

# Newsletter

Issue 7: September—December 2014

Achieving Success Together

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## FRENCH RUGBY TOUR A HUGE SUCCESS



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our first newsletter of the 2014-15 school year. This has been an incredibly busy term for us here at CHS, culminating in a visit from Ofsted in the last few days, the result of which we will share with you as soon as we are able.

For many of you, students and parents alike, this will be your first CHS newsletter, so I would like to welcome you to the school and look forward to sharing our successful future with you. You have joined us at a very exciting time in our journey in many ways, both as a thriving school and as part of the growing Congleton Multi-Academy Trust (CMAT).

2014 really has been a series of betters and bests for us, the latest of which you can read about in the following pages. In June, we marked fifty years on our Box Lane site with a hugely enjoyable and really well-attended celebration day. In August, our tremendous A level results and the announcement of our GCSE results, with new records being set for the school, delighted us all. Our sporting triumphs continue apace and, with our first ever rugby tour taking place last September, we are looking forward to adding more trophies to our cabinet in 2015.

CMAT too is going from strength-to-strength and, since launching in February 2014 with CHS as the founder and only member, the Trust is now growing, currently comprising us, Black Firs Primary and The Congleton College, with Castle Primary School due to come on board next term. Again, this is great news for CHS, helping us to create a strong network of teaching and support staff, share best practice across all aspects of school life and attract and maintain beneficial outside interest in the school.

We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Enjoy the festive period, which hopefully will allow you to enjoy time with friends and family and relax, especially our Year 11, who will need to recharge after two weeks of mock exams. I look forward to welcoming in another successful New Year with you all when we start back to school on 5th January.

Mr D Hermitt  
Executive Principal

## BTEC MUSIC CONCERT

Last month, our Level 3 BTEC Music students staged a fantastic evening of traditional and contemporary pieces, which will be graded as part of their course work. The fifteen Year 12 and 13 students organised everything for the event including sourcing and booking a venue, planning the evening, inviting the guests, setting up for the show and, of course, performing on the night.



As the evening was held on Remembrance Day, a poignant rendition of the Last Post accompanied more contemporary music from artists including Coldplay, Ed Sheeran and Red Hot Chili Peppers. Students showcased their incredible skills across a range of instruments including piano, guitar and drums as well as demonstrating their excellent vocal abilities.



Music teacher, Mrs Martin, commented: *'The evening went really well and was a total success and this was down to the tremendous amount of preparation, effort and*

*teamwork by the students. The performances were excellent and the audience enjoyed every minute.'*

## KINGSWOOD

Back in October, our new intake of Year 7s got to know one another better and learnt about our strong ethos of teamwork, problem solving and communication on a trip to the Kingswood Colomendy Centre in North Wales. Enjoying what was probably the best and most exhausting programme of activities CHS has ever experienced at Kingswood, with the support and encouragement of their new team mates, students worked together to face challenges, test their own limits and conquer fears.



All the activities were a resounding hit but, without doubt, the favourite had to be 'Nightline' - a sensory deprivation exercise, in which students are blindfolded, relying solely on group trust, support and communication to successfully navigate their way, as a group, through a series of obstacles and mazes.

Students also enjoyed a nature hunt, kayaking, canoeing, aerial walkway, a 3G swing, caving, a zip wire, vertical play pen, archery, fencing and aeroball, plus a campfire and a disco at Club Kingswood!

There were a lot of tired but happy faces returning to school on Friday, new friendships had been made, confidence raised and a great team spirit created for the year group as a result! Our school motto is 'Achieving Success Together' and over the three days, our new intake learned that working as a team is definitely the most effective and fun way of succeeding!

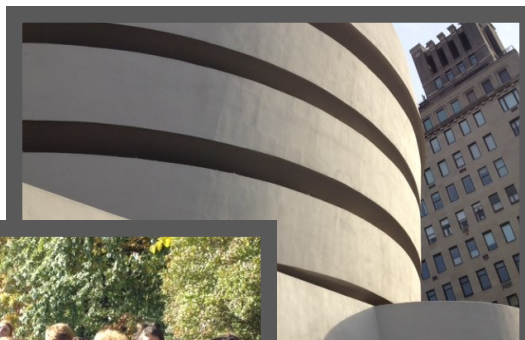


# ART AND CULTURE IN THE BIG APPLE

Nothing inspires an artist like being immersed in international art and culture and it was with this in mind that thirty of our art students met with their teachers at Manchester Airport for a trip of a lifetime last month. Over the long weekend, the students were able to draw inspiration from a wide variety of artworks by artists from around the world and, at the same time, see the renowned New York landmarks and cultural icons for themselves.

