

Newsletter

Issue 13: September-December 2016

Achieving Success Together

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Fantastic First Class FA Standard Facilities



Welcome to our first 2016-17 newsletter, packed with stories of yet another very busy term at Congleton High. Our new Year Seven have been finding their feet and taking part in a wide range of activities aimed at helping them settle in, make new friends and discover all the new subjects they learn at high school. Our older students have been getting to grips with GCSE coursework and others sitting mock exams in preparation for the 'real thing' in summer. Suzannah de Takats and Richard Vickers, our Head Girl and Boy are also adapting to their new roles, combining school duties seamlessly with their Post 16 coursework and even some very successful fundraising for our new shelter and our Syria appeal.

A major highpoint for us and for our town this term has, of course, been the opening of our fantastic new 3G pitch and 150 seat Daniel Sturridge stand, which will create so many sporting opportunities for everyone in Congleton. We were delighted that Daniel and his family agreed to be involved with the project. They have been incredibly supportive and we look forward to working on a range of sporting projects with The Sturridge Foundation in the future

With so many fantastic things happening here every week here, it is difficult to do them all justice in a newsletter so please take a look at our News and Events section of the website where you will find more information and additional stories. Subscribing to our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds will also give you up-to-the-minute news of what we are doing here at Congleton High

We would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year and look forward to welcoming in another successful New Year with you all when we start back to school on Monday 9th January.

Mr D Hermitt
Executive Principal (CHS)



Learning to Achieve Success Together



Starting a new school can be a scary time at any age and is particularly daunting for those eleven year olds moving up from primary school to become the youngest members of a much larger school than they have been used to for the previous seven years.

It is with this in mind that we hold a number of 'Discovery Days' for primary school children of all ages to familiarise them with the school, the staff, students and also the other children that will join them in Year Seven. These span many areas of the curriculum including PE, maths and art and also include our very popular Cultural Diversity Day, held each year in September.

This work, to ensure a smooth transition and help students settle in quickly, doesn't stop once they join the school, however. In the first few weeks of the new term, all Year Seven students are able to take part in our New Starter Teambuilding Day at Astbury Waterpark, a full day of activities aimed at helping students get to know each other, learn how to achieve success together by working in teams and, most of all, have fun!

Students enjoy a whole range of activities including kayaking, climbing, bushcraft, archery, raft building and orienteering. New friendship groups are formed, which is a real bonus for those joining from one of the many smaller schools in the area, who often make the move up in ones and twos.

This year's Year Seven were the first to take part in the day and although the majority ended up very wet indeed, everyone had a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable day, which started off the new school year in the best possible way!



2016 Exam Results Give CHS a Reason to Celebrate

Summer '16 was a time of celebration at CHS after GCSE students achieved exceptional results, seeing a year-on-year improvement in the overall grade, unlike the national average, which actually decreased. With 164 students in the year, over half (eighty eight) achieved at least one A*/A or Distinction*/Distinction (D*/D) grade. In total 401 A*/A and D*/D grades were recorded, with all subjects boasting a healthy share, notably History, which saw forty four per cent of all grades at A*/A (eighty two per cent of grades were A*-C) and Geography with forty three per cent at A*/A (eighty eight per cent A*-C).



Some of our amazing 2016 GCSE students

In line with other top performing schools nationally, over eighty per cent of Congleton High students achieved an A*-C grade in English/ English Literature, in fact three quarters of all grades achieved this year were at a grade C or above, with remarkable pass rates displayed across all subjects. All of the single sciences achieved over ninety five per cent pass rates, with Biology and Physics both at ninety eight per cent and Chemistry at ninety six. The arts triumphed also, with Music achieving an amazing one hundred per cent, Art only slightly less at ninety seven per cent and Drama a superb ninety six per cent. Vocational subjects too performed extremely well with Catering, Child Development, ICT and PE all seeing over eighty per cent A*-C grades or equivalent.

On results day, teachers, parents and governors gathered with students to celebrate their success and were joined throughout the morning by Sky News, who filmed students opening their results and, later, interviewed them live on air to share their exciting news.

