you can give your views of our school to Ofsted at any time in the school year using their online questionnaire called Parent View. All you need to do is register with an e-mail address and password at <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>. Once your login has been activated, it only takes a few minutes to complete answers to 12 short questions about the school, such as how well we deal with bullying, the quality of teaching, whether the level of homework given to your child is appropriate, and whether you would recommend the school to other parents.



# CHS CATERING

Since September, we have been directly managing our catering service and are committed to providing our students with nutritional, good quality food for a reasonable price.

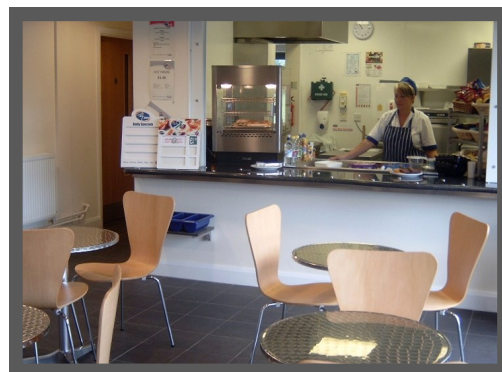
**Christmas lunch**—Make sure you don't miss our delicious homemade Christmas dinner—available on Tuesday 17th, Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th December.

**Brand new menu for the New Year**—A brand new menu will be introduced in the new year, so watch out for our wide range of different and exciting dishes to tempt you. There will be daily meal deals and plenty of great offers aimed at giving you excellent value for money lunches and snacks.

**@chscatering**—Did you know that you can now follow @chscatering on Twitter for details of our daily meal deals and menus.



**Sixth Form Café**—Over in the Sixth Form Café, as well as the daily meal deals, students can warm themselves up in the chilly weather with our great deal of a muffin and a choice of hot chocolate, coffee or tea for just £1.80.



## D&T LEARNING SKILLS DAY

Two students in Year 8 (Robyn Harrison and Eleanor Graham) were recently involved in a Learning Skills Day with Design and Technology groups from all different years. They said *"We thoroughly enjoyed the experience and we all hope we can do it again."* Here is their explanation of the day:

Seven members of staff from Staffordshire University came in to school to talk to us about improving the design of basic objects like light switches. Each group of four students had to come up with their own unique design for a modified light switch. Each design had its own target audience, such as the elderly, disabled, teenagers or small children. We all added shape and colour to each design and each group added special features like music players or security alarms.

At the end we all rated the switches, giving them marks from "seriously uncool" for the lowest to "sub-zero" for the highest mark. Thankfully nobody got "seriously uncool"!

## DRUG-FREE CONGLETON TALK

Year 9 students recently participated in a 'Drug Free Congleton' talk organised by the Congleton Youth Committee, Mayor of Congleton - Councillor George Hayes and Fiona Bruce, the Member of Parliament for Congleton Constituency.

Mark Cotton from the Cheshire Constabulary gave a talk to the year group on the dangers of drugs, followed by a question and answer session. The same session was also given to Year 9 students at Eaton Bank School as part of joint program to make Congleton Drug Free.

The session was very thought provoking and Year 9 Guidance Team Leader, Mr Franklin, said afterwards *"Our Year 9 students were really good representatives for the school and by the end of the session were asking really insightful questions – I was very proud of them!"*



## YEAR 11 RE STOP DAY

In November, Year 11 students took part in an RE Stop day, where they were encouraged to reflect on a number of contemporary moral issues, including crime and punishment, abortion, drug addiction and self-worth. Workshops included an interactive game led by Mission Aviation Fellowship, who work to provide healthcare and other resources to indigenous people in areas of the world where transport and communication is difficult. Students also enjoyed a musical performance and presentation from Christian band, 'Brightline', as well as an African drum workshop led by Ed Freitas.

Students listened to a testimony from an ex-offender and drug addict whose life was transformed by faith. The activities and presentations on the day served to reinforce the themes of tolerance and open-mindedness that are already prevalent at Congleton High School. One student remarked that the day had been 'thought-provoking but also fun' and this sentiment seemed to sum up the overall impact of the day. The staff were thrilled to see the students participate without prejudice and said that they felt proud of the powerful insight and reflections they gave on the day.

# PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

## Jazz Scholarship

Year 12 student, Sophie Mullins, has been awarded a jazz scholarship with the British Ballet Organisation. Sophie auditioned in November and is one of only 10 students to be offered a scholarship. The scholarships are awarded to talented students who show potential both technically and artistically. The scheme provides Sophie with the opportunity to study jazz to a high level and she will receive tuition from some of the most respected teachers in the country, all of whom have had distinguished professional careers. Mrs Salt, Curriculum Team Leader for PE said *"Our congratulations go to Sophie for such a fantastic achievement and we look forward to hearing how she progresses with her Scholarship."*



## Pembroke North Programme success

We were delighted to learn recently that one of our Year 12 students, Alex Jackson, has been accepted onto the prestigious Pembroke North Programme following an interview at Pembroke College, Oxford this month. The programme is designed to raise the aspirations of the students who take part, to get them to think about and engage with subjects they may not have considered studying, and to raise their academic attainment by engaging them in sustained, intellectually challenging programmes.



The programme is extremely well respected and will support Alex with his progress towards university. Alex explained about his experience of going for the interview: *"I went to Pembroke College in Oxford with at least 25 other applicants. My interview was interesting and terrifying, with questions ranging from the reason I'd chosen the universities I had, to 'If I had a time machine, who would I spend an afternoon with?', to the merits and problems of standardised tests in American universities."* Having been accepted, Alex will now have to complete an essay, attend seminars and take residential trips to both London and Oxford. Director of Sixth Form, Wendy March, congratulated Alex on his achievement: *"Alex has done really well to be selected for this prestigious programme. He has worked extremely hard and deserves his success. We wish him all the best with the activities over the coming year."*

## Student gets work published in Cheshire Life Magazine

Year 11 ICT student Louis Wedgwood has recently taken his graphics skills to a new level by having a double-page spread published in this month's Cheshire Life magazine. Louis designed an advertorial for a local business, using a range of design concepts and skills he had learned and developed both in his ICT lessons and independently.



His work was praised by Cheshire Life Magazine, who said of Louis that *"Surely a career in design beckons!"*

Mr Davis, ICT teacher said *"We are all extremely proud of Louis' achievement and the quality of the final product. The fact that his work has been included in a magazine which is read by over 16,000 people each month is a credit to the effort Louis has put into developing his graphic design skills even further."*

## Student raises £300 for Women V Cancer charity

We would like to congratulate Year 11 student, Megan Geimer, who single handedly raised over £300 for the charity Women V Cancer recently. Two Congleton Mums, Jane Oldfield and Carol Rayner, are embarking on a 400km bike ride across Cuba to raise funds for the charity and Carol told us that *"when Megan heard about the challenge, she asked if she could do something to support us."* Megan suggested that she cook a meal at one of their houses for which she could charge a fee. Anyway, the event grew to the extent that they needed to hire Mossley Village Hall to accommodate everyone. Carol said that *"Megan planned, prepared and cooked a retro meal for over 25 people, using a proper commercial kitchen."* She added *"Megan did all of it from scratch and the event was a huge success."* Well done, Megan and thank you to Carol Rayner for letting us know about this great achievement. You can find out more about Women V Cancer on their website [www.womenvcancer.co.uk](http://www.womenvcancer.co.uk)

Finally, if you know of any student who has done something outstanding out of school, we would love the opportunity to recognise their efforts or celebrate their achievements in our newsletter. Please e-mail details to [dhermitt@congletonhigh.com](mailto:dhermitt@congletonhigh.com). Thank you.

# CHS WILL BE 50 NEXT YEAR!

Did you come to Congleton High School, or Heathfield as it used to be? Did you teach here? Or do you know anyone who did? If so, this is advance warning to make sure that you put **Friday 20 June 2014** from **2pm – 6pm** in your diary or on your calendar as the date of our Community Festival to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. All current and past students, staff and their families will be invited to join us for what promises to be a wonderful celebration of 50 years of teaching on this site.