The group's first port of call was the 9/11 Memorial at the site of the twin towers, where they paused to consider the horrific events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. Despite being far too young at the time to remember, the students were still all too aware of the tragedy that had taken place. Next they headed down town, taking in the sights of world-famous Wall Street and on to Battery Park for their first view of the iconic Statue of Liberty, towering over Liberty Island. After lunch at a typical New York deli, the group took the elevator to the top of the Empire State Building for a magnificent panorama across Manhattan at night.

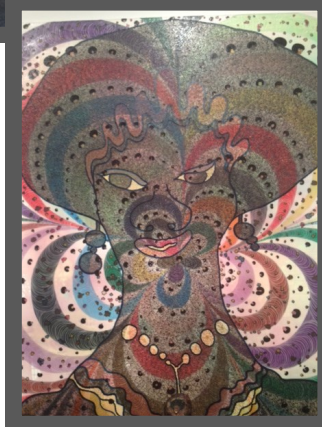
The following day saw a trip across Central Park to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on to Fifth Avenue and then the Guggenheim Art Gallery, with its permanent Kandinsky and Thannhauser collections and its famous spiral structure. During the trip the group also managed to fit in a ride on the Staten Island Ferry for a close up of the Statue of Liberty, a subway ride to the American Art Gallery for a guided tour of an inspiring exhibition by Turner Prize-winning artist, Chris Ofili, a Henri Matisse exhibition – The Cut Outs – at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and an evening ice skating in Central Park. The trip left the students with heads full of artistic inspiration and aspiration. They returned home very tired and with aching feet but with lots of great memories and experiences.



Top: the world-famous Guggenheim Art Gallery



Left: Students enjoying the sunshine in the Big Apple



Below: One of the pieces by Chris Ofili that the students saw on their visit

## IT GIRLS ALLOWED

Mr Curry took a group of Year 9 girls to the IT Girls Allowed day at Barclays Technology Centre at Radbroke Hall earlier this term. They joined 200 of their peers from across the NW and worked in teams to create computer programmes to solve specific problems. Using this information they were then able to design products and also programme a robot to test their solutions.

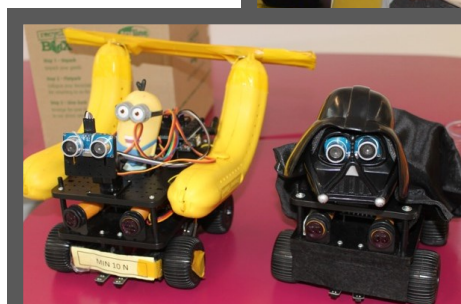
One of the activities the girls were given during the day was to create an application not currently available on the market. Arabella Brimelow came up with an inspired design for a phone with integrated projector to watch films when out and about and her originality won her an android tablet!

The girls were lucky enough to meet Betty Webb, a WWII Bletchley Park veteran, who gave a fascinating presentation on code breaking. Bletchley Park was where many of the secret enemy codes were cracked and deciphered, including the famous German Enigma cipher. Andrew Miller MP, chair of the science and technology select committee, also spoke at the event.

The activity day was part of Barclays' pledge towards the Government's 'Your Life' campaign, which focuses on increasing support for STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and encouraging girls to take these options. It was hoped that the event would inspire girls to think about studying IT at school with a view to developing a career in technology later in life.



Girl Power: Year 9 students from CHS joined 200 of their peers at the IT Girls Allowed event at Barclays Technology Centre. They took part in many activities, including programming a robot like the ones on the left.



# RECOGNITION FOR DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

## Design Mark

We are proud that we have received further recognition for our outstanding work as a Specialist Engineering School and, notably, for Design and Technology (DT) education with the award of the much sought after **Design Mark**, a quality standards measure developed jointly by The Design Council and The Design and Technology Association and awarded to schools that demonstrate excellence in their teaching of design.



In order to achieve this accolade, DT staff had to produce extensive evidence of excellence in a number of areas, including work within the school and also across the local and wider community. The value, status and importance given to the design ethos within the school and its close links with local employers and other organisations promoting the importance of the key 'STEM' areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics was recognised. The Design Mark moderators confirmed that CHS *'is clearly committed to its engineering status, having an impressive range of activities and a clear structure to its design based curriculum.'*

The DT curriculum and teaching and learning of design was also scrutinised and moderators applauded the excellent leadership and practice evident within the school and the DT department. Examination results confirm the progress and attainment of DT students at CHS with this year's GCSE results, once again, outstanding (A\*-C in Product Design 82%, Textiles 96%, Catering 92%, Engineering 100%).

## Weaving fun into learning with Berisfords

Eleven of our fashion and clothing students visited the Berisfords ribbon factory in Congleton recently to learn more about the manufacturing methods and the skills required. They were warmly welcomed by Fiona Hampton, Berisford's marketing and design director and were given a tour of the factory. Berisfords were founded in 1858 so have over 150 years of experience in designing and manufacturing ribbon for a wide range of applications. After having learnt about it in the classroom, the visit was a fabulous opportunity for the students to see this industry in action and to be able to direct all their questions to the experts in person. They saw all the looms weaving, took in the smell of the dye room and marvelled at the speed of the screen printing machines putting designs onto ribbons.