In the spirit of improving upon the previous year, last year's record for the youngest student collecting results was also beaten, with eleven-year-old Isaac Cumberland, from Castle Primary in Mow Cop, joining his older counterparts to collect his results. Not only did he completely ace his Mathematics GCSE paper with an A*, he also scored an incredible 194 out of a possible 200! Isaac joined CHS full time in September and hopes to develop his interest in mathematics even further.



Isaac with his parents, Castle-head teacher, Jill Mason and Mr Hermitt

A Level students performed equally as well with superb pass rates and many A*/A and Distinction*/Distinction grades achieved across the wide range of subjects offered. CHS is keen to support academic and vocational pathways equally so was delighted that both attracted such impressive results, with many students successfully combining academic and vocational courses in their Post 16 years.

Under the new Progress 8 measure, these summer results place Congleton High at eighth place in the performance tables for the whole of the Cheshire East region.



Sky News spent the day at CHS filming

A Creative Partnership

For many years now, we've been extremely lucky to have the support of local ribbon manufacturer, Berisfords, who work with us to help our GCSE Textiles Technology students learn more about the manufacturing and design process, taking the lessons out of the classroom and into the real world.

Each year our Year Ten students visit the Berisfords factory to see the industry they have learned so much about actually in action and be able to direct all their questions to the experts in person. It is a great experience seeing all the looms weaving, taking in the smells of the dye room and marvelling at the speed of the screen printing machines putting designs onto ribbons.

The factory visit is only the first stage of the process for students, with the Berisfords' annual CHS Design Competition forming the second part. Following the tour, students are challenged to design and make a particular item, such as a bag or a cushion, using ribbons supplied by the company.

This year's challenge was to design and produce a skirt and, with ten weeks to go, the students launched into their task with gusto and fabulous, original concepts were soon taking shape.

Each skirt produced was exquisite, with students going all out to use the ribbons to their best effect to create wearable pieces of art.

Managing director, Peter Bowers, had the unenviable task of choosing the winners and, following great deliberation, finally selected Iris Stansfield's beautiful sea blue, flowing creation as the winner. Diyana Nikolova took second place and Holly Dawson third, winning them prizes of £100, £70 and £30 respectively.



L-R Peter Bowers, Iris Stansfield, Diyana Nikolova and Holly Dawson

New York, New York!

Thirty four Year Ten, Eleven and Twelve art students were able to travel half-way across the world this term to seek inspiration from iconic landmarks and international works of art in the galleries of New York city.

After landing, their first stop was a visit to the striking Flat Iron Building, before heading down town on the subway to the heart of the financial district and site of the Twin Towers disaster, where the memorials and Freedom Tower provided a moving start to the trip. After time for reflection, the group ate their first US meal in a typical New York Deli and then completed their first day with a trip up the familiar Art Deco inspired Empire State Building with its magnificent night time views across the city.

Day two saw a visit to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MOMA), where students sketched and viewed paintings and artefacts from around the world. Lunch was a typical New York affair with hot dogs and hamburgers followed by an afternoon exploring Central Park with its boating lake, Alice in Wonderland Sculpture, fountains and John Lennon Memorial. Tea at Bubba Gumps allowed the visitors a first glimpse of the bright lights in Times Square. The day was rounded off off with a cruise down the Hudson River with more photo opportunities provided by the Manhattan Sky Line, Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.

A second gallery visit to the MOMA was arranged for the third day, to see some of the most famous art of the 20th and 21st centuries including paintings by Picasso, Monet, Dali, Hopper and Rauchenberg. On their way to lunch at the Grand Central Station, the group saw many new and interesting sights, including a protest march against Trump's presidency! A visit to Wall Street followed and the day was finished off at yet another New York Deli followed by Ice Skating at the atmospheric Wolfman Rink in Central Park.

The penultimate day meant a trip to the Whitney Museum at the dock side to experience contemporary art work from famous artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Audrey Flack. Sculptures were sited on verandas allowing views out towards the Statue of Liberty, the Chrysler Building and Empire State Building.

No New York art trip would be complete without seeing the iconic Guggenheim with its spiral construction, so the group made that their mission for the final day, before a last trip down Fifth Avenue for a few souvenirs, last minute photos and then the long journey home.