# 50



# STUDENTS' LEARNING ENHANCED OUT OF SCHOOL

At CHS we try to enhance and extend students' learning and experiences by organising as many educational visits as we can for students in all years. Here are details of just a few of the recent visits.

## War Horse

On the chilly evening of Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November, after a long and anticipated wait, students and staff from years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 galloped off to The Lowry Theatre in Salford to see the theatre event of the decade - 'War Horse'.

Students and staff were not disappointed at this astonishing production, based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, which highlights the plight of the forgotten heroes of WW1, the war horses. Miss Lang, who accompanied the students on the trip said *"As the horses galloped and charged around the stage, we quickly forgot that they were life-sized puppets and as the theatre filled with emotive music and songs, we were all moved by this powerful and imaginative show."* Ella Smith (9AB) added that it was *"Absolutely amazing."*



## Skills Show

Year 13 students recently took the opportunity to attend the nation's largest Careers Fair at the NEC to find out about alternatives to university that are available to them. The four exhibition halls were filled with the best Britain could offer and were grouped into 5 different zones—Built environment, Engineering, IT and Business Administration, Social and Professional services and Culture and Creative Arts.

The students were encouraged to

- See it ..by visiting a competition or demonstration
- Try it ...in a workshop
- Hear about it ..a programme of presentations was available in each zone on a dedicated stage
- Visit employers' exhibition stands

Pre-planning was essential to make the most of all that was available and then it was essential that our students prioritised as it was impossible to see it all. There are plenty of exciting opportunities available to school leavers and our Year 13 students were offered a window into the world of work that they can build on when planning their future.



## Culturally fulfilling visit to London

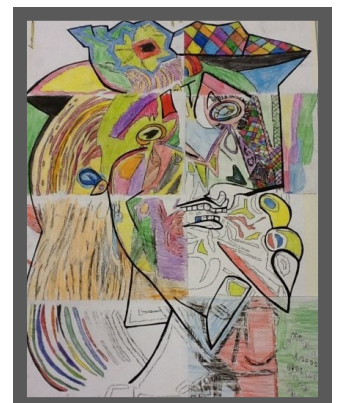
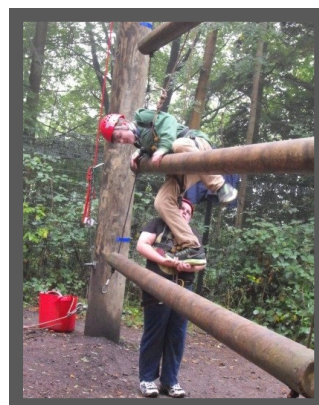
A group of Sixth Form Art students recently went on a trip to London and packed in visits to many of our country's best art galleries and museums. The group arrived and dropped their luggage off at the hotel and then headed for the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben. From there they walked along the Thames to visit **Tate Britain** and then returned towards the city centre to walk across the Millennium bridge to view the art at the **Tate Modern**. Two hours later the group moved on to the **V&A Museum** to view the fantastic costumes gallery. They finished the day off with tea at Planet Hollywood and a little shopping in Oxford Street.



Friday brought more art, with visits to the **National Gallery** and **Portrait Gallery** and the students finished off their experience with a visit to Covent Garden. Curriculum Team Leader for Art, Helen Vale, said *"We had a wonderful trip and we were able to see so many different styles and kinds of art. We all returned to Congleton tired but culturally fulfilled!"*

## Kingswood Residential

Back in October, Year 7 students rose to the challenge in their search for a hero during their 3 day residential at Kingswood, Colomendy or off timetable at school. Certificates were handed out to 86 students in a special praise assembly following a bumper crop of hero nominations from staff. Students were praised for their courage in overcoming fears, helping others, pushing themselves to be the best they can be, excellent attitude and fantastic teamwork. Year 7 students produced a fantastic 'Picasso-esque' portrait and a poem entitled 'Water...' which was read out in front of the whole year group by Jessika Sample.



For details of some of our successful sports trips, see the Sports Pages (p10-11)

Once again, CHS has been celebrating some great sporting achievements this term.