*Fashion & Clothing students were able to see ribbon making for themselves on a visit to Berisfords*

This was an introductory visit for these students, who have now been challenged to design and make a bag using ribbons supplied by Berisfords as part of Berisfords' annual CHS design competition, which will be judged at the end of February 2015.

## DEBATING MATTERS

CHS recently hosted the Cheshire round of the prestigious national Debating Matters competition, with the team demonstrating an impressive depth of knowledge and range of debating skills, which saw them talk their way into the forthcoming regional finals. Organised by the Institute of Ideas, the competition aims to present sixth form students with an innovative and engaging approach to debating through topical issues and a challenging format. A panel of judges, which included Phil Pegum, producer of BBC Radio 4's The Moral Maze, assessed the debates on the night.

In the first round, despite stiff competition from Brine Leas School, CHS won a close debate about whether the UK should embrace the use of fracking. In the final round, the team faced last year's national finalists, St. Bede's College. Following an entertaining and sometimes heated exchange about whether artistic expression should be censored, CHS emerged as winners and will now proceed to the regional finals in Manchester. The CHS debaters were Ellen Booth, Ben Harris, Alex Jackson and Emma Ward.

Teacher, Jonathan Fryer, commented: *"The evening was a great success with much high-quality debating. It was a pleasure to see the impressive skills and knowledge of the students in action."*

Debating has become increasingly popular at CHS, with two active and lively debating societies, one for Year 13 and another for Year 12, meeting every week to discuss political, moral and philosophical topics. Back in September, Honours Programme students marked the referendum on Scottish independence by holding their own debate on the issue. Two teams of Year 13 students debated the motion 'Should Scotland be an independent country?' in front of an audience of Year 12 students.



*Two of our debaters (on the right) at the Debating Matters competition recently hosted at CHS*



# WORKING WITH OUR PARTNER PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Throughout the school year, we strive to create as many ways as possible that we can connect with our partner primary schools and we do so through academic and sporting activities, workshops, clubs and competitions. These activities not only help the students to get to know us long before they move here in Year 7, but they stretch gifted students with challenging workshops, allow students to try out new and fun things and increase co-operative working between our schools.

## Around the World in a Day

Not long after returning to school in September, 176 students from our partner primary schools took part in our second Cultural Diversity Day. The students shared in a carousel of activities including wheelchair basketball, Bollywood dancing, African beading and a drum workshop, designed to introduce them to different cultures from around the world. The workshops encouraged students to work together in groups in a confident and cooperative manner and also required them to consider a range of moral, ethical and cultural issues in a fun and interactive way. As well as teaching them about cultural differences, the sessions also challenged the students' own thoughts and opinions.

Response to the activities was overwhelmingly positive and everyone involved agreed that the aims of the day had been achieved. The event also enabled the CHS students of the future to begin to build relationships at an early stage, making their move up from primary to secondary school a little less daunting.

We are proud that CHS holds the Gold Cultural Diversity Quality Standard in recognition of our extensive work in promoting a greater awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity.

## Workshops for gifted Mathematicians and English students

Continuing from last year's success, CHS staff have also been running fortnightly workshops for gifted Year 6 Mathematicians and English students from nine Congleton primary schools. The students have been coming into CHS where they have had the opportunity to explore learning objectives at a high level in reading and writing or in mathematics. They have also had the opportunity to work alongside other gifted students from other local primary schools in a secondary school environment. The sessions began in September and will run until May 2015.

This term students from 8 local primary schools also entered our fourth annual Primary Schools Art Exhibition and we played host to 350 teachers from Congleton schools who attended the second Congleton Town INSET day in November. You can also read about the Datastor Cup 2014 on our Sports Pages (p10-11). This annual football competition saw teams from 14 local primary schools competing for this coveted title.




Primary students try out Bollywood dancing (above) and wheelchair basketball (below) as part of our Cultural Diversity Day




The Schools Network  
**Cultural Diversity**  
Quality Standard

# 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. We are also using the following ways of communicating with parents:

 In addition to this termly newsletter, we produce an E-Newsletter approximately once a month during term time. You can sign up for this via the homepage of our website at [www.congletonhigh.com](http://www.congletonhigh.com).