Making (and Baking) History

Our annual Year Eight Local History Competition produced three very deserving winners this year, Elle-Mae Hambley, Katie Darmon and Reve Clowes-Michael, all of whom found incredibly unique and memorable ways of sharing Congleton's many stories with their peers.

Local historian, Peter Kenyon, from the Congleton Local History Society was kind enough to judge the competition, a task which, each year, becomes more difficult, with the standard of entries climbing ever higher. Peter was extremely impressed by the depth of research and quality of the work and presentation of the information the students had amassed and eventually awarded first prize to Elle-Mae for her fantastic piece of research and talking book, covering a wide range of aspects of Congleton history. Second and third places went to Katie and Reve respectively.

Katie delighted the History Department with her delicious recreation of the Lion and Swan Hotel, made entirely of cake! Reve created a terrific model of Astbury's St Mary's Church. As the setting for Congleton High's annual Christmas Celebration Service, St Mary's has a special place in the hearts of the staff and students of the school, making Reve's recreation particularly pertinent and important.



Top: Elle-Mae Hambley won first prize in the Y8 Local History Competition

Middle: Katie Darmon won second prize with her historical cake

Bottom: Reve Clowes-Mitchell model won him third place

'Destiny is Choice Not Chance'

This term we hosted our annual Year Eleven awards evening, welcoming back our previous Year Eleven to collect their GCSE and BTEC certificates and learn who had won the additional curriculum area and the nine special awards. The guests were also able to hear chief executive principal of South Staffordshire College, Graham Morley, talk of his own school days and the path he had taken to climb to his current position.

Following a warm welcome from Mr Hermitt, their guidance team leader, Mr Franklin, gave an affectionate review of the students' previous five years, from their first days as timid new starters, right through to their Year Eleven prom.

The awards ceremony began with chair of governors, Richard Benson, presenting exam certificates and Mr Morley handing out a further two awards in each curriculum area, one for outstanding attainment and another for outstanding effort, rewarding not just those who secured high grades but also those that put in the work and really tried their best.

Current Year Eleven, Olivia Donelon, played a delightful version of Passenger's 'Let Her Go', following which, guests were able to discover who would receive the first of the nine special awards, including the Governors' Award, the Outstanding Academic Achievement Award, the Citizenship Award and, new for 2016, the South African Humanitarian Award.

Graham Morley then took to the stage, instantly stunning the audience with his statement "I love Monday mornings". He then went on to explain his unusual comment and to share sound advice for success with the young people - and, indeed, the older ones. To the young people in the audience, embarking on the next phase of their lives, Graham passed on a piece of sound advice he had been given as a young man: **'The day you find what you love is the last day you ever go to work'.**

He went on to say that connecting the head and heart was key to a successful and fulfilling career as all choices are better made when the two work in unison. He continued that they would always excel at what they enjoy and ended with the encouraging assertion that **'destiny is a matter of choice and not chance'**, reminding them that they are in control of their own future.

Following on from Mr Morley's positive and motivational words, came the presentation of the Stacey Marsh Inspiration Award, named in honour of a former student who sadly passed away. Stacey inspired everyone with her courage and positivity despite ongoing illness and her parents, Steve and Julie, presented the award to Selby Alexander, Rachel Mackenzie and Catherine Stoker, all three of whom, like Stacey, had battled with illness yet never asked for or expected special consideration, sympathy or even recognition of their circumstances.

Mr Marsh commended the girls on their courage and determination: *'Their strength to cope with these challenges was staggering and a constant source of inspiration. This desire to just get on and succeed, despite overwhelming mental and physical obstacles, is something we can all learn from.'*

The final award of the evening, Award for Outstanding Contribution to School Life, was presented by Head Girl, Suzannah de Takats and Deputy Head Boy, Jay McAleer. Will Banks and Caitlin Kirkwood, were awarded the prize for the way they had both immersed themselves into school life, making a difference, not just for themselves but for their peers and everyone else around them.

The evening was brought to a close by Suzannah and Jay, 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 everyone that had come along to the event to join in the celebration of the five tremendous Congleton High years of the class of 2016.