## Sports Tour of Malta

On Thursday 24th October, whilst most students on half term were sleeping, 53 sports students from CHS set off on a Sports tour of Malta, representing the school at football and netball.

Four teams were taken from year 8 & 9 girls and boys and Year 10 & 11 boys. Mr Cross, who was one of the staff that accompanied the students on the trip said *"They played two fixtures each against Maltese opposition and demonstrated a level of maturity throughout the tour that rivalled any trip I have taken before."*

There were many highlights on the trip and many memories were made, with all students returning to school motivated and ready to push on to achieve their best for their futures. Mr Cross added *"The best testimony for this trip doesn't come from me, but from the students that attended—speak to any one of them and they will say that they want to be on the next one! Watch this space!"*

Pictured are just two of the teams that made the trip to Malta at half term.



## Premier League Schools winners continue to enjoy their year as Champions



You may remember that back in May, our under-13 girls football team became National Champions, winning the Premier League Schools tournament and bringing back to school with them a replica of the Barclays Premier League trophy.

Well, the girls have been enjoying their year as Champions and have been treated to a couple of fantastic experiences as a result. The first was at the start of September, when they were invited to Wembley to watch England's World Cup qualifier against Moldova. Seven members of the team were invited by Nike (England's shirt sponsor) to watch the game in England's luxurious Club Wembley

seats. PE teacher, Mr de Souza, who took the girls on the trip, said *This was a fantastic reward for the girls; they were brushing shoulders with Martin Peters (England's World Cup winner) in Club Wembley and it was a great game to watch."*

Then, in November, the girls were invited by Stoke City Football Club to parade their Premier League Trophy to the fans at half time. Seven of the girls, Mr Hermitt and other members of staff from CHS travelled to the Britannia on a windy and wet Saturday afternoon to watch the game against Southampton. When the half time whistle went, the girls and CHS staff were invited onto the pitch by the stadium announcer. They did a lap of honour in front of the Stoke crowd and also received big cheers from the Southampton fans.

An excited captain, Hollie Massey, said *"It was a great experience for myself and the rest of the team. This was a fantastic opportunity to stand in front of thousands of fans and the atmosphere on pitchside was incredible."* Mr Hermitt added that *"It was an incredible experience with 26,000 fans celebrating this remarkable achievement with us."*

It was another great reward for the girls, who worked extremely hard last year; this has given them and other students at CHS the drive and inspiration to dedicate themselves to school sport again this year. And who knows, there may be more silverware on the horizon.





## Olympic Judo athlete visits CHS

At the end of September, we welcomed Olympic judo athlete Sophie Cox to CHS to launch the Sky Sports "Living for Sport" project. Sophie will act as an athlete mentor to a small group of students, working with the Science and PE departments to develop resilience and motivation through the project's six core values to success:

- Mental toughness
- Hunger to achieve
- People skills
- Knowledge
- Breaking barriers
- Planning for success

Jack Massey, Jordan Wycherley, Seth Randall and Owen Hassell, four competitive judoka from CHS, took this opportunity to meet an icon of their sport.



## Datastor Cup

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November, CHS once again hosted the annual Datastor Cup (formerly the Siemens Cup). This year, fourteen primary school football teams entered the competition, competing for the title as the strongest school football team in Congleton.

With well over two hundred people on the CHS astroturf for the competition, each team was led through a warm up by our Year 10 and 11 Sports Leaders, who also supported each team throughout the evening. The games were officiated by Year 12 and 13 Senior Sports Leaders.



All the teams played superbly, and following the group stages there were two semi-finals involving Black Firs against Astbury and Mossley against Quinta. Black Firs went through to the final, against the previous year's winners Mossley. The game was extremely tight with neither team giving away any clear cut chances. It eventually finished in a draw and both teams will now share the trophy for the year. Bill Wright from Datastor, who sponsor the event, was on hand to present the winner's trophy to both team captains.