We also distribute up-to-the-minute information via Twitter and Facebook:

 [@CongletonHS](https://twitter.com/CongletonHS) — for general school news and announcements  
[@PhysEdCHS](https://twitter.com/PhysEdCHS) — for PE news and information about fixtures etc

Plus we now have many departmental Twitter accounts for subject-specific information, including: [@CHSHumanities](https://twitter.com/CHSHumanities), [@CHSLanguages](https://twitter.com/CHSLanguages), [@chsmediadept](https://twitter.com/chsmediadept), [@CHS\\_Sixth\\_Form](https://twitter.com/CHS_Sixth_Form), [@chsartists](https://twitter.com/chsartists), [@chstechdept](https://twitter.com/chstechdept), [@CHSSocSci](https://twitter.com/CHSSocSci), [@CHSICT](https://twitter.com/CHSICT), [@chsmathsdept](https://twitter.com/chsmathsdept) and [@CateringCHS](https://twitter.com/CateringCHS)



[www.facebook.com/pages/Congleton-High-School/526370394106880](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Congleton-High-School/526370394106880)

# OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU

As a school we understand that one of the keys to our success is to maintain excellent communication between school and home. Many parents want to be involved in their child's education and seek ways in which they can support them in their learning. On a day-to-day basis we utilise the school website, e-mail, e-newsletters, Facebook and Twitter to try to keep parents up to date with what is happening in school. We also encourage parents to get to know their child's tutor and contact them if any concerns arise. All of our staff can be easily contacted via the 'Staff Contacts' section of our school website.



CHS and Parents  
Achieving Success Together

## Made to Measure Education

In November, we held our annual Academic Mentoring Day, an opportunity for students, parents and teachers to come together to discuss individual's progress and plan and create tailored learning targets to help each student achieve their maximum potential.

We are firm believers that education is not a 'one size fits all' solution and so we constantly monitor and adjust each student's targets. This ensures that individuals are given the support they need wherever they need it. If anyone is

struggling or falling behind, this can be identified and addressed early on to prevent it becoming a major concern. Conversely, students performing above their expected levels can be encouraged to aim high and go much further than their initial targets. Further reviews take place throughout the year, involving student and teacher within the normal school day. Details of these are added to their Academic Mentoring Report, which is then taken home for parents to add any comments or queries.

*'The support available to students, academic and pastoral, is excellent. Thank you.'*

*'I thought it was very useful today along with the revision evening. I feel that the school staff are very encouraging and caring.'*

*'My daughter is thriving in this school environment. Brilliant, thanks.'*

Jim Barlow, CHS deputy principal and head of school, commented on the Academic Mentoring Day: *'We are incredibly proud of the hard work put in by both students and staff and our results are testament to this. However, this is made so much easier as we have the support and involvement of the vital third team member – parents. We really do appreciate them taking time out of their day to join us at the school so that we can all work together to help their child thrive and succeed, enabling them to go on to greater things.'*

*'Thank you for the opportunity to support my daughter's education. Great to see her progress but equally areas where she needs support.'*

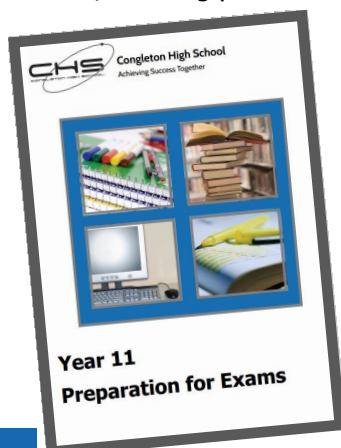
## Helping to make exams a less testing time

Also this term, we held an information evening for the parents of Year 11 students with the aim of giving them the knowledge and tools they need to help their child prepare for GCSEs. One of the key messages of the evening was that exam success relies heavily on planning and preparation. Alongside Mr Barlow – Deputy Principal and Head of School and Mrs Airey – Year 11 Guidance Team Leader, were the Curriculum Team Leaders for English, Maths and Science and they were able to talk parents through what they could expect over the coming months and what their role at home will be.

The evening aimed to deliver a mix of information, helpful advice and practical tips designed to cover all the areas of concern, enabling parents to get a better understanding of how best to support their child in the run up to and during the exam period. Parents received advice on things like planning and timetabling, effective revision and recognising and reducing stress. They also heard from each of the Curriculum Team Leaders about the specific revision requirements of their subject and the best approach to take. Important dates and key information were covered, along with beneficial sources of information and suggested websites.

At the end of the evening, parents were given a useful pack of information to take away that include a 'Preparation for Exams' booklet and English and maths specific revision guides, all crammed with easy to follow information and advice, with lots of example exam questions and additional sources of support and help.

The Preparation for Exams booklet and the English and maths revision guides, along with other useful information and guidance, can be found in the **Parent Area** of our website, under the heading, **'Supporting Your Child's Learning'**.



# CMAT—FROM LITTLE ACORNS

Since officially launching in February 2014, Congleton Multi-Academy Trust (CMAT) has gone from strength-to-strength, now spanning education from pre-school, right up to eighteen-plus and it looks set to expand further throughout 2015 with other schools currently in discussions with regard to joining the Trust.

Back in June 2014, one of our key partner schools, Black Firs Primary School, became the first primary to come on board. As one of our closest neighbouring schools, we have worked alongside Black Firs already on many projects, so this new partnership will continue the success we have already achieved with our joint ventures and further smooth the transition from primary to high school for students. Recently, CHS and Black Firs were able to join forces for the 'Hands Up for Children's Rights' world record attempt, joining schools around the region in raising awareness of children's rights.