A full list of award winners can be found in the news section of our website - www.congletonhigh.com



Remembering with Poetry

On 11th of November, Remembrance Day, eight of our English Department students from Year Nine, Twelve and Thirteen, visited Astbury Mere Care Home. The purpose of their trip was to help mark the important day by sharing war poems with the residents there, many of whom had their own memories of the war years.



Winning Designs



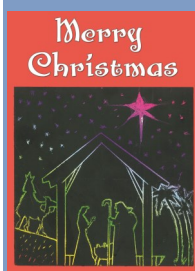
Left: Tom Mitchell
and Katie Darman



Right: Abigail
Cope, Bobby
Cartwright and
Nicole Andrade



This term, we have run two individual design competitions. The first was to design a 'Praise Postcard' for the English Department to give to students to congratulate them on good work and effort. The many excellent designs were whittled down to leave five worthy winners - Year Eight Tom Mitchell and Katie Darman and Year Seven Abigail Cope, Bobby Cartwright and Nicole Andrade.



The second competition was for Key Stage Three students to design a Christmas card on the theme of 'The True Meaning of Christmas' to be sent on behalf of Congleton High School to all our friends and neighbours. Once again, the standard of entries was exceptionally high and choosing an overall winner was not easy. Year Eight, Oliver Beardmore, was finally chosen for his card's simple but effective design.

We would also like to thank Alice Hill, Year Thirteen, for her lovely festive wreath image she created to adorn the front cover of our Astbury St Mary's Christmas Service this year.



Inspired by Manchester's Matchstalk Men

Over the course of one week in November, over one hundred and seventy Year Eight students travelled to Manchester to spend a whole day visiting The Lowry and The Manchester Art Gallery, giving them a wonderful opportunity to see a wide range of classical, modern and contemporary works of art for themselves.

Many of the pieces they saw were completely new to the group but the majority were able to recognise the familiar 'matchstalk men' and northern industrial scenes in the works of LS Lowry.

The visits gave the group an even greater enthusiasm and confidence for their art projects and a multitude of fresh ideas and references from which to draw inspiration and build their own portfolios of imaginative art works.



An International School

We were delighted in October to receive the British Council's prestigious International School Award for a ninth year in recognition of our work to bring the world into the classroom. We strive to raise students' awareness of the world around them through a range of International projects and visits including:

- Annual Africa Day exploring some of the various themes and issues of the continent
- Partnerships with Muizenberg School, South Africa and Rocky Crest High, Namibia
- Year 10 visit to Cape Town to work with a number of charitable projects
- German exchange programme with the Friedrich Spee Gymnasium in Trier
- Engineering visits with the Gymnasium Süderelbe in Hamburg
- Study visits to Italy, Iceland, France, USA and WWI Battlefields
- Annual Cultural Diversity Day for Partner Primaries

The International School Award is a badge of honour for schools that do outstanding work in international education, such as through links with partner schools overseas. Fostering an international dimension in the curriculum is at the heart of the British Council's work with schools, so that young people gain the cultural understanding and skills they need to live and work as global citizens.



Giving a Helping Hand

When it comes to helping others, Congleton High students and staff have always proved to be extremely generous and this term has certainly been no exception.

Children in Need, back in November was an amazing and memorable event, not least due to the sight of Mr Barlow as Pudsey Bear and Mr Warren and Mrs Taylor covered in gunge. Many of our students spent their lunchtime on stage, entertaining their peers, with the event raising over £1000.

Our ongoing appeal to help Syrian refugee children has raised £884 to date through a number of initiatives including collecting loose change in water bottles and raffling a fabulous Christmas hamper.

Again this year we took part in Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal, which enables students and their families to share gifts with less privileged children across the world. We were delighted to be able to send over 150 boxes this year, which we hope will bring smiles to the faces of the children who receive them.

Following an appeal from City Hearts, a charity supporting victims of human trafficking in the UK, our staff donated eighteen bags of warm, winter clothes and shoes. The majority of trafficking victims arrive in the UK with no possessions of their own, so it is hoped that our donations will enable the charity to help even more people.



Cooking up Success

Sam Vale, one of our Year Nine students, was recognised for his outstanding skill, culinary flare and creativity in the semi-final of the 21st annual Local and District Rotary Club Young Chef Competition in December, securing top placing with his delicious menu.