Mr de Souza, PE teacher at CHS, who organised the competition, said *"It was a fantastic evening with high quality football from all the students. I was most impressed by the number of teams entered this year, which shows that sport is thriving in Congleton. I must also congratulate our Sports Leaders, who were excellent all evening in either officiating, coaching, supporting or organising the event, so well done to all of them"*

## Other sports news in brief

Congratulations to Brian Barton in Year 11, who was delighted last week to be given the news that Port Vale are going to offer him a scholarship. This means he will spend 2 years training as a footballer with them in the hope that at 18 years old he will be offered a full professional contract. PE Teacher Mr Cross was delighted for Brian *"We fully support Brian as we do all of our students at CHS, however we recognise that he has demonstrated fantastic resilience, desire and determination to succeed to this point. Naturally we are completely biased, but we hope that Brian's success continues to a point that we all get some free tickets to watch him play... an FA cup final would be nice! In the meantime he's going to concentrate on achieving his best towards his GCSEs!"*

CHS were delighted recently that we were one of only 5 schools shortlisted in the 'Secondary School of the Year' category in the **Cheshire East Sports Awards**. We lost out to Wilmslow High School on the night, but it is testament to the great work of our PE staff and the dedication of all our students to their different sports that has brought us such recognition. Well done to everyone!

And just last week, our Under-15 girls football team won through to the final 16 in another national competition—the ESFA (English Schools' Football Association) Cup. Congratulations to the girls, who beat Mirfield Grammar School 5-2 in their decisive win.

# PRAISE FOR OUR SIXTH FORM

Our recent Sixth Form Open Evening was extremely well attended, not only by students from our own Year 11, but also by students from neighbouring high schools. The feedback we received about the night was very positive and students and their parents were impressed by the facilities here at CHS and also by the wide range of courses we are able to offer in the Sixth Form.

Following on from the success of the evening, Year 12 student, Jack Posnett, was moved to put pen to paper about how he and some of his fellow students had found the transition from Year 11 into Sixth Form and his thoughts are below:

*One of the major parts of school that changes in Year 12 is lessons. In Sixth Form you can choose to study subjects that actually interest you and that are beneficial to the career path that you wish to follow. For many students, this makes a day at school more interesting, because the subjects that you choose are the ones that you like best.*

*Another positive about settling into Sixth Form is the way that we are treated by the teachers. When we enter Year 12 we are no longer treated like school children, we are treated a lot more like young adults. This means both students and teachers have more respect for one another and it improves the working environment. Fellow Sixth Form student Ellen Booth says; "Because the lessons have fewer people we get more attention from our teachers and they treat us more like young adults, due to them having students who are keen to learn."*

*Free periods – they are just an extended break, right? Wrong. At first most Sixth Formers see free periods as an opportunity to relax, however then we realise that it is an opportunity to get coursework and homework done so that we have more free time at home and become less stressed, because our work doesn't pile up. I personally enjoy my free periods because I get my work done, but I also talk to my friends and together we create our own positive working environment.*

*Another major benefit of being in the sixth form is the canteen food! With our own Sixth Form Café, there is a lot more choice than we had in Year 11 and as well as the hot chocolate and muffins that we all love, there are also some healthier options, such as pots of fruit, and they cater for vegetarians too.*

*Finally, Sixth Formers can also benefit from the NUS Extra student card. It gets us great discounts in places like Burtons, ASOS and Topshop/Topman, and let's face it, who doesn't want a free portion of chips from McDonalds?*

*I myself have settled in very well to sixth form and am very much looking forward to the rest of the year.*

**Jack Posnett** (Year 12)



## Key Dates for your diary

Friday 20th December 2013— <b>1:10pm finish</b>	School closes for the Christmas holidays
Monday 6th January 2014	School re-opens
Tuesday 7th January 2014	Ex-Year 13 Awards Evening
Wednesday 8th January 2014	PIP Meeting (7pm)
Thursday 16th January 2014	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Thursday 23rd January 2014	Ex-Year 11 Awards Evening
Tuesday 28th January 2014	Year 9 Options Evening
Tuesday 11th February	UCAS Parents' evening
Thursday 13th February	PIP Y7-9 Valentine's Evening
Friday 14th February	School closes for half term
Monday 24th February	School re-opens