At the opposite end of the education spectrum, The Congleton College has continued apace from its launch in July 2014 and is set to welcome its first intake of students from September 2015. It will enable Congleton students to take advantage of a wide range of vocational courses without having to travel out of the town. The College can also provide the training and support for students wishing to undertake an apprenticeship.

Alongside our Box Lane site, The Congleton College has been offered a lease to run the Mountview day-care facility and is looking to expand further into additional premises around the town to enable as many students as possible to benefit from the outstanding teaching, facilities, support and work placement opportunities.

There are a great many advantages to being part of a successful multi-academy trust. Importantly, it helps to attract and retain high quality teaching staff and it raises the profile of each of the members locally and nationally, helping to attract funding and support for initiatives and development plans. There are also the key benefits from sharing knowledge, best practice and assets, economies of scale and reduction in duplication of administration.

2015 looks set to be another exciting year for CMAT and we look forward to working with our existing members and to welcoming new schools into the family.



Congleton Multi-Academy Trust

## YOUNG ENTERPRISE GROUP



Rob and Ben at the Barclays Winter Trade Fair

Our fantastic Young Enterprise team, Young Hood, have been incredibly productive and creative this year and have created a range of handmade cards and unique, airbrushed artwork.

Two Year 11 students have been the creative brain behind the products, with Beth Hancock designing the distinctive paintings and Angel Alexander responsible for the fabulous individual Christmas cards.

The team have been selling their ranges to staff and students in school during lunch, which has been a great success. They were given an additional boost to sales with an invite to the Barclays Winter Trade Fair to sell their cards and artworks to Barclays staff at Radbroke Hall, Knutsford along with Young Enterprise Groups from other schools.

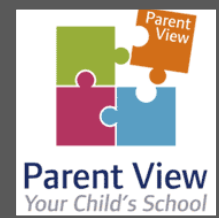
Sixth Form Young Hood team members, Rob Kirkwood and Ben Dolman

went along to the fair and managed to bring in sales of almost £100 on the day. Mrs Sadat-Shafai commented: 'The cards and artworks went down well with the customers and received lots of excellent comments. Rob and Ben really did the school proud at the fair, with their courteous manner and wonderful sales technique.'

## OFSTED PARENT VIEW—SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

By the time most parents read this newsletter, you will know that we have recently been inspected by Ofsted. Thank you to all of the parents who found the time at this busy time of year to complete Ofsted's online questionnaire—Parent View.

However, did you know that you can share your opinions and experiences of CHS with Ofsted *at any time* by completing this questionnaire? Once you have registered at <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>, all you have to do is answer twelve short questions about the school on subjects such as the quality of our teaching, effectiveness of our policies and whether you would recommend us to other parents. Sharing this information not only helps Ofsted inspectors make a decision about how well our school is doing but since the survey is public, it also allows prospective parents to see what current parents think of the school. Your views are also important to us and help us in setting priorities for our improvement plans. If you do not have a computer or an email address or if you would like help to use Parent View, please come into school and ask at reception.





# PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

## Charity netball match

Congratulations to Year 9 student, Robyn Harrison, who recently organised a charity netball match in aid of St Luke's Cheshire Hospice. Robyn chose to raise money for St Luke's as staff at the hospice had cared for her Grandad last year before he passed away and she wanted to give something back to them. The match took place at Congleton Leisure Centre and featured a team of Robyn and her friends – the High School Hotshots – against the Congleton Jets netball team. It was a close game with the Hotshots eventually winning 21 points to 17. A raffle was also held after the game and they raised a total of £450!

Robyn commented *"There was a brilliant atmosphere and we all had loads of fun. Thank you to the many local businesses who supported us by providing raffle prizes, to the Leisure Centre for providing the venue, to my team and to my mum and all the players and parents who donated prizes and sponsored the teams. I also want to say a big thank you to the ladies from Congleton Netball Club for their support and for umpiring the event."*

Robyn's mum, Tracy Harrison, added *"I am so proud of Robyn for organising this event. She is on the Sports Council at CHS and loves playing netball so this was a great way for her to raise money for St Luke's. She's already starting to think about next year's competition!"*



*Robyn (centre front in black) with her netballing friends at their charity match in aid of St Luke's hospice*

## 'Angelman' comic strip

Caring CHS sixth former, Reece Jones, used his A' level art project to help raise awareness of his twin, Theo's rare genetic condition. Reece created 'Angelman', a comic strip superhero character named after his brother's Angelman Syndrome, which resulted in him appearing on Granada News to tell Theo's story.