The seven contestants from four regional schools, including Congleton High and Eaton Bank, were required to prepare and present a two course meal within a pre-set budget and time limit, which was judged by an expert panel. Congleton High's Sam cooked his way into first place with his Chinese themed main course of Char Siu Pork, Egg Fried Rice and healthier option baked Spring Rolls, followed by Swiss Roll and Raspberry Coulis, all prepared with a range of locally sourced products.

Ben Simpson, also from Congleton High, who came second in the previous heat, competed in the semi-final too, preparing his delicious Italian Chicken with a duo of desserts - Rosé Raspberry Jelly Shot and Chocolate and Raspberry Mousse. Ben worked exceptionally hard on the night, delivering two fantastic courses but, unfortunately, didn't make the top three, achieving a Runner-Up placing on this occasion.

Sam and Ben were presented with their certificates and trophies by Tony Graves, District Governor Nominee for the 1285 District of the Rotary Club in Great Britain and Ireland, Darryl Houghton, Manchester Marriot Executive Head Chef and John Bainbridge, Head of HR at Manchester Marriot.

Following this heat, which was held at Congleton High's Box Lane site, Sam will now go on to represent the school at the District Final early next year.



Sam (above) and Ben (below) with (L-R) Darryl Houghton, Tony Graves and John Bainbridge



Calling all Box Lane Ex-Students



Whether you are a past student of Congleton High or came to school on this site when it was Heathfields or Congleton County Secondary School for Boys, we would love to hear from you.

We are hoping to build up a register of our alumni, which will enable us to share your stories with current and future students who may be wondering where their studies could take them or confused about the different routes at 16+

We plan to use the stories in a number of ways, including as case studies in our termly newsletter and on posters around school, where students can learn about and be inspired by the young people who were once where they are now. We are also planning to have an alumni section on the website enabling current and prospective students and parents to see the sorts of things our alumni have gone on to do and also show the many different routes to success.

We are equally interested in hearing about vocations that have taken decades to develop and may not have followed a 'traditional' route, alongside those that began at Options stage and have progressed seamlessly. Sharing all your accounts will be of immense value to our students who will be able to learn a great deal from your experiences.

If you would like to be part of our project and share your story with our students now and in years to come, please email our Communications Officer, Katrina Kenyon kkenyon@congletonhigh.com



Helping High Flyers Soar

High-achieving Year 12 Post 16 students joined our Honours Programme this term. The scheme is designed to challenge and support able students and those with high aspirations so they can achieve and exceed their full potential and effectively compete for places at top universities and in top careers.


Students and parents attended a launch event to hear about the wide range of activities included, such as debating societies, essay competitions, lectures from visiting academics and university application support. Head Girl, Suzannah de Takats, shared her experiences of the Programme and told how she had benefitted from activities such as attending TedX talks, leading debating workshops and the school's annual Oxbridge Trip.


The Programme has run successfully for many years and has helped many Post 16 students to recognise, reach and exceed their academic and personal capabilities.



Keeping in Touch

 Our main switchboard telephone number is **01260 730123** and will show as this on caller ID

 We are increasingly using e-mail as a method of communicating with parents as it is quick, efficient and cost effective. Please therefore make sure that we have your current e-mail address so that you don't miss out on important communications.

 In addition to this termly newsletter, we also produce an E-Newsletter. You can sign up for this via the homepage of our website at www.congletonhigh.com


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

 @CongletonHS - for general school news and announcements

We also have departmental Twitter accounts for area-specific information including sports team fixtures:
[@chsartists](#), [@CHSBus](#), [@CateringCHS](#), [@CHSEnglishDep](#), [@CHSHumanities](#), [@honoursprog](#), [@CHSICT](#),
[@CHSLanguages](#), [@LawCHS1](#), [@chsmathsdept](#), [@chsmediadept](#), [@CHSPerformers](#), [@PhysEdCHS](#), [@CHSSciences](#),
[@CHS_Sixth_Form](#), [@CHSSocSci](#) and [@chstechdept](#)

 www.facebook.com/pages/Congleton-High-School/526370394106880

 Congletonhs

 Parents can access a wide range of information regarding their child's school day, attendance and performance via Progresso and should receive log in details when their child starts. Any queries or problems should be referred to Mrs Tarpey, via email: dtarpey@congletonhigh.com or telephone: 01260 730123.