Angelman Syndrome is a rare genetic disorder affecting the nervous system of its sufferers, causing delayed development, frequent smiling, severe language impairment, movement and balance problems and often epilepsy. Although there are a range of treatments and aids, which can assist with the symptoms of Angelman syndrome, there is no actual cure as it is not possible to alter the genes and chromosomes in the brain, which are what form this condition.

Reece explained to ITV's Granada News why he had created this



*Reece's comic strip superhero was inspired by his twin brother, Theo*

new Superhero: *"Theo's my brother, he's special to me and I love him. I want to get Angelman Syndrome as well-known as Downs Syndrome, Cancer and Autism."*

David Hermit, executive principal at CHS commented: *'Reece's thoughtful project is truly representative of the way we encourage our students from year seven all the way to sixth form to think and act. We also encourage the development of problem solving skills and his first reaction was to help overcome the lack of knowledge about his twin's condition with his own, fantastic art project. Well done, Reece!'*



*Ella and her sister with Santa and the new Virgin 'Traindeer'*

## Have you spotted a 'Traindeer'?

Year 7 student, Ella Prior and her sister Ruby, who goes to The Quinta Primary School, had a lovely surprise earlier this month when their inspirational 'Traindeer' idea was brought to life by Virgin Trains. The girls won a Virgin competition to design a Christmas card and they dreamed up the 'Traindeer' for their design. They not only won the competition, but Staff at Virgin were so taken with the idea, they decided to bring it to life and have transformed one of their Pendolino trains into a proper 'Traindeer', complete with antlers and a red nose! Look out for it if you're travelling by train this Christmas. You can watch a video of how it happened at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML5GXsE5cZ4>.



# HONOURS PROGRAMME LAUNCH

High-achieving Sixth Form students from across Congleton participated in the launch of this year's Honours Programme earlier this term. The Honours Programme is a scheme run collaboratively by CHS and Eaton Bank Academy to develop the wider learning of the most able students, encouraging and supporting them to achieve their full potential within school and beyond into university and a successful career. The students and their parents heard talks from staff from both schools, telling what the programme has to offer them including information on activities such as debating, a book club, visits to leading universities, conferences and workshops. Two students who have already been on the Honours Programme also highlighted the importance of developing skills and experiences through the programme to help prepare for university later. The launch evening was a great success and both schools are looking forward to working closely together to continue to support and develop Congleton's star students.



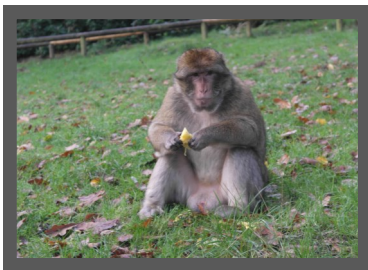
## TRIPS BRING STUDIES TO LIFE FOR SIXTH FORMERS

Two recent trips have helped bring classic texts to life for sixth form literature students. First they saw a production of R.C. Sherriff's 'Journey's End', a poignant portrayal of three days in a WWI dugout. The students are studying the play as part of their coursework and they were genuinely moved by this powerful and emotional production. Then they also attended a lecture day in Manchester where they listened to four talks on their exam text, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, delivered by university academics. The students were inspired by the ideas presented and came away with aching hands and full notebooks. They described it as 'hard work but really worthwhile' and a fantastic opportunity to hear arguments presented by experts in nineteenth century literature.



The dedicated CHS English department is constantly seeking out new ways to help students of all ages gain a deeper understanding of both the classic and more contemporary literature they study and our fantastic 2013-14 English exam A\*-C grades - A level 100% and GCSE 81% - are testament to this.

Meanwhile, the Social Sciences department organised a psychology field trip to Trentham Monkey Forest in Staffordshire to enable students to study the behaviour of the 140 Barbary macaques that roam freely there in the 60 acres of forestland and to put the psychology theory they had been learning in the classroom into practice. The Trentham macaques exhibit behaviour akin to their wild counterparts from Morocco and Algeria and the students were able to see the monkeys feeding and socialising in this natural environment. They also got an opportunity to speak with Monkey Forest Primatologist, Sue Wiper, and benefitted from an interesting and interactive discussion with her regarding her experience with the monkeys and her observations of their social behaviour over the years.



Jo Sanders, CHS Social Sciences deputy curriculum team leader, explained the reason for the visit: 'Undertaking trips such as this enables our students to really bring their studies to life and helps them to get a far better understanding of the subjects we cover in the classroom. She added, 'Seeing the theories of psychological behaviour actually demonstrated by these monkeys in a real life situation has underlined their significance for the students, who all felt that they had benefitted from the day.'

## PRESTIGIOUS ARKWRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

Sixth Form student, Joel Ball, has been awarded a sought-after Arkwright Engineering Scholarship that identifies him as one of the country's future leaders in engineering and technical design. The renowned scholarship provides him with £600 to enhance his A level studies and a range of activities to enhance his understanding and experience of engineering. Joel's Scholarship is sponsored by The Reece Foundation and he follows in the footsteps of Year 13 student, Jayne Booth, who was awarded an Arkwright Scholarship last year.