A Headstart for the World of Work

Many students across the UK leave school to find themselves totally unprepared for what comes next. No matter how well they have done academically and how many GCSEs, BTECs and A Levels they may attain, without adequate preparation, even the brightest of young people will not have the easiest start to their working life.

For students choosing to remain with us after Year Eleven, we take a bespoke approach that enables us to provide support, advice and practical help for students hoping to follow a wide range of routes including both academic and vocational pathways.

In any one week we have around forty of our Year Twelve and Thirteen students on local work placements within a range of industries including childcare, software development, mechanical engineering, catering and leisure. This offers them access to hands-on experience within their chosen career, learning at the coal face from experienced colleagues who know their business inside out. This also enables us, as a school, to learn directly from employers as to what skills and knowledge are required and ensures we remain relevant in what are often rapidly changing environments. We constantly monitor all our students and seek feedback from employers, which in turn helps us tailor the work we do in the classroom to ensure we equip our students with workskills that count.

In addition to liaising with employers in situ, we have also hosted a number of fact-finding Business Breakfasts with prospective and existing work placement hosts to enable us to create a network of employers with whom we work to offer our students a high level of training and education. In return, we are able to provide local businesses with a workforce fully equipped with the desired skills and aptitudes and ready to 'hit the ground running'.

We also encourage and assist our young people to get out and about to expand on their experiences, network and begin to gain a greater understanding of the actual requirements of employers.

Thursday Thirty is a Chamber of Commerce event where local businesses have the opportunity to meet and network. Year Thirteen student, Sam Lynn, joined our work experience coordinator, Mrs Sadat Shafai, at one such event held at Prism Solutions in Congleton. Currently studying Business and Economics and hoping to pursue a career in banking, it gave Sam the opportunity to talk with industry professionals to develop his understanding of what employers are looking for in business and financial recruits.

Brittany Swinnerton, also in Year Thirteen and hoping to study nursing at university after Year Thirteen, joined the 'Kidneys for Life' Thursday Thirty event and, like Sam, was able to meet and learn from the people relevant to the field she wishes to enter.

In preparation for completing the Award in Employability Skills, four Year Twelve students, Tom Strick, Harry Couchman, Paul Levers and Connor Cottrell, took part in a mock interview at one of our local employer partner companies, Reliance Medical. The purpose of the interview was to provide the students with an opportunity to practice and improve their interview skills in an authentic environment.

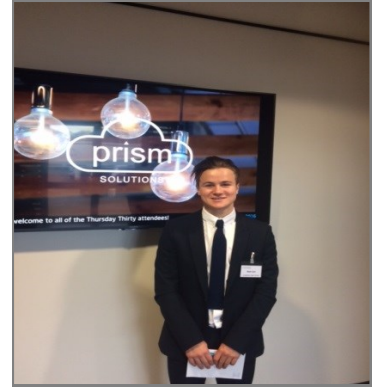
Thomas Pear, national account director at Reliance, said: *"The students I saw were well equipped for their mock interviews, handling difficult questions with confidence, showing they had researched and prepared themselves thoroughly".*

These same four students also attended the National Apprentice Show in October where over sixty employers and providers were showcasing apprenticeship opportunities in a lively interactive and informative setting.

Mrs Sadat-Shafai commented on the day:

"The event was a fantastic opportunity for the students to meet potential employers and providers to find out what apprenticeships have to offer them. Placing them firmly in the adult world of work, all four boys thought the whole event was a great experience that 'pulled us out of our comfort zone'".

Our wide-ranging and tailored work to equip students with the skills they need to succeed continues. In January, ten students will take part in the Astra Zeneca Challenge, where teams of students compete to win a week's work experience in the area of their choice at the company's Macclesfield site. This will be a great opportunity for all those involved and a definite high point on their CVs.