Executive Principal, David Hermit commented 'We are delighted that another student from CHS has won such a prestigious scholarship. As an engineering school, we put great emphasis on the teaching of STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and understand the importance of these subjects in providing a route towards secure careers for our young people.' The Scholarships are respected by leading universities and companies and are supported by top engineering employers and organisations such as Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems, Balfour Beatty and Microsoft Research.



## Sporting students tackle a weekend in Paris

Forty-one of our sporting students travelled to Paris at the end of September on our first ever rugby tour, which proved a fantastic success for those involved, with the team acting as the perfect ambassador for both the town of Congleton and the school.

The students, who had been learning French for the trip, were keen to put both their sporting and new language skills to the test as they arrived at the CREPS (Centres de Ressources, d'Expertise et de Performances Sportive) sports complex. They were treated to an exclusive training session from the coaches of one of France's top rugby union clubs, Racing Metro 92, who were extremely impressed with the handling skills of the Congleton squad.

After this unique training experience, the students received a once in a lifetime opportunity to view the whole of the Racing Metro 92 training ground. They were treated to a tour of the site and saw for themselves the daily routines of international rugby stars like Jonny Sexton and Jamie Roberts.



One of our teams in action against their French counterparts (top) and the impressive facilities at the CREPS sports complex near Paris (above)

Over the next few days, the squad headed out to the Parisian suburbs for matches against home teams, Noisy le Sec and Soisy Rugby Club, with exciting play from the two sides in all the matches. Both of the CHS squads made their teachers very proud. Of course no trip to Paris would be complete without a little sight-seeing and, with matches over, the team headed off to the city for glimpses of iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower and l'Arc de Triomphe before enjoying an awards evening, during which the team received prizes for their performance during the four days, with Brad Oliver deservedly scooping the coveted 'Best Tourer' accolade.

PE teacher, Greg de Souza, who organised the trip, commented: *'The boys' attitude during the whole trip was fantastic, they trained extremely hard and competed like warriors. I am immensely proud of them all, they represented CHS exceptionally throughout the tour and, hopefully, this will be the first of many more rugby tours for the school.'* The tour was hailed as a great success by students and teachers alike with the team building on their love of rugby and inspiring yet more students at CHS to get involved in anticipation of England's hosting of the Rugby World Cup in 2015.

## Datastor Cup 2014

In November CHS hosted the annual Datastor Football Competition for all the Primary Schools in Congleton. This is one of the biggest events in the calendar in the area, with 14 teams entering the competition this year. After some fantastic games in the group stages, Mossley, Black Firs, Quinta and Marton were left in the semi-finals, with Mossley and Quinta A making it through to the final. The final had some outstanding footballers on show and the standard of play was very high. Mr de Souza, CHS PE teacher and competition

organiser said *"I was extremely impressed with the performances of all the teams, both from the big and the smaller schools in the area – the players should all be very proud."*

The overall winners were Quinta A, who hadn't won this competition for over 5 years, and class teacher Mrs Cope, along with the other Quinta staff, were ecstatic with their team's performance.

Also in football, congratulations to our Year 7 boys football team who are **South Cheshire League Winners** for 2014-15.



Year 7—South Cheshire League Winners



The Quinta A team—Datastor Cup winners





CHS under-18s netball team—South Cheshire Champions 2014

## South Cheshire Champions

On Tuesday 21st October, CHS under 18s netball team competed in the South Cheshire Tournament, playing some exciting matches against Alsager, Holmes Chapel and Brine Leas.

The CHS girls played to an exceptionally high standard, winning all their games and, as a result, were crowned South Cheshire Champions. During the tournament, other schools commented on how well they played, showing excellent skill and team spirit.

CHS PE teacher, Mrs Henderson, commented: *'The girls have put in a lot of hard work over the months and have been totally committed to training and because of this they have been able to reap the rewards. We are really proud of them and their success.'*

The winning team were: Ella Baskerville, Nina Bennett, Charlotte Ingle, Emma Ingle, Phoebe Plant, Whitney Plant, Hannah Tatton and Lucy Vaughan.

## Everybody Award Finalists

Staff in the PE department recently nominated four of our inspirational students for two prestigious honours and the students were selected as finalists in the Everybody Awards, which were held at a glittering ceremony at Cranage Hall last month.

Amy Rodgers and Hollie Massey were nominated for Young Sports Person of the Year and Morgan Harrop and Adam Fastiggi for Young Volunteer of the Year. Narrowly missing out on the first places on the night, the students are still winners with their friends, teachers and the school, who are all incredibly proud of their achievements, hard work and dedication, which all led to their initial nomination. Congratulations also go to one of our partner schools, The Quinta Primary, who were named Primary School of the Year in the awards.

The Everybody Awards is an annual event, recognising the contributions of local heroes – individuals and organisations – in sport, play and active recreation. Everybody is an independent non-profit distributing organisation with charitable status and is responsible for delivering leisure services in partnership with Cheshire East Council.



Above & left: Our 'Everybody Awards' finalists



## Students leading change in school sport

At CHS we value the opinions and ideas of our students and try to create a culture where our young people are empowered to lead change. For many years we have had a Student Leadership Team and Sixth Form Management Group and to this we have now added a **Sport Organising Committee (SOC)**. This term interviews were held for nominated students from Years 7 – 11 and the students have now created a full committee who will lead the planning and delivery of school sports clubs and intra-school competitions. The SOC will influence and shape the school sport offer for their peers, thus ensuring that the activities and opportunities are based on what the students really want and need. In addition, the students involved in the committee will gain life and work skills as it will encourage them to take responsibility and instil the meaning of commitment. It will help them overcome challenges and make decisions both as an individual and as part of a team. The school will also benefit by increasing its capacity to help deliver a wider range of activities for a more diverse range of young people. The Chairperson of the SOC is Year 13 student, Nina Bennett.



Tag rugby sessions at CHS



Students at the AJ Bell stadium as part of MBNA & Sale Sharks' Number Cruncherz programme

## Using sport to engage and motivate students

Financial education is now part of the compulsory national curriculum in England for 11-16 year olds and MBNA and Sale Sharks Community Trust have developed an innovative programme called **Number Cruncherz** to give 11-12 year olds the opportunity to develop their number and financial literacy skills outside of their school environment. As part of this programme, coaches from Sale Sharks came to CHS to deliver some fun touch rugby sessions to some of our Year 7 students. The students then went to the AJ Bell stadium where they took part in sessions on Income and Expenditure, Needs and wants, Budgeting and Making choices.

# CELEBRATING AN OUTSTANDING YEAR GROUP

Last week we hosted our annual GCSE awards evening, welcoming back the previous year eleven students to collect their GCSE certificates and learn who had been selected as worthy winners of the various curriculum and special awards. Always an exciting occasion for students, parents and teachers alike, this year was a particularly memorable one since this year group broke all school records with their exam results: 80% A\*-C in maths, 81% A\*-C in English and 74% attaining 5 or more GCSE at grades A\*-C including both English and Maths.

The evening started with a drinks reception, allowing guests a chance to catch up with old friends and former teachers. A special surprise that delighted everyone was the return of Gill McNulty, the year group's guidance team leader from year seven to year eleven and a popular and respected teacher in the school. Mrs McNulty retired this year but came back for the night to speak at the event. She gave an affectionate review of the students' previous five years, from their first school trip as new starters right through to their year eleven prom and their fantastic GCSE results. The pride felt by Mrs McNulty in their achievements and successes shone out as she spoke of what a fantastic year group they had been and wished them every success in their chosen fields.

Special guest on the night was former student, Dr Sarah Band, who gave a truly inspirational presentation, sharing with her fellow alumni words of wisdom that had helped her achieve her goals and keep her motivated. She also told guests that she had been in the same year group as a very famous former student, Liverpool and England striker, Daniel Sturridge, and that he had written something in her year book that she had never forgotten, 'The world is your oyster'. She urged the students to take that particular piece of advice away with them and let it help them achieve their dreams and aspirations too. Dr Band closed her address with a simple yet apposite quote from current film, *The Imitation Game*: 'Sometimes it is the people that no-one imagines anything of that do the things that no-one can imagine'.



*Special Award winners: Megan N Bailey (Pecks Restaurant Award for Excellence in Catering) and Thomas Fastiggi (Award for Contribution to Performing Arts)*



*Dr Sarah Band (centre) with Emily Hamand and Matthew Jones, two of the winners of the Award for Outstanding Contribution to School Life*

The evening was brought to a close by head girl and boy, Niamh Hogg and Jamie Bernardi, who, on behalf of the governors, staff and fellow students, thanked all the guests that had given their time to present the awards and also thanked everyone that had come along to the event to join in the celebration of the five tremendous years of the CHS class of 2014.

## Key Dates for your diary

Friday 19th December 2014— <b>1:10pm finish</b>	School closes for the Christmas holidays
Monday 5th January 2015	School re-opens
Tuesday 6th January 2015	Ex-Year 13 Awards Evening
Wednesday 14th January 2015	Parents in Partnership meeting (re-arranged from 21st Jan)
Thursday 15th January 2015	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 20th January 2015	Year 9 Options Evening
Wednesday 28th—Friday 30th January 2015	School Production—Bugsy Malone
Monday 2nd—Friday 6th February 2015	Ski Course—Le Corbier, French Alps
Tuesday 3rd February 2015	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 10th February 2015	UCAS Parents' Evening
Friday 13th February 2015	School closes for half term holiday
Monday 23rd February 2015	School re-opens to students