Sam Lynn (above) and Brittany Swinnerton (below) were able to learn more about their future careers via Chamber of Commerce networking events



Above (and below): L-R Tom Strick, Harry Couchman, Paul Levers & Connor Cottrell



Spotlight on Success

We are incredibly proud of all our students and what they have achieved during their time with us. When we hold our awards evenings, we are always as keen to recognise and reward effort and resilience as much as academic achievement. Knowing how much work our students put in to their school work, we are always amazed by the many activities in which they are involved and we would like to share some of their out-of-school achievements here.



One remarkable Year 8 Congleton High student, Elle Mae Hambley, was honoured with a national award in recognition of the support and compassion she's shown to her foster sister, winning the 'Outstanding Contribution by Sons and Daughters Award' in the annual Fostering Excellence Awards.

Elle Mae travelled to London with her family to receive her award from Ashley John-Baptiste, X Factor finalist and now BBC journalist and presenter.



Many of our students took place in the Remembrance Day Parade on Sunday 13th November, including our Head Girl, Suzannah de Takats and Head Boy, Richard Vickers, who joined the parade and then laid a wreath on behalf of Congleton High students and staff.



Also part of the parade were Fire Cadets, Charlotte Frost, Mia Brady, Chloe Meigh, Asa Hendrickx, Ben Evans and Jack Evans and another fifteen of our students (left), who marched alongside their peers as part of the 230 Squadron Air Cadets: Olivia Barber, Rebecca Faulkner, Tyler Greenwood, Lenny Heap, Dominic Hill, Tom Hodgetts, Clara Jackson, Oliver Jennings, Sam Kehoe, Toby Large, Ewan Ling, Bethany McCusker, Melanie Meigh, Tom Smith and Lucy Tkaczyk.



Above L-R Charlotte, Mia & Chloe



We like to think of all of our students as high flyers, but Year Eleven, Alfie Tarrant (right), definitely is as he has been taking flying lessons at Liverpool airport!

A student with a real eye for a good nature photograph is Year Ten, Emily Beckett, who scooped third prize in her 12-15 age category in the RSPCA Young Photographer Competition with her stunning picture of a carp, floating just beneath the surface of the water.



Above: Emily with Chris Packham and other winners

Right: Emily's prizewinning carp image



The judges were looking for 'striking, moving or quirky images' and Emily certainly ticked all three boxes with her image. Nature programme presenter, Chris Packham, presented Emily with her prize at a ceremony held in London



And finally, congratulations to our Year Ten Lexie Harrison, currently an Under Sixteens midfielder with Crewe Alexandra Ladies Football Team, who, following trials at the beginning of December, has made the English Schools' FA Under Fifteen squad!



First Class FA Approved Facility

After many months of planning and a busy summer break watching the project evolve, we were delighted to finally be able to unveil our brand new, state-of-the-art, 3G artificial turf pitch and 150 seat 'Daniel Sturridge Stand' in October. This is a fantastic asset for the town, destined to reduce disruption to and improve the quality of a whole range of Congleton outdoor team sports.

The new facilities were officially opened on Monday 10th October by Ava Sturridge-Packer CBE (aunt of former student and international footballer, Daniel Sturridge) of the Sturridge Foundation, Congleton Town Mayor, Cllr David Brown, Congleton High executive principal, Mr Hermitt and chair of Congleton High Governors, Richard Benson.

Following the opening ceremony, also attended by Daniel's father, Michael, his uncle and former premiership footballer, Dean Sturridge, members of the town's sports clubs and local residents, coaches and teams from Congleton Rugby Club, Congleton Rovers, Vale Juniors and Soccer Sevens were invited to test out the facilities and be amongst the first to officially play on the new surface. Daniel Sturridge was unable to attend the event himself due to his International football duties

With many grass field pitches waterlogged from November to February, the school's old all-weather facility was an incredibly important part of school and town life, however, the heavy usage it endured over the years meant the pitch reached the end of its lifespan some time ago and years of wear and tear meant maintenance costs had begun to mount. Also, the sand-based construction of the original AstroTurf surface made it unsuitable for football and rugby matches, unlike the new 3G pitch.

Providing safety alongside weather resistance, durability and versatility, 3G pitches are probably the most significant development in synthetic pitches since AstroTurf was first developed in 1965. While there are a number of construction variations, the pitch at Congleton High includes an all-weather 60mm artificial grass layer laid on to a 20mm rubber 'shockpad' base, which takes the impact out of any fall, making this new surface as suitable for rugby as it is for football and other outdoor team sports.

In addition to the new surface, which will enable more teams than ever to benefit, the pitch project also includes new dug outs, fencing and goals and the covered Daniel Sturridge Stand alongside the pitch, vastly improving the whole experience for plays as well as spectating home and away family and friends.

Mr Hermitt, executive principal at Congleton High, commented: *"Replacement of our existing AstroTurf pitch was way overdue and we are extremely excited to be able to deliver this new facility for our students and all of Congleton's sporting enthusiasts. As the only one of its kind in Cheshire, it opens up opportunities for a great many more people from the town and surrounding areas to benefit and to enjoy participating in a wide range of sports at a local and national level. We talked with the local clubs who train and play matches here and they fully support us and are thrilled that they will now have this latest sporting technology within easy reach. We would like to thank the Sturridge family for all their support."*

On December 1st, we were delighted to learn that, following a successful test report, our brand new facilities have been included on to the FA 3G Football Turf Pitch Register for three full seasons, following which it will be retested to ensure its continued compliance with the FA's standards.

The timely arrival of the new pitch coincides with the launch of the Congleton Sport Academy, which has been created by the school in recognition of the high numbers of Post 16 students wishing to pursue academic and vocational pathways whilst still maintaining a high level of sporting activity and also those wishing to pursue a career in the sports industry.

Although extremely popular, with local clubs and organisations already booking their time on the pitch, there are still a number of time slots available. Groups or individuals interested in hiring the new 3G pitch or any of the school sports facilities should contact Sports Centre Manager, Laura Heades, on 01260 730143 or email: sportsmanager@congletonhigh.com

[illegible]

Farewell to Miss Mardlin

After spending over thirty years in teaching, sixteen of those with us here at Congleton High School, Miss Mardlin will be taking a very well earned retirement at the end of the year.

Miss Mardlin started her teaching career back in the 1970s when she took on her first teaching post as a maths teacher at Swanley School, a very large comprehensive in Kent.

Her next move, to St George's C of E School in Gravesend, saw her achieve the position of Head of Maths and, subsequently, take on a role within their senior leadership team.

In 2000, Miss Mardlin decided to venture north, accepting the Deputy Headship at the newly formed Congleton High School and has been here ever since.

In the sixteen years that have followed, alongside her teaching responsibilities, Miss Mardlin has become a central member of the senior leadership team, with a role that has included many of the aspects that often go unnoticed but ensure that the school is able to function successfully on a day-to-day, month-to-month and year-to-year basis.

The design of the curriculum, rigorous planning of our timetables, managing the data we gather and improving our self-evaluation processes are all vital to the smooth running of the school and success of our students and are all down to Miss Mardlin.

Without her, there would not have been our popular and successful Option K, which ran until 2016. She was the author of our accelerated A Levels programme, affording our most able students access to a wide range of subject opportunities. She built a structure that turned the theory into a reality, enabling Year Ten and Eleven to be educated alongside our Post 16 students.

We are delighted for Miss Mardlin that she is now embarking on a new chapter in her life. We thank her for everything she has brought to our school family and wish her all the very best for her exciting future.



Key Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 22nd December 2016 - 1:10pm finish	School closes for the Christmas holidays
Monday 9th January 2016	School re-opens
Thursday 12th January 2016	Year 11 Rewards Trip - Trafford Centre
Thursday 19th January 2016	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Friday 20th January 2016	Year 9 Big Arts Day and Art Exhibition
Wednesday 25th January 2016	Year 9 Options Evening
Wednesday 1st February 2016	Key Stage 3 Art Exhibition
Wednesday 1st February 2016	Parents in Partnership Meeting
Tuesday 7th February 2016	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Monday 13th February 2016	Post 18 Opportunities Evening
Friday 17th February 2016	School closes for half term holiday
Monday 20th - Friday 24th February 2016	Ski Course
Monday 27th February 2016	School re-